

IRONIC AUTHORITY:

A Rhetorical Critical Analysis of the Stability of Irony in the Fourth Gospel Passion Narrative

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For Jenn, Nath, Loz and Em and their families

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ABSTRACT

This thesis offers a new analysis of the nature and function of irony in the Fourth Gospel's Passion Narrative (John 18-20). It utilises a new way of analysing the text in order to discern the irony and rhetoric in the Fourth Gospel narrative. This new methodology is adapted from George Kennedy's method of rhetorical analysis. In addition, by revisiting the analytical categories of stable and unstable irony the research demonstrates that, despite the preponderance of stable ironies in the Fourth Gospel, some ironies remain unstable (twice in 18:35b; 19:15; 20:23), and others are temporarily unstable (18:2-11; 19:1-16; 20:8, 24-25, 26-28). The thesis introduces a new category for this temporary ironic instability: 'perplexing irony' and provides some examples of perplexing irony from various sources.

In this thesis, *Ironic Authority*, the analysis of irony in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative reveals, highlights and demonstrates Johannine theology. Some of the various aspects of Johannine theology examined in the light of irony include: Christology, intertextuality, a theology of the cross, and a theology of power and authority. These theological aspects are interwoven with irony and reveal new insights for this research.

It is widely recognised that the evangelist uses a wide variety of different types of irony, that can be specifically identified and categorised. By using an adapted rhetorical analytical methodology, the thesis examines the Gospel's passion narrative and demonstrates the Gospel's prolific use of irony. The abundance of it indicates that Johannine irony is intentional.

This study identifies a fivefold purpose in the evangelist's use of irony which reveals aspects of his Christology. Irony provides a connection between the evangelist and the reader; helps readers 'believe into Jesus'; awakens the reader to a double layer in the narrative; sometimes connects other Scriptures intertextually; and expresses the Gospel's theology, mystery and revelation.

This research adds to irony theory and defines irony (and its various categories) in a relatively simple way. It demonstrates the purposes of irony in the Fourth Gospel; how to identify and categorise it; and it argues the case for temporary unstable (perplexing) irony. By extension, irony encourages faith and provides interest in the Gospel, and in addition, perplexing irony offers hope for those who face adversity.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Candidate's signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keos', is placed on a light grey rectangular background.

Date: 10th March, 2017

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ABBREVIATIONS

Chap. Chapter

ed. eds editor(s)

edn. edition

JBap John the Baptist

Jn The Gospel According to John

n. footnote

NASV The Lockman Foundation, *New American Standard Version*, Iowa Falls, World Publishing, 1975.

NIV Bible Translation, Committee on, *New International Version*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1991.

no. number

NRSV Metzger, Bruce M., and others, eds. *New Revised Standard Version*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1990.

p., pp. page (s)

para. paragraph

PLX Perplexing irony

PXR Perplexing rhetoric

Tr. Translator / translated by

UBS4 Aland, Kurt, Barbara Aland, Barclay Moon Newman, and Florian Voss, eds. *The Greek New Testament*, 4th edn. Berlin, United Bible Societies, 2010. This is the Greek translation used throughout.

UPI Unstable persistent irony

USR Unstable persistent rhetoric

v., vv. verse (s)

Vol., Vols volume(s)

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Come, people, follow where our captain trod,
our King victorious, Christ the Son of God.

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
draw all to you, let all the nations see:

From farthest regions let them homage bring,
and on his cross adore their Saviour King.

*Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.¹*

¹ Bartlett, ed. *Together in Song: Australian Hymn Book II*, (Sydney: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005).
'Lift High the Cross' (Hymn 351:1, 5, 6 and chorus), words: G.W. Kitchin (1827-1912); rev. M.R.
Newbolt (1874-1956).

INTRODUCTION

The Research Topic: Ironic Authority²

The Oxford Dictionary offers four possibilities for the definition of irony. They include:

1 Dissimulation, pretense ...of ignorance ...as a step towards confuting an adversary [Socratic irony]. 2 ...[L]anguage that normally expresses the opposite; especially the humorous or sarcastic use of praise to imply condemnation or contempt. 3 ...Discrepancy between the expected and the actual state of affairs; a contradictory or ill-timed outcome of events as if in mockery of the fitness of things. 4 The use of language with one meaning for a privileged audience and another for those addressed or concerned.³

These definitions indicate that irony is complex and context-specific; when transposed into another context, irony can be confusing. By analysing Johannine irony, this thesis offers a new examination of the nature, function and stability of irony in the Gospel of John. The focus of this study is to discuss the issue of temporary and persistent ironic instabilities, to provide a rationale for their use, and to nuance and analyse irony in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative (John 18-19). It reopens the discussion on the categories of stable and unstable irony; a discussion that was pioneered in the 1970s.

In *Ironic Authority*, the critical analysis of the different categories and types of irony in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative reveal, highlight and demonstrate Johannine theology. This thesis affirms the widely recognised prolific use of Johannine irony through the use of an adapted rhetorical methodology. This abundance of irony in the Fourth Gospel indicates that the Gospel's irony demonstrates authorial intent to draw the reader's attention to the significant message the Gospel contains.⁴ By exploring instances of these various types of intended irony, this research provides a deeper understanding of the subtleties of irony in the Gospel.

² This head title of the thesis needs further explanation. I selected this title because it incorporates various layers of meaning that correspond with the various layers of irony in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative.

³ Brown, *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (2 vols)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 1: 1417.

⁴ While no one is able to reconstruct the intent of the historical author of the Fourth Gospel, it is with some degree of certainty that I have assumed the intentional nature of the rhetoric and irony due to its prolific use in the gospel. See Chapter Eight and Appendices 1, 2, 3 for a summary of the irony I have identified in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. (Discover implies that no one else has found it before).

General readers of the Fourth Gospel may question the claim that there is such prolific ironic activity in the Fourth Gospel. This is due to the fact that all Fourth Gospel irony is covert. One has to dig beneath the surface of the text in order to discover and appreciate it.

In the Fourth Gospel, the evangelist uses a wide selection of different types of irony. Each of these can be specifically identified and categorised by the literary devices used. This thesis demonstrates that despite the overwhelming incidence of stable covert ironies in the Fourth Gospel, there remain some examples of unstable irony. The analytical chapters look at four examples of this feature in greater detail (twice in 18:35b; 19:15; 20:23).

Furthermore, Fourth Gospel ironies can be temporarily unstable. This thesis introduces a new category for this temporary unstable irony: “perplexing irony”. I offer four instances from the Johannine passion narrative (18:2-11; 19:1-16; 20:8, 26-28). Further instances of perplexing irony are offered from the Fourth Gospel, from the Old Testament narratives and from outside the Bible.

In this thesis I also argue that some rhetorical instabilities remain unresolved, while other unstable examples do not stay unstable persistently. They demonstrate *temporarily unstable rhetoric*. This phenomenon presents the scholar with a new category of temporary unstable rhetoric: “perplexing rhetoric”. These developments in rhetoric will be addressed in Chapter Three.

Contextualising the Thesis

The Research Question

Is there temporary unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel, and if so, can a development in irony theory make sense of this perplexity caused by a period of instability?

For the purpose of this thesis, my working definition connects irony with particular literary and rhetorical devices, rather than with a description incorporating a variety of meanings, as in the Oxford Dictionary definition. I define irony “as an incongruent

twist in a literary or rhetorical device”.⁵ This definition of irony differs from other irony theorists who attempt to analyse irony’s different aspects.

Since the seminal study by Wayne Booth over fifty years ago, scholars have distinguished stable and unstable ironies. Stable irony is understood as resolved irony. Conversely, the definition of unstable irony (or ironic instability) is that irony that results from the *victimisation of the protagonist*, or the protagonist’s *specific, identified unmet desires*. If the victimisation continues then the instability is persistent. Yet on other occasions the unstable irony is temporary because the victimisation or the unmet need ceases.

Booth claims that these ironies are intrinsically separate from each other.⁶ However, it is my contention that in the Gospel some of these unstable ironies stabilise; that is, they do not remain unstable. However, as the critic expects, most unstable types remain unstable. The ironies that are temporarily unstable, create this new category which I call “perplexing irony”.

In the analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative I identify a range of stable, unstable and perplexing ironies.

It appears to Booth that irony is intended by the author, it is covert, and its discovery is the responsibility of the hearer / reader.⁷ The rhetorical and literary devices the author uses are the means to discover his irony. This method of discovering Johannine irony is one of the significant features of this research. Easily discovered devices include examples of the following: (i) double meaning; (ii) metaphor; (iii) sarcasm; (iv) satire; (v) unanswered question; (vi) reversal; (vii) prolepsis; (viii) analepsis; (ix) juxtaposition; (x) paradox; (xi) dualism; (xii) understatement; (xiii) hyperbole; (xiv) misunderstanding; (xv) parody; (xvi) double standard; and (xvii) double entendre. When any of these literary or rhetorical devices undergo an incongruent twist, irony results. Additionally, if there is *no* incongruent twist in the literary device, then I classify the device as ‘rhetoric’. For the sake of clarity and identification in this thesis,

⁵ I will be using this as my working definition of irony throughout this thesis.

⁶ See Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 140.

⁷ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 6.

non-ironic literary devices also include: (i) the historic present tense in Greek; (ii) the use of chiasm; (iii) the use of *inclusio*; (iv) where there is a gap in the story; and (v) other literary devices where there is no incongruent twist. There are some tables in the analytical chapters in which I identify the location, frequency and type of irony discovered in the passion narrative.⁸ I adopt the methods of Literary Criticism of ancient texts and refer to the implicit commentary as described by Stanley Fish. This implicit commentary emphasises features including: the narrator, the real author, implied author; real reader, and the implied reader.⁹

In recent decades, the attention of biblical scholars has shifted from studying the biblical author to focussing on the reader.¹⁰ As we may expect, this shift has had a profound effect on biblical interpretation. Using these adopted methods, I narrow my attention to the result of studying the text and the reader, focussing specifically on the incidence, the nature, and effect of irony on the reader.¹¹ The hermeneutical approach to interpreting the Bible, especially the Fourth Gospel, is based in the rhetorical analysis stream of Literary Criticism.

In *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, Culpepper seemed puzzled by the development of literary criticism of the Bible, and in particular the “study of the reader of a narrative”.¹² When his book was published in 1983, he used phrases like, “so sweeping is the change”, and “growing at an alarming rate” because literary criticism of the biblical text was in its infancy.¹³ This surge in literary criticism over the past forty years or so has resulted in a shift of focus. This has meant that there has been a lessening of interest in the diachronic historical-critical method of biblical analysis. That is not to diminish the value of historical criticism, but rather to enhance the effect of a literary critical reading of the Bible because of the new range of insights that have emerged with respect to the

⁸ See the list of these in the opening pages of the thesis, as well as the Appendices.

⁹ Fish, *Is there a text in this class? : The authority of interpretive communities* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980).

¹⁰ Davies, "Literary Criticism," in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (eds. Coggins and Houlden; London: SCM Press, 1990), 402.

¹¹ See Chapters Two and Three of this thesis.

¹² Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 205.

¹³ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 205.

text and the reader. I pursue *a rhetorical critical analysis of the stability of irony in the Fourth Gospel using literary critical methods*.¹⁴

Methodology

In the analytical chapters I use an adapted version of George Kennedy's five steps for rhetorical analysis of the text (exegesis).¹⁵ In Chapter Four, I present these steps under five headings:

1. Select a passage that has unity
2. Explore rhetoric in the passage
3. Consider the rhetorical arrangement
4. Analyse the irony as a writing style
5. Review the passage as a whole.

These steps will form the basis of my method for the analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative.¹⁶

Rationale for this study

This research offers a new phase in the development of irony theory. To my knowledge there has not been a book written covering the stability of irony since Booth's *A Rhetoric of Irony* in 1974. Furthermore, there has been a dearth of irony theory in all literature during the past decade. I am unaware of any published monographs wholly concerned with Fourth Gospel irony since the 1980s, though some other doctoral theses have addressed aspects of it since then.¹⁷ This research contributes to the understanding of the temporarily unstable nature of some ironies, including those in the Fourth Gospel.

¹⁴ See Chapter Four.

¹⁵ Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

¹⁶ See Chapters Five and Six.

¹⁷ Mooney, *Myth and irony in the New Testament* (UCLA, 1993); Wright, *The Governor and the King: Irony, Hidden Transcripts, and Negotiating Empire in the Fourth Gospel* (Union Presbyterian Seminary, 2014); Bell, *The Midwife of Truth: The Nature of Irony and a Rationale for its Prevalence in the Gospel of John* (PhD, Victoria University, NZ, 2014).

Why ‘Perplexing Irony’ / ‘Perplexing Rhetoric’?

If irony is an incongruent twist in a literary device, why is temporary unstable irony perplexing? And, why also is temporary unstable rhetoric perplexing? In answer, whenever irony or rhetoric is destabilised by the specific, identified unmet desires of the protagonist or reader or by their victimisation, the implied reader connects with the suffering of the protagonist. This becomes an instance of unstable irony. However, this victimisation may not necessarily persist. In the period before any unstable rhetoric or irony is resolved, the characters as well as the implied reader experience anxiety because of the unresolved nature of their adversity. If their suffering ends, the instability resolves, leaving irony that is temporarily unstable, or perplexing. For example, if the reader is temporarily victimised, the result is that the instability is resolved when the victimisation ceases. If this happens, the result is “*perplexing rhetoric*”.

Disparity of Meaning

Part of the disparity in the analysis of ironic stability in the Fourth Gospel is due to differing understandings between scholars concerning the definition and classifications of irony. Gail O’Day has a helpful way of looking at irony: holding two levels of meaning side-by-side (the literal and the symbolic).¹⁸ However, she categorises all Johannine irony as verbal irony, that ignores all of the situational and dramatic ironies in the text.¹⁹ By contrast, Bruce Bell identifies in his recent doctoral thesis the disparity in definitions of irony. He says that, when defining irony,

Scholars have a habit of using the same terms to mean slightly, or occasionally vastly, different things about irony and so the descriptions themselves are not as important as the illustrations provided.²⁰

My definition of irony has more in common with irony’s function within a text than the traditional definition of the comparison of layers of meaning. Hence, I focus on the

¹⁸ O’Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 24.

¹⁹ See O’Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 22.

²⁰ Bell, *The Midwife of Truth: The Nature of Irony and a Rationale for its Prevalence in the Gospel of John*, 36.

practicalities of using the literary approach set out above to find a variety of incongruently twisted literary devices.

Outline of the Chapters of this Thesis

Chapter One deals with the scope and limits of this thesis, issues of provenance and the presuppositions I bring to this research. In Chapter Two, I categorize the various schools of thought and analyse the literature on rhetorical devices the fourth evangelist uses in the Gospel. In Chapter Three I detail the nature of local-covert irony theory. I also examine stable and unstable ironies, and set out the three categories of irony: verbal, situational and dramatic ironies. Within these categories I discover seventeen types. Chapter Four deals with the methodology I adopt for the exegesis. I explain how I use and adapt Kennedy's five steps. The fifth and sixth chapters are my exegesis of the passion narrative. Chapter Five examines John 18:1-19:16a, and Chapter Six examines 19:16b-20:31. In Chapter Seven I analyse perplexing irony, looking at various examples and highlighting the difference between unstable and perplexing ironies. I also explore through the technique of implied commentary²¹, the effect of perplexing irony on the reader and I examine what scholars have written concerning the stability / instability of Fourth Gospel irony. In the final chapter, Chapter Eight, I focus on some further relevant issues concerning Johannine irony, including the impact of ironic stability and instability, intertextuality and authorial intentionality. In the Conclusion I set out five possible purposes of Fourth Gospel irony.

Significance of This Research

This thesis provides several significant features. The most significant feature offered is the analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative (18:1-20:31). The UBS4 Greek text is used as the basis for my translation of the selected passage. The method I use is a hybrid, comprising rhetorical, narrative and my own methodologies.

Of significance also are my identification and provision of explanations for the numerous types of Johannine irony and rhetoric. A significant contribution of this thesis is my argument for and demonstration of examples of persistent ironic instability and

²¹ See Chapter One. Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 30.

temporary ironic instability in the Fourth Gospel. Tables of results detail the frequency, type, literary device and location of each identified example of irony and rhetoric. I offer examples from different families, categories and types of irony, and there is an in-depth discussion of perplexing irony. I propose some purposes of Fourth Gospel irony.

The Fourth Gospel tells a story in which the key protagonist, the divine Son Jesus, is victimised, that forms the central and unstable irony of the narrative. The Fourth Gospel also tells the covert story of the adversity suffered by the Johannine Christian community. This is displayed through the hidden agenda of the Fourth Gospel, in its double-layered drama.²² Nevertheless, the ironic authority demonstrated in this thesis may have offered the Johannine community hope for future resolution to the problems it faced.

²² See Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel (3rd edn)* (Louisville / London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 35-98.

CHAPTER ONE: PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

With such a complex topic as irony in the Johannine passion narrative, it is essential to discuss some of the issues that shape our understanding of it. The issues raised here are important for a background knowledge of the area of research. They provide a framework of the analysis that follows. The topics covered in this chapter include the scope of the research, the provenance of the Fourth Gospel, the assumed presuppositions, and my understanding of the term “the Jews” in the Fourth Gospel.

Scope and Limits of This Research

The portion of text I have selected to analyse is the Johannine passion narrative. The reason for doing so is that this is the passage in the Gospel where irony is closest to the surface.²³ Additionally, it is where Johannine irony is most prolific and sustained.²⁴ Therefore, I limit the focus of this thesis to an analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative, to the specific features of the irony and rhetoric discovered there and to the various classifications, families and types of irony.

More specifically, this research does not set out to examine all examples or aspects of irony, or rhetorical and literary devices in the Fourth Gospel. There will be other examples, aspects, types, families or groupings of Fourth Gospel irony that other scholars may discover or have discovered. The shape of this thesis is delimited in two ways. First, the focus is on my analysis of the Johannine passion narrative (18:1-20:31), and second, the focus is on the nature of Booth’s theoretical framework concerning irony (Boothian irony theory), where they relate to the meaning of irony and its stability, and specific features of the various classifications, families and types of irony.

As indicated in the introduction, Booth argues that irony is either stable or unstable.²⁵ In addition, R. Alan Culpepper and others have applied Boothian irony theory to the analysis of Fourth Gospel irony, implying that all biblical (and hence Fourth Gospel)

²³ Bell, *The Midwife of Truth: The Nature of Irony and a Rationale for its Prevalence in the Gospel of John*, 184.

²⁴ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), 117.

²⁵ See Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 233-235.

irony is stable.²⁶ However, some scholars have identified features of unstable Johannine irony. In addition to their findings, I propose that there are some examples of intended Fourth Gospel irony that are persistently unstable. Further, I propose that there are some examples of unstable Fourth Gospel irony that are only temporarily unstable. This means that, after an initial period of instability, the intended unstable ironies transform and adopt the characteristics of stable ironies.

Throughout the thesis I will be considering the definition of irony at different points. However, here I address some of the issues briefly. Irony is difficult to define because it is a broad topic and diverse in application. To narrow down an accurate, specific and concise definition has proven to be most difficult.²⁷ Scholars demonstrate this by their different ways of defining and understanding irony.²⁸ Again, my definition is that *irony is an incongruent twist in a literary device*.

Ironisation is the process in which a literary or rhetorical device becomes ironic, and ironised literary or rhetorical devices fall into the three families of irony in the Gospel's passion narrative, namely: verbal, situational and dramatic.²⁹ These ironised literary or rhetorical devices make up all of the ironies that are analysed in this thesis. Verbal ironies include: double meaning, metaphor, sarcasm, satire and unanswered question. Concerning the second family, situational irony, the examples of the types of literary or rhetorical devices include: reversal, prolepsis, analepsis, juxtaposition, paradox, and dualism. The third family is that of dramatic literary or rhetorical devices. They include: understatement, overstatement or hyperbole, misunderstanding, parody, double standard

²⁶ Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony," in *Exploring the Gospel of John in honor of D. Moody Smith* (eds. Culpepper and Black; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1996); Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*. Also, Sharp, *Irony and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*. See also; O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*.

²⁷ Douglas Muecke says, "[There is] no brief and simple definition that will include all kinds of irony while exclude all that is not irony." Muecke, *The Compass of Irony* (London: Methuen, 1969), 14.

²⁸ For example, "Irony is a complex oppositional structure in which words or happenings can be interpreted at two different levels, a superficial level and a deep level." Stibbe, *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 27. "Irony is the necessarily indirect and allusive expression of the deconstructability of the formal structure of language that is the model for all formal structures, all of which are in the last analysis structures of representation." Eric Gans (1997), cited in Schneider, "Writing in the Dust: Irony and lynch law in the Gospel of John", *The Legal Studies Forum*, 23 (1999): 34. "Irony ...is a literary-rhetorical device of the implied author by which he reveals what is hidden (reality) behind what is seen (appearance)." Berg, *Irony in the Matthean Passion Narrative* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 1.

²⁹ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*. Verbal (64-98); Situational (99-136); Dramatic (137-147).

and double entendre. However, I do not consider that the literary and rhetorical devices that I have listed in this paragraph are an exhaustive list. This thesis is limited to the rhetorical and literary devices identified above.

With these limitations, my approach will be useful to help identify specifically each occurrence of irony, because the type of irony will be related to and bear the name of the literary or rhetorical device in question. Ironisation changes these literary and rhetorical devices, nevertheless, the original literary or rhetorical devices are still recognisable. Other cumbersome definitions have focussed on the identification and comparison of different layers of irony, or used broad terms, which could apply to more than one literary or rhetorical device.

When a particular instance of irony is identified in the text, I add its rhetorical or literary device name to the analysis. For example, I might identify a situation where it appears that two different truths about the same person or thing come together. In this case, the classification is irony of paradox. Unless otherwise stated, the ironies are all stable. This is because unstable ironies make up less than five per cent of the number of all ironies in the Fourth Gospel.³⁰ Moreover, the new definition and specific classification of all types of ironies is a unique feature of this thesis and will be useful for future classifications.

Unstable irony in this thesis focusses on the issue of victimisation of the protagonist, or where the protagonist has a specific, identified unmet desire. When either situation occurs, the applicable rhetorical device produces unstable irony. If we apply this literary technique to the Fourth Gospel, the protagonist is predominately God or Jesus. Thus, whenever an important character (often God or Jesus) becomes a victim or has a specific, identified and unmet need, the result is unstable irony. Ironic instability is demonstrated by an incongruent twist in the relevant literary device that results in the victimisation of that character.

Another term that will be used throughout this thesis is “rhetoric”, and its adjective, “rhetorical”. These refer to both the ancient and modern literary approaches to the study of literature and oratory. In ancient Greek society, the written and spoken word was

³⁰ I have based this on the statistics of this research as detailed in Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4.

influential and educational strategies focussed on analysing language and how people communicated.³¹ The power of rhetoric was not to be underestimated as it was the means of influencing a vast number of people, of exercising authority, and therefore of gaining control.

Rhetorical criticism is a modern method of textual analysis, which has gained currency over recent years. Its focus is on the literary features of style, implied commentary, texture, and the literary and rhetorical devices found in the document. Rhetorical criticism studies the biblical text in the form in which it is transmitted to the reader today.

In this thesis I also consider literary and rhetorical devices other than those which undergo an incongruent twist. These include non-ironic verbal, situational and dramatic devices, as well as the following: the historic present tense; *inclusio*; chiasmic structures; double drama; a revolving platform; a gap in the story; and the use of withheld information.

Sometimes the fourth evangelist withholds information from readers and this entraps or victimises them. I argue that this is unstable rhetoric, and not irony, because there is *no incongruent twist* in the literary and rhetorical devices. Even though the withholding of information victimises readers, the literary and rhetorical devices do not become irony. Yet, they are unstable because the reader is victimised. In the Gospel, most of these instabilities are temporary. They resolve in the course of the narrative, and so become *perplexing rhetoric*. However, a small proportion of unstable reader entrapment or victimisation persists throughout the Gospel and is never resolved.³²

Authorship, Date, and Origin of the Fourth Gospel

It is important to set out the assumptions of the thesis concerning authorship, date and origin of the Gospel.³³ It states the agreed position of earlier critical approaches to the

³¹ Young, "Rhetoric," in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (eds. Coggins and Houlden; London / Philadelphia: S.C.M. / Trinity Press International, 1990), 598.

³² See Diagram 1 and Appendices 3 and 4.

³³ While not decisive, the inclusion of a discussion of the Fourth Gospel's provenance is important in providing a context for the use of irony in this Gospel. The issues discussed here include: the identity of

Fourth Gospel. Recent scholarship suggests the following summary, which will suffice without further discussion in the thesis.

Concerning the authorship of the Gospel; in John 21:24, there is posthumous internal evidence that the author is the “beloved disciple”. He is introduced to the reader at the last supper (13:23), is present as Jesus was crucified (19:25-27), goes to the empty tomb with Peter (20:3-10), and is on the Sea of Tiberias (Galilee) in a fishing boat with six other disciples (21:1-7), where the author does not name two of those present. Over the centuries, these references have led many to believe that the only plausible author is John the son of Zebedee. Moreover, the title of the Gospel carries his name, and has done so since the Gospel was accepted in the second century.

If we examine external evidence, Irenaeus is the earliest extant writer to name John as the author.³⁴ However, John was a common name, and Irenaeus could have meant a different John (John the elder, John Mark, or someone else named John). It could have been Lazarus, whom the author identified as someone Jesus loved (11:3, 36).³⁵

Jo-Ann Brant and Marianne Thompson observe that modern scholars are less likely to choose one of the twelve as the author.³⁶ Francis Moloney says scholars will continue to have differing opinions over the real author’s identity.³⁷ Alan Culpepper concludes his discussion of the authorship debate by adding,

The issue of authorship, therefore, should now be separated from that of the value or authority of the Gospel. The historical and theological importance of the Gospel can be maintained regardless of one’s view concerning its authorship.³⁸

the Beloved Disciple; the date of writing; and the historical context of the Fourth Gospel. These issues have a bearing on the use of irony identified in this thesis.

³⁴ Irenaeus, “The Evangelists and their Sources,” in *Documents of the Christian Church (2nd ed)* (ed. Bettenson; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), Adversus Haereses, III.I.i; (in Eusebius H.E. V.8): 28.

³⁵ Brown provides a full appraisal of the authorship debate, suggesting possible authors. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), 1: LXXXVII-CII.

³⁶ See Brant, *John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 5; Thompson, *John: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 18.

³⁷ See Moloney, *The Gospel of John* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 8-9.

³⁸ Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 37.

On the basis of ancient and modern evidence, I accept that the real author cannot be known, and that the Gospel was probably a collaborative exercise involving multiple stages of development.³⁹

Recent scholarship dates the Gospel as early as circa 80 CE, and some scholars point to a date ten years after the fall of Jerusalem as the earliest the Gospel could have been written.⁴⁰ The other extremity of date is the end of Hadrian's reign (138 CE).⁴¹ If we accept the traditional view that the Gospel originated in Ephesus, an approximate date for writing may be between 85 and 95 CE.⁴²

Presuppositions

For the purpose of this thesis, I am using a rhetorical critical method of biblical analysis. This methodology will produce practical and identifiable results. A rationale for using literary criticism follows. Today, rhetorical critics are concerned with what lies within the text and in front of it.⁴³ To this end, the rhetorical critic's interest is to see each piece of literature as it is, as a work of art.⁴⁴

Literary Criticism and hence implied commentary distinguishes the real author and reader of the text from their literary counterparts.⁴⁵ As the reader reads the narrative, neither real author nor real reader figures in the story. Rather, the implied author creates

³⁹ For a full description of the probable sequencing of events in the development of the Fourth Gospel, see volume 3 of Von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John (3 vols)* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010). Brown offers a five stage development of the Gospel; see Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*, 1: XXXIV-XL.

⁴⁰ See Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel (3rd edn)*, 155.

⁴¹ Metzger and Ehrman, *The text of the New Testament : its transmission, corruption, and restoration* (New York, N.Y. ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 38-39.

⁴² Marianne M. Thompson offers that the Gospel was 'written or published or known quite early in Ephesus' and suggests 'a date towards the latter part of the first century'. Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 21-22. George R. Beasley-Murray claims that there seems to be consensus that John's Gospel is dated in 'the decade 90-100, and toward its end rather than its beginning'. He says also that 'Ephesus has been traditionally viewed as the place of its composition'. Beasley-Murray, *John* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2000), lxxvii, lxxix.

⁴³ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 31. The purpose of historical-critical methodology in biblical studies over the past two centuries has been to enable an informed exegesis of 'the world behind the text'. Diachronic methodology has enabled scholars to recognise this, so that there was no misunderstanding of the text.

⁴⁴ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 31n. Moloney cites Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture* (Collegeville, MN.: Liturgical Press, 1999).

⁴⁵ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 32.

the narrative and the implied reader reads it and 'knows what has already been read'.⁴⁶ When it comes to the Fourth Gospel, we know that the real author(s) and original recipients have died long ago. Yet, because of its uniqueness and power, vast numbers of readers still read the Gospel. The point is that implied commentary helps us discern more about the real author than other methods of or approaches to biblical criticism.

The real author is the writer of the Gospel, whom the real reader can only encounter through the perceived understanding of the implied author. Yet the real author and real reader are outside the text and the implied author and implied reader are inside the text. The communication between real author and real reader happens through the interplay between the implied author or the narrator, and the implied reader. The implied reader gathers a great deal from the text, even though the real readers today may never know who the original author or who the original recipients of the Fourth Gospel were.⁴⁷ See Diagram 1 below.

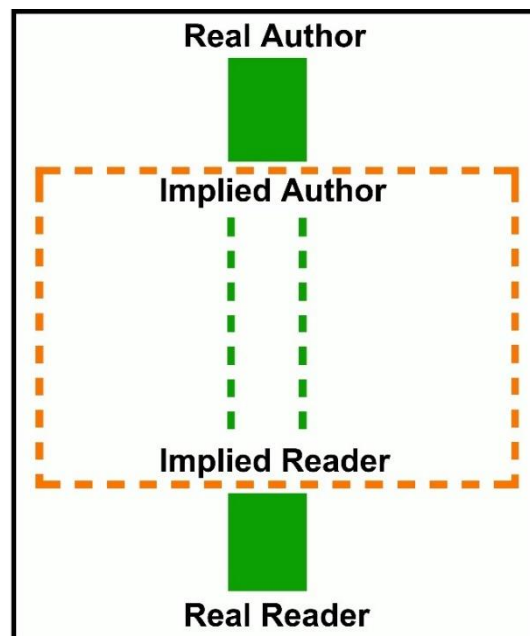


DIAGRAM 1. The Relationship Between Real Author and Real Reader

⁴⁶ Moloney, "Who is 'The Reader' in/of the Fourth Gospel?", *Australian Biblical Review*, 40 (1992): 20.

⁴⁷ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 32.

In Diagram 1, the real author and the real reader are outside the text marked by the broken orange lines. The solid green line from the real author to the text indicates the actual writing and the solid green line from the text to the real reader indicates the actual reading of the text. The implied author and implied reader are imaginary figures used to facilitate the literary process. The lines between the implied author and implied reader are fictive, however, they enable the real reader to connect with the implied author and real author. There will be developments on this diagram in Chapter Three.

My focus in this thesis is a synthesis of three approaches: rhetorical and narrative criticisms and my own adaptations.⁴⁸ Rhetorical and narrative criticisms seek to analyse the process of the communication between real author and real readers. Various factors in the literary shape of the text will affect the outcome for the reader. These factors include: the logical sequence of events in the narrative; the roles that the various characters play; the passing of time; paradoxes, riddles and puzzles that crop up in the narrative that challenge the reader to dig deeper in order to discover an answer; consistency of the author's image and portrait of the various characters; the author's underlying point of view, and of particular interest to this thesis, the incidence, the nature and the effect of stable, unstable and perplexing ironies; as well as the consistency of the relationship between the implied author and the implied reader. Communication between the author and the reader takes place in the narrative. This is because the narrative is the only thing that the implied reader has to comprehend what the implied author intends.

The implied commentary is a term from literary criticism which uses the concepts of narrator, real author, implied author, real reader, and implied reader.⁴⁹ The implied reader is an imaginary person. In reality, there are only real readers. The implied reader is a literary device constructed and shaped by the author. This implied reader is defined as the imaginary audience which can be inferred by the writing itself, which becomes more identifiable within the narrative as it unfolds. By following the insights gained by the implied reader, we can better understand the ebb and flow of the narrative and narrow the conceptual gap between implied reader and ourselves as real readers.

⁴⁸ I see rhetorical and narrative criticisms are both subsets of literary criticism.

⁴⁹ Fish, *Is there a text in this class? : The authority of interpretive communities*.

In addition to the implied reader, there is inside the text an ‘ideal reader’. In many respects, the ideal reader is the same as the implied reader. However, there is a difference. The ideal reader is understood as a reader of the Fourth Gospel who comes to an awareness of the Gospel message. Such an ideal reader is also one who actually takes up the challenge of the narrator and acts on the words that the Johannine Jesus speaks. The result is that an ideal reader becomes a follower of Jesus, and ‘believes into him’. The Fourth Gospel text becomes a living reality for such a person.

The fourth evangelist has a unique way of describing the process of a person ‘coming to faith in Jesus’. Typically, the evangelist does not simply use the dative case (= in Jesus, for example, John 5:38, 46), nor the term ἐπὶ Ἰησοῦς (= on Jesus, for example, Matthew 27:42; Acts 16:31; Romans 4:24), rather he uses εἰς Ἰησοῦς (= into Jesus) for someone who has begun to follow Jesus and believe that he is Messiah. In this thesis I use the term ‘believing into Jesus’.⁵⁰

Moloney focusses on the implied commentary.⁵¹ In this he deals with more recent insights into literary criticism of the Fourth Gospel that have come about since Brown wrote and published his two-volume Anchor Bible Commentary more than fifty years ago.⁵² The original focus, modified by Moloney, in Brown’s posthumous introduction to his commentary was to focus on the text as we now have it, rather than how it came about. This approach recognises the ‘strong narrative unity’ across the Fourth Gospel text.⁵³ Moloney cautions,

In assessing that narrative unity, however, the world behind the text must never be lost from view, but narrative critics concentrate upon the world in the text, attempting to show how the story has been designed and told in order to influence the world in front of the text.⁵⁴

In this sentence, Moloney creates a picture in our minds of the text of the Fourth Gospel as we have it, the world behind it, the world within it and the world in front of it. This

⁵⁰ I use this jarring translation to highlight the importance of the relationship between the believer and the divine Son as portrayed by the fourth evangelist. The traditional translation of “believing in Jesus” is too bland, εἰς is equally jarring in Greek. Believing *into* Jesus implies a shift in perspective and allegiance using a special preposition to evoke a relational and spiritual reconfiguration of identity.

⁵¹ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*.

⁵² This book is a revamp of Raymond E. Brown’s masterly introduction of the Fourth Gospel, that extended over 130 pages of volume one of his Anchor Bible commentary on the Fourth Gospel.

⁵³ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 31.

⁵⁴ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 31.

thesis will attempt to explore briefly what Moloney means by these observations, and I offer an assessment of his insights, bearing in mind the fourth evangelist's use of irony.

Another presupposition is that the Gospel has two long passages of sustained irony.⁵⁵ In addition to the passion narrative (John 18-20) there is also the passage of the healing of the man born blind (John 9). Both are significant for this thesis for different reasons. John 9 is significant because it introduces and highlights the hidden layer of drama concerning the conflict between the Judean authorities and those with a Jewish heritage in the Johannine community.⁵⁶ However, a full analysis of this is outside the scope of this thesis. The passion narrative is significant because of its high frequency of a variety of ironic types. This is the focus of my analysis in Chapters Five and Six.

The “Jews” in the Fourth Gospel

This section prepares the way for reading and analysing the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. The fourth evangelist frequently uses the term “the Jews” which is sometimes ambiguous. I offer this explanation to understand what the evangelist means when referring to “the Jews” in the narrative and in the Gospel as a whole.

In the twenty-one chapters of the Fourth Gospel, the author uses *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι* (“the Jews”) on seventy occasions. In six places in the Gospel's passion narrative (18:31, 36; 19:3, 7, 12, 14) we find the term “*hoi Ioudaioi*”. With the use of these words throughout the Gospel, the meaning as to who constitutes this group of people is contingent upon the context. As we will discover, the reader's understanding of this term is critical to an informed appreciation of the Gospel and to understanding the rhetoric of the Gospel.

There is a problem for the implied reader because the term has different meanings in different contexts, and even a hidden agenda: the fourth evangelist uses “*hoi Ioudaioi*” as a symbol for the members of the Jewish synagogue in the last quarter of the first century CE (see Chapter Eight).⁵⁷ The term is thus the subject of interpretive controversy. Some twentieth century commentators narrowly understood the Gospel to

⁵⁵ Paul Duke identifies the Fourth Gospel passion narrative as a passage of sustained irony. Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 126-127.

⁵⁶ See my comments concerning this double layered drama in Chapter Eight and the Conclusion.

⁵⁷ See Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel (3rd edn)*, 35-98.

be anti-Semitic, blaming the *Ioudaioi* for murdering Jesus.⁵⁸ Another extreme view is that the Gospel should be left aside because of its strong anti-Semitism.⁵⁹

Some passages in the Gospel are scathing towards the *Ioudaioi* concerning their abusive treatment of Jesus. The negative references concerning the *Ioudaioi* include the following list.⁶⁰ (i) Those who represent a world that disbelieves (3:19-20; 7:7; 15:18-19; 16:8; 17:14-15). (ii) Those who oppose Jesus (5:16, 18; 7:1, 11, 13; 8:48, 52, 57, 59; 9:18, 22; 10:31, 33; 11:8; 18:31, 36; 19:7, 12, 14-15, 38; 20:19).⁶¹ (iii) Those who try to hurt or kill Jesus (5:18; 7:1, 19-20, 25; 8:37, 40, 59; 10:31-33; 11:8, 53). And (iv) those who try to throw those who believe into Jesus out of the synagogue (9:22, 34; 12:42; 16:2).⁶² The fourth evangelist opposes these people because they undermine Jesus' claims (7:10-13, 45-52), they assert that he blasphemes God (5:16-18; 19:7) and they consistently clash with Jesus and his followers.⁶³

On the other hand, we find many positives in the Fourth Gospel concerning the *Ioudaioi*. Some of these positives include the following list.⁶⁴ (i) Jesus is 'Jewish' (4:9), and he owns his Jewish heritage (4:22).⁶⁵ (ii) All who follow Jesus in the Gospel (except the Samaritans and the official's household in John 4) are *Ioudaioi* (1:37, 40, 43; 2:11, 22-23; 6:69; 7:31; 8:30-31; 9:35-38; 10:42; 11:27, 45; 12:11, 42; 13:36-37; 16:30; 18:15; 20:8, 27-29; 21:19-20, 22).⁶⁶ (iii) Some of the *Ioudaioi* believe into Jesus

⁵⁸ Moloney says, "The use and abuse of the Fourth Gospel's description and condemnation of 'hoi *Ioudaioi*' over the centuries are a matter of shame for generations of Christians". Moloney, "The Jews in the Fourth Gospel: Another Perspective", *Pacifica*, 15 (Feb 2002): 16-17.

⁵⁹ See Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 9.

⁶⁰ I am indebted to Paul Anderson for his input concerning all the items in this list. I have added to his references to the Fourth Gospel. Anderson, "Fourth Gospel: A Pro-Jewish Gospel" (paper presented at John and Judaism Conference. Mercer University, Atlanta, 20 November, 2015).

⁶¹ Moloney says, "The conflicts between Jesus and 'the Jews' [sic] are more the reflection of a Christological debate at the end of the first century than a record of encounters between Jesus and his fellow Israelites in the thirties of that century. *They do not accurately report the experience of the historical Jesus.*" Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 10. (His emphasis).

⁶² Moloney argues that the clash which brought about the relationship breakdown between *hoi Ioudaioi* and Christians of the Johannine community could have been a "very local affair". However, due to the internal and external evidence of the New Testament, I am opting for a more widespread separation between Church and Synagogue which is reflected in the Birkat ha-minim (curse on the deviators), one of the eighteen synagogue benedictions, circa 85 CE. See Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 11.

⁶³ See Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 10.

⁶⁴ I am indebted to Paul Anderson for his input concerning these items: (ii), (v), (vi), (vii), (viii), (ix), (x), (xi), and (xii). Further, I have added to his references to the Gospel. Anderson, "Fourth Gospel: A Pro-Jewish Gospel", Mercer University, Atlanta, 20 November, 2015.

⁶⁵ In 4:22, Jesus owns his Jewish heritage by saying to the Samaritan woman, 'we worship what we know'. See Moloney, "The Jews in the Fourth Gospel: Another Perspective", 30-31.

⁶⁶ See Moloney, "The Jews in the Fourth Gospel: Another Perspective", 32.

(2:23; 7:31; 8:30-31; 10:42; 11:45; 12:11, 42). (iv) John the Baptist, who is Jewish, bears witness to Jesus (1:6-9, 15, 19-36; 3:25-30; 5:31-36; 10:41). In the Gospel, John the Baptist is one of a number of Jewish significant others (apart from the disciples) including, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Lazarus, Mary, Martha, the unnamed man born blind, and others.⁶⁷ (v) ‘Salvation’ is a Jewish concept (4:22). Moreover, salvation ‘comes from the *Ioudaioi*’.⁶⁸ (vi) Jewish customs, feasts and festivals are observed by Jesus, and they are described and explained by the narrator (2:6, 13-14; 4:9; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2; 11:55; 18:28; 19:14, 31, 40, 42). (vii) The author of the Gospel is Jewish (21:24). (viii) Jesus fulfils the Old Testament (Jewish) Scriptures (2:21; 5:39; 7:38, 42; 10:34-35; 13:18; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37; 20:9). (ix) The narrator portrays the Johannine Jesus as ‘King of the *Ioudaioi*’ (1:49; 6:15; 12:13-15; 18:33-37, 39; 19:2-5; 12-15, 19-21). (x) Jesus embodies the concept of the ‘ideal Israel’ by his deeds and words (bread of life 6:35; light of the world 8:12; good shepherd (10:11); and true vine (15:1). (xi) The Johannine Jesus (or narrator) uses Jewish titles for himself (1:51; 3:13-14, 18; 5:25, 27; 6:27, 35, 41, 48, 51, 53, 62; 7:28, 29, 33, 34, 36; 8:12, 14, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 58; 9:5, 35; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:4, 25; 12:23, 34; 13:13, 19, 31; 14:6; 15:1, 5; 18:5, 6, 8; 19:21). (xii), the narrator portrays the Johannine Jesus as the prototypical Messiah of Judaism (1:41; 4:25-26, 29; 7:26-27, 31, 41-42; 9:22; 10:24-30; 11:27; 12:34; 17:3; 20:31). And (xiii) the fourth evangelist sometimes uses synonyms for “*hoi Ioudaioi*”, with words like “*Ἰσραήλ* (Israel)’ (1:31, 49; 3:10; 12:13), “*Ἰσραηλίτης* (Israelite)’ (1:47), ‘*ὁ λαός*’ (the people), (8:2; 11:50; 18:14); ‘*τὸ ἔθνος*’ (the nation), (11:48, 50, 51, 52).⁶⁹

In the first century CE, the people of Israel preferred to use ‘Israelites’ when referring to themselves (1:47), whereas “the Jews” is a generic term that Gentiles would have used for them.⁷⁰ The term “Judeans” may be a more accurate term to describe where those who were hostile to Jesus came from, however, it is not appropriate. There are two reasons for this. First, not all Judeans were hostile towards Jesus, and some even followed him (11:45). Second, the term “*hoi Ioudaioi*” appears to be deliberately ambiguous, so a good translation should be broad enough to convey this ambiguity.

⁶⁷ See Moloney, "The Jews in the Fourth Gospel: Another Perspective", 30.

⁶⁸ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John (3 vols)* (London: Burns & Oates, 1982), 1: 436.

⁶⁹ See Moloney, "The Jews in the Fourth Gospel: Another Perspective", 18-29.

⁷⁰ See Brant, *John*, 149.

Despite the lack of consensus among scholars about the meaning of “*hoi Ioudaioi*”, I concur with Brant. She claims that the term “seems to signify different Jewish constituencies rather than simply adherents of Judaism”.⁷¹

All of the negative references to the *Ioudaioi* are located in Judea. Yet, if the dispute the Johannine Jesus has with the *Ioudaioi* is a polemic against the synagogue’s rejection of the Johannine community, then the whole issue becomes ironic.⁷² This could mean that every negative reference to “*hoi Ioudaioi*” is a reminder to the reader of the evangelist’s hidden agenda, and could therefore be an example of the irony of double meaning.

When addressing this issue it is best to begin with the positives of the Jewishness of the Fourth Gospel. It is obviously a profoundly pro-Jewish book.⁷³ The negative references in the Gospel to “*hoi Ioudaioi*” have nothing in common with Israel (nationally, politically or religiously). Rather, as Moloney says, “It has *everything* to do with the definitive rejection of Jesus as the revelation of God”.⁷⁴

Sheridan therefore posits a way forward in the debate arguing for Dynamic Equivalence in translation. She suggests that we use the anglicised form of *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι*, (*hoi Ioudaioi*), essentially leaving the term untranslated.⁷⁵ I have followed her recommendation in this thesis, transliterating *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι* as *hoi Ioudaioi*.

Summary

The scope and limits of the thesis have provided clear boundaries within which the research can proceed. The provenance of the Gospel concerns issues of authorship, date and place of publication. They locate the Gospel within a community of faith which had a historical time and place at the close of the first century. The presuppositions set out above are uncontroversial, but even so they may still affect some of the results of the research. The discussion concerning the Gospel’s use of “*hoi Ioudaioi*” provides

⁷¹ Brant, *John*, 46.

⁷² In the underlying drama, the Johannine Community can be the protagonist. When the community becomes a victim with an incongruent twist, irony results.

⁷³ Adele Reinhartz says, “John is the most pro-Jewish book in the New Testament”. Reinhartz, “Panel Discussion” (paper presented at John and Judaism Conference, Mercer University, Atlanta, 2015).

⁷⁴ Moloney, “The Jews in the Fourth Gospel: Another Perspective”, 33. (His emphasis).

⁷⁵ Sheridan, “Issues in the Translation of *hoi Ioudaioi* in the Fourth Gospel”, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 132 (2013): 671-195.

understanding of the likely issues facing the Johannine community and readers of the Gospel.

The next chapter has two sections. First, I will review the literature on irony as a literary device, and secondly, the focus will be on irony used as a literary device in the Fourth Gospel.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW OF (i) IRONY THEORY AND (ii) FOURTH GOSPEL IRONY

(i) LITERATURE REVIEW OF IRONY THEORY

Introduction

In the previous chapter I presented the presuppositions upon which the following research will be based.

This chapter reviews the literature that addresses irony in two main sections. The first section deals with the literature that focusses on irony theory, its use and its analysis. Some ancient Greek philosophers and playwrights wrote about irony or demonstrated it in what they wrote. They were the first in the Western philosophical stream to do so. I also refer to biblical authors and commentators who write using covert irony or who write about the biblical authors who use irony. Some of these may have even predated the Greek philosophers and playwrights. In the second section, I turn to the Fourth Gospel. In this second section I review those who write about the literary and rhetorical devices that become irony in the Fourth Gospel text. These resources provide the breadth and scope of irony theory for this thesis.

Irony Theory

In this section I provide an overview of the two main streams of scholarship dealing with irony theory that influence this research. They are: (a) those whose work is a primary source and who use irony in what they have written, and (b) those whose work is a secondary source as they theorise about it. The primary source material to be reviewed includes: (i) the ironies in the ancient Greek plays; (ii) the ironic stories of the Hebrew people found in the Old Testament narratives; (iii) the rhetorical devices and ironies in the Fourth Gospel; and (iv) the ironies in pre-modern, modern and post-modern literature. In this chapter I examine all four. I present further examples from premodern, modern and post-modern literature in Chapter Seven, and I offer my analysis of sustained irony from the Fourth Gospel in Chapters Five and Six.

The secondary sources are of equal interest as they identify irony, provide insights into the dynamics and literary nuances regarding irony and rhetoric, and provide an interpretation which enables the reader to appreciate the literature more fully. They

include: (i) the ancient Greek philosophers; (ii) the pre-modern irony theorists; (iii) the modern irony theorists; (iv) the post-modern theorists; (v) those who comment on biblical irony and (vi) those who comment on Fourth Gospel literary and rhetorical devices, including irony. I begin this review by commenting on some ancient primary sources, beginning with the dramas and narratives of the ancient Greek world.

The writers chosen for this first section are mostly ancient Greek philosophers and playwrights. They have been specifically selected as they either describe the use of irony or provide examples of it. They demonstrate how irony has changed in meaning, usage and acceptance. Initially irony was used in a seemingly underhand way, however, through refinement it became a respectable and honourable literary device.

Aristotle: 384-322 BCE

Aristotle described several types of irony. *Μίμησις* (or imitation) was a description of all the fine arts because the fine arts contrast what was real, and whatever was made to look real. The fine arts imitate real action and life, and are therefore symbolic and / or ironic. Poetry and drama imitate action. However, for Aristotle, the pinnacle of imitation was the drama of tragedy.⁷⁶

In Aristotle, the irony of reversal in tragedy was *περιπέτεια*. It was demonstrated when the hero/heroine had a lapse, a moral slip or an error of judgment when they attempted to live by heroic virtues. While tragedy dramatized the story of the hero leading up to the lapse, it also dramatized the destruction of the hero by the same process.⁷⁷

Περιπέτεια was the tragic irony that happened when the result of an action was the reverse of what was expected. The hero's fortunes were altered in a surprising disappointment.

There were also the ironies demonstrated by *εἰρωνεία* (understatement) and *ὑπερβολή* (overstatement or hyperbole).⁷⁸ The mock-modest person claimed to be a lesser person than he or she really was, while the boastful one claimed to be greater than he or she

⁷⁶ Aristotle, "Poetics," in *Introduction to Aristotle, 2nd edn* (ed. McKeon; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), (VI; 1450a: 14-17) 678.

⁷⁷ Aristotle, "Poetics", (XI; 1452a:21-1452b:13) 683f.

⁷⁸ It is noteworthy that Socrates/Plato used *εἰρωνεία* as 'pretended ignorance', however, Aristotle used it to imply 'ironic understatement'.

really was. Both εἰρωνεία and ὑπερβολή had a similar outcome as both varied from reality, and those who built their characters on these literary devices did not give a true account of themselves.⁷⁹

Aristotle's value for the thesis is that he explains some of the types of irony we find in the Fourth Gospel, namely, reversal, understatement and hyperbole. Furthermore, he addresses the reversal of fortune for the protagonist who is victimised, which indicates unstable irony.

Ancient Greek Playwrights & Their Use of Irony

In this section I follow Claire Colebrook's lead by exploring what the ancient Greek philosophers and playwrights wrote about irony.⁸⁰ I begin with Socrates' contribution to irony as he is recognised as 'the "first" or "original" practitioner of irony'.⁸¹ In addition, there are three ancient Greek tragedian playwrights whose works are extant: Aeschylus (525-456 BCE), Sophocles (496-406 BCE) and Euripides (484-407 BCE). Within the scope of this thesis, I will give attention to only one of these playwrights, namely Sophocles.

Socrates: 470-399 BCE and Plato: 427-347 BCE

The earliest recorded occurrence of irony in the Greek plays dates back to the Greek philosopher Socrates, and his student Plato. It is sometimes difficult to differentiate between Socrates and Plato as Socrates is the character in Plato's dramas.⁸² It was Socrates who devised a method of dialectic or inductive teaching later called "Socratic method".⁸³ In several of Plato's plays, Socrates is the εἰρόν (the ironist) who had the reputation for "foxiness".⁸⁴ He would respectfully ask someone a question about the meaning of a virtue after it had come up in conversation. For example, in Plato's drama,

⁷⁹ Aristotle, "Ethics", (IV; 1126b:10-1127a:13) 429-430.

⁸⁰ Colebrook begins her study of irony by 'looking back to Socrates and ancient Greek literature'. Colebrook, *Irony: the critical idiom* (London: Routledge, 2004), 1, 22-41.

⁸¹ Grimwood, *Irony, Misogyny and Interpretation: Ambiguous Authority in Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2012), 140.

⁸² Plato was Socrates' pupil. Either Xenophon or Plato wrote all we have of what Socrates said. In Plato's earlier works Socrates seems to come through more clearly. Much of Plato's writing portrays Socrates plying his Socratic method for the education of his students.

⁸³ Knox, "Irony," in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: studies of selected pivotal ideas* (ed. Weiner; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 627.

⁸⁴ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 138-139. Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1961), 3.

Hippias Major, Socrates asks Hippias, a fellow orator, “But then what are the things about which they like to listen to you and which they applaud? Tell me yourself, for I cannot discover them”.⁸⁵

Socrates appeared to be genuinely curious and interested.⁸⁶ Most probably though, the questions he posed were motivated by his passion to discover truth. Plato’s works demonstrate that the answers his character Socrates received were never satisfactory, as each ἀλαζών (respondent, braggart), had never thought through the issues Socrates raised. This is true of Hippias who brought up the issue of “the beautiful”, that Socrates asked him to define. The drama is concentrated around Hippias’ impossible task. Socrates says,

...if the appropriate makes him appear more beautiful than he is, the appropriate would be a sort of deceit in respect to the beautiful, and would not be that which we are looking for, would it Hippias? For we were rather looking for that by which all beautiful things are beautiful ...[because you said] ...things appear more beautiful than they are.⁸⁷

Socrates’ perceived genuineness invariably trapped hapless interlocutors, and their glib answers revealed naïveté and foolishness.⁸⁸ The proceedings provided amusement for the audience.

Karl Jaspers has suggested that Plato had three levels of irony.⁸⁹ The first level was obvious irony where Socrates led his opponent along a false track by deception. In the second level, Socrates sought to “provoke the knowledge of nonknowledge”.⁹⁰ At the third and highest level, Plato created an in-between atmosphere where everything was ambiguous.⁹¹

Ironically, Socrates dismantled the wisdom of the wise through his own claim of a lack of wisdom. For example, in the drama *Gorgias*, Plato’s Socrates says to Gorgias, an accomplished orator,

⁸⁵ Plato, *Hippias Major* (Elpenor; Jowett, Benjamin (Tr.), <http://www.ellopos.net/elpenor/greek-texts/ancient-greece/plato/plato-hippias-major.asp>, 2016), 8.

⁸⁶ Socrates characterised his ignorance as εἰρωνεία (pretence).

⁸⁷ Plato, *Hippias Major*, 21.

⁸⁸ Guthrie, *Socrates* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 122.

⁸⁹ Jaspers, *The Great Philosophers* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), 26-28.

⁹⁰ Jaspers, *The Great Philosophers*, 27-28.

⁹¹ Jaspers, *The Great Philosophers*, 28.

And what is my sort? you will ask. I am one of those who are very willing to be refuted if I say anything which is not true, and very willing to refute any one else who says what is not true, and quite as ready to be refuted as to refute; for I hold that this is the greater gain of the two...⁹²

Socrates uses knowledge that is widely accepted and undisputed to form his persuasive arguments (in this instance, he asks Gorgias of his knowledge of rhetoric. Gorgias has vast experience of rhetoric, however, he has difficulty in defining it. Socrates exposes Gorgias' understanding as hopelessly inadequate. As Colebrook says,

By demanding a definition from those who presented themselves as masters of wisdom, Socrates showed how some terms were less self-evident and definitive than everyday meaning would suggest.⁹³

Often the ensuing debate would end in stalemate or withdrawal from the discussion.⁹⁴ The strength of the irony was that Plato's Socrates appeared to be ignorant and naïve, however, in reality, the respondent demonstrated ignorance and naïveté. It could even be argued that Plato has Socrates relishing the opportunity to demonstrate the ignorance of the respondent.⁹⁵ However, Guthrie suggests that Socrates never intended to humiliate his opponents publicly.⁹⁶ Rather, Socrates' aim was to discover truth. Copleston adds that his purpose was not just to educate his students, however, it was to improve their behaviour.⁹⁷

Socratic irony is helpful for this research because of its ability to discern truth. What matters to Socrates is his desire to discover the truth and to teach others the importance of it. In addition to this purpose of eliciting truth in a complex situation, Plato's Socrates also demonstrates the necessity of the spoken (or written) word to make irony happen.

I offer a brief outline of Plato's *Apology* here. This is because Socrates, as protagonist, becomes the victim, thus demonstrating unstable irony in portraying the ironic

⁹² Plato, *Gorgias* (Project Gutenberg; Jowett, Benjamin (Tr.), http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1672/1672-h/1672-h.htm#link2H_4_0002, 2008), np.

⁹³ Colebrook, *Irony: the critical idiom*, 2. Colebrook, *Irony: the critical idiom*, 2.

⁹⁴ Plato's early dialogues (those Socratic in style, including *Lysis*) generally conclude without having achieved an agreed result.

⁹⁵ Plato, *Lysis* (Pennsylvania State University; Jowett, Benjamin (Tr.); http://books.ebooklibrary.org/members/penn_state_collection/psuecs/lysis.pdf, 1998), St.II: 213.

⁹⁶ This is demonstrated in that Socrates sometimes took the blame for failing to achieve a satisfactory outcome through dialectic. See Guthrie, *Socrates*, 122.

⁹⁷ Copleston, *The History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome (vol 1)* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1956), 107-108.

ambiguity of virtue. In his trial defence, it is revealed that his desire for truth had brought about his conviction and death.⁹⁸ In this play of tragic genre, Socrates' noble actions lead to his victimisation and death. Socrates is the victimised protagonist. In Chapter Three, where irony theory is developed, I explain that unstable irony results whenever a protagonist becomes a victim. Therefore, the rhetoric demonstrated is unstable paradoxical irony.

Sophocles: circa 496-406 BCE

It is also valuable to consider Sophocles' use of dramatic irony. In one of his best-known works, *Oedipus Rex*, the plot is full of various types of irony. Oedipus becomes king after supposedly committing regicide.⁹⁹ He vowed revenge, only to discover from a blind seer that he himself was the perpetrator. Oedipus had been oblivious to his own world at the beginning of the drama. The blind seer informs Oedipus that he had murdered his own father, King Laius. Oedipus' self-awareness grows throughout the drama. The tragic drama demonstrates both stable and unstable ironies.

The value of *Oedipus Rex* for this thesis is that it provides us with another example of a victimised protagonist, demonstrating unstable irony. The end of the tragedy shows the audience an unresolved paradoxical irony through Oedipus' self-destruction.

These ancient Greek playwrights may have contributed indirectly to the fourth evangelist's understanding and use of irony. They provided community awareness about how irony was understood, and gave writers the understanding of what effect irony would have on readers and audience.

Premodern Approach to Irony

We move from the ancient Greek playwrights to a nineteenth century philosopher and theologian who analysed ancient Greek philosophy, focussing on irony.

Pursuing his passion, Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), published his book in 1841, *The Concept of Irony with Constant Reference to Socrates*. In it he explained how difficult it was to reconstruct Socrates' existence, because his contemporaries could not grasp what

⁹⁸ See Plato, *Apology* (Project Gutenberg; Jowett, Benjamin (Tr.); <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1656/1656-h/1656-h.htm>, 2008), Act 2: XXVIII: 38.

⁹⁹ Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* (Tr. Murray, Gilbert; Project Gutenberg; <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/27673/27673-h/27673-h.htm>, 2008).

he was speaking about.¹⁰⁰ “Irony is a negative concept”, he says, and moreover, Socrates’ existence was an irony in itself.¹⁰¹ Yet, after exploring the depths of Socratic irony, Kierkegaard concluded that irony has finiteness, truth, reality, “and thereby imparted stability, character and consistency”.¹⁰² He began his thesis with the unstable irony of trying to grasp Socratic thought (unknowable) and ended with the stable irony of practical and actual living.¹⁰³

Kierkegaard often wrote ironically. For example,

You Spirit of Holiness, you live in our unholiness. You Spirit of Wisdom, you live in our unwisdom. You Spirit of Truth, you live in our untruth. Oh, please stay there! You have every right to go looking for a more desirable address, but you do not do so. After all, it would be a futile search! You, who are creating and regenerating and making your own house, oh, keep on living here so that some day you may be pleased with the house you are making in my unworthy heart.¹⁰⁴

The paradoxical irony of God choosing to make his dwelling in unworthy human hearts is the theme of this prayer to the Holy Spirit. Kierkegaard’s relationship with God, shaped by dialectical thought can be expressed through irony. His research is valuable for this thesis as it connects particularly with the foundational irony of reversal found in the Fourth Gospel. See Chapters Five and Six for a detailed explanation.

Old Testament Irony: A Precedent for Fourth Gospel Irony

The narrative genre of the Old Testament is a fertile ground to discover instances of irony that may predate the ancient Greek philosophers who discussed irony. Even a date as late as the end of the first temple period predates Socrates by a hundred years. The irony of the Old Testament is always covert, never defined, and usually either situational or dramatic. Edwin M. Good’s book *Irony in the Old Testament*, published over fifty years ago, is still useful in highlighting Old Testament irony.¹⁰⁵ Also, more recently, Carolyn J. Sharp has published a monograph exegeting the Hebrew text and

¹⁰⁰ See Kierkegaard, *The concept of irony, with constant reference to Socrates* (trans. Capel; London: Collins, 1966), 50.

¹⁰¹ Kierkegaard, *The concept of irony, with constant reference to Socrates*, 50.

¹⁰² Kierkegaard, *The concept of irony, with constant reference to Socrates*, 338-339.

¹⁰³ See my critique of Wayne Booth’s analysis of “stable irony” and “unstable irony” under the heading ‘Modern Irony Theorists’.

¹⁰⁴ Hong, *Forgiveness is a Work as Well as a Grace* (Philadelphia: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 58. Howard and Edna Hong translated thousands of Kierkegaard’s articles from Danish / Norwegian into English.

¹⁰⁵ Good, *Irony in the Old Testament* (London: SPCK, 1965).

analysing the irony she has discovered.¹⁰⁶ Neither Good nor Sharp are particular about identifying the victimised protagonists of Old Testament tragic ironies.¹⁰⁷ However, they both explain some of the key ironic narratives for this thesis.¹⁰⁸

Old Testament Unstable Irony

As well as the most common forms of stable irony, there are examples of unresolved irony in the biblical narrative. The best known is the story of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 32-34. Jacob wrestled with God at Jabbok (32:23-33), and his hip was dislocated. All his life, Jacob has been the ‘trickster’. However, now at Jabbok there is an opportunity for change. Jacob had fought with divine figure all night, and at day break he demanded a blessing (32:25-26). God gave him a new name, Israel (32:28), as well as a permanent limp as a constant painful reminder that God is in control (32:31-32). As protagonist, Jacob is the victim, demonstrating persistently unstable irony of paradox.

Jacob leaves Jabbok to meet his estranged twin brother, Esau (33:1-4), whose birthright he had usurped (25:31-34). Traditionally, preachers have used Jacob’s experience with God at Jabbok as a sign of divine transformation. However, Peter Lockwood points out that despite Jacob’s persistent attempts,

...desperately hoping to secure Esau’s favour ... it is not forthcoming. ...The more Esau resists, the more irritated Jacob becomes. ...This reading is totally opposed to the opinion that by offering Esau his blessing, Jacob is acknowledging his wrongdoing and seeking amends. That is too simplistic.¹⁰⁹

Jacob, the one who received the blessing from their father, Isaac, brags to Esau, the one who should have received it. Jacob says, “I have everything” (Genesis 33:11).

However, he did not have what he came for, namely, reconciliation with Esau, his brother. Little wonder that the unstable irony of double entendre remains unresolved.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Sharp, *Irony and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible*.

¹⁰⁷ Sharp refers to an extensive list of narratives in the Old Testament. Sharp, *Irony and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible*, 349-356. Good explores six main ironic themes: Jonah, King Saul, Genesis narratives, Isaiah, Qoheleth and Job. Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 39-240.

¹⁰⁸ My research picks up on the Old Testament narratives of Jacob and Esau, Joseph, Jonah, and Job.

¹⁰⁹ Lockwood, *Guile and Grace* (Doctor of Theology, Luther Seminary, 1991) 218.

¹¹⁰ A double entendre is where a character speaks a double meaning while unaware of it.

Perplexing Irony in the Old Testament

There are some types of irony that share the characteristics of unstable irony for a period; however, they are later resolved in the discourse or narrative. As in stable irony, these are usually covert, however, they are not restricted to this form.¹¹¹ To date in literary studies no one has noticed an incidence of temporary instability of irony in Ancient Greek dramas or philosophy.¹¹²

However, there are examples of this temporary unstable irony (perplexing irony) in the narratives of Genesis, Job and Jonah in the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament. These may predate the Hellenistic philosophers. In ancient narratives in the genre of tragedy, we may discover that protagonists are ironised. When this happens, unstable irony occurs, and there can be the possibility that these tragedies become transformed. If transformation takes place, the instability of the irony presented in these tragedies becomes stable. *This phenomenon of perplexing irony is always a possibility when considering a divine drama.*

The Old Testament Joseph narrative (Genesis 37-45) provides us with an early example of temporary unstable irony involving a victimised protagonist. As a young man, Joseph infuriated his brothers by recounting dreams he had experienced. The dreams were of his brothers bowing down to worship him (Gen 37:2-11). The dreams (and Joseph's interpretation of them) affirmed his exaltation, but also caused his degradation as his brothers sold him into slavery (Gen 37:25-28). After some years in Egypt, and at least two in prison (39:20; 40:1, 23; 41:1), as a prisoner, Joseph is freed and reunites his family (46:5-7).¹¹³ Joseph's degradation also affected his promotion in Egypt. So, the effect of Joseph's initial dreams brought about his degradation as well as his promotion.

¹¹¹ See Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 235-238.

¹¹² There are three possible exceptions. The first is demonstrated by the fickleness of the gods who may unexpectedly show mercy instead of vengeance. Ironically, in Euripides, Apollo protects his mother, Leto, by killing Python. Apollo is the god who can heal, yet at the same time he can bring sickness and deadly disease. In Homer's *Illiad*, Apollo brings physical healing under the direction of the gods, however, also creates disease, pain and death using his bow and arrows. The second example is in the story of the god Dionysus, who is portrayed as a slaughtered bull-calf, then eaten by the Titans. In later mythic episodes he is alive. However, the whole idea of a mortal god, or even a god who morphs into an animal is incompatible with Greek mythology. See Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 64-65. A third example is the Egyptian mythological god, Osiris, who comes back to life to reproduce. Plumley, "The Religion of Ancient Egypt," in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient Civilizations* (ed. Cotterell; Leicester: The Rainbird Publishing Group, 1980), 69.

¹¹³ In biblical narratives, this can result from encountering Yahweh the God of Israel.

(This is perplexing ironic reversal). This demonstrates unstable irony becoming stable and is an example of what I call *perplexing irony*. Joseph, the protagonist, acknowledged that God had initiated his family reunion. He was victimised by his brothers, however, later he reunited with his family, resolving the unstable irony.

An investigation of this perplexing irony in this biblical narrative reveals that the irony is predominately resolved. Joseph acknowledged that his God had been in control all along and had sovereignly brought about the reunion of his family. This was due to Joseph, the person entrapped by the irony, dealing with the tragedy and experiencing the workings of God.

In the book of Job, a tragedy unfolds in which Job, a wealthy man (1:2-4), loses all his treasures: family, health, land, and possessions (1:13-19). His three well-meaning, yet naïve friends stay with him (Job 2:11-13), however they offer useless advice (chapters 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 20, 22, 25). The only thing Job has left is his relationship with his God. He continues to cling to his faith in God, even though he appears to have been abandoned by God. His wife tells Job to curse God (2:9), and his friends mock his unyielding allegiance to God. They treat him patronisingly, providing Job with simplistic answers to life's incongruent perplexities. The irony is paradoxical as Job rejects their taunts and endures all the pain. God, who initially appeared to abandon Job, now restores everything he lost (Job 42:10-16).

The covert instabilities of irony found in the narrative of Job's tragedy are changed. They were operating in and through the drama for an extended, yet limited period. The demonstrated instabilities were real for Job, but not infinite, even though the tragedy of Job's experience made it appear to be so. Their persistence over a period caused perplexity for Job, his friends and the reader.

The story of Jonah is another example of temporary unstable irony. As the protagonist he was called by his God to proclaim judgment to Nineveh (1:2). He ran in the opposite direction, boarded a ship and left (1:3). A violent storm arose (1:4). Jonah identifies himself as the problem, and is thrown overboard by the crew (1:10-15). A huge fish swallows him (1:17). He is inside the fish for three days (1:17), during that time he cries out to his God (2:1-2). He is spewed out on dry land (2:10). When God's call comes a second time he decides to obey it (3:1-3). He goes and preaches God's message to

Nineveh (3:4). The city repents (3:5-9). Jonah was angry. He retreats and sulks (4:1) because his God had shown mercy after he, (Jonah) had preached judgment (4:2-3). It was a surprising result that the situation was reversed, demonstrating perplexing irony of reversal.

Through Jonah's disobedience, he brings himself under victimisation. These incidences in the narrative demonstrate the presence of ironic instability: when he is thrown overboard, when he is swallowed by an enormous fish, and when Nineveh repents.

However, finally, the resolution of the instabilities in the Joseph, Job and Jonah narratives mean that these ironies cannot be classified as either stable or unstable. They can be classified as *perplexing* irony. In Chapter Seven I discuss perplexing irony in the Fourth Gospel.

Contemporary Approaches to Irony

In this section I will examine what modern and postmodern authors are saying about irony; its meaning and irony theory. Norman Knox and M.H. Abrams are two scholars who have taken different approaches to understanding irony. Knox examined irony's etymology and Abrams focussed on the historical development of its meaning.

Definitions of Irony

Both Norman Knox and M.H. Abrams offer insights into the understanding of irony, explaining the changes in meaning over the centuries, and providing understanding of the historical development of the concept. In 1961, Knox, published *The Word Irony in its Context, 1500-1755*.¹¹⁴ In it he analysed the etymology of the Greek words *eirōn* and *eirōneia*, beginning with the Greek classics. He said that the term *eirōn* never appeared "before the Peloponnesian War and was never found in tragedy or the more serious poetry".¹¹⁵ The words began their early usage in Aristophanes and Plato, where they conveyed a "sly, mocking pretence and deception", being a "vulgar expression of reproach".¹¹⁶ The words were deeply rooted in Socrates, his nature and his method.

¹¹⁴ Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*.

¹¹⁵ The Peloponnesian War was between the two Greek states of Athens and Sparta, 431-404 BCE. Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*, 3.

¹¹⁶ Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*, 3.

Plato, through his character Socrates, used “sarcastic praise and disingenuous self-deprecation” to demonstrate his dialectic.¹¹⁷

Knox identified that the Greek concepts became a little more dignified in Aristotle who contrasted “boastful exaggeration” with “self-deprecating concealment”.¹¹⁸ He demonstrated that further development took place with Demosthenes and Theophrastus, as the character they described was lazy and would not be involved in any lively discussion.¹¹⁹ This interpretation turned irony into a “social device” depicting someone trying to escape responsibilities.¹²⁰ Knox said that, during the second century BCE, the terms were in common speech and were no longer associated with reproach.¹²¹

However, he went on to say that it was not until Cicero that the terms εἶρων and εἶρωνεία had positive connotations.¹²² If Knox is correct, it appears then that Cicero gave the use of irony respectability in educated circles. Those who would follow him would recognise its value in the spoken and written word, in situations and for dramatic effect.

Knox explains how, over time, the less aggressive types of irony become more respectable. He shows how the use of irony leading up to the time of Jesus was commonplace. His arguments from a non-theological background show how the prolific use of irony in the Fourth Gospel is plausible.

Another modern scholar, Abrams defined the original term εἶρων as a character in Greek comedy who exemplified understatement.¹²³ It was a person who “deliberately pretended to be less intelligent than he was, yet triumphed over the ἀλαζών – the self-deceiving and stupid braggart”.¹²⁴ This was Socratic irony and was used for rhetorical effect.

Developments in irony theory included verbal irony where a speaker’s implied meaning was different from what was said. Another was structural irony where the author wrote

¹¹⁷ Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*, 3.

¹¹⁸ Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*, 4.

¹¹⁹ Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*, 4.

¹²⁰ Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*, 4.

¹²¹ Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*, 4.

¹²² Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context 1500-1755*, 4.

¹²³ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Boston: Thompson Wadsworth, 2005), 142. The first edition was published in 1957.

¹²⁴ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 142.

about a “structural feature that serve[d] to sustain a duplex meaning”.¹²⁵ The implied reader seeks to “correct” the naïve comments or actions by a hapless victim.

Sarcasm was “taunting ...praise for dispraise”.¹²⁶ Abrams claimed that the two terms of irony and sarcasm were sometimes confused, even though they came from different root words.¹²⁷ Irony came from εἰρὸν (meaning “dissembler”), whereas sarcasm came from σαρχάζω (meaning “to rip flesh”).

Dramatic irony was demonstrated where the author and audience shared privileged information of which the character had no prior knowledge.¹²⁸ Greek tragedies often used this type of irony.

Cosmic irony occurred when a deity manipulated circumstances, causing characters to have unfounded hope. The author did this to mock the character.¹²⁹

Another type of irony introduced in the late eighteenth century was romantic irony, described as an illusion, later destroyed by the author.¹³⁰ The desired effect was for the audience to perceive that the author’s manipulations were an art form.¹³¹

Both of these modern authors have provided us with an understanding of the development of the definition and understanding of irony. Knox’s assessment is root-word based, while Abrams’ assessment is based on the development of various ironic themes over the past 2400 years. Using Knox’s historical basis concerning Cicero in particular, a large portion of Fourth Gospel irony is positive and encouraging for the audience. Abrams’ themes-approach concerning verbal irony is useful in identifying the hostile witness who makes an unintentionally profound, prophetic statement (John 18:14). Sarcasm and dramatic irony also have a place in the Fourth Gospel.¹³² I have not found any examples of either cosmic or romantic ironies in the Fourth Gospel.

¹²⁵ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 142.

¹²⁶ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 143.

¹²⁷ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 143.

¹²⁸ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 143-144.

¹²⁹ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 144.

¹³⁰ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 144.

¹³¹ Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 144-145.

¹³² For example, Jesus addresses Nicodemus sarcastically. He says this, “Since you are the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?” (3:10). Nicodemus had been taking the surface

Modern Irony Theorists

Apart from Knox and Abrams, two other modern irony theorists have significantly added to our understanding of irony by their contribution to irony theory: Douglas C. Muecke and Wayne Booth. In 1969, Muecke published *The Compass of Irony*.¹³³ This was followed a few years later in 1974 by Booth's *A Rhetoric of Irony*.¹³⁴ I will draw on both of these authors as resources in this thesis.

Muecke points out the basic features of all irony. They are:

- (i) a contrast of appearance and reality, (ii) a confident awareness (pretended in the ironist, real in the victim of the irony) that the appearance is only appearance, and (iii) the comic effect of this unawareness of a contrasting appearance and reality.¹³⁵

He also identifies three classifications of irony. They are:

Verbal irony: where the ironist speaks ironically.

Situational irony: where the irony may come from a difference between expectations and actual events, or the audience's knowledge before the character is aware.

Dramatic irony: where characters betray themselves, or where there is a paradox.¹³⁶

His features and classifications of irony will be useful building blocks for this thesis.

The second theorist, Booth, writes extensively on the stability of irony. He gives us the task of identifying and reconstructing the meaning of covert stable ironies, and he says that there are four identifying marks of stable irony. They are: (1) Ironic statements are intended, and are not accidental; (2) They are covert, and intended to be reconstructed; (3) The reader is not encouraged to reconstruct further ironies; and (4) Stable ironies are a narrowly defined and described field, and not about 'life in general'.¹³⁷ In order for

meaning of what Jesus was teaching him (3:4, 9). Jesus was helping him to look for the deeper spiritual meaning. Rabbi Nicodemus had come to Rabbi Jesus to learn spiritual truth. As a rabbi, and the teacher of Israel, one expects that Nicodemus knows about spiritual matters. The sarcasm delivers irony as it identifies Rabbi Nicodemus as one who needs to learn spiritual truth, yet because of his position as a member of the Sanhedrin and a leading rabbi of Israel, he ought to be in a position to know and teach it. Concerning the second item in this footnote, Dramatic irony has several types namely: misunderstanding, understatement, hyperbole, and double standard. There are examples of each of all these types in the Fourth Gospel. See Chapters Five and Six for examples in the Johannine Passion Narrative.

¹³³ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*.

¹³⁴ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*.

¹³⁵ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*, 35.

¹³⁶ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*. Verbal (64-98); Situational (99-136); and Dramatic (137-147).

¹³⁷ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 6.

the reader to reconstruct the covert irony, Booth recommends these four steps: (1) Reject the literal meaning, recognising what the reader reads and what the reader already knows. (2) Try out possible alternative meanings. (3) Make a decision about the author's knowledge or beliefs. (4) Choose a new meaning relying on the reader's perception of the author.¹³⁸

For my research, Booth's identification of the difference between "stable irony" and "unstable irony" is of *critical importance*. He says of stable irony that it "does not mock our efforts by making general claims about the ironic universe, or the universe of human discourse".¹³⁹ On the other hand, he argues that unstable irony is infinite, defies reconstruction and is absurd.¹⁴⁰ He adds a pivotal comment, that in stable irony, the author and reader are never victims.¹⁴¹ Booth declares that there is a "formidable chasm" between stable ironies and unstable ironies.¹⁴²

Because Booth has found a gulf between stable and unstable ironies, he has not taken into consideration the absurdities of real life. On many occasions as circumstances change, the absurd ironic events of life also change. They even may become finite, stable and reconstructable. Furthermore, it seems that his model for the "formidable chasm" between stability and instability comes from the Greek and Roman classics, where there is either one extreme or the other.

Modern Example of Unstable Irony

We have a good example of sustained unstable irony in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.¹⁴³ Vladimir and Estragon, who hinder rather than help Pozzo and Lucky, act out the unstable irony in the drama. Their attitude to Pozzo and Lucky is the same as the way they treat each other: ignoring, threatening, abusing, and assisting, rather than providing the salvation they all desire. Ironically, they are incapable of showing mercy even though they discuss the mercy of the crucified Jesus to the penitent thief. In the

¹³⁸ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 10-12.

¹³⁹ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 6.

¹⁴⁰ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 240-277.

¹⁴¹ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 233.

¹⁴² Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 240.

¹⁴³ Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (New York: Grove Press, 1955).

same way, Vladimir and Estragon's unmet need for salvation is typical of the ironic instability that is demonstrated in the drama, as they wait for Godot, who never comes.

Postmodern Irony Theorists

In 1994, Linda Hutcheon published *Irony's Edge: the theory and politics of irony*. She talks about how irony forms its own community (including some and excluding others), how its nature is very slippery, and how there will always be problems identifying covert irony.¹⁴⁴ Her book's usefulness for this thesis is the importance she gives to ambiguities, as these are "irony's subversive edge" and are "so unsettling".¹⁴⁵ She appears to be talking about ironies that do not easily resolve themselves, or of ironies that are perplexing because they are temporarily unstable.

Claire Colebrook, another postmodern irony theorist, builds on the foundation of others saying,

Recently ... greater stress has been placed on irony that is undecidable and on modes of irony that challenge just how shared, common and stable our conventions and assumptions are. Many have argued that our entire epoch, as postmodern is ironic...¹⁴⁶

Here Claire Colebrook gives weight to the idea that postmodernism is the age of unstable, or even temporary unstable irony.

A famous post-modern ironist is Jacques Derrida. Through deconstruction, he identifies the unstable irony in the Genesis depiction of the limits of God's knowledge. In a lecture, posthumously published, he offers a deconstruction of the Western philosophical tradition concerning animals. This is not a theological, but rather a literary claim in which he gives an analysis of the Genesis account of creation, naming

... the finitude of a God who doesn't know what is going to happen to him ... In short, God doesn't yet know what he really wants; this is the finitude of a God who doesn't know what he wants ... a God who sees something coming without seeing it coming.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge: the theory and politics of irony* (London: Routledge, 1994), 17, 116, 152. These are concepts she echoes from Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 28, 159, 206.

¹⁴⁵ Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge: the theory and politics of irony*, 35.

¹⁴⁶ Colebrook, *Irony: the critical idiom*, 18.

¹⁴⁷ Derrida, "The animal that therefore I am", *Critical Inquiry*, 28 (2008): 386-387.

Derrida acknowledges that it is the *mysterium tremendum* – the ‘terrifying mystery’ that is at work.¹⁴⁸ The mystery is that which is unknowable; that helps us remain humble in our lack of knowledge; that reminds us of the Other. Unstable irony can make the ironist its object. It takes humility to realise that the irony of which we speak is mysterious. As Derrida says,

...the terrifying mystery, the dread, fear and trembling of the Christian in the experience of the sacrificial gift. This trembling seizes one at the moment of becoming a person, and the person can become what it is only in being paralyzed, ... in its very singularity, by the gaze of God.¹⁴⁹

When it comes to interpreting and understanding any irony, including biblical irony, the scholar needs to show humility. Irony is elusive. When scholars think they have understood it, they may find themselves mistaken, or they end up becoming entrapped by it. Deconstruction helps in identifying and highlighting irony in the text, especially unstable irony. Deconstruction may help a critic discover unstable irony. However, ironies in the text that are found using deconstruction are not the biblical author’s intention. Diagram 6 in Chapter Three helps to illustrate unintended unstable irony.

(ii) LITERATURE REVIEW OF FOURTH GOSPEL IRONY

Since Booth’s book in 1974, three biblical scholars have made significant contributions to Boothian irony theory as it affects this thesis, namely, Candace Lang, Carolyn Sharp and InHee C. Berg. Their concern is either to redeem unstable irony as a positive and valid literary tool, or to comment concerning the “formidable chasm” between stable and unstable ironies.¹⁵⁰ The first to address the value of unstable irony is Lang.¹⁵¹ She says of unstable irony,

It is by equating “no single meaning” with “no meaning” that critics of this supposedly unruly irony further stigmatize it with the epithets “meaningless” and “gratuitous” — hence nihilistic and of no redeeming social value. However, the

¹⁴⁸ Derrida, *The gift of death* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 6.

¹⁴⁹ Derrida, *The gift of death*, 6.

¹⁵⁰ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 240.

¹⁵¹ Lang, "Irony/Humor: Assessing French and American Critical Trends", *boundary 2*, 10 (Spring 1982): 271-290; 292-302.

“meaninglessness” and “gratuitousness” of this literary phenomenon are precisely what make it fundamentally different from the “old” and “stable” irony...¹⁵²

And again,

...[for Booth,] the truly multivalent text is unthinkable: discrepancies or incoherencies can only be interpreted as errors, as attempts to communicate anxiety over life’s contradictions, as despairing demonstrations of the inadequacy of language as a vehicle of self expression, or as gratuitous word play with intent to mystify.¹⁵³

Candace Lang here is the first to argue that a modern understanding of unstable irony has positive literary value. She says that it is true that tragic instability is part of human life. She encourages us to embrace the reality of our ironic unstable traumas.

A second scholar, Sharp, writes in support of Lang’s critique of Booth.¹⁵⁴ Both Sharp and Lang identify Booth’s wrong assumption that irony occurs whenever there is a disconnection between what the text reveals and what the author intends. Sharp claims that Booth certainly does not have a post-modern view of the text.

The third scholar of irony, Berg, has recently published her *Irony in the Matthean Passion Narrative*.¹⁵⁵ She has analysed Booth’s classifications of stable and unstable irony in her preliminary material as she sets out her methodology for exegeting the irony in the Matthean passion narrative. Her analysis of stable irony is excellent, however her analysis of unstable irony is not fully developed. Concerning the “formidable chasm”, she merely agrees with Booth’s assertion that stable and unstable ironies are poles apart.¹⁵⁶ With regard to this claim by Booth, affirmed by Berg, there is a need for further reflection; sometimes unstable irony becomes resolved and the instability is stabilised. Berg asserts that unstable irony only happens in the minds of ambitious readers who want to find it in the text and are guided by their own experiences.¹⁵⁷ That may be true of those who use deconstruction, however, it is a

¹⁵² Lang, "Irony/Humor: Assessing French and American Critical Trends", 276.

¹⁵³ Lang, *Irony/Humor: Critical Paradigms* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 45.

¹⁵⁴ Sharp, *Irony and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible*, 255n37.

¹⁵⁵ Berg, *Irony in the Matthean Passion Narrative*.

¹⁵⁶ See Berg, *Irony in the Matthean Passion Narrative*, 17.

¹⁵⁷ See Berg, *Irony in the Matthean Passion Narrative*, 16.

sweeping generalisation to classify all unstable irony in that way.¹⁵⁸ The unstable irony identified in the Fourth Gospel is both specific and covert, and so this aspect of Berg's analysis must be questioned.

Fourth Gospel Analysis

From now on, the focus of this discussion shifts to scholars who have contributed to our current knowledge of Fourth Gospel irony and / or identified and explored it. I will be following various themes that scholars have adopted, and I will group scholars according to their understanding of irony. Whenever I find either unique or common ideas relevant to my research, I will identify them.

Comedy & Irony in the Fourth Gospel

Since 1959 there have been a number of books and articles published discussing irony in the Fourth Gospel. The first published is a journal article: Henri Clavier's *L'ironie Dans le Quatrième Évangile*. This essay has triggered only a modest amount of academic interest, some of which continues today. Clavier states at the outset that there is a vast amount of irony in the Fourth Gospel and that it comes in several varieties. Referring to Fourth Gospel irony he says, "*L'ironie est une genre qui offre des espèces et de nombreuses varieties.*"¹⁵⁹ He lists six varieties of Fourth Gospel irony.¹⁶⁰

Secondly, he argued that the fourth evangelist borrowed heavily from Plato's portrait of Socrates in that he identified the tropes of sarcasm and ridicule levelled at Jesus' opponents. This was to create humour for the reader as well as for the Johannine community.¹⁶¹

Thirdly, Clavier pointed to his understanding of irony's purpose in the Gospel: to tear down and humiliate Jesus' opponents, just as Socrates had done in Plato's plays.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ See Berg, *Irony in the Matthean Passion Narrative*, 16f. Furthermore, she assumes that unstable irony is "not specific" as well as "overt". Therefore, her definition of unstable irony differs from mine and may be the reason for her different conclusion.

¹⁵⁹ Clavier, "L'Ironie Dans le Quatrième Évangile," in *Studia Evangelica* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1959), 261.

¹⁶⁰ See Clavier, "L'Ironie Dans le Quatrième Évangile", 261-263. They include: metaphor, ridicule, farce, humour, satire, and Socratic ironies.

¹⁶¹ See Clavier, "L'Ironie Dans le Quatrième Évangile", 261-276.

¹⁶² See Clavier, "L'Ironie Dans le Quatrième Évangile", 275.

Clavier accurately identifies instances in the Gospel where there is public rebuke of *hoi Ioudaioi* for their unbelief. He says,

Ironie de la meme espèce, mais plus aiguë, de quand il s'agit ' Ioudaïoi, les laisse en « aporie » totale et ridicule, quand au chap.7, 33 SS., Jésus parle réponse de son prochain départ.¹⁶³

Here Clavier identifies the problematic confusion of *hoi Ioudaioi* who completely misunderstand the meaning behind what Jesus is saying. This is brought home by the fourth evangelist's comments who interprets their thoughts as ridiculous. This situation in 7:33-36 demonstrates ironies of double meaning, parody and double entendre,

I have identified another example of this phenomenon that is not discussed by Clavier, in John 9:40-41 where Jesus demonstrates to the Pharisees that they are 'blind sinners'. However, there is equally as much or even more evidence that irony engenders faith and connects with readers who are willing to believe into Jesus. For example, earlier in 9:35-39, Jesus encourages the man who had been born blind and is now healed, because he opened his eyes of faith. His physical sight is symbolic of his newfound faith into Jesus. For my research, Clavier's contribution is significant in that he claims there is a multitude of examples of Fourth Gospel irony with several varieties.

With a similar conclusion to Clavier and six years later, Jakob Jónsson linked humour and comedy with Fourth Gospel irony.¹⁶⁴ Doris E. Myers discovered "laughable obtuseness" in Fourth Gospel irony, however, the irony of the Fourth Gospel is hardly "laughable", so her conclusions are unconvincing. Furthermore, the humour she said it produced was relatively bland.¹⁶⁵ Even though much of the Gospel's irony is of the genre of comedy, MacRae claims that there is little evidence in the "heavily ironical" Fourth Gospel that the irony was intended to be humorous.¹⁶⁶ However, Douglas Adams has found "clowning humour" in the wedding at Cana in John 2 and in the

¹⁶³ Clavier, "L'Ironie Dans le Quatrième Évangile", 272.

¹⁶⁴ See Jónsson, *Humor and irony in the New Testament : illuminated by parallels in Talmud and Midrash* (Reykjavík: Bókautgáfa Menningarsjóðs, 1965).

¹⁶⁵ Myers, "Irony and Humor in the Gospel of John", *Occasional Papers in Translation and Textlinguistics*, 2 (1988): 7.

¹⁶⁶ MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel," in *The Gospel of John as Literature: An Anthology of Twentieth Century Perspectives* (ed. Stibbe; Leiden: EJ Brill, 1993), 105.

feeding of the five thousand in John 6.¹⁶⁷ Nevertheless, the examples of irony depicted by Clavier, Jónsson and Myers fit within the genre of comedy. Both Clavier and Jónsson seem preoccupied with satire and parody as a basis for their studies. Also, Myers' ironic humour has not convinced scholars.¹⁶⁸ Yet, they have identified and addressed the genre of Fourth Gospel irony and have become a springboard for others to develop Johannine irony theory. What Clavier, Jónsson and Myers have perceived of Fourth Gospel irony can be interpreted in another way. This thesis offers such an alternate interpretation.

Insider / Outsider

The analysis of the literature now shifts from focussing on the significant scholars to an important dualistic feature in Johannine writing: the insider / outsider motif. This motif is worthy of consideration because it is the focus of comparison between those who understand the riddles and irony, and those who do not. Some scholars have identified polarised groups in the Fourth Gospel. These are the "insiders" or those who form part of the believing community, and the "outsiders" who do not believe into Jesus. There is special language that the author uses to bring about this polarisation.

Herbert Leroy used Form Criticism to argue that riddle and misunderstanding are the two keys to enable interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.¹⁶⁹ Fourteen years later, Donald A. Carson had similar methods and conclusions.¹⁷⁰ Some readers / hearers of the Fourth Gospel would fully understand the dialogue while others would remain "in the dark".¹⁷¹ Leroy and Carson identified this dichotomy and claim that "riddles" brought it about.¹⁷² "Outsiders", represented by those who did not believe into Jesus, misunderstood these

¹⁶⁷ Adams, *The Prostitute in the Family Tree: Discovering Humor and Irony in the Bible* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 60-64, 71.

¹⁶⁸ Myers does not use conventional methodology. Instead, she sets up a hypothetical argument yet it has no basis in reality.

¹⁶⁹ Leroy, *Rätsel und Missverständnis. Ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte des Johannesevangeliums* (PhD, P. Hanstein, Tübingen, 1968).

¹⁷⁰ See Carson, "Understanding Misunderstandings in the Fourth Gospel", *Tyndale Bulletin*, 33 (1982): 62. Furthermore, Paul Anderson addresses the Fourth Gospel aporias as "riddles". Anderson, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel: An Introduction to John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

¹⁷¹ Norman Petersen identifies this feature in his monograph. Petersen, *The Gospel of John and the Sociology of Light: Language and Characterization in the Fourth Gospel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 1-3, 89-109.

¹⁷² See Carson, "Understanding Misunderstandings in the Fourth Gospel", 62.

“riddles”, however “insiders” represented by the believing community, grasped their concealed, special meaning.

R. Alan Culpepper referred to a conflict that the author set up between “outsiders” and “insiders” in the Fourth Gospel.¹⁷³ He argued that the irony of misunderstanding happens between the “outsider” who has a limited knowledge of the truth and the “insiders” who have access to the secret things of God. Unbelievers see an insurmountable barrier between themselves as being “outside”, and those on the “inside”, where Jesus is. They often remain puzzled or perplexed because they have followed the literal meaning of words and phrases rather than their less prominent alternate meanings. However, this is not so for the disciples or “insiders” who have chosen to follow Jesus by believing into him.¹⁷⁴

Bruce Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh also identify the “insiders” and the “outsiders” in the Fourth Gospel.¹⁷⁵ They claim that the polarisation is due to antisociety and antilanguage. Antisociety is demonstrated by the Johannine community, that is an alternate group opposing the society in which it lives. The issues that separate it are “the world” and “*hoi Ioudaioi*”.¹⁷⁶ Antilanguage is the sort of language that is found within an enclave.¹⁷⁷ More than this, Malina and Rohrbaugh reinforce the concept of the insider-outsider model.¹⁷⁸ They claim that antisociety and antilanguage themes fit the Johannine community.

Jeffrey Staley, in his book on Fourth Gospel irony,¹⁷⁹ uses the terms “insider” and “outsider” in reference to what the implied author does to the implied reader. He explains that the implied author has a strategy of inclusion designed for “insiders” that is evident from as early as the prologue. It is the implied author, who makes the implied

¹⁷³ See Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 164-165.

¹⁷⁴ See Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 164-165.

¹⁷⁵ Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998). See also Malina, *The Gospel of John in Socio-Linguistic Perspective* (Berkeley: Center for Hermeneutical Studies, 1985).

¹⁷⁶ Compared with the Synoptic accounts, the frequency of these two terms in the Fourth Gospel is astounding. They occur over seventy times for both in the Fourth Gospel, but less than ten in each of the Synoptic accounts. See Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 9-10.

¹⁷⁷ For example, in a prison sub-culture, or drug culture, a new language is devised to rebuild society within a society. See Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 7-9.

¹⁷⁸ See Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 9.

¹⁷⁹ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

reader an “insider”. (S)he does this by keeping the implied reader informed with as much information as the disciples, and sometimes more. However, in several places in the Fourth Gospel, by using the technique of “implied reader victimisation”, Staley says that the implied author makes the implied reader into an “outsider”.¹⁸⁰

For the purpose of this thesis, I note the value of distinguishing two opposing groups. One group is privy to the knowledge of special double meanings while the other group is ignorant of them. This results in the dramatic ironies of misunderstanding and double standard playing out. To complicate things, the narrator treats the reader as an “insider”. Disparity and incongruity arise between the two groups due to the narrator’s explanations. “Insiders” are the believers (and readers) who enjoy the light of the presence of Jesus, while the “outsiders” remain in the darkness of unbelief.

We carefully consider the opposites of “insider” and “outsider” in this thesis. These are shaped by the rhetoric of the Fourth Gospel and distinguished by their belief (or unbelief) into Jesus. The difference between these groups is not based on secret knowledge, but by their reception of knowledge that is open to all. When discussion focusses on the polarisation of the Johannine community from “the world” or from “*hoi Ioudaioi*”.¹⁸¹ If salvation in the Fourth Gospel is by knowing a secret or special language, then Gnosticism is imposed on to the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, the Gospel is not pro-Gnostic nor pro-Docetic.¹⁸² The fourth evangelist does not advocate salvation by knowing a secret or special language of which outsiders are ignorant.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ See Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 116.

¹⁸¹ I accept the scholarly position that this polarisation is not based upon privileged access to “secret knowledge”.

¹⁸² See MacRae, “Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel”, 112. Docetism was a form of Gnosticism. It taught that Jesus was a ghost and not human, thus robbing the witnesses of their memory of Jesus and undermining the historical basis for faith into him.

¹⁸³ Meier, “Jesus,” in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (eds. Brown, et al.; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990), 1318; MacRae, “Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel”, 112. Salvation in the Fourth Gospel is by receiving and believing into Jesus (1:11f). Only a relationship with God through Jesus ensures that the believer has become one of God’s children and therefore has the gift of eternal life (3:15-16, 36; 4:14; 5:24; 6:40, 54; 10:9-10, 25-28; 20:31). In the Fourth Gospel the divine Son is not merely the appearance of a human who suffers, the fourth evangelist testifies that his eyewitness portrait of him is true (21:24).

Significant Johannine Commentators & Scholars

The English translation of Rudolf Bultmann's commentary on the Fourth Gospel, influenced biblical scholarship across the world.¹⁸⁴ His radical re-examination of the Fourth Gospel had its foundation on the premise that he saw believers' faith statements as having greater value than the conjecture of a historian. For Bultmann, irony was a literary device of lesser importance, so he allocated little space to explain its significance.¹⁸⁵ Nonetheless, Bultmann does recognise the aporias in the Fourth Gospel without trying to explain them away. He sees them as being united together in the final (though disjointed) current form of the text.¹⁸⁶

Raymond E. Brown's two-volume Fourth Gospel commentary devotes only a few lines to describe the usage of irony in his expansive introduction.¹⁸⁷ He says irony occurs when Jesus' opponents make statements that slander Jesus.¹⁸⁸ Yet, these statements speak truth in such a way that the opponent of Jesus who slanders him never realises the hidden truth. Mostly the irony is unexplained in the Gospel text and this adds to its power.

In 2003, Francis Moloney published a posthumous edition of Brown's introduction, addressing literary, rhetorical critical and implied commentary matters.¹⁸⁹ Brown's treatment of Fourth Gospel irony is minimal. However, Moloney's work in this revised introduction helps in our understanding of the relationship between the real author, implied author, real reader, implied reader and narrator.¹⁹⁰

Brown also wrote a monograph that has had wide influence: *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*.¹⁹¹ He offered a scholarly appraisal of the community's development. Brown was one of the chief editors of the *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, a

¹⁸⁴ See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971).

¹⁸⁵ Bultmann identifies ten literary devices in his commentary. They include: symbolism, myth, misunderstanding, allegory, metaphor, parabolic sayings, dualism, sign, irony and proverb. I have listed these devices in order of the frequency that Bultmann identifies them in the text (reflecting the frequency of references in the indexes) of his commentary.

¹⁸⁶ See Paul Anderson's Foreword in this recent addition: Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014), vii-x.

¹⁸⁷ Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*.

¹⁸⁸ Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*, 1: cxxxv-cxxxvi.

¹⁸⁹ Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

¹⁹⁰ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 30-39.

¹⁹¹ Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple: the life, loves and hates of an individual church in the New Testament times* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979).

significant one volume tome that has a wide range of theological and exegetical articles.¹⁹² Furthermore, Brown gives profound insights into Jesus' arrest and trial in his two-volume work *The Death of the Messiah*.¹⁹³ This will be a useful resource in the analytical chapters of this thesis.

In the *Sacra Pagina* Series, Moloney's *John* (1998), is another significant commentary.¹⁹⁴ In this book he follows both historical critical and literary critical methodology, producing a well-rounded, academic and balanced understanding of the Gospel. His three volume commentary on John is particularly useful for a practical application of the Gospel and its narrative-critical insights,¹⁹⁵ as is his shorter introduction to the Gospel and Letters.¹⁹⁶ His major work in 2005 is a collection of excellent essays, some of which were published as articles.¹⁹⁷ His most recent monograph is a compendium of Johannine essays. Moloney's scholarship has greatly influenced this thesis.¹⁹⁸

J. Louis Martyn's *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (third edition, 2003) is also a significant book.¹⁹⁹ Martyn's argument is that the fourth evangelist wrote a double-layered story. Below the Jesus-story layer is another hidden layer. This covert story reflects what was happening in Johannine community. It is a polemic detailing the struggles between community members and Roman dominance, as well as the consequences of the rejection of its Jewish members from the synagogue. His arguments have received wide acclaim among Johannine scholars. Furthermore, the double-layered story is the basis for a considerable amount of irony that emerges in the passion narrative. Understanding his argument is crucial for an informed appreciation of the Gospel.

¹⁹² Brown, et al., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990).

¹⁹³ Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols) (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994).

¹⁹⁴ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*.

¹⁹⁵ I refer to the third of this three-set series of commentaries in my analytical chapters. Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor: Reading John 13-21* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998).

¹⁹⁶ Moloney, *Reading John: Introducing the Johannine Gospel and Letters* (Melbourne: Dove / Harper Collins Publishers, 1995).

¹⁹⁷ Moloney, *The Gospel of John: text and context* (Boston: Brill Academic, 2005).

¹⁹⁸ Moloney, *Love in the Gospel of John: An Exegetical, Theological and Literary Study* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013).

¹⁹⁹ Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd edn).

This century, there have been many significant monographs on the Fourth Gospel.²⁰⁰ I draw on the insights of many of them in this thesis, mostly in Chapters Five and Six, where I analyse the passion narrative text.

Literary Devices in the Fourth Gospel

In the 1950's and 60's, C.H. Dodd's work pioneered scholarship in the analysis of the Fourth Gospel. He identified symbolism as the most prominent of twelve leading ideas of the Gospel. As he says,

The explicit use of symbolism is an obvious characteristic of this gospel... It has long been recognised that the employment of such symbols is different from the use of parables in the Synoptic Gospels.²⁰¹

Using a variety of illustrations, he describes how the fourth evangelist characterises symbolism, saying, 'the symbol is absorbed into the reality it signifies'. He concludes,

...we are required to interpret [narrated events] in accordance with the evangelist's known methods and conceptions. ...there is no reason why a narrative should not be at the same time factually true and symbolic of a deeper truth, since things and events in this world derive what reality they possess from the eternal Ideas they embody.²⁰²

Here Dodd is saying that, at least as far as the Fourth Gospel is concerned, both factual truth and symbolic truth are able to sit alongside each other happily.²⁰³ While Dodd's insight is particularly relevant for understanding the characteristics of Johannine metaphors, it has a wider value for this research in that it is applicable to all types of irony and rhetoric.

In 1994, Dorothy Ann Lee's monograph *The Symbolic Narratives of the Fourth Gospel: The Interplay of Form and Meaning* was published. She examines the six "symbolic narratives" of the Gospel (the Nicodemus narrative 3:1-36; the Samaritan woman

²⁰⁰ These include: Beasley-Murray (2000), Stibbe (2002), N.T. Wright (2002), Martyn (2003), Mullins (2003), Moloney (2005), Ashton (2007), Neyrey (2007), McHugh (2009), Von Wahlde (2010), Michaels (2010), Brant (2011), Kanagaraj (2013), and M.M. Thompson (2015).

²⁰¹ Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 134.

²⁰² Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 142-143.

²⁰³ In the twenty-first century we have moved away from Dodd's methodology. He assumed that the way we interpret the symbols in the Fourth Gospel was to bring together all of the available textual materials and read these meanings into the Johannine symbolic words, usually out of their original context. However, this fallacy does not discredit Dodd's rich understanding of Johannine symbolism. Van der Watt, "Symbolism in John's Gospel: an evaluation of Dodd's contribution," in *Engaging with C.H. Dodd on the Gospel of John: Sixty years of tradition and interpretation* (eds. Thatcher and Williams; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 68-69.

narrative 4:1-42; the healing at the pool narrative 5:1-47; the feeding of the five thousand narrative 6:1-71; the healing of the man born blind narrative 9:1-41 and the raising of Lazarus 11:1—12:11). She discovers a central symbol in each of the narratives that draws the reader's attention to the interplay between Jesus and the characters in the narrative.²⁰⁴ By and large, the characters misunderstand the symbols and “struggle to make sense of Jesus and his offer of eternal life”.²⁰⁵ In her more recent work, *Hallowed in Truth and Love: Spirituality in the Johannine Literature* she says,

Symbols in this Gospel are neither decorative or arbitrary but substantial, part of the coherence of the good news. In general terms, symbolism can manifest itself in different forms – in metaphor, art, music, dreams... As the linguistic form of symbol, the metaphors of the Gospel create new meaning, bringing together in extraordinary ways elements that, at face value, have no correspondence. They need therefore to be carefully interpreted.²⁰⁶

Lee's work is helpful for this research as she connects the relevance of Johannine symbolism with transcendence and truth. In addition, she emphasises the relationship between symbol and metaphor.

A significant contribution to the study of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel was published by David Wead in 1970.²⁰⁷ His fourth chapter explores irony where he sees that Sophocles has a stronger link with the Fourth Gospel than other Greek philosophers do. The Greek writers of tragedy demonstrated their irony by comparison with different character types. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and others adopted Sophocles' teaching method. They removed the negative implications and made irony more palatable and adaptable to everyday life²⁰⁸.

In defining irony, Wead says,

Irony is the disparity between the meaning conveyed and the literal meanings of the words. (Irony is understatement, achieved) ... through the disparity between the understanding of the character in the play and the meaning the audience

²⁰⁴ Lee, *The Symbolic Narratives of the Fourth Gospel: the interplay of form and meaning* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 11.

²⁰⁵ Lee, *The Symbolic Narratives of the Fourth Gospel: the interplay of form and meaning*, 11.

²⁰⁶ Lee, *Hallowed in Truth and Love: Spirituality in the Johannine tradition* (Preston, Vic: Mosaic Press, 2011), 44-45.

²⁰⁷ Wead, *Literary devices in John's Gospel* (Basel: Basel University Press, 1970).

²⁰⁸ See Wead, *Literary devices in John's Gospel*, 47.

perceives. Thus the character speaks that which is truth to his understanding but the audience understands it in relation to the total context of the drama²⁰⁹.

He says that there is a conflict between what appears to be happening and what is known to be true. This disparity is irony.²¹⁰ Wead's understanding of irony calls for the author to hold a philosophical view that will enable the disparity to be dramatized. Nevertheless, the whole drama needs to be considered before the audience can appreciate the irony present.²¹¹

Wead points out that comedy and tragedy can both employ irony.²¹² For example, he says that it is "the Jewish authorities" acting with arrogance towards the Creator who are the ones demonstrating comedy in the Fourth Gospel.²¹³ While this may be so, tragic circumstances are close to the action, making the result a combination of comedy and tragedy. Nevertheless, the interplay between comedy and tragedy brings entertainment for the reader / audience.²¹⁴

George MacRae has built on Wead's research in Fourth Gospel irony.²¹⁵ MacRae clearly identifies that the prevalent use of irony that the author employs is not "pejorative" in a Socratic sense.²¹⁶ He explains that Johannine irony is nowhere near as offensive as the irony used by Socrates, even though the Socratic style is not altogether foreign to the Fourth Gospel. He says that Fourth Gospel irony is not like Sophoclean (tragic or unstable) irony even though there may be "points of contact". In tragic (or unstable) irony, the hero's hubris is his undoing.²¹⁷

MacRae observes that irony in the Fourth Gospel is of the dramatic type, as it relies on the implied reader to find and appreciate it.²¹⁸ The dramatic irony takes place when there is conflict between characters, and where there is ignorance of what is real on the

²⁰⁹ Wead, *Literary devices in John's Gospel*, 47-48.

²¹⁰ See Wead, *Literary devices in John's Gospel*, 48.

²¹¹ See Wead, *Literary devices in John's Gospel*, 48.

²¹² The comic side of irony is derived from Socrates' method, but Wead (1970: 49) thinks this is a wrong move of Clavier to over-emphasise it. See Clavier, "L'Ironie Dans le Quatrième Évangile".

²¹³ In drama there are two genres: comedy and tragedy.

²¹⁴ See Wead, *Literary devices in John's Gospel*, 49.

²¹⁵ MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 104.

²¹⁶ MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 105.

²¹⁷ Also, in tragic unstable irony the hero becomes the victim of the irony.

²¹⁸ See MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 107.

part of one or more characters. It is appreciated as irony when the audience recognises both the appearance and the reality.²¹⁹

Secondly, like tragic irony, MacRae argues that Fourth Gospel irony presumes a separation from the events.²²⁰ However, unlike tragic irony, this separation does not produce fear in the implied reader. Rather, he says that the result is faith and greater faith.²²¹ This separation is the result of the author's post-resurrection reflection on Jesus. MacRae argues that the fourth evangelist does not say "these things happened so you may believe", but instead, "these things are written that you may believe" (20:31). The fourth evangelist shares his knowledge of this separation with the implied reader.²²²

Thirdly, it is MacRae's contention that "Johannine irony affirm[s] the view that the world itself and the symbols it uses are *ambiguous*".²²³ For MacRae, Jesus is also ambiguous through his symbolic identity as living water and bread of life. This is portrayed by the evangelist as a complete ironic perspective representing a "whole literary ... outlook".²²⁴ For it is through the vehicle of irony that the evangelist expresses his theology. As MacRae says, "in the Fourth Gospel, theology *is* irony".²²⁵ He argues that, by referring to Jesus' trial before Pilate, the fourth evangelist demonstrates "the clearest example of Johannine dramatic irony".²²⁶

MacRae points out that the trial in the Fourth Gospel is narrative style, and not drama, so irony is in what the narrator says as well as in what the characters say. his analysis of the passion narrative picks up several ironies.²²⁷

MacRae asserts that the most powerful irony is about the identity of Jesus as the messianic King.²²⁸ All the characters proclaim his kingship, even Jesus. There is one exception though, *hoi Ioudaioi*, who can only manage an indirect acknowledgment (19:12). However, the irony works because the fourth evangelist and implied reader are

²¹⁹ See MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 107.

²²⁰ See MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 108.

²²¹ See MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 108.

²²² See MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 108.

²²³ MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 109.

²²⁴ MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 109.

²²⁵ MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 109. (emphasis original). Gail O'Day echoes this, arguing that revelation is the vehicle for irony in the Fourth Gospel. O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 6, 31-32.

²²⁶ MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 109.

²²⁷ The arguments expressed in this paragraph are from: MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 109-110.

²²⁸ See MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 111.

looking at the Gospel events from the hindsight of the resurrection.²²⁹ There will be more about their perspective in Chapters Five and Six where I deal with the analysis of the text.

MacRae writes with a clearer perspective, relying on the insights of previous scholarship. MacRae is a major contributor to this debate. His significance for this research is in terms of understanding *the theology of the Fourth Gospel, which he maintains is irony*. He describes the ironic encounters Jesus has with insightful literary understanding, good exegesis and theological acumen.

R. Alan Culpepper's *Anatomy* (1983) has been the standard text for literary critical study of the Fourth Gospel for over three decades.²³⁰ Culpepper says that simple definitions of irony are often inadequate. To say irony is "saying one thing and meaning something else very different ...does not adequately distinguish irony from metaphor, symbol or mockery"²³¹. Irony's "slippery" nature makes it difficult to define clearly and accurately.²³² Therefore, I conclude that a clear, concise and accurate working definition of irony is essential.

Culpepper describes four important ingredients for the demonstration and recognition of Fourth Gospel irony.

First, he says that the implied reader is to "...reject the literal meaning..."²³³ In other words, the author sets up a double meaning, a double standard, or metaphor that has a literal as well as a hidden or spiritual meaning. Some character (or group of characters) will view things from a literal perspective although there will be another more profound meaning under the surface. (The author does not necessarily have to hide it from view, because the implied reader needs to be able to find the irony to appreciate its value.)

On the other hand, looking at the text from the implied reader's perspective, the reader needs to be able to discover some passage or word in the text that carries ambiguity. It may have been "flagged" earlier. The protagonist's words or actions may have highlighted it, or the narrator may have explained it. One or more of the characters will

²²⁹ See MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 111.

²³⁰ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*.

²³¹ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 166.

²³² See Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 166-167.

²³³ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167.

see things literally or be victimised. This will be a contrast between the protagonist and this character.

Secondly, Culpepper says that the implied reader is to "...recognise alternative interpretations...".²³⁴ This means that the author provides the opportunity in the text for the implied reader to discover the literary device, or perceive the duality of opposing thought that the literary device creates. This can come through what the protagonist says or does, or through direct input from the narrator, who must not explain too much of the irony. If the narrator provides too much explanation, the intended irony is lost and it becomes an alternate literary device of metaphor, paradox or mockery.

Furthermore, he states that the implied reader is to remain open to the possibility of seeing things differently from the victim.²³⁵ While reading the text with irony present, possibilities other than the literal meaning will be revealed. The author assumes that the implied reader will have the ability to comprehend the deeper or spiritual meaning.

Thirdly, Culpepper says the implied reader needs to "...decide about the author's knowledge or beliefs...".²³⁶ He argues that the author is credible in portraying the protagonist's viewpoint in such a way that respondents are able to relate to what is said and done. The plot is designed in such a way that it is not far-fetched, and too easily discounted as fantasy. The message has authenticity, reliability and truth as key components. So too, the real reader makes a judgment about the credibility of the implied author. The reader has to be able to rely on the information that comes through the protagonist and narrator. The author and the plot need to be believable. They will ring true, affirming the text as an authentic record based on eyewitness testimony.

Fourthly, he says the implied reader is to "...choose a new meaning that is in harmony with the (implied) author's position".²³⁷ He understands that the author assists the implied reader to make the transition from seeing things from a literal perspective to seeing things from the protagonist's perspective. Opportunities are forthcoming in the form of encouragement to believe, assurance of support, promise of nurture, and positive hope of future reward. The author makes it clear to the implied reader that the

²³⁴ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167.

²³⁵ See Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167.

²³⁶ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167.

²³⁷ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167.

transition from a literal to spiritual perspective is a worthwhile exercise. Faith is the desirable outcome and will be rewarded when the implied reader makes the transition.

From the implied reader's perspective, it is natural to trust the narrator. Thus, the transition to move from a literal meaning to a spiritual meaning will not be a difficult one for the reader to make. The implied author's perspective, identical with that of the narrator, is presented well. The implied reader hungers for truth and desires to be in relationship with the protagonist. This will prevail over the implied reader's need to discover everything that the implied author has not revealed about Jesus.²³⁸

These dynamics of irony are true for the Fourth Gospel. In detail, we see the fourth evangelist structuring irony to convince the implied reader to come over and view things from the inside, with Jesus. This may be the reason that there is such strong dualism in the Gospel. These opposing themes are: light and darkness (1:4-5, 9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35-36, 46), good and evil (10:1-10), life and death (11:24-25), spiritual matters and worldly matters (3:5-12), Jesus is "from above" while those who oppose him are "from below" (3:3, 7, 31; 8:23; 19:11), truth and lies (8:44-45; 14:6; 17:17), reality and appearances (7:24), right judgment and deception (9:39; 12:31), and, of supreme importance for the fourth evangelist, faith and unbelief (9:35-41; 20:31). Furthermore, Culpepper and others adopt Muecke's three classifications of irony (verbal, situational and dramatic).²³⁹ These will become useful classifications for my analysis in this thesis. Various types of each of these ironies are present in the Fourth Gospel and the analytical chapters will highlight examples of their usage.

Concerning "right judgment", Culpepper says that the Johannine Jesus draws our attention to these dualistic images and associated symbols. "Do not judge by appearances, but instead, judge with right judgment" (7:24). The fourth evangelist invites the implied reader to become aware of the message in the Gospel, to receive Jesus, to believe into his name, and become an insider (1:12). The purpose of the

²³⁸ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167.

²³⁹ See Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*, 42, 99-115. See my earlier expansion of these three classifications; Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 168. ; Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 21-27.

invitation is so that an ideal reader can make right judgments and not mistakenly trust at first glance the things that appear to be true.²⁴⁰

Furthermore, with reference to O'Day's interpretation of Johannine irony, Culpepper identifies that in irony there is always conflict between two levels or layers of meaning. In his article, *Reading Johannine Irony*, Culpepper cites O'Day who says,

The correct reading of irony involves a continual awareness of the "felt presence and felt incongruity of both meanings". Irony is not "merely a matter of seeing a 'true' meaning below a 'false,' but of seeing a double exposure on one plate".²⁴¹

This concept is critical if we are to distinguish between true and imposed ironies in the Fourth Gospel. The two levels, or layers, or the "double exposure" are the literal meaning of the words, compared with the symbolic, metaphoric or spiritual meaning. For true irony to come from the Fourth Gospel, O'Day insists that both meanings need to be in the mind's eye of the reader.²⁴² However, if the literal meaning has been abandoned in favour of the "higher meaning", then the irony is imposed onto the text. This tends to happen in the case of deconstructed irony. I will refer to this later in my treatment of Stephen Moore's article on "living water".

Paul Duke developed and adapted Culpepper's analysis. Duke categorises irony into local, extended and sustained varieties. Local ironies are the small examples in a localised area. Extended irony is where there are several local ironies grouped together. Sustained irony is irony that fills a whole chapter or more.²⁴³ Duke's work is one of only three monographs dedicated to the topic of Johannine irony and it provides a significant contribution to Johannine studies. Furthermore, it is foundational for this thesis.

Scholarship on Stable Fourth Gospel Irony / Rhetoric

²⁴⁰ See Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167-168.

²⁴¹ O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 24. ; Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony", 197-198.

²⁴² O'Day says, "the literary form in which Jesus is presented as Revealer in John is inseparable from the Johannine theology of revelation". O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 31-32. ; Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167.

²⁴³ See Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 43-94; 95-115; 17-37.

Culpepper is the first to connect the irony theory of Wayne Booth with Fourth Gospel irony.²⁴⁴ He argues that stable irony is used throughout the Fourth Gospel.²⁴⁵ In other words, Culpepper is saying that the meanings, the duality, and the characters conveyed to the implied reader remain rational and finite and never become permanently absurd. They do not collapse in on themselves and they always resolve in the end.²⁴⁶ He asserts that neither the implied reader nor the protagonist ever become the victim of the irony. Seldom are the disciples victims either.²⁴⁷ Culpepper maintains that,

The irony of the Fourth Gospel is always stable and usually covert. In covert irony meaning is hidden rather than explained, but when the meanings of stable ironies are reconstructed by the perceptive reader “they are firm as a rock”.²⁴⁸

Drawing on Culpepper, I expand his argument to include the following. This research finds that there are a few instances in the Fourth Gospel where the protagonist becomes the victim, and as well, there are instances where the implied reader is victimised. God becomes the victim of Johannine irony when God’s desires go unmet. The divine being desires that all will believe into Jesus and be saved (3:16-17), however, the fourth evangelist is at pains to demonstrate that not everyone will believe (10:26-28). It is a persistent problem throughout the world of the text, and hence will continue as an example of persistent unstable irony of paradox.

Additionally, sometimes the implied reader is victimised. One such instance is concerning who the beloved disciple is. For some undisclosed reason, the fourth evangelist withholds his identity throughout. Even at the close of the Gospel, the evangelist hints at his death, however, his name remains undisclosed. This is not an example of irony as there is no incongruent twist. Rather is it persistent unstable rhetoric of reversal. This instance is developed further in subsequent chapters.

The issue of *identification of stable and unstable ironies in the Fourth Gospel remains critical*. Insightfully, Culpepper also says, “As we will see, the distinction between

²⁴⁴ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*.

²⁴⁵ Culpepper says that it is “usually covert” (or concealed), but at other times the ironic truth is “half-hidden in the dialogue of John’s characters” Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 168, 176. Culpepper later says that covert means “intended for reconstruction” Culpepper, “Reading Johannine Irony”, 194.

²⁴⁶ Culpepper, “Reading Johannine Irony”, 193-195.

²⁴⁷ Culpepper, “Reading Johannine Irony”, 195.

²⁴⁸ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 168. Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 235.

stable and unstable ironies has become pivotal in the interpretation of Johannine irony.”²⁴⁹ This is indeed the case that is argued in this thesis. The tasks of identifying each type of irony used, and the stability status of each instance of irony will be important steps for gospel scholars. If we are to make sense of Johannine irony, the choice of type and status will provide essential understanding for them to interpret the text.

Following on from Culpepper’s work, several scholars make reference to Booth’s irony theory.²⁵⁰ Like Culpepper, Duke affirms that the Fourth Gospel has stable irony throughout.²⁵¹ He expands on Culpepper, saying,

Fixed irony is stable. It is solid ground on which author and sound reader can stand together with common and consistent perception. For this shared confidence to be possible, the irony must also be “finite”.²⁵²

Duke goes on to explain this further.

If irony, then, is finite, we are given some place of meaning on which to stand. If it is fixed, that place is solid enough that we can pitch our interpretive tents there. If it is covert, we have freely made the journey without having been forced at swordpoint by the author. If it is intended, we have some degree of confidence that we have not made the move alone. Added together, these variables of ironic method comprise stable irony. It is this irony that moves and rewards us. It is this irony that permeates the Fourth Gospel.²⁵³

Duke argues that these four adjectives identify stable irony: finite, fixed, covert and intended.²⁵⁴ This research affirms Duke’s claims, with the following qualifier. Unstable or perplexing irony, by its very nature is infinite. When God is the object of the irony, it is infinite as the irony concerns one who is limitless.

O’Day analyses the stability of irony in a similar way. She says,

... the author intends his or her irony to be seen through and understood, not to remain permanently absurd. ... (T)his quality of irony (is) its stability – the author expects the reader to move with him or her through the incongruities of the verbal irony and to arrive at a new, more coherent sense of the ironic statement. Such

²⁴⁹ Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony", 194.

²⁵⁰ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*. ; O’Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*.

²⁵¹ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 18-21.

²⁵² Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 20.

²⁵³ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 20-21.

²⁵⁴ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 18.

ironies are also finite because they presuppose a closed set of relationships. ... The incongruities are a means to an end, not an end in themselves.²⁵⁵

Here, O'Day assumes that all Fourth Gospel irony is stable. Jeffrey Staley says that the narrator allows the reader to "wander off" occasionally and become "confused".²⁵⁶

Jeffrey Staley's book uncovers what he understands as the "victimisation of the implied reader" of the Fourth Gospel.²⁵⁷ I consider this to be unstable rhetoric, a topic I address in Chapter Seven. I assume that rhetoric lapses into instability whenever the implied reader becomes its victim.

Staley provides five examples of the implied reader-victimisation (4:1-2; 7:1-10; 10:40-11:18; 13:1-30; and 20:30-21:25). Staley hints at the instability this causes.²⁵⁸ He says,

The "victimizing" of the reader is related to the category of irony which Wayne Booth calls "unstable," for he says – in regard to "stable irony" – that if there were victims (and there usually were) they were never the implied author (whatever victimized masks he assumed in passing) and they did not include the true implied reader; the reader and author were intended to stand, after their work was done, firmly and securely together.²⁵⁹

While Staley has pointed out inconsistencies in what the implied author discloses, we can note that the implied reader still does not know all there is to know. Furthermore, the fourth evangelist has designed the gospel to be a learning tool for the ideal reader. Occasionally the narrator's details for the implied reader are misleading. Yet, Staley affirms that the portrait he paints of the Messiah is completely true and the implied author's irony remains consistent throughout the Fourth Gospel. So, despite inconsistencies that appear to be intentional by the author, he claims that there is no absurdity or instability remaining at the end.²⁶⁰ Yet my argument is that in rationalising

²⁵⁵ O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 22-23.

²⁵⁶ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 48.

²⁵⁷ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 95-118.

²⁵⁸ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 95-116.

²⁵⁹ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 95, n1. ; Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 233.

²⁶⁰ See Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 116-118.

“implied reader victimisation”, Staley tries to redeem the rhetorical instability in the narrative.

Scholarship on Unstable Fourth Gospel Irony / Rhetoric

The instability of irony in the Fourth Gospel is another central focus of this thesis.

There are four scholars I identify who write concerning unstable Fourth Gospel irony:

Werner H. Kelber, J. Eugene Botha, Stephen D. Moore and Tom Thatcher.

Werner Kelber

Werner H. Kelber’s book, *The Oral and the Written Gospel*, has its focus on Mark’s gospel, yet it is nevertheless a useful resource for this thesis.²⁶¹ He says, “Jesus ...dying on the cross is fraught with irony and paradox”.²⁶² In relation to the theme of living water in the Fourth Gospel, he comments that “irony prevents meaning” and the fourth evangelist “suspends meaning”.²⁶³ He argues that the Johannine Jesus succumbs to his physical need for water, yet he does not fulfil his promise to provide living water. He says, “the narrative buildup...has collapsed, and the expected resolution of irony is thereby turned into stark paradox”.²⁶⁴

In another article, he argues for the *instability* of the irony surrounding Jesus as Bread of Life.²⁶⁵ The imagery of bread undergoes several changes: from the material to the non-material, from the non-material to the heavenly, and then from the heavenly into the person of Jesus. In the course of this bread-imagery irony, the Jewish authorities become “outsiders” and are “scandalised”. He claims that what Jesus says amounts to “ironic transformations” and is unsettling for the implied reader. He says, “John’s

²⁶¹ Kelber, *The oral and the written Gospel: the hermeneutics of speaking and writing in the synoptic tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983).

²⁶² Kelber, *The oral and the written Gospel: the hermeneutics of speaking and writing in the synoptic tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q*, 197.

²⁶³ Kelber, "In the beginning were the words: the apotheosis and narrative displacement of the Logos", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 58 (1990): 88.

²⁶⁴ Kelber, "In the beginning were the words: the apotheosis and narrative displacement of the Logos", 88f-89.

²⁶⁵ Kelber, "The birth of a beginning: John 1:1-18", *Semeia*, 52 (1990).

language...reserves a wide margin of uncertainty for the characters...and for the readers as well".²⁶⁶ For Kelber, the layers of meaning have collapsed into paradox.

Eugene Botha

In 1990, J. Eugene Botha addressed "reader entrapment" in the Samaritan woman story.²⁶⁷ He says that this entrapment (or manipulation) of the implied reader is one of the fourth evangelist's literary devices. He identifies seven sections of John 4:1-42 where this happens.²⁶⁸ These are in verses 1-3; 4-7a; 7b-15; 16-26; 27-30; 31-38 and 39-42. Botha concludes the Samaritan woman episode by the narrator resolving all the instabilities, thus encouraging the implied reader to a deeper faith into Jesus.

Stephen Moore

In 1993, Stephen D. Moore, published an article on unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel.²⁶⁹ He used the literary analysis of deconstruction to support his arguments. He addressed the theme of "living water" found throughout the Gospel, starting with the Samaritan woman story in John 4.

In his analysis, Moore examines the needs that Jesus has concerning water. So, in John 4:7 Jesus hints at his own deep desire to dispense living water to the Samaritan woman (and to everyone). Using deconstructive method, Moore poses the question, can Jesus "keep the living water pure and clear, uncontaminated by the profane drinking water"?²⁷⁰ He uses John 7 and 19 that both refer to water that Jesus dispenses. The narrator informs us of another need Jesus has: to fulfil Scripture (19:28). The fourth evangelist tells us that moments after his death, the soldier pierces Jesus' breast with a spear, causing a gush of water mingled with blood to flow from him (19:34). Ironically,

²⁶⁶ Kelber, "The birth of a beginning: John 1:1-18", 138.

²⁶⁷ Botha, "Reader Entrapment as a Literary Device in John 4:1-42", *Neotestamentica*, 24 (1990).

²⁶⁸ Botha, "Reader Entrapment as a Literary Device in John 4:1-42", 39.

²⁶⁹ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", *Biblical Interpretation*, 1 (1993).

²⁷⁰ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 216.

the water Jesus dispenses is contaminated with his own blood. Thus, Stephen Moore argues that the deconstructed irony is unstable, causing it to “spiral into paradox”.²⁷¹

However, Moore’s deconstructed unstable irony does not remain unstable. Rather, it becomes temporarily unstable (perplexing) when the literal and figurative meanings collapse together in a paradox. Resolving the instability comes about because the water contamination is due to nothing less than Jesus’ blood. At the very time that the Johannine Jesus dies on the cross, devout *hoi Ioudaioi* are slaughtering their Passover lambs. Given that Moore’s unstable irony concerning the contaminated water is resolved within the narrative, my category of perplexing irony is a more accurate designation of this phenomenon. Yet, Moore does provide an example of persistently unresolved unstable irony: God’s desire for all to be saved will never be met. I address this in Chapter Five.

Tom Thatcher

Tom Thatcher highlights the instability of irony in the Fourth Gospel, claiming that Jesus is a Sabbath-breaker.²⁷² He argues that the implied author (and narrator) trick the implied reader concerning two occasions where Jesus is a lawbreaker-sinner. His essay examines how that happens. Thatcher unearths irony through a literary-critical creation of a postmodern, post-structural drama.

Thatcher argues that not only did Jesus break the Sabbath code, he also encouraged those he healed to break the Sabbath laws. Is Jesus a lawbreaker? What does this teach us about the Johannine Jesus? He is elusive.²⁷³ Thatcher argues that the recipients have no choice. It is either stay crippled or blind to keep the Sabbath, or break the Sabbath by obeying Jesus to receive healing. This is stable irony.

Yet, Thatcher argues further for ironic instability. Jesus loves the world (3:16), yet does not show love for the Pharisees. He is the light of the world, yet makes people who are

²⁷¹ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 227.

²⁷² Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel", *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 76 (1999).

²⁷³ Stibbe, "Elusive Christ: a new reading of the Fourth Gospel", *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 44 (1999): 37.

seeing blind (9:39-40; 12:40).²⁷⁴ However, even though God's desire is overarching (persistent paradoxical irony), the resurrection does resolve the victimisation that Jesus suffers. In 12:27-28, the Johannine Jesus implies the reason he came into this world was to go to the cross, and the unity Jesus has with the Father resolves the unstable irony.

Conclusion

Ever since irony was demonstrated through the dialectic of Socrates there has been a growing desire to understand its usage and application. Søren Kierkegaard's thesis in 1841 is testimony to that. The biblical authors may not have articulated irony theory, however, they certainly were able to demonstrate the use of stable, unstable and temporary unstable ironies in their narratives.

There has been interest in Fourth Gospel irony since 1959, as witnessed by a steady stream of articles. The earlier studies had a focus on satire and parody, as shown by the studies of Clavier and Jónsson. Subsequent studies however, that took their lead from the categories assigned by Booth, can be divided according to their focus, either stable or unstable irony.

Most significant in their contributions to the debate supporting the stability of irony in the Fourth Gospel have been Wead, Culpepper, Duke, O'Day and Staley. On the other side, emphasising that there are areas of unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel are Kelber, Botha, Moore and Thatcher. All these, to some extent, have relied on Boothian irony theory, that polarises stable and unstable ironies.

In Hee Berg critiques this aspect of Boothian irony theory however, she is unable to explain the "gulf" between stable and unstable ironies in a satisfactory way. It is noteworthy that Candace Lang (and Carolyn Sharp who echoes her argument) has provided a sure footing on which to affirm unstable and temporary stable ironies as they reflect the absurdities of life.

In this chapter I have identified that each of those who propose unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel either concede that the instability is later resolved, or resort to deconstructive methodology. With regard to deconstructive approaches, they have not

²⁷⁴ Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 76.

allowed the figurative and literal meanings to remain side-by-side, that would allow the reader to appreciate the outcome.

CHAPTER THREE: COVERT IRONY THEORY

Introduction

In the previous chapter the palette was set for the picture to take shape. Scholarship from both historical and Johannine irony perspectives was analysed. Concerning Johannine irony, there are two schools of thought: First, there are those who affirm the stability of Fourth Gospel irony throughout. Secondly, there are those who claim there is some unstable irony present in the Gospel. The literature review provided the groundwork upon which an analysis of irony theory can be based.

In this chapter, I discuss the nature of covert irony. This form of irony is the simplest and most common of the four forms (local-covert, local-overt, infinite-covert, and infinite overt).²⁷⁵ I argue the case for intentional irony and for the presence of unstable and perplexing ironies in the Fourth Gospel. In doing so, I explain the nature of numerous types of irony, with examples. This chapter on irony theory will lay the foundation for forthcoming chapters in which I demonstrate the relevant forms and types of irony I find in the Fourth Gospel with particular reference to the passion narrative.

Discussion concerning the nature of covert irony is normally the agenda of philosophy texts, not works concerning Fourth Gospel irony.²⁷⁶ However, I discuss irony theory in this chapter in order to make sense of the irony I examine later. In addition to this, it will be helpful to begin with some idea of the concept of irony itself. Yet trying to define or classify irony is an almost impossible task. As Douglas Muecke says,

Getting to grips with irony seems to have something in common with gathering the mist; there is plenty to take hold of if only one could. To attempt a taxonomy of a phenomenon so nebulous that it disappears as one approaches is an even more desperate adventure.²⁷⁷

Nevertheless, it is important for our study to define irony and analyse a selected passage according to that definition. “Saying the opposite or ‘contrary’ to what is meant” was

²⁷⁵ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 233-277, especially his figure 5. The three other forms are outside the scope of this thesis. All four of these ironies can be either stable or unstable.

²⁷⁶ Booth identifies that the first seven chapters of his book deal with covert irony. Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*.

²⁷⁷ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*, 3.

the way the ancients from Cicero to Quintilian defined εἰρόνεια.²⁷⁸ However, this certainly is inadequate to define irony for this study, mainly because the attempted definition is ambiguous. Saying the opposite of what is intended can also be the definition of a simile, a metaphor, a pun, an exaggeration, a lie, or an imitation (*mimesis*). A less ambiguous, more accurate and context-specific understanding of irony is needed for our research.

A decade ago Jodi Eisterhold, Salvatore Attardo and Diana Boxer all contributed to an article in which they argue for a theoretical background for irony that contains six variables. They are: a speaker, a hearer, the context, what is spoken, the apparent meaning of the words and their intended meaning.²⁷⁹ These variables are significant because they make the content specific nature of irony clear, and also the fact that it is a communication between speaker and hearer. Unfortunately, for this thesis, the definition they provided was formula based (seemingly distant from reality), it made no distinction between irony and sarcasm, and was only relevant to verbal irony.

Identifying local irony has to do with recognising the exposure of differing layers of meaning. It is connected with the absurdity of what appears to be true when what is apparent stands alongside the truth of reality. Irony deals with the comparison of what the characters experience alongside what the author writes to the readers. It also has reference to the intended meaning by the author and the context in which it was used. Accurate definitions of irony are complicated because it is difficult for the author to convey and for the reader to comprehend all of irony's different facets in a simple way. A key question for this thesis is: how can I define irony clearly and succinctly? Previous chapters have provided a working definition, however, this and subsequent chapters will add to our understanding of irony.

To simplify, I define irony as: *an incongruent twist in the literary or rhetorical device*. I use this simple definition throughout because I find that irony is much more connected

²⁷⁸ Knox, "Irony", 628.

²⁷⁹ Eisterhold, et al., "Reactions to Irony in Discourse: evidence for the least disruption principle", *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38 (2006): 1240-1243.

with literary and rhetorical devices than it is with the traditional identifications above. As Muecke says, "...there is incongruity in all ironic situations".²⁸⁰

First, we see that this broader meaning of rhetoric encompasses several types of literary and rhetorical devices. I examine more of this later in this chapter. Secondly, local ironies focus on issues concerning the context of the irony. Thirdly, all covert ironies are undisclosed by the author and hidden within the text, however, the author intends for the critic to find and explain them. We discover in Chapters Five and Six which analyse the Fourth Gospel passion narrative, that local-covert irony is predominately the irony of the Fourth Gospel. As it resides in the Fourth Gospel text, local-covert irony is hidden irony. Yet Fourth Gospel irony is at its simplest and easiest to find and identify when all we have to find is a rhetorical device with an incongruent twist. See Diagram 2 below that demonstrates stable irony as it is found in the Fourth Gospel.

Wayne Booth stipulates that all local-covert stable ironies have these characteristics:

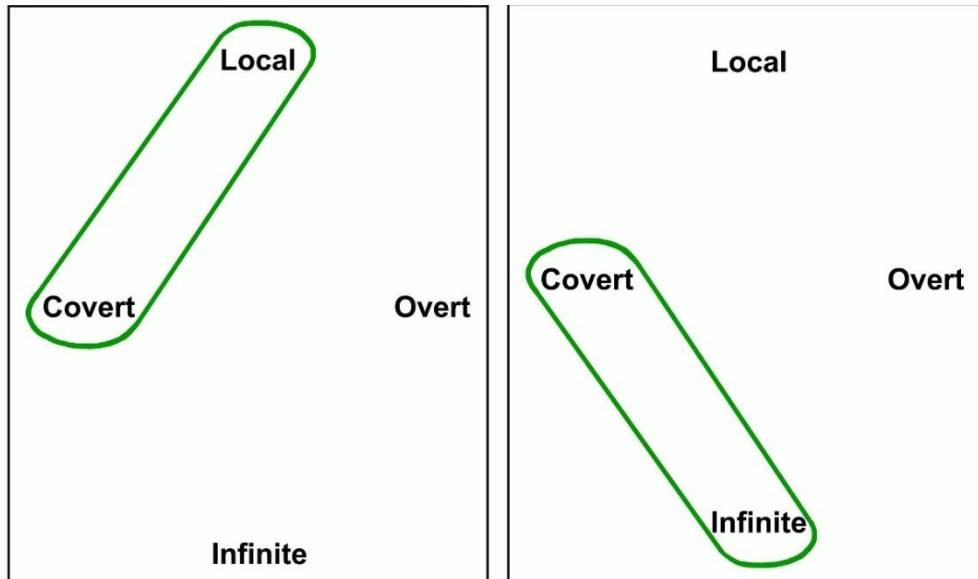
- a) They are intended by the author (not accidental).
- b) They are covert (hidden, but intended for discovery).
- c) They are to be taken as a complete entity (the reader is not invited to extrapolate further ironies from these examples).
- d) They are finite (the field is narrowly described).²⁸¹

I add an additional feature: e) Stable ironies are resolved.

When we turn to unstable covert ironies, we find that they have many of the same characteristics as the stable varieties. However, with instabilities (both ironic and rhetorical), the protagonist is victimised. As already stated, instabilities happen when the protagonist has specific, identified unmet desires. Diagram 3 below identifies infinite-covert irony as unstable irony.

²⁸⁰ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*, 100.

²⁸¹ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 6.



DIAGRAMS 2 & 3: Local Covert Irony is Stable Infinite Covert Irony is Unstable

Various Forms of Irony Identified

Our efforts to define, discover, interpret and explain irony may be complex, however, they are not futile. Rather, our efforts help us to discover truth and put into words what would otherwise be an unexplained mystery, a paradox, or an enigma. Where overt spoken or written non-ironic words would be too bland, “mock” the context in which the literary device was used, or bring unnecessary violence, irony helps to bring truth through rhetoric. It does so by utilising the different layers of meaning in the words, and/or of bringing this incongruent twist to the literary device employed by the author.

Intentional Irony

In order to make sense of stable-local-covert irony, Booth devised the checklist mentioned above. I present it here again in an expanded form.

First, the critic needs to believe that the author intended for the reader to discover the irony. Secondly, the author intends for the reader to be able to explain how the irony works. Thirdly, once the irony is identified, the incongruently twisted rhetorical device is complete. Fourthly, each instance of irony relates to a single rhetorical device. However, being “narrowly described” does not discount that other ironies using

different rhetorical devices may also be present.²⁸² Fifthly, stable ironies do not allow for the victimisation of protagonist or reader. They are resolved ironies.

The literary device of intended irony is not conjured by the manipulation of words of the “untamed critic [who is] guided chiefly by his own experiences”.²⁸³ Rather, as highlighted earlier, local-covert-stable irony “is the clever quick sure-footed creature”.²⁸⁴

It can be problematic to discuss the intent of the author. Such imposition of the reader’s experience on to the text is anachronistic. The modern scholar needs to exercise care as no one is able to reconstruct the thoughts and intentions of the historical author of the Fourth Gospel with complete accuracy. In order for a claim for author intentionality to have validity there needs to be strong internal evidence to support it. Yet, it is with some degree of certainty that I have assumed the intentional nature of the rhetoric and irony due to its strategic and prolific use throughout the gospel.²⁸⁵ Furthermore, Boothian covert irony theory assumes intentionality of the author.²⁸⁶ The issue of authorial intentionality will be covered in greater detail in Chapter Eight.

There are two basic questions when the issue concerns the intentions of the implied author with the use of unstable ironies. The first is: how can the implied reader know what the implied author intended concerning the presence of persistent or temporary unstable irony? Is there is a tell-tale sign in the text? If so, what is it? In order to address this question, I explore and analyse the evidence. The second question I ask is this: are there any instances of this intended, unresolved, unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel (whether persistent or temporary)? If so, what are they?

Whether the author intends unstable irony or not, a reversal of fortune for the victimised protagonist must always be a possibility. If the protagonist has specific, identified unmet desires, there must always be the possibility that these unmet desires are only temporary. Sometimes the author will leave a particular character to continue to suffer

²⁸² Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 6.

²⁸³ Berg, *Irony in the Matthean Passion Narrative*, 16.

²⁸⁴ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 6.

²⁸⁵ For a detailed analysis of the irony I find in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative, see Diagram 1 (later in this chapter), Chapters Five and Six (analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative), along with Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

²⁸⁶ See my arguments above, as well as Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 6.

as a victim. On other occasions, the author may choose to end the suffering of a particular character. The decision to prolong or cut short the victimisation of a character must always remain with the author. It is as Jean Starobinski describes,

Nothing prevents the ironist from conferring an expansive value to the freedom he [sic] has conquered for himself: he [sic] is then led to dream of a reconciliation of the spirit and the world, all things being reunited in the realm of the spirit. Then the great, eternal Return can take place, the universal reparation of what evil had temporarily disrupted.²⁸⁷

Here Starobinski implies that the resolution of unstable irony makes sense. First, as noted above, the resolution of unstable irony is always a possible or even a plausible option for the ironist. Secondly, by resolving the ironic instability, the author brings the plot, that once was “temporarily disrupted by evil”, back on track. In doing so, the author enables hope to emerge for the reader.²⁸⁸ Thirdly, such irony that was once unstable for a period, and is now stabilised, is indicative of the reality of human life.

Authors who write using unstable irony have the potential to convey a negative view of life. They can create despair for the reader. As Eric Gans says,

...ironic thinking is potentially tragic. Once the absolute formal barrier between sign and referent has been shown to be vulnerable, an end is made to deferral and the central figure becomes subject to sparagmatic [sic] violence.²⁸⁹

As well as this, implied authors may victimise their characters or implied readers, or they may choose to write in such a way as to end their suffering / specific, identified unmet desires and produce hope for the implied reader. If authors do write with irony that victimises their protagonists, they can begin with hope and end with tragedy, or begin with tragedy and end with hope. If the ironic literature is persistently unstable it will remain negatively biased, however, if it is temporarily unstable, it will end with hope.

Readers of the Fourth Gospel today may ask the question: Is the irony we find in the Gospel intended by the author? If so, how can we know? It is impossible for us to get into the mind of the fourth evangelist. All we have is the written Gospel. So, when we

²⁸⁷ Starobinski, *Ironie et mélancolie* (Paris: unknown, 1966), 459.

²⁸⁸ Starobinski describes how the plot can move from instability to stability. I propose that his argument also applies to the resolution of ironic instability to create perplexing irony.

²⁸⁹ Gans, *Signs of paradox : irony, resentment, and other mimetic structures* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 76.

discuss the intent of the author, we can never be absolutely certain of what was in the mind of the author.

Intent is difficult to prove. If we turn to the analogy of the law courts, judges and juries have a difficult enough time trying to discover the innocence or guilt of someone facing a criminal charge. However, the work to find authorial intent in a biblical text by a scholar is even more strained. In biblical analysis, there are no live suspects or witnesses to question. Nevertheless, the court does not have to prove intent for a conviction to stand. All it takes for a guilty verdict is a decision that is 'beyond reasonable doubt'. Chief Justice Martin elaborates, saying, "...the reference to a reasonable doubt being 'a' doubt that the jury entertains...".²⁹⁰ Likewise, in literary criticism, scholars cannot be absolutely certain when it comes to authorial intent.

Irony often happens unexpectedly in common speech and behaviour. As Gibbs observes,

[Sometimes] ...people's ironic behaviours result from their self-organising tendencies even before any intention to speak or write in certain ways ever reaches awareness. [Needless to say] ...our conscious thoughts may only provide after-the-fact, and often inaccurate, narratives for what we do.²⁹¹

So, we might expect that a few examples of written irony could appear without the deliberate action of the author's intent. Bearing Gibbs' observation in mind, there needs to be strong evidence that the author intended to include irony, or authorial intention cannot be established.

When examining a text, scholars may establish a verdict of authorial intentionality. They do this by presenting good evidence. Moreover, the more substantial the weight of evidence, the greater the certainty of the verdict.

The Five Key Aspects of Irony Theory

Here I identify five key components in irony theory. They will be incorporated into the chapters to follow. They are:

²⁹⁰ Martin, "Beyond Reasonable Doubt" (paper presented at Annual Conference of Supreme and Federal Courts Judges. 26th January, 2010, 2010), paragraph 20, page 11.

²⁹¹ Gibbs Jr, "Are Ironic Acts Deliberate?", *Journal of Pragmatics*, 44 (2012): 114.

1. The Fourth Gospel is full of deliberate irony that emerges from the community of the beloved disciple.²⁹² In this thesis, I demonstrate the abundance of varieties of irony by the analysis of a section of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative that contains sustained irony. I also demonstrate what may be the purposes of the fourth evangelist's usage of irony in his gospel.

2. I argue that stable irony is the kind of irony that is most commonly found in the Fourth Gospel. My understanding of stable irony differs from that of Muecke and Booth. I see that it happens when a literary device undergoes an incongruent twist. This definition of irony provides a fresh way of looking at Fourth Gospel irony and sheds new light on the rhetoric of the Fourth Gospel. Conversely, unstable irony happens when the protagonist is shown to have specific, identified unmet desires, or becomes the victim of the irony. (Booth contrasted stable and unstable irony.)²⁹³ Further, I add another classification of irony to Booth's classifications of ironic instability: unstable irony that becomes resolved. When ironic instabilities are resolved after a period of time, they reveal another category between stable and unstable ironies. By the addition of this new category, I modify Booth's model. This modification makes his irony theory a more useful tool for those who want to make sense of unstable irony that is resolved.

3. Temporary unstable irony appears in many of the narrative sections of the Bible. These examples become a precedent for its use by the fourth evangelist in the Fourth Gospel.

4. I join with those scholars who identify passages in the Fourth Gospel that demonstrate the specific, identified unmet needs of God or Jesus.²⁹⁴ This thesis examines my examples as well as the claims of others who have found unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel.

²⁹² Alan Culpepper writes, "...the fourth evangelist is characterized as a master of irony." Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony", 193. Also, Paul Duke writes, "...there are places in which the author touches his text with irony so subtle [and]...there are other places in which the device is employed ..."Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 1.

²⁹³ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 233-245.

²⁹⁴ The following three scholars claim to find unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel: Kelber, *The oral and the written Gospel: the hermeneutics of speaking and writing in the synoptic tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q.*; Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman"; Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel".

5. There are passages in the Fourth Gospel in which the reader is entrapped or victimised. Yet no irony results because there is no incongruent twist in the employed literary device. Rather, the created result is *unstable rhetoric*.²⁹⁵ Sometimes these examples of unstable rhetoric are resolved.²⁹⁶ This thesis examines those examples and provides a name for this new type of rhetoric: “perplexing rhetoric”.

Discerning Unintended Unstable Irony

In this section of this chapter, I show how the reader may discern whether (or not) an implied author intends some particular example of unstable irony. We can apply a simple test. The definition and description of irony is the basis of the test. It comes from the perspective of the implied reader, comparing a figurative meaning alongside an actual meaning. This happens on the same level of hermeneutic, without the need to resort to deconstruction or intertextual interpretation.²⁹⁷

The test is simple. It is this: do the figurative and literal meanings blur together in the irony? Gail O’Day claims that this question establishes whether an author intends a particular example of irony (or not). She adds that the figurative and actual (literal) meanings must always be recognisable by the implied reader. The critic must never blur these two meanings.²⁹⁸ They no longer remain as two meanings but become a hybrid or composite of one. In Diagram 4 below I show these things graphically.

²⁹⁵ The following two scholars claim to find examples in the Fourth Gospel where the reader is entrapped or victimised (unstable rhetoric): Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*. ; Botha, "Reader Entrapment as a Literary Device in John 4:1-42".

²⁹⁶ The above two scholars argue for the resolution of unstable Fourth Gospel rhetoric.

²⁹⁷ I define intertextual interpretation as joining meaning together using a variety of verses that may have only a single word in common.

²⁹⁸ O’Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 24-30.

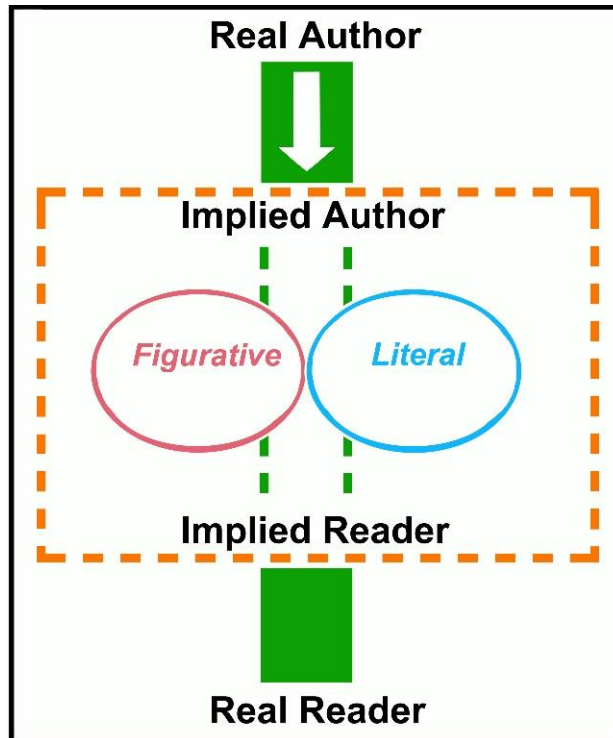


DIAGRAM 4: Author Intended Stable Irony (with unblurred figurative and literal meanings)

How do I know if the irony is unintended by the implied author? If the real reader ever discerns the blurring of the figurative and literal meanings at the same time, then the implied author has not intended the irony. The drama of tragedy demonstrates this unintended irony. It only ever seems to happen in cases of unstable irony. Unintended irony appears when the figurative and literal meanings blur together.

Conversely, in each of the examples I examine in preparing this thesis, I find that stable ironies always exhibit identifiable meanings. Additionally, I find that in all cases where deconstruction unearthed the irony, it also blurred the figurative and literal meanings of the irony. Diagram 5 below is a graphic illustration of this.

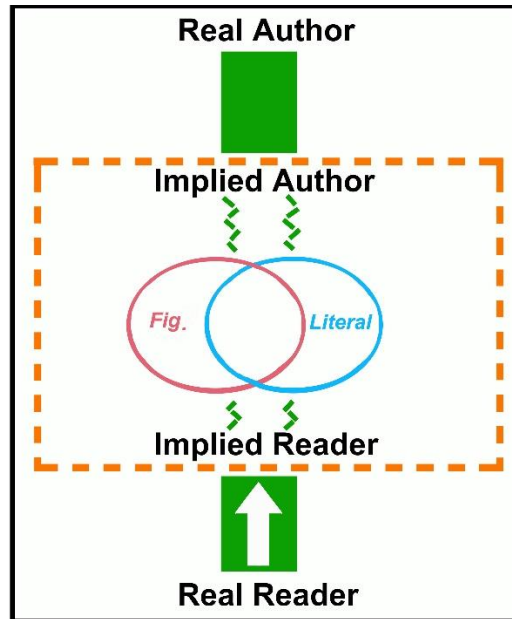


DIAGRAM 5: Unintended Unstable Irony (with blurred figurative and literal meanings)

This diagram illustrates the fact that the communication between real author and real reader is substantially affected when the communication between implied author and implied reader is via blurred categories. When literal and figurative meanings are blurred it is not possible to prove that the implied author intended it.

Yet, this does not mean that the implied author never intended unstable irony. On the contrary, the implied author has the right to choose to present the plot as a tragedy, and, to decide whether or not to victimise the protagonist or implied reader. Furthermore, the choice continues as to whether or not the author wishes to make the victimisation persistent or temporary. These factors are ingredients in the creation of unstable ironies.

We turn to two scholars who have blurred the figurative and literal ironies in the Fourth Gospel.²⁹⁹ I provide detailed analysis of these two authors in my previous chapter, and they will receive only a brief mention here. The first is Werner Kelber who offered two deconstructive studies: on the living water that Jesus offers (4:4-42; 7:37-39; 19:28),³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ I am indebted to Alan Culpepper for identifying these two scholars. Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony", 199-201.

³⁰⁰ Kelber, "In the Beginning Were the Words: The Apotheosis and Narrative Displacement of the Logos," in *Imprints, Voiceprints and Footprints of Memory: Collected Essays of Werner H. Kelber* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 75-101.

and on the metaphor of the bread of life (John 6).³⁰¹ The second is Stephen Moore who argued that impurities contaminate the living water that Jesus dispenses.³⁰² In each of these three journal articles, the author blurred the figurative and literal meanings in question. In so doing, these Johannine scholars demonstrated that the implied author did not create their unstable ironies. Their unstable ironies were their own creations. Yet, for the purposes of rhetorical analysis, they did discover unstable ironies in the Fourth Gospel. However, using the criteria set out above, I may claim that the author of the Fourth Gospel did not intend the unstable ironies that these two authors saw.

Discerning Intended Unstable Irony

Under this heading, I explore the nature of unstable irony, that I am assuming the implied author intended to create in the text. I revisit examples of this literary device written through the ages. Then I ask if it is possible to find examples of it in the Fourth Gospel. In order to achieve this, it will be advantageous to provide a brief summary of unstable irony theory in this section.

The following is a development of my previous arguments concerning the process of identifying the presence of unstable irony. Unstable irony may be found when a protagonist is victimised or whenever a protagonist has specific, identified unmet desires. Initially it is the incongruent twist in the relevant literary device that provides the irony. The protagonist's victimisation brings about the irony's instability. This is because the reader's normal expectation is for the protagonist to succeed and prosper. However, the opposite happens in a tragedy and the hero / heroine becomes the victim. The absurdity of the victimised protagonist makes the irony unstable. For this thesis, the definition is valid whether the victimisation is permanent or temporary.

There are four indicators to the implied reader indicating covert, author-intended, unstable irony:

- The first indicator is the genre of tragedy.

³⁰¹ Kelber, "The birth of a beginning: John 1:1-18", 121-144.

³⁰² Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman".

- The second indicator is the occurrence of a situation in which the protagonist becomes the victim or experiences specific, identified unmet desires.
- The third indicator is the non-blurring of figurative and literal meanings.
- The fourth indicator is that all these indicators need to be present simultaneously.³⁰³

The first indicator of covert, intended ironic instability is the presence of the genre of dramatic tragedy in the text. In literature, the genre of tragedy is unique. It usually follows that the protagonist and possibly other significant characters face their own demise over which they have no control. By contrast, if the characters appear to be able to control their circumstances, they are oblivious to their impending downfall until it is too late.

The second indicator of intended unstable irony is protagonist victimisation. In a dramatic tragedy, the protagonist becomes a victim or has specific, identified unmet desires. The indicator of whether the ironic instability is persistent or perplexing depends on whether the tragedy is resolved or not. As argued before, if the implied author uses the genre of tragedy, it demonstrates the intent to victimise the protagonist. If the implied reader finds protagonist victimisation, then the result is either persistent or temporarily unstable irony.

The third indicator of covert, intended ironic instability is that the figurative and literal meanings are on the same level of meaning. The implied reader can discern the author's intention to create the irony whenever it displays the figurative and literal meanings simultaneously. However, as argued earlier, even if the first two indicators are present, the blurring of figurative and literal meanings indicates that the implied author did not create the ironic instability; the critic created it.³⁰⁴

All three of these indicators are essential for intended, covert, ironic instability to occur in the text. In Diagram 6 below I depict author intended unstable irony.

³⁰³ Of course, these indicators relate to local-covert ironies, as the implied reader first has to recognise the irony in the text or drama. (It is this covert variety of irony, that we find in the Fourth Gospel.) On the other hand, overt ironies are already plain to see because the author already identifies them.

³⁰⁴ This appears to be what happens when a text has to undergo deconstruction in order to produce irony.

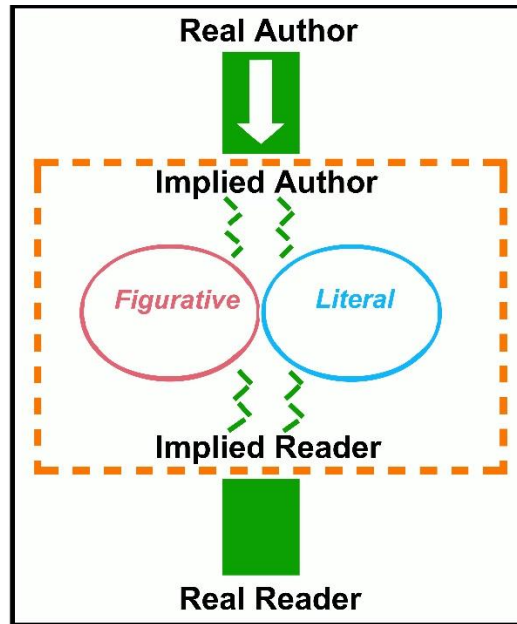


DIAGRAM 6: Author Intended Unstable Irony

Examples of this classification of intended, covert, ironic instability include: *Oedipus Rex*, *Richard III*, and *Waiting for Godot*. Each of these dramas reflects the genre of tragedy wherein the protagonists self-destruct, or suffer death or have persistent, specific and identified unmet desires. The conclusion of these dramas identifies the permanent nature of these tragedies. Thus, they demonstrate persistent ironic instabilities.

Biblical examples of intended covert unstable irony include, the Joseph cycle (Genesis 37-47), the story of Job (Job 1-42), and Hezekiah’s letter incident (Isaiah 36-37). In each of these examples, the protagonists face an incident that has the potential for their complete ruin or death. The plot of the narrative depends on what takes place in the lives of these important characters in the divine drama. Interestingly for the purposes of this thesis, the conclusions of these dramas are similar, in that they all demonstrate unexpected and dramatic “turn-around of events”. The calamities, that appear to have awful consequences for the heroes, do not turn out as anticipated. Furthermore, the unstable irony created through the victimisation resolves and stabilises. The result is a temporary unstable irony. This is what I am calling “perplexing irony”.

The question that I now ask is this: are there any instances of this intended, unresolved, unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel (whether persistent or perplexing)? Briefly, the

answer is “yes”. The reason for this affirmative answer is due to the very nature of my definition of irony. It is an incongruent twist in a literary device. Having now defined the issue, I discuss stable ironies (which are the default ironies), then unstable ironies (which are the aberration), then examples follow (which I identified earlier in this thesis).

Ironic instability therefore, is apparent when the protagonist suffers or has unmet desires. This happens on a few occasions in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. Those who deny these things try to redeem Fourth Gospel irony from instability.

Stable-Local-Covert Ironies

This form of irony always stays resolved, enhancing the plot, as the reader discovers the irony. There are no loose ends. As mentioned previously, Booth states that, “the meanings are hidden, however, when they are discovered by the proper reader they are as firm as a rock”.³⁰⁵ There could be a victim, especially in the case of verbal or dramatic irony, or it can be victim-less irony, as may be found in situational irony. Whether there is a victim or not, the relationship between implied author and implied reader remains strong. The irony does not undermine this relationship. In either case, the author or narrator invites the critic to reconstruct and explain the irony, demonstrating that there are no unresolved elements within it.³⁰⁶ Furthermore, by using irony, the narrator enhances the plot of the narrative. This happens because the irony introduces layers in the story, which may be opposite, yet are true nonetheless. These different layers, perceived by the critic, strengthen an intangible dimension of understanding between author and reader.

Some examples of stable-local-covert ironies are in John 19:5, that reads: “So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, " ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος (Here is the human being!)".” In these words, I find the following multiple irony types: satire, understatement, double-meaning and reversal.

Throughout Jesus’ ministry, the uninformed and unbelievers refer to Jesus as “a man”, however, the disciples and the implied reader know he is much more than this. From the

³⁰⁵ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 235.

³⁰⁶ See Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 277.

beginning of the Fourth Gospel the author declares to the reader that Jesus is the divine Son and that he participated in creation (1:1-3). Pilate scorns Jesus (verbal irony of satire), and it becomes an understatement (dramatic irony) of Jesus' real identity. As well as Pilate addressing the crowd saying, "ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος" (19:5), he also says to them, "Here is your king" (19:14). Is the first a "throne name", and the second a reminder to *hoi Ioudaioi* with whom they are dealing? It could be, therefore, a deliberately ambiguous covert double meaning on Pilate's lips. Pilate could be speaking the words with the higher meaning of a royal title, yet all the crowd hears are sarcastic and disparaging references to Jesus. This then is irony of double meaning (verbal irony).

Furthermore, the garb that Jesus wears is what regal families typically wear (a crown and a purple robe). Jesus is on trial facing capital punishment, yet ironically, this "human being" is dressed in royal garb throughout the proceedings. This is irony of reversal (situational irony). These four ironies in 19:5 are local-covert and stable. In Chapter Five (one of the chapters in which I analyse the passion narrative), I provide a more complete explanation of the types of irony I have mentioned here.

Unstable-Local-Covert Ironies

For the most part, we may accept that the author of the Fourth Gospel intends this unstable-local-covert form of irony, even though it has the potential to victimise the protagonist and isolate the reader. The genre of tragedy demonstrates this where the protagonist cannot recover from victimisation. As we have noted, "tragedy" is a demonstration of persistent unstable irony where the hero / heroine self-destructs, faces an irredeemable problem, or with whom a specific, identified unmet desire persists.

An example of this form of unstable irony from the Ancient Greek Classics is Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*.³⁰⁷ Oedipus, the protagonist and king of Thebes, blinds himself

³⁰⁷ Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*. For example, Oedipus, the king and hero of the story, self-destructs at the end of the tragedy.

and his life spirals out of control when he realised that he killed his own father, Laius, even though he had earlier vowed to kill the person responsible.³⁰⁸

Another example, addressed in Chapter Two, is in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.³⁰⁹ The unstable irony of this play is demonstrated by the way the protagonists hurt Pozzo as well as one another in order to seek their own salvation. Ironically, Vladimir and Estragon desire an elusive salvation that is typical of the unstable irony demonstrated in the drama. The vicious cycle of suffering and cruelty entraps the protagonists. This happens because their ultimate goal is salvation (according to their warped understanding of it). Beckett masterfully utilises local-covert unstable irony in this drama. The unstable irony works well capturing and revealing the honest human conditions of directionless living, procrastination and discouragement.

An example from the Fourth Gospel of local-covert unstable irony is God's specific, identified unmet desire: The divine being desires salvation for all. However, as previously mentioned, God never will have this desire met because some of the characters in the gospel persistently refuse to believe into Jesus (John 3:16-17 and 5:39-40). The Father's unmet desire for all to be saved is an example of persistent unstable paradoxical irony. The ironic twist is that the Father sends his Son to bring salvation (3:16). However, this action does not always produce salvation, but in some cases it produces condemnation (3:36). Jesus was sent to his own who did not receive him (1:11). His own people (*hoi Ioudaioi*) should have followed Jesus, but chose to walk in darkness (8:12). Instead of following him, they turned away, causing the Father's desire to remain unmet. I further expand this feature in later chapters of this thesis.

Likewise, unstable rhetoric occurs in cases of persistent reader victimisation. Again, this rhetorical form appears to be the intention of the author. In rhetorical instability, the implied reader has no unmet desires, yet nonetheless is victimised when ignored by the author. Instances of this include: not being informed about developments in the plot; situations where the characters know certain information that is not conveyed to the reader; or where the author deliberately misinforms the reader (recognised in hindsight later in the narrative). In Diagram 7 below I illustrate unstable rhetoric that results from

³⁰⁸ See Section on Dramatic Irony, Double-Entendre below for a more detailed treatment of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*.

³⁰⁹ Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*.

the victimisation of the implied reader. The diagram indicates that the intent to victimise the reader comes from the author. The figurative and literal meanings are still present, or may not even be in play. However, in the process of the victimisation, the relationship between the author / implied author and the reader / implied reader is threatened. Hence the link between them has collapsed. The victimisation causes the real reader to question what is happening.

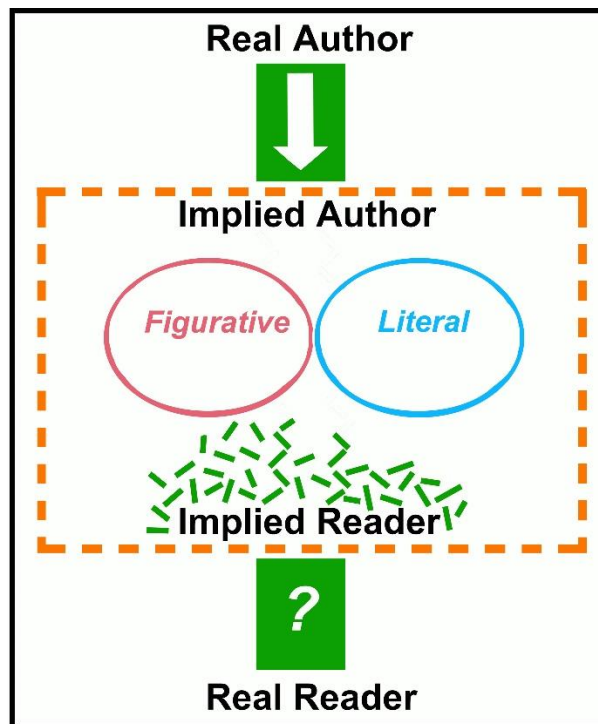


DIAGRAM 7: Unstable Rhetoric Demonstrated by Reader Victimisation

None of these criteria occur in stable ironies or stable rhetoric.³¹⁰ However, stable ironies do often demonstrate overt victimisation of characters in the drama or in speech.³¹¹ Stable ironies have a predictable outcome.

Reader victimisation can be the result of undisclosed information. The author may deliberately choose to withhold information known to the implied author, to narrator, to protagonist, and / or to other characters in the story. When this happens, the reader is “kept in the dark” and the relationship between the author / narrator and reader comes

³¹⁰ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 233.

³¹¹ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 27-28.

into tension. By contrast, when the author / narrator shares information with the reader, it builds the relationship between them. Staley identifies examples of this unstable rhetoric that is later resolved. Commenting on this phenomenon in his analysis of John 7:1-10, he says,

Since the implied author does not have Jesus give a reason why he told his brothers he was not going up to the feast, the relationship between the implied reader and Jesus remains unresolved, and the implied reader can only follow him from a distance. However, the narrator immediately wins back the allegiance of the implied reader by saying that “the Jews [sic] were looking for him at the feast and kept on asking, ‘where is he?’”³¹²

Here Staley identifies what I call “perplexing rhetoric”. The reader expects the narrator to disclose all relevant details of the narrative. However, for an undisclosed reason, sometimes this does not happen and the reader becomes victimised. Furthermore, if there is obvious non-disclosure to the reader the trust-relationship between author and reader suffers. This is not irony as there is no incongruent twist in the situational rhetorical device. Rather, when the reader is entrapped or victimised, it is an example of unstable rhetoric. This situation does not necessarily persist indefinitely. It may become resolved. Whenever the victimisation of the reader is no longer in effect, the result is perplexing rhetoric. In Diagram 8 below I offer a diagrammatic representation of this phenomenon.

Another example of how the fourth evangelist withholds information from the implied reader is the case of the beloved disciple who is a significant character of the Fourth Gospel. The author and narrator appear to know this person, as well as the Johannine Jesus, Peter and the other disciples.³¹³ Yet, strangely, the author never reveals the identity of this nameless disciple. Moloney is of the opinion that it was probably the

³¹² Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 104.

³¹³ It is possible that the original readers also knew his identity.

beloved disciple, or the unnamed disciple with Peter who started to follow Jesus in 1:37-42.³¹⁴

This is an example of the persistently unstable rhetoric where the narrator specifically withholds this person's identity. See Diagram 8 that follows for a visual representation of this literary device.

Diagram 8 below represents and identifies the variety of literary and rhetorical devices I find in the Fourth Gospel. In the diagram, I also display the development of Fourth Gospel rhetorical and literary devices.³¹⁵

³¹⁴ See Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 6-9, 487.

³¹⁵ My analysis of these devices enables the creation of this diagram. (I address these issues in Chapters Five and Six and in Diagram 10. In Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4 I offer a full description of the literary and rhetorical devices found in John 18-20).

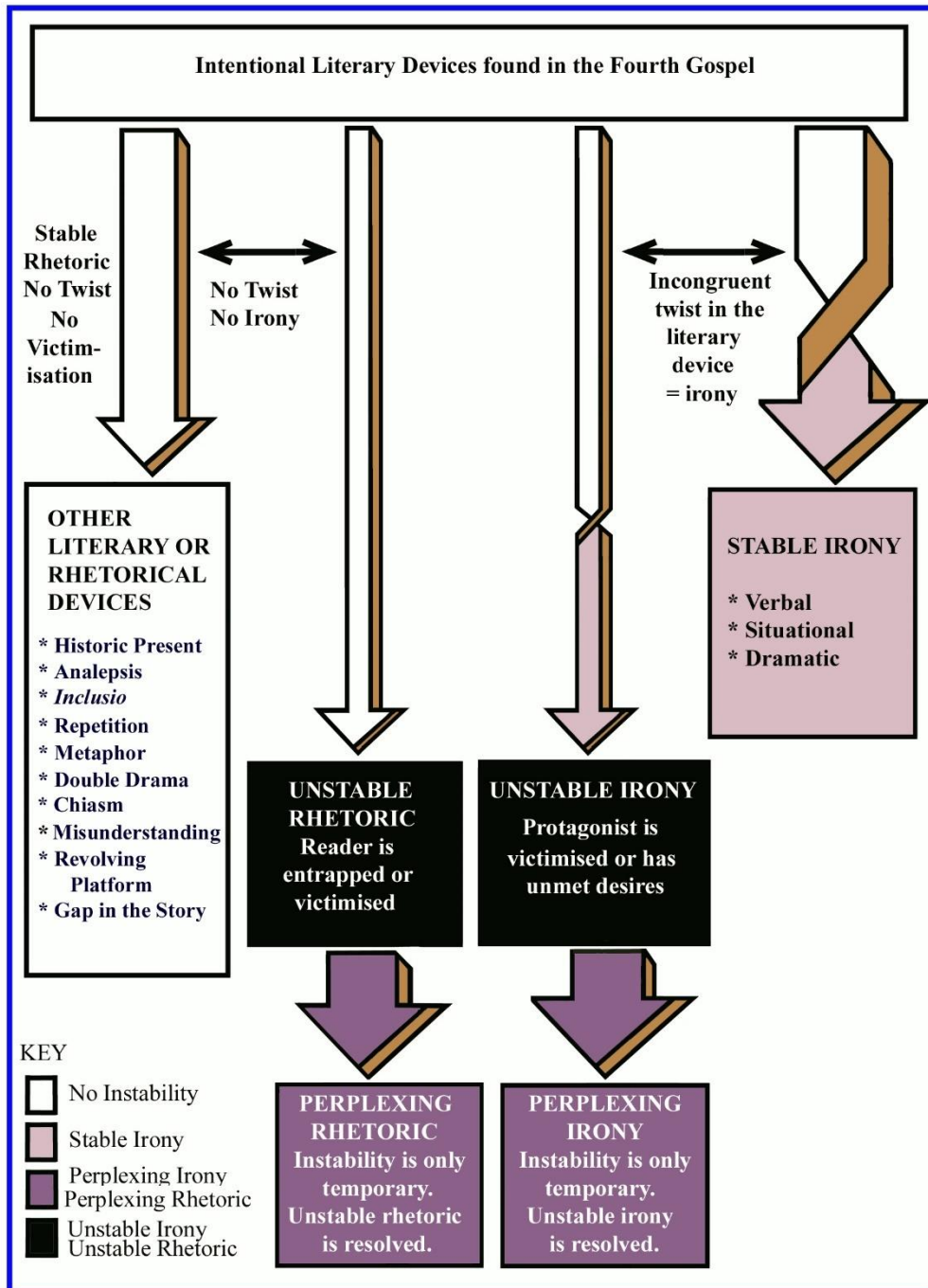


DIAGRAM 8: Development of Rhetoric in the Fourth Gospel

The forms of devices represented in the diagram are: stable irony, stable rhetoric, stable literary devices, unstable irony, unstable rhetoric, perplexing irony and perplexing rhetoric. This thesis provides examples of all these literary and rhetorical devices that I find in the Fourth Gospel.

The rectangle on the top of Diagram 8 represents all of the literary and rhetorical devices of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. Many of these devices undergo an incongruent twist, becoming irony as one of either verbal, situational or dramatic ironies. Irony is indicated by the right hand side twisted arrow. These ironies are stable in most cases. However, in five ironies, the protagonist (as God or Jesus) is the victim or has specific, identified unmet desires. Yet, two of these unstable ironies are resolved because God or Jesus is no longer the victim of the irony. The result is perplexing irony.

In the middle, the long straight arrow represents stable rhetoric. There are no incongruent twists of the rhetorical device, indicating that there is no irony present. Nevertheless, in a small percentage of all rhetorical devices, the reader is victimised. This creates unstable rhetoric. However, in most cases of Fourth Gospel reader entrapment or victimisation, the instabilities are resolved and the result is “perplexing rhetoric”.

The left hand side arrow represents the literary devices found in the Fourth Gospel that always remain stable. It shows that there are no “incongruent twists” in any of these devices. Furthermore, there are no victimisations of either protagonist or reader. The literary devices itemised here include: the historic present tense, chiasm, *inclusion*, a gap in the story, and non-ironic prolepses and analepses. These literary devices add stability to Fourth Gospel rhetoric.

The various shades of arrows and rectangles indicate the different types of irony, rhetoric and literary devices. Moreover, the diagram demonstrates various facets of irony, rhetoric and literary devices being argued in this chapter on irony theory.

If we want to find the earliest examples of this ironic instability, we need look no further than the Old Testament. This is because the earliest usage of this category of irony is found in the biblical narratives, where it appears that there is a common factor. That is that there is a shared expectation by the Israelites that the divine being can and may intervene in their circumstances. This does not seem to be the case in the narratives and dramas of the Ancient Greeks.

Biblical Irony with Instability

In the biblical narratives, especially in the Old Testament, there are examples of ironic instability. The examples that follow are by no means an exhaustive list, neither do they constitute all the irony in a given narrative section. I am focussing only on particular examples in certain narratives in order to highlight the particular aspect of the victimisation of the protagonist. As highlighted in this chapter, there are two categories of ironic instability: (i) persistently unstable irony, and (ii) perplexing irony. In Chapters Five and Six I provide five Fourth Gospel examples of persistently unstable irony and four examples of perplexing irony.

Narrative Criticism

It will be useful to determine the value of narrative criticism for my research. Some of the exponents of this method in the Fourth Gospel have been R. Alan Culpepper, Mark Stibbe, Robert Alter and Francis Moloney.³¹⁶

As one of the forms of literary criticism, narrative criticism focusses on features of the narrative. These include: plot, characterisation, genre and “point of view in narration..., view[ing] the narrative as an interactive whole, with harmonies and tensions that develop in the course of narration”.³¹⁷

As one of the types of literary criticism, narrative criticism applies ancient and modern literary theory to the text. According to narrative criticism, the biblical narrative is not some historical source hidden in the text. Rather, it sees the narrative as a complete entity.

We can see the value of narrative criticism for this thesis in the following three features.

1. We may assume that the narrative’s plot has an important function in the Fourth Gospel. If we desire to discover the development of the plot, we do not simply add up

³¹⁶ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*. Stibbe, *John’s Gospel* (London: Routledge, 1994). Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981). Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*.

³¹⁷ Tannehill, "Narrative Criticism," in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (eds. Coggins and Houlden; London: SCM, 1990), 488.

the number of references to a given theme. To do so would end up with a mathematical formula based on frequency. For example, if we examine the various responses people make towards Jesus, we see depicted in the narrative the Johannine view of how people respond to him. Some believe, some are secret believers and others refuse to believe into Jesus. Narrative criticism enables us to identify the development of faith of particular people who are facing a crisis, or the growing antagonism in others. Furthermore, where the author places an incident in the narrative it is of significance to the plot. So, a particular scene in the Fourth Gospel may not be fully appreciated without looking at its place within the whole narrative.

2. We may use a gap in the narrative as an example of one of the features of narrative criticism. The gaps in a narrative are an often-used literary technique. For example, in the passion narrative there is a gap in the story while Jesus is before Caiaphas (18:24, 28). In verse 24 Jesus is taken from Annas (the high priest's father) to Caiaphas (the high priest). Verses 25-27 are an interlude that deal with Peter's denial, concluding with the crowing rooster. Then, in verse 28, the guards take Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate. Yet, there is no mention of what takes place while Jesus is before Caiaphas. If we examine the gap-in-narrative through the eyes of narrative criticism, it highlights Caiaphas' contribution to the passion narrative solely on the basis of his ironic prophecy (18:14) that one person (Jesus) "had to die for the people". His further presence in the narrative is therefore, unnecessary. The gap in the story is non-ironic rhetoric.

3. The details outlined above concern the plot of the narrative, characterisation, genre and point of view in narration. These features of narrative criticism are important to this research on irony, so it seems appropriate to find a way forward that can utilise these features in my analysis.

Biblical Narrative and Perplexing Irony

In Chapter Two, I argue that sometimes the instability of irony is only temporary, indicating the presence of perplexing irony. In other words, sometimes the protagonist in a story is not persistently a victim. When we turn to biblical narratives, we find several examples. The first early example of perplexing irony I examine is the Joseph

cycle (Genesis 37 onwards).³¹⁸ This story provides us with an example of perplexing irony involving a victimized protagonist. The story of Job and Jonah, that I examine next, are further examples of this irony.

Joseph

Joseph is the son of Jacob's old age (Genesis 37:3), and Jacob especially loves him. He is the dreamer in the family. His childhood dreams are powerfully prophetic of what is to take place in his adult life. However, the seventeen-year-old Joseph (37:2) lacks the wisdom of knowing what and how to tell his brothers. He incurs their hatred (37:8). Jacob's rebuke does not settle the matter, as he is only concerned about Joseph's relationship of power towards his parents and not his siblings (37:10-11). H.C. White describes the situation, saying, "The narrator has thus outlined a system of emotional forces in the family, over which no one has control, and its consequences".³¹⁹ The family situation is not ideal. J. Goldin describes Jacob, saying that he

...is the most stupid of the patriarchs. He knows that passions rage in his family... Yet he sends Joseph to learn of the welfare of the boys and the flocks; and Joseph does not even know the way; he gets lost in the fields.³²⁰

Jacob's favouritism of Joseph is partly the cause of the sibling rivalry, jealousy and antagonism from his brothers (37:5-9). They want to kill him (37:18-19), however, Reuben (37:21-22), and also Judah prevail and they spare their brother (37:26-27).³²¹ Eventually, the brothers (without Reuben; 37:29-30) sell him to a slave caravan heading for Egypt (37:25-28). To back up their story, the boys soak Joseph's special coat that his father had made him, in goat's blood, and then they take it home to deceive their father (37:31-32).

Meanwhile in Egypt, Joseph becomes a slave of an influential family and he is subsequently and unjustly condemned to prison (39:1-20). He spends some years there.

³¹⁸ Historical critical analysis of the Joseph cycle reveals a combination of J and P traditions.

³¹⁹ White, "The Joseph Story: A Narrative which 'Consumes' its Content", *Semeia*, 31 (1985): 60.

³²⁰ Goldin, "The Youngest Son or Where Does Genesis 38 Belong", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 96 (1977): 39.

³²¹ Reuben, the eldest, was probably trying to regain his birthright after his father heard that he had a sexual relationship with Bilhah, his father's concubine (35:22). See Goldin, "The Youngest Son or Where Does Genesis 38 Belong", 37.

Finally, a freed prisoner remembers Joseph's ability to interpret dreams and recommends him to Pharaoh who has had dreams no one can interpret (41:8-13). Providentially, he interprets Pharaoh's dreams, Pharaoh recognises his usefulness and elevates him (41:14-40). Joseph gives wise counsel for Egypt, and this is the reason he becomes the Prime Minister of the country. Carolyn J. Sharp identifies how Joseph is reinvested with power. She says,

Joseph wears the Pharaoh's own signet ring, robes of fine Egyptian linen, a gold chain around his neck. His identity is reconfigured via a new Egyptian name, Zaphenath-pa'neah, which may mean 'God speaks and lives'... Finally, he gains an Egyptian wife... He is second in authority only to Pharaoh himself... How powerful? As powerful as God – at least to those who are duped by the exquisite ironies that unfold.³²²

Joseph's teenage dreams are starting to become a reality in a foreign land. His new work involves overseeing the collection and storage of grain in the years of bounty and its distribution during the drought that followed (41:56-57). After seven good years, a severe famine ravaged that part of the world (41:53). Its effect was not just in Egypt, but also in the land where Joseph's father, Jacob, and his family lived. The lack of food forced Jacob to send his other sons to Egypt to buy grain (42:1-2). J.P. Fokkelman says of the Joseph cycle,

...so we discovered that great reversal – Joseph making himself known to the remorseful brothers and inviting his father to live in Goshen – takes place some twenty years after the pit incident.³²³

It took twenty or more years, with much of that as a slave, before Pharaoh recognised Joseph and elevated him to his trusted position. However, H.C. White says of the narrator's use of reversal irony,

...that by inciting the brothers to take action against the 'dreamer' and his dreams, the familial system of jealous hatred is made to serve the very end of Joseph's ascendancy which it seeks to defeat.³²⁴

Furthermore, the narrator attributes this change of fortune to God's intervention (45:7-8). This is ironic double standard as Joseph has acted like a divine being in

³²² Sharp, *Irony and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible*, 55-56.

³²³ Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38 at the Interface of Structural Analysis and Hermeneutics," in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible* (eds. de Regt, et al.; Assen: Van Gorcum and Company, 1996), 167.

³²⁴ White, "The Joseph Story: A Narrative which 'Consumes' its Content", 61.

manipulating his brothers since they arrived (42:28; 43:23; 44:15-16).³²⁵ Nevertheless, the drought brought Joseph and his brothers together (43:15). However, it also enabled Joseph to reunite with all his family, including his father and younger brother, as well as those who betrayed him and sold him into slavery (46:1-7).

The unstable irony becomes stable. Joseph, the protagonist, acknowledges that his God had initiated this full family reunion. Joseph was victimised by his brothers, yet later he reunited with his family, resolving the unstable irony. Thus, the *Joseph cycle demonstrates perplexing irony of reversal*.

Job

The story of Job, from sapiential literature, has a similar outcome in terms of demonstrating perplexing irony. In the Jobian narrative, a tragedy unfolds.³²⁶ It is the story of Job, a wealthy man (Job 1:1-3), who loses all the treasures in his life: his family (Job 1:18-19), his health (Job 2:7), his servants and all his possessions (Job 1:14-17). Apart from his wife, the only thing he has left is his relationship with God whom he faithfully acknowledges. The tragedy unfolds upon Job as his wife and his friends who come to comfort him (Job 12: 4) mock his unyielding allegiance to his deity. They try to encourage him to blame God (Job 2:9), or they tell him that his own misbehaviour or disobedience has brought about the calamities that have come upon him. My understanding of Eliphaz' advice to Job is: 'your sin is the cause of your suffering' (Job chapters: 4, 5, 15, 22). In essence, Bildad's advice is: "you are still suffering because you have not admitted your fault to God" (Job chapters: 8, 18, 25). I summarise Zophar's advice: "you are still suffering because you still will not admit your guilt before God" (Job chapters 11 and 20). They tried to provide Job with simplistic answers to life's incongruent perplexities. The irony spirals into paradox because Job (the protagonist) continues to endure his suffering and reject their unhelpful advice.

Job is angry with God, because to him, he is being punished and he is suffering unjustly (Job 6:24-25; 7:11-21; 9:15-19, 27-29; 10:2, 14-17). His claim for unfairness is based

³²⁵ Sharp identifies how Joseph is "quasi-divine". Sharp, *Irony and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible*, 56.

³²⁶ I have assigned the generic terms of 'tragedy' and 'narrative' to the Jobian literature, but neither of these words are conclusive. See Whedbee, "The Comedy of Job," in *On Humour and the Comic in the Hebrew Bible* (eds. Radday and Brenner; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 217-218.

on the traditional view: righteousness means being happy, and sin brings misery.³²⁷ However, something has gone wrong with his theology.³²⁸ This is because even though Job is righteous, he is miserable, in pain and suffering. Therefore, Job wants to talk with God face to face and set the record straight with him. As Edwin Good says,

Righteousness produced no benefit whatever, as Job himself demonstrates. He has done all that should procure for him a life of pleasure and honor. If the argument of the friends is right, then he should be sitting in the city gate, moderating disputes, possessor of authority and object of admiration. However, he is sitting not there but here, and the argument of the friends is nonsense. If man [sic] wants divine favor, he must have a God he can control.³²⁹

When Job talks with his naïve companions, the reader gets the sense that Job is trying to persuade God to be kind to him. There are two complaints he makes against his companions: they are of no use to him (Job 16:4-5), and what they say is nonsense (Job 9:2-4). Moreover, Job is not just impatient with them, he is sarcastic! (Job 6:25; 12:2; 13:5; 26:1-4).³³⁰ As Whedbee says, “Job’s sarcastic and satirical rejection of his friends and their irrelevant advice is sharp and bitter, but not unmerited”.³³¹ Yet, even though Job struggles with what they say to him, he wants them to stay with him (Job 6:28). Ironically, Job’s ultimate problem is not with his companions, it is with his God. As Whedbee says again, “His language of attack against God is probably the most searing in the Hebrew Bible. God often emerges as a grotesque, demonic deity”.³³²

Life is just too painful and difficult for Job (16:6 – 17:2). Death seems better than a life of misery (Job 3:16-19). Yet, Job perseveres. He never curses his God, yet he despises the day of his birth (Job 3:3-7). He guards himself against speaking blasphemy, yet asks a rhetorical question that has an underlying assumption that his deity must be the instigator of evil as well as good.

²² It is all one; therefore, I say, he destroys both the blameless and the wicked. ²³
When disaster brings sudden death, he mocks at the calamity of the innocent. ²⁴
The earth is given into the hand of the wicked; he covers the eyes of its judges -- if it is not he, who then is it? ([Job] 9:22-24 NRSV).

³²⁷ Clines, *Job 1-20* (Dallas: Word, 1989), lxii.

³²⁸ Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 213.

³²⁹ Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 220.

³³⁰ Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 214.

³³¹ Whedbee, "The Comedy of Job", 227.

³³² Whedbee, "The Comedy of Job", 230.

Nevertheless, in the end, Job meets his God and he acknowledges the wisdom and omniscience of the Creator. His God restores to Job everything he lost, so that he becomes even wealthier than before (Job 42:10-16).³³³

Job's story is one of unexpected loss and grief, and finally of redemption. As the protagonist in the drama, he is the victim of a heavenly conspiracy (Job 1:6-12) creating unstable irony. He is victimised throughout the narrative until the end when the ironic instabilities are resolved. Thus, the story of Job is a biblical example of the perplexing irony of reversal.

Jonah

Likewise, the Jonah narrative depicts the prophet's ruin through his wilful rejection of God and his unwillingness to obey the divine summons. Instead of travelling to Nineveh to proclaim the judgment of the Lord, he boards a ship heading to Tarshish, in the opposite direction (Jonah 1:3). A violent storm arises, tossing the ship about (Jonah 1:4). The ship's captain awakes Jonah (Jonah 1:6). The crew help Jonah realise that his deliberate disobedience is the cause of the stormy threat to the ship, and of the impending danger they face (Jonah 1:11-12). Consequently, at Jonah's request, the ship's crew throw Jonah overboard, and he surrenders his life to the depths of the sea (Jonah 1:15).

Ironically, in his effort to experience the absence of the Lord by going to sea, Jonah finds that the Lord's presence is in the sea.³³⁴ Before he drowns, a large fish consumes him, and he survives in its stomach for three days (Jonah 1:17). While he is there, he cries out to God. In penitence he prays,

“As my life was ebbing away, I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple. Those who worship vain idols forsake their true loyalty. But

³³³ Whedbee sees that this restoration scene is a confirmation that the whole story is a comedy. See Whedbee, "The Comedy of Job", 244.

³³⁴ Several passages in the Psalms poetically affirm that the sea is a sign of God's presence. For example, Psalms 24:1-2; 29:3-4, 10; 65:5-7; 77:16-19; 95:5; 97:2-5; 107:23-30; 139:7-10; 148:7-8. See Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 43n9.

I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Deliverance belongs to the Lord!” (Jonah 2:7-9 NRSV).

Miraculously, Jonah survives the ordeal. After being vomited by the large fish on the shore near Nineveh, he eventually journeys to the place he had been sent (Jonah 2:10).

Reluctantly, Jonah obeys the word of the Lord by going to Nineveh to proclaim God’s message (Jonah 3:3). This decision to change his mind and actions is the result of his maritime experience. Nevertheless, his new-found obedience as demonstrated by his actions averts the consequences of the evil and violence that was being perpetrated by the citizens of Nineveh.³³⁵ According to God’s word to Jonah, the citizens of Nineveh were facing destruction (Jonah 3:4). It was the punishment they had brought on themselves (Jonah 1:2). Their response to what Jonah said meant that they were no longer under God’s judgment, but rather, recipients of God’s favour (Jonah 3:5). The citizens of Nineveh received Jonah’s message as a divine summons, calling them to repentance. The people of that great city humbled themselves, and turned away from evil and violence (Jonah 3:6-9). As a result, they averted destruction (Jonah 3:10).

From Jonah’s point of view, this reversal of God’s judgment on Nineveh was unacceptable and he became angry with God (Jonah 4:1). After Jonah had finished proclaiming the prophetic message of judgment, God relented and had mercy on Israel’s enemies. Concerning the fate of Nineveh, God did not do what Jonah said that God would do. This upset the reluctant prophet. Jonah’s annoyance demonstrated his arrogance and petulance. He wanted to die. He sat down overlooking the city to see what would happen to it. God gave him a shady bush, protecting him from the hot sun, however, by the next day, the bush had withered. Jonah’s reaction to the withered bush becomes the parable that shows him the mercy of God and his care for all the inhabitants of Nineveh, even the animals.

³³⁵ Perhaps the reason for Jonah’s initial disobedience and flight away from Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, “...was not motivated by any thought that he was an essential cog in the wheel of revelation, and that God’s plan would be thwarted by his flight. Rather, he simply wanted no part of something so horrible as mercy shown to a brutal, oppressing, enemy nation.” Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah* (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 453. See also Nahum 3:4-7.

The narrative prophecy of Jonah also tells the story of the tragedy of the citizens of Nineveh. They face destruction because their evil and violent behaviour is abhorrent to God. They are victims of the consequences of their own actions. However, the citizens (and animals) of Nineveh, led by the king, repent in sackcloth and ashes (Jonah 3:6-9).³³⁶ Even though the citizens of Nineveh are not the protagonists in the narrative (Jonah is), they are the recipients of the message Jonah proclaims. The ironic reversal concerning God's treatment of them demonstrates perplexing irony. It appears as though they are the subjects of God's compassion, and they repent. As a result, God relents and reverses his decision. They are redeemed by God's mercy, and he does not destroy the city. This demonstrates perplexing irony of reversal on the Ninevite situation.

As far as Jonah is concerned, there is a similar ironic outcome. His initial disobedience and running away has the consequence of him being cast into the angry sea (Jonah 1:15). Because of the words of the pagan sailors, the implied reader is led to believe that Jonah's disobedience, and the consequent tragedy of being cast overboard, will end in his death (Jonah 1:14). This demonstrates unstable irony as Jonah, the protagonist, is the victim. The poetic description of protagonist victimisation is vivid, using the metaphor of an ocean drowning (Jonah 2:3-5). Jonah cannot breathe. The water engulfs him. He is trapped beneath the waves with seaweed tangled around his head (Jonah 2:3-5). To the surprise of the implied reader, God has mercy on Jonah and spares his life, even though his ordeal means remaining inside the large fish for three days (Jonah 1:17).

In analysing the narrative, I concur with Good that the book of Jonah ridicules the prophet.³³⁷ It satirises his xenophobic attitude toward Gentiles whom he considers are outside of God's covenant (see Jonah 4:1-2, 11). Who is Jonah to dictate to God whom God will forgive (Jonah 4:4, 9)? Jonah had done his work of preaching well, yet now he is disgusted, annoyed and frustrated with God who has mercy on him (Jonah 4:2). His

³³⁶ This is an unexpected surprise, even to Jonah. The satire makes us laugh at Jonah's petulance. Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 49-50.

³³⁷ Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 41.

reluctant obedience and his patronising attitude towards the citizens of Nineveh do not prevent God from sparing Jonah's life a second time, under the vine (Jonah 4:6-10a). This shows the perplexing irony of satire.

As Edwin Good says,

To be sure, the author clarifies his position by playing the figure of Jonah off against God. . . . But our attention is directed primarily to the prophet, and his attitude is the focal point of the tale. The attitude of God – and of the author – highlights the attitude of Jonah in order to satirize it. And the satire is through and through ironic. Its basis is a perception of incongruity.³³⁸

And again he says,

We would be mistaken if we sought to spell out the positive theology of our author in too much detail. His purpose was not to propose some theological statements for our consideration, but to expose absurdity by the irony of satire. Like all ironists, he took his stand upon an ultimately serious truth. The alternative to Jonah's absurdity is the absurdity of God. If the author's readers are not prepared to settle for the former, he offers no recourse but to the latter. And the mystery of grace is no less absurd than the mystery of justice.³³⁹

Satirical irony pervades the book. Jonah is ridiculed on various occasions, adding to the intrigue of the story. For example, Jonah is in a deep sleep, even snoring (so Septuagint version), that aroused the captain in the midst of the violent storm (Jonah 1:5). He is the object of ridicule when thrown overboard (Jonah 1:15), when the large fish swallows him (Jonah 2:1), and spews him out on dry land (Jonah 2:10)! As a reaction to the changes in his circumstances, Jonah's rapid mood changes are satire as well.³⁴⁰

How absurd, that when God turns from his anger, Jonah says he is greatly displeased and angry (Jonah 4:1). David Marcus identifies this absurdity as a theological one. The prophet of God struggles with the basic tenet of his faith: God is a merciful God.³⁴¹

The book of Jonah declares the universal truth that God is in control and there will be consequences of divine wrath upon those who dare to defy his sovereignty.³⁴²

³³⁸ Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 41.

³³⁹ Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 54-55.

³⁴⁰ Marcus, *From Balaam to Jonah: Anti-Prophetic Satire in the Hebrew Bible* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 119-120.

³⁴¹ Marcus, *From Balaam to Jonah: Anti-Prophetic Satire in the Hebrew Bible*, 115.

Moreover, Jonah realises that God will show compassion and kindness to whomever he chooses (Jonah 4:2). Additionally, the message of the book of Jonah is this: in spite of the poor decisions, and tragic mess people make of their lives, hope and redemption may happen at any time. Furthermore, the message is anti-xenophobic.³⁴³ Both Jonah and the Ninevites, who were stereotypically outside of the Lord's favour, demonstrate the veracity of these truths.³⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the key stable irony of the prophecy of Jonah is the satire aimed at the prophet. The two perplexing ironies are (i) the reversal of judgment on the citizens of Nineveh, and (ii) the reversal of death twice for Jonah. The first occasion is after being thrown overboard and swallowed by a large fish, the second as he sits under the withered vine.

The Categories of Irony

Irony theorists identify three main categories of irony: verbal, situational and dramatic, however, Knox identifies three others: Socratic, cosmic and romantic ironies.³⁴⁵ I will analyse the first three with detail in the following paragraphs as they are the categories of irony demonstrated in the Fourth Gospel.³⁴⁶ I propose that these last three are types and not categories of irony. Socratic irony becomes part of the category of verbal irony, cosmic becomes part of situational irony and romantic becomes part of dramatic irony.

These last three types of irony are outside the scope of this thesis.³⁴⁷

³⁴² Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 448.

³⁴³ Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 39.

³⁴⁴ Even though Jonah's anger (4:1) prevents him from seeing the Lord's gracious actions towards him, he acknowledges that the Lord is slow to anger (4:2).

³⁴⁵ Knox, "Irony".

³⁴⁶ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*. In this book Muecke analyses these three categories in depth: Verbal (64-98); Situational (99-136); and Dramatic (137-147) ironies.

³⁴⁷ I briefly define them here. *Socratic irony* was the category of irony used by Plato of his character Socrates, who demonstrated it in his questioning of interlocutors. As Plato's mentor, Socrates was a real person as well as a character in Plato's dramas. Socrates is portrayed as the master ironist. He would ask a noble person about a virtue (justice, courage, love, friendship, rhetoric, etc.). The questions were answered quickly and not thought-through. The interlocutors appeared as victims to the audience. They were inadequate to define the virtues that they exemplified. With further questioning Socrates exposed an interlocutor's naivety and helped create ethical knowledge. Unfortunately, Socrates' feigned ignorance made sport of those who tried in good faith to answer his questions. Yet, he intended to elicit truth and this was the reason behind his art of questioning, known later as the 'Socratic method'. *Cosmic irony* is

Verbal Irony

Speech is the vehicle for Verbal Irony. This category of irony implies that an orator is using the rhetoric of irony. Moreover, the orator is the ironist, consciously and intentionally presenting, creating and evoking the irony in speech.³⁴⁸ Orators have used and do use a variety of rhetorical devices in speech. Their speeches can be: deliberately ambiguous, cryptic, deceptive, sarcastic, derisive, witty; or they may use banter, metaphors, ridicule, satire, or rhetorical questions. These rhetorical devices signal the presence of Verbal Irony to the reader. This happens when there is an incongruent twist in one or more of these devices. Historically, the Greco-Roman authors and philosophers paved the way for modern usage by discussing the dynamics of the orator's rhetoric. Handbooks on understanding and using rhetorical devices were common among them.³⁴⁹

The following is a list of examples of the types of Verbal Irony I find in the Fourth Gospel. I have prefaced each of these with another example from outside Johannine literature. These examples help to demonstrate the various nuances of each type.

Double meaning

Of ironic double meaning, Longinus quotes from Xenophon's account of the Spartan polity. In the following quote, Xenophon refers to the pupils of the eye as "maidens" producing double meaning.

demonstrated by an ominous event that characters try to avoid, but in their attempt to escape the tragedy their very actions bring it on. Some scholars may argue that the Fourth Gospel has an example of Cosmic irony in the response of *hoi Ioudaioi* to Jesus after the healing of the blind man in 9:40-41. However, this example also fits into the situational type of reversal irony. *Romantic irony* happens when an author moves from the plot of the novel or drama to make other comments. These can include personal reflections, or comments about personal awareness, or lack thereof to the reader or audience (Muecke, *The Compass of Irony* 159-215.). These comments keep the reader or audience informed. Often these comments set up ironies of double-entendre in the drama. Because of this, romantic irony is a type of dramatic irony. Furthermore, I have found that where specific examples of Fourth Gospel romantic irony occur, I can always identify them as another type of dramatic irony.

³⁴⁸ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*, 42.

³⁴⁹ The following Greco-Roman philosophers wrote about the use of rhetoric: Aristotle, "Ethics"; Aristotle, "Poetics". Demetrius, *On Style* (Cambridge, MA: Roberts, R. (Tr.) Cambridge University Press; <http://www.classicpersuasion.org/pw/demetrius/index.htm>, 1902). Longinus, *On the Sublime* (Tr. Lang, Andrew; Project Gutenberg; <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17957/17957-h/17957-h.htm>, 2006). Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* (London: George Bell and Sons; Watson, John (Tr.); <http://archive.org/stream/quintiliansinst00watsgoog#page/n7/mode/1up>, 1903). Cicero, *His Orator* (Jones, E. (Tr.) Project Gutenberg; <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/9776/pg9776.html>, 2003).

Their voice you would no more hear than if they were of marble, their gaze is as immovable as if they were cast in bronze; you would deem them more modest than the very maidens in their eyes.³⁵⁰

For Xenophon to speak of the pupils of the eye as “modest maidens” is absurd, until we discover the pun.³⁵¹ Additionally, it is completely strange and delusional to suggest that the only way to express modesty is by the eyes! Nevertheless, it is quite acceptable to suggest that your eye expression can betray your character.³⁵²

The double meaning that is explained by Longinus is where Xenophon uses a Greek homonym. Double meanings happen when there is an unintended deeper meaning that is more profoundly true (and sometimes untranslatable). Both meanings are very different from each other, and sometimes one of the meanings is unintended. It can be in the form of a homonym as above, or even as a prophetic proclamation from an unexpected source. The effect of the pun can be profound on the hearer, who may perceive a spiritual dimension to the experience.

An example of the irony of double-meaning can be found in the episode of the Samaritan woman (4:4-41). The Johannine Jesus asked the woman for a drink (4:7). He may have needed a drink in the heat of the day after a long journey (4:6). However, Jesus indicated that his thirst was deeper than just a physical need (4:10). He “thirsted” for the woman to drink from the living water that only he could supply (4:10, 13).³⁵³ Thus, the “water” of which Jesus was speaking was spiritual, however, the woman understood it as the liquid she needed to draw from the well.

Metaphor

Demetrius identified *μεταφορά* as having a broader meaning than our English understanding of “metaphor”, including the concept of transfer.³⁵⁴ For example, abstract

³⁵⁰ Longinus, *On the Sublime*, IV, 4.4. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17957/17957-h/17957-h.htm> .

³⁵¹ *κόρα* has a double meaning: ‘maiden’ and ‘pupil of the eye’.

³⁵² Longinus, *On the Sublime*, IV, 4.4. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17957/17957-h/17957-h.htm> .

³⁵³ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 207-209.

³⁵⁴ Demetrius, *On Style*, 78-88, 142, 172. <http://www.classicpersuasion.org/pw/demetrius/index.htm>

things become more vivid (ἐνέργεια) when μεταφορά is used, making something dead have life.

A metaphor is a figure of speech where something real and concrete is compared with something completely different to give a deeper meaning. Dorothy Lee says,

Metaphors ... do not merely substitute one element for another, nor do they function merely as affective channels. On the contrary, real metaphors have cognitive content as well as intuitive power, enlarging the reader or hearer's understanding.³⁵⁵

Metaphors are only used in speech or writing. They are often double-sided, linking the finite with the divine.³⁵⁶ For example, when John the Baptist says that Jesus is the “Lamb of God” (1:29) he is using a metaphor. Obviously, Jesus is not an ovine creature, but rather is like the “lamb” that becomes the sacrifice.³⁵⁷ The sacrificial lamb is symbolic of what Jesus does when he dies on the Cross (1 Corinthians 5:7). This is somewhat blurred in the crucifixion of Jesus because Passover lambs are being slaughtered at the same time that Jesus dies. The blurring occurs because the Passover celebrates God's people being rescued from slavery, with no mention of it providing atonement for sins. Nevertheless, as Jesus carries his cross (19:17), he fulfils the Messianic prophecy of being “a lamb ... to the slaughter” (Isaiah 53:7 and Jeremiah 11:19). In addition, the Fourth Gospel alludes to the Suffering Servant of Deutero-Isaiah who faces the rejection of his people. Yet, in the Fourth Gospel, the divine Son is also exalted by God. John 12:38 is a direct quote from the Septuagint of Isaiah 53:1.³⁵⁸ Irony becomes evident through the symbol of a lamb because Jesus is the “Lamb of God” (1:29). This is metaphorical irony because the symbolic lamb is the divine person of Jesus.

Sarcasm

Plato demonstrates sarcasm in Socrates' greeting to Agathon. Agathon has invited Socrates to come and sit with him. The sarcasm is demonstrated in these words,

³⁵⁵ Lee, *Flesh and Glory: Symbol, Gender and Theology in the Gospel of John* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 2002), 17.

³⁵⁶ Lee, *Flesh and Glory: Symbol, Gender and Theology in the Gospel of John*, 14.

³⁵⁷ See the following references where the slaughtered lamb is offered as a sacrifice: Genesis 22:7-8; Exodus 12:3-6, 21; Leviticus 14:1-32; 23:12; Numbers 6:13-17; 7:11-81; 28:1-15; 2 Chronicles 30:15-17; 35:1-12; Ezra 6:20; Isaiah 53:7; Jeremiah 11:19; and Ezekiel 46:11-15.

³⁵⁸ Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*, 1:485. See also Beasley-Murray, *John*, 215-216.

How I wish, said Socrates, taking his place as he was desired, that wisdom could be infused by touch, out of the fuller into the emptier man, as water runs through wool out of a fuller cup into an emptier one; if that were so, how greatly should I value the privilege of reclining at your side! For you would have filled me full with a stream of wisdom plenteous and fair; whereas my own is of a very mean and questionable sort, no better than a dream. But yours is bright and full of promise, and was manifested forth in all the splendour of youth the day before yesterday, in the presence of more than thirty thousand Hellenes.³⁵⁹

Socrates greets Agathon heaping praise upon him, far beyond anything Agathon expects. All along the audience suspects that the lavish praise is really spoken with tongue in cheek, and that Socrates does not really wish to heap such merit on him at all. Sarcasm happens when someone makes a wounding comment to someone else where the words used by the protagonist identify different levels of meaning.

Jesus addresses Nicodemus with acerbity, saying, “You are the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? (3:10)”.³⁶⁰ Nicodemus had been taking the surface meaning of what Jesus was teaching him (3:4, 9). Jesus was encouraging him to look for the deeper spiritual meaning. Nicodemus had come to Jesus. As a teacher of Israel, one may expect that Nicodemus would know about spiritual matters.³⁶¹ This sarcasm delivers irony as it identifies Rabbi Nicodemus as one who needs to learn spiritual truth, yet because of his position as a member of the Sanhedrin and one of Israel’s leading rabbis, he ought to be in a position to know and teach it.

Satire

Satirical irony laughs at, scorns or denounces wild eccentricity and folly. It forms part of the genre of comedy, that is, it is opposite to the genre of tragedy.³⁶² It is clearly identified by Anatole France who says,

The irony I invoke is not cruel. It mocks neither love nor beauty. It is mild and benevolent. Its laughter calms anger, and it is this irony that teaches us to make fun of the fools and villains whom otherwise we might have been weak enough to hate.³⁶³

³⁵⁹ Plato, *The Symposium* (Project Gutenberg; Jowett, Benjamin (Tr.); <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1600/1600-h/1600-h.htm>, 2008), 175e.

³⁶⁰ My translation.

³⁶¹ The NRSV omits translating the article, but by so doing the resulting translation weakens the irony of sarcasm that is apparent in the Greek text.

³⁶² Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*, 119.

³⁶³ France, *Le Jardin d'Epicure* (1948), 450. Cited in Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*, 232.

Here France describes the nature of satiric irony. This is sometimes referred to as banter.³⁶⁴

In the Fourth Gospel there are a few situations where the narrator uses satire. For example, at the garden scene, a cohort of soldiers carrying torches, lanterns and weapons arrive with some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. Judas brings them to arrest Jesus (18:3).

“Cohort” (σπεῖραν) is the word the narrator uses to imply a huge number of troops. George Beasley-Murray also thinks the deployment of six hundred troops is ...

certainly... impossible, but it is unlikely that we were meant to read it so. The Evangelist should not be credited with stupidity when he wrote that Judas “took” a force of Roman soldiers and Jewish constables ... (T)here is no need to understand that the entire company of soldiers in the Antonia garrison was dispatched... But this does not require the deduction that the Evangelist has manipulated his sources in an unhistorical manner. The whole passion narrative is told in order that the reader may grasp its theological significance.³⁶⁵

When we read 18:3 with an eye for rhetoric, we may discover the covert ironies of hyperbole and satire. The presence of a full garrison of Roman soldiers alongside the High Priest’s official is an absurd exaggeration (and hence hyperbole) to make the satirical point that no amount of armed and dangerous people could hope to arrest the Johannine Jesus. Rather instead, the Johannine Jesus asks about whom they seek and then calmly surrenders to them.

Unanswered question.

Cicero made use of the rhetorical unanswered questions (ἐρώτημαι) in the Roman senate to challenge the renegade Catiline. This was a powerful tool of rhetoric and resulted in Cicero discrediting Catiline.

When, O Catiline, do you mean to cease abusing our patience? How long is that madness of yours still to mock us? When is there to be an end of that unbridled audacity of yours, swaggering about as it does now?³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ Brown, *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (2 vols), 1:179.

³⁶⁵ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 322.

Catiline became a fugitive because of these penetrating unanswered questions.

In the passion narrative, the arresting party take Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters where Pilate questions Jesus concerning the kingdom (18:28-38). Pilate realises that Jesus is not culpable and does not deserve death. Jesus stands before Pilate and says to him, "everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice" (18:37). Then, when Pilate asks Jesus, "What is truth?" he does not wait for an answer (18:38). Ironically also, the hearings before Annas and Pilate lacked truth. They were hurried proceedings in the dark that the narrator says sinful people preferred (3:19), allowing for lies and injustice to prevail.

When a character in the narrative poses a significant question to the protagonist, the implied reader anticipates an answer. This is what happens in challenge-riposte. The reader expects the protagonist to respond. If there is no answer, the confused reader must rely on what the narrator has already disclosed. As demonstrated above, Cicero's rhetorical unanswered questions made Catiline the victim of the irony. In contrast, on the surface in the passion narrative, the implied reader anticipates an answer to Pilate's question of Jesus. No answer comes from him, however, he doesn't need to speak. The silence powerfully conveys irony because the implied reader already knows the answer from previous disclosure. Truth is already present. Jesus is Truth (14:6. See also 1:9, 14, 17; and 15:1-3).³⁶⁷

Verbal ironies have these types: double-meaning, metaphor, sarcasm, satire and unanswered question.

Situational Irony

Irony will result whenever the author (or narrator) describes an event that has an incongruent twist in its employed rhetorical device. In situational irony, the reader

³⁶⁶ Cicero, *His Orator*, 1.1.

³⁶⁷ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 245. Moloney adds that the question concerning truth is a theme from the Wisdom literature. The implied reader will remember that Jesus has already compared truth with lies (ψεῦδος in 8:40-46) and with falsehood (ἀδικία in 7:18). This comparison comes from the traditional Jewish sapiential literature (Job 6:24; 12:24; 19:4; Psalm 118:10; Proverbs 7:25; 12:26; 13:9; 21:16; 28:10; Sirach 9:8; Wisdom 12:24), from the Essene corpus (Community Rule 1QS 3:13-4:26; 5:10; 6:15; 8:9-10; 9:17; Thanksgiving Psalms 1QH 4:25; 15:25) and from the Jewish Writings of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Testament of Reuben 3:5-8; Testament of Levi 16:1-2; Testament of Judah 14:8; Testament of Issachar 4:6; Testament of Dan 5:1; 6:8-9; Testament of Naphtali 3:2-3; Testament of Gad 3:1-4; Testament of Asher 5:3-4; 6:1-4; Testament of Benjamin 10:3).

becomes aware of the incongruous event, as two meanings (or layers) are set alongside each other. Situational irony is irony without a victim, as the circumstances themselves provide the different perspectives and layers of meaning.

Narratives are the genre in which we may expect to discover situational irony. This happens because in narratives the author and narrator provide the ironic circumstances. The input from narratives may include a variety of literary devices to portray, reveal and ironise different aspects of the situation.

Narrators employ some rhetorical devices that are peculiar to circumstances. These are victimless irony. These types include: reversal, prolepsis, analepsis, juxtaposition, paradox and dualism. An incongruent twist in any of these rhetorical devices signals the presence of situational irony.

Examples of situational irony follow. The Fourth Gospel text demonstrates examples of each of these types.

Reversal

Aristotle demonstrates his understanding of *περιπετεία* where the circumstances turn around drastically. The character's fortunes can reverse, contrary to audience expectations. The audience wants heroes to win, however, as the drama unfolds, their fortunes plummet.

This also happens in a similar way in the Fourth Gospel when there is a reversal of thought or action and where the situation appears to be back-to-front. On closer inspection at a deeper level, the tables are turned and irony results.³⁶⁸ For example, when Jesus is on trial, who is the judge that sits in the judgment seat? (19:13) Is it Pilate or Jesus? We could read the Greek text either way.³⁶⁹ On the surface, Jesus is on trial, so Pilate sits in judgment. However, there is ambiguity concerning who actually sits.³⁷⁰ We may well ask "who is judging whom?" This is because the fourth evangelist utilises

³⁶⁸ Demetrius, *On Style*, 148-149. ; Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 23: 1. Both Demetrius and Longinus identify this as μεταβόλος = repentance, change or reversal.

³⁶⁹ John 19:13: ὁ οὖν Πιλάτος ἀκούσας τῶν λόγων τούτων ἤγαγεν ἔξω τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον, Ἑβραϊστὶ δὲ Γαββαθα. (My emphasis.) Aland, et al., eds. *The Greek New Testament*, (Berlin: United Bible Societies, 2010).

³⁷⁰ Stibbe, *John* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 191.

the irony of reversal to imply that Jesus sits down and by doing so he judges Pilate, the crowd, and even the implied reader (12:48).

Prolepsis and Analepsis

In Quintilian, prolepsis means anticipating and considering what will take place.³⁷¹ In the Fourth Gospel, prolepsis means to look forward, and conversely, analepsis means to look back. Prolepsis is just like some stories or movies, that start with a flash forward (analepsis would begin with a flash back). When, during the course of the story, the event that flashed earlier now comes to the fore, the plot breaks open and the meaning becomes apparent. Prolepsis and analepsis display irony because of the sequence of events in the narrative. The narrator provides the implied reader with prior knowledge of an event (before it happens). This leaves the characters in the plot at a disadvantage, and the irony happens because the characters are disadvantaged. Characters on this situation only have a limited understanding of the circumstances they face compared with the full knowledge of the narrator and implied reader.

For example, in the first chapter of the Fourth Gospel, in a prolepsis, John the Baptist identifies Jesus saying, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (1:29, 35). Later, Jesus becomes the “Lamb of God” as he dies at the same hour as the sacrificial Passover lambs. There are three analepses in the passion narrative when the fourth evangelist draws the reader’s attention to the “Day of Preparation” prior to the Passover meal (19:14, 31, 42). On this day, devout *hoi Ioudaioi* slaughtered their Passover lambs in preparation for the feast. In the Old Testament, the blood of sacrificial animals provided atonement for the sins of the people.³⁷² Correspondingly, the fourth evangelist implies that the Johannine Jesus provides forgiveness of sin to believers through Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross.

Juxtaposition

Ironic juxtaposition happens when a situation contrasts alongside or stands over against another. The comparison of the two situations brings about an incongruent twist. It

³⁷¹ Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*, 4.1.49; and 9.2.16.

³⁷² One aspect of atonement is that the shedding of blood provides reconciliation and forgiveness of sins. This enables the believer to be at one with God. The Pentateuch teaches: “For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar; for, as life, it is the blood that makes atonement.” (Leviticus 17:11 NRSV)

happens when the subject(s) and action(s) are in close proximity and their comparison provides emphasis or calls for added attention.

In her critical analysis of the Werner Herzog film *Grizzly Man*, Brigitte Peucker comments on the performance strategies of certain actors, and in particular, Jewel Palovak.³⁷³ Peucker discloses an example where Jewel's family pressured her concerning her performance to "do it up big". While acting as a waitress in the film, she deliberately caused a kitchen fire on the set as the camera was rolling. While Jewel "staged" the fire, there were authentic reactions from those who witnessed it. Peucker concludes, "There are other such 'borderline' situations in the film, situations in which the juxtaposition of the real with the simulated produces ironic undertones".³⁷⁴

For an example from the Fourth Gospel, we turn to the passion narrative. The Johannine Jesus is *inside* the residence before Annas, the high priest, and he affirms the full support of his hearers' testimony. Meanwhile, in the courtyard *outside*, Peter, who had heard what Jesus taught, nevertheless denies three times that he followed Jesus (18:19-27). The juxtaposition of Jesus on the inside, and Peter on the outside, making opposite confessions at the same time, is key to the irony.

Paradox

Quintilian in *Institutes* identifies *παράδοξον* as a type of irony that uses "surprise" in examples where there was a particular expectation created, however, the opposite resulted³⁷⁵. Paradoxes are "big picture" reversals concerning the protagonist. They occur where two truths, that seem to be incongruent and appear to contradict, can stand side by side.

The fourth evangelist has developed and adapted this type. In the opening verse of the Prologue we read, "In the beginning was the *Λόγος* and the *Λόγος* was with God, and

³⁷³ Peucker, "Herzog and Auterism: Performing Authenticity," in *A Companion to Werner Herzog* (ed. Prager; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2012).

³⁷⁴ Peucker, "Herzog and Auterism: Performing Authenticity", 50.

³⁷⁵ Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*, 6.3.84; 9.2.22-24. ; cited in Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms Connected to Methods of Argumentation, Figures and Tropes from Anaxeminies to Quintilian* (Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 2000), 88.

the Λόγος was God” (1:1-2). Both God and the Λόγος are therefore eternal. God cannot die. Yet ironically, Jesus who is the divine living Λόγος dies (1:14; 19:30). Further dualistic irony emerges because his death brings life (3:15-16; 5:24; 10:10-11, 15; 12:24).

Dualism

Dualism is a comparison of opposites.³⁷⁶ The late nineteenth century novelist, Charles Dickens begins *A Tale of Two Cities* with these words,

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way - in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.³⁷⁷

The list of opposites describes the time of the French Revolution. However, it also sets the scene for the comparison of London and Paris at that time.

An example of this dualism in the Fourth Gospel is the discussion concerning light and darkness. Light is symbolic of the presence of God / presence of Jesus. Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night. He comes out of the darkness into the presence of Jesus (3:1-2). At the last supper, when Satan entered Judas Iscariot, he went outside, and it was night (13:30). The implied reader knows that Judas has not just walked outside, however, that by walking into the darkness he has deliberately turned his back on Jesus. As Jesus said, “I am the light of the world, whoever follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (8:12). These actions of Nicodemus and Judas demonstrate the irony of dualism between light and darkness.

The situational ironies are these: reversal, prolepsis, analepsis, juxtaposition, paradox and dualism.

³⁷⁶ I limit the scope of the discussion of dualism to the literary phenomenon only.

³⁷⁷ Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (Single Works. A Tale of Two Cities; London: Chapman & Hall, 1859), 1.

Dramatic Irony

Dramas and plays are the medium for dramatic irony. The audience cannot interfere with the plot, however, thanks to the narrator, they do usually have greater knowledge than the characters. The characters performing in the drama are generally the victims who create the irony, and the narrator keeps the audience aware of the developments. The characters are usually unaware of these movements in the plot.

This is also true of the narrative where the reader is kept informed by the narrator, while the persons in the narrative stumble along, unaware of their victimisation. As Muecke says, “Generally speaking the irony is more striking when an observer already knows what the victim has yet to find out”.³⁷⁸

The Fourth Gospel demonstrates each of these examples of dramatic irony, as set out below.

Understatement

When Aristotle identifies εἰρωνόμεια as understatement, he refers to the actions of a “mock-modest (person) ... to disclaim what he has or belittle it”.³⁷⁹ This irony happens when a character makes a claim that is well below what the implied reader knows to be the case. When the characters are oblivious to the real circumstances, even greater dynamics occur between the narrator and the audience. This was the typical action of Socrates in Plato’s dramas. He gave the impression that he was genuinely ignorant of the virtues he inquired about, and that he was interested in the various interlocutors. Nevertheless, by the depth of his questions, his relentless pursuit of truth and his brilliant perception of where the debate was going, the interlocutors began to realise that they were his victims.

An example of understatement in the Fourth Gospel occurs as Nicodemus visits Jesus at night. In the opening dialogue, Nicodemus refers to Jesus as “a teacher who has come

³⁷⁸ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*, 104.

³⁷⁹ Aristotle, "Ethics", IV, 1127a: 21-24.

from God” (3:2). It appears from these words that Nicodemus’ understanding of Jesus is limited to that of an unbeliever. He has no idea that he is in the presence of the pre-existent Logos who has become flesh (1:1-3, 14), the Messiah (1:41), the Son of God (1:34, 49), the King of Israel (1:49), the Son of Man (1:51), and therefore he is unable to recognise the true identity of Jesus. However, from the outset in the Fourth Gospel, the implied reader already does know the real identity of Jesus. The irony of understatement takes place as Nicodemus understates the identity of Jesus, when from chapter one of the Fourth Gospel the implied reader is privy to what the Narrator and the Johannine Jesus have disclosed about his identity.

Hyperbole

This literary device is concerned with overstating the case. It has to do with deliberate exaggeration. The implied reader knows not to consider the overstatement as a lie, but rather as a means of emphasising what a character perceives to be an important aspect of the truth.

Beverley Briggs, secondary school teacher in the Durham County, believes that legislation should forbid us from exaggerating historical disadvantage to highlight our achievements. She makes use of hyperbole when she states, “...we’ll exaggerate the miseries of our past. And if we haven’t got any, we’ll sign up to some genealogy site until we discover a distant relative who was shipped off to Australia for stealing a pea”.³⁸⁰

In the Fourth Gospel, we may find deliberate overstatement to emphasise a perceived truth. This is never on the lips of the Johannine Jesus who is the Truth, though we do find examples of it in the Synoptic Gospels.³⁸¹ Yet, in the Johannine trial scene, Pilate exaggerates his own authority compared with the revealed authority of the Johannine Jesus, presumably as an attempt to intimidate him (19:10-11).

³⁸⁰ Briggs, *Rags to Riches: Comment* (London: The Times Publishing, 2013), 14.

³⁸¹ The synoptic Jesus talks of the probability of a camel passing through the ‘eye of a needle’ (Mark 10:25), and of a person with a grudge having ‘a log in their eye’ compared to someone they help as having a ‘speck in their eye’ (Matthew 7:3-5).

Misunderstanding

There is misunderstanding in Socratic irony. Socrates, as the εἰρὸν (or sly fox), lulls his victims with a false sense of security. He would enquire from someone about a virtue they had demonstrated, appearing to be genuinely interested in his adversary's explanation. Then the adversary would fall victim to his beguiling rhetoric and, through naïve answers, Socrates made them feel foolish.³⁸² All along, the audience knew that the adversary would fall victim to the εἰρὸν. This form of dramatic irony was demonstrated to the audience because the victim blindly trusted the protagonist and therefore misunderstood his intent.

In Chapter Two, I review Leroy, Carson and Culpepper's contribution to the insider / outsider theme in the Fourth Gospel.³⁸³ Each of these scholars agree that misunderstanding is a key to understanding Fourth Gospel irony. This is because there is a foundational dichotomy separating believers (on the inside) who understand the spiritual meanings, and unbelievers (on the outside) who misunderstand the narrator / Jesus.

I find an example of this irony of misunderstanding in John 2 after Jesus cleanses the temple.³⁸⁴ *Hoi Ioudaioi* expect a sign from Jesus so he could show them he had the authority to do what he had done (2:19-22). Jesus speaks of his physical body as the "temple" that he will raise after they have destroyed it. They misunderstand him. The narrator depicts them as mistakenly thinking that he could only be talking about the temple of Jerusalem that Herod had taken forty-six years to complete. Sarcastically, they question that he could do it in three days (2:22).³⁸⁵ *Hoi Ioudaioi* do not understand

³⁸² Gill, *Socratic Irony* (<http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/socratesphil/g/080709SocraticIrony.htm>, 2013), 1; Narcy, "What is Socratic Irony", *Journal of the International Socratic Society*, March (2001): 1.

³⁸³ Leroy, *Rätsel und Missverständnis. Ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte des Johannesevangeliums*. See also Carson, "Understanding Misunderstandings in the Fourth Gospel", 62; Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 164-165.

³⁸⁴ There are at least twenty-five times in the Fourth Gospel where Jesus is misunderstood by the disciples, or others. See also 2:19-22; 3:3-7; 4:10-15; 4:32-34; 6:32-36; 6:41-51; 6:51-58; 7:33-36; 8:16-19; 8:21-24; 8:24-25; 8:26-29; 8:31-36; 8:37-44; 8:51-55; 8:56-58; 11:11-15; 11:23-27; 12:32-36; 13:33-14:3; 14:4-6; 14:7-12; 14:21-23; 16:16-22; 21:22-23. See Reynolds, "The Role of Misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel", *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 9 (1998): 151.

³⁸⁵ However, it is the narrator (not Jesus) who chides the disciples for their forgetfulness and lack of understanding of what Jesus had meant. The narrator explains to the implied reader that after the

that Jesus is talking at a spiritual level using the temple building as a symbol to explain his own death and resurrection. The irony is that because they do not understand that the human body is the divine temple, and not the one made with bricks and mortar, that they want to destroy the physical body of Jesus (5:18; 7:1, 19, 25; 8:37-40; 11:53).

Parody.

Parodic irony happens when there is an incongruent twist with a caricature of something more serious. Parodies ridicule authority figures. They poke fun at the status quo.

In 2006, New Zealand Telecom began a television advertising campaign, using children to praise the company. Soon after release, an anonymous hacker released an imitation video on social media with voice-overs of the children disapproving Telecom. Visually, the only change to the clip was an altered logo erasing part of the 'm' in Telecom to become 'Telecon'. Unfortunately for Telecom, the more effort it spent in trying to block the offending video, the more it spread on social media. Eventually, after a current affairs program aired the issue Telecom dropped legal proceedings.³⁸⁶ The offending video clip was an ironic parody as it imitated and ridiculed the telecommunication company that had released the original video to boost its image.

In the Fourth Gospel, we find several examples of parody on a small scale. For example, again we turn to the passion narrative, to the garden scene at night where the huge group of those who have come to arrest Jesus are carrying torches, lanterns and weapons (18:3). The arresting group come with all seriousness, however, the implied reader knows that it is absurd to use torches and lanterns to find the "Light of the World" (See 8:12).

Double-Standard

A double-standard occurs when a character says one thing and does the opposite, either intentionally or unintentionally. This irony arises when the enforcer of the standard is

resurrection the disciples finally remembered. See also E.E. Reynolds, Reynolds, "The Role of Misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel", 151.

³⁸⁶ See this article for a full report. Holloway-Smith, "Illegal Art: Considering our Culture of Copying", *Junctures: The Journal of Thematic Dialogue*, 15 December (2012): 19-20.

unfairly exempt from it, and the narrator or the protagonist highlights the discrepancy. The irony of the double-standard is a powerful device, especially in the dramatic narrative.

For example, in Paris, twelve people were shot dead by Islamic terrorists on 7 January, 2015. Two armed, masked gunmen broke into the office of Charlie Hebdo, the satirical newspaper, and gunned down the editors, story writers and cartoonists in a shooting spree.³⁸⁷ In contrast, on 14 April 2014, in Chibok, a north-east Nigerian town, a group of Boko Haram militants stormed into a government boarding school and abducted 276 young girls. The last report (two years after the crime) indicates that 218 of the children are still missing.³⁸⁸ In Paris, the authorities apprehended the perpetrators quickly and news sources reported the event for weeks. Whereas the child abductions in Nigeria, a more heinous crime in comparison, were less well covered and the perpetrators still remain at large. By comparing these two news items provided by the same, normally “unbiased” newspaper, we can see an ironic double standard in the number of journalists whose names appear alongside the corresponding news articles. Five journalists reported on the events in Paris, but only one reported on the events in Nigeria. The ironic double standard is also reflected in the society’s outrage (or lack of it) as the case may be.

A Johannine example of the double-standard is found in the passage where Jesus is on trial before Annas, the high priest’s father-in-law (18:19-23). In verse 19, Annas questions Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus responds saying that he had always been open with his teaching in synagogues and the temple, and that nothing was done in secret (18:20). Jesus questioned why Annas was asking him for these details when he could have asked any of those who had been there and heard what Jesus had said (18:21). One of the officials who was there hit Jesus on the face (18:22) and said, “is this how you answer the high priest?” Jesus responded by saying (18:23), “If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?” If we assume that officials had the responsibility to treat everyone maintain correct behaviour, then Jesus identifies the double-standard by his answer. So, by assaulting Jesus, the official was acting outside the ethical standards his position

³⁸⁷ Levy, et al., "Charlie Hebdo Staff Shot Dead in Paris Terrorist Attack," *Sydney Morning Herald* 2015.

³⁸⁸ Murphy, "Kidnapped Chibok Girl rescued in Nigeria," *Sydney Morning Herald* 2016.

required. This action demonstrates irony of double-standard. This episode will be revisited in Chapter Five in the analysis of John 18.

Double-Entendre

The “double entendre” is a specific category of Dramatic Irony where innocence or naiveté of the victim brings about a more effective demonstration of it. A “double entendre” happens when the victim unknowingly says or accepts something that has meaning in a different sense than anticipated.

A well-known example of a double entendre comes from Homer’s *Odyssey*.³⁸⁹ Ulysses and his men are trapped in a cave by a cyclops. Odysseus had introduced himself to the cyclops as “Nobody”.³⁹⁰ The time for escape arrived and Odysseus poked a stick from the fire into the cyclops’ eye. Wailing, screaming and blinded, the cyclops left the cave entrance unguarded as he ran outside ranting “Nobody has hurt me”. The other cyclops ignored his cries for help, allowing his captives to escape.

In the Fourth Gospel passion narrative, Caiaphas, the high priest, made a prophetic proclamation, presumably to calm the disquiet concerning Jesus among the Sanhedrin. He predicted that one person (Jesus) should die in order to save the whole Jewish nation (11:49-53; cf. 18:14). Caiaphas was unaware that he was identifying the foundational plan of God for the salvation of the world (3:16f).

The ironies of the theatre are these: understatement, hyperbole (overstatement), misunderstanding, parody, double-standard and double-entendre.

Conclusion

In this chapter, and indeed throughout this thesis, my focus is exclusively on three families of irony: verbal, situational and dramatic ironies. Furthermore, I allocate each of the seventeen types of irony into one of these families.

Verbal irony has five types: double-meaning, metaphor, sarcasm, satire, and unanswered question.

³⁸⁹ Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer* (London: Cowper, William, (Tr.) Project Gutenberg; J.M. Dent and sons; <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/24269/24269.txt>, 2008), Book IX: 428-483.

³⁹⁰ ‘Nobody’ is my translation of ‘*outis*’.

Situational irony has six types: reversal, prolepsis, analepsis, juxtaposition, paradox and dualism.

Dramatic irony has six types: understatement, hyperbole, misunderstanding, parody, double-standard, and double-entendre.

I utilise each family and type of irony as described in this chapter in my analysis of the Fourth Gospel and throughout this thesis.

By way of conclusion, I make four observations concerning irony theory. In particular, I address the contention over the credibility of unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel. They are:

- (i) The identified seven scholars examined and defined Fourth Gospel irony differently from the definition and approach applied in this thesis. They focussed on layers of meaning, or of one “photographic plate” set alongside another, or of the appearance of things set over against its reality.
- (ii) It seems that those who deny the presence of unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel may be trying to redeem the Gospel from apparent instability.
- (iii) Predominately those who acknowledge the possibility of unstable Fourth Gospel irony resort to deconstructive analysis to determine the ironic instabilities they find there.
- (iv) My approach to defining irony is different from other approaches as it focusses on literary and rhetorical devices and the incongruent twist exhibited in those devices. This enables me to be specific about the type and family of irony used, and determine whether the irony or rhetoric is stable, unstable or perplexing.

The theory of irony outlined in this chapter is my development of Boothian irony theory. This adapted theory will be applied to the analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative using the methods to be outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: A SUITABLE METHODOLOGY FOR ANALYSIS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL PASSION NARRATIVE

Introduction

With the working knowledge of irony outlined above, it will be useful for our study to apply this knowledge to a passage characterised by sustained irony.³⁹¹ The passion narrative is one such example of sustained irony in the Fourth Gospel. This section of the gospel demonstrates both the frequency and the variety of different types of irony.

As the researcher, I am faced with a dilemma. There are two main literary-critical approaches, both of which could provide me with valuable insights when applied to the Fourth Gospel passion narrative (18:1-20:31). These two methods are Narrative Criticism and Rhetorical Criticism. When I look at the selected passage, it is a narrative. Do I use Narrative Criticism? Will it yield the best results at highlighting the literary devices? Or do I choose Rhetorical Criticism? Will it provide the insights of the narrative?

In this chapter, I look for the best method to use for this research. I examine both narrative and rhetorical critical methods and, from these I choose, refine, determine and set out the method for the forthcoming analysis.

Rhetorical Criticism

What value can rhetorical criticism add to my research? It is logical that rhetorical analysis be considered as the thesis focus is the stability of irony. Rhetorical criticism has a solid structure for analysis and is therefore important because it looks most thoroughly at how a text seeks to persuade its audience. The Fourth Gospel is written so that we may believe (20:31) – it is written with the intent to persuade, encourage, convict. Irony is a rhetorical device, more than simply a narrative device. It can persuade, encourage, convict or ironize in a way that does not leave the reader / audience unaffected.

³⁹¹ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 117. Duke argues for two episodes of sustained irony in the Fourth Gospel: the man born blind (in John 9), and Jesus' trial (in John 18-19). For my analysis of Duke's classification of 'sustained irony', refer to Chapter Two.

Well over thirty years ago, George Kennedy published his rhetorical critical methodology and his method has been effectively used since.³⁹² There is advantage to be gained in adopting his methodology. However, this research is attempting to use his rhetorical approach in a way that no-one has done so before. His rhetorical methodology has mostly been applied to discourse material, including Acts, but not to Gospel narratives.³⁹³

To my knowledge, up to mid 2016, no other scholar has used Kennedy's five-step rhetorical critical method to analyse any gospel passion narrative. Even Kennedy, who did apply his method to the Fourth Gospel, only examined the Farewell Discourses.³⁹⁴ Therefore, there is no reason against using a combination of Kennedy's rhetorical critical method, with other approaches. I therefore set out the case in favour of pursuing and adapting his methodology that includes my additional features.

The Case for Kennedy's Methodology

The Fourth Gospel is unique, being different in theology, Christology and narratology from the Synoptic tradition. Much of its content also differs from the three Synoptic Gospels. Kennedy himself says of the Fourth Gospel that it

...makes far more demands than Mark on his readers in approaching the truth they are to perceive. [The fourth evangelist] uses the forms of logical argument not so much as proof, ...but as ways of turning and reiterating the topics which are at the core of his message.³⁹⁵

Furthermore, Kennedy claims that the evangelists themselves may have intended "to present speeches, and early Christian audiences, listening to the gospels read, heard

³⁹² Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*. See the argument that follows in this chapter for my understanding of Kennedy's five steps in rhetorical criticism.

³⁹³ Shipp, "George Kennedy's influence on rhetorical interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles," in *Words Well Spoken* (eds. Black and Watson; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 108-114. In this article Shipp explores some ways scholars have used rhetorical analysis in Acts: by comparing Acts with handbooks on rhetoric; examining the rhetorical aspects of speeches; socio-rhetorical analyses; and the eclectic approach, or drawing from auxiliary disciplines. Significantly, Shipp himself has modified Kennedy's five-step method for his analysis of the Damascus Road narratives in Acts.

³⁹⁴ Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*, 114-140. See Watson, "The Influence of George Kennedy on Rhetorical Criticism of the New Testament," in *Words Well Spoken: George Kennedy's Rhetoric of the New Testament* (eds. Black and Watson; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 48-50.

³⁹⁵ Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*, 113. Cited in Black, "Kennedy and the Gospels: an ambiguous legacy, a promising bequest," in *Words Well Spoken: George Kennedy's Rhetoric of the New Testament* (eds. Black and Watson; Waco TX.: Baylor University Press, 2008), 67.

these chapters as speeches”.³⁹⁶ C. Clifton Black argues that the gospels are not speeches, but rather they “contain speeches”, and he therefore considers that “to practice Kennedy’s method with the gospels requires a somewhat oblique approach and intellectual suppleness...”.³⁹⁷ So, with due care, the way may still be open for there to be a rhetorical analysis of the Fourth Gospel narrative.

Before going into detail with the five steps, there is a word of caution. His method may not be completely appropriate for analysing the passion narrative. Rhetorical Criticism is at its best when analysing the rhetoric of discourses. It is *not* at its best when analysing narrative, and the passage I have selected is the passion narrative. Scholars who support Kennedy’s method for New Testament research are aware of this limitation.³⁹⁸ Only as the method is examined and adjusted as necessary will it be proven as useful. His method of rhetorical criticism is best presented in its five steps that provide fruitful understanding of literary techniques for readers of the biblical text. These are the features of his method.

To take this one step further, it could be considered that the Fourth Gospel narrative is “Christian preaching”.³⁹⁹ If this is the case, then the fourth evangelist seems to have designed the passion narrative to be read as a tragic drama. It therefore makes good sense to analyse it using an adapted version of Kennedy’s rhetorical critical methodology.

On a different note, there is much rhetoric in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. By examining its one hundred and thirteen verses, the scholar soon discovers that there are numerous literary devices present. Literary devices such as irony are the tools of rhetoric.

As previously mentioned, the rhetorical devices that twist incongruently to form Fourth Gospel irony include the following:

³⁹⁶ Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*, 39. Cited in Black, "Kennedy and the Gospels: an ambiguous legacy, a promising bequest", 71.

³⁹⁷ Black, Black, "Kennedy and the Gospels: an ambiguous legacy, a promising bequest", 71.

³⁹⁸ Black, "Kennedy and the Gospels: an ambiguous legacy, a promising bequest", 70-71.

³⁹⁹ Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus. Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Göttingen, 1956). Cited in Black, "Kennedy and the Gospels: an ambiguous legacy, a promising bequest", 72.

- Verbal rhetoric is demonstrated in pun or double-meaning, metaphor, sarcasm, satire, and unanswered questioning.
- Situational rhetoric is demonstrated in what Aristotle called “*peripeteia*”, that is a situation’s flipside (reversal), in a flash-forward (prolepsis), in a flash-back (analepsis), in juxtaposition (or comparison of situational opposites), in paradox, or dualistic opposites.
- The rhetoric of the theatre (dramatic irony) is seen in the mock modesty of understatement, with hyperbole (or overstatement), with misunderstanding, with ridiculing a serious work (parody), with the double standard, or with the double entendre.

Given the arguments above, it seems that rhetorical criticism can be a valuable approach for this research, because it helps to detect and analyse the irony and other rhetorical devices in the Fourth Gospel. Therefore, as a matter of importance, I explain Kennedy’s five steps to discover the dynamics of his rhetorical critical method.

1. We need to determine what passage will be the focus of our research. The selected passage must have unity. These issues need to be addressed: (i) the reason I select this passage above others, and (ii) the rhetorical significance of this passage.

2. We need to explore the rhetoric of the passage using these key issues: (i) the rhetorical problems that need addressing; (ii) the dynamics between the author and the reader of the passage; (iii) the communication between author and the reader; (iv) the effect the passage’s genre has on its interpretation; and (v) the “rhetorical situation”.

3. We need to focus on the issues concerning the “rhetorical arrangement” of the text. These are: (i) consideration of the various rhetorical parts used by the author for effect; (ii) the rhetorical structure, and (iii) what this reveals about the implied reader. All this is a development of the second feature.

4. We need to analyse the literary devices, including the irony in the passage and determine how they are used. This feature details style and content, that is essential in determining the author’s purpose.

5. We need to review the whole passage as a unit. The issues addressed include: (i) how the implied author has addressed the rhetorical problem; (ii) the perceived impact on the “rhetorical situation”; and (iii) the perceived impact on the real reader today.

The Application of Kennedy’s Rhetorical Methodology

There are features in both the narrative and rhetorical methods that would be beneficial to this thesis. I therefore offer this modified method to use in the forthcoming analysis.

Step One

The passage I have selected for review for the first step is the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. This deals with the arrest, trial, sentencing of Jesus, crucifixion, resurrection, and appearances. These 113 verses of narrative (18:1 to 20:31) form a unity, as preceding it there are more than four chapters of discourse, and following the passion narrative, the Gospel has an epilogue. Throughout the passage under consideration, the narrative genre is interspersed with dialogue and action. For convenience, I have chosen to break the passion narrative into two natural sections: 18:1-19:16a and 19:16b-20:31. The first section has fifty-six verses, the second has fifty-seven.

Section One

A comparison of this scene with the Synoptic counterparts can help to highlight aspects of the rhetorical significance for the fourth evangelist. In the Synoptic accounts of the passion narrative of Gethsemane Jesus is grieved and agitated (in anguish) (Matthew 26:37-38; Mark 14:33; Luke 22:44). He cries out to the Father, pleading for the cup of suffering to pass from him (Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:35-36; Luke 22:42). Jesus chides his disciples for falling asleep instead of praying (Matthew 26:40-46; Mark 14:37-41; Luke 22:45-46). Additionally, in the Synoptic Gospels, the disciples flee in fear as the arresting party takes Jesus (Matthew 26:56; Mark 14:50). In contrast, the Johannine Jesus is in control of the events that unfold and even of his own arrest. He identifies himself to the arresting group (John 18:4-8).

In the Fourth Gospel there is no plea from Jesus to the Father to remove his cup of suffering. Such a plea is explicitly rejected by Jesus in John 12:27. Rather, the Johannine Jesus uses the “cup of suffering” metaphor in an unanswered rhetorical question, as a poignant plea to Peter, who had violently tried to defend him (18:10f). In

the Synoptic Gospels, we find, “Remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want” (Mark 14:36; See also Matthew 26:39; Luke 22:42). However, here in 18:10, we find the covert Johannine version of Jesus’ willingness to die.

In addition to all this in the Johannine narrative, the disciples do not flee⁴⁰⁰. They stay together as Jesus pleads for them to be unharmed (18:8f).

The full trial scene in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 26:57-27:31; Mark 14:53-15:15; Luke 22:54-23:25) is broken by Peter’s denials (Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-62).⁴⁰¹ However, the full trial scene in the Fourth Gospel (18:12-19:16a) is split into three sections due to Peter’s denials (John 18:15-18, 25-27) giving the impression that they were in different locations. However, this is not necessarily the case.⁴⁰² Furthermore, in the Fourth Gospel, Peter is with an unnamed disciple (probably the beloved disciple) whom the High Priest already knows.⁴⁰³

The Johannine passion narrative that I have selected (18:1-20:31) will be a useful passage to explore as it highlights a wide variety of irony throughout. As mentioned earlier, Paul Duke identifies the Johannine passion narrative as an example of sustained irony.⁴⁰⁴

For Kennedy the first step was to select a passage that has unity. This selected passage has unity as it is competent to stand alone. Its constant theme throughout is “authority”. In 18:1-8, the fourth evangelist uses a huge number of people to come and arrest Jesus. This presumably was to demonstrate their authority to intimidate Jesus and his disciples. However, the authority of Jesus foiled their attempt because Jesus spoke the divine name and they fell to the ground. Peter tried in vain to use the authority of a

⁴⁰⁰ Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols). This double volume work is the fullest treatment of the distinctive features of the four passion narratives, and of the Johannine passion narrative in particular.

⁴⁰¹ For the purposes of this thesis, the time from when Jesus leaves the garden until the time he is led away to be crucified will be known as the trial scene.

⁴⁰² Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 758-759.

⁴⁰³ The following commentators support the notion that the unknown disciple was probably the beloved disciple: Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 222. Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), 175. Pfitzner, *The Gospel According to John* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1988), 288. Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 63-64. Milne, *The Message of John: Here is Your King!* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993), 257-258. Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 751-752.

⁴⁰⁴ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 117.

sword to protect Jesus, and then was rebuked for his effort (18:10-11). This is because Jesus' authority is demonstrated in doing the will of "the Father who sent him" (4:34; 5:30; 6:38-39; 7:29; 8:42; 9:4; 12:49). Jesus allows himself to be taken away to face the authority of Annas, the high priest's father-in-law (18:12-13; 19-23). At the same time that Jesus is before Annas, Peter is tested and, lacking the authority of his convictions, he denies his discipleship (18:15-18). Following on from there, Jesus is brought before Caiaphas, another Jewish authority figure (18:24, 28). For the final scene in this passage, Jesus goes to Pilate to face the authority of Rome. Ironically, the fourth evangelist portrays Jesus as the one who has ultimate authority, yet he gives his life for the sake of the world (3:16-17; 4:42; 6:33, 51; 10:11-18; 12:47; 15:13). This constant theme highlights the title of this thesis and demonstrates the passage's unity throughout.

Section Two

This section comprises 19:16b-20:31. There are two sub-narratives in this section: the crucifixion and the resurrection. When this section of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative is compared with the Synoptics we can highlight further rhetorical significance.

After the trial before Pilate, Matthew and Mark have the flogging of Jesus (Matthew 27:26; Mark 15:15). This occurred about the middle of the trial in the Fourth Gospel (19:1). It took place after Pilate had declared his innocence (18:38) and tried to release Jesus (18:39-40).

All three Synoptics record how Simon of Cyrene was compelled to carry the cross for Jesus (Matthew 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26). However, the Johannine Jesus bears his own cross to Golgotha.

All four Gospels mention that the Roman soldiers crucify him in the middle, with one on either side of him, and that Pilate puts a notice on Jesus' cross. However, the Fourth Gospel provides much more detail about the notice. Matthew 27:37 uses seventeen Greek words, Mark 15:26 uses twelve, and Luke 23:38 uses only eleven, while the fourth evangelist uses seventy-four words (19:19-22). The fourth evangelist finds significance in the wording of the notice that offends some of *hoi Ioudaioi* as Jesus is not their king. The sequence of the gambling for Jesus' clothes happens before Pilate's notice in the Synoptics and after it in the Fourth Gospel.

All four Gospels record the women being at the cross (Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 23:49; John 19:25b-27). However, only the fourth evangelist provides the account of the formation of the new kinship community. This account adds to the developing rhetoric of the double layered drama of the Fourth Gospel. In Chapter Six, my analysis of 19:23-30 addresses this in greater detail.

The words of Jesus from the cross vary between the Gospel accounts, yet of significance, there are two further occasions in the Fourth Gospel where Jesus speaks. He says, “I thirst” (19:28) and “It stands accomplished”. Both of these connect with key ironized Johannine themes: Jesus is the giver of living water (4:10-14; 7:37-40), and Jesus does the will of the Father (3:16-17; 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 17:4-5).

The Fourth Gospel includes a seven verse story of *hoi Ioudaioi* asking Pilate to expedite these deaths of those crucified. It was the eve of the Passover with the Sabbath day following and they did not want to preclude themselves from the festivities. The soldiers then broke the legs of the others, however, they recognised Jesus was already dead. One lanced Jesus’ side, causing a rush of blood and water. This not only verified that Jesus was dead, but it also connected ironically with the prophetic voice of John the Baptist who had announced at the beginning of the Gospel that cleansing would come from Jesus’ sacrifice (1:29, 36).

The burial afforded by Joseph from Arimathea was a hasty affair in the Synoptics (Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56). However, in the Fourth Gospel, it was the occasion for Jesus’ secret disciples to reveal themselves. Nicodemus (3:1-15) joins Joseph in seeking public permission to take charge of Jesus’ body. They anoint Jesus’ body with a huge amount of unguent. These actions signify that they now openly recognise him as Messiah. They lay Jesus’ body in the garden tomb.

The resurrection took place very early on the morning of the first day of the week. Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb and finds the stone covering the entrance has been lifted away (20:1-13). Matthew 28:1-8 adds that another Mary came with her, there was an earthquake, the angel rolled back the stone and announced that Jesus has risen. Mark 16:1-8 says that two women came with Mary to anoint Jesus body, wondering how they would get into the tomb. They were amazed to find the stone rolled back and a young man in white announcing the resurrection. Luke 24:1-12 has a group of women from

Galilee come to the tomb to put spices on Jesus' body. The stone was rolled away, the tomb had no body, and they were met by two men in dazzling white who told them the good news of the resurrection.

Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples that Jesus was not in the tomb. The Fourth Gospel records how Peter and the beloved disciple ran to the tomb and Peter went inside and saw the linen grave clothes. Then the beloved disciple entered and he believed (3-10). This reinforces the significant Johannine theme of believing into Jesus (3:16; 5:24; 7:37-38; 11:25-26; 20:31), and that the beloved disciple is the model believer. After Mary Magdalene encounters the risen Jesus outside the tomb (20:11-17), she reports a second time to the disciples. This time she says, "I have seen the Lord" (20:18). That evening Jesus appeared to the frightened disciples and put their minds at ease. He commissioned them, breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit, and gave them authority to forgive (20:19-23). Thomas was absent that night and spoke of his unwillingness to believe unless he touched Jesus' wounds. Later, the disciples were all together when Jesus appeared to them again. He invited Thomas to touch his wounds. Thomas' profound confession became the opportunity for Jesus to commend others who would not see him yet would still believe (20:24-29).

In comparison, the post-resurrection Synoptic accounts all differ slightly. Mark's shorter reading has no appearances of the risen Jesus. However, the longer ending contains an appearance to Mary (Mark 16:9-11), to two other disciples (12-13) and to the eleven. This appearance includes a commission to preach the gospel to all creation (14-18). Matthew's account describes how the women left the tomb and immediately met the risen Jesus who told them to tell the disciples and go to Galilee where he would meet them (Matthew 28:8-10). There is also a unique story of the guard who reported to the chief priests what had happened (11-15). Matthew's Gospel concludes with the commissioning of the disciples on a Galilean mountain (16-20). In Luke, several women, including Mary Magdalene, reported what they had seen to the disciples who did not believe their story. Yet, Peter did and he ran to the tomb and found everything that the women had said was true (Luke 24:10-12). This is followed by Jesus' appearance to Cleopas and his companion on the Emmaus road (13-35). Later that evening, Jesus appeared to his disciples in Jerusalem. He put their minds at ease, taught

them from the Scriptures, and promised they would be empowered to be witnesses for him (36-49).

Step Two

In the second step, Kennedy's method addresses and explores the key narrative and rhetorical issues associated with the text. There are many of these, so this step is the one in which most of the analysis takes place. In the Fourth Gospel, as well as in the passion narrative there are issues of (i) the use of the historic present tense, (ii) gaps in the story, (iii) *inclusio*, and (iv) chiasm. Other literary-critical issues of (v) time sequencing, (vi) plot, and (vii) characterisation are relevant. There are (viii) the seventeen literary devices, that become irony after undergoing an incongruent twist. (I explore these later in this chapter.) There are (ix) the literary critical issues of implied commentary, (x) the implied reader, and (xi) the stability of irony. Other issues I address in this step include, (xii) the significance of the relationship between the author and the reader; (xiii) the dynamics of the communication between the author and the reader; and (xiv) how the passage illustrates rhetoric. I will address some of these issues here.

Gap in the Story

A "gap in the story" occurs when we compare the Synoptic accounts with the Fourth Gospel account of the trial scene. Directly from the familiar garden, the arrested Jesus appears before Caiaphas, the High Priest. There, as recorded by the Synoptic Gospels, he suffers interrogation, mocking, beating and the insult of false accusations (Matthew 26:57-68; 27:1-2; Mark 14:53-65; 15:1; Luke 22:54, 63-66). However, in the Fourth Gospel there is no record of what took place at Caiaphas' residence, even though the authorities keep Jesus there until morning (John 18:24, 28).

Time sequencing is an issue in the Johannine passion narrative. There is a different time sequence between the Synoptic account of the Passover and the account of it in the Fourth Gospel.⁴⁰⁵ In the Synoptic Gospels, the last supper is the Passover meal with shared bread and wine, (with overtones of the Lord's Supper,) while in the Fourth Gospel, devout Jewish people eat their Passover meal when Jesus is in the tomb.

⁴⁰⁵ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, 74.

Nevertheless, what is significant for the author is “the day of Preparation” when the Passover lambs are slaughtered (19:14, 31, 42). This is the exact time that Jesus dies. John the Baptist had made this profound declaration “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (1:29, 35). The Baptist’s words demonstrate the irony of prolepsis, flashing forward to Golgotha. The words of John the Baptist are a reminder to the implied reader of the sacrificial lamb offered at the first Passover (Exodus 12:1-11). In presenting this, the implied author wants the implied reader to believe that Jesus brings freedom and that he bonds together the people of God (8:32, 36; 17:11, 20-23).

Plot

Plot has to do with causality and origins.⁴⁰⁶ Regarding causality, we examine the reason behind the story being like it is.⁴⁰⁷ Regarding origins, we examine where the author obtains the resources for this material. If the author utilised the Synoptic Gospels as a basis for accurate gospel writing, then it was done with much freedom.⁴⁰⁸ If the author utilised other resources, we may only guess what they were and to what extent they were consulted. Whatever the case, Mark Stibbe says the Fourth Gospel author used “... ‘historical imagination’ in the reconstruction of Jesus’ history.”⁴⁰⁹ This “historical imagination” does not imply “invention” by the author, because the gospel has its foundation in the author’s and the community’s real memory of what Jesus did and said. Beasley-Murray suggests there are two aspects of this “imagination”. It (i) draws from the prophetic word of the risen Christ in the community, and (ii) it has the unique personality of the author.⁴¹⁰ These things show that the plot of the Fourth Gospel is unique. Moreover, Jesus as the protagonist of the gospel is primarily elusive.⁴¹¹

The plot develops through the Fourth Gospel in stages. It is driven by the stated purpose “that you may believe” (20:31) and it is carried / developed / shaped by the various faith

⁴⁰⁶ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 80.

⁴⁰⁷ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 81.

⁴⁰⁸ Stibbe, *John’s Gospel*, 33.

⁴⁰⁹ Stibbe, *John’s Gospel*, 34.

⁴¹⁰ See Beasley-Murray, *John*, Intro, li. See also Beutler, “Synoptic Jesus Tradition in the Johannine Farewell Discourse,” in *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* (eds. Fortna and Thatcher; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 165.

⁴¹¹ Stibbe, “Elusive Christ: a new reading of the Fourth Gospel”.

responses.⁴¹² The characters respond to Jesus in various ways: acceptance, wonder, puzzlement, questioning, misunderstanding, anger, or a refusal to believe.

Characterisation

Another literary or narrative aspect worthy of consideration is characterisation. If the author uses “historical imagination” in plot development, then we might expect the characters themselves will also fit the author’s imaginative worldview. This can be demonstrated by comparing the portraits of Jesus and the other characters of the Synoptic accounts and the Fourth Gospel. Characters take shape through the author’s description of them and their circumstances, by what they do and say, and by how other characters deal with them.⁴¹³ In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus and the Father are the protagonists, while other characters are in different categories. The disciples form a single group; the Judean authorities, the Pharisees and their associates form another group; and a third group comprises the crowd and those who have not aligned themselves with Jesus or the Judean authorities.⁴¹⁴ R. Alan Culpepper sums it up well, saying,

The characters are individualized by their position in society and by their interaction with Jesus (which are) ... verisimilar and realistic. They must be for the reader to accept them and, more importantly, accept the evangelist’s characterization of Jesus.

The functions of the characters are primarily two: (1) to draw out various aspects of Jesus’ character successively by providing a series of diverse individuals with whom Jesus can interact, and (2) to represent alternative responses to Jesus so that the reader can see their attendant misunderstandings and consequences.⁴¹⁵

The characters as portrayed by the author detail the variety of attitudes and responses to Jesus, and these help the implied reader to make an informed choice about faith into Jesus.⁴¹⁶

Irony

⁴¹² Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 97.

⁴¹³ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 106. ; Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 21. ; Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 116-117.

⁴¹⁴ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 106.

⁴¹⁵ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 145.

⁴¹⁶ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 148.

Among the key literary devices of the Fourth Gospel, the most profound is *irony*. In Chapter One of this thesis, I stated that irony uses a literary device and gives it an incongruent twist; it is a comparison of the “appearance” alongside the “reality”. The implied reader, unless victimised by it, always sees the irony and appreciates it, even though it is covert. The irony is obvious to the implied reader because the implied author, who is a master of irony, intends it.⁴¹⁷ However, for the real reader, not all the irony is apparent.⁴¹⁸ Readers need to be aware of metaphoric examples, the dualism of light and darkness, life and death, spirit and flesh, truth and deception, the world above and the world below, right judgment and appearance; all these equate with faith and unbelief (7:24).⁴¹⁹ Culpepper gives us an example of ironic reversal:

... the Jews [sic] rejected the Messiah they eagerly expected: John states the incongruity simply at the outset: “He came to his own home, and his own people received him not” (1:11). Ironic development of various aspects of the theme of Jesus’ rejection by his own permeates the narrative.⁴²⁰

In the passion narrative *hoi Ioudaioi* demonstrate this profoundly when they deny their spiritual heritage and declare, “We have no king but the emperor” (19:15).

The seventeen types of irony I identify are in the three broad groups detailed by Muecke: verbal, situational and dramatic.⁴²¹ I find some of the examples of Fourth Gospel irony demonstrated through a single spoken phrase, a situation or a dramatic event. Sometimes, two or more types of irony may overlap, depending on the meaning of a single word.

In addition, there are several types in each group. In verbal irony, we find double meaning, metaphor, sarcasm, satire, and unanswered question. In situational irony, we find reversal, prolepsis / analepsis, juxtaposition, paradox and dualism. In dramatic

⁴¹⁷ Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony", 193.

⁴¹⁸ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 1.

⁴¹⁹ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 167-168.

⁴²⁰ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 169.

⁴²¹ Muecke, *The Compass of Irony*. Verbal (64-98); Situational (99-136); and Dramatic (137-147).

irony, we find understatement, overstatement / hyperbole, misunderstanding, parody, double standard and double-entendre.⁴²²

The subordinate characters in the gospel narrative constantly misunderstand Jesus.⁴²³ There are three factors that identify misunderstandings: where Jesus speaks with ambiguity; where characters make a literal interpretation of what Jesus says; or where the text requires further explanation by Jesus (or the narrator).⁴²⁴ It is significant that in the passion narrative “misunderstandings” highlight the presence of irony. For example, Pilate misunderstands what Jesus means when answering his questions concerning kingship (18:33-38) and authority (19:9-11).⁴²⁵

Implied Commentary

As part of the focus of this thesis is concerned with the stability of irony in the Fourth Gospel, my rhetorical analysis will address the questions that identify the presence of unstable irony. There are two critical questions:

- Is (Jesus, God or a main character) ever a victim or the object of the irony?
- Do Jesus’ or God’s specific, identified desires ever go unmet?⁴²⁶

The relationship between the author and the reader needs consideration before we embark on the exegesis proper. This implied reader cannot avoid the experience of fully engaging with the implied author. Therefore, this implied reader is “shaped by the desires of the author”.⁴²⁷ Typically then, the implied reader: can (i) discern covert irony, (ii) make sense of double meanings in the Greek (or the Aramaic underlying it), (iii) is able to discern intertextual references, (iv) is not put off by the author who may make readers objects of irony, and (v) be privy to the ancient Jewish culture and customs of Jesus’ time.⁴²⁸ It appears that in most cases of irony, as described in the following chapters, the implied author keeps the implied reader abreast of the developments in the

⁴²² Tables 6 and 8 in the next two chapters demonstrate this.

⁴²³ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 152.

⁴²⁴ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 152.

⁴²⁵ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 161.

⁴²⁶ See Chapters One and Two of this thesis for a full description of unstable irony’s characteristics.

⁴²⁷ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 34.

⁴²⁸ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 35-36.

narrative. However, on some occasions, if only temporarily, the implied author does not tell the reader the full story. As explained in Chapter Two, such instances if persisting to be unresolved are “unstable rhetoric”, whereas those instances that do resolve I designate as “perplexing rhetoric”.

Dialogue and action are integral to the passion narrative, that takes us on a journey with Jesus. It begins with the familiar garden where Jesus is arrested. It continues with the path leading Jesus to Golgotha and the crucifixion, and then to the garden tomb where Jesus’ corpse is laid to rest. Then in the post resurrection narrative of John 20, we are led to the room where Thomas and the other disciples experience their risen “Lord and God”.

Step Three

Kennedy suggests that the critic considers the rhetorical arrangement. Adapting his step for our selected passage allows us to address the following issues: (i) the significant developments from the second step; (ii) the dynamics of the author’s use of various rhetorical devices; (iii) the rhetorical structure the author uses; and (iv) what this structure reveals about the implied reader.

The implied author uses a variety of literary devices that provide interest for the readers of the gospel. These include: a variety of ironies, the historic present tense, chiasms, a gap-in-the-story and *inclusio*. The major focus of this thesis is concerned with irony. Therefore, in the analytical section of this thesis I identify where I find covert irony in the text. I also explain and comment on the particular variety of irony used.

In the passion narrative I identify two chiasms (18:3-10, 18:28—19:14). The first (Table 1 below) centres on Judas’ attempted betrayal that goes awry.⁴²⁹ There are four

⁴²⁹ My full diagram of this chiasm is Table 2, in the following chapter. For other chiasms in the Passion Narrative see Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse: How the Gospel Passion Narratives Inform a Pastoral Response* (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 215, 220, 222; Smith, *The Amazing Structure of the Gospel of John* (Blackwood, SA: Sherwood Publications, 2005).

stages and three are duplicated in it. I provide the first one here as an example in Table 1. The second chiasm is of Jesus before Pilate.⁴³⁰

TABLE 1: Chiasm of 18:3-19

A: Soldiers with weapons arresting Jesus.
B: Jesus says, "Are you looking for me?"
C: Jesus identifies himself. Divine name: 'I Am'
D: Jesus prevents Judas' betrayal of him.
C1: Jesus identifies himself. Divine name: 'I Am'
B1: Are you looking for me?
A1: Peter with weapon defending Jesus.

Ancient authors often used chiasms "to lend variety and charm to their parallel structures".⁴³¹ Additionally, because of their reprise feature, they would have been useful in the oral tradition as a mnemonic.

Of the four gospels, the fourth has the highest incidence of the historic present tense in the Greek text with 164 finite verbs that are not in speech.⁴³² In my reading of the selected passage, I have discovered that the historic present occurs forty-five times in the 113 verses of the narrative. That is about two occurrences every five verses.⁴³³ The historic present, even though it is lost in the translation to English, identifies vitality and action and adds to the interest of the implied reader.⁴³⁴

A common Johannine literary device is *inclusio*. *Inclusio* is a technique where the author has a similar beginning and ending to a passage, possibly using the same word or phrase. At the beginning of the passion narrative in 18:1 we find the word describing Jesus' action: ἐξῆλθεν ("he went out"). Strangely, at the beginning of the next section of the Passion Narrative in 19:17 we find the same word again, this time describing Jesus'

⁴³⁰ In Table 4 found in Chapter Four I graphically portray these details.

⁴³¹ Dahood, "Chiasmus," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* 5:5: 145.

⁴³² O'Rourke, "The Historic Present in the Gospel of John", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 93 (1974): 585-587.

⁴³³ In Appendix 4, I itemise each occurrence of the historic present. In Appendix 5 I offer my translation of the passion narrative. I have used the UBS4 Text to translate the historic present into the English present tense, thus retaining the vitality of the Greek text.

⁴³⁴ O'Rourke, "The Historic Present in the Gospel of John", 585-590.

punctiliar action of departure, carrying his own cross. *Inclusio* may trigger for the implied reader the impression of “circularity” or completeness.⁴³⁵

Step Four

In the fourth step, the issues of the text to be addressed are: (i) whether the irony found in the passage is stylistic; (ii) other literary devices used, and (iii) how the author uses them. These answers detail style and content, that are essential in determining the author’s purpose.

The Fourth Gospel passion narrative demonstrates some important features of style. It is strikingly different from the Synoptic accounts. The most telling sign is that the Johannine Jesus is different; he knows what is about to happen to him (18:4). Jesus does not experience agony in the garden, there are no sweat drops of blood, and there is no rebuke for the disciples who fall asleep rather than watch and pray. As Michael Trainor says, “Jesus appears pre-eminently exalted, all knowing, self-assured and, in his passion, in control”.⁴³⁶ From the time of his arrival at the familiar garden, Jesus is at peace and in calm command of what takes place.

Other important stylistic features are themes such as contrasts and discipleship.⁴³⁷ It will be significant to contrast the behaviour and attitudes of Jesus and other characters. Additionally, in terms of discipleship, it will be helpful to investigate the nature of Peter’s denial, Judas’ betrayal, and the actions of the unnamed disciple.

The implied author is clever to detail the irony. In the big picture, God does not conform to or obey anyone. Moreover, God cannot die. Yet paradoxically, the divine Son undergoes the suffering of torture from evil people who are intent on having Jesus falsely convicted and on having him executed. More than this, there is the incidence of the prolepsis (flash forward) that serves to reinforce the significant themes of the gospel. Stibbe says these

⁴³⁵ Stibbe, *John’s Gospel*, 1.

⁴³⁶ Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse: How the Gospel Passion Narratives Inform a Pastoral Response*, 201.

⁴³⁷ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary* (London: Routledge, 2002), 179-193.

...echo effect[s]... underline the author's highly complex use of the narrator in the story (who)... requires the reader to read the middle of the gospel from the perspective of the ending... (creating) a kind of realised eschatology...⁴³⁸

These covert ironies of paradox and prolepsis / analepsis seem more profound in the Fourth Gospel, as the author presents his / her historical imagination of the events.

The uniqueness of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative gives insight into what the gospel demonstrates as the author's purposes. These include,

- To present Jesus as someone who is in control of his circumstances and never overwhelmed by them.
- To highlight the paradox of Jesus' actions and behaviour compared with those of others.
- To demonstrate the folly of the heart attitude that is unwilling to believe into Jesus.
- To demonstrate the depths of depravity and evil deeds that humans have committed by abusing, torturing and murdering the One whom the author portrays as the incarnate Son that God sent to save the world.
- To demonstrate through resolved stable irony that the narrator is a reliable witness to the Johannine Jesus.
- To help the reader accept the incongruities and perplexities of life, and to be confident of assistance through various trials because of the presence of the Spirit.

Step Five

In the fifth step, the whole passage undergoes a review as a unit. I ask, how does the implied author address rhetorical issues? What is the perceived impact of the rhetoric in the text? Does the rhetoric affect the implied reader? How?

In the Fourth Gospel, the author, narrator, or Jesus usually keeps the implied reader informed of every detail in the story as it happens, or even before it happens. These three have been a consistent witness for the implied reader from the outset. As Culpepper says,

The norms of the implied author are ostensibly drawn from Jesus and revealed by him. The prologue... serves the crucial function of elevating the reader to the

⁴³⁸ Stibbe, *John's Gospel*, 105.

implied author's Apollonian vantage point before the spectacle begins... The revelation of Jesus' identity at the outset provides firm footing for the reader's reconstruction of hidden meanings and reception of suppressed signals behind the backs... of the characters.⁴³⁹

The implied reader therefore can read / hear and understand the Greek text, detect, understand and categorise all instances of covert, subtle irony (for example 19:14-15), and even know the story of Jesus.⁴⁴⁰ However, what the implied author conveys to the implied reader is a revelatory experience of Jesus. Furthermore, the author wants to persuade the implied reader to develop new understandings of God's purposes through reading the gospel.

Conclusion

In this chapter I demonstrate how I have adapted and modified Kennedy's method of rhetorical criticism. Briefly, the five steps that I adopt are as follows:

STEP ONE: The passage to be analysed by this methodology needs to have a demonstrated unity. This step seeks to provide a rationale to support the choice of the passage.

STEP TWO: In the chosen passage there will be examples of literary devices used by the author. This step asks the critic to find examples of all rhetorical and literary devices in the chosen passage. They will include both non-ironic and ironic literary devices. Note that the difference between these is that ironic ones have an incongruent twist.

STEP THREE: There will be developments in the research from Step Two. The rhetorical and literary devices will need to be categorised, sorted and explained. This step assigns categories and types to each example of irony, and identifies whether the irony is stable, unstable or perplexing. If there is no incongruent twist, then this step identifies which type of rhetoric is used. In addition, this step comments on the dynamics and structure of the rhetoric used, as well as the effect these things have on the reader.

STEP FOUR: Resulting from Step Three, the critic will have questions about the author's style. The way the author uses the irony will need to be analysed. This step

⁴³⁹ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 168.

⁴⁴⁰ Moloney and Brown, *Excursus: Narrative Approaches to the Fourth Gospel*, 35-36.

determines whether the irony has a particular style or purpose, and explains how the author may have written using style and content.

STEP FIVE: The final step is about revision. The process of these five steps will need reviewing. Critical thinking will be an essential part of this step.

This step discusses how the implied author / narrator addresses rhetorical issues, determines the impact of rhetoric on the text and on the implied reader. In addition, this step discusses the relationship between the author / narrator and the implied reader, especially if persistent or perplexing instability is present.

In Diagram 9 below I visually portray the five steps in the adopted method. This simplifies the process I undertake in Chapters Five and Six. In the next two chapters, I follow these methodological steps to gain an effective analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. I will not follow each step of the method mechanically, but will consolidate the results under each heading in the next two chapters.

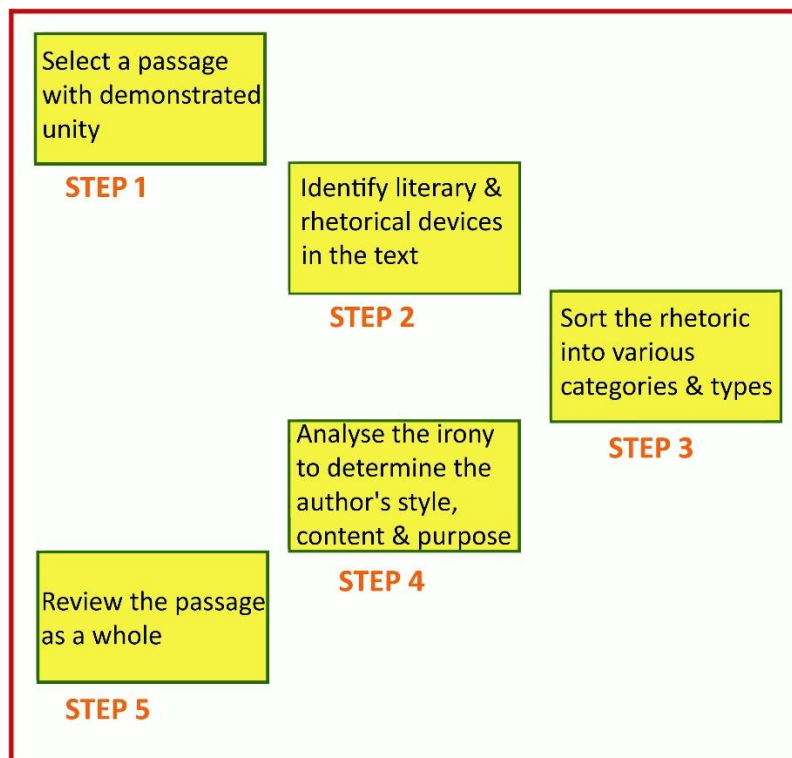


DIAGRAM 9. The Five Steps in the Adopted Method

CHAPTER FIVE: THE ANALYSIS OF JOHN 18:1–19:16A: AN EXAMPLE OF SUSTAINED IRONY

Introduction⁴⁴¹

In each of the five steps of method as per Diagram 9 above, I seek to help the reader understand the literary and rhetorical impact of the text. I have adapted Kennedy's methodology in the following manner. In step one I set out the reason for choosing the selected passage. Step two identifies the literary and rhetorical devices discovered in the passage. In step three I categorise the literary and rhetorical devices. Step four focuses on the irony to determine the implied author's style, content and purpose. Step five reviews the passage overall, with particular reference to its impact. By applying this revised methodology to the text I provide greater awareness of the presence of various types of irony and other literary devices in the Fourth Gospel.

In Chapters Five and Six, I examine the Johannine passion narrative chronologically. There are fifty-six verses in the first section of the passion narrative (18:1-19:16a), which Chapter Five addresses, and fifty-seven verses in the second (19:16b-20:31) covered in Chapter Six.⁴⁴²

Throughout the Johannine passion narrative, there are numerous examples of irony and rhetoric. I have referred to some of these various types in earlier chapters, that I again use in these following chapters in their contextual sequence. As well as detailing the varieties of irony, I identify and explain the other forms of stable and unstable rhetoric

⁴⁴¹ As mentioned earlier, throughout this thesis, I use the term "trial" to refer to the various occasions where Jesus appears before the Jewish and Roman authorities. However, these occasions could hardly be considered as such in a forensic way, or as we might consider as a proper administration of justice. A more apt description would be a "legal procedure". The term "trial" seems meaningless without knowledge of the legal system of the first century. Nevertheless, for clarity and simplicity the term "trial" will suffice. Further, in place of the term "the Jews" I prefer to use "*hoi Ioudaioi*". See my treatment of this complex issue in Chapter One. For a detailed analysis, see Sheridan, "Issues in the Translation of *hoi Ioudaioi* in the Fourth Gospel". Additionally, when I use the term "reader", I also imply "hearer".

⁴⁴² The Johannine passion narrative is the subject of ironic scrutiny already. See Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 126-137. See MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 109-112. See Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 223-228. See also Kanagaraj and Kemp, *Gospel of John* (Bangalore: Asian Theological Association, 2000), 372-382. Another helpful commentator is Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 189-198.

as I defined in Chapter Two. Additionally, for ease and simplicity, I examine the narrative by following the sequence of the Greek text. All English translations of the Greek text are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

Appendices 1 and 2 itemise all of the ironies I have discovered in sequential order, Appendix 3 provides a summary of all these ironies and rhetoric, and Appendix 4 itemises all of the identified rhetoric in sequential order.

The analytical material in these two chapters follows the usual narrative sequence of the verses in the text. I opt for sections of verses because they provide a smoother flow of understanding. This enables me to follow the storyline of the passion narrative and offer a coherent presentation. It also enables me to interweave the exegesis with the rhetorical analysis in each of the various steps. Thus, the results arising from this rhetorical criticism become part of the overall analysis. Each section begins with my literal translation of the UBS4 Text.⁴⁴³

The Trial Narrative

To achieve step one of the method, I address the unity of the selected passage. Since leaving the farewell discourse (that began in 13:6 and concluded in 17:26) there has been a transition in genre. The genre has changed predominately from monologue to narrative with the beginning of John 18. Furthermore, John 18-20 concerns the events of the climax of the Gospel: the arrest, trial, crucifixion, death and resurrection of the divine Son. These factors affirm the unity of the narrative of Jesus' arrest and trial as part of the passion narrative as a whole.

⁴⁴³ In my translation of UBS4 I emphasise the nuances of the Greek that otherwise may be lost in translation, as well as rhetoric and irony (including Greek verb tenses and nuances in meaning).

18:1-11

^{18:1} Having spoken these things, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron ravine, where there was a garden, into which he and his disciples entered. ² Now even Judas, the betrayer, had known the place because Jesus and his disciples were often gathered there. ³ So Judas, having taken the cohort of soldiers along with officials from the chief priests and from the Pharisees, comes there with lanterns, torches and weapons. ⁴ Therefore Jesus, knowing all the things coming upon him, went out and says to them, ‘Whom are you seeking?’ ⁵ They answered him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth’. He says to them, ‘I Am’. Now, Judas, the one who was betraying him, also continues to stand with them. ⁶ Now as he said to them, ‘I Am’, they went backwards and they fell to the ground. ⁷ So again he questioned them, ‘Whom are you seeking?’ And they said, ‘Jesus of Nazareth’. ⁸ Jesus answered, ‘I told you that I Am he. Therefore, since you are seeking me, allow these ones to leave’. ⁹ In order that the word that he spoke might be fulfilled, ‘those you have (permanently) given me, I never ever lost one of them’. ¹⁰ Having a sword, Simon Peter then drew it and struck the right ear of the chief priest’s slave and cut it off. And the name of the slave was Malchus. ¹¹ So, Jesus said to Peter, ‘Thrust the sword into the sheath; shall I not drink the cup the father has given me?’

The Analysis

In 18:1-11, the key points I discuss centre on the ironies and rhetoric as follows: (i) the ironies concerning the size of the arresting group and their methods of achieving their

^{18:1} Ταῦτα εἰπὼν Ἰησοῦς ἐξῆλθεν σὺν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ πέραν τοῦ χειμάρρου τοῦ Κεδρὼν ὅπου ἦν κῆπος, εἰς ὃν εἰσῆλθεν αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ. ² Ἦιδει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδούς αὐτὸν τὸν τόπον, ὅτι πολλάκις συνήχθη Ἰησοῦς ἐκεῖ μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ. ³ ὁ οὖν Ἰούδας λαβὼν τὴν σπεῖραν καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων ὑπηρέτας ἔρχεται ἐκεῖ μετὰ φανῶν καὶ λαμπάδων καὶ ὀπλων. ⁴ Ἰησοῦς οὖν εἰδὼς πάντα τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἐξῆλθεν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· τίνα ζητεῖτε; ⁵ ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ· Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον. λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἐγὼ εἰμι. εἰστήκει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδούς αὐτὸν μετ’ αὐτῶν. ⁶ ὡς οὖν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐγὼ εἰμι, ἀπήλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ ἔπεσαν χαμαί. ⁷ Πάλιν οὖν ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτούς· τίνα ζητεῖτε; οἱ δὲ εἶπαν· Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον. ⁸ ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· εἶπον ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι. εἰ οὖν ἐμὲ ζητεῖτε, ἄφετε τούτους ὑπάγειν ⁹ ἵνα πληρωθῇ ὁ λόγος ὃν εἶπεν ὅτι οὓς δέδωκάς μοι οὐκ ἀπόλεσα ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐδένα. ¹⁰ Σίμων οὖν Πέτρος ἔχων μάχαιραν εἴλκυσεν αὐτήν καὶ ἔπαισεν τὸν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως δούλον καὶ ἀπέκοψεν αὐτοῦ τὸ ὠτάριον τὸ δεξιόν· ἦν δὲ ὄνομα τῷ δούλῳ Μάλχος. ¹¹ εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ Πέτρῳ· βάλε τὴν μάχαιραν εἰς τὴν θήκην· τὸ ποτήριον ὃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ οὐ μὴ πῖω αὐτό;

purpose of taking Jesus away. (ii) Jesus' attitude towards the arrest; (iii) the identity of Johannine Jesus, who uses the divine name, "I Am", for himself; (iv) the dualism between light and darkness; (v) the power and authority of Jesus and the arresting group; and (vi) the rhetorical device of a chiasm that focusses on the actions and words of Jesus prior to and during the arrest.

In 18:1 we find the word ἐξῆλθεν (= he went out) which is repeated again in 19:5 and 19:17. This forms an *inclusio* at the beginning of the Johannine passion narrative, at the point where Jesus comes out to face the crowd who wanted him to die, and at the end of the trial scene. The end of the trial scene (19:16a) forms a natural break and this *inclusio* serves to affirm the unity of the first section of the passion narrative, which is the topic of analysis in this chapter.

A second *inclusio* focusses on the whole passion narrative. The key word in 18:1 that identifies this *inclusio* is κῆπος (= garden). This was a familiar place across the Kidron ravine that Jesus frequented with his disciples (18:2). Another κῆπος, at the end of the passion narrative (19:41), is the setting for Jesus' burial and resurrection. At the end of the resurrection narrative, Mary meets the risen Jesus and does not recognise him at first glance. In 20:15, she thinks he is ὁ κηπουρός (= the garden keeper) and asks him where his corpse is! The repeated garden theme demonstrates unity for the whole passion narrative. These *inclusios* are non-ironic rhetoric and correlate with step one of the method.

After Jesus leads the eleven to the familiar garden, Judas Iscariot brings the arresting party into in the garden (18:1-2). Jesus greets them there (18:4). Those arriving in this second group include: Judas (the betrayer), soldiers, officials from the chief priests, as well as some Pharisees (18:3). My translation of 18:1-3, that duplicates the translation above, follows.

^{18:1} Having spoken these things, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron ravine, where there was a garden, into which he and his disciples entered. ² Now even Judas, the betrayer, had known the place because Jesus and his disciples were often gathered there. ³ So Judas, having taken the cohort of soldiers along with

officials from the chief priests and from the Pharisees, comes there with lanterns, torches and weapons.

The size of the arresting group in the Fourth Gospel is of particular interest to several commentators. In the Synoptic accounts, the arresting group has no soldiers, but rather consists of “a (large) crowd ... from the chief priests (the scribes) and the elders of the people” (Matthew 26:47; Mark 14:43; cf. Luke 22:47). In the Fourth Gospel this group of Jewish authorities is accompanied by τὴν σπεῖραν (“the detachment of soldiers” (NRSV), “battalion” (NLT) or “cohort” (NASV) that Jey Kanagaraj explains is “the tenth part of a legion, normally six hundred Roman soldiers with a commander, though the number varied”.⁴⁴⁴ Marianne Meye Thompson says, “...the numbers of troops sent to confront Jesus are exaggerated”.⁴⁴⁵ George Beasley-Murray also thinks the deployment of six hundred troops is not credible historically, however, is intended for the reader to understand it theologically.⁴⁴⁶

Francis Moloney says the Fourth Gospel’s description of the arresting group is

both unlikely and historically inaccurate. As throughout the Johannine passion account, historical accuracy [is]... often subordinated to the Johannine theological point of view.⁴⁴⁷

Both Beasley-Murray and Moloney are right in thinking that the “Johannine theological point of view” is the critical issue here. Rudolf Schnackenburg agrees stating, the fourth evangelist’s

... “report” becomes a theological representation. What happens in the foreground reveals a deep insight of faith for which historical exactitude is unimportant. ...With such a type of story-telling, a verdict such as “mistake” or “deception” is quite out of place.⁴⁴⁸

The size of the arresting group, rather than being a mistake or deception, reflects the author’s theological viewpoint. In addition to this, I suggest that the author wrote with the intended covert ironies of hyperbole and satire and the rhetoric of symbolism. This symbolism is a non-ironic metaphor. Furthermore, if my premise is valid, then the reference to the full garrison of six hundred Roman soldiers alongside the High Priest’s

⁴⁴⁴ Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 172, n1.

⁴⁴⁵ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 362.

⁴⁴⁶ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 322.

⁴⁴⁷ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 485.

⁴⁴⁸ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John (3 vols)*, 3: 223.

officials is not impossible or manipulated. Rather, the incredible size of the arresting party is to be understood theologically as it indicates the irony of overstatement or hyperbole. The literary technique is employed to highlight the “regal poise of Jesus ... who occupies the centre stage and directs the events. The soldiers by contrast are background figures”.⁴⁴⁹ The important feature of the improbability of the numbers sent to arrest Jesus highlights the theological weight of the ironic hyperbole.

The purpose of the irony here seems to increase the intensity of the drama, raising it to another level.⁴⁵⁰ The Johannine portrait of Jesus is that he is in full control of the garden scene. His importance is the central issue, and this contrasts over and against the apparent powerlessness of the large number of people who have come to take him away. As Schnackenburg says, “Only Jesus himself can allow the soldiers and slaves to take him”.⁴⁵¹ Moreover, the Romans and *hoi Ioudaioi* combined in the arresting scene are symbolic of a world intent on forcing Jesus to do as they desire.⁴⁵² It is paradoxically ironic that so many with weapons cannot overcome the unarmed one who surrenders to them (18:3-8). Furthermore, Moloney makes the connection between the events of Jesus’ arrest and the fledgling Church. He says that the narrator tells the story “in such a way that the reader learns as much about the responsibilities and the fragility of the future Christian community as about the experience of Jesus”.⁴⁵³ This is a non-ironic double drama.

This large group has come in the night with lanterns, torches and weapons in order to arrest Jesus (18:1-3). There are ironies of understatement and dualism present because the implied reader already knows that Jesus is the “Light of the world” and whoever follows him “will not walk in darkness” (8:12; and 1:9; 9:5). Yet, the arresting group bring lanterns and torches to shine in the darkness. They discover that they have no need of their lanterns and torches to find Jesus. They do not expect him to be waiting for them, demonstrating ironic misunderstanding on their part. Jesus twice reveals himself to them in such a way that it is impossible for Judas or anyone to make a mistake in identifying him (18:4, 7). The implied reader is aware of the ironic

⁴⁴⁹ Milne, *The Message of John: Here is Your King!*, 254.

⁴⁵⁰ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, 48.

⁴⁵¹ Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John (3 vols)*, 3: 225.

⁴⁵² Moloney, *Reading John: Introducing the Johannine Gospel and Letters*, 59.

⁴⁵³ Moloney, *Reading John: Introducing the Johannine Gospel and Letters*, 62.

understatement, dualism and even parody because the implied reader already knows it is absurd to light a “torch” to find the Light of the world.

Who can arrest God’s Revealer?⁴⁵⁴ The Johannine Jesus demonstrates by what he says and does that no one can arrest him. As Vic Pfitzner says, he “...comes forward as if to invite arrest”.⁴⁵⁵ The armed soldiers and officials demonstrate the irony of reversal. They come to arrest Jesus, but instead he arrests them into doing what the Father wants, allowing himself to be taken by them. Instead of the kiss of betrayal as per the Synoptic Gospel accounts, Jesus dialogues with the Gentile soldiers who come to arrest him.⁴⁵⁶

The implied reader may well ask, “Why are there so many soldiers, weapons, lanterns and torches?” Such a large group of authority figures points to their insecurity and fear of the one who raised Lazarus from death only a week earlier. Meanwhile, at the time they came to the garden to arrest Jesus he was already waiting for them, (as the narrator tells us) “knowing all that was going to happen to him” (18:4). In demonstration of paradoxical irony, the narrator wants the implied reader to understand that Jesus is in control.

Judas brings the people in the arresting group into the garden to identify Jesus to them. However, Jesus has never prevented anyone from getting to know him. Judas’ actions could be a non-ironic analepsis, a flash-back to the scene of two of John the Baptist’s disciples who show interest in where Jesus is staying. Jesus responds to them, “Come and see” (1:39). Then, later (1:46), Philip invites Nathanael to come and meet Jesus using the same words. After encountering Jesus, the woman of Samaria went back into her village of Sychar, and began to call the residents to “come and see” Jesus (4:29). Later, Philip helped some Greeks come and see Jesus (12:20-24). Then, when Lazarus died, Jesus came to visit his sisters, Martha and Mary. Prior to Lazarus’ raising, he asks Mary and those with her, “Where have you laid him”? They say to him, “Lord, come and see” (11:34). The author includes these earlier episodes with a desire to enhance Jesus’ ministry. Here in the garden (18:3), bringing the arresting group with him, the betrayer leads them to “come and see” Jesus. The manner in which Judas brings the

⁴⁵⁴ The ‘Revealer’ is Rudolf Bultmann’s title for Jesus. See Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*.

⁴⁵⁵ Pfitzner, *The Gospel According to John*, 283.

⁴⁵⁶ Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 538.

arresting group is different from these earlier examples. In contrast to them, the arresting group have come to take Jesus away. This is the beginning of the tragedy, that unfolds in the passion narrative. It represents the first step in the brutal treatment of the protagonist; the beginning of unstable irony of reversal.

We might expect a reaction of fear, or at least anxiety, on the part of someone facing arrest. The arresting group is huge, armed and hostile, and presumably fearful. On the other hand, the Johannine Jesus has no fear or anxiety. This stark contrast in the garden between the apparent calmness of Jesus and the fearfulness of the arresting party demonstrate ironic juxtaposition. Jesus is not afraid. On the contrary, he delights when people come to him and seek him, even if for the wrong reasons. Jesus expects them to arrest him and knows they are coming for him (18:4). We can see that the actions of Judas and the arresting group demonstrate the irony of misunderstanding.

The chiasm of 18:3-10 (Table 2 below) demonstrates the irony of misunderstanding surrounding the identity of Jesus.⁴⁵⁷ Here are the four members of the chiasm: A/A1 The arresting group have weapons / Peter has a weapon; B/B1 “Are you looking for me?”; C/C1 Jesus identifies himself as “I Am”; D Jesus prevents Judas from betraying him.

The following section of text reads,

^{18:4} Therefore Jesus, knowing all the things coming upon him, went out and says to them, “Whom are you seeking?” ⁵ They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth”. He says to them, “I AM”. Now, Judas, the one who was betraying him, also continues to stand with them. ⁶ Now as he said to them, “I AM”, they went backwards and they fell to the ground. ⁷ So again he questioned them, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth”. ⁸ Jesus answered, “I told you that I AM he. Therefore, since you are seeking me, allow these ones to leave”. ⁹ In order that the word that he spoke might be fulfilled, “those you have (permanently) given me, I never ever lost one of them”.

⁴⁵⁷ See Table 1 in the previous chapter for a shorter chiasm of this section.

TABLE 2: Full Chiasm of John 18:3-10

A.	3 So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.
B.	4 Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" 5 They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth."
C	Jesus replied, "I am he."
D	Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.
C1	6 When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. 7 Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." 8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he.
B1	So if you are looking for me, let these men go." 9 This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me."
A1	10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus.

In the garden, there is a startling effect of Jesus using the divine name for himself. The arresting group think they are prepared to arrest Jesus because they have weapons, they have lamps and torches and they have Judas to identify him. Nevertheless, they are unprepared for their encounter with Jesus, and fall down as they encounter the divine name on the lips of Jesus, “ἐγώ εἰμι I Am” (18:5, 6, 8).⁴⁵⁸ As David Rensberger says,

Jesus’ declaration is a theophany, a divine revelation, and it overwhelms the dozens of armed men sent to arrest him. We see ...the one being crucified [as] the symbol of God, there will be symbolism throughout the passion narrative as well, starting with “I am he,” the name that also symbolises the deity.⁴⁵⁹

Rensberger identifies a non-ironic metaphor in the divine name.

⁴⁵⁸ The divine name (ἐγώ εἰμι) is on the lips of the Johannine Jesus in several places throughout the Fourth Gospel. Most profoundly, it occurs without the predicate here and at 8:24, 58 and 13:19.

⁴⁵⁹ Rensberger, "It is Accomplished! The Passion in the Gospel of John," in *Engaging the Passion: Perspectives of the Death of Jesus* (ed. Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 78.

Their attempt to take Jesus away seems preposterous as they have no idea of the true identity of the person with whom they are dealing. Throughout the Gospel, the author has prepared the implied reader for this theophany of Jesus speaking the divine name. However, those with Judas have no idea of his identity as the divine pre-existent Logos.

Furthermore, Jesus does not allow Judas to betray him because Jesus identifies himself to the arresting party. Judas, who has handed over this group to arrest Jesus, is prevented from the act of betrayal because of Jesus' self-disclosure.⁴⁶⁰ Jesus has pre-empted Judas' betrayal so that it hardly constitutes a betrayal at all. The author identifies Judas as the betrayer (18:2, 5), however, in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus does not allow Judas the opportunity to betray him (18:4). Instead, there are *three types of irony* that the author uses.

First, we discover the irony of reversal. Judas is named as the betrayer, however, the fourth evangelist does not have him betray Jesus. Secondly, there is the irony of parody. The narrator ridicules Judas. Jesus had prevented him from his work of betrayal through Jesus' own self-disclosure. Thirdly, there is the irony of misunderstanding. This happens because the arresting group misunderstand the identity of Jesus, even though the disciples and implied reader know. These ironies serve as another opportunity to declare the "real" identity of the Johannine Jesus. Furthermore, they demonstrate that he is the divine Son by being in control of the circumstances that surround his arrest, trial and subsequent death.

Jesus speaks to the arresting group, "τίνα ζητεῖτε; Whom are you looking for? (18:4)". This is strangely similar to what Jesus said to his early disciples, "τί ζητεῖτε; What are you looking for? (1:38)". In both passages, Jesus is encouraging those with whom he speaks to seek him.⁴⁶¹ The first group seeks him to become his disciples. The second group seeks him to take him away for execution. This is an ironic analepsis.

⁴⁶⁰ The noun ὁ παραδιδούς means both "the one who hands over" or "the one who betrays" (18:2-3, 5). I have taken the second meaning to highlight the irony.

⁴⁶¹ Brown says, that this question to his captors is "hauntingly reminiscent of the first words Jesus ever addressed to those who would be disciples in this Gospel. ...While people "seek" Jesus because he has the gift of life, much more frequently, as irony would have it, people "seek" him to put him to death..."

As Jesus speaks the divine name in disclosing his identity to them, they “fall down” (18:6). In the Greek world, ‘to worship’ meant to “fall down”, or to “prostrate oneself”, before the deity.⁴⁶² Even though the normal word for worship, *προσκυνέω*, is not used here, it is used eleven times in the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, when Jesus healed the man of his blindness, and he began to exercise faith into Jesus, the narrator implies that he falls down when he worships Jesus (9:38). Conversely here, the arresting group do not worship Jesus, as they step backwards. Yet, strangely they fall down prostrate as they hear the divine name. In the Johannine arrest, there is no kissing Jesus on the cheek, but rather an unexpected falling to the ground. The narrator has provided the implied reader with an imitation of true worship; an ironic parody. In addition to this, their ironic posture of worship scorns their attempt to arrest him, creating ironic satire.

In the bigger picture, there are the ironies of paradox and misunderstanding. The implied reader knows that Jesus has used the divine name (*ἐγώ εἰμι*) several times (6:35, 48, 51; 8:12, 28, 58; 9:5; 10:9-10; 11:25; 13:19; 14:6; 15:1, 5), each time revealing more about his identity.⁴⁶³ Here he speaks the divine name again, those “majestic and now familiar words of self-revelation” and because of the power of his name, they fall to the ground.⁴⁶⁴ There is misunderstanding among the arresting group, as they have no understanding of the identity of the Johannine Jesus, that the fourth evangelist’s portrait reveals (18:4-5). It is ironic that the arrest takes place based on their “unenlightened” misunderstanding.

The Johannine arrest of Jesus does not happen because the arresting group have their way. Nevertheless, ironically they do arrest Jesus and take him away (18:12). In the

Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1:260.

⁴⁶² In the ancient Greek world, *προσκυνέω* “...depicts the posture of kissing the ground, a reverent act used mainly in reference to worship of a deity. ...The word demands a visible act, a concrete gesture of reverence to a visible deity.” Martin, “Worship,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (ed. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 4:1118.

⁴⁶³ The author uses the divine name of Jesus here. Importantly, in 8:28 and 13:18f the “absolute” rendering is made. Pfitzner, *The Gospel According to John*, 283f.

⁴⁶⁴ J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 885. Furthermore, in John 18:5b-6 we read, “Jesus replied, ‘*I am* he.’ Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. ⁶ When Jesus said to them, ‘*I am* he,’ they stepped back and fell to the ground.” (My emphasis).

Fourth Gospel, Jesus' arrest demonstrates a clash of power and authority between the Roman authorities, the religious authorities, and Jesus himself. Yet his arrest happens because the Johannine Jesus is in control of what takes place in the garden (10:18). Thompson explains the irony this way, "Even if in the end the Romans do put Jesus on a cross, they do so only because Jesus allows and even wills it. The one who has and is life gives himself over to death".⁴⁶⁵ Jesus chooses his arrest. The implied reader is aware of the ironies of double entendre and paradox.

Purposefully, in the Synoptic Gospels, three times Jesus predicts that his passion and death will happen after his arrest (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34 and parallels). Conversely, all the while in the Fourth Gospel, the evangelist portrays Jesus as one who is in command, even of those who try to arrest him. The Johannine Jesus demonstrates that no one can take his life. He gives it of his own accord (10:11, 15-18). Furthermore, Jesus (in fulfilment of the Scriptures, 18:9) ensures that nothing will happen to his disciples, because the arresting party have only come for him. As Rudolf Bultmann says,

...Jesus puts himself at their disposal, he ensures that nothing happens to the disciples (vv.8f). So the first scene reveals that the Passion does not come upon him as his fate, rather *he* is the one who acts, and *he* controls the situation.⁴⁶⁶

Moloney suggests a greater significance to Jesus seeking the freedom of his disciples. He gives himself to the arresting party on the one condition: that his disciples are free to go and be missionaries (13:20, 34-35; 15:5, 8, 16, 26-27; 17:18-19, 20-23).⁴⁶⁷ By ensuring their release, Jesus demonstrates his love for his followers by giving himself to be captured. This is a non-ironic analepsis to the words Jesus spoke earlier, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (15:13).

⁴⁶⁵ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 363.

⁴⁶⁶ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 637. (original emphasis).

⁴⁶⁷ Moloney, *Reading John: Introducing the Johannine Gospel and Letters*, 60. Also see Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor: Reading John 13-21*, 131.

In 18:6, Jesus uses the divine name as he did in 13:19 (at the last supper in the context of predicting his betrayal). Jesus, the betrayed, confronts the betrayer Judas, demonstrating the irony of paradox and a non-ironic analepsis with the name being a symbol of the divine.⁴⁶⁸

Furthermore, the author uses the ironies of satire, sarcasm and unanswered question to demonstrate the uselessness and futility of weapons to arrest or defend Jesus (3-11).⁴⁶⁹ The arresting group is large, including Judas, soldiers and officials. They have weapons and they are prepared for violence if necessary. My translation of 18:10-11 follows.

^{18:10} Having a sword, Simon Peter then drew it and struck the right ear of the chief priest's slave and cut it off. And the name of the slave was Malchus. ¹¹ So, Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; shall I not drink the cup the father has given me?"

Peter also has a weapon, a sword, and cuts off Malchus' ear in a flash.⁴⁷⁰ There is no healing of the ear, as in Luke 22:51, but rather Jesus commands Peter to re-sheath his weapon with apparent acerbity (18:11).⁴⁷¹ Jesus asks the rhetorical unanswered question to Peter, to rebuke and remind him not to try to stop Jesus bringing the Father's plan into fruition as revealed by the fourth evangelist (also see Matthew 26:52-56). Peter's action of trying to "protect" Jesus is potentially preventing the Johannine Jesus from the suffering already prepared for him. Jesus uses the symbol of "drinking the cup" (18:11; see also Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42), that evokes the deliberateness of Jesus' choice to demonstrate his love for the world in laying down his life (15:13). As

⁴⁶⁸ Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 541.

⁴⁶⁹ Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1: 265-281.

⁴⁷⁰ The sword-wielder in the Fourth Gospel is identified as Peter, but the identity of the sword-wielder in the Synoptics is unclear. See Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1:266-268.

⁴⁷¹ Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1:267.

well as this non-ironic metaphor, the fourth evangelist provides the implied reader with the ironies of misunderstanding and prolepsis.

I turn now to an unmet desire of the protagonist. Even though Jesus and his disciples are together in the garden, it is clear from the recorded events that they were not all with the same mind. Jesus was intent on fulfilling the Scriptures not to lose one of his disciples (18:9). Peter drew a sword, violently wounding Malchus and drew harsh criticism from Jesus (18:10-11). Similarly, the narrator twice identifies Judas as the betrayer (18:2, 5). In 17:22-23, Jesus prays boldly that his followers be one, “that they might be drawn into the oneness of love that existed from all time between the Father and the Son”.⁴⁷² It is clear that his desire is specific, identified and unmet, that indicates unstable irony of paradox. If Jesus’ claim is correct, that he will draw all people to himself through his death (12:32-33), then the irony becomes resolved as he dies on the cross. Thus, the resolved paradox will become perplexing irony.

Jesus comes to bring his kingdom, which is not of this world (18:33-37). It is not a kingdom of political intrigue, nor is it of violence needing weapons (18:36b), nor does it come by force (6:15). Rather, in contrast to Peter’s violent action, it is one of keeping the Father’s commands, full of love and peace (14:27; 15:9-10, 12-14; 20:19, 21, 26). There is irony of misunderstanding on Peter’s part as he demonstrates that he has failed to understand the nature of Jesus’ mission. His misunderstanding leads him to draw his sword, and his violent action brings about this ironic prolepsis, a flash-forward to the cup of suffering, concerning the mission of Jesus, which will be resolved later as Jesus meets Pilate (18:36). Furthermore, these events remind the reader that Jesus has already declared, “I have overcome the world” (16:33).

⁴⁷² Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 484.

18:12-14

¹² Therefore, the cohort of soldiers and the military commander and the officials of *hoi Ioudaioi* took Jesus and bound him. ¹³ First, they led him to Annas, as he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ Now Caiaphas was the one who plotted with *hoi Ioudaioi* that it was necessary that one person die on behalf of the people.

¹² Ἡ οὖν σπεῖρα καὶ ὁ χιλιάρχος καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται τῶν Ἰουδαίων συνέλαβον τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸν ¹³ καὶ ἤγαγον πρὸς Ἄνναν πρῶτον· ἦν γὰρ πενθερὸς τοῦ Καϊάφα, ὃς ἦν ἀρχιερεὺς τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐκείνου· ¹⁴ ἦν δὲ Καϊάφας ὁ συμβουλευσας τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι συμφέρει ἓνα ἄνθρωπον ἀποθανεῖν ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ.

In this section the rhetorical and ironic themes are: (i) the issues surrounding the arrest of Jesus; and (ii) the poignant prophetic words of Caiaphas. The ironies identified include metaphor, reversal, misunderstanding and double entendre.

The enormous arresting group “seizes” Jesus and binds him (18:12). They bind him and Jesus goes with them. My translation of these next few verses follows.

¹² Therefore, the cohort of soldiers and the military commander and the officials of *hoi Ioudaioi* took Jesus and bound him. ¹³ First, they led him to Annas, as he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ Now Caiaphas was the one who plotted with *hoi Ioudaioi* that it was necessary that one person die on behalf of the people.

The narrator already had highlighted to the implied reader that knowing Jesus will bring freedom. The implied reader knows that the Son will set us free, and when that happens, she will truly be free (8:32, 36). Additionally, the implied reader knows the Johannine Jesus desires to protect his followers from the evil one’s power.⁴⁷³ Through this, the narrator demonstrates the ironies of metaphor and reversal. Furthermore, the cross-purposes of what the implied reader knows about Jesus setting her free and the overly-forceful actions of the arresting group who do not know Jesus and bind him, demonstrate the irony of misunderstanding.

⁴⁷³ In John 17:15 Jesus prays, “I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.” (1 John 3:8 is also on the same theme.)

The arresting group's first destination for Jesus's trial is to Annas. The narrator describes him as the father-in-law of the high priest, Caiaphas. What follows (18:13-14) is an irony of analepsis to what Caiaphas had said earlier (11:49-50). He had seen Jesus' death as collateral damage and appeared unaware that he had predicted the consequences of Jesus' death.⁴⁷⁴ Yet strangely, the Johannine Caiaphas was able to predict the consequences of the cross in line with the implied author's view. He had given an unintentionally-prophetic word to the Sanhedrin about Jesus. In doing so, he demonstrated irony of misunderstanding. Jesus has to die, one person on behalf of the nation, and indeed (as the Narrator adds) for the "scattered children of God" (11:49-52). Indirectly, these would be the diaspora; the people of God around the world. Nevertheless, theologically speaking from God's perspective, Jesus' death is a poignant demonstration of God's intent to bring salvation, born out of God's love for the world (3:16-17).

When Caiaphas speaks to the Sanhedrin, what he says is a double-entendre. The narrator explains to the reader that Caiaphas was unaware that he was making a prophetic prediction (18:14). The Johannine Caiaphas is portrayed as intending it simply as a rationale for Jesus' death, and is unaware that his words would be spiritually significant to the much larger audience of the world. Moreover, the fourth evangelist arranges Caiaphas' words to enable the implied reader to see the ironic double entendre.

⁴⁷⁴ Brown suggests that the meeting of the Sanhedrin, which resolved that Jesus must die, was more than a week before Passover. The decision was a consequence of the danger Jesus posed to the nation, by raising Lazarus to life. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1:121.

18:15-18

^{18:15} But Simon Peter was following Jesus and another disciple; Now that disciple was known to the high priest and he entered in with Jesus into the open courtyard of the high priest's residence. ¹⁶ But Peter had been standing at the door outside; the disciple, the other one who was known to the high priest, came outside and spoke to the female gatekeeper and brought Peter inside. ¹⁷ So the girl, who was the female gatekeeper, says to Peter, "Aren't you also one of the disciples of this man?" He says, "I am not." ¹⁸ Now, having made a coal fire, the slaves and officials were warming themselves, because it was cold. And Peter was also with them warming himself.

The issues displaying rhetoric and irony which I address in this section include the following: (i) the fourth evangelist's use of the unnamed disciple; (ii) Peter's first denial of his discipleship; and (iii) the entrance to the courtyard. There are these following literary devices: persistent unstable rhetoric, ironic analepsis, an ironic prolepsis, ironic reversal, ironic double standard, and a non-ironic analepsis.

In verses 15-16 we are introduced to an unnamed disciple.⁴⁷⁵ My translation follows.

^{18:15} But Simon Peter was following Jesus and another disciple; Now that disciple was known to the high priest and he entered in with Jesus into the open courtyard of the high priest's residence. ¹⁶ But Peter had been standing at the door outside; the disciple, the other one who was known to the high priest, came outside and spoke to the female gatekeeper and brought Peter inside.

^{18:15} Ἦκολούθει δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ ἄλλος μαθητής. ὁ δὲ μαθητής ἐκεῖνος ἦν γνωστός τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ καὶ συνεισῆλθεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως, ¹⁶ ὁ δὲ Πέτρος εἰστήκει πρὸς τῇ θύρᾳ ἔξω. ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ μαθητής ὁ ἄλλος ὁ γνωστός τοῦ ἀρχιερέως καὶ εἶπεν τῇ θυρωρῷ καὶ εἰσήγαγεν τὸν Πέτρον. ¹⁷ λέγει οὖν τῷ Πέτρῳ ἡ παιδίσκη ἡ θυρωρός· μὴ καὶ σὺ ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν εἶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου; λέγει ἐκεῖνος· οὐκ εἰμί. ἐθερμαίνοντο· ἦν δὲ καὶ ὁ Πέτρος μετ' αὐτῶν ἐστῶς καὶ θερμαινόμενος. ¹⁸ εἰστήκεισαν δὲ οἱ δοῦλοι καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται ἀνθρακιὰν πεποηκότες, ὅτι ψῦχος ἦν, καὶ ὁ Πέτρος μετ' αὐτῶν ἐστῶς καὶ θερμαινόμενος.

⁴⁷⁵ This unnamed disciple's identity remains a mystery. It is probably the beloved disciple. See discussion later in this chapter.

This unnamed disciple and Peter follow Jesus at a distance as they approach the courtyard surrounding the residence of the High Priest. The guards escort Jesus inside the compound. Strikingly, an important dynamic now occurs. The unnamed disciple, following the arresting party, enters the compound unhindered, while Peter waits outside. The unnamed disciple has access to the courtyard because he is an acquaintance of the high priest. The high priest was complicit in Jesus' arrest! (18:15). The unnamed disciple enables Peter to stay near the residence. Peter has reason to fear the authorities, as a servant of the High Priest (18:26) would later identify him as the person responsible for removing the ear of Malchus (18:10).⁴⁷⁶ So, the unnamed disciple returns to the entrance gate and brings Peter inside past the female gatekeeper. The role of the unnamed disciple is pivotal to establish Peter's placement inside the courtyard. Peter has to be where he can fulfil his pledge to follow Jesus (13:37). Furthermore, he has to be in the exact place where, in fulfilment of Jesus' prediction, he can be tested (and fail) to confess the loyalty of his discipleship (13:38). The unnamed disciple makes it possible for Peter to be within the high priest's residence courtyard during the first part of Jesus' trial.

Notably, the implied reader is victimised because the withheld identity of the unnamed disciple brings about persistent unstable rhetoric.⁴⁷⁷ We can see that this unnamed disciple has an important role for the unfolding events and for ongoing significance to the implied (and real) reader in the passion narrative than the female gatekeeper. Yet, the implied reader wonders why this person's identity remains undisclosed. Before this, the narrator has not made a practice of hiding information from the implied reader. However, here is different. Who could this person be who has access to Jesus, his disciples, the guards, and the high priest? The fourth evangelist knows the unnamed disciple's identity. Peter knows who it is. Jesus knows his/her identity, the disciples

⁴⁷⁶ Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1:593.

⁴⁷⁷ See Diagrams 8 and 9 for a full explanation of stable rhetoric, persistently unstable and perplexing rhetoric as compared with stable irony, persistently unstable and perplexing ironies.

must know him/her, the high priest and all the guards know, and the narrator also.⁴⁷⁸

Yet, strangely, the author never reveals the person's name.⁴⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the implied reader remains victimized because the person's identity always remains a mystery.⁴⁸⁰

The product is not irony (there is no incongruent twist), but instead, unresolved, local-covert, unstable rhetoric of reversal.

The unnamed disciple brings Peter into the High Priest's courtyard past the female gatekeeper. She knows the other disciple is a friend of the High Priest, and she may also know that the other disciple is one of Jesus' friends. She asks him and he denies it (18:17). My translation follows.

^{18:17} So the girl, who was the female gatekeeper, says to Peter, "Aren't you also one of the disciples of this man?" He says, "I am not."¹⁸ Now, having made a coal fire, the slaves and officials were warming themselves, because it was cold. And Peter was also with them warming himself.

This first denial is part of an ironic analepsis looking back to Peter's failed promise (13:37) and an ironic prolepsis that looks forward to the post-resurrection breakfast on the beach where the risen Jesus recommissions Peter (21:1-19).⁴⁸¹

The first of Peter's denials (18:17) displays the irony of reversal. Earlier Jesus had forthrightly identified himself in the garden with the words: "I am" (ἐγώ εἰμι). Now, at

⁴⁷⁸ I move beyond the strictly literal translation of a male disciple as implied by the Greek text. I suggest the unknown disciple could have been female. However, the gender of the disciple is not as important as the function of this unknown disciple.

⁴⁷⁹ See Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 107-111.

⁴⁸⁰ The fourth evangelist treats the implied reader in the same way he had concerning the identity of the beloved disciple, who may also be this unnamed disciple. See 13:23; 19:26-27; 20:2-4, 8; 21:7, 20, 23-24. See Stibbe, *John*, 181. Compare with Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels (2 vols)*, 1:597-603.

⁴⁸¹ Here Jesus addresses Peter to help him deal with the shame of the denial of his discipleship of Jesus, and to recommission him as a leader of the church. See Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*, 2: 1105. He argues that the combination of the words Jesus uses to commission Peter, "feed" and "tend", express to Peter's the full nature of his coming ministry. Three times Peter had denied Jesus (18:17, 25, 27), and three times Jesus asks Peter, "do you love me?"

the gate of the courtyard, Peter disowns Jesus and negates his discipleship with the grave words of John 18:17: “I am not ...” (οὐκ εἰμί).⁴⁸²

After further reflection on Peter’s words οὐκ εἰμί, they are a repetition of the words of John the Baptist in John 1. John says adamantly he was not the Messiah, that he was not Elijah or the prophet (1:20-22). On the other hand, with the same brashness, Peter denies knowing Jesus. Both John and Peter make three denials each. John’s words affirm his heritage, he speaks in humility, and he honours God. Peter’s words disown his Galilean heritage, he speaks with defiance, and he dishonours God. Peter’s first denial is thus an ironic analepsis (18:17).

The fourth evangelist has shown Peter to be the spokesperson for the disciples. He is one of the best confessing witnesses Jesus has, yet he denies his discipleship.

Thompson sees this, saying,

Simon Peter fails to rise to the challenge of bearing witness to Jesus. Jesus may journey toward the cross without wavering in John, but few of his disciples display the same courage and faithfulness. Certainly Peter does not.⁴⁸³

So, as their spokesperson, Peter’s denial embraces the witness (or lack of it) of the other disciples as well. He has spoken on their behalf. Thus, this demonstrates an ironic double standard on Peter’s part.

Furthermore, the gate to the courtyard (18:16-17) is symbolic of the threshold or entrance to a desired place. Yet only known or introduced persons can go through it. Jesus speaks with a non-ironic metaphor of being that gate for his followers (10:9). Through faith into Jesus, his followers will find salvation. The gate to the courtyard is symbolic of Jesus’ offer of salvation to all who come by faith. This is a non-ironic analepsis.

⁴⁸² Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1: 599.

⁴⁸³ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 367.

18:19-24

^{18:19} Now the high priest asked Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world, I taught everyone in the synagogue and in the temple, where all *hoi Ioudaioi* are coming together, and in secret I said nothing. ²¹ Why do you ask me? You need to ask those who have heard my teaching. Look! they know the things that I said”. ²² Now after speaking these things, one of the officials standing gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying, “are you answering the high priest this way?” ²³ Jesus answered him, “if I spoke badly you must give witness concerning the bad thing, but if a good testimony, why do you hit me?” ²⁴ So, having bound him, Annas sent him to Caiaphas, the high priest.

In this section I examine the rhetorical and literary devices that I find when the arrested Jesus comes before Annas and Caiaphas. The ironies identified include double standard, juxtaposition,

When Annas questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching, Jesus replied by drawing attention to his displayed openness, by not teaching secretly (18:19-21). My translation follows.

^{18:19} Now the high priest asked Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world, I taught everyone in the synagogue and in the temple, where all *hoi Ioudaioi* are coming together, and in secret I said nothing. ²¹ Why do you ask me? You need to ask those who have heard my teaching. Look! they know the things that I said”.

^{18:19} Ὁ οὖν ἀρχιερεὺς ἠρώτησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδαχῆς αὐτοῦ. ²⁰ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς· ἐγὼ παρρησίᾳ λελάληκα τῷ κόσμῳ, ἐγὼ πάντοτε ἐδίδαξα ἐν συναγωγῇ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, ὅπου πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι συνέρχονται, καὶ ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν. ²¹ τί με ἐρωτᾷς; ἐρώτησον τοὺς ἀκηκοτάς τί ἐλάλησα αὐτοῖς· ἴδε οὗτοι οἶδασιν ἃ εἶπον ἐγώ. ²² ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ εἰπόντος εἷς παρεστηκῶς τῶν ὑπηρετῶν ἔδωκεν ῥάπισμα τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰπών· οὕτως ἀποκρίνη τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ; ²³ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ· εἰ δὲ καλῶς, τί με δέρεις; ²⁴ ἀπέστειλεν οὖν αὐτὸν ὁ Ἄννας δεδεμένον πρὸς Καϊάφαν τὸν ἀρχιερέα.

The words on Jesus' lips openly describe his public ministry, however, this is in direct contrast to the private and secret dealings of the High Priest and his co-conspirators concerning Jesus.⁴⁸⁴ The implied reader remembers that the Sanhedrin has secretly planned to destroy Jesus (11:53). Their harsh treatment of Jesus demonstrates the irony of double standard. Jesus taught publicly while the Sanhedrin operated secretly.

In answer to Annas' question, Jesus affirms the testimony of his disciples (18:21). As he does this inside the residence, Peter denies his discipleship outside the residence (18:17). This creates a situation of ironic juxtaposition.

In 18:22-23 the irony of the double standard is repeated. My translation follows.

^{18:22} Now after speaking these things, one of the officials standing gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying, "are you answering the high priest this way?" ²³ Jesus answered him, "if I spoke badly you must give witness concerning the bad thing, but if a good testimony, why do you hit me?" ²⁴ So, having bound him, Annas sent him to Caiaphas, the high priest.

This is ironic double standard because the official considers this revelation to him as offensive towards Annas and slaps Jesus in the face (18:22). Without minimizing the humiliation and the pain, this 'slap in the face' is more a sign that *hoi Ioudaioi* have rejected Jesus, than "brutalizing" him.⁴⁸⁵

Yet in the third Servant Song of Deutero-Isaiah, it seems that accepting humiliation graciously is a sign of kingship. Isaiah 50:5-6 says,

5 The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.
6 I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

⁴⁸⁴ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 325.

⁴⁸⁵ Staley claims that Jesus was brutalised with the slap. See Staley, "Subversive Narrator / Victimised Reader: A Reader-Response Assessment of a Text-Critical Problem", *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 51 (1993): 96. Contra this, I agree that the slap is symbolic of rejecting the truth. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 491. Brown also supports this idea. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1: 413.

The Servant of the Lord has divine characteristics, yet in obedience he suffers injustice and humiliation. John Watts comments on these verses in the context of the role of the ancient king saying, “[accepting] humiliations [was] part of the job”.⁴⁸⁶ The sufferings Jesus endured were in line with those of Isaiah’s Suffering Servant, demonstrating a non-ironic intertextual analepsis.

However, we return to the actions of the official who struck Jesus. The Sanhedrin, and Annas in particular who is its representative, have operated outside the law, secretly and unethically. They have not followed their own rigorous standards set down in their Law in their dealings with Jesus, and in so doing are perverting the course of justice (Exodus 23:2, 7; Deuteronomy 1:16; 16:19-20; 19:15-20). This becomes more pronounced with the unjust trial process of Jesus that has begun. The implied reader is certain that the victim of this irony is not Jesus, even though he is the victim of the slap in the face. Rather, paradoxically, Jesus is the one who creates the irony, while the victims are Annas, (as the representative of the Sanhedrin) and the official who slapped Jesus. The types of irony demonstrated here are paradox, reversal and double standard in that the culpable go unpunished, while the innocent one suffers an assault from the official.

The narrator established in 18:12 that Annas is the father-in-law of Caiaphas. Yet in this section there is ambiguity regarding who is the high priest.⁴⁸⁷ Both Annas and Caiaphas have the title (18:19, 24). This could lead to misunderstanding here, yet not ironically so, as the narrator has already explained the relationship between Caiaphas and his father-in-law.

⁴⁸⁶ Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 203.

⁴⁸⁷ There appears to have been a tradition to continue to confer the title to retired high priests, but the narrator does not explain these details. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1: 405.

18:25-27

²⁵ But Simon Peter was standing and he was warming himself. Then [the attendant] spoke to him, “Are not you from his disciples?” He denied that he was and said, “I am not.” ²⁶ One of the slaves of the high priest speaks, a relative of the one Peter cut off the ear, “Were not you in the garden with him?” ²⁷ Therefore, Peter then denied it, and immediately the rooster crowed.

^{25*} Ἦν δὲ Σίμων Πέτρος ἐστῶς καὶ θερμαινόμενος. εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ· μὴ καὶ σὺ ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ εἶ; ἤρνήσατο ἐκεῖνος καὶ εἶπεν· οὐκ εἰμί. ²⁶ λέγει εἷς ἐκ τῶν δούλων τοῦ ἀρχιερέως, συγγενῆς ὧν οὗ ἀπέκοψεν Πέτρος τὸ ὠτίον· οὐκ ἐγώ σε εἶδον ἐν τῷ κήπῳ μετ’ αὐτοῦ; ²⁷ πάλιν οὖν ἤρνήσατο Πέτρος, καὶ εὐθέως ἀλέκτωρ ἐφώνησεν.

The rhetoric and irony covered in this section concern Peter’s second and third denials in the residence courtyard. The ironies identified in this section include double standard, prolepsis and juxtaposition.

In verses 25 and following, the scene begins with a reprise of 18:18 where Peter warms himself in front of the fire and where we revisit Peter’s denials. The repetition serves to highlight what is about to happen. They are the second and third times that Peter denies his discipleship of Jesus. Surprisingly, it is the testimony of slaves and servants around Peter’s three denials that drives the action. Out of character, Peter’s actions have become problematic as a disciple for he has betrayed his master. He has three times vehemently disowned being a disciple. Raymond E. Brown points out that, “The wording in ...John shows the readers that Peter’s behaviour is the opposite of Jesus”.⁴⁸⁸ Maybe it was Peter’s fear of persecution that made him become this poor role model.⁴⁸⁹ He who was best able to be a confessing witness to what Jesus had said and done

⁴⁸⁸ Brown, Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1: 603. Also see Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 181.

⁴⁸⁹ Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 223.

renounces his relationship with Jesus, and in so doing demonstrates the irony of double standard.⁴⁹⁰

In addition to the ironic analepsis concerning John the Baptist (1:20-22), these denials are ironic analepses to Peter's promise to lay down his life for Jesus (13:37), and Jesus' double response. He questions Peter's loyalty as well as predicts Peter's denial (13:38). Furthermore, these denials complete the ironic prolepsis that flashes forward to the breakfast Jesus prepares on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias (21:12-19). My translation of this next section follows.

18:25 But Simon Peter was standing and he was warming himself. Then [the attendant] spoke to him, "Are not you from his disciples?" He denied that he was and said, "I am not."²⁶ One of the slaves of the high priest speaks, a relative of the one Peter cut off the ear, "Were not you in the garden with him?"²⁷ Therefore, Peter then denied it, and immediately the rooster crowed.

Stibbe and Kanagaraj identify the dramatic irony of juxtaposition in the events that take place simultaneously.⁴⁹¹ At the same time that Peter denies knowing Jesus to apparent strangers *outside* the residence, Jesus is defending the disciples, including Peter, to the High Priest on the *inside*.⁴⁹² If Peter had not cut off Malchus' ear, he may have gone unnoticed in the courtyard.⁴⁹³ Even so, the juxtaposition is explained as follows: the Johannine Jesus implies the disciples are reliable witnesses and can testify to what he has said (18:20-21).⁴⁹⁴ However simultaneously, Peter denies being that witness. The comparative situation indicates ironic juxtaposition.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹⁰ Perkins, "The Gospel According to John," in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (ed. Brown; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990), 61: 213, p.980.

⁴⁹¹ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 180. See also Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 177.

⁴⁹² Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 177.

⁴⁹³ A relative of Malchus, whose ear Peter cut off, identified Peter in the courtyard (18:26).

⁴⁹⁴ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 180. Additionally, there is an expectation that all followers of Jesus do share their testimonies.

⁴⁹⁵ The narrator juxtaposes Peter's first denial, outside the residence to Jesus' affirmation of his followers' testimonies, which occurs inside the residence at the same time. The second example of juxtaposition is between Jesus' affirmation inside the residence to Peter's second and third denials outside the residence. Brown says, "the $\delta\epsilon$ at the beginning of 18:25 is equivalent to 'in the meantime,' so that the second and third denials go on while Jesus is being interrogated...". Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1: 592.

18:28-40

²⁸ So they lead Jesus from the house of Caiaphas into the governor's residence, and it was early in the morning. But [*hoi Ioudaioi*] themselves did not enter into the governor's residence in order that they might not be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover meal. ²⁹ So, Pilate went outside to them and says. "What accusation are you bringing against this man?"

³⁰ They answered and said to him, "If this person was not doing evil, we would not have handed him over to you." ³¹ So Pilate said to them, "You take him yourselves and you judge him according to your law." *Hoi Ioudaioi* said to him, "It is not lawful for us to kill anyone." ³² This is in order that the word which Jesus spoke, indicating what sort of death he was about to die, might be fulfilled. ³³ So again Pilate entered the governor's residence and he called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Are you yourself saying this or did others say this about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What did you do?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my servants who belong to me would be fighting in order to prevent me from being handed over to *hoi Ioudaioi*. But now, my kingdom is not from this place". ³⁷ So Pilate said to him, "So aren't you a king?" Jesus answered, "You yourself are saying that I am a king. It was for this purpose that I myself have been born and for this purpose I have come into the world, that I might testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice". ³⁸ Pilate says to him, "What is truth?" And having said this he went out again to *hoi Ioudaioi* and says to them, "I find nothing in him deserving accusation. ³⁹ It is your custom that I might release one prisoner at the Passover. So, is it your desire for me to release the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*?" ⁴⁰ Therefore, they cried out again saying, "Not this one, but the one we both know, Barabbas". Now, Barabbas was a bandit.

²⁸ Ἀγουσιν οὖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ Καϊάφα εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον· ἦν δὲ πρωΐ· καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐκ εἰσῆλθον εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον, ἵνα μὴ μιανθῶσιν ἀλλὰ φάγωσιν τὸ πάσχα. ²⁹ Ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Πιλάτος ἔξω πρὸς αὐτοὺς καὶ φησίν· τίνα κατηγορίαν φέρετε [κατὰ] τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου; ³⁰ ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος κακὸν ποιῶν, οὐκ ἂν σοι παρεδώκαμεν αὐτόν. ³¹ εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐτόν. εἶπον αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα. ³² ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πληρωθῇ ὃν εἶπεν σημαίνων ποῖω θανάτῳ ἡμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν. ³³ Εἰσῆλθεν οὖν πάλιν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ὁ Πιλάτος καὶ ἐφώνησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; ³⁴ ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἀπὸ σεαυτοῦ σὺ τοῦτο λέγεις ἢ ἄλλοι εἶπόν σοι περὶ ἐμοῦ; ³⁵ ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Πιλάτος· μή τι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖός εἰμι; τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς παρέδωκάν σε ἐμοί· τί ἐποίησας; ³⁶ ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου· εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἦν ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ, οἱ ὑπηρεταὶ οἱ ἐμοὶ ἠγωνίζοντο [ἂν] ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· νῦν δὲ ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν. ³⁷ εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ; ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι. ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἵνα μαρτυρήσω τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς. ³⁸ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· τί ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια; Καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν πάλιν ἐξῆλθεν πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἐγὼ οὐδεμίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν. ³⁹ ἔστιν δὲ συνήθεια ὑμῖν ἵνα ἓνα ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν ἐν τῷ πάσχα· βούλεσθε οὖν ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων; ⁴⁰ ἐκραύγασαν οὖν πάλιν λέγοντες· μὴ τοῦτον ἀλλὰ τὸν Βαραββᾶν. ἦν δὲ ὁ Βαραββᾶς ληστής.

In the section under investigation I examine the rhetoric and irony in the first part of Jesus' trial before Pilate. The identified rhetorical and literary devices deal with the following issues: (i) the events that transpired when Jesus left Annas; (ii) a comparison of the Fourth Gospel with the Synoptic accounts concerning the charges brought against Jesus; (iii) the ritual purity of the *hoi Ioudaioi* and their acceptability (according to the law) to make a sacrifice to the Lord; (iv) the literary device of the "revolving platform"; (v) the fulfilment of Scripture; (vi) Pilate's eight questions; (vii) Question one: "do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?"; (viii) Question two: "I am not a Jew, am I?"; (ix) Question three: "what have you done?"; (x) Question four: "so you are a king?"; (xi) Question five: "what is truth?"; and (xii) the issue of a prisoner release.

The act of bringing Jesus before Caiaphas is significant in rhetorical analysis. In the Synoptic accounts, Caiaphas is the first stop after the arrest. Jesus is detained there all night, and it is there he receives mocking, beatings and insults (Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:54, 63-66). However, in the Fourth Gospel, the diversion from Annas to Caiaphas, the High Priest, makes a *gap in the story*.⁴⁹⁶ What happened when Jesus was with Caiaphas? The narrator of the Fourth Gospel leaves the reader in suspense. Nothing is said about the meeting; just that Jesus was taken there under Annas' instruction (18:24), and after that he was taken to Pilate's headquarters (18:28).

The authorities bring Jesus before Pilate, the Roman governor.

^{18:28} So they lead Jesus from the house of Caiaphas into the governor's residence, and it was early in the morning. But *hoi Ioudaioi* themselves did not enter into the governor's residence in order that they might not be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover meal. ²⁹ So, Pilate went outside to them and says. "What accusation are you bringing against this man?"

The Johannine account of Jesus' trial before Pilate is the lengthiest of the four gospel accounts.⁴⁹⁷ Yet, while the Synoptic allegations (that Jesus does evil, and that he appointed himself as God's Son) are mentioned earlier in the Fourth Gospel (5:18; 7:12, 47; 8:48; 9:16, 24), there is no mention of them here.⁴⁹⁸ While the readers of the

⁴⁹⁶ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 326.

⁴⁹⁷ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 326.

⁴⁹⁸ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 326-327.

Synoptic accounts are being informed of these false allegations in their passion narratives, the implied reader of the Fourth Gospel already knows the charges *hoi Ioudaioi* have brought against Jesus.

Because *hoi Ioudaioi* were devout, they would not enter Pilate's headquarters. They were conscientious in adhering to the laws of ritual purity that might prevent them from sharing in the Passover (18:28). However, they were guilty of a much greater sin. They were condemning the innocent Jesus, yet did not experience the shame of their actions against him. They perceived themselves as guiltless, yet they were not. As Beasley-Murray says,

...they hold fast to the ceremonial law while they seek the execution of the Promised Deliverer of Israel, the Son of God and Savior; and in their zeal to eat the Passover lamb they unwittingly help to fulfil its significance through their demanding the death of the Lamb of God, at the same time shutting themselves out from its saving efficacy.⁴⁹⁹

Their prior concern was that they may not be able to eat their sacrificed Passover lamb, yet they were not at all concerned about sacrificing the one whom the implied reader understands as the Lamb of God.⁵⁰⁰ *Hoi Ioudaioi* display the irony of the double standard.

Jesus' trial before Pilate is a drama on a revolving platform. (See Table 3 following. It details the seven stages of the revolving platform.) The staging of the trial is sometimes inside and at other times outside Pilate's residence. Outside are *hoi Ioudaioi* who will not come in, and on the inside is Jesus who can or will not come out. *Hoi Ioudaioi*

⁴⁹⁹ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 327-328.

⁵⁰⁰ Some commentators recognise the irony. See Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1:746. He says, "Those who are so careful about the Passover meal will demand the death of the Lamb of God". Compare that with Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 555. He says, they "are more concerned with ceremonial purity than with moral integrity". Then see Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester: IVP, 1991), 589. He says, they "take elaborate precautions to avoid ritual contamination in order to eat the Passover, at the very time they are busy manipulating the judicial system to secure the death of him who alone is the true Passover". Another scholar is Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000), 235. He says, "while they adhere to the law's regulations about the necessity for purity in order to eat the Passover lamb, they are completely unable to make the true judgment about the one who is in reality the Passover Lamb". See also Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 652. He says, "while (they) are leading to death the one whom God has sent, they meticulously hold fast to their ceremonial prescriptions". Compare Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 128. He says, "These soon-to-be murderers are at pains to maintain their purity". See Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 763.

cannot hear the conversation Pilate has with Jesus.⁵⁰¹ All the while, Pilate is the common character in both settings. He moves inside to question Jesus and he moves outside to reason with the accusers who refuse to cooperate with Pilate. Even though Jesus appears outside briefly (19:5-8), there are seven times when the platform revolves around (18:28, 33, 38b; 19:1, 4, 9, 13) before Jesus finally emerges at the end of the trial (19:13).⁵⁰²

TABLE 3: The Revolving Platform

Sequence number	Reference in John	Outside Pilate's Headquar	Pilate's Headquarters In view	Inside Pilate's Headquarters	Courtyard Inside Headquarters
1	18:28-32	CROWD	PILATE	JESUS	---
2	18:33-38a	CROWD	---	PILATE & JESUS	---
3	18:38b-40	CROWD	PILATE	JESUS	---
4	19:1-3	CROWD	---	---	PILATE & JESUS
5	19:4-8	CROWD	PILATE & JESUS	---	---
6	19:9-12	CROWD	---	PILATE & JESUS	---
7	19:13-16a	CROWD	PILATE & JESUS	---	---

All of this movement serves the implied author's purpose to heighten the drama and exclude *hoi Ioudaioi* "from the revelation of truth".⁵⁰³ The narrator reveals everything of consequence to the implied reader; things spoken by Pilate, by *hoi Ioudaioi*, or by Jesus, yet hides these words from those who will not see. Furthermore, Pilate's vacillation between Jesus on the inside and *hoi Ioudaioi* on the outside "portrays the human predicament in which one must choose between Jesus and the world".⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰¹ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 328.

⁵⁰² Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 223-224.

⁵⁰³ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 328.

⁵⁰⁴ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 127.

With the mention here of “Passover” in 18:28, there is an *inclusio* of Jesus’ trial before Pilate, starting with 18:28 and concluding at 19:14.⁵⁰⁵ Within this passage I find a chiasm. See Table 4 below. It is of interest to observe that the centre of the chiasm (19:5) is Pilate’s presentation of Jesus to the *hoi Ioudaioi*, with the words: “Here is the human being!”

TABLE 4: Chiasm of 18:28-19:15: Jesus Before Pilate

A	18:28 Preparation for the Passover
	B 29-32 Pilate Tries to Release Jesus
	C 18:33-19:3 Jesus’ Identity & Authority
	D 19:4 No Case Against Jesus
	E 19:5 King Jesus Presented
	D1 6-8 No Case Against Jesus
	C1 9-11 Jesus’ Identity & Authority
	B1 12-13 Pilate Tries to Release Jesus
A1	14 Preparation for the Passover

We turn now to the next few verses.

^{18:30} They answered and said to him, “If this person was not doing evil, we would not have handed him over to you.” ³¹ So Pilate said to them, “You take him yourselves and you judge him according to your law.” *Hoi Ioudaioi* said to him, “It is not lawful for us to kill anyone.” ³² This is in order that the word which Jesus spoke, indicating what sort of death he was about to die, might be fulfilled. ³³ So again Pilate entered the governor’s residence and he called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*?” ³⁴ Jesus answered, “Are you yourself saying this or did others say this about me?”⁵⁰⁶

In the Fourth Gospel, the narrator portrays Jesus having a desire to fulfil Scripture (2:22; 7:38; 10:35; 13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 18:9; 19:24, 28, 36f).⁵⁰⁷ However, in each of these cases, the narrator informs us that the Scripture was fulfilled. By doing so, the narrator reminds the implied reader (18:32) of the plan and mission of the Johannine

⁵⁰⁵ Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 203. The *inclusio* continues on to Golgotha where Jesus dies on the ‘day of Preparation’ (19:31), and it resurfaces at the burial tomb where the passion narrative ends. (19:41).

⁵⁰⁶ My translation.

⁵⁰⁷ See Chapter Eight, including Table 8, for a more complete analysis on issues of intertextuality.

Jesus to be “lifted up”, that is, to die on a Roman cross (3:14; 8:28; 12:32f).⁵⁰⁸ In 18:32 we have an analepsis (yet not irony) to these three earlier readings that highlight the way that Jesus will suffer and die.

There is no reprisal for the *hoi Ioudaioi* who are brutal in their accusations of Jesus (18:30), nor is there any for the official who slapped his face (18:22-23). This is ironic double standard.

In the Fourth Gospel, Pilate’s only recorded communication with Jesus is through a series of eight questions. These are in two sections. I deal with the first question (18:33) here.

Pilate ask Jesus, “Are you the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*?” (18:33). The kingship of Jesus is an important ironic theme in the Johannine passion narrative.⁵⁰⁹ As Donald Senior describes,

Twice [Pilate] ...leads Jesus outside his headquarters to the crowds in imitation of a ritual public acclamation (19:4-5; 13-15). All of these symbols are deliberate mockeries: a thorn crown; homage that is a violent game; a royal procession that is meant to provoke pity and dismissal, not acclamation. In so doing, Pilate asserts that, in fact, Jesus is no king but a powerless and insignificant figure, one not worth a public condemnation.⁵¹⁰

Stibbe suggests that even though Pilate calls Jesus a ‘king’, he does not even realise he is in the presence of the true King.⁵¹¹ Thus, Pilate ironically satirizes Jesus as King. In dealing dismissively with Jesus, he has no idea that Jesus has the authority to be his King.

In response to Pilate’s first question Jesus asks him a question, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" (18:34). Jesus addresses Pilate and puts him on

⁵⁰⁸ See Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 224. See Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 178. Compare with Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 592. See also Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor: Reading John 13-21*, 137. Then see Leung, *The Kingship-Cross Interplay in the Gospel of John: Jesus' Death as Corroboration of His Royal Messiahship* (Eugene OR.: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 114-118. Compare her with Wright, *John for Everyone: Chapters 1-10 (2 vols)* (London: SPCK, 2002), 111.

⁵⁰⁹ Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 179-180. See Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, 152-154. Compare with Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 126-133. See also Leung, *The Kingship-Cross Interplay in the Gospel of John: Jesus' Death as Corroboration of His Royal Messiahship*, 1-3.

⁵¹⁰ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, 153.

⁵¹¹ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 190.

trial, making Pilate the object of the irony.⁵¹² Thus, the author uses the irony of reversal. Jesus, the prisoner, judges the judge; interrogates the interrogator, and accuses the accuser.⁵¹³

In the next few verses we read,

^{18:35} Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What did you do?” ³⁶ Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my servants who belong to me would be fighting in order to prevent me from being handed over to *hoi Ioudaioi*. But now, my kingdom is not from this place.” ³⁷ So Pilate said to him, “So aren’t you a king?” Jesus answered, “You yourself are saying that I am a king. It was for this purpose that I myself have been born and for this purpose I have come into the world, that I might testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.”⁵¹⁴

Pilate asks Jesus a second question, “I am not a Jew, am I? (μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖός εἰμι;)” (18:35a). This unanswered question from Pilate to Jesus opens up the issue of the “Fourth Gospel and Judaism”.⁵¹⁵ Both Pilate and the Johannine Jesus know Pilate was not born a Jew, so why is there a need for him to ask Jesus (who is a Jew) if he is? The implied reader sees the rhetorical effect of the scorn. It is a satirical, ironic play on words. In addition, this is another unanswered question. Pilate’s question has a variety of meanings, all of which expect a negative response. Paraphrased, they include: (i) “I am a Roman, not some stupid Jew, aren’t I?” (ii) “I will never understand the way you *hoi Ioudaioi* do things, will I?” (iii) “I am not rejecting you like *hoi Ioudaioi*, am I?” (iv) “I am not trying to convince myself that I am a Jew, am I?” (v) “I am not trying to convince you that I am a Jew, am I?” (vi) “I am not bound by your Jewish laws, am I?” (vii) “I am not free from the restrictiveness of Judaism, am I?” (viii) “I am not as judgmental / murderous as you expect me to be, am I?” There may even be other possibilities. Nevertheless, the implied reader expects a negative response to all questions. This is multiple meaning rhetoric as it is deliberately ambiguous.

⁵¹² Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 126.

⁵¹³ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, 79. See also Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 126.

⁵¹⁴ My translation.

⁵¹⁵ See Chapter One for a more complete treatment of this important issue. Also see the introduction to this chapter.

Yet, Paul Duke puts it, “Insofar as ‘the Jews [sic]’ represent the world’s rejection of Jesus, Pilate is already in the process, even while despising them, of joining them”.⁵¹⁶ However, the implied reader is aware of Pilate’s desire to be in control of the situation. The author’s portrait of Pilate is of one who wants to think that Roman authority is far superior to the kind of “powerlessness” that Jesus demonstrates. So the implied reader must answer “yes” to all the above possible questions.⁵¹⁷ Pilate’s question to Jesus, whatever the meaning, is an exposing of Pilate’s thinking, that scorns the Sanhedrin and the nation of Israel and demonstrates the irony of satire. Jesus does not react at all and we are left with the irony of an unanswered question.

In the preface to Pilate’s next question to Jesus, the Johannine Pilate demonstrates the persistent irony of reversal. This is one of the foundational ironies of the Fourth Gospel expressed in the theme that the ones who are rightly “his own” (he came to save the world) have rejected him (1:11).⁵¹⁸ Pilate says to Jesus, “Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me” (18:35a).

There are at least four ways of interpreting Pilate’s third question to Jesus, “What have you done?” (18:35b). It appears that the narrator has made Pilate’s question ambiguous. The possible interpretations are different levels of meaning and include: (i) ‘What is your purpose for coming into this world?’ (ii) “Can you tell me what ministry work you have done?” (iii) “Can you tell me what you have done to upset *hoi Ioudaioi*?” (iv) “What indictable offence have you committed to deserve the death penalty?” Each question seeks a different answer. How is the Johannine Jesus able to respond to Pilate? This is non-ironic multiple meaning rhetoric.

The possible interpretation of (i) is the agenda of the fourth evangelist as set out in the Prologue to the Gospel. The implied reader already knows its answer, that concerns the pre-existent Logos who becomes flesh to “tabernacle” among us (1:1-14). On another

⁵¹⁶ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 129.

⁵¹⁷ Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 126. See also Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 593.

⁵¹⁸ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 169.

level, equally unlikely, is (ii). This would require Jesus giving testimony of the various signs he performed. It is more likely, however, that the narrator has the Johannine Pilate inferring (iii) or (iv).

Throughout the Fourth Gospel, *hoi Ioudaioi* have refused to believe into Jesus (1:45; 5:39-40; 5:45-47; 6:30-31; 8:52-53; 9:28; 12:37-43). The fourth evangelist tells us that God's plan for Jesus is for him to be the Saviour of the world (3:17; 4:42; 12:47), however, this is denied him as far as *hoi Ioudaioi* are concerned. They will not believe into Jesus (1:10-11; 3:18; 5:37-40; 6:36, 64; 8:19, 24, 37, 42-45; 9:41; 10:25-26; 12:48; 15:6, 21-25). This specific, identified and unmet desire of God demonstrates the characteristics of instability and this repeated theme demonstrates the tragic, unstable, unresolved foundational irony of reversal that spirals into paradox. Furthermore, Pilate asks the question "what have you done? (18:35c)". Is Pilate exasperated or judgmental? It depends on the interpretation. On the surface, at best, Pilate appears to try to discover the reason they brought Jesus to him (see iii. above). At worst (see iv. above), his ambiguous question blames Jesus for a capital offence leading to his own demise, demonstrating the irony of double meaning.

The words of the Johannine Jesus may confuse the implied reader. He says, "If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to *hoi Ioudaioi*. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here" (18:36b-c). Yet Jesus knew that Peter had unsuccessfully tried to keep him from being arrested. Jesus had told him to put his sword away after he had cut off Malchus' ear (18:10-11). This is paradoxical irony.

The fourth question Pilate asks Jesus requires a closer look. "So, you are a king?" (18:37). Even though this is presented as a question in the Greek text, the fourth evangelist desires for the implied reader to understand it as an affirmation of the identity of Jesus. Significantly, here, Jesus does not deny or withdraw from the thought of kingship.⁵¹⁹ He had withdrawn from being made a king earlier (6:15), however, the nature of his kingship was unclear then.⁵²⁰ The implied reader will now know the true nature of his kingdom. It is as Jesus says, "I have overcome the world." (16:33). In

⁵¹⁹ Milne, *The Message of John: Here is Your King!*, 266.

⁵²⁰ Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 127.

these words of Jesus I find a non-ironic analepsis, where Jesus alludes to the authority and power he has over the persecution he and his followers will face. The Johannine Jesus promises that his kingdom will prevail. Again, he says, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to *hoi Ioudaioi*. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here” (18:36). Peter had been guilty of using a sword violently, and Jesus had rebuked him for that (18:11). More than this, Jesus’ kingdom is a spiritual kingdom and cannot be achieved by his followers through violent means, even if Jesus has to suffer violence to usher it in. This is paradoxical irony.

Further to the discussion concerning the kingship of Jesus and suffering violence, Marianne Meye Thompson says,

Indeed in John there is no royal victory and no kingship at all without death. In chapter 6 the crowd’s clamorous recognition of Jesus as king (6:14-15) dissipates into unbelief and leads to desertion when he insists that his mission culminates in his death on the cross. . . it is precisely as king that he must suffer death.⁵²¹

The author continues with the kingship theme. The important issue here for the implied reader is *not* whether Pilate can secure a guilty verdict for Jesus usurping Caesar’s authority (treason), requiring capital punishment.⁵²² Rather, the issue is whether Pilate himself and *hoi Ioudaioi* can discover the real identity of Jesus and begin to believe into him.⁵²³ However, of course, this does not happen for *hoi Ioudaioi*. Even though covertly Pilate wants to release Jesus, he does not. He is trapped in the system he represents, and his authority is too weak for *hoi Ioudaioi* to take his “not guilty” verdict seriously.⁵²⁴ Another possibility is that Pilate is unwilling to risk his political capital – in contrast with Joseph from Arimathea and Nicodemus.

My translation of the next section of text is:

^{18:38} Pilate says to him, “What is truth?” And having said this he went out again to *hoi Ioudaioi* and says to them, “I find nothing in him deserving accusation.”³⁹ It is

⁵²¹ Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 106-107.

⁵²² There were several capital offenses under ancient Roman Law for non-citizens, including, treason, patricide and insurrection. See Seale, *Crime and Punishment in the Roman Empire* (Prezi; <https://prezi.com/v5952oding2g/crime-and-punishment-in-the-roman-empire/>, 2012), np; Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 395-396.

⁵²³ Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 225. See also Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor: Reading John 13-21*, 137.

⁵²⁴ Kanagaraj and Kemp, *Gospel of John*, 378. See also Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 152. Duke is of the opinion that Pilate is potentially a secret disciple of Jesus.

your custom that I might release one prisoner at the Passover. So, is it your desire for me to release the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*?"⁴⁰ Therefore, they cried out again saying, "Not this one, but the one we both know, Barabbas". Now, Barabbas was a bandit.

Pilate continues questioning Jesus, "What is truth?" (18:38). This fifth question is profound and unanswered, filled with Johannine irony. Jesus does not reply to Pilate's question. It appears that Pilate has walked away (18:38b).⁵²⁵ Nevertheless, Jesus' silence speaks louder than any words. For the implied author, truth is not an academic proposal, but rather it is a personal encounter with God.⁵²⁶ The implied reader is well-informed by what the narrator discloses about the real identity of Jesus when he declares, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (14:6; see 17:3), and by what the narrator discloses.

Another ironical twist is in the implication that, by asking the question, "what is truth?" Pilate asks how can truth be discovered. Even though he knows the correct judicial process, he appears unwilling to comply with it. How can "truth" be discovered in this case: of a very hurried hearing, of fabricated evidence and of a verdict influenced by a hostile public? The truth about Jesus can only be discovered in examining the untainted evidence, that was never sought. This reveals the irony of double standard in the judicial process.

Unfortunately, Pilate is not aware of these revelations. As Bultmann says, "he shuts the door on the claim of the revelation, and in so doing he shows that he is not of the truth – he is of the lie."⁵²⁷ Pilate becomes exceedingly afraid (19:8).⁵²⁸ The narrator reveals why this is so. He had not seen or understood that standing before him was God's true Revealer, "the Truth". The three types of irony demonstrated in Pilate's question are double meaning, misunderstanding and unanswered question.

More than this, at least on a surface reading, Pilate wants to release Jesus. He offers a "prisoner release" as a gesture of winning the detractors over (18:39). *Hoi Ioudaioi* reject his offer of releasing the "King of *hoi Ioudaioi*". There is a pun in Aramaic which

⁵²⁵ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 131. Compare with Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 225.

⁵²⁶ Kanagaraj and Kemp, *Gospel of John*, 375. See also Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 225.

⁵²⁷ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 656.

⁵²⁸ See my detailed analysis of 19:8 in Chapter Six.

is easily understood by Jewish readers.⁵²⁹ The detractors choose “*Βαρ-Ἀββα*” (a son of the father) over the Son of the Father, and release Barabbas.⁵³⁰ This pun on the meaning of “Barabbas” reflects an ironic double meaning. However, ironically, the narrator tells us that Barabbas is a bandit (18:40).⁵³¹ To Pilate the choice between the two is clear: Barabbas is a guilty bandit and ought to suffer punishment, while Jesus is innocent and ought to go free. Through the irony of reversal, *hoi Ioudaioi* are prepared to release someone deserving (under Roman law) the death penalty, yet slay the One for whom there is “no case to answer”. This also reveals the irony of misunderstanding.

Pilate, who appears on the surface to be non-dismissive of Jesus, pleads to the angry crowd of *hoi Ioudaioi* for the release of Jesus. Pilate says, “I find no case against him” (18:38c). This is the first of three pleas for a “not guilty” verdict (repeated in 19:4, 6). Pilate has the full authority to release Jesus, if he so chooses. The crowd have none. It is ironic that the crowd, who have no authority, override Pilate’s sole discretion. He is trapped into indecision and his inability to take authority is his undoing. If he sets Jesus free, the crowd will inform the emperor of his incompetence (19:12). However, Pilate cannot afford to offend the emperor and so capitulates to their cries of “crucify! crucify!” (19:6, 15). So on the surface, Pilate becomes easily manipulated by what *hoi Ioudaioi* want to do with Jesus. Yet all along in the passion narrative drama the implied reader remembers that the suffering Jesus is still in control of what happens to him (10:17f). The narrator reminds the implied reader that it was the day of Preparation (19:14a). All was happening in accordance with the Baptist’s ironic proleptic prediction in 1:29: Jesus, “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”.

⁵²⁹ The Johannine community may not have known Aramaic. If this is the case, the pun may reflect the irony passed on by the oral traditions of the passion narrative.

⁵³⁰ Kanagaraj and Kemp, *Gospel of John*, 376. See also Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 225.

⁵³¹ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 131.

19:1-9a

^{19:1} Then Pilate took and flogged Jesus. ² And having woven a crown out of thorny stems, the soldiers placed it on his head and threw a purple robe around him. ³ And they were repeatedly coming to him and saying, “Rejoice, king of *hoi Ioudaioi*”. And they were repeatedly slapping him in the face. ⁴ And again Pilate went outside and he says to them, “I led him outside to you so that you might know that I find no reason for accusation in him.” ⁵ So Jesus went outside wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And [Pilate] says to them, “Look at the human being!”

⁶ So when they saw him, the chief priests and the servants cried out saying, “Crucify! crucify!” Pilate says to them, “You take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no accusation in him.” ⁷ *Hoi Ioudaioi* answered him, “We ourselves have a law, and according to that law, he ought to die because he made himself God’s Son.” ⁸ Now when Pilate heard this word he became exceedingly afraid. ⁹ And he entered the governor’s residence again...

^{19:1} Τότε οὖν ἔλαβεν ὁ Πιλαῦτος τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐμαστίγωσεν. ² καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται πλέξαντες στέφανον ἐξ ἀκανθῶν ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῦ τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν περιέβαλον αὐτὸν ³ καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ἔλεγον· χαῖρε ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων· καὶ ἐδίδοσαν αὐτῷ ραπίσματα. ⁴ Καὶ ἐξῆλθεν πάλιν ἔξω ὁ Πιλαῦτος καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἴδε ἄγω ὑμῖν αὐτὸν ἔξω, ἵνα γνῶτε ὅτι οὐδεμίαν αἰτίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ. ⁵ ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔξω, φορῶν τὸν ἀκάνθινον στέφανον καὶ τὸ πορφυροῦν ἱμάτιον. καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος.

⁶ Ὄτε οὖν εἶδον αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες· σταύρωσον σταύρωσον. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλαῦτος· λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ σταυρώσατε· ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν. ⁷ ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· ἡμεῖς νόμον ἔχομεν καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὀφείλει ἀποθανεῖν, ὅτι υἱὸν θεοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν. ⁸ Ὄτε οὖν ἤκουσεν ὁ Πιλαῦτος τοῦτον τὸν λόγον, μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη, ⁹ καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον πάλιν

The main issues in the drama are the following: (i) the power and authority between the empire of Rome (represented by Pilate) and the kingdom of God (represented by Jesus); (ii) who is in control of what is taking place (*hoi Ioudaioi* seem to have the upper hand; Pilate, who has the final decision, is responsible to his superiors in Rome; and Jesus, who is on trial for his life, demonstrates God-given leadership in that the implied reader now knows he is the true King. To keep abreast of the instances of irony in 19:1-16a, the work will be easier to follow when using Appendices 2, 3 and 4.

In these first nine verses of John 19 there are some key ironic themes including: (i) the suffering of Jesus as protagonist; (ii) the symbolic royal garb; (iii) the ridicule of Jesus that actually exalts him; (iv) characters are unaware of Jesus' true kingship; (v) Pilate's words: "Here is the human being" are ironic; (vi) Pilate is the judge, however, *hoi Ioudaioi* do not accept his judgment; and (vii) concerning Pilate's unanswered question: 'where are you from?' implied readers know Jesus' origin from the Prologue of the Gospel.

The types of rhetoric include: a non-ironic intertextual analepsis, non-ironic analepses, an *inclusio*, and repetition. The types of ironies include: sarcasm, parody, the unstable irony of reversal, stable reversal, understatement, double entendre, double meaning, double standard, misunderstanding, metaphor and paradox.

John 19 opens with the suffering of Jesus. My translation of 19:1-3 follows.

^{19:1} Then Pilate took and flogged Jesus. ² And having woven a crown out of thorny stems, the soldiers placed it on his head and threw a purple robe around him. ³ And they were repeatedly coming to him and saying, "Rejoice, king of *hoi Ioudaioi*". And they were repeatedly slapping him in the face.

The narrator portrays the Johannine Jesus suffering extreme physical abuse. The soldiers flog him (19:1), and inflict him with physical pain. His suffering is even more acute because they mock and taunt him. Yet, the Johannine Jesus embraces the agony. By doing so, he shows he can also deal with emotional and spiritual pain. Pilate orders the flogging (19:1). This shows that he is complicit in Jesus' abuse. It demonstrates his own self interest and weakness. He is apparently hoping that it appeases the crowd and the bloodlust of the soldiers. By his abuse of Jesus, it appears that he attempts to soften the minds of *hoi Ioudaioi*, but instead of them laughing at his satirical portrait of Jesus, it has the opposite effect.⁵³² The soldiers parade the symbols of kingship they have put on Jesus: the crown of thorns; the purple robe; the repeated cynical homage of "hail, King of *hoi Ioudaioi*". The procession and his presentation is for the crowd to see (19:2-5). The continuing brutal treatment of Jesus by the soldiers is in order to mock him (19:2-3).⁵³³ This demonstrates ironies of sarcasm and parody.

⁵³² Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 658.

⁵³³ The three imperfects in 19:3 (*ἤρχοντο*, *ἔλεγον*, and *ἐδίδοσαν*) indicate and emphasize the repeated forms of torment and abuse Jesus suffered. Brown says that the use of the imperfect "makes the narrative continuous and interesting". Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*, 2: 875.

Here also we have the irony of reversal, where “the one who is on trial is robed as a king throughout the rest of the proceedings”.⁵³⁴ What is more, the soldiers strike him in the face and treat him with contempt (19:3). This extends the physical abuse and torment heaped on Jesus as the suffering protagonist, reinforcing the unstable irony of reversal.

The positioning of 19:1-3, describing the scourging, the robing in royal garb, the striking of Jesus on the face and the mocking as “king of *hoi Ioudaioi*”, is significant.⁵³⁵ Matthew and Mark have the scourging after the sentencing. However, here, the narrator places it between declarations of Jesus’ innocence. This humiliating treatment is preparing King Jesus for what is to come.⁵³⁶ The narrator places 19:1-3 at the centre of the trial, rather than at the end of it as per the Synoptic Gospels. Furthermore, Matthew and Mark portray Jesus being stripped of the royal garb and made to wear his own clothes before his crucifixion (Matthew 27:31; Mark 15:20). Unlike them, the implied reader assumes that the Johannine Jesus wears the purple robe and crown through to his glorification.⁵³⁷ As Duke says, “Jesus will stride toward his cross in kingly attire”.⁵³⁸ It is an ironic paradox of his being “lifted up” on high (12:32).

The cycle of abuse continues. My translation of 19:4-5 follows here.

^{19:4} And again Pilate went outside and he says to them, “I led him outside to you so that you might know that I find no reason for accusation in him.”⁵ So Jesus went outside wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And [Pilate] says to them, “Look at the human being!”

In 19:4, Pilate makes a repeated plea that Jesus is innocent. This rhetorical repetition serves to highlight the importance of what is happening to Jesus (18:38; 19:6). Later in this chapter in Table 5, I detail each of Pilate’s three pleas for his innocence.

⁵³⁴ Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 130.

⁵³⁵ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 132.

⁵³⁶ There may even be a connection between the humiliation of Jesus in 19:1-3 and a mandatory ancient Mesopotamian ritual for the king. Celebrated annually at Marduk’s shrine, during the new year celebration, the Babylonian king was struck in the face, humiliated and thrown to the ground heavily. This was enacted to strengthen and prepare the king for the coming year. Contrastingly, in 19:1-3, even though his “cup of suffering” is a foretaste of his cross, Pilate gives Jesus no ritual, no leniency and no mercy. For more on the Babylonian ritual, see Armstrong, *Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence* (London: Vintage, Penguin, 2015), 34; Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago / London: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 90-96.

⁵³⁷ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 495.

⁵³⁸ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 132. ; See also Meeks, *The prophet-king: Moses traditions and the Johannine Christology* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 69.

In 19:5, the author uses the active ἐξῆλθεν (rather than the passive voice) indicating that Jesus “came out” rather than “was led out” (19:5). This is evidence that, during all the abuse heaped on Jesus, he takes the initiative.⁵³⁹

The soldiers have tortured Jesus at the instigation of Pilate, and he stands before *hoi Ioudaioi*. Beasley-Murray comments on this, saying,

For it is precisely in that suffering, culminating in the cross on which he hung, that Jesus revealed his royalty and the glory of a love that gives itself to the uttermost for the redemption of a world that knows not what it does.⁵⁴⁰

With ironic sarcasm and parody, Pilate announces to his accusers, "Look at the human being!" (ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, 19:5b).⁵⁴¹ Earlier in the Fourth Gospel, those who do not believe into him or who have a limited understanding of his identity refer to him as “ὁ ἄνθρωπος” (4:29; 5:11f; 7:25, 31, 35, 40, 46; 9:11f, 16, 24, 29; 10:33; 11:47; 18:14, 27, 29).⁵⁴² However, the implied reader knows that through his ministry, Jesus has demonstrated that he is more than just “a man”. The evangelist emphasises this in several ways in the Gospel.

The Johannine Jesus refers to himself ambiguously as the “son of man” (1:51; 3:13-14; 5:27; 6:37, 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23, 34; 13:31), a title with messianic connotations (see Psalm 8:4; Ezekiel 37:3; Daniel 7:13).⁵⁴³ Furthermore, he performs miraculous signs: turns water to wine (2:1-11), heals the sick (4:46-54), makes the lame to walk (5:2-9), multiplies food for the hungry (6:5-13), walks on water (6:16-21), gives sight to the blind (9:6f), and raises the dead to life (11:38-44). The fourth evangelist has Jesus speak the word of God as God’s only Son (1:14; 5:19-27; 7:16; 8:16-18; 10:25; 11:41f; 12:27, 49f; 14:20-24; 15:26f; 16:25; 17:1-3, 8, 14; 18:20). The religious leaders cannot align themselves with his perspective. They will not believe into him. They are offended by his claims about himself and his relationship with “the Father” (5:16, 18; 7:25-27; 10:33; 19:7). Moreover, from the outset of the Gospel, the author has informed us that Jesus, the Living Word, became flesh (1:1-3; 14). Pilate is unaware that he is making an ironic understatement calling Jesus “the

⁵³⁹ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 191.

⁵⁴⁰ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 336-337.

⁵⁴¹ Michael Trainor prefers this translation of ἄνθρωπος. Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse: How the Gospel Passion Narratives Inform a Pastoral Response*, 225-226. ὁ ἄνθρωπος emphasises his humanity, not his gender.

⁵⁴² Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 107.

⁵⁴³ Sarlow, *YHWH's Anointed: the development of a biblical promise in the Old Testament prophets* (Master of Theology, Sydney College of Divinity, 1999) 80-97.

human being”.⁵⁴⁴ Nevertheless, all the while the implied reader knows that Jesus is never less than the living Word incarnate. As Duke says of “ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος”,

...in three devastating words the author has crystallized a great depth of ironic truth which no direct utterance could convey. With great artistry the evangelist has unfolded the identity of this human being who, thoroughly human, is infinitely more than human – and so offer⁵⁴⁵s “the true light that enlightens every human being” (1:9).⁵⁴⁶

Intertextually, Kanagaraj connects two Old Testament pronouncements to Pilate’s introduction of Jesus to the crowd.⁵⁴⁷ These are non-ironic intertextual analepses. The first is Samuel’s presentation of Saul as Israel’s first king (1 Samuel 9:17), “Here is the human of whom I spoke to you!”⁵⁴⁸ Second, in Zechariah 6:12-13 we find that the prophet uses the horticultural metaphor “Branch” to speak of a future messianic figure.⁵⁴⁹

¹² Thus says the LORD of hosts: Here is a human whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out in his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. ¹³ It is he that shall build the temple of the LORD; he shall bear royal honour, and shall sit and rule on his throne.

He comes with authority; a human Davidic king, who will build his temple.⁵⁵⁰ At the temple cleansing episode, the fourth evangelist makes a further connection of Jesus to the temple to make the allusion more visible to the implied reader. In 2:19, we read, “ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· λύσατε τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ αὐτὸν (Jesus answered them, ‘destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up’)”. So, when Pilate introduces Jesus to the crowd with, “Look at the human being” (19:5b), he

...unknowingly and ironically declares the Man of Suffering as the messianic King (cf. 19:14), who came to establish his kingdom and deliver humankind from the evil one. The chief priests and the officials, who should have understood this from the OT, could not see in the blood-stained Jesus the kingly glory of God.⁵⁵¹

The word ἰδοὺ (“behold”, “look at”, “here is”) is an imperative (19:5c). The fourth evangelist uses it as a “revelation formula” and challenges readers to look closely and

⁵⁴⁴ Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 107.

⁵⁴⁵ My translation.

⁵⁴⁶ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 107.

⁵⁴⁷ Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 182.

⁵⁴⁸ My translation.

⁵⁴⁹ Brown also connects Zechariah 6:12 intertextually with 19:5c. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*, 2: 876.

⁵⁵⁰ Sarlow, "Horticultural Metaphors, Messianic Promise and Davidic Dynasty in the Old Testament", *PCBC Journal*, 3 (1999): 24-25.

⁵⁵¹ Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 182.

behold what others cannot or will not see.⁵⁵² This double meaning, while Pilate is unaware of it, is an ironic double entendre. The evangelist uses the ironic double entendre to remind real readers to align themselves with his perspective as they read what happens to the protagonist (Jesus).

Whenever the author refers to Jesus as *ὁ ἄνθρωπος* the implied reader may perceive that there will be some covert irony nearby.⁵⁵³ Thus, the ironies demonstrated by Pilate's words, "Look at the human being" (19:5b,) are parody and understatement. However, the mockery that the soldiers designed and perpetrated on Jesus in order to poke fun at him actually served to exalt him. As Joel Marcus says that the suffering of Jesus is

...an unforgettable parody of kingly epiphany (John 19:1-5). ...For John, then, exaltation comes precisely through his enthronement on the cross... [For the Johannine Jesus, there is an] unusual twist that association with crucifixion gives to the idea of exaltation.⁵⁵⁴

The mockery of the kingship of Jesus is the issue brought about by the actions of Pilate, the soldiers and *hoi Ioudaioi*. The Markan Jesus does not become king until he faces the trial before Pilate.⁵⁵⁵ By contrast, in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus has never claimed to be king. The one the fourth evangelist portrays as Son of God sets aside these aspirations to be divine, so he can be "the human being". This is precisely so that we may "behold his glory" (1:14).

Nevertheless, the implied reader already knows that Jesus is king (1:49; 6:15; 12:13-15; 18:33-39), and that he is the person from God (3:2; 6:46; 7:17; 8:40-42; 9:33; 13:3; 16:27-30). All of these are intertextual non-ironic analepses. The soldiers, who are unaware of Jesus' true identity, do humiliating, abusive and degrading things to Jesus and mock him as a royal impostor, even though he never claimed to be a king.

However, because of the Fourth Gospel's incongruent twist, Jesus, the true king is exalted through his humiliation. "The mockery is reversed and the derided victim demands to be taken seriously".⁵⁵⁶ This mockery of Jesus' kingship demonstrates the ironies of parody and reversal.

⁵⁵² See Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse: How the Gospel Passion Narratives Inform a Pastoral Response*, 226.

⁵⁵³ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 171.

⁵⁵⁴ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 125 (2006): 74-75.

⁵⁵⁵ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 73.

⁵⁵⁶ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 87.

There is a strong connection between the two statements of Pilate concerning Jesus: “Here is the human being” (19:5b) and “Here is your King” (19:14).⁵⁵⁷ It is unclear, though, what the narrator intended for Pilate to achieve. Thompson asks,

Is Pilate’s first statement, “Behold the man!” designed to arouse pity and compassion for Jesus, the harmless caricature of a king? Or is “the man” itself a throne name, a title of honour and dignity?⁵⁵⁸

Both of these interpretations of Pilate’s statement appear valid. If I am correct in saying this, then I can say that “Look at the human being!” is a deliberately ambiguous statement. Whether the Johannine Pilate is aware of both meanings is uncertain. Nevertheless, the implied reader is aware of the second meaning. So, this play on words is the work of the fourth evangelist to create an ironic double meaning.

The same could be said of the second statement, “Here is your king! (19:14)” Assuming this is also a valid argument, the author has on Pilate’s lips a deliberately ambiguous covert double meaning at 19:14. Pilate could be speaking the words “Here is your king!” with the higher meaning of a royal title, however, all the crowd hears are sarcastic and disparaging references to Jesus. As Thompson says again,

That this man is king, and that to and in his death he obeys the will of God and so is the victor, are assertions which deflect any claim that the Johannine passion minimizes the true humanity of Jesus.⁵⁵⁹

By Pilate’s scornful use of “king”, he is implying that Jesus is no king at all.⁵⁶⁰ It appears that he was just using the words of the accusation against Jesus and *hoi Ioudaioi*.⁵⁶¹ However, for the Fourth Gospel author, “the whole trial, has a meaning beyond what happens superficially, that is revealed to the eye of faith”.⁵⁶² Therefore, for the ideal reader, Jesus is the true King. This is irony of double meaning, revealing multiple layers of meaning as well.

Pilate incriminates himself. The soldiers are under his orders to flog Jesus (19:1-3). Yet, three times he declares there is “no case” to answer according to Roman law (18:38; 19:4,

⁵⁵⁷ Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 107. ; Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 802.

⁵⁵⁸ Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 107.

⁵⁵⁹ Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 107.

⁵⁶⁰ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 802.

⁵⁶¹ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*.

⁵⁶² Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John (3 vols)*, 3: 257.

6). The repetition (not ironic) draws the reader's attention that something significant is about to take place. This is set out in Table 5 below.

Here is my translation of 19:6-9.

^{19:6} So when they saw him, the chief priests and the servants cried out saying, "Crucify! crucify!" Pilate says to them, "You take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no accusation in him."⁷ *Hoi Ioudaioi* answered him, "We ourselves have a law, and according to that law, he ought to die because he made himself God's Son."⁸ Now when Pilate heard this word he became exceedingly afraid.⁹ And he entered the governor's residence again...

In 19:6 as Jesus emerges, with crown of thorns, with purple robe, and carrying the visible signs of physical brutality in his body, *hoi Ioudaioi* cried out for more blood, a Roman cross. When Jesus appears, he is already dressed as a king, the very image of what *hoi Ioudaioi* "have accused him of wanting to be".⁵⁶³ They cry out, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Yet, Pilate, full of contempt for them, responds by telling the crowd to kill Jesus in a manner that would be impossible for them: crucifixion.⁵⁶⁴ The issues in 19:6-11 are of power, agency and authority. Pilate thinks he has power, however, he is being manipulated by *hoi Ioudaioi*, and alongside Jesus he has no power at all (19:11). This is ironic misunderstanding.

Pilate, the soldiers and *hoi Ioudaioi* make fun of Jesus' wearing the symbols of royalty as an ironic metaphor, however, the implied reader knows that there is no humour in it at all.⁵⁶⁵ The symbols point to the reality of his kingship. The situation demonstrates the ironies of metaphor and paradox.

Why does Pilate flog an innocent person, and then have him killed? For whatever reason, Pilate's actions do not line up with what he says to the crowd.⁵⁶⁶ His self-incrimination is an ironic double standard.

⁵⁶³ Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 130-131.

⁵⁶⁴ The law prohibited them from carrying out the death penalty. Jewish law provided for stoning, and this happened sometimes when the Romans were unaware of it. But here in Jerusalem, under the watch of the Roman governor, *hoi Ioudaioi* knew that they could not get away from strict observance to Roman protocol. Furthermore, death by Roman cross was considered by devout *Ioudaioi* to be "hanging on a tree", which, according to Jewish law, made that person "cursed by God" (Deuteronomy 21:22f). Green, "Death of Jesus," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (eds. Green and McKnight; Downers Grove: IVP, 1992), 161-162.

⁵⁶⁵ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, 148.

⁵⁶⁶ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 384.

Pilate’s strategies fail. The fourth evangelist portrays him as a weak and frustrated man because *hoi Ioudaioi* thwart his apparent plans to release Jesus. Their cries of “Crucify him! Crucify him!” make him react and he retorts, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him" (19:6b). It was as though Pilate responded to their cries with, “you bring him to me for trial, but you will not accept my judgment”.⁵⁶⁷

I pick up the issue of the case against Jesus. The words on Pilate’s lips are worthy of consideration for the irony alone. See Table 5 below where I show the words Pilate uses for each of his three pronouncements of “no case” to answer. All three of Pilate’s pronouncements of Jesus’ innocence serve to increase the tempo of the narrative. Normally, when a judge makes a pronouncement concerning the fate of a defendant, the words need only be spoken once before acquittal or sentencing. However, demonstrated below in Table 5, Pilate has ruled three times that there is no case against Jesus. How can Pilate punish anyone before their trial is over? How also can he allow the vocal crowd to sway him to change this ruling, and sentence someone he has declared “not guilty” to death? According to the evidence provided by the fourth evangelist, Pilate has let false testimony and unsubstantiated evidence cloud his judgment. For whatever reason, Pilate is guilty of perverting the course of justice.⁵⁶⁸ This is ironic double standard.

TABLE 5: ‘No Case’ to Answer According to Roman Law

VERSE	PILATE’S STATEMENT / MY TRANSLATION
18:38	ἐγὼ οὐδεμίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν. “I find nothing in him deserving accusation”.
19:4	οὐδεμίαν αἰτίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ. “I find no reason for accusation in him”.
19:6	ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν. “...for I find no accusation in him”.

⁵⁶⁷ Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 377.

⁵⁶⁸ Thompson suggests three possible reasons why Pilate flogged Jesus before his trial ended. They are: (i) flogging often preceded crucifixion; (ii) flogging was often used as a means of ‘coercing a confession’ (In this case it could have been used to find why the claims of the crowd and Jesus differed); and (iii) “state-sponsored terrorism”, which means that it was used by Roman officials to dominate and control unruly subjects using fear and torture. Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 382-383.

In 19:7, the leaders of *hoi Ioudaioi* allude to a Jewish law that calls for the death penalty for offenders. The law to which they refer is against blasphemy (Leviticus 24:16), and in their eyes, Jesus is guilty as “he claimed to be the Son of God”. This is a non-ironic analepsis.

Nevertheless, *hoi Ioudaioi*, belittled by Pilate’s response, bring the charge of sedition against Jesus, “he has claimed to be the Son of God.” (19:7). The Johannine Pilate realises Jesus has supernatural powers, and therefore must be a god. However, to the implied reader, the news that Jesus is divine is no surprise. At the outset in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is the divine Logos who becomes fully human “and dwells among us” (1:14). A little further on, John the Baptist had recognised and declared him to be the Son of God (1:34), and, also Nathanael confesses him in these terms (1:49). The narrator tells us the same (1:18; 3:16-18, 20:31). The author has the confession that Jesus is the Son of the Father on his own lips (3:35-36; 5:19-26; 10:17; 11:4; 14:13; 17:1).

In 19:8, we discover that the narrator has special insight into the lives of the characters in the Johannine drama, even Pilate’s.⁵⁶⁹ The narrator tells us that he is exceedingly afraid. The Greek is “μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη = all the more afraid”. Perhaps his fear was of *hoi Ioudaioi* and their ability to accuse him to Caesar, and now it is of Jesus himself. Pilate is so fearful for three reasons: He realises that Jesus is a supernatural being; that *hoi Ioudaioi* will not back down on the issue of blasphemy; and that he cannot save Jesus from the death penalty, even though he tries to do so.⁵⁷⁰ This is paradoxical irony. In 19:12, we read “ὁ Πιλάτος ἐζήτει ἀπολῦσαι αὐτόν (Pilate was making repeated attempts to release him)”.⁵⁷¹ The clause is in the imperfect, a continuous tense in the past, meaning that Pilate tried to release Jesus repeatedly. Eventually, Pilate has to face the truth about making a judgment about the Truth.⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁹ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 23-24. ; Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 40.

⁵⁷⁰ Kanagaraj and Kemp, *Gospel of John*, 378.

⁵⁷¹ My translation.

⁵⁷² Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 1: 830.

19:9b-11a

^{9b} and he says to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus did not give him an answer.

¹⁰ So Pilate says to him, “Why aren’t you speaking to me? Don’t you know I have authority to release you and I have authority to crucify you?” ¹¹ Jesus answered [him], “You would have no authority over me unless it had been given to you from above.”

^{9b} καὶ λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ· πόθεν εἶ σύ; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀπόκρισιν οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ. ¹⁰ λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· ἐμοὶ οὐ λαλεῖς; οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχω ἀπολύσαι σε καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαί σε; ¹¹ ἀπεκρίθη [αὐτῷ] Ἰησοῦς· οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν κατ’ ἐμοῦ οὐδεμίαν εἰ μὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν·

In this section I address the irony concerning the following issues: (i) Pilate’s unanswered question, “where are you from?”; (ii) Jesus’ origin; (iii) human versus spiritual authority; and (iv) the metaphorical use of *ἄνωθεν*.

I turn to the last three questions that Pilate asks Jesus beginning at 19:9b with my translation. The stage revolves. Pilate is inside his headquarters with Jesus for scene six of the trial before him.

^{19:9b} “Where are you from?” But Jesus did not give him an answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate says to him, “Why aren’t you speaking to me? Don’t you know I have authority to release you and I have authority to crucify you?” ¹¹ Jesus answered [him], “You would have no authority over me unless it had been given to you from above.”

Pilate asks Jesus a sixth question, “Where are you from?” (19:9b). Pilate still does not comprehend the nature of Jesus’ mission as the divine Son. His question has to do with a geographical location of a kingdom, however, Jesus (and his kingdom) is concerned with heavenly origins. This highlights an ironic double meaning and leads to ironic misunderstanding on Pilate’s part. This question is the central issue or “ultimate concern” of the Fourth Gospel.⁵⁷³ This is why there is no response from Jesus. His silence reinforces the power of the ironic unanswered question. This is a non-ironic intertextual analepsis to

⁵⁷³ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 191.

the words of the fourth Servant Song in Deutero-Isaiah: “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7). The question concerning the origin of Jesus forces the implied reader to remember what Jesus and the narrator have said earlier in the Gospel. The theme, “God sent his Son”, starts in the prologue and continues through the signs section into the farewell discourse (1:1-3, 14; 3:2, 16-17; 6:45-46; 8:38, 42; 9:33; 10:32; 13:3; 14:24; 15:26; 16:27-28, 30).

Pilate’s double question reflects the fourth evangelist’s intent to escalate the tension in the drama. Pilate reminds Jesus of his positional “power” (ἐξουσία = authority, 19:10). He says, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have the power to release you, and power to crucify you?” (19:10). It is as though Pilate says, “Don’t you know that I represent Caesar in Rome, the ruler of our world? Don’t you know that I am the one who holds in his hands the power of life and death over you?”⁵⁷⁴ When Jesus answers this final question, that has to do with human authority, he reminds us that his kingdom is concerned with spiritual authority, that is an even greater authority than Caesar.⁵⁷⁵ He says to Pilate, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above” (19:11a). Lindars points out that this response is emphatic, saying, “...without divine support, Pilate would crumble before Jesus.”⁵⁷⁶

With Jesus’ use of ἀνωθεν in 19:11a we have double irony: metaphor and double meaning.⁵⁷⁷ We also have an analepsis (not irony) to his dialogue with Nicodemus (3:3, 7; see 3:31; 8:23). In John 3, the implied author uses it in the context of regeneration where it has the two meanings of “born again” and “born from above”. However, here, Jesus’

⁵⁷⁴ I have paraphrased Kanagaraj’s words. Kanagaraj and Kemp, *Gospel of John*, 377.

⁵⁷⁵ Kanagaraj and Kemp, *Gospel of John*, 378.

⁵⁷⁶ Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 568.

⁵⁷⁷ Leung, *The Kingship-Cross Interplay in the Gospel of John: Jesus’ Death as Corroboration of His Royal Messiahship*, 111.

understanding that he comes from “above” stands in contrast to Pilate’s concept of earthly authority. For Jesus, ἀνωθεν means “from God”, yet for Pilate and those who are in collaboration with Roman authority, Pilate’s authority has come down the chain of command from Caesar.

For Pilate, those who are “above” him are in Rome, namely Caesar. The term ἀνωθεν hints at the origin of Jesus: his incarnation (1:14). In the Prologue, Jesus originates from above, from heaven, from God.

Furthermore, Jesus knows his origin, purpose and future; a major emphasis of the Fourth Gospel (3:11-13; 7:27-28, 34-35; 8:14; 9:29-30; 13:1, 36-47; 14:4-5; 16:5, 28; and here 19:11).⁵⁷⁸ Jesus is sent by God from heaven “above”. Pilate misunderstands and does not realise that his authority is no match for the authority of heaven in Jesus. This demonstrates ironies of double meaning, misunderstanding and hyperbole. In the course of answering Pilate’s eighth question, Jesus has also answered Pilate’s sixth unanswered question (19:9). Everything comes to Jesus from “above”, and that is precisely where this heavenly person comes from.⁵⁷⁹ Stibbe identifies a double irony here. He says,

First of all, Pilate’s reference to his authority constitutes a grandiose claim which hardly rings true in the light of his pathetic attempts to get Jesus released... Secondly, ...“Pilate’s unqualified claim to be above reason and justice, like an absolute monarch, makes him ascribe to himself the almost divine prerogative which is actually true of Jesus.”⁵⁸⁰

Both of these ironies Stibbe identifies are ironic reversals.

⁵⁷⁸ Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 339. ; Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 174. ; Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 133-134.

⁵⁷⁹ Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor: Reading John 13-21*, 140.

⁵⁸⁰ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 191. ; Marsh, *Saint John* (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1968), 608; Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 568.

19:11b-16a

19:11b “On account of this, the one who handed me over to you has a greater sin.”¹² After this, Pilate was making repeated attempts to release him. But *hoi Ioudaioi* cried out saying, “If you release this person you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself the king is speaking out against Caesar.”¹³ Then Pilate, having heard these words, led Jesus outside and he sat on the judgment seat facing a place called “stone pavement”, which in Hebrew is “Gabbatha”.¹⁴ And it was the preparation day of Passover. It was about the sixth hour and [Pilate] says to *hoi Ioudaioi*, “Look at your king!”¹⁵ Then they cried out, “Lift him away! Lift him away! Crucify him!” Pilate says to them, “Do you want me to crucify your king?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king except Caesar!”¹⁶ So then, [Pilate] handed him over to them in order that he might be crucified.

In this section of the passion narrative, I address the following issues: (i) the hierarchies of the gravity of sin, and power and authority; (ii) the question of who sits on the judgment seat? Pilate or Jesus? (iii) the chronological sequence concerning the day of Preparation for the Passover, and its significance for the Johannine Jesus; (iv) the declaration of Pilate to the crowd: “here is your king!” (v) the crowd’s cry of “lift up” is everything Jesus wants; (vi) the chief priests betray their covenant relationship with God by pledging allegiance to Caesar; and (vii) *hoi Ioudaioi* continue to reject God’s Son.

Jesus reminds Pilate, “the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin (NRSV)” (19:11b). There are four possibilities of “the one” identified by the author of the Fourth Gospel, namely, Judas, Annas, Caiaphas (specifically any one of these), or

19:11b ...διὰ τοῦτο ὁ παραδούς μέ σοι μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει. ¹² Ἐκ τούτου ὁ Πιλάτος ἐζήτει ἀπολύσαι αὐτόν· οἱ δὲ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες· ¹³ Ἐκ τούτου ὁ Πιλάτος ἐζήτει ἀπολύσαι αὐτόν· οἱ δὲ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες· ἐὰν τοῦτον ἀπολύσῃς, οὐκ εἶ φίλος τοῦ Καίσαρος· πᾶς ὁ βασιλέα ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν ἀντιλέγει τῷ Καίσαρι. ¹⁴ ὁ οὖν Πιλάτος ἀκούσας τῶν λόγων τούτων ἤγαγεν ἔξω τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον, Ἑβραϊστὶ δὲ Γαββαθα.¹⁴ ἦν δὲ παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα, ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη. καὶ λέγει τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν. ¹⁵ ἐκραύγασαν οὖν ἐκεῖνοι· ἄρον ἄρον, σταύρωσον αὐτόν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· τὸν βασιλέα ὑμῶν σταυρώσω; ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς· οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα. ¹⁶ Τότε οὖν παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς ἵνα σταυρωθῇ.

hoi Ioudaioi (in general).⁵⁸¹ This is because they all acted treacherously towards Jesus. This statement on the lips of Jesus serves as a warning to the reader to avoid disloyalty. Here is my translation of these two verses.

19:11b “On account of this, the one who handed me over to you has a greater sin”.¹²
After this, Pilate was making repeated attempts to release him. But *hoi Ioudaioi* cried out saying, “If you release this person you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself the king is speaking out against Caesar.”

Equally though, these words of Jesus concern hierarchies. The hierarchies are related to the gravity of the sin in handing Jesus over, as well as the hierarchies of power and authority concerning who has the right to be the judge. Legally, Pilate has the authority, However, the crowd thwart his efforts to release Jesus. *Hoi Ioudaioi* are operating on “lynch law” and seem to have the upper hand.⁵⁸² Alternatively, the implied reader knows from the first part of verse 11, that even as a victim, Jesus is the ultimate judge.⁵⁸³ This situation of double (or triple) meaning concerning authority (19:11), is an ironic double (or triple) entendre as *hoi Ioudaioi* seem to be in control, Pilate has positional authority, and Jesus has ultimate authority.

Pilate’s repeated and continuous attempts to release Jesus are in vain (19:12). The crowd, manipulated by *hoi Ioudaioi* is backing Pilate into a corner. Their spokesperson says, “If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor” (19:12). Poignantly, Pilate had proclaimed Jesus’ innocence three times, yet, he still sentences Jesus to death.⁵⁸⁴ As soon as the fourth evangelist introduces the name of the emperor into the drama, the implied reader knows that the Johannine Pilate will announce the death sentence.⁵⁸⁵

My translation of 19:13-14 follows.

⁵⁸¹ Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 132-133. ; Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 569. ; Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 662-663n In Bultmann's opinion, it was obviously *hoi Ioudaioi*.

⁵⁸² Schneider, "Writing in the Dust: Irony and lynch law in the Gospel of John".

⁵⁸³ See my comment on 19:13 where I argue that it could be Jesus who sits in judgment of Pilate, *hoi Ioudaioi*, and the world.

⁵⁸⁴ In Luke, it was the centurion who proclaimed his innocence (Luke 23:47).

⁵⁸⁵ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 799.

^{19:13} Then Pilate, having heard these words, led Jesus outside and he sat on the judgment seat facing a place called “stone pavement”, which in Hebrew is “Gabbatha”. ¹⁴ And it was the preparation day of Passover. It was about the sixth hour and [Pilate] says to *hoi Ioudaioi*, “Here is your king!”

Pilate brings Jesus outside for the seventh and final scene of the trial, to make one last attempt to gain Jesus’ freedom (19:13).⁵⁸⁶

In 19:13 the translator is faced with a problem. Is the verb ἐκάθισεν intransitive or transitive? That is, does Pilate sit, or does he have Jesus sit? The words “and sat on the judge’s bench” do not have a clear subject, and this means that the author is being deliberately ambiguous.⁵⁸⁷ On the surface we expect that Pilate is about to pass his judgment on Jesus, and we might conclude that he is the one who sits down.⁵⁸⁸

However, surprisingly, he does not pass judgment. Equally, the implied reader who is privy to what the narrator discloses concerning Jesus knows that it may well be Jesus who sits on the judgment bench, even as he faces the death penalty.⁵⁸⁹ However, on the other hand, if the fourth evangelist had clearly stated that Jesus sat down, it might have gone against the reasoning of “Pilate profaning a sacred symbol of Roman justice”.⁵⁹⁰

Earlier in the Fourth Gospel the narrator points out that the judge is Jesus (as his words are the judge, 12:47-50; and 5:22, 26-27; 9:39-41). If Jesus sits in judgment, is it a symbolic enthronement for him? Or is it the exposé of the inability of Pilate to procure Roman justice for Jesus? Whatever the case, the implied reader is able to perceive that Jesus is the real judge, not Pilate.⁵⁹¹ He will judge the people of this world: Pilate, the crowd, *hoi Ioudaioi*, Annas, Caiaphas, Judas, and even the disciples. All judgment belongs to him (5:22). Lincoln observes,

Jesus’ activity as judge has been so clearly depicted that here it can be established primarily by irony that the accused whose mission is to witness to the truth is also the judge. He holds centre stage between Pilate and [*hoi Ioudaioi*], whose words

⁵⁸⁶ See Table 3, ‘The Revolving Platform’ in previous chapter.

⁵⁸⁷ This quote is from NRSV. See Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 191.

⁵⁸⁸ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 801. ; Marsh, *Saint John*, 609. ; Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels (2 vols)*, 2: 1388-1393. All three commentators support the intransitive reading, meaning that Pilate sat at the Stone Pavement.

⁵⁸⁹ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 191. ; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John (3 vols)*, 3: 263-264. ; Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 184. All three commentators support a transitive reading, meaning that Pilate had Jesus sit at the Stone Pavement.

⁵⁹⁰ Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels (2 vols)*, 2: 1390.

⁵⁹¹ Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 664.

and actions expose both to judgment. He ...in all probability ...is even seated, as part of the mockery, on the judge's bench.⁵⁹²

As the climax of the passion narrative approaches, which is identified by the strength of irony, Jesus, the accused, may well be the judge. This is a complete turnaround, however, because the one who has ultimate authority as judge of the world is about to be enthroned as King. Those who reject Jesus' authority now will not see life for God's wrath remains on them (3:36).

If we consider that Jesus sits at the judge's bench, then something even more astounding happens. The narrator connects it with the timing of devout *hoi Ioudaioi* killing their Passover lambs.⁵⁹³ The narrator adds, "Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon" (19:14). By digressing in order to locate the liturgical feast and the time of day, the narrator sends a signal to the implied reader. This signal provides a connection between Jesus, judgment, and the slaughter or "preparation" of the Passover lambs (1:29; 3:19; 5:22-30; 7:24; 8:15-16; 12:47-49, 31; 16:8, 11).⁵⁹⁴ This is ironic juxtaposition. In addition, Stibbe sees another two linked ironies, first,

...Jesus is the true Passover sacrifice, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29). Here narrative chronology and narrative Christology are inseparable. Secondly, ...the Passover context is crucial for covenantal reasons. Passover is a celebration of God's faithfulness to his covenant with Israel.⁵⁹⁵

Yet, *hoi Ioudaioi* "abandon Israel's faith at the very moment when they are to begin preparations for the celebration of God's faithfulness to them!"⁵⁹⁶ *Hoi Ioudaioi* look to the sacrifice of Passover lambs for salvation, however, the implied reader looks to the Lamb of God. Here we have demonstrated the ironies of analepsis, prolepsis and paradox.

The fourth evangelist writes with ambiguity. Ironically, the evangelist implies both the stamp of Roman authority *and* the authority of Jesus, who is the eschatological judge. This demonstrates the literary device of ironic double meaning. This ironic double meaning is in keeping with the Johannine style of writing about the historical Jesus,

⁵⁹² Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 197.

⁵⁹³ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 496.

⁵⁹⁴ Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*, 203.

⁵⁹⁵ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 192.

⁵⁹⁶ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 135. ; cited in Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 192.

which the evangelist does in such a way as to convey the hidden meaning symbolically. So, these arguments demonstrate the ironies of double meaning, satire, reversal and misunderstanding.

In a situation that is similar to 19:5, Pilate says to the crowd of *Ioudaioi*, “Here is your King! (19:14c)” Pilate intends it for mockery, demonstrating ironic parody. He does not believe that Jesus is a real king. This unintended truth serves to highlight the ironic paradox that C.K. Barrett identifies, “the helpless prisoner of Rome is the only king they are likely to have.”⁵⁹⁷ Here is also a repeated irony of misunderstanding because to Pilate, Jesus is no king, yet to the narrator and implied reader he is the true king.

In the same way, the crowd of *Ioudaioi* want nothing to do with Jesus. They yell, “ἄρον ἄρον, σταύρωσον αὐτόν! Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” (19:15a). Here is my translation of 19:15-16a.

19:15 Then they cried out, “Lift him away! Lift him away! Crucify him!” Pilate says to them, “Do you want me to crucify your king?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king except Caesar!” 16 So then, [Pilate] handed him over to them in order that he might be crucified.

‘ἄρον’ is a second person, singular, aorist imperative, which literally means “lift up!” The *Ioudaioi* are unaware of the significance of these words to the Johannine Jesus who has earlier said, “ ‘And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’ He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die (12:32-33)”. By being elevated on the cross, Jesus is glorified. Unknowingly, the *Ioudaioi* honour Jesus, demonstrating the ironies of parody and prolepsis as a flash forward to the cross.

Furthermore, in order to have Jesus killed, the chief priests now revert to hypocrisy. The chief priests are the custodians of the Temple, and have a vested interest in supporting Rome.⁵⁹⁸ They confess their allegiance to the Roman emperor, however, they could never accept his political rule over them.⁵⁹⁹ Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but the emperor”

⁵⁹⁷ Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John : an introduction with commentary and notes on the Greek text* (London: SPCK, 1978), 454; Kanagaraj and Kemp, *Gospel of John*, 379. Kanagaraj and Kemp paraphrase Pilate’s words, “If you subordinate and rebellious people ever talk again of having a king, this bedraggled looking creature is the only kind of king you’re ever going to get.”

⁵⁹⁸ The term ‘Sadducee’ is not used in Johannine literature.

⁵⁹⁹ Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 185.

(19:15b). This confession was a complete and utter betrayal of their covenantal relationship with God. As Beasley-Murray says,

...it is nothing less than the abandonment of the messianic hope of Israel. ... Their repudiation of Jesus in the name of a pretended loyalty to the emperor entailed their repudiation of the promise of the kingdom of God...⁶⁰⁰

The key theme of the Fourth Gospel has a reprise. The author revisits, ‘the rejection of God’s Son by those whom God desires’ (1:10-11, 3:18; 5:37-40; 6:36, 64; 8:19, 24, 37, 42-45; 9:41; 10:25-26; 12:48; 15:6, 21-25). Jesus has already been inducted as judge and king in the eyes of the implied author (18:38b-40; 19:4-7), however, *hoi Ioudaioi* have preferred to select the idols of “false [hopes of liberation]... (18:40 [Barabbas]; 19:12-15 [Rome]) and to seek the crucifixion of their King (18:29-32; 19:4-7, 13-15).”⁶⁰¹ Instead of pledging allegiance to God, the chief priests, the vocal minority of the *Ioudaioi*, pledge allegiance to Caesar, demonstrating ironic reversal.

In accordance with step one, the *inclusio* which began the passion narrative at 18:1 (ἐξῆλθεν = went out) occurs at 19:5 and here at 19:17. There, we read, “Jesus, carrying his cross... ἐξῆλθεν”. In these places, ἐξῆλθεν forms the beginning, middle and end of this section of the Johannine passion narrative, that affirms its unity.

Conclusion

Hoi Ioudaioi have committed the “ultimate blasphemy in their same breath as their final rejection of Jesus”.⁶⁰² Tragically, the people who stubbornly reject the kingship of Jesus can never meet God’s desire for intimacy with them. This is persistent unstable irony, that spirals into paradox. The suffering and passion of Jesus, that ends in crucifixion is a parody of Jesus’ exaltation.⁶⁰³ As he is “lifted up” on the cross, he is glorified, by drawing all to himself (12:23-33).

Pilate hands Jesus over to *hoi Ioudaioi* for crucifixion (19:16a). This too is betrayal.⁶⁰⁴ The implied reader sees that Jesus’ death on the cross confirms that the whole passion narrative is a tragedy. Jesus is dead. The drama is of the genre and magnitude of a divine tragedy. The king, the living Word, whose plan is to save the world, dies.

⁶⁰⁰ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 343.

⁶⁰¹ Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor: Reading John 13-21*, 142.

⁶⁰² Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 136.

⁶⁰³ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 74-75.

⁶⁰⁴ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 192.

Evil appears to have the upper hand. The protagonist is the victim in this tragic drama.⁶⁰⁵ The pre-existent Word carries in his body the weight of abuse. He suffers in the extreme and finally dies. His body rests in the garden tomb. Mysteriously, the irony through this tragedy is unstable.

Nevertheless, there is hope. The one who promised eternal life also predicted that his “temple” would be “rebuilt in three days” (2:12). There is hope that the unstable irony of reversal will become resolved. If this happens through Jesus coming back to life, the protagonist will no longer be the victim, and the ironic instability through the drama of Jesus’ passion will become perplexing irony of reversal.

Moreover, because of the sustained nature of irony in the passion narrative, the narrator has built up a strong rapport with the implied reader. This good rapport reflects the desire of the fourth evangelist to impress the nature of God into the implied reader. Through this disclosure, the implied reader has become more aware of the generosity and love of God as demonstrated in Jesus’ passion and death (3:16-17). So, the narrator uses irony to help the implied reader become an ideal reader. The implied reader may believe in Jesus in the same way as all other disciples. That is, to respond with faith and appreciation to God for the gift of Jesus as the Saviour of the world (4:42; 20:31).

Pilate assumes he has the authority in the trial of Jesus, while throughout the proceedings *hoi Ioudaioi* seem to have the upper hand by influencing Pilate’s actions. But all the while, the implied reader knows that Jesus is ultimately directing the proceedings because of his divine authority.

In Table 6 following I set out the results of the analysis of this first section of the Johannine passion narrative.

⁶⁰⁵ Stibbe, *John, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 193.

TABLE 6: Analysis of Ironies in John 18:1-19:16a

Verbal (22)

Double Meaning	Metaphor	Sarcasm	Satire	Unanswered question
It is ambiguous having 2 meanings	A symbol that can't be taken literally; a resemblance	A sneering, cutting remark a taunt or jibe	An exposing, scorning or denouncing of a folly or vice	A question designed for effect and not for an answer
18:35c, 38; 39f 19:9b, 11, 13, 14	18:12-14; 19:2-5, 11	18:11; 19:2-3, 5	18:2-3, 3-10, 6, 35a; 19:13	18:11, 35a, 38; 19:9b

Situational (53)

Reversal	Prolepsis	Analepsis	Juxtaposition	Paradox	Dualism
A situation's flipside	A flash forward	A flash backwards	A comparative situation	A self contradictory truth	Diametrically opposite terms
18:2-4, 4, 4-8, 12-14, 17, 22f, 25, 33f, 35b , 40; 19: 1-16 , 2-5, 3, 8, 10, 13, 14-16, 15	18:10f, 17, 25, 27; 19:14, 15a	18:4, 12-14, 17 (x2), 25, 27; 19:14	18:4, 15-27, 21-27, 39f; 19:13f, 14-16	18: 2-11 , 3, 4, 6 (x2), 12, 22f, 35b , 36, 36f; 19:1-3, 2-6, 5, 14-16, 15b	18:3

Dramatic (45)

Understatement	Hyperbole	Misunderstanding	Parody	Double Standard	Double Entendre
Under exaggeration	Over exaggeration	Taking a different meaning to what is intended	An imitation designed to ridicule a serious work	The enforcer of the standard is unfairly exempt from it	An event / character speaks a double meaning while unaware of it
18:3; 19:3, 5	18:2f; 19:9f	18:4 (x2), 4f, 10, 12-14 (x2), 28, 38, 39f; 19:3 (x2), 6-11, 9b, 9f, 13, 14	18:3, 4, 6, 33; 19:2f, 5, 14c, 15a, 16a	18:17, 19-24, 22f (x2), 22-30, 25, 27, 28, 38; 19:1-6, 6	18:12, 14; 19:5, 11

Unstable (persistently unresolved irony)

18:35b Reversal; Pilate's 3rd question: "What have you done?" Identifies unbelief = reveals the unmet desire of God: for us all to believe into Jesus.

18:35b Paradox; God: It is the Creator's desire to save all, yet this is denied him by *hoi Ioudaioi* who will not believe into Jesus.

19:15b Paradox; Chief priests: "We have no king but Caesar": The betrayal of salvation history and rejection of God's Son by those whom God desires to come to him.

Perplexing (temporary unresolved irony)

18:2-11 Paradox; Jesus: He has an unmet desire to unite all to himself (18:9), however, it is resolved through the cross (12:32-33).

19:1-16 Reversal; The protagonist (Jesus) has become the victim in this tragic drama. However, it will be resolved through his resurrection.

TOTAL: 22 + 53 + 45 = 120 examples

CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS OF JOHN 19:16-20:31, FURTHER SUSTAINED IRONY

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the second half of the analysis of the Johannine passion narrative, with sub-narratives of the crucifixion and resurrection. It continues using the methodology explained in Chapter Four and demonstrated in the analysis of Chapter Five. Now, the focus shifts to the climax of the Fourth Gospel: the death of the divine Son and his resurrection (19:16b-20:31). This chapter will identify and examine the irony and non-ironic rhetoric in the Johannine passion narrative through to the end of John 20.

In step one of the method, the researcher selects a passage that has unity. As demonstrated in the section of Jesus' trial of the passion narrative, *inclusio* is one of the non-ironic literary devices that help to demonstrate the unity of a passage. There are two *inclusios* identified here. The first is the identification of Jesus as the Messiah-King, that happens when Pilate orders the notice on the cross to read: "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of *hoi Ioudaioi*" (19:19). "Nazarene" is almost a homonym for "Branch" in Hebrew, which is a horticultural messianic term (Isaiah 11:1).⁶⁰⁶ This messianic theme recurs where the narrator informs the reader that "these things are written in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God ..." (20:31). The second *inclusio* is the use of the term μέσος (= middle, amidst) which is used to locate the cross of Jesus (19:18) and it locates the risen Jesus as he appears to the disciples in the locked room (20:26). Overall, to show the unity of the whole passion narrative, there is the *inclusio* of the garden (ὁ κήπος). It was the place

⁶⁰⁶ Coloe, *God Dwells With Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2001), 186.

frequented by Jesus and his disciples, where Judas led the cohort to arrest Jesus (18:1). A garden features after the crucifixion as the place where Jesus' body was laid to rest in a tomb (19:41), and after the resurrection where Mary Magdalene met the risen Jesus in the garden (20:15), thinking he was the garden-keeper (ὁ κηπουρός). All these add weight to the unity of the whole passion narrative.

The Crucifixion Narrative

The whole Fourth Gospel points to these seven verses (19:16-22). Jesus and the narrator refer to this event as his “being lifted up” (3:14; 8:28; 12:32) and his “hour of glorification” (12:16, 23; 13:31-32; 17:1). Ironically, the glorification of Jesus means that he dies an agonisingly painful death. The cross becomes his throne. The enthronement is not intended by those who were, humanly speaking, responsible for his crucifixion. Yet, mockingly they proclaim him king with a crown of thorns, a purple robe (19:2), the taunts about his authority (19:3) and a notice attached to the cross (19:19). It is for this reason that the Father has sent his Son: that the Son might be exalted and draw the people of the world to himself (3:14-17; 6:44; 8:28; 12:32).

In the Johannine drama, *hoi Ioudaioi* have almost finished playing their part concerning the condemnation of Jesus. Now, at the beginning of the crucifixion narrative, all that is left for them to do is to take Jesus to Golgotha.⁶⁰⁷ As crucifixion is a Roman punishment, the Romans take over from there on.⁶⁰⁸ They will continue the abuse of Jesus, which Pilate has approved. However, the implied reader knows that things are

⁶⁰⁷ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 136.

⁶⁰⁸ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 392.

different from how they seem. It is here that Jesus takes his throne. He wears his crown made of thorny stems, and is lifted high and exalted for the world to see on the cross that bears his Messianic title. The ultimate message of the cross is not defeat, for it is here that Jesus is glorified.⁶⁰⁹

If Jesus had died through natural causes, through accident or disease, it would have changed everything. As Forsyth says, “Everything turns, not on his life having been taken from him, but on its having been laid down”.⁶¹⁰ Jesus’ crucifixion is the laying down of his life. This is what the Johannine Jesus had predicted would take place. Jesus says,

“Through this the Father loves me because I lay [down] my life-soul in order that I might take it [up] again. No one removes it from me, but I lay it [down] away from myself. I have authority to lay it [down], and I have authority to take it [up]. This is the command I received from my Father” (10:17-18).

For the Johannine Jesus this decision for him to lay down his life relates to the authority he has received from the Father, and his obedience to the Father’s command. If Jesus were to die of old age, or disease, or by accident or even by an unknown cause, his death would have been one of many millions of deaths and would not have had universal significance. He could not have been the “sacrificial lamb”. He would not have fulfilled the prophetic promises given through the Old Testament prophets. He would not have been able to live up to the high Christological portrait of him in the prologue of the Gospel. However, the fourth evangelist makes it clear that Jesus is in control of the events throughout the passion narrative. Additionally, the irony in this section will play a large part in the cross becoming the centre-piece of the Gospel. This chapter continues on with step three of the five-step method. Diagram 9 in Chapter Four provides a simplified model of this.

⁶⁰⁹ I offer my translation of the UBS4 Greek text as a basis for the analysis. All English translations are my own unless otherwise specified.

⁶¹⁰ Forsyth, *The Cruciality of the Cross* (Coromandel East, SA: New Creation Publishing, Inc., 1994), 179.

19:16b-22

^{19:16b} Therefore, they took Jesus, ¹⁷ and taking up the cross himself, he went out into what is being called “Skull Place”, which in Hebrew is named “Golgotha”. ¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others; one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. ¹⁹ And also Pilate wrote a notice and placed it on the cross. It stood written: “JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF *HOI IOUDAIOI*”. ²⁰ Many of *hoi Ioudaioi* read this notice because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it stood written in Hebrew, in Latin and in Greek. ²¹ Then the chief priests of *hoi Ioudaioi* were saying to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*, but ‘this one said, I am the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*’”. ²² Pilate answered, “What I have written, stands written”.

In these seven verses dealing with the events leading up to and including the crucifixion of Jesus, I identify the ironies of metaphor, analepses, reversal, double meaning, satire, paradox, parody and double entendre.

My translation of 19:16b-18 follows:

^{19:16b} Therefore, they took Jesus, ¹⁷ and taking up the cross himself, he went out into what is being called “Skull Place”, which in Hebrew is named “Golgotha”. ¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others; one on either side, with Jesus in the middle.

The word βαστάζω means “to take up”, “to bear”, or “to carry away”.⁶¹¹ Here in 19:17 it describes what Jesus did, “taking up (βαστάζων) his own cross”. Unlike the Synoptic

⁶¹¹ Bauer, et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (2nd edn) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 137. It occurs only five times in the Fourth Gospel (10:31; 12:6; 16:2; 19:17; 20:15).

^{19:16b} Παρέλαβον οὖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ¹⁷ καὶ βαστάζων ἑαυτῷ τὸν σταυρὸν ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὸν λεγόμενον Κρανίου Τόπον, ὃ λέγεται Ἑβραϊστὶ Γολγοθα, ¹⁸ ὅπου αὐτὸν ἐσταύρωσαν, καὶ μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἄλλους δύο ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν, μέσον δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν. ¹⁹ ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ τίτλον ὁ Πιλάτος καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ· ἦν δὲ γεγραμμένον, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων. ²⁰ τοῦτον οὖν τὸν τίτλον πολλοὶ ἀνέγνωσαν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἦν ὁ τόπος τῆς πόλεως ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καὶ ἦν γεγραμμένον Ἑβραϊστί, Ῥωμαϊστί, Ἑλληνιστί. ²¹ ἔλεγον οὖν τῷ Πιλάτῳ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, Μὴ γράφει, Ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἀλλ’ ὅτι ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν, Βασιλεὺς εἰμι τῶν Ἰουδαίων. ²² ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Πιλάτος, Ὁ γέγραφα, γέγραφα.

accounts, there is no Simon of Cyrene in the narrative to bear the cross for Jesus (Matthew 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26). This shouldering of the wooden cross-beam can be seen as an allusion to Isaac carrying the wood to prepare for his own sacrifice (Genesis 22:6-9) and is thus a metaphor for sacrifice (19:17).⁶¹² Abraham did not withhold his only son (Genesis 22:12) in the same way that God did not withhold his one and only Son, Jesus (3:16). Instead, the Lord provided a ram to replace Isaac for the sacrifice (Genesis 22:13-14). However, Jesus is the sacrificial “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29). These ironies are metaphor and a non-ironic intertextual analepsis.

Earlier in the Gospel, the implied reader remembers that *hoi Ioudaioi* “took up (ἐβάστασαν)” stones (10:31) in their hands with intent to kill Jesus. They had claimed he was guilty of blasphemy (10:33). However, Jesus’ time had not come and their intentions were unsuccessful. By contrast, here, Jesus takes up the cross in his own hands. The cross will become the means by which he will give his life. βαστάζω incorporates a volitional meaning. As Büchsel claims, “carrying is an exertion of power and thus includes an exercise and application of will”.⁶¹³ By Jesus taking up and bearing his own cross, he demonstrates that he gives his own life (6:51; 10:11, 15, 17; 13:37; 15:13) out of love. This is a demonstration of Jesus’ volitional authority over the ending of his life. According to the fourth evangelist, this is not suicide, as in his death he becomes the sacrificial Paschal Lamb (1:29; 6:51-59). This contrast in the evangelist’s use of βαστάζω demonstrates the irony of reversal.

In 19:18, the evangelist describes the scene at Golgotha. The evangelist records the crucifixion in a matter-of-fact style, without embellishment. Three people are crucified together. They are in a row with two on either side and Jesus “in the middle” (μέσον).

The middle position of the cross of Jesus, who is flanked by others in his death (19:18), gives value to and reinforces his kingship (12:13). Senior points out the importance of Jesus’ position of being “in the middle”. He says, that Jesus’ “crucifixion becomes an

⁶¹² Beasley-Murray, *John*, 345.

⁶¹³ Büchsel, “Bastazō,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (ed. Kittel; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 1:596.

enthronement with an entourage on his right and his left”.⁶¹⁴ μέσος is also a word that reminds us of the central place that the cross has in the Fourth Gospel. μέσος is therefore an ironic metaphor for Jesus’ kingship.

When the cross is central in one’s theology, Tidball calls it a “crucicentric” Gospel.⁶¹⁵ As Moloney says about this section of the passion narrative,

Jesus, now crucified, occupies a central place between them ... The narrator does not dwell on the bloody reality of a Roman crucifixion, but [on] ... making Jesus the centrepiece of a triptych of crucified people...⁶¹⁶

For this analysis, the NRSV translation misses the significance of the middle position, translating μέσον with “between them”. Despite its relatively infrequent use, μέσος is used in some significant passages.⁶¹⁷ These include the positioning of the cross here in 19:18, and in two post-resurrection appearances where he appears in the midst of them, one with Thomas absent and the second with him present (20:19, 26). The position of Jesus’ cross reinforces that the cross of Jesus is central to the Fourth Gospel, demonstrating ironic double meaning and double entendre.

Another instance where the evangelist uses this term μέσος is when John the Baptist introduces Jesus. John says, “In the midst (μέσος) of you has stood one whom you do not know” (1:26). However, here in the passion narrative, Jesus is again “in the middle”; he is in their midst. The fourth evangelist has Jesus spend the majority of his ministry in Judea so the Judeans could become his followers and get to know him (3:22).⁶¹⁸ *Hoi Ioudaioi* welcomed him as king into Jerusalem (12:9-15), and subsequently have swayed Pilate to condemn him to death (19:14-15). Now, here in 19:18, his cross stands in the most prominent position at Golgotha (19:20), yet still they have failed to get to know him. It is at this place, at the place where he is glorified “in the middle”, that Jesus has prominence by virtue of the position of his cross. This is paradoxical irony.

⁶¹⁴ Senior, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, 148.

⁶¹⁵ Tidball, *The Message of the Cross* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 2001), 24-28.

⁶¹⁶ Moloney, *Glory Not Dishonor: Reading John 13-21*, 143.

⁶¹⁷ Μέσος occurs six times in the Fourth Gospel (1:26; 8:3, 9; 19:18; 20:19, 26).

⁶¹⁸ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 3. Thompson affirms that the majority of Jesus’ ministry in the Fourth Gospel is centred around Judea and Jerusalem.

Ironically also, it is only in his death that Jesus receives this royal treatment, that highlights his kingship.⁶¹⁹ This is despite the accolades of the crowd who welcome Jesus into Jerusalem with hosannas (12:12-19). In the Fourth Gospel, the cross of Jesus, the instrument of his execution, is not to be understood in terms of humiliation and shame. Rather, it is depicted as the place where Jesus is enthroned and where he receives glory.⁶²⁰ As Marcus says,

For John, ...Jesus' exaltation comes precisely through his enthronement on the cross, and commentators often speak of the unusual twist that association with crucifixion gives to the idea of exaltation.⁶²¹

Crucifixion means exaltation for Jesus. This is ironic double meaning. Furthermore, the prominence of the middle position of the cross belonging to the divine Son is reinforced by the crown Jesus is still wearing (19:2) and the content of the notice Pilate attaches to his cross (18:19). In the Fourth Gospel, the kingship of Jesus is made known primarily through the cross. As the cross becomes his "throne", it makes the Gospel narrative crucicentric.⁶²² This demonstrates metaphorical and paradoxical irony.

The Fourth Gospel's account of the crucifixion highlights the divine Son who never ceases to be in control. The evangelist portrays Jesus as one who manages his own arrest, trial and even his own death. As Thompson says, "...John's account fits with his portrayal of Jesus as initiating and superintending the events that lead to his arrest and condemnation."⁶²³ Moreover, the Johannine Jesus is portrayed as having the authority and power to save himself. Yet he chooses to remain nailed to the cross and die. It appears to mocking onlookers that the notice above his head that identifies him as a king is a farce. Yet, the implied reader already knows it is true. The evangelist demonstrates Jesus' kingship by the fact that he did *not* save himself.⁶²⁴ This is ironic reversal.

It is Jesus' authority that the evangelist emphasises, and he makes this known by means of the introduction of irony in its various forms and types.

⁶¹⁹ Thompson says, "There is no glory apart from the cross." Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 111.

⁶²⁰ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 393.

⁶²¹ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 74.

⁶²² Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 73; Tidball, *The Message of the Cross*, 24-28.

⁶²³ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 397.

⁶²⁴ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 74.

Additionally, when Jesus is “lifted up” (ὑψόω) on the cross, he fulfils his own prophetic word, reminding the implied reader of the Gospel’s theological themes that point to this climactic event. When Jesus or the fourth evangelist speak of being “lifted up” they are talking about the crucifixion.⁶²⁵ For example, the analogy is made to Moses (3:14) who fashioned a bronze snake in the desert and raised it on a pole (Numbers 21:4-9), so that anyone who was bitten by a venomous snake could look up to it and not perish. The evangelist compares Moses’ action of providing salvation with the lifting up (ὑψόω = to raise up, uplift, exalt) of Jesus on the cross, so that everyone who believes into him will have eternal life (3:15-16). This ironic metaphor in 3:14-15 demonstrates the first of five examples of ironic analepsis related to the crucifixion in 19:18.

A second analepsis is to 8:21-30 where the Johannine Jesus is speaking to *hoi Ioudaioi* about his forthcoming death. In 8:28 he uses ὑψόω as a double-meaning reference to his death. Equally, it could be translated “when you exalt me [to my throne] you will come to know that I am he”. Once *hoi Ioudaioi* crucify Jesus they will know that truly he is the Messiah, that he speaks the Father’s words and that he does nothing on his own authority.⁶²⁶ Jesus’ authority comes from the Father who instructs him, sends him and is with him always (28-30). Therefore, when Jesus is crucified, there are two ironies related to this. The first is that the cross becomes a metaphor for Jesus’ throne as king, and secondly, this double meaning in 8:28 identifies an ironic analepsis.

A third analepsis is to 12:28-30 where Jesus prays to the Father, “glorify your name”. For the Johannine Jesus, “being crucified” is equivalent to “being glorified” (7:39; 12:16, 23; 13:31). A voice comes from heaven in response (12:28), “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.” Jesus explains that the voice is for the benefit of the disciples, not for him (12:30). When the glory of God is revealed, all that some can hear is the noise of thunder, while others can hear the voice of an angel (12:29). Therefore, the crucifixion of Jesus in 19:18 is both a metaphor of Jesus “being glorified” and an ironic analepsis to 12:28-30.

⁶²⁵ This thesis does not address nor claim to add to the historicity of crucifixion practices, which were diverse. Rousseau and Arav (eds), *Jesus and His World: An Archaeological and Cultural Dictionary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1995), 75, 154-155. They say that there was a difference between a “low cross” (susceptible to wild animals), where the victim's feet were only 25-45 cm above the ground, and the “high cross” where the feet were about a metre above ground.

⁶²⁶ Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 93.

A fourth analepsis is to the following dialogue with the disciples (12:32-34), Jesus uses the ambiguous ὑψωθῶ (I am lifted up, exalted) for the third and fourth times in the Fourth Gospel to mean that when he dies he will be exalted / elevated on a cross. Both meanings are intended and appropriate. On the surface level, Jesus predicts that he will die from crucifixion, after being nailed to a cross-beam and raised up above the crowd. Secondly, Jesus' death on the cross will be a means by which he will be exalted. In other words, the cross will enable the world to see and appreciate the authority of Jesus. This explains that God's purposeful plan for all time is in God's unmet desire to provide salvation to the world. These verses demonstrate the foundational unstable paradoxical irony of the Fourth Gospel concerning God's unmet desire for all to be saved. Jesus' death on the cross therefore is an ironic analepsis to the paradox of 12:32.

A fifth analepsis is to 12:32b where the Johannine Jesus declares that his death will provide atonement for the people of the world in that he will draw everybody to himself through the cross (also 6:44).⁶²⁷ The evangelist explains this prediction to the implied reader (12:33). In the following verse, the crowd understands the meaning of being "lifted up" as they ask Jesus in 12:34b "who is the Son of Man [who will be lifted up]?" Therefore, these verses (12:32-34) affirm that the crucifixion of Jesus has value as an atoning sacrifice. The crucifixion in 19:18 is therefore an ironic analepsis to the atonement Jesus promises in 12:32.

In crucifixion, the ones who are subjected to this form of execution (19:18) are elevated on a wooden structure *above* those who condemn and execute them. This absurdity demonstrates ironies of double meaning, reversal and paradox. Furthermore, as far as Roman authority was concerned, the elevated position of those suffering crucifixion was intended to mimic those who pretended to be of higher status than they really were.⁶²⁸

⁶²⁷ None of the words that are often used in the context of "atonement" (λύτρον = ransom; ἱλασμός / ἱλαστήριον = atoning sacrifice; θυσία = sacrifice; καταλλαγή = reconciliation) occur in the Fourth Gospel. This is puzzling given the centrality of the message of the cross for the fourth evangelist. Even so, this does not mean that the Fourth Gospel is devoid of the concept. Rather, "atonement" is expressed differently. In terms of Johannine thought, "atonement" is being drawn into a relationship (12:32) and becoming one with the Father (17:6-11, 20-23) by believing into Jesus and receiving eternal life (1:12; 3:15-16; 5:24; 17:3; 20:31). It is achieved because, out of love for the world, Jesus laid down his life (10:11, 14-18; 15:13). It is received by hearing, obeying the Word (10:27; 14:21, 23), and following Jesus (8:12). This implies that there will be some who will not find salvation as they refuse to believe and receive him into their lives (8:42-45).

⁶²⁸ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 78.

According to the Johannine description of the Romans, Jesus was one such person who pretended to be a king. The mode of elevating a criminal on a cross mocked any who dared to revolt against the might of Rome's imperial authority. This is ironic satire and parody.

However, sometimes, satire and parody reverse and the perpetrators of violence can capitulate to their own mockery. The implied reader recalls that Jesus came to Pilate, who had the soldiers flog him. They dressed Jesus in royal garb with a crown of thorns and a purple robe, making a mockery of his kingship (19:1-3, 5). The reader assumes that it is the soldiers, on Pilate's order, who make and affix the notice on Jesus' cross in three languages, implicitly declaring him to be king of the nations of the world. Yet, the soldiers seem ignorant of the truth of the content of their mockery. They are unaware that Jesus is truly the King of the World. Thus, their mockery is reversed because Jesus as Messianic King endures the cross with regal dignity. As Marcus says,

[In the cross of Jesus,] ...the mockery that has transformed kingship into a joke encounters a sharper mockery that unmasks it, so that the derision of kingship is itself derided and true royalty emerges through negation of the negation. For many early Christians this reversal, which turned penal mockery on its head, was probably the inner meaning of Jesus' crucifixion.⁶²⁹

This mocking of the mockery of the cross is ironic parody.

My translation of 19:19-20 follows:

^{19:19} And also Pilate wrote a notice and placed it on the cross. It stood written: "JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF *HOI IOUDAIOS*". ²⁰ Many of *hoi Ioudaioi* read this notice because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it stood written in Hebrew, in Latin and in Greek.

The first part of the notice reads: "JESUS THE NAZARENE" (19:19). Only the Fourth Gospel refers to Jesus as "the Nazarene". It is a veiled link to Jesus being the Jewish Messiah. The term "Nazarene" is similar in pronunciation, coming from the same stem as one of the Hebrew horticultural metaphors used to describe Messiah: "Branch נֵזֶר *nêțser*" (Isaiah 11:1; Daniel 11:7).⁶³⁰

⁶²⁹ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 78.

⁶³⁰ Coloe, *God Dwells With Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 186. ; cited in Culpepper, "Designs for the Church in the Gospel Accounts of Jesus Death", *New Testament Studies*, 51 (2005): 386-387.

It speaks defiantly to the chief priests. *Hoi Ioudaioi* and the chief priests were offended by the notice and wanted it changed (19:21). This play on the words “Nazarene” and “Branch” highlights ironies of metaphor and double meaning. Furthermore, as earlier indicated in the introduction to this chapter, it is also the beginning of an *inclusio* that concludes with the mention of “Messiah” in 20:31.

The rest of the notice was also inflammatory. As Duke says, the title

“King of the Jews” [sic] is ironic because he is obviously not their king, and again because obviously he is”. It is ironic because he himself in life has fled the people’s desire to crown him (6:15). It is supremely ironic because it is precisely “the Jews” [sic] – the name reserved for those who hate him and have demanded his death – over whom he has triumphed and, quite unknown to them, reigns.⁶³¹

Here Duke identifies the ironies of reversal and double entendre.

The notice that Pilate had made was written in three languages, Hebrew, Latin and Greek (19:20), demonstrating that the cross of Jesus was for the world (3:16-17; 12:32).

“[Pilate’s] testimony [was] a proclamation to the world, extending Christ’s kingship far beyond ...[*hoi Ioudaioi*]”.⁶³² Golgotha (or “Skull Place”) was situated on the main road to and just outside the city of Jerusalem (19:20). The location of the cross at this place enabled many people, including *hoi Ioudaioi* and Gentiles to read the notice. This unintended double meaning is ironic double entendre.

Jesus has already declared that his kingdom is not of this world (18:36), yet the notice (19:19) proclaimed him as king of the people who wanted to kill him. This is paradoxical irony. Little wonder the notice was offensive to the chief priests. They would rather have given their allegiance to Caesar (19:15)! The irony of the notice’s message was that it also conflicted with the attitude of the chief priests, demonstrating ironic reversal.

I offer my translation of 19:21-22:

^{19:21} Then the chief priests of *hoi Ioudaioi* were saying to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*, but ‘this one said, I am the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*’”.²² Pilate answered, “What I have written, stands written”.

⁶³¹ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 136.

⁶³² Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 136.

Pilate is adamant. He will not relent, and the notice stays as is (19:22). When Pilate has the notice attached to the cross he is treating *hoi Ioudaioi* with contempt. In so doing, he acts as though he is unaware of the true identity of Jesus. This demonstrates ironic double meaning, sarcasm and double entendre.

The one who promised life in abundance (10:10) hangs dying on a Roman cross “in the middle” of others who are dying as criminals. He promised abundant life to his followers (10:10). He dies to bring life to those who believe into him (12:24). This demonstrates paradoxical irony.

19:23-30

²³ Therefore, when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. [They] even [took] the undergarment. Now the undergarment was seamless, woven as one piece from the top.

²⁴ Then they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it [to see] whose it shall be”. [This happened] in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, “They distributed my outer garments among themselves, and upon my clothes they cast a lot”. The soldiers therefore did these things.

²⁵ Now there were standing beside the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ Then Jesus, having seen [his] mother and the disciple whom he was loving standing by, he says to [his] mother, “Woman, see, your son”.²⁷ Then he says to the disciple, “See your mother”. And from that hour, that [disciple] took her into [his own] home.

²⁸ Later, having known all these things were complete, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he says, “I thirst”. ²⁹ A full jar of sour wine was sitting [there], so [using] a hyssop [sprig], they brought to his mouth a sponge soaked in sour wine. ³⁰ After Jesus took [some] sour wine he said, “It stands accomplished”. And having bowed [his] head, he gave over [his] spirit.

²³ Οἱ οὖν στρατιῶται, ὅτε ἐσταύρωσαν τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ἔλαβον τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐποίησαν τέσσαρα μέρη, ἐκάστῳ στρατιώτῃ μέρος, καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα. ἦν δὲ ὁ χιτῶν ἄραφος, ἐκ τῶν ἄνωθεν ὑφαντὸς δι’ ὄλου. ²⁴ εἶπαν οὖν πρὸς ἀλλήλους, Μὴ σχίσωμεν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ λάχωμεν περὶ αὐτοῦ τίνος ἔσται· ἵνα ἡ γραφή πληρωθῇ [ἡ λέγουσα], Διεμερίσαντο τὰ ἱμάτιά μου ἑαυτοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἱματισμὸν μου ἔβαλον κλῆρον. Οἱ μὲν οὖν στρατιῶται ταῦτα ἐποίησαν

²⁵ εἰστήκεισαν δὲ παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Κλωπᾶ καὶ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνῆ. ²⁶ Ἰησοῦς οὖν ἰδὼν τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὸν μαθητὴν παρεστῶτα ὃν ἠγάπα, λέγει τῇ μητρί, Γύναι, ἴδε ὁ υἱός σου. ²⁷ εἶτα λέγει τῷ μαθητῇ, Ἴδε ἡ μήτηρ σου. καὶ ἀπ’ ἐκείνης τῆς ὥρας ἔλαβεν ὁ μαθητὴς αὐτὴν εἰς τὰ ἴδια.

²⁸ Μετὰ τοῦτο εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤδη πάντα τετέλεσται, ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή, λέγει, Διψῶ. ²⁹ σκεῦος ἔκειτο ὄξους μεστόν· σπόγγον οὖν μεστόν τοῦ ὄξους ὑσσώπῳ περιθέντες προσήνεγκαν αὐτοῦ τῷ στόματι. ³⁰ ὅτε οὖν ἔλαβεν τὸ ὄξος [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Τετέλεσται, καὶ κλίνας τὴν κεφαλὴν παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα.

This next section analyses the scene at Golgotha from the time Jesus is crucified until he gives over his spirit. The ironies and rhetoric are concerned with the soldiers who divide up Jesus' clothes, the women and the beloved disciple who stand underneath the cross of Jesus, and the words that Jesus speaks before he dies. The fourth evangelist uses the ironies of prolepsis, parody, metaphor and reversal, along with the persistent unstable rhetoric of reversal.

My translation of 19:23-24 follows:

^{19:23} Therefore, when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. [They] even [took] the undergarment. Now the undergarment was seamless, woven as one piece from the top. ²⁴ Then they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it [to see] whose it shall be". [This happened] in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They distributed my outer garments among themselves, and upon my clothes they cast a lot". The soldiers therefore did these things.

In 19:23-24, the soldiers divide up Jesus' clothes. There are five garments as each of the four soldiers takes one piece and there is one remaining to divide between four of them. They gamble for the (presumably more expensive) garment that is woven in one piece, from top to bottom. This undergarment is not torn. "They said to one another...". This is in direct contrast to the Temple symbolism of the Synoptic tradition where the Temple curtain *is torn* from top to bottom (Mark 15:38; Matthew 27:51). This untorn garment is also an ironic prolepsis to the untorn net *οὐκ ἐσχίσθη τὸ δίχτυον* (21:11).

As Jesus' five garments are taken away, he hangs on the cross naked. While the divine Son hangs unclothed, it is a parody that the fully-clothed soldiers can only think of dividing up his clothes among themselves. They gamble for his last possessions. The fourth evangelist reminds the reader that this took place in order to fulfil the Scripture (Psalm 22:18). I explain this later in Chapter Eight when I examine the use of Scripture in the Fourth Gospel. However, these actions of the soldiers demonstrate reversal and parodic irony.

My translation of 19:25-27 follows:

^{19:25} Now there were standing beside the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ Then Jesus, having seen [his] mother and the disciple whom he was loving standing by, he says to [his] mother, "Woman, see, your son". ²⁷ Then he says to the disciple, "See your mother". And from that hour, that [disciple] took her into [his own] home.

In 19:25-26, Jesus speaks to the women who had stayed at the cross to be with Jesus until the very end. With them is the beloved disciple who remains unidentified throughout the Fourth Gospel. This victimises the implied reader, as the designation "beloved disciple" treats the implied reader as an outsider.⁶³³ This demonstrates persistent unstable rhetoric.

My translation of 19:28-30 follows:

^{19:28} Later, having known all these things were complete, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he says, "I thirst". ²⁹ A full jar of sour wine was sitting [there], so [using] a hyssop [sprig], they brought to his mouth a sponge soaked in sour wine. ³⁰ After Jesus took [some] sour wine he said, "It stands accomplished". And having bowed [his] head, he gave over [his] spirit.

In 19:28, Jesus is thirsty and needs a drink. He simply says "Διψῶ I thirst". The implied reader remembers an earlier incident where Jesus is thirsty. After a tiring journey in the heat of the day, he asks a Samaritan woman for a drink (4:7). This is a non-ironic analepsis.

Then he says to her,

"If you knew God's gift, and who it is that is saying to you, 'give me a drink', you would have asked him and he would have given you living water. ... Everyone who drinks of this water will become thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water that I give will never become thirsty. The water that I will give will become in that one a spring of water welling up into eternal life" (4:13-14).

Later in Jerusalem, at the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus declares,

⁶³³ In my analysis of 18:15-16 in Chapter Five I discuss this further.

Let the one who is thirsty come to me,³⁸ and let the one who believes in me drink. As the Scripture says, “out of the believer’s heart shall gush forth rivers of living water” (7:37b-38).

The narrator adds, “Now he said this about the Spirit which believers in him were to receive, for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus had not yet been glorified” (7:39).

For a second time in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus asks for a drink (4:7;19:28). The obvious irony in this is that Jesus is the one who offers “living water” (4:10, 13; 7:37-38), yet he is thirsty. This is paradoxical irony. As he hangs on the cross he is thirsty and is offered a sour-wine soaked sponge on a hyssop sprig (19:29). Hyssop was traditionally associated with cleansing and purification (Psalm 51:7). It is therefore symbolic of the sacrifice Jesus is making as he is the sacrifice.⁶³⁴ This identifies an ironic metaphor. Lee suggests that there is evidence of another metaphor here, as Jesus’ request fulfils Psalm 69:21, and that hyssop sprigs are too flimsy to support wet sponges.⁶³⁵ She says, “it follows that Jesus’ thirst on the cross expresses the desire not just for physical water but for the will of God”.⁶³⁶ Moore claims that ironically, when Jesus asks the Samaritan woman for a drink (4:7),

...he has another desire that well water cannot satisfy... What Jesus longs for from this woman, even more than delicious spring water, is that she long for the living water that he longs to give her. Jesus thirsts to arouse her thirst.⁶³⁷

So on both occasions when Jesus thirsts for a drink, there is more at stake for the implied reader than simply assuaging a physical thirst for water. It is as Moore suggests, that the Johannine Jesus is longing to satisfy the need for others to believe into him, as well as his longing to fulfil the Scripture concerning himself.⁶³⁸ Furthermore, the

⁶³⁴ While sacrifice is not a Johannine term, it is incorporated in Jesus laying down his life for his sheep (10:11-17); laying down his life for his friends (15:13); and consecrating those who believe into him (17:18,19). It is also implied in the Temple symbolism of the Fourth Gospel. Coloe, *God Dwells With Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*.

⁶³⁵ Lee, *Flesh and Glory: Symbol, Gender and Theology in the Gospel of John*, 81-82.

⁶³⁶ Lee, *Flesh and Glory: Symbol, Gender and Theology in the Gospel of John*, 82.

⁶³⁷ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 208. His emphasis.

⁶³⁸ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 208.

paradoxical irony of the one who offers the all-surpassing living water being thirsty has already been identified. This also demonstrates other ironies of metaphor and reversal.

I offer my translation of selected verses from 19:26-30.

^{19:26} Then Jesus, ...says to [his] mother, “Woman, see, your son”. ²⁷ Then he says to the disciple, “See your mother”. [Jesus] ...says, “I thirst”. ... ³⁰[then] ...he said, “It stands accomplished”. And having bowed [his] head, he gave over [his] spirit.

In these verses, the fourth evangelist has provided the last four utterances of Jesus on the cross, reducing them to only eleven words in Greek. In 19:26-27, Jesus shows compassion toward his mother and paves the way for her and his unnamed beloved disciple to share in community life. These arrangements use nine words, while the other two statements, “I thirst” Διψῶ (19:28) and “It stands accomplished” Τετέλεσται (19:30) are one word each. The brevity and succinctness of what Jesus says adds immediacy and poignancy to the graphic portrait of his death as the divine Son. Jesus is the “Resurrection and the Life” (11:25-26; 14:6), yet, as the protagonist, he dies. This is unstable paradoxical irony, which when understood in terms of Jesus’ promise in 11:25-26 has the prospect of becoming resolved. However, Jesus’ death also now means that the Spirit can be poured out, as was promised (7:37-39), because Jesus is now glorified.

In 19:30, as Jesus bows his head he “gave up” or “gave over” τὸ πνεῦμα. This could be translated two ways. The traditional interpretation is that τὸ πνεῦμα means “his spirit”. However, it can also mean “his breath”. The implication here is that the core group of the Johannine community has gathered below which includes Jesus’ mother, Mary Magdalene and the beloved disciple. If Jesus bows his head towards them and breathes on them this could be interpreted as equipping them with the Holy Spirit as promised in 7:39.⁶³⁹ If this is so, it would demonstrate three ironies: an ironic analepsis to 7:39, an ironic prolepsis to when the risen Jesus breathes on the disciples (20:22), and πνεῦμα would be an ironic double meaning.

⁶³⁹ Tidball, *The Message of the Cross*, 26.

Yet there is hope for a brighter future as the death of Jesus now means that the promised Holy Spirit will be poured out. John the Baptist promised that Jesus would be the one who baptises believers in the Holy Spirit (1:33). These promises are to be fulfilled now that Jesus is glorified (7:37-39; 16:7). This demonstrates perplexing paradoxical irony, which is resolved in the following chapter of the Gospel.

19:31-37

³¹ Since it was [the Day of Passover] Preparation, *hoi Ioudaioi* then, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, because that Sabbath day was great, asked Pilate if they might break the legs [of the crucified ones] in order that their bodies might be removed. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first one, and of the other one who was crucified together with him. ³³ But having come to Jesus, they did not break his legs as they saw that he was already dead. ³⁴ Indeed, one of the soldiers lanced his side [with a] spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

³⁵ Also, the one having seen [these things] has testified, and his testimony is true. And he knew that he speaks the truth in order that you might believe as well. ³⁶ For these things happened in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, “Not one of his bones will be broken”. ³⁷ And again another Scripture says, “they will look into the one they have pierced”.

³¹ Οἱ οὖν Ἰουδαῖοι, ἐπεὶ παρασκευῆ ἦν, ἵνα μὴ μείνη ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ τὰ σώματα ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ, ἦν γὰρ μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου, ἠρώτησαν τὸν Πιλάτον ἵνα κατεαγῶσιν αὐτῶν τὰ σκέλη καὶ ἀρθῶσιν. ³² ἦλθον οὖν οἱ στρατιῶται καὶ τοῦ μὲν πρώτου κατέαξαν τὰ σκέλη καὶ τοῦ ἄλλου τοῦ συσταυρωθέντος αὐτῷ. ³³ ἐπὶ δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐλθόντες, ὡς εἶδον ἤδη αὐτὸν τεθνηκότα, οὐ κατέαξαν αὐτοῦ τὰ σκέλη, ³⁴ ἀλλ’ εἷς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγχῃ αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἐνυξεν, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν εὐθὺς αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ.

³⁵ καὶ ὁ ἑωρακῶς μεμαρτύρηκεν, καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύ[σ]ητε. ³⁶ ἐγένετο γὰρ ταῦτα ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ, Ὅσοῦν οὐ συντριβήσεται αὐτοῦ. ³⁷ καὶ πάλιν ἑτέρα γραφὴ λέγει, Ὅψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν.

In this section (19:31-37) we find the details of the “breaking of the legs” and the piercing of Jesus’ side. Each detail has its own significance for the crucifixion, and all

the details together add to the demonstration of the centrality of the death of Jesus on the cross in the Fourth Gospel. In this section we find ironies of double standard, analepsis, reversal and metaphor, and non-ironic repetition.

I offer my translation of 19:31-33 here:

^{19:31} Since it was the [Day of Passover] Preparation, *hoi Ioudaioi* then, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, because that Sabbath day was great, asked Pilate if they might break the legs [of the crucified ones] in order that their bodies might be removed. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first one, and of the other one who was crucified together with him. ³³ But having come to Jesus, they did not break his legs as they saw that he was already dead.

This section opens with the fourth evangelist reminding the implied reader of the significance of the day. It is the same day that Passover lambs are being slaughtered as a symbol of God's salvation and the deliverance of God's people from slavery. The phrase "the [Day of Passover] Preparation" occurs three times (19:14, 31, 42). This repetition, as rhetoric, is a poignant reminder to the reader of the true significance of the death of Jesus for every believer.

The image the fourth evangelist portrays of *hoi Ioudaioi* is one of moral bankruptcy. The implied reader expects that if it had not been for the impending Sabbath, *hoi Ioudaioi* would not have requested that the legs of the crucified ones be broken as an act of mercy. Their motivation is depicted as unmerciful. Their actions are merely ritualistic. We see in them an ignorance of Micah's injunction: "What does the Lord require of you? To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). They consider their ritual purity can be obtained by observance of the law. This is all important to them, to the exclusion of mercy. However, if they truly loved God, they would show it by their mercy towards those dying on their crosses. Their heartless actions (19:31) demonstrate the irony of double standard.

The soldiers, under orders from Pilate, break the legs of the two people being crucified on either side of Jesus (19:32). They come to the cross of Jesus and recognise that he is

already dead, so there is no need to break his legs (19:33). The fourth evangelist makes an intertextual comment concerning these actions of the soldiers: that “none of his bones would be broken” (19:36). Yet, the implied reader knows that Jesus’ body has been “broken” in death through crucifixion. This is an ironic reversal. Furthermore, there is an ironic flashback to 6:35, where Jesus offers himself as the “Bread of Life” who is “broken” for the sake of the world. The possible intertextual references are Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; and Psalm 34:20, that deal with the suitability of a Passover lamb. These are examples of ironic analepses.

Here is my translation of 19:34-37:

^{19:34} Indeed, one of the soldiers lanced his side [with a] spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵ Also, the one having seen [these things] has testified, and his testimony is true. And he knew that he speaks the truth in order that you might believe as well. ³⁶ For these things happened in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, “Not one of his bones will be broken”. ³⁷ And again another Scripture says, “they will look into the one they have pierced”.

Knowing that Jesus was dead, a soldier lanced his side with a spear (19:34). A mixture of blood and water issued forth as further testimony that Jesus had died.

On three occasions in the passion narrative, the fourth evangelist connects Jesus’ death with the Jewish commemoration of the Feast of the Passover by having Jesus’ death at the same time as slaughter of the Passover lambs (19:14, 31, 42). On the first Passover, hyssop was used to daub the lamb’s blood on the lintel and doorposts on the homes of those who ate the Passover meal (Exodus 12:22). Earlier in the Gospel, John the Baptist had identified Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29).

However, as discussed in Chapter Three, the Passover lamb of the Old Covenant was not a sacrifice for sin, rather, it was a symbol of God’s salvation. As a symbol of God’s rescue of his people from slavery (salvation), the Passover lamb demonstrated metaphoric and double meaning ironies. God had rescued the nation from slavery by “passing over” the homes where a lamb’s blood was painted on the door frame. In the Fourth Gospel, the timing of the death of Jesus with the killing of the Passover lambs

makes Jesus as the New Covenant Passover lamb and demonstrates ironies of metaphor and double meaning.

The fourth evangelist sees that there is atonement in the death of Jesus.⁶⁴⁰ However, there is only a small amount of material concerning sacrifice in the Fourth Gospel (6:53; 15:13). Additionally, the Scriptures do not teach that blood used in sacrifices has inherent significance. More than this, there is no correlation made between the sacrificial blood and the suffering of the victim from which it came. Rather, Forsyth claims that the value of the sacrificial blood was because God desired it (Leviticus 17:11).⁶⁴¹ To clarify, the fourth evangelist does *not* make a connection between atonement and the blood and water that flowed from Jesus. Rather, the atonement happens because Jesus draws people to himself through his death (12:32). Believers become “at one” with God through the death of God’s Son. This is an ironic reversal. Nevertheless, water in the Fourth Gospel is symbolic of the Holy Spirit (7:37-39) and has cleansing value (13:4-10; 15:3). For the fourth evangelist, the death of Jesus (19:30) is linked to the atonement as an ironic metaphor, promising that believers will be “at one” with God and that they will be cleansed by the Holy Spirit.

⁶⁴⁰ “Atonement” is not a word used in the Fourth Gospel. Nonetheless, the concept is Johannine. Believers become at one with God through Jesus’ death (12:32).

⁶⁴¹ Forsyth, *The Cruciality of the Cross*, 178-183.

19:38-42

^{19:38} But after these things, Joseph from Arimathea having been secretive [about] being a disciple of Jesus because of his fear of *hoi Ioudaioi*, asked Pilate in order that he might lift up the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave permission, so he went and lifted up his body. ³⁹ But even Nicodemus, the one who had first come to Jesus at night, went carrying a mixture of myrrh and aloes [totalling] a hundred litres. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus and they wrapped it in linen strips with the aromatic spices according to Jewish custom. ⁴¹ But, at the place where [Jesus] was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden there was a new grave in which no [body] had ever been placed. ⁴² So, because [it was] the Jewish [Day of] Preparation and the grave [was] nearby, they placed Jesus [in it].

In this section we find the narrative of the two men who took care of Jesus' body after the crucifixion. The identified ironies are: hyperbole, metaphor and double meaning.

I offer my translation of 19:38-40 here:

^{19:38} But after these things, Joseph from Arimathea having been secretive [about] being a disciple of Jesus because of his fear of *hoi Ioudaioi*, asked Pilate in order that he might lift up the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave permission, so he went and lifted up his body. ³⁹ But even Nicodemus, the one who had first come to Jesus at night, went carrying a mixture of myrrh and aloes [totalling] a hundred litres. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus and they wrapped it in linen strips with the aromatic spices according to Jewish custom.

The mention of Joseph from Arimathea is in the earliest traditions (see Mark 14:42-46; Matthew 27:57-60; Luke 23:50-54). Brown claims that the Johannine embellishments

^{19:38} Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἠρώτησεν τὸν Πιλαῶτον Ἰωσήφ [ὁ] ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας, ὃν μαθητῆς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ κεκρυμμένος δὲ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἵνα ἄρῃ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ· καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν ὁ Πιλαῶτος. ἦλθεν οὖν καὶ ἦρεν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ. ³⁹ ἦλθεν δὲ καὶ Νικόδημος, ὁ ἐλθὼν πρὸς αὐτὸν νυκτὸς τὸ πρῶτον, φέρων μίγμα σμύρνης καὶ ἀλόης ὡς λίτρας ἑκατόν. ⁴⁰ ἔλαβον οὖν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸ ὀθονίοις μετὰ τῶν ἀρωμάτων, καθὼς ἔθος ἐστὶν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἐνταφιάζειν. ⁴¹ ἦν δὲ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη κήπος, καὶ ἐν τῷ κήπῳ μνημεῖον καινὸν ἐν ᾧ οὐδέπω οὐδεὶς ἦν τεθειμένος. ⁴² ἐκεῖ οὖν διὰ τὴν παρασκευὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἦν τὸ μνημεῖον, ἔθηκαν τὸν Ἰησοῦν.

were not part of the earliest gospel traditions, as they are not consistent with the more probable hasty burial of Jesus in the Synoptic accounts.⁶⁴² This makes the fourth evangelist's narrative all the more interesting for rhetorical analysis.⁶⁴³

In 19:39, we find the words “μίγμα σμύρνης καὶ ἀλόης ὡς λίτρας ἑκατόν = a mixture of myrrh and aloes [totalling] a hundred litres”. This is a huge amount of aromatic spices. The significance of putting these unguents on Jesus' body cannot be overstated. My translation opts for “litres” which is an Anglicised translation of λίτρας. According to Bauer and others, a λίτρα was equivalent to twelve ounces or 327.45 grams or about a third of a litre.⁶⁴⁴

The implied reader remembers the incident in 12:1-3 after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. His sister, Mary, took a “λίτραν = a litre” of very expensive nard ointment and spread it on the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair. With this act of devotion, Mary had anointed Jesus, and symbolically acknowledged him as Messiah.⁶⁴⁵ Jesus affirmed her action of anointing him, and added that she was preparing him for his burial (12:8). This is a non-ironic analepsis with a flash back to 12:1-3. So here in 19:39-40, the narrative turns to Joseph from Arimathea and Nicodemus. They are two of Jesus' secret disciples who bring this huge amount of very expensive unguent. With it, they also prepare Jesus for burial. Joseph's actions are a non-ironic analepsis to Mary's anointing of Jesus in 12:1-3.

However, the exact amount of the compound Joseph used is only recorded in the Johannine account. Nevertheless, the ancient measure is not the issue here. Rather, the significance must be in the multiple of a hundred times the quantity Mary used. She had only used one λίτρα to anoint Jesus' feet. When the reader considers the multiplier of a hundred times more than Mary offered, we see the fourth evangelist's emphasis on anointing. This huge quantity of aromatic unguent was therefore making a statement

⁶⁴² Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (2 vols), 2:1239-1241.

⁶⁴³ This is the focus of my translation from UBS4.

⁶⁴⁴ Bauer, et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (2nd edn), 475.

⁶⁴⁵ “Messiah” is the Hebrew term for the Greek term “Christos” which means “Anointed One”.

about the importance of Jesus' anointing. This would also provide further revelation concerning the true identity of Jesus: that he is Messiah. If this approach is correct, the fourth evangelist's purpose is to show that even secret disciples may identify Jesus as Messiah.⁶⁴⁶ Therefore, the use of "a hundred" as a multiplier (19:39-40) is an example of ironic hyperbole.

Atonement in the Bible is the bringing together the whole of humanity into one family, and the vicarious suffering of one person for another.⁶⁴⁷ Compared with the Synoptics and Paul we see a different side to the theology of atonement in the Fourth Gospel. Here it has to do with God's eternal plan to unite all people with Jesus (17:6-12), the eternal covenant (6:37-40; 14:16-21) and Jesus' prediction to lay down his life (10:11-18). There are some glimpses of it. Jesus cleanses them from sin (15:3). There is a flow of blood and water from Jesus' side as it is lanced (19:34). After Jesus fed the five thousand, Jesus spoke to those who followed him about the importance of eating his flesh and drinking his blood. (6:53-57). John the Baptist identified Jesus as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29, 36).

My translation of 19: 41-42 follows:

^{19:41} But, at the place where [Jesus] was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden there was a new grave in which no [body] had ever been placed. ⁴² So, because [it was] the Jewish [Day of] Preparation and the grave [was] nearby, they placed Jesus [in it].

The *inclusio* of a garden, was first mentioned at the beginning of the Johannine passion narrative in 18:1, and occurs again here in 19:41. I comment on this feature again at 20:15. This repetition identifies the unity of the passage.

In 19:42, the fourth evangelist reminds the implied reader for the third time (see 19:14; 19:31) that it was the day of preparation for the Jewish Passover. His emphasis on what is happening is achieved by repetition. As the day draws to a close, the devout *Ioudaioi* had slaughtered their lambs and were in readiness to celebrate the rescue of God's

⁶⁴⁶ This is the stated purpose of the Gospel (20:31).

⁶⁴⁷ Reid, "Atone, Atonement," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (ed. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 1:353.

people from slavery. The implied reader makes the symbolic correlation between the slaughtered Passover lambs and the Lamb of God whose blood flowed at the cross to bring salvation. In this there are ironies of metaphor and double meaning.

The Resurrection Narrative

Until now, the Fourth Gospel passion narrative has been the story of Jesus suffering the brutality of his arrest and trial. It climaxes in his exaltation and glorification with a cross as his throne. As Jesus dies, he declares that the work he has come to do is accomplished (19:30). As well, Jesus' death has been verified by the expert Roman executioners who lanced his side. Correlated with this is the symbolic significance of the blood and water that flowed from his side. This provides cleansing (13:1-10), the living water (4:10; 7:37-38) and the Holy Spirit (7:39) for those who believe into him. Everything Jesus set out to do is now achieved (19:30). The scene of John 20 is of the garden tomb where Jesus' corpse had been laid. It is now the scene of awe and hope. The grief and sadness of the previous days now give way to the unexpected turn of events on the first day of the week.

20:1-10:

^{20:1} But early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene comes into the grave-yard and sees the stone which had been lifted away from the tomb. ² Then she runs and comes to Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and she says to them, "They lifted up the master from the tomb and we do not know where they have placed him". ³ Then Peter and the other disciple went out and they were coming to the tomb. ⁴ Now both were running together, and the other disciple was running faster, ahead of Peter, and arrived at the tomb first.

^{20:1} Τῇ δὲ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων Μαρία ἢ Μαγδαληνὴ ἔρχεται πρῶτ' σκοτίας ἔτι οὔσης εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον καὶ βλέπει τὸν λίθον ἠρμένον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου. ² τρέχει οὖν καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς Σίμωνα Πέτρον καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἄλλον μαθητὴν ὃν ἐφίλει ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ἔβρασαν τὸν κύριον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου καὶ οὐκ οἶδαμεν ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν. ³ Ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Πέτρος καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητὴς καὶ ἤρχοντο εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον. ⁴ ἔτρεχον δὲ οἱ δύο ὁμοῦ· καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητὴς προέδραμεν τάχιον τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ ἦλθεν πρῶτος εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον,

⁵ Having stooped down, he sees the linen wrappings lying there, however, he did not enter. ⁶ Then also Simon Peter comes following him, and he entered into the tomb. He sees the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the headpiece that had been on Jesus' head [which was] not lying with the other linen wrappings, but it was in a separate place, still wrapped up.

⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, went in, and he saw and believed. ⁹ For they had not yet [fully] known the Scripture that it was necessary for him to rise from death. ¹⁰ Then again the disciples went [back to the others].

In these ten verses, the issues are: (i) the darkness which symbolises the absence of Jesus, (ii) the continued withheld identity of the beloved disciple, (iii) a cameo of the beloved disciple's belief, and (iv) the resolution of the abuse Jesus suffered which is demonstrated in the resurrection. This section has ironies of metaphor, dualism, persistent unstable rhetoric of reversal, an example to the Johannine community, and perplexing irony of reversal.

I offer my translation of 20:1-2:

^{20:1} But early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene comes into the grave-yard and sees the stone which had been lifted away from the tomb. ² Then she runs and comes to Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and she says to them, "They lifted up the master from the tomb and we do not know where they have placed him".

In 20:1, there is no mention of the "third day" (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Rather, in alignment with the Synoptic tradition (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1), the fourth evangelist announces that the resurrection took place on "the first day". When Mary came to the grave-yard garden, it was "still dark" (20:1). These

⁵ καὶ παρακύψας βλέπει κείμενα τὰ ὀθόνια, οὐ μέντοι εἰσῆλθεν. ⁶ ἔρχεται οὖν καὶ Σίμων Πέτρος ἀκολουθῶν αὐτῷ καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον, καὶ θεωρεῖ τὰ ὀθόνια κείμενα, ⁷ καὶ τὸ σουδάριον, ὃ ἦν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ, οὐ μετὰ τῶν ὀθονίων κείμενον ἀλλὰ χωρὶς ἐντετυλιγμένον εἰς ἓνα τόπον.

⁸ τότε οὖν εἰσῆλθεν καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητῆς ὁ ἐλθὼν πρῶτος εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐπίστευσεν. ⁹ οὐδέπω γὰρ ᾔδεισαν τὴν γραφὴν ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι. ¹⁰ ἀπῆλθον οὖν πάλιν πρὸς αὐτοὺς οἱ μαθηταί.

words remind the reader of two instances in the Gospel. The first was when Nicodemus had come to visit Jesus by night (3:2). Metaphorically, he had stepped out of the darkness into the light of Jesus' presence. The second instance was when Judas Iscariot went outside during the last meal Jesus shared with the twelve. He was on his way to betray Jesus. Judas left the light of the presence of Jesus, "and it was night" (13:30). Furthermore, Jesus had promised his disciples, "I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in the dark, but shall have the light of life" (8:12). According to the implied reader, this dualistic theme of light and darkness correlates with walking closely with Jesus on one hand, and darkness correlates with being absent from him. So when Mary comes to the grave-yard garden in the dark, the implied reader is awakened to the possibility that Jesus is no longer present. This is an example of both ironic metaphor and dualism.

In 20:2 the fourth evangelist now discloses that "the other disciple" and "the beloved disciple" are the same person.⁶⁴⁸ However, despite this revelation, the continued non-disclosure of the identity of this Jesus-follower remains a mystery (1:35-40; 13:23-25; 18:15-16; 19:26-27, 35; 20:2-8; 21:2, 20-24). This victimises the reader further, with persistent unstable rhetoric.

Here, I offer my translation of 20:3-6a:

^{20:3} Then Peter and the other disciple went out and they were coming to the tomb. ⁴ Now both were running together, and the other disciple was running faster, ahead of Peter, and arrived at the tomb first. ⁵ Having stooped down, he sees the linen wrappings lying there, however, he did not enter. ⁶ Then also Simon Peter comes following him, and he entered into the tomb.

Jesus' body is no longer in the tomb. Even though the sun has not risen, the Lord has risen. Yet, in the pre-dawn light, Mary was able to see that the stone had been moved, lifted up and away from the entrance it had once covered. Furthermore, on closer inspection, she discovers that the corpse of Jesus has gone (20:1-2). The Fourth Gospel account records that Mary ran and brought the news to Peter and the beloved disciple (20:2). They came running to the tomb. The beloved disciple arrived first, yet stayed outside. Peter went straight in (20:6). The one who is light of the world is risen, while the sun had not. This demonstrates ironic reversal.

⁶⁴⁸ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 521.

This is my translation of 20:6b-10:

^{20:6b} He sees the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the headpiece that had been on Jesus' head [which was] not lying with the other linen wrappings, but it was in a separate place, still wrapped up. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, went in, and he saw and believed. ⁹ For they had not yet [fully] known the Scripture that it was necessary for him to rise from death. ¹⁰ Then again the disciples went [back to the others].

It appears that the grave clothes were still intact. The linen wrappings and the headpiece were an indication that Jesus' corpse was not stolen. For the beloved disciple they are a sign; he sees the grave clothes and believes. We are not certain what he believed. We may presume that it was that Jesus had come to life as he had promised. This is because the beloved disciple is portrayed as the model for faith in the Johannine community. As Culpepper says, "[The beloved disciple] is the only character in the New Testament who believes in the resurrection merely because of the physical evidence of the tomb".⁶⁴⁹

With the resurrection comes a resolution to the unstable irony which had commenced at the beginning of the passion narrative. Jesus as the protagonist was abused and tortured and was finally killed. This abuse eventually came to an end. The resurrection changed the narrative from tragedy into one of unexpected joy. The protagonist is no longer the victim. The unstable irony which began with the abuse he suffered is now transformed into perplexing irony of reversal. This then is also an ironic analepsis to the wrappings around Lazarus' corpse that had to be undone so that he could be free to live a life raised from death (11:44).

⁶⁴⁹ Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 240.

20:11-18

¹¹ But Mary stayed outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she stooped down into the tomb, ¹² and she watches two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus was lying, one nearer the head and one nearer the feet. ¹³ And they say to her, “Woman, why are you crying?” She says to them, “they lifted up my master and I do not know where they have placed him. ¹⁴ When she had said these things, she turned around and looks at Jesus, but she did not know that it is Jesus.

¹⁵ Jesus says to her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?” Supposing that he is the garden-keeper, she says to him, “Sir, if you took him, tell me where you placed him and I will lift him up”. ¹⁶ Jesus says to her, “Mary”. She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni” (which means teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus says to her, “Stop clinging to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father and my God and your God’”. ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene comes giving the message to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”, and [telling] the things he said to her.

In these eight verses the fourth evangelist tells the story of Mary Magdalene’s experience of the resurrection. Mary is crying. Initially, she thinks the corpse has been removed by persons unknown and does not realise that Jesus has risen from the dead. The account of the resurrection demonstrates how the evangelist shapes the narrative.

¹¹ Μαρία δὲ εἰστήκει πρὸς τῷ μνημείῳ ἔξω κλαίουσα. ὡς οὖν ἔκλαιεν, παρέκυψεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον ¹² καὶ θεωρεῖ δύο ἀγγέλους ἐν λευκοῖς καθεζομένους, ἓνα πρὸς τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἓνα πρὸς τοῖς ποσίν, ὅπου ἔκειτο τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. ¹³ καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῇ ἐκεῖνοι, Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; λέγει αὐτοῖς ὅτι Ἔβρα ἦραν τὸν κύριόν μου, καὶ οὐκ οἶδα ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν. ¹⁴ ταῦτα εἰποῦσα ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ θεωρεῖ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐστῶτα καὶ οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν.

¹⁵ λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς, Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; τίνα ζητεῖς; ἐκείνη δοκοῦσα ὅτι ὁ κηπουρός ἐστίν λέγει αὐτῷ, Κύριε, εἰ σὺ ἐβάστασας αὐτόν, εἰπέ μοι ποῦ ἔθηκες αὐτόν, καὶ γὰρ αὐτόν ἀρῶ. ¹⁶ λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς, Μαριάμ. στραφεῖσα ἐκείνη λέγει αὐτῷ Ἑβραϊστί, Ραββουνι (ὃ λέγεται Διδάσκαλε). ¹⁷ λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς, Μὴ μου ἄπτου, οὐπω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα· πορεύου δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ εἰπέ αὐτοῖς, Ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ θεόν μου καὶ θεὸν ὑμῶν. ¹⁸ ἔρχεται Μαριάμ ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ ἀγγέλλουσα τοῖς μαθηταῖς ὅτι Ἐώρακα τὸν κύριον, καὶ ταῦτα εἶπεν αὐτῇ.

This section contains a mixture of rhetoric and irony. The rhetoric includes: non-ironic repetition, analepsis and double drama. There are also examples of reversal irony.

I offer my translation of 20:11-13:

^{20:11} But Mary stayed outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she stooped down into the tomb, ¹² and she watches two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus was lying, one nearer the head and one nearer the feet. ¹³ And they say to her, “Woman, why are you crying?” She says to them, “They lifted up my master and I do not know where they have placed him.

As Mary was unable to see what the narrator discloses to the reader, she does not recognize Jesus straight away. She seeks a dead Jesus rather than the living Jesus, and she weeps over a dead Jesus who is actually alive, demonstrating two ironic reversals. Both of these ironic reversals show that Mary misunderstood the situation. She thought Jesus was still dead. Furthermore, there are two non-ironic analepses: At Jesus’ voice, she recognizes him (which is a flash back to 10:27). Jesus must depart so he can send his Spirit (which is a flash back to 13:1; 16:7). The fourth evangelist uses repetition of the questions to her to reinforce the importance of the event (the absence of Jesus’ body from the tomb). In this section Mary becomes the first to witness the risen Jesus and becomes the bearer of the message of the resurrection. The final paragraph extols Mary who has become the example of faith for the Johannine community. This reinforces the double layered drama of the Fourth Gospel.⁶⁵⁰

Twice Mary is asked why she is crying. First, it is the angels who ask her (20:13). Secondly, as she turns around, the risen Jesus asks her the same question (20:15). The repetition reinforces to the Christian community the importance of the news of the risen Jesus. It is wonderful and joyous. There is really no reason for her to be sad any longer.

⁶⁵⁰ I deal with this feature in more detail in Chapter Eight.

In the Synoptic accounts of the resurrection, the angels appear much more active. In Matthew, there is only one angel (whose appearance is as lightning and whose clothing is as snow) who descends from heaven. He rolls back the stone, causes dread in the guards, brings comfort to the women, announces the resurrection and directs the women to go to Galilee (Matthew 28:2-7). In Mark, there is a young man (dressed in white) who sits on the right side. He brings comfort to the women, announces the resurrection and commissions the women to tell the disciples (Mark 16:5-7). In Luke, there are two men (in dazzling clothing) who stand beside the women from Galilee. They question the women (who seem untroubled by their presence) concerning their futile search for Jesus' body, announce the resurrection,⁶⁵¹ and instruct them concerning Jesus' prediction that he would rise (Luke 24:4-7).

In the Fourth Gospel, there are two angels (in white, sitting inside the tomb) who appear only to Mary Magdalene after the two disciples have left the grave-yard garden and have gone back, presumably to be with the others (20:10-11). The only work they do, as recorded by the fourth evangelist, is in bringing comfort to Mary in her sadness. While the Synoptics focus on the importance of the revelation that Jesus is risen, the fourth evangelist focusses on how the Christian community is to respond to that revelation. This shift in emphasis from the Synoptic accounts to the Fourth Gospel is further evidence that the evangelist is addressing the needs of the Johannine community as part of the double layered drama.

This is my translation of 20:14-15:

^{20:14} When she had said these things, she turned around and looks at Jesus, but she did not know that it is Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus says to her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

⁶⁵¹ At this point, the UBS4 apparatus indicates that the text is fairly certain with strong papyri and uncial witnesses. Although, several fifth century witnesses (an uncial, as well as seven early Latin manuscripts and versions) omit the declaration of the resurrection altogether. Even if the omission was original, the good news of the resurrection is still strongly implied in the words of the messengers.

Who are you looking for?" Supposing that he is the garden-keeper, she says to him, "Sir, if you took him, tell me where you placed him and I will lift him up".

After speaking with the angels, Mary turns around and sees what she assumes is the garden-keeper. The "author deliberately shows us what Mary cannot see and plays our knowledge against her ignorance".⁶⁵² Jesus must know whom she is looking for, yet asks her. She responds, "Sir, if you took him, tell me where you placed him and I will lift him up" (20:15). Because of misunderstanding of Jesus' real identity, Mary seeks a dead Jesus from the living Jesus!⁶⁵³ Jesus' body is not missing as she presumed.⁶⁵⁴ He is risen! But more than this, is the use of the vocative "Κύριε" which is correctly translated as "Sir" as Mary is unaware she talking to the risen Jesus. The implied reader knows that he is the "Lord", the other meaning of Κύριε.⁶⁵⁵ These are ironies of misunderstanding and reversal.

At the beginning of this episode, Mary cannot see because of the darkness and her grief-stricken tears. She is crying over a dead Jesus who is now actually alive and standing before her, asking why she is crying (20:15).⁶⁵⁶ This is ironic reversal.

Here is my translation of 20:16-18:

¹⁶ Jesus says to her, "Mary". She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni" (which means teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus says to her, "Stop clinging to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father and my God and your God'". ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene comes giving the message to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord", and [telling] the things he said to her.

⁶⁵² Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 105.

⁶⁵³ See Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 197. See also Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 104.

⁶⁵⁴ See Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 412.

⁶⁵⁵ Steyn, "Misunderstanding, Irony and Mistaken Identity in References to Jesus as Κύριος in John's Gospel," in *Miracles and Imagery in Luke and John: Festschrift Ulrich Busse* (ed. Verheyden; Louvain: Peeters, 2008), 158.

⁶⁵⁶ See Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 104.

Now, in 20:16, after encountering the risen Jesus, she becomes the first eyewitness of the resurrected Christ. She hears and recognizes the voice of Jesus as he calls her by name. The implied reader remembers the words of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, who says, “My sheep continue to listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (10:27).

Jesus says to her, “Stop clinging to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father and my God and your God’” (20:17). The important issue here is not that Mary was trying to hang on to Jesus, nor is it about the comparison between what she was prevented from doing (touch Jesus) and Thomas was later encouraged to do. Rather, the fourth evangelist is reiterating the Father’s plan for Jesus as set out already in 13:1. Jesus must depart from this world so that he can send his Spirit (7:39; 16:7; 20:19).⁶⁵⁷ This is a non-ironic analepsis.

Mary is the first person to see the Lord, who once was dead and is now alive. In this she becomes the model believer as a confessing witness. As Brown says,

Mary Magdalene could serve as an example to Christians of the Johannine community at the end of the first century whose contact with the risen Jesus is through the Paraclete who declares to them what he has received from Jesus (16:14).⁶⁵⁸

More than this, in 20:17, Mary is sent to the male disciples to tell them of the risen Lord, and becomes the “apostle to the apostles”.⁶⁵⁹ This is indeed a reversal, as in the first century the testimony of males was more acceptable than that of females. However, the fourth evangelist affirms the status of women to be apostles. This is ironic reversal and a non-ironic reference to the part Mary would play in the Johannine community as part of the double layered drama.

⁶⁵⁷ See Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*, 2:1011-1012.

⁶⁵⁸ Brown, *The Gospel According to John (2 vols)*, 2:1010.

⁶⁵⁹ Kanagaraj, *John : a new covenant commentary*, 196-198.

20:19-23

¹⁹ Then when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, the disciples were behind tightly closed doors for fear of the *Ioudaioi*; Jesus came and stood in their midst and says to them, “peace be with you”. ²⁰ Having said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced having seen the Lord. ²¹ Then Jesus said to them again, “peace be with you; just as the Father has sent me, I am also sending you”. ²² And having said this, he blew [on them] and says to them, “take the Holy Spirit; ²³ whomever you forgive, they stand forgiven; from whomever you withhold forgiveness, they stand with forgiveness withheld.

In these five verses, we examine the text describing the appearance of Jesus to his disciples on the first evening. The issues discussed here include the following: (i) There are the crippling effects that happen when the disciples fear *hoi Ioudaioi*. (ii) There is the repetition of the “Shalom” to indicate significant words and action to follow. (iii) The commissioning of the disciples in the Fourth Gospel is the epitome of the various commissions of the four different evangelists. (iv) The Johannine giving of the Spirit provides the occasion for rhetorical flash-backs (1:29; 7:39). And, (v) There is the imparting of God’s authority to the disciples to forgive and retain sins. The irony and rhetoric in these five verses include: non-ironic analepses, repetition of Jesus’ words, ironic reversal and paradoxical unstable irony.

Here is my translation of 20:19-21:

¹⁹ Then when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, the disciples were behind tightly closed doors for fear of the *Ioudaioi*; Jesus came and stood in their midst and says to them, “peace be with you”. ²⁰ Having said this, he showed

¹⁹ Ούσης οὖν ὀψίας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τῇ μιᾷ σαββάτων καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Εἰρήνῃ ὑμῖν. ²⁰ καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῖς. ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν κύριον. ²¹ εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς [ὁ Ἰησοῦς] πάλιν, Εἰρήνῃ ὑμῖν· καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέν με ὁ πατήρ, καὶ γὰρ πέμπω ὑμᾶς. ²² καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησεν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον. ²³ ἂν τινῶν ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἀφένονται αὐτοῖς, ἂν τινῶν κρατῆτε κεκράτηνται.

them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced having seen the Lord.²¹ Then Jesus said to them again, “peace be with you; just as the Father has sent me, I am also sending you”.

In 20:19 and following, the disciples are frightened and together. They have shut their doors tightly because they are afraid that what *hoi Ioudaioi* did to Jesus, they will do to them too. Fear of *hoi Ioudaioi* is a minor theme in the Gospel. This one issue has prevented people from declaring their allegiance to and following Jesus. It happened at the feast of Tabernacles that some were too intimidated by *hoi Ioudaioi*. (7:13); the parents of the man born blind did not want to be ejected from the synagogue (9:22); the authorities would not confess their allegiance to Jesus because they were afraid of the Pharisees (12:42). It was fear that hindered Joseph from Arimathea from becoming an open rather than a secret disciple (19:38). The implied reader is reminded of the disciples’ fear in these four instances in the Fourth Gospel. They become flash-backs to when fear motivated their actions. These are non-ironic analepses. Now here, in the secure room, the disciples are grouped together finding safety (20:19).

The doors are no barrier to the risen Jesus who comes and stands in the midst (*μέσος*) of them. The fourth evangelist uses this term again. The implied reader remembers how it signified the centrality of the cross in Johannine theology (19:18). Now in 20:19, *μέσος* highlights the importance and centrality of the resurrection for the Johannine community and for all believers. The risen Jesus appears to the disciples and stands in their midst because he is the Life (11:25-26; 14:6), and to know him is to experience eternal life (5:24; 10:10). The flash-back of *μέσος* to the cross is a non-ironic analepsis and it demonstrates ironies of double meaning and metaphor.

He greets them with “Shalom!” (20:19), and now stands before them very much alive. He has accomplished the work the Father gave him to do (19:30). He shows them the wounds on his hands and side, proving that he is the same Jesus who was crucified and

died.⁶⁶⁰ They are filled with joy (20:20; see Psalm 16:11). For a second time he says “Shalom!” (20:21). The repetition serves to make the reader aware of the significance of what Jesus is about to say and do.

What follows (20:21) is the Johannine commission, that functions like an epitome of the four commissions provided by each Gospel writer. In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus commissions them to go and make disciples of all the nations and he promises his abiding presence. In Mark, the disciples are commissioned to preach the good news to the whole creation and Jesus promises that signs will accompany those who believe (Mark 16:16-17). Luke’s commission is in Acts 1:8 where Jesus calls his disciples to be confessing witnesses to him to the ends of the earth as they are empowered by the Holy Spirit. The commission in the Fourth Gospel is for Jesus’ disciples to be like him, to act like him and to speak like him. As Jesus is to the Father, so we are to be to him. He says to them, “just as the Father has sent me, I am also sending you” (20:21c). Pfitzner puts it succinctly, “Jesus has been God’s agent; now they are to be his”.⁶⁶¹ This is ironic reversal.

My translation of 20:22-23 follows:

²² And having said this, he blew [on them] and says to them, “take the Holy Spirit;
²³ whomever you forgive, they stand forgiven; from whomever you withhold forgiveness, they stand with forgiveness withheld.

The next moment (20:22) is the Johannine giving of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁶² It is the occasion John the Baptist had prophesied about when he said: ““On whomever you see the Spirit descending and abiding on him, this is the one baptizing in the Holy Spirit’. And I have seen and I have testified that this is the Son of God” (1:33b-34). Jesus “blew [on them] and says to them, ‘take the Holy Spirit’”(20:22). Believers need the empowering of the Παράκλητος (= Advocate, [Spirit] 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) to be effective in their

⁶⁶⁰ See Newbigin, *The Light Has Come: an exposition of the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 267.

⁶⁶¹ Pfitzner, *The Gospel According to John*, 86.

⁶⁶² See Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 535.

testimony (15:26-27). This moment refers back to 7:39, where the narrator says, “But he said this concerning the Spirit whom those who believed into him were about to receive, for the Spirit had not yet been sent, because Jesus was not yet glorified”. The cross is the place of Jesus’ glorification, and now, triumphant over the grave, he comes and breathes on them the breath of God to equip them for what lies ahead. The Spirit (Πνεῦμα) and the Word (Λόγος) bring life (Ezekiel 37:9-10). Furthermore, it is the fulfilment of Jesus’ promise to provide the Παράκλητος who will lead believers into all truth (16:13). Moreover, in contrast to Luke’s theology, the fourth evangelist links resurrection, ascension and the baptism in the Spirit. There are two prior passages of which the implied reader is aware: John the Baptist’s prediction that Jesus will baptize believers with the Holy Spirit (1:33); and the narrator’s comment that the Spirit will be given after Jesus is glorified (7:39).

In 20:23, Jesus gives his disciples the authority of God. The fourth evangelist emphasizes that Jesus imparts his authority to his disciples.⁶⁶³ Jesus tells his disciples that they are to be agents of his forgiveness. He passes on to them his mission and authority.⁶⁶⁴ This is central to the mission of Jesus.⁶⁶⁵ As John the Baptist foretold, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29). However, the authority goes beyond forgiveness. There are dire consequences for retaining sins. If a disciple chooses not to forgive someone, their sins remain unforgiven. These words require deeper discussion, that is outside the scope of this thesis. However, it is the Christian community’s great responsibility to shine the light of God’s presence into a world of darkness and to allow the Spirit to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (16:8-11).⁶⁶⁶ Some will believe into Jesus. However, some will never choose to become a Jesus follower, and this action will thwart the desire of God: that everyone be saved. This is the foundational, persistent, paradoxical unstable irony.

⁶⁶³ See Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John (3 vols)*, 3:324.

⁶⁶⁴ See Coloe, *God Dwells With Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 216-217.

⁶⁶⁵ See Newbigin, *The Light Has Come: an exposition of the Fourth Gospel*, 267.

⁶⁶⁶ See Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 536.

20:24-29

²⁴ But Thomas, who was called “twin”, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ Then the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord”. But he said to them, “Unless I might see in his hands the nail marks, and I might thrust my finger into the nail marks, and I might thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe”.

²⁶ A week later, his disciples were again inside with tightly closed doors, and Thomas was with them. There comes Jesus and he stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you”. ²⁷ Then he says to Thomas, “Put your finger here and gaze at my hands, and thrust your hand into my side, and stop your state of unbelief, but be one who trusts. ²⁸ Thomas answered and said to him, “My Lord and my God”. ²⁹ Jesus says to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? How blessed are those who have believed without having seen”.

The themes addressed in this section include the narrative of the resurrection appearance of Jesus to Thomas and a chiasmic structure associated with the narrative. The ironies and rhetoric demonstrated here include the unstable irony of reversal and the subsequent perplexing irony as it is resolved, and there are further ironies of analepsis, paradox and reversal. The rhetoric is demonstrated in the chiasm.

I offer my translation of 20:24-26a:

²⁴ But Thomas, who was called “twin”, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ Then the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord”. But he said to them, “Unless I might see in his hands the nail marks, and I might thrust my finger into the nail marks, and I might thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe”. ²⁶ A week later, his disciples were again inside with tightly closed doors, and Thomas was with them.

²⁴ Θωμᾶς δὲ εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ’ αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς. ²⁵ ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί, Ἐωράκαμεν τὸν κύριον. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω μου τὴν χεῖρα εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω.

²⁶ Καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέρας ὀκτῶ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ’ αὐτῶν. ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν, Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. ²⁷ εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾶ, Φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός. ²⁸ ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου. ²⁹ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ὅτι ἐώρακάς με πεπίστευκας; μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες.

A week had transpired since the resurrection. Thomas was absent when Jesus had appeared to the others. He had said to them that he could not believe unless he could put his finger into the nail-scarred hands, and his hand into the wound in Jesus' side. Jesus returns to the place where the disciples are. This time, Thomas is there.

We come to the encounter between Thomas and the risen Jesus. I offer my translation of 20:26b-29 here:

^{20:26b} There comes Jesus and he stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you".
²⁷ Then he says to Thomas, "Put your finger here and gaze at my hands, and thrust your hand into my side, and stop your state of unbelief, but be one who trusts."²⁸
Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God".²⁹ Jesus says to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? How blessed are those who have believed without having seen".

Thomas has been the focus of attention. He makes his point, implying that, "if only I had been there, I would have been able to see Jesus with my own eyes, I could have touched him, and seen the wounds, and I would have believed like the others". He deeply regretted his absence when Jesus had come. He had an unmet desire. Thomas expressed his doubt, and in doing so he is experiencing unstable irony of reversal. That is, the irony remains unresolved until Jesus comes back and reveals himself to the disciples again. All his doubts and questions are answered in that single experience of encountering the risen Jesus. It changes everything for him. For our analysis, he is no longer a victim. The unstable irony which was brought about by his unmet desire is now resolved. The result is perplexing irony of reversal.

The implied reader remembers the evangelist saying back in 1:18, "No one has ever seen God". There is also a non-ironic intertextual analepsis which flashes back to Exodus 33:18-20. Moses wants to see God's glory, but he is prevented, as no one can look on God and live. Intertextuality reinforces the drama in the resurrection appearance as anticipation rises for the implied reader with the presence of both the "doubting Thomas" and the risen Jesus. It is in the risen Jesus that Thomas encounters the living God!

So, in 20:28, when Thomas confesses these words to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!", there is an incongruent twist. This irony becomes more apparent in Jesus' reply (20:29): "have you believed because you have seen me? How blessed are those who have believed without having seen". The evangelist is clear that God is invisible, yet Thomas

declares he has seen God. The risen Jesus does not contradict Thomas' claim, but rather affirms that Thomas has seen God and believed. This then, demonstrates two ironies. First there is the ironic analepsis to 1:18, and secondly, there is the occasion where Thomas sees God, whom the fourth evangelist claims is invisible. This is ironic paradox.

The chiasm below in Table 7, draws the implied reader's attention to the profound confession of Thomas. This is an example of stable rhetoric. Furthermore, Thomas (or Didymus), believes because he sees the evidence of the nail marks in the hands and the lance wound in the side of the risen Jesus. However, the unnamed disciple believes without having seen the risen Jesus. This is irony of reversal.

TABLE 7: CHIASM OF 20:25-29: JESUS APPEARS TO THOMAS

A	20:25a The believing ones have seen the Lord.
	B 20:25b-27 Thomas' unbelief: I want to see in order to believe.
	C 20:28 Thomas' confession: "My Lord and my God."
	B1 20:29a Thomas is questioned: "do you believe because you see?"
A1	20:29b Not-seeing ones will be blessed if they have believed the Lord.

20:30-31

³⁰ Indeed then, Jesus worked many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these things have been written in order that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you might have life in his name.

³⁰ Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν [αὐτοῦ], ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ. ³¹ ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύ[σ]ητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

These two verses mark the early ending of the Fourth Gospel. In 20:30 the fourth evangelist refers to "many other signs" that Jesus performed. There are only seven signs in the Fourth Gospel. This tally is extraordinarily small in comparison with the Synoptic description of Jesus' miracles. This smaller number of signs has not diminished

scholarship on the Fourth Gospel in the least. Rather, there has been much theological discussion on the value of the signs in this Gospel.

Here in 20:30-31 the fourth evangelist states his overt purpose in writing this Gospel: it is so people may believe that Jesus is the Christ / Messiah (= God's Anointed One), and that by believing they may have life in his name. We see a glimpse of the double-layered drama where the fourth evangelist addresses the Johannine community concerning his portrait of Jesus. It is the evangelist's hope and desire that the real readers of his Gospel will become ideal readers by believing into Jesus. The rhetoric and irony the fourth evangelist has employed will help this happen.

There is an instance of reader victimisation in 20:30 and following. The implied reader expected that 20:31 would be the end of the Gospel. There is finality in the words of 20:30-31, and therefore the epilogue of chapter 21 is "somewhat unexpected...[and] the reader does not anticipate more".⁶⁶⁷ Because of this prolonged ending there is some sense of reader victimisation. Staley identifies this, saying, "...the implied reader, at the discourse level, is forced to realize through his victimization ...that there is more to his journey of faith than mere confession".⁶⁶⁸ However, Staley goes on to show that the reader victimisation is only temporary. The narrator (without the disciples knowing) informs the reader that it is Jesus on the shore of Tiberias (21:4), that builds the relationship between the implied author and implied reader again.⁶⁶⁹ This then, is an instance of perplexing rhetoric.

⁶⁶⁷ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 431.

⁶⁶⁸ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 112.

⁶⁶⁹ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 113.

Furthermore, it provides the Johannine community with practical teaching to implement, reflecting the double layered drama of the Fourth Gospel.

Conclusion

In this conclusion, we move from step three of the method into step four. The passion narrative has been analysed and the variety of ironies and rhetoric have been sorted into their different categories and types. In step four we examine the irony to determine the style, content and purpose of the fourth evangelist.

Throughout the whole passion narrative, we see the prolific use of a variety of ironies. Moreover, as one might expect, there is a merging of themes around the climax of the passion narrative, which is the crucifixion and death of Jesus. This is highlighted by the abundance of ironies that either flash forward to this event or are directly linked to the crucifixion narrative in John 19:17-30. These Johannine themes include: (i) that the cross is central to the evangelist's theology. (ii) that the cross is a demonstration of Jesus as King and Messiah. And, (iii) that the cross is the means by which God achieves atonement. Each of these themes is reinforced by several ironies, demonstrating that the evangelist uses irony as a vehicle for revelation. Moreover, the fourth evangelist overflows with irony in all the theological themes that are analysed in this chapter. This demonstrates that irony is strongly linked to the revelation that comes through the suffering, death and resurrection of the divine Son.

In Table 8 below, I detail the ironies in the analysis of 19:16b-20:31. The results show a concentration of a variety of categories and types of irony in the sections dealing with the crucifixion and death of Jesus. A theology of the cross must therefore be central to our understanding of Johannine irony.

TABLE 8: Analysis of Ironies in John 19:16b-20:31

Verbal (29)					
Double Meaning	Metaphor	Sarcasm	Satire	Unanswered question	
It is ambiguous having 2 meanings	A symbol that can't be taken literally; a resemblance	A sneering, cutting remark a taunt or jibe	An exposing, scorning or denouncing of a folly or vice	A question designed for effect and not for an answer	
19:18 (x2), 19 (x2), 22, 28, 30, 31, 42; 20:1, 19	19:17, 18 (x2), 19, 28, 28f, 30, 31 (x2), 32-36, 42 (x2); 20:1, 19, 22.	19:19, 22	19:18	---	
Situational (47)					
Reversal	Prolepsis	Analepsis	Juxtaposition	Paradox	Dualism
A situation's flipside	A flash forward	A flash backwards	A comparative situation	A self-contradictory truth	Diametrically opposite terms
19:17, 18 (x2), 19 (x3), 23, 28, 30 (x2), 32-36; 20:1, 8 , 13-15 (x2), 17, 24f, 26-28 .	19:24, 30; 20:8	19:17, 18 (x3), 28f, 31, 32-36 (x2), 42; 20:1-10, 22, 28f.	20:28	19:18 (x5), 26-30; 28, 30 (x2); 20:23 ; 28f.	20:1
Dramatic (13)					
Understatement	Hyperbole	Misunderstanding	Parody	Double Standard	Double Entendre
Under exaggeration	Over exaggeration	Taking a different meaning to what is intended	An imitation designed to ridicule a serious work	The enforcer of the standard is unfairly exempt from it	An event / character speaks a double meaning while unaware of it
---	19:39f	20:13-15 (x2)	19:18 (x3), 23f.	19:31	19:18, 19 (x2), 22 (x2)
Unstable (persistently unresolved irony)					
20:23 Paradox; God. Some will thwart God's desire to save all					
Perplexing (temporary unstable irony)					
20:8 Reversal; Beloved disciple believes the resurrection, Jesus is alive.					
20:24f Reversal; Thomas is victimised as he was absent when Jesus had appeared.					
20:26-28 Reversal; Jesus appears to Thomas ending his doubts					
TOTAL: 29 + 47 + 13 = 89 examples					

CHAPTER SEVEN: MAKING SENSE OF FOURTH GOSPEL IRONY

Introduction

In Chapters Five and Six, I offer a rhetorical analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. I highlight numerous types of irony and rhetoric that I found there. Most of these ironies (200 out of 209 examples) were stable. The remaining nine examples of irony showed evidence of instability, and there were only four that were examples of perplexing irony in the 113 verses. In this chapter, I summarise the analysis and explore the nature of Johannine perplexing irony, giving examples in different contexts from the Gospel.

Summary of Analysis

The following summary of analysis is the fifth of Kennedy's five steps. The proliferation of irony in the chosen section of the passion narrative affirms Duke's assertion that this passage is indeed a fine example of sustained irony.⁶⁷⁰ In the whole passion narrative (fifty-six verses in the first section: 18:1-19:16a; and fifty-seven verses in the second section: 19:16b-20:31) I find 209 examples of irony.⁶⁷¹ As well as the seventeen types of irony demonstrated, five example of unstable irony, and four examples of perplexing irony are discernible. In Table 6, I offer a one-page summary of the ironies I discovered in John 18:1-19:1-16a, and in Table 8 there is a one-page summary of the ironies I discovered in 19:16b-20:31.⁶⁷²

⁶⁷⁰ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 117.

⁶⁷¹ The reader of this thesis will undoubtedly find others!

⁶⁷² For a detailed explanation of all ironies and rhetoric I have discovered, refer to Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4. Furthermore, I can now reveal the incidence of irony and rhetoric in the passion narrative. These quantitative results are based on my research as detailed in Chapters Five and Six of this thesis. These are depicted in Diagram 10 below: Intentional Literary and Rhetorical Devices in the Fourth Gospel Passion Narrative. This diagram (a development of Diagram 8 in Chapter Two) details the quantitative results of applying my five-step methodology to the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. It gives numerical values to the literary and rhetorical devices I find. Furthermore, these results demonstrate and ground the irony theory of Chapter Two of this thesis. Even though the passion narrative is an example of sustained irony, these results may be an indicator of the incidence of literary and rhetorical devices used by the fourth evangelist in the rest of the Gospel. By examining the results, I find useful data based on the statistics. Of the 333 literary devices I identify in John 18:1-20:31, I classified 209 as irony, four as unstable rhetoric (where there is victimization of the reader), and 120 as other literary devices. Of these 120, forty-five were examples of the historic present tense (which only includes the present tenses of the narrative genre, and excludes those in discourse).

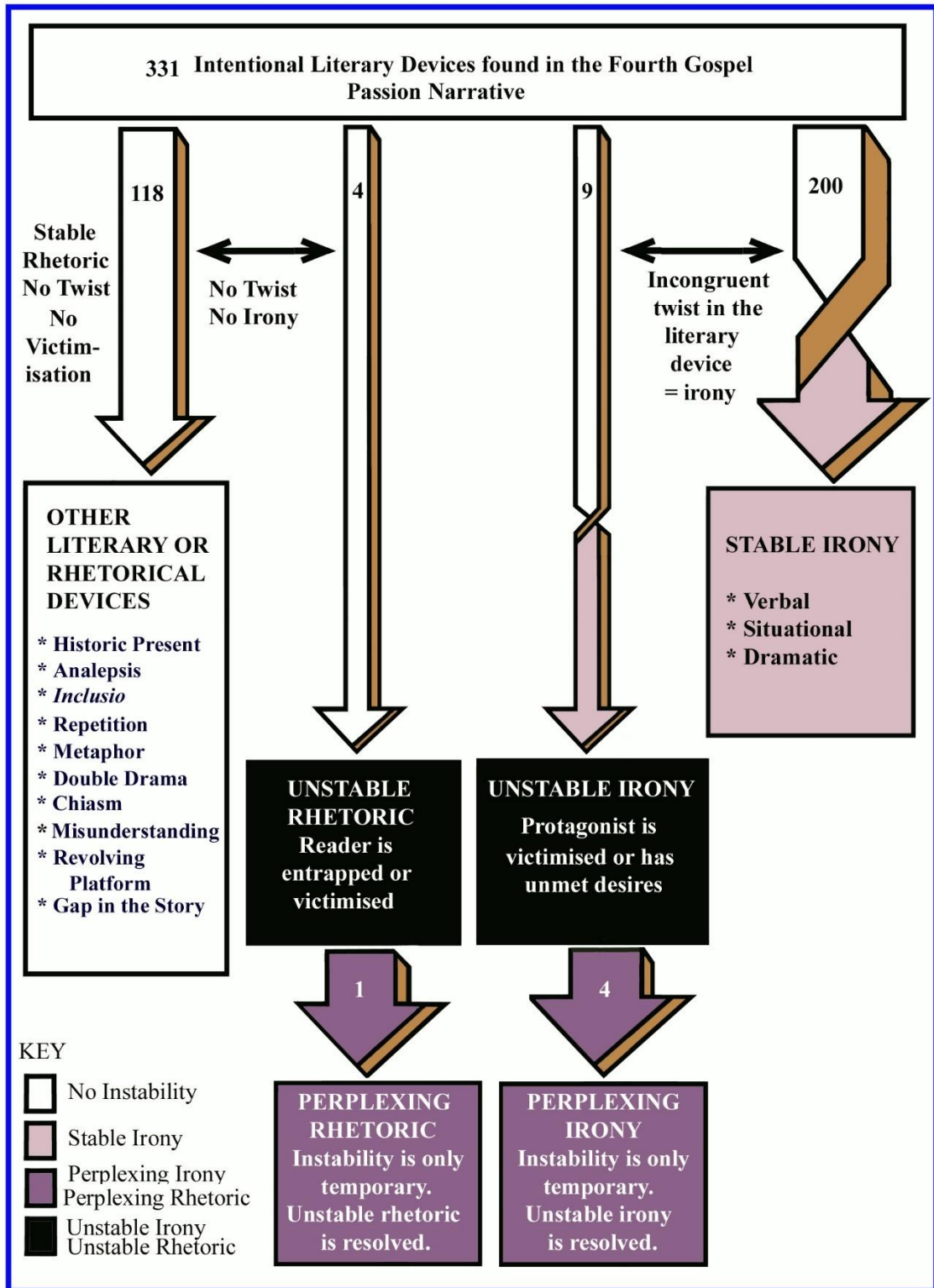


DIAGRAM 10: Intentional Literary and Rhetorical Devices in the Fourth Gospel Passion Narrative

Unstable Irony and Unstable Rhetoric

In Diagram 10 above, I demonstrate that there is a difference between unstable irony and unstable rhetoric. I contend that when a reader becomes a victim there is *no irony*, as there is no incongruent twist in the literary device. Rather, unstable rhetoric happens when the implied reader is the subject of victimisation in the text. Simply put, unstable irony results when the protagonist is the victim of the irony. Conversely, unstable rhetoric results when the implied reader is the victim in the text.

The same difference is found between perplexing irony and perplexing rhetoric. Perplexing irony is resolved ironic instability, whereas perplexing rhetoric is resolved rhetorical instability. Both unstable irony and unstable rhetoric become perplexing irony and perplexing rhetoric respectively if they are stabilised by later being resolved. However, this only happens when the protagonist / reader is no longer the victim.

The Results of the Analysis

The analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative reveals some useful results. I offer these to provide a grounded perspective on irony theory. These results make sense of the passion narrative analysis and demonstrate my thesis in practical ways. In Appendices 1 and 2, I demonstrate the location, provide a brief description, and identify the type of irony in the passion narrative. Appendix 3 shows us incidence of each type and the frequency of the types of irony from the most prolific to the least frequently used. Totalling 209 examples, they are: Reversal (35 times), Analepsis/Prolepsis (28 times), Paradox (28 times), Misunderstanding (18 times), Double Meaning (18 times), Metaphor (18 times), Parody (13 times), Double Standard (12 times), Double Entendre (9 times), Juxtaposition (7 times), Satire (6 times), Sarcasm (5 times), Unanswered Question (4 times), Understatement (3 times), Hyperbole (3 times), Dualism (twice).

The most prolific of the families of irony in the passion narrative is situational irony (100 examples), followed by dramatic irony (58 examples), then verbal irony (51 examples). The three most prolific types in each family of irony are listed in the following statistics.

Situational irony: reversal, paradox and prolepsis / analepsis. These three have 91 examples.

Verbal irony: double meaning, metaphor and satire. These three have 42 examples.

Dramatic irony: misunderstanding, parody and double standard. These three have 43 examples.

Situational Ironies

Reversal and Paradox

It is significant that the top two situational ironies, reversal and paradox, exhaust all five examples of persistent unstable irony found in this research. Ironic reversals are the simple flipside of a situation and serve to heighten the implied reader's attention to the rhetorical strategies the author uses. There are no particular themes that come through reversal irony. Paradoxes are self-contradictory truths and, in the text, remind the reader that there is always a bigger picture than, that which the scene portrays. The paradox highlights the important Johannine concept that Jesus is always in control, even when it appears he is not. Paradoxical irony is mostly connected with the identity and mission of Jesus. As such, it highlights and reinforces issues of Christological significance.

For an example of the high Christological focus of the Fourth Gospel, we turn to the Prologue. There the Gospel's foundational paradoxical irony was stated at the outset (1:1-3, 14) and reaffirmed in the relationship between Jesus and the Father throughout the Gospel. It is that the Johannine Logos is the co-creator of the world as well as being the divine Son who shares equality with God. It is ironically paradoxical that while the Logos is divine, the Logos is also fully human. The Logos "became flesh" and lived among us in the person of Jesus who is called the Christ. The Johannine Jesus states, "whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (14:9) and "I and the Father are one" (10:30). In 19:5 Jesus is hailed by Pilate as "the human", however, the fourth evangelist and the implied reader portray him as nothing less than the divine Son. These examples of paradoxical irony emphasise the high Christology of the Gospel.

The irony is further extended christologically with the foundational reversal irony of the Gospel.⁶⁷³ It is explained in a simple way by the narrator in 1:11. "[The Logos] came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him." Again, this ironic theme is

⁶⁷³ I deal with further issues of Christology and irony in Chapter Eight and in the thesis Conclusion.

restated in many ways through the Fourth Gospel, especially with intertextual references. It is Christological in that it implies that the will of the Father was to give his Son to those who would reject him. It is reaffirmed in such passages as 3:16-17; 4:42; 12:37-38, 40, 47; 15:25.

Verbal Ironies

Double Meaning

When the fourth evangelist uses the irony of double meaning, deliberate ambiguity results. For example, in 19:13, the words of the narrator are, “Then Pilate, having heard these words, led Jesus outside and *he* sat on the judgment seat” (my translation). The Greek text is ambiguous. If the verb is understood as a transitive, it implies that Jesus sits in judgment (of the world). However, if it is an intransitive, Pilate sits in judgment of Jesus. Both translations are supported by commentators. Yet when we look at the passage through the rhetorical critical lens, the reading that highlights the irony further has Jesus sitting on the judge’s seat.

In this episode, ambiguity and irony characterise the evangelist’s style of writing about Jesus. The evangelist uses the events of the trial to convey that Jesus is the judge through the hidden meaning. If both intransitive and transitive meanings are intended, it shows us that the fourth evangelist uses a double meaning to be intentionally ambiguous. This is so that the reader might perceive that even though Pilate judges Jesus, ultimately Jesus becomes the eschatological judge on the last day.

Metaphor

Metaphors are symbolic literary devices. Metaphors can either be rhetoric or irony, depending on whether the symbol has an incongruent twist. The Fourth Gospel passion narrative demonstrates both.

For instance, in 18:11 when Jesus speaks of “drinking the cup” it is an example of rhetoric using a non-ironic symbol of the suffering he is about to endure. On the other hand, in 19:17, Jesus carries the wooden cross-beam (on his shoulder). Intertextually, the implied reader remembers the narrative of Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah (Genesis 22:1-18). Genesis 22:6 says, “Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac...”(NRSV). Bearing the wood (on his shoulder), Isaac was

to become the human sacrifice in obedience to the Lord.⁶⁷⁴ However, the angel of the Lord provided a lamb for Abraham to use instead of his son. The ironic twist in John 19:11 is that the wood Jesus shoulders actually becomes the instrument of death for him. In both cases the wood carried on the shoulder is the symbol of sacrifice.

Satire

Ironic satire plays an important role for the narrator by exposing the folly of the scorning and the aberrant behaviour of the characters around Jesus.⁶⁷⁵ It is the type of irony that laughs at or pokes fun at eccentricity and stupidity. The evangelist uses it to highlight important truth that may otherwise be overlooked.

For example, in 18:6, when the Johannine Jesus uses the divine name for himself, the arresting party falls down. Elsewhere in Scripture, “falling down” is synonymous with worshipping the Lord (Genesis 17:3, 17; Leviticus 9:24; Numbers 14:5, 16:4, 22, 45; 20:6; 22:31; Deuteronomy 9:18; 1 Samuel 17:49; Psalm 145:14). However, this is the last thing that the arresting party want to do. The satire here pokes fun at the folly of those who come with weapons to arrest Jesus. They think they are the ones doing the arresting. However, the implied reader knows that Jesus lays down his life of his own accord (10:17-18). The implied reader, as an insider, is able to appreciate the banter concerning the arresting party as ironic satire.

Unanswered Question

Unanswered questions in the Gospel are ironic because they undergo an incongruent twist. These are not like normal rhetorical questions that are asked for impact. Rather, when the Johannine Jesus is asked a question that he does not answer, the evangelist wants the reader to remember what Jesus has already said. The statements the narrator or the Johannine Jesus makes earlier in the Gospel are significant for understanding the answers to the unanswered questions we find later. For example, when Pilate asks Jesus, “Where are you from?” and Jesus does not answer (19:9), the implied reader

⁶⁷⁴ While further examples of irony could be found using intertextual connections it is deemed unnecessary to provide more than one example.

⁶⁷⁵ Satire is what post-modern irony theorists call banter.

knows to look back in the Gospel for discussion concerning this theme. For the correct answer, we are to hear what the narrator, John the Baptist or Jesus has to say (1:1-5, 9-15). There may have been considerable discussion and comment from those opposing Jesus (6:41-52; 7:40-52; 8:48-59; 10:21-39). Nevertheless, their comments only serve to highlight the truth.

Dramatic Ironies

Misunderstanding

This type of irony provides us with a cameo of those who oppose the Johannine Jesus. As “outsiders”, they can only see and understand the surface meaning, and never perceive what the ideal reader (or “insider”) can. “Outsiders” cannot appreciate spiritual truth.

Misunderstanding between those who will not believe and the narrator (or Jesus) provides fuel for the ironic drama that unfolds. The misunderstanding of non-believers helps to clarify the spiritual meaning that the evangelist wants to convey. This feature of irony is best demonstrated by Jesus’ encounter with Nicodemus (3:1-15), where Nicodemus accepts the literal meaning of γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν (born again) while Jesus implies ‘born from above’ which is the spiritual meaning (3:3, 7).

In the passion narrative, *hoi Ioudaioi* call for the release of Barabbas (18:39-40), whose name means “son of (the) father”. Barabbas is a convicted bandit, whereas Jesus has no case against him. It is therefore an ironic misunderstanding that Pilate releases the wrong “son of the father”.

Parody

Parodies imitate and ridicule the status quo. They play on a distorted image or perception of reality. Yet, the distortion is not all that far from the truth and the parody serves to bring further truth to real situations by highlighting the difference.

For example, in 19:14b-15a, we read, “[Pilate] says to *hoi Ioudaioi*, ‘Here is your king!’ Then they cried out, ‘Lift him away! Lift him away! Crucify him!’”⁶⁷⁶ This is an ironic parody as *hoi Ioudaioi* unknowingly exalt Jesus whom they want executed. The effect is

⁶⁷⁶ This is my translation.

that the implied reader can now see the folly of their actions. Furthermore, crucifixion is a parody of Jesus' exaltation.⁶⁷⁷ As he is "lifted up" on the cross, he is glorified, as he draws all to himself (12:23-33).

Double Standard

Double standards highlight injustice and unfairness. Authorities expect that everyone will keep the law, and that justice will be unprejudiced and impartial. Therefore, if a character enforces a standard or behaviour, however, does not comply with the standard they have set, a double standard arises.

For example, an official slaps Jesus in the face because he reacted to Jesus' response to Annas (18:22-23). The setting is in the patriarchal society of first century Jerusalem, where honour and shame are significant aspects of the culture. The reader assumes that the official had the responsibility to help others observe the law. Jesus' answer to him highlights the official's double standard, because Jesus had spoken the truth to Annas.

Summary of Rhetoric

In Appendix 4, I itemise all of the identified rhetoric in the passion narrative. Out of 124 examples, there are 120 stable rhetorical devices, three persistently unstable and one example of perplexing rhetoric.

The most predominant types of rhetoric are the historic present (45 occurrences) and non-ironic analepses (42 occurrences). The historic present adds vividness to the narrative while the analepses provides flashes back to relevant texts of which the implied reader is aware.

Summary of Quantitative Results

There are seventeen types of covert ironies in the Gospel's passion narrative. It is noteworthy that of these 209 examples of irony, 200 were stable and nine showed signs of instability (victimised protagonist). Of these nine, five were persistently unstable (unresolved), and four were perplexing irony (where the victimisation of the protagonist ceased or resolved). Likewise, of the three instances of unstable rhetoric (victimised reader), two remained persistently unstable (unresolved), and the other was perplexing

⁶⁷⁷ Marcus, "Crucifixion as Parodic Exaltation", 74-75.

rhetoric (where the victimisation of the reader was resolved). I provide a more detailed explanation in Tables 6 and 8, Diagram 10, and Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

I note that all the irony in the Fourth Gospel is covert. That is, no irony is ever explained by the author. Never in the text does the author use the word “irony”, or say, “it is ironic that ...”. This adds to the intrigue of the narrative, and draws the reader to read more, even if the reader is not fully aware of the presence of irony. Because all the irony is covert, the implied reader is encouraged to dig below the surface of the text, discover its significance and discern its message. Apart from nine instances of unstable irony (of which four become perplexing irony) that I have identified here, all the irony in the passion narrative appears stable.

More than this, there is much meaning conveyed through the sustained nature of the irony in the crucifixion, death and resurrection narratives. This proliferation demonstrates that the irony is the fourth evangelist’s vehicle to convey theology, as MacRae has already affirmed.⁶⁷⁸ The major theological themes that irony highlights in the passion narrative include: (i) the true nature, identity and mission of Jesus; (ii) the emphasis that Jesus is both King and Messiah; (iii) the contrast between God’s authority which is seen in Jesus and the authority based on positional power; (iv) the nature of Johannine atonement; (v) the contrast between faith and unbelief; and (vi) the important truths for the Johannine community to have hope and believe. We may therefore affirm that Johannine irony is indispensable to the Fourth Gospel because it conveys what the fourth evangelist understands about Jesus. This profound message of the suffering, dying and risen divine Son is accompanied by the promise of eternal life for everyone who believes into Jesus (3:15-17; 5:24; 10:10; 11:25-26; 20:31).

One may ask: “Has this analysis of sustained Johannine irony exhausted all the varieties and examples of Fourth Gospel irony?” By no means! These results are only preliminary. There is always more irony than meets the eye. The more I have examined the passion narrative, the more irony I have discovered in it. I therefore conclude that there may never be an exhaustive treatment of Johannine irony.

⁶⁷⁸ MacRae, “Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel”, 109-111.

The analysis of the whole passion narrative identifies the six most prolific (out of sixteen) types of irony in this section.⁶⁷⁹ They are the ironies of reversal (35 times), prolepsis/analepsis (27 times), paradox (24 times), misunderstanding (18 times), double meaning (18 times) and metaphor (17 times). Their combined tally is 139 instances out of a total of 204, or a little over two-thirds. The author's preference for these six types of irony gives us an insight into the cultural and rhetorical context of the Johannine community and the fourth evangelist.

- Reversal irony is the simple incongruent twist in a situation. It is the irony of Judas' betrayal in John 18:5. Jesus pre-empts his betrayal, and by self-disclosure, he prevents the betrayer from betraying him with a kiss (18:3-5; cf. Matt. 26:49 and parallels).
- The ironies of analepses and prolepses relate to the sequence of events. They help the implied reader to connect what is happening now in the drama with events or prophetic words in the past or future with a flashback or a flash forward. This adds vitality, interest and provides a demonstration of God's connected activity throughout the divine drama of the Fourth Gospel.
- Paradoxical irony is irony on a grand scale. It takes place when worldviews clash. When the chief priests answered Pilate, "We have no king but the emperor" (19:15b), they completely and utterly betray their covenant relationship with God. They are swearing allegiance to a foreign king, and murdering the King their prophets had foretold would be their Messiah. The irony of paradox stretches and challenges the implied reader's worldview and calls the reader to follow Jesus.
- The ironic misunderstandings have to do with revelation. Misunderstandings arise because those who do not become friends with Jesus misunderstand what he says and does. These characters understand things in a literal sense, however, what Jesus says has spiritual content, and they miss the point. The deepest misunderstanding is that some characters cannot fathom the identity of Jesus.

⁶⁷⁹ I am counting the ironies of prolepsis and analepsis as one type as they have the same effect on the reader.

- Ironic double meanings are often closely related to ironic misunderstandings. The fourth evangelist often uses words that seem ambiguous and these create double meanings. Believers / insiders know to take the spiritual meaning, but others see Jesus / the narrator talking in riddles.⁶⁸⁰ An example of this is ὑψόω (= lift up and exalt, 3:14-15; 8:21-30; 12:28-30, 32-34). The fourth evangelist makes the implied reader aware that ὑψόω means that Jesus will be elevated on a cross and die (12:32). His death will also be his exaltation as King of the world as the cross becomes his throne.
- Ironic metaphors indicate symbolism in the Gospel. An example of an ironic metaphor is the fourth evangelist's use of "darkness" to symbolise the absence of Jesus. Nicodemus had come out of the darkness into the presence of Jesus (3:1). The Johannine Jesus declares that anyone who follows him "will not walk in darkness" (8:12). Judas Iscariot had left the last meal with Jesus to meet with the chief priests in order to betray Jesus (13:30). On the day of resurrection, Mary Magdalene comes in the dark to seek the dead body of Jesus, which is no longer in the tomb (20:1).
- Another significant literary device is the author's use of the unanswered question. Whenever the text presents the irony of unanswered question (only on four occasions in the passion narrative), it is a signal to the implied reader to revisit and remember what has already been disclosed. With each unanswered question in the Fourth Gospel passion narrative, the implied author is saying something profound about the issue raised by the question.⁶⁸¹ The issue is covert, or if it is addressed in the context, it will not be in the same sentence. Therefore, the implied reader who wants to discover the character's intended reply has to remember what the author has already disclosed. The implied reader will find, without difficulty, several references in the Gospel where the author addresses the issue raised by the unanswered question.

⁶⁸⁰ Anderson, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel: An Introduction to John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

⁶⁸¹ The only possible exception to this data is the seventh question Pilate asks Jesus, "Do you refuse to speak to me?" (19:10). Pilate's question highlights the significance of the previous unanswered question, "Where are you from?" (19:9).

For example, when Pilate asks Jesus, “what is truth?” (18:38), and Jesus does not answer, the implied reader is urged to remember the earlier references to Jesus and truth. In this instance, the implied reader remembers that the divine Logos “became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth” (1:14). In addition, Jesus said to his disciples, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (14:6). The prior revelation of these references identifies Jesus as “the Truth”, so the incongruent twist of the irony in Pilate’s unanswered question is brought home. In following this method, the full answer to the unanswered question will be disclosed as the implied reader follows the theme through the gospel.

These ironies continue to affect the implied reader who can never forget this divine drama of the pre-existent Logos. He is unrecognised by those from whom he longs recognition (1:9-10), suffers agony and gives himself over to death for them. These ironies of a suffering protagonist do not produce a smirk, a grin, a wink or even a wry smile.⁶⁸² Rather, at the end of this passion drama that is filled with sustained irony, the implied reader is changed. Even though there have been double meanings in what has been said, even though people have misunderstood what was intended, even though paradoxically some whom Jesus came to save have rejected the message, to the implied reader the message of the Fourth Gospel is abundantly clear. By reading the Fourth Gospel, the implied reader is treated as a faithful disciple and is provided with insights that even the disciples do not perceive.⁶⁸³

In this analysis of the passion narrative, we have seen how the implied author sets forth these ironies as theological revelation for the implied reader. As argued in Chapter Two and earlier in this chapter, irony is theology.⁶⁸⁴ This is one of the purposes of irony: to highlight the identity and authority of Jesus. It is therefore the responsibility and one of the challenges facing the implied reader to act on the revelations concerning Jesus. The implied reader changes and becomes the “ideal reader” when there is willingness to make these connections.

⁶⁸² Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 5, 156.

⁶⁸³ After the resurrection the disciples do recognise this, though this could be the faith experience of the late first century Johannine community shining through.

⁶⁸⁴ MacRae, "Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 109.

The three identified occasions in the passion narrative where the implied reader is victimised (18:15-16; 19:25; 20:2) have not destroyed the narrator-reader relationship.⁶⁸⁵ Since then, the narrator has provided numerous revelations and notations to the reader, which have more than compensated for the non-disclosure of the unnamed disciple's identity.⁶⁸⁶ Moreover, the instance of perplexing rhetoric that flows into the final chapter of the Gospel (21:4) highlights the strengthened relationship between the narrator and implied reader.

By adapting Kennedy's rhetorical critical methodology in this thesis, I have been able to assess the relevant literary devices of the Fourth Gospel. In each of Kennedy's five steps, the method I use has helped the real reader access the literary and rhetorical impact of the text. Following this adapted methodology, this has helped us to become aware of the presence of various types of irony as well as provide insight into the implied author's style, content and purpose.

Analysis of Examples

We can see that perplexing irony emerges where there is the possibility of redemption; where hope may be found in disaster and tragedy; and where there is an expectation that good can come out of bad things.

It is reasonable to assume that the perplexing ironies demonstrated in the biblical narratives of the Hebrew Bible were a precedent for the author of the Fourth Gospel. While there may not be any examples of perplexing irony in the Ancient Greek Classical philosophers and playwrights, there were examples of it in the biblical narratives. This makes even more sense when it is most likely that the author of the Fourth Gospel is Jewish.⁶⁸⁷

The examples of Fourth Gospel perplexing irony demonstrate the same dynamics as the perplexing ironies of the Hebrew Bible. Redemptive themes always portray hope. Furthermore, the Gospel is the unexpected positive outcome of divine intervention.

⁶⁸⁵ This ironic reversal concerns the identity of the unnamed disciple.

⁶⁸⁶ This is also true of the identity of the beloved disciple.

⁶⁸⁷ In Chapter One I argue further concerning the significance of the Fourth Gospel as pro-Jewish literature.

What is Perplexing Irony?

It will be helpful to recap earlier discussion on perplexing irony. It begins as unstable irony. Moreover, as we have discovered in previous chapters, it begins in both of the following cases:

1. Where the protagonist is victimised, or
2. Where the protagonist has a specific, identified and unmet desire.

These two situations create unstable irony. But if these instabilities are resolved, the irony is stabilised, and perplexing irony is the result.

Perplexing irony is that irony that is neither unstable nor stable, though temporarily, it once was both, at different times. It begins with instability and ends with stability.⁶⁸⁸ It begins in the bad news of tragedy and ends in the good news of joy. It starts off being unresolved and ends up dissipating, being repaired, renewed or restored. Here I offer further analysis of this new category of irony. I examine contexts in the Fourth Gospel where it may be found and where there may be an incidence of it. In each case I will analyse examples to support my theory. These perplexing ironies share the characteristics of unstable irony for a period, however, they are later resolved in the discourse or narrative. As with other Johannine stable ironies, they are covert.⁶⁸⁹

Fourth Gospel Perplexing Irony

Following on from the earlier stories of Old Testament characters depicting themes of redemption, we can also see examples of redemption in Fourth Gospel characters. I examine two of them. Following this I examine the Johannine account of the risen Jesus.

Transformed Disciples

We turn now to the Johannine account of two of Jesus' disciples, Peter and Thomas, to examine possible examples of perplexing irony.

Peter

“Simon Peter” (19 times), “Peter” (17 times), or “Simon son of John” (1:42; 21:15-17) are the names the fourth evangelist uses for him. In various places throughout the

⁶⁸⁸ Sometimes when ironic instability resolves, the irony dissipates.

⁶⁸⁹ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 235-238.

Fourth Gospel, he is the spokesperson for the others (6:68; 13:8-9, 24, 36, 37).

However, being outspoken and impetuous sometimes gets him into trouble. Earlier, on the night of Jesus' final meal with the twelve, Peter promises to journey with Jesus to the death (13:37). However, when he finally realises that the death of Jesus is becoming a reality, he fails.

While Jesus is on trial before the high priest Annas, Peter undergoes his own struggle (18:17-27). In an example of covert-stable irony of juxtaposition, Jesus defends the integrity of his disciples, at the same time as Peter is denying his discipleship. The act of his denial is a tragedy indeed. However, this is not the end of the story. After the resurrection, the epilogue to the Fourth Gospel has a redemptive incident (21:15-19) that provides for Peter's reinstatement. Earlier, Peter denies his discipleship three times. In the epilogue, Jesus asks Peter three times, "do you love me?" Peter experiences hurt as he responds to Jesus' questions. However, in so doing, the Johannine risen Jesus commissions him to "feed" and "take care of" the vulnerable people (lambs and sheep) in the Christian community (21:15-17).

In a post-resurrection experience, Peter goes back to his former trade of fishing. It is possible that if the risen Christ does not appear to him, his position of leadership among Jesus' followers becomes problematic. Jesus gives Peter another chance, reinstating him to leadership. This redemptive act by the risen Christ is transformational for Peter, as it heals the damage he had caused through his former denials.

The narrative from Peter's perspective is one of perplexing irony. If we regard him as a protagonist in the trial of Jesus, he seems to destroy his credibility as a Christian leader. However, in the Galilean epilogue to the gospel, Jesus' questioning reinstates him. This is an ironic reversal, and an example of the unstable irony that stabilises to form *perplexing* irony.

Thomas

The fourth evangelist uses both names "Δίδυμος" (Greek) and "Thomas" (Hebrew) for the disciple; both mean "twin". On the night of resurrection, the risen Jesus appears to the disciples in the locked room (21:19-23). Thomas is absent (21:24), however when he returns, the others tell him what he had missed experiencing (21:25a). Thomas is

victimised in the narrative because he has missed seeing Jesus. After the disciples recount their experiences to him, he says to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe" (20:25b).

A week later, they were still hiding behind locked doors because they were still frightened by the possibility of *hoi Ioudaioi* arresting them. This time, Thomas was present when Jesus returns to the upper room and appears to his disciples (21:26).

Jesus approaches Thomas and says, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe" (21:27). Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God" (20:28). The implied reader assumes that Thomas has been victimised for a week. His experience was different from the other disciples. He had not seen the risen Christ as they had. However, now a week later, his victimisation was at an end. Jesus finally revealed himself to Thomas. This incident demonstrates the *perplexing* irony of reversal.

Death and Resurrection of Jesus

It was indeed a tragedy for Jesus' followers when Pilate sentenced Jesus to death. Furthermore, what is even more ironic is that the Jesus portrayed by the fourth evangelist lays down his life of his own accord (10:17f). However, in John 19, as Jesus dies, he becomes the victim of the crucifixion drama. He is the protagonist in the passion narrative demonstrating ironic instability.

However, on the third day, the first day of the week, while it was still dark (20:1), the narrator depicts the stone being rolled away and Jesus rising victorious from the grave. The ironic instability has ended. The tragedy of the cross is reversed. *The resurrection of Christ from death is the demonstration of perplexing irony of reversal.*

The Effect of Perplexing Irony

In this section, I demonstrate that even though most of the Fourth Gospel irony is stable, some is unstable, and that some irony, which at first appears to be unstable, later becomes perplexing irony. In previous chapters, I set out my revised rhetorical method

that includes aspects of literary and narrative criticisms. I employ this blended methodology to highlight various nuances of the text and its effect on the reader.

As previously mentioned, we can discern the difference between a real reader and the implied reader and between the real author and the implied author of the Fourth Gospel. The real reader is the one who is actually reading the text. However, the implied reader is a theoretical, fictive literary construction to help us discern the effect of the text.⁶⁹⁰ It is the real reader's perception of the real author's intended audience.

It is noteworthy that R. Alan Culpepper, Paul Duke and Gail O'Day assert that *all* of the irony found in the Fourth Gospel is stable.⁶⁹¹ By this, these scholars imply that God and Jesus as well as the implied reader / audience of the Fourth Gospel are *never* the intended victim of the irony.⁶⁹² Tom Thatcher, Stephen Moore and Beryl Lang argue a contrary case.⁶⁹³ The reason that Culpepper, Duke and O'Day assert the stability of irony in the Fourth Gospel is because they rely on Wayne Booth's assessment of what constitutes stable and unstable irony. Booth's analysis does not allow for unstable irony to become stable.

The Effect of Unstable Irony

This section is a reprise of my earlier discussion. Now, we come to the question of this chapter. *What sort of irony do we find in the Fourth Gospel?* Can it be unstable? Culpepper, Duke and O'Day say 'no', while Thatcher and Moore say "yes".⁶⁹⁴ In addition to this contentious issue, this chapter also examines the claims of Jeffrey

⁶⁹⁰ Botha, "Reader Entrapment as a Literary Device in John 4:1-42", 38.

⁶⁹¹ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 179.

⁶⁹² Culpepper says of the implied reader of the Fourth Gospel, "Never is the reader the victim of irony." Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 179. Duke says, "The fellowship of irony is founded upon the bond we feel with a narrator who is reliable". Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 30. O'Day says, "Indeed, the basic definition of dramatic irony centers around the audience's superior knowledge of events and characters in the play, derived from its role as spectator and from the information with which the playwright supplies it". And, without this close bond between author and reader of the Fourth Gospel, O'Day asserts, "irony will not work". O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 29. See also Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 54. I argue that these factors are the criteria for ironic instability.

⁶⁹³ Thatcher and Moore have both demonstrated unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel. See Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel". Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman".

⁶⁹⁴ Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 54; Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman".

Staley, Werner Kelber and Eugene Botha. These three authors argue the case for the victimisation of the reader, yet remain uncommitted in the end as to whether their examples demonstrate unstable irony or unstable rhetoric. I argue that their examples do not demonstrate unstable irony. The reason for this is that there is no incongruent twist in the literary device. There is therefore no irony. (See Diagram 9 at the end of Chapter Six.) Further, I examine Thatcher's essay to see if his understanding of unstable irony has merit. If I am able to discover unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel, the answer to the following question will also be worth exploring. What is the purpose of unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel for the implied reader?

In providing an answer, I begin with Tom Thatcher's perspective on the issue, followed by Staley, Kelber, Botha, and Moore, and conclude by commenting on Culpepper's article, "Reading Johannine Irony". The reason I conclude with Culpepper is that his essay critically analyses both Moore and Kelber's articles. Furthermore, is the latest journal article I have found that addresses ironic instability in the Fourth Gospel.

Thatcher argues that the implied author (and narrator) trick the implied reader concerning a lawbreaker-sinner in two Fourth Gospel episodes.⁶⁹⁵ His essay examines how that happens. Both episodes involve Jesus performing a sign. The signs are: he heals the crippled man by the pool (5:1-18), and gives sight to the man born blind (9:1-41). Thatcher claims that the narrator backs Jesus into a corner, tricking the reader. The ironic twist creating instability that Thatcher demonstrates by deconstruction is that the Johannine Jesus is a Sabbath-breaker on both occasions.⁶⁹⁶ His argument follows that Jesus is the only one who has the ultimate power and authority to uphold the fourth commandment of the Law of Moses, yet he deliberately breaks it for the sake of others. This unstable irony of the double standard remains unresolved for the reader throughout the Gospel.

Prior to Thatcher's article, Staley's book, *The Print's First Kiss*, chose to diverge from Culpepper's stance on rhetorical criticism.⁶⁹⁷ Staley bypasses Booth's literary structure

⁶⁹⁵ Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 55.

⁶⁹⁶ Thatcher, "The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel", 59-60.

⁶⁹⁷ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 11-14. Even though Culpepper is aware of Chatman's model (see note below), he rejects it in favour of others. See Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 53, 102.

of irony in favour of Seymour Chatman's modified model.⁶⁹⁸ In doing so, Staley is able to go on to identify five occasions in the Fourth Gospel where the implied reader is victimised.⁶⁹⁹ These passages are: 4:1-2; 7:1-10; 10:40-11:18; 13:1-30; and 20:30-21:25. Staley is keen to resolve each of these reader victimisations, and is reticent to concede that any Fourth Gospel narrative contains unstable irony. However, according to my argument, Staley does identify rhetorical instability in these passages because he shows examples where the implied reader becomes a victim in each example.

I concur with Staley to the extent that the reader is a victim. He demonstrates well how the implied reader is initially victimised, and how the rhetoric becomes stable again. This is because he is able to describe how the reader-victimisation is resolved in each case. Yet, I have reservations with regard to his conclusions concerning the effect of withholding the identity of the beloved disciple from the implied reader (13:1-30). In this case he asserts that the reader victimisation is resolved.⁷⁰⁰ However, his argument is not convincing. Instead of resolving the reader victimisation, he shows only how the author rebuilds trust between narrator and the implied reader.⁷⁰¹ According to my reading of the last supper in the Fourth Gospel, the instability remains. This is because the author maintains a victimisation of the implied reader by continuing to withhold the beloved disciple's identity, not only in this section, but rather throughout the Gospel.⁷⁰²

Kelber recognises the readers as victims of the irony in the Fourth Gospel, and identifies the instability in the "living water" metaphor. He says,

Instead of living up to his projected role as the dispenser of the "living water", he [the Johannine Jesus] is depicted as himself succumbing to thirst for water in the literal physical sense. As a result, the whole narrative builds up from the literal to

⁶⁹⁸ Chatman, *Story and discourse : narrative structure in fiction and film* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978), 146-151; Cited in Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 21-22.

⁶⁹⁹ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 95-118.

⁷⁰⁰ Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 108-111.

⁷⁰¹ Staley attempts to do this by showing that the narrator divulges further information about the identity of "the betrayer" whose identity is not withheld, and helps the implied reader to trust the narrator by reminding the reader that the disciples did not understand what Jesus was saying to Judas as he left (13:28). Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 110.

⁷⁰² Yet, we still cannot be certain whether this withheld information was done knowingly, or without knowing the beloved disciple's identity.

the figurative meaning of water is on the verge of collapse, and the expected resolution of irony is thereby turned into a stark paradox.⁷⁰³

Here, Kelber admits that the literal and figurative instances of water collapse in a paradoxical “flood”. This real water that the Johannine Jesus twice seeks in order to quench his thirst, blends with the figurative “living water”, which is a metaphor for the Spirit.

So, for Kelber, the unstable paradoxical irony does not resolve. He sees the resurrection of Jesus as the blockage to resolving the reader victimisation. However, at the ‘narrative culmination’, Jesus breathes on the disciples, endowing them with the Holy Spirit (20:22), of which the “living water” is the symbol. In this self-giving action, the risen Jesus resolves the ironic instability, as the disciples are recipients of the Spirit / living water on behalf of the implied reader. Therefore, I classify the resultant resolved irony as paradoxical perplexing irony, as Jesus is no longer victimised.

Another scholar, Botha, has divided John 4 into seven sections in which he claims to find ‘reader entrapment’.⁷⁰⁴ These seven sections are: 4:1-3; 4-7a; 7b-15; 16-26; 27-30; 31-38; 39-42. Botha claims that in each case, the author temporarily entraps or manipulates the implied reader, because the author does not provide enough information.⁷⁰⁵ In these sections, Botha highlights a number of situations where he assumes that the implied reader “feels uncomfortable” because of the limited narration, unclear directions given, or indistinct information provided in the text. These examples *do not* constitute irony as there is no incongruent twist in the literary device. Furthermore, Botha indicates that the narrator deliberately creates intertextual issues for the implied reader by placing Jesus in a culturally compromising position. In each of the several instances, Botha identifies this unease or manipulation of the implied reader, that he identifies as “entrapment”. The result is reader victimisation and therefore rhetorical instability. Botha offers some helpful insights as to the effect on readers, saying,

⁷⁰³ Kelber, "In the Beginning Were the Words: The Apotheosis and Narrative Displacement of the Logos", 96.

⁷⁰⁴ Botha, "Reader Entrapment as a Literary Device in John 4:1-42".

⁷⁰⁵ Botha, "Reader Entrapment as a Literary Device in John 4:1-42", 39-40.

This can serve two purposes. The obvious one is that it keeps them [readers] attentive and involved in the narrative. Another reason could be to force the readers into a re-evaluation of the events so far described...

All these manipulations are very functional, however, since they are designed to enhance the communication between author and reader. In some instances, the manipulation is designed to keep the story interesting and the readers involved and attentive; ...to align the readers with certain characters and to prepare fertile ground for somewhat difficult messages.⁷⁰⁶

Like Staley, Botha clearly shows that the reader-entrapment is only temporary, all the while correctly denying the ironic instability. However, from the perspective of this thesis, each instance of Botha's reader entrapment demonstrates perplexing rhetoric. This happens because Botha shows that, by the end of the Samaritan woman episode (4:42), the narrator has resolved all seven passages of the rhetorical instability of reader-entrapment, creating perplexing rhetoric.

Using deconstruction and feminist criticism, Moore discerns that the water that Jesus dispenses is contaminated.⁷⁰⁷ He refers to three main Johannine passages. The first is the offering of "living water" to the Samaritan woman (4:10), from whom he had asked a drink (4:7). The second is at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, where Jesus gives the promise that rivers of living water will gush forth from believers' bellies as they are filled with the Spirit (7:37-40). The third is, as Jesus hangs on the cross, he asks for a drink (19:28). Ironically, the one who offers living water is in need of a drink again! However, this time, the drink is a contaminant, sour vinegar (19:28-29). Later, to demonstrate that Jesus is already dead, a soldier thrusts a spear into him, causing a rush of water mingled with blood from Jesus' side (19:34). Ironically again, the water Jesus dispenses is mingled with blood. According to Moore's deconstructed argument, this brings about unstable irony.⁷⁰⁸

However, from my perspective, the mention of the blood (and water) of 19:34 was a flashback to John the Baptist's proleptic word (1:29, 36). According to Johannine sequencing, devout *Ioudaioi* were slaughtering their Passover lambs at the same time that Pilate condemns Jesus (19:14, 31, 42). These Passover lambs' blood brought

⁷⁰⁶ Botha, "Reader Entrapment as a Literary Device in John 4:1-42", 44-45.

⁷⁰⁷ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 218-219.

⁷⁰⁸ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman".

deliverance and life to *hoi Ioudaioi*, and in the same way for the fourth evangelist, the blood of Jesus brings deliverance and life to the ideal reader. The mingling of the water that comes from Jesus (his blood) is necessary for the salvation of those who believe into him. It is only as Jesus dies that his desire (to fulfil the Scriptures in obedience to God) is fully met and the temporary ironic instability ends. Therefore, the unstable irony (caused by Jesus drinking the sour wine, and the issuing water mingled with his blood) resolves and forms the perplexing irony of metaphor. Jesus as protagonist is the victim for a period. It begins when they nail Jesus to the cross. Subsequently, the irony resolves after his death, when a soldier thrusts his spear into Jesus' side. The water that flows from Jesus mingles with his blood. This means that Jesus is dead, and that the unstable irony resolves into *perplexing* irony, with water being the metaphor for life.

Metaphorically also, the "living water" is symbolic of the Spirit (7:39-40) who is promised when Jesus is glorified.⁷⁰⁹ This "living water", Moore argues, has its origin in the Scriptures, and the driving force for Jesus is his desire to fulfil the Scriptures in obedience to the Father.⁷¹⁰

There is also some sustained unstable irony. Moore says that the stream of water, representing the Spirit, only comes when Jesus is absent, after he has gone to be with the Father (14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15; 20:22-23).

The water imagery in John is a river of desire... Jesus too is driven by desire, carried along in its current, until he reunites with the Father in death... The Father is the ultimate object of Jesus' desire in the Fourth Gospel. But even the Father is not free of desire. [His desire] is a black hole.⁷¹¹

The Father's desire is for all to desire him. This desire may never be satisfied, as many will choose not to desire him. If this is a truly specific, identified and unmet desire of God, as Moore rightly claims, then this is un-deconstructed irony and cannot be resolved.⁷¹² Rather, it remains as unstable paradoxical irony.

⁷⁰⁹ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 221. Also, Barrett, "Symbolism," in *Essays on John* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 60.

⁷¹⁰ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 218.

⁷¹¹ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 226.

⁷¹² Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 226-227.

Three years after Moore's article, Culpepper wrote concerning the stability of Fourth Gospel irony.⁷¹³ Culpepper is the first to use irony theory from Muecke and Booth in any study on Fourth Gospel irony.⁷¹⁴ In the article, Culpepper examines Kelber and Moore's essays on "living water" in which both claim that the Fourth Gospel displays unstable irony.⁷¹⁵ However, Culpepper argues rightly that for Kelber and Moore to find their unstable irony in the "living water", they have to resort to collapsing the literal and figurative meanings of water. In the John 19 narrative with Jesus on the cross, Culpepper argues,

...the whole structure of Johannine irony collapses, because it is constructed on the distinction between the two levels of meaning ... which he [Jesus] had maintained were separate, [which Kelber and Moore] have collapsed into paradox".⁷¹⁶

Culpepper thus disagrees with both Kelber and Moore who have determined that they found unstable irony in the Gospel. Culpepper says that unsuspecting characters, readers, Jesus and the implied author are all victims of Kelber's and Moore's irony.⁷¹⁷ From my perspective, I concur with Culpepper on the point that the blurring of the two layers compromise Fourth Gospel irony. However, I hasten to add that these unintended unstable ironies concerning "living water" do not appear to have been in the author's mind when the Fourth Gospel was written, but rather they appear to come from the clever arguments of the critics.⁷¹⁸ Nevertheless, despite the optimistic claims of Moore and Kelber about finding unstable irony in the Gospel, deconstruction does provide the reader with a fresh perspective of the biblical text. It would be unproductive to dispense with it for the sake of maintaining a stand on the stability of Fourth Gospel irony. On the other hand, my proposal of perplexing irony may go a long way to address both sides of the debate.

⁷¹³ Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony".

⁷¹⁴ Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony", 193.

⁷¹⁵ Kelber, "In the beginning were the words: the apotheosis and narrative displacement of the Logos". And Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman".

⁷¹⁶ Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony", 200-201.

⁷¹⁷ Culpepper, "Reading Johannine Irony", 201.

⁷¹⁸ See also Berg, *Irony in the Matthean Passion Narrative*, 16.

Fourth Gospel Instabilities

Thus far, I have found 209 examples of irony from my exegesis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative. These are analysed in Chapters Five and Six of this thesis. Of these, only nine showed signs of instability, and only four of these demonstrated perplexing irony. We may assume that the sample size of 113 verses out of a total 882 (for the whole gospel) is adequate to provide useable data. The ratio of ironic stability to ironic instability is 23.33:1, and the ratio of stable to unstable irony is 50 :1. These ratios indicate that the number of instances of unstable irony is quite small, and the number of instances of perplexing irony is even smaller. However, these figures could reveal an even lower instance of instability if I had used a larger sample size of the Gospel. This is because the chosen passage is an example of sustained irony.

The Effect of Irony on the Reader

Life is full of uncertainties and perplexity. It can be an existential paradox and dilemma for anyone who is a victim of suffering.⁷¹⁹ While irony may not be able to make sense of tragedy, it can help a victim find some reason and purpose. When unstable irony is the result of a tragedy, the effect can be a poignant reminder of the fragility of our existence. A tragedy may also remind us of the human condition that no one gets through life unscathed, everyone faces trauma at some point in life, and that we are all mortal. Muecke reminds us that the effect of covert irony is tantamount to life. He says,

...irony has basically a corrective function. It is like a gyroscope that keeps life on an even keel or straight course, restoring the balance when life is being taken too seriously or, as some tragedies show, not seriously enough, stabilising the unstable, but also destabilising the excessively stable.⁷²⁰

With such a predominance of covert irony in the Fourth Gospel, the fourth evangelist, and also Muecke, both demonstrate their high regard for irony; maintaining that irony is indispensable, and can even be a virtue for the reader / audience.

⁷¹⁹ In the movie of the same name, Forrest Gump says, "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get". Zemeckis, *Forrest Gump* (Hollywood: Paramount Pictures, 1994).

⁷²⁰ Muecke, *Irony and the Ironic* (London: Methuen, 1982), 4.

The Effects of Unstable and Perplexing Ironies

When the protagonist becomes a victim, or has specific, identified and unmet desires, the plot has a hiatus of hopelessness. (The implied reader, if victimised, may lose confidence in the narrator or implied author.) Never do unstable ironies promise hope for the reader / hearer. Stable ironies offer hope as they are always resolved. Unstable ironies, by their very nature, end in tragedy. It is this tragic ending that underlines the hopelessness of ironic instabilities.

Unstable ironies begin badly and end up worse for the victimised protagonist or reader. More than this, the audience / hearer / reader may even predict the outcome. Aristotle describes the end of a tragic plot as an inevitable conclusion and this was often the case in the Greek tragedies.⁷²¹ A predictable plot can be a bland and boring story. However, inevitable does not necessarily mean predictable. As Steven James describes,

In one of the paradoxes of storytelling, the reader wants to predict how the story will end (or how it will get to the end), but he wants to be wrong. So the resolution of the story will be most satisfying when it ends up in a way that is both *inevitable* and *unexpected*.⁷²²

Yet, the inevitable end of a tragedy is somewhat predictable in that the protagonist continues to be victimised.

By adding ironic instability to the plot of a story, a writer attempts to make it more realistic, interesting and appealing. Muecke hinted that unstable irony can help destabilise what is traditionally too stable.⁷²³ If the instability is realistic, it connects with the readers' human condition. In this case, readers are able to relate their life experience to the drama as it unfolds. The outcome, even though tragic and hopeless for the victim, is credible. The tragic outcome results from the widespread human fear that no one deserves salvation.

As an example of unstable irony, I revisit Beckett's tragedy, *Waiting for Godot*. In the drama we see the two travellers, Vladimir and Estragon who epitomise their poverty in

⁷²¹ Aristotle, "Poetics", I: 454: 32-34; pp. 689-690. He provides instruction to tragedy writers saying, "The right thing, however, is in the Characters just as in the incidents of the play to endeavour always after the necessary or the probable; so that whatever such-and-such a thing, it shall be the necessary or probable outcome of his character; and whenever this incident follows on that, shall be either the necessary or probable consequence of it".

⁷²² James, "Story trumps structure", *Writers Digest*, 91 (Feb 2011): 39. (His emphasis).

⁷²³ Muecke, *Irony and the Ironic*, 4.

absurd ironic instability.⁷²⁴ The unstable irony they demonstrate is due to their self-imposed victimisation, and their cruelty towards each other and to Pozzo and Lucky. Their ultimate goal is warped, unrealistic and unachievable. Furthermore, Vladimir and Estragon wait throughout the whole drama for Godot to arrive. They have no idea when or why he is coming to meet them, and the drama ends with Godot still absent. The result is unstable irony of unresolved misunderstanding.

This thesis puts the case for perplexing irony. It was once unstable irony, yet after a period of suffering for the protagonist, and due to an unexpected external injection, the irony now resolves. The instability was temporary, and surprisingly, it has become stable through transformation. Perplexing irony speaks of people's experience of providence. Not everything that was once a disaster remains that way. There is always the possibility that things will improve, or that things will turn out for the best. For those who suffer tragedy, there is real reason for hope. This is not a naïve platitude, because without hope, life is unsupportable. Furthermore, for ideal readers, no matter what happens in this world, they can "take courage" because, as the Johannine Jesus says, "I have overcome the world" (16:24). Perplexing irony, that is born out of tragedy, creates hope for the ideal reader.

There is a redemptive element in the construction of a narrative that anticipates the resolution of unstable irony. Redemption is a noun borrowed from the ancient slave trade, meaning the action of buying a person out of slavery and setting them free (8:33-36). If a writer chooses to use perplexing irony in a play or narrative, then there will be heightened interest as the plot develops and the protagonist's crisis finally can be averted.

Perplexing irony is incarnational. By that, I mean that the incarnational theology of the Fourth Gospel invites confidence that hopelessness does not have the last word. If irony is perplexing, then it will be resolved. It will no longer be unstable, but rather it will

⁷²⁴ Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*.

become stable. The ideal reader trusts, hopes and prays that a deity will come and transform atrocious situations.

More than this, an irony that was once unstable but now resolved, reflects what is revealed in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel. The author implies that the incarnation is indeed good news! He claims, “And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only Son, full of grace and truth” (1:14). According to the fourth evangelist, it was indeed a costly, selfless act of love on God’s part, to send his Son to bring hope to a hopeless world.

Conclusion

We have seen that there is contention among Johannine scholars over whether or not there is unstable irony in the Fourth Gospel, and if so, whether it is permanently unstable. I have argued that there is unstable irony in the Gospel, and some of it is resolved and it stabilises or dissapates. In a scholarly discourse which has established a binary opposition between stable and unstable irony, my proposal of perplexing irony offers a third category. It can help resolve the oppositional dilemma identifying that many of the ironic instabilities in both irony and rhetoric are finally resolved. These now come under the headings of perplexing irony and perplexing rhetoric.

Of the seven passages in which Botha found unstable irony, all seven were resolved. Four of the five reader victimisations in Staley became perplexing irony as well. Kelber’s one example became stable, as did one of Moore’s examples. Add to this the example I uncovered, that concerns the Johannine Jesus who suffers, how he dies on the cross, and how this tragedy is resolved through the resurrection (see Chapters Five and Six).

Fourth Gospel perplexing irony helps to provide readers with an appreciation that *the Gospel is God’s revelatory word speaking into the perplexities and incongruities of humanity*. It helps the implied reader understand the significance of what the fourth evangelist conveys through the words of the Johannine Jesus. Furthermore, the use of perplexing irony by the fourth evangelist helps provide hope and assurance for ideal

readers. The end result is that ideal readers may continue to trust in a God who helps them make some sense of the vicissitudes of life.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE PURPOSES OF FOURTH GOSPEL IRONY AND OTHER ISSUES

Introduction

In this final chapter, there are some additional issues that need to be considered. I address the following issues: (i) discerning the purposes of irony in the Fourth Gospel; (ii) understanding the evangelist's 'intended irony' in the Gospel; and (iii) discussing the impact of ironic stability and instability in the Gospel.

The Purposes of Fourth Gospel Irony

I contend that good, irrefutable and non-fanciful evidence for the intentional presence of irony in the Fourth Gospel is established. I argue for this using my definition of key words and phrases already discussed. More than this, the 209 examples of irony I find in the passion narrative include nine examples of ironic instability, and the breadth of seventeen different types. All these ironies demonstrate that the author has a high ironic vision based on the foundational ironies of paradox and reversal: that the "Word" who "became flesh" was rejected by his own (1:11, 14). This thesis' analysis of the Fourth Gospel passion narrative demonstrates the extent, depth and brilliance in the use of sustained irony. Therefore, I contend that it is a test case for demonstrating authorial intent of irony as well as ironic instability in the whole of the Gospel. Additionally, because perplexing irony is in no small way linked to the resurrection, it is beyond reasonable doubt that the evangelist also intended perplexing irony.

Here in this section, I identify and explain a variety of purposes for Fourth Gospel irony and irony theory. It is true that most of these relate to stable irony, however, equally, some may also apply to persistently unstable or perplexing ironies. This multi-faceted approach will help dispel the notion that there is only one intended purpose for irony. On the basis of the research set out in the previous chapters, the purposes of irony in the Fourth Gospel include the five main categories set out below.

1. The fourth evangelist connects irony with the relationship between himself (as the author and evangelist) and the reader. That is, the fourth evangelist becomes the key point of connection with the implied reader, and thus between the real author and the real reader. Along these lines, we can discern the following purposes of irony:

(i) Irony helps the reader come to understand the high Christology of Jesus in the Gospel: his incarnation as the divine, pre-existent Logos; his passion, death and resurrection as the “manifestation of his glory”; his enthronement as the King; and his “exaltation to the Father”.⁷²⁵

(ii) Fourth Gospel irony spurs the reader on to discern the truth beyond the surface layer of events. All Fourth Gospel irony is covert. That is, the author does not explicitly say, “Isn’t it ironic that...”. Because the irony is hidden in the text, readers have the task of exploring and discovering the irony. This task of discovery helps to spur readers on to detect some of the less-obvious truth in the gospel.⁷²⁶ For instance, how profound the relationship with Jesus is for the believer! The man born blind can receive his sight (9:7) and begin his life of faith (9:27-28, 38). At the same time, the Pharisees (who would have been further up the socio-economic ladder than a blind person) remain in their sin because they refuse to believe into Jesus (9:39-41).

(iii) Because the Gospel’s irony is covert, and is intended to be covert, it highlights the contrast between the folly of an attitude that is unwilling to believe into Jesus and the satisfaction of a willingness to trust him.⁷²⁷ Its hiddenness draws the reader to dig deeper to discover more about Jesus. The use of irony prompts the reader to explore the text further and so to discover more and more truth.

(iv) Irony draws together the implied author and implied reader, as well as the Johannine Jesus and the ideal reader like co-conspirators. As this takes place, the relationship between Jesus and the reader is strengthened and deepened.⁷²⁸

(v) Irony reinforces the relationship between the reader and the narrator. By predominately using irony that is easily resolved, the fourth evangelist reinforces the reliability of the narrator, and therefore the fourth evangelist’s portrait of Jesus.⁷²⁹ For the most part, the fourth evangelist uses the narrator to tell the story about Jesus. The implied reader’s understanding of Jesus is completely reliant on the narrator. Furthermore, it is through what the narrator reveals about Jesus that the reader is drawn to faith into Jesus. This, the narrator reveals (20:31), is the reason for the Gospel.

⁷²⁵ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 232, 236.

⁷²⁶ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 177.

⁷²⁷ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 233.

⁷²⁸ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 233.

⁷²⁹ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 237.

Therefore, resolved irony reinforces the relationship between the reader and the narrator.

(vi) The irony that the reader of the Fourth Gospel discovers helps to provide the reader with a profile of the fourth evangelist. By inviting the reader to align him/herself with the implied reader, the Gospel helps the reader to move towards a concept of the implied author, and in this way towards a concept of the actual author, the fourth evangelist. Thus, the reader will recognise that the irony is a “signature of insight and art”, as well as being a display of the author’s “keen sense of incongruity, humour and pathos”.⁷³⁰

2. The fourth evangelist connects irony with the overall stated purpose for writing the Gospel (20:30-31). The possibilities include:

(i) To encourage readers to believe that Jesus is Messiah and that by believing into Jesus, they will receive eternal life through him (3:16; 5:24; 10:9-10; 11:25-26; 20:31). I contend, as I have detailed throughout this thesis, that we may assume that *irony is the intention of the author*. If this is so, then I claim that irony in the Fourth Gospel *must also have the same purpose as the Gospel overall*.

(ii) Through the use of irony, the fourth evangelist encourages readers to appreciate the message of the Gospel so that they will continue to find value in both the message of the Gospel itself, and in the person of Jesus Christ whom it portrays.⁷³¹

(iii) The evangelist uses irony to assist readers to understand Jesus’ teaching, receive him and believe into him. By doing so, readers share in the “evangelist’s concept of authentic faith”.⁷³²

(iv) In the Fourth Gospel, there are some secret disciples, including Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. It is possible the fourth evangelist used irony to persuade all secret disciples to come out in the open and fully embrace Jesus as Messiah.⁷³³

3. The evangelist uses irony as a polemic in a double-layered drama to (a) tell the story of the historical Jesus, and (b) give insight into the struggles of the Christian community.⁷³⁴ The possibilities include:

⁷³⁰ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 199, 178.

⁷³¹ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 236.

⁷³² Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 225. Alan Culpepper contrasts this ‘authentic faith’ with the ‘inauthentic faith of those who marvel at signs but do not grasp their significance.’ (Culpepper, *ibid.* p.226).

⁷³³ Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 152.

- (i) Some ironies emphasise the contrast of power between the Roman state as a political entity and the spiritual kingdom that is portrayed by the Johannine Jesus.
 - (ii) Some ironies reveal the hidden conflict between *hoi Ioudaioi* and the followers of Jesus, especially in relation to Jewish Christians being expelled from the synagogue. This becomes a major issue for the man healed of blindness in John 9. He was expelled from the synagogue because he publicly confessed being a follower of Jesus (9:22, 34, 35).
 - (iii) Some ironies rely on the double meaning of words and phrases. Those who understand the hidden or deeper meaning are believers (or “insiders”).⁷³⁵ Irony affirms insiders because, if we assume that they have the ability to understand what the author is conveying through irony, then they can grasp the hidden or deeper meaning of it. Ironically, in contrast, unbelievers / “outsiders” (or those in the process of becoming insiders) miss the truth altogether. Therefore, the purpose of some ironies is to affirm the “insider” status of believers.
 - (iv) Irony helps provide the tightest bonds of friendship.⁷³⁶ This happens with the ideal readers of the Gospel who believe into Jesus and become his followers. They become the community of “insiders” created through the irony of the Gospel.⁷³⁷
4. The fourth evangelist uses *intertextuality* associated with irony in a unique way. The direct references to the ancient Scriptures express irony. These instances of irony connected with Old Testament texts establish a christological portrait that affirms the divine origin of Jesus and the task he was sent to do. When it comes to the question of intertextuality, we need to look for quotations or allusions to earlier ancient documents in the Gospel. In doing so, we can examine Gospel passages to discern the irony connected with the reference.

In the Fourth Gospel there are many fewer direct references to the Old Testament than there are in the Synoptic accounts. Instead, there are far more indirect references.⁷³⁸ For example: The Λόγος who dwells among us (1:14) who is like the glory of the Lord in

⁷³⁴ Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd edn), 89.

⁷³⁵ Staley argues that the implied author makes the implied reader an insider. Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 116.

⁷³⁶ Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, 13-14, 29.

⁷³⁷ O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 31. Staley, *The Print's First Kiss: A rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in the Fourth Gospel*, 77; n15.

⁷³⁸ See Brown, *The Gospel According to John* (2 vols), 1: LIX-LX.

the Shekinah glory dwelling among the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 13:21-22). This is part of the Gospel’s foundational ironies of paradox and reversal where God condescends to come to us in the person of the divine Son, demonstrating ironic paradox. He comes to his own, yet they reject him (1:11), demonstrating ironic reversal.

Another indirect reference is made to the Old Testament concept of wisdom. The Λόγος in 1:1-3 is likened to wisdom which was involved in the act of creation (Psalm 104:24; Proverbs 3:19).

A second indirect reference is found in the “Bread of Life” discourse (6:31) that alludes to Exodus 16:4 and to Psalm 78:23-25.

My research provides samples of possible intertextual references. I analyse these by examining the eleven places that refer to the ‘Scriptures’ in the Gospel. There is irony expressed in all these passages. Table 9 below shows the details of this research.

TABLE 9: “The Scripture” in the Fourth Gospel

TEXT	Jesus Narrator Others	CONTEXT
2:22	N	The disciples remembered Jesus had spoken of his body as a temple, according to Scripture.
7:38b	J	Scripture predicted that living water would gush forth from believers.
7:42	O	Could Jesus be Messiah, coming from Galilee, rather than from Bethlehem as per Scripture?
10:35	J	From Scripture, Jesus refutes the blasphemy charge of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> . Confirms he is God’s Son.
13:18	J	Jesus predicts his own betrayal, as the Scripture has foretold.
17:12	J	No one was lost except the one who was doomed, that the Scripture may be fulfilled.
19:24	N	To fulfil Scripture, the soldiers gambled for Jesus’ garment, keeping it in one piece.
19:28	N	In order for Jesus to fulfil Scripture, he says, “I am thirsty”.
19:36	N	None of Jesus’ bones would be broken, so that Scripture might be fulfilled.
19:37	N	They will look on the one they pierced, in fulfilment of Scripture.
20:9	N	At the empty tomb, the disciples did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise.

In 2:22, we find the ironies of metaphor and double meaning, as everyone who was present thought that ‘the temple’ was the building made of stone. Instead, Jesus was speaking about his own body. (Psalm 69:9). In 7:38b, the living water Jesus speaks about is an irony of metaphor. This is because water is symbolic of what the Holy Spirit does. (7:39; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Joel 2:28). In 7:42, the argument about Jesus’ origins demonstrates the irony of misunderstanding as *hoi Ioudaioi* argue over Palestinian place names, while the implied reader knows about Jesus’ pre-existence. (1:1-3, 14; Micah

5:2). As Moloney says, “the irony runs deeper, as Jesus is ‘from God,’ not ‘from Galilee’”.⁷³⁹

In 10:35, the ironies are misunderstanding and the foundational ironies of paradox and reversal. This is because *hoi Ioudaioi* fail to understand and accept the true identity of Jesus, even though he came to his own people. (1:11; Psalm 82:6, “You are gods”). In 13:18, Jesus predicts his own betrayal from one of his own, as a further demonstration of paradoxical irony. (Psalm 41:9). This is echoed again in 17:12.⁷⁴⁰ In 19:24, we find the ironic parody of the nakedness of the divine Son. Jesus hangs on the cross unclothed, while the soldiers gamble to decide who gets his one-piece garment. (Psalm 22:18). In 19:28, the irony is reversal and paradox (Jesus offers “living water” – an analepsis to 7:38) yet here he thirsts for a drink. (Psalm 69:21, “gave me vinegar for my thirst”). In 19:36, the Scripture highlights that there are no bones broken, yet Jesus’ body is broken in death, an ironic metaphor. As well as this, it is an analepsis, a flash back to the offer of the bread of life (See 6:35; Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20). 19:37 has foundational ironies of paradox and reversal again (Zechariah 12:9-10), and 20:9 is ironic misunderstanding. They had been with Jesus, but now fail to connect his life and death with what he had fulfilled.⁷⁴¹

There are an additional thirteen direct references that include the use of keywords like “Isaiah” (12:38, 39) and “written” (2:17; 6:31, 45; 12:13, 15; 15:25).

In 1:23, John the Baptist says, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord” (Isaiah 40:3). He uses the metaphor of “the voice” to describe his prophetic mission of preparing the way for Jesus. In 1:29 we see the irony of prolepsis as John the Baptist declares, “here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”. His prophetic word is pointing forward to Jesus dying on behalf of the world to bring their forgiveness. The Old Testament passage is Isaiah 53:5-7, which speaks of a suffering servant who is “like a lamb that is led to the slaughter”. This

⁷³⁹ Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 254.

⁷⁴⁰ Thompson argues that the most likely Scripture the Johannine Jesus refers to here is Psalm 41:9. Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 354.

⁷⁴¹ There does not appear to be any specific and direct Old Testament reference to the resurrection of Jesus. However, references from “Psalms and Zechariah exemplify the point that the Scriptures at least anticipated the resurrection of Jesus”. Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 413.

servant of the Lord brings wholeness through his suffering.⁷⁴² This demonstrates an ironic prolepsis.

In 2:17, the context is of Jesus cleansing the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus quotes from Psalm 69:9 saying, “zeal for your house will consume me”. The content, context and irony are a repetition of 2:22 above.

In 6:14, the crowd who had witnessed Jesus multiply fish and bread exclaim, “this is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world”. These words echo what God had spoken to Moses saying, “I will raise up for them a prophet like you...” (Deuteronomy 18:15, 18). However, we discover later in the chapter that these people who recognised Jesus as a prophet only followed him so that they could see more miraculous signs or receive another free meal. The evangelist depicts them as following him only out of self interest, demonstrating an ironic double standard in their fickleness.

In 6:31, the crowd are expecting Jesus to perform another sign and remind him that God provided manna from heaven to feed his people. They said, “our ancestors ate manna in the wilderness; ‘he gave them bread from heaven to eat’” (Nehemiah 9:15; Psalm 78:24). They had unknowingly proclaimed the work of Jesus metaphorically. Later in 6:51, Jesus tells them plainly, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. The bread that I give for the life of the world is my flesh”. The ironies demonstrated here are misunderstanding and double entendre.

In 6:45, Jesus speaks to the same crowd and says, “‘they shall all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learns from the Father comes to me.” (Isaiah 54:13; Jeremiah 31:34). This verse reveals that it is God’s desire to draw everyone to Jesus. However, not everyone will respond, creating a persistent unstable irony of paradox.

In 7:37-38a, we find Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles declaring, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and let the one who believes in me drink” (Isaiah 55:1). The living

⁷⁴² The reversal irony is that the Suffering Servant is the Redeemer (Isaiah 53:4-5, 10). His divinity is revealed through his ability to provide atonement and forgive sin. Yet, it is this Suffering Servant who is smitten by the LORD (53:6, 10).

water becomes a river gushing forth to eternal life in the believer. This ironic metaphor of the Spirit is developed further in the next two verses.⁷⁴³

There are four direct references in John 12. The first two relate to the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. In 12:13, the people shout “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord” (Psalm 118:25-26). The fickle crowd hail him as the King of Israel, yet within a week, they have him killed demonstrating ironic reversal. The second reference concerning the triumphal entry is 12:15 that refers to Zechariah 9:9, “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion, look your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt”. This second intertextual reference reinforces the irony of 12:13.

In 12:37-38, we return to the refrain of the foundational irony of reversal. In the context of Jesus withdrawing from the crowd, the fourth evangelist comments about their unbelief. Even though Jesus “had performed so many signs in their presence”, the evangelist retorts, “Lord, who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Isaiah 53:1). Furthermore, the evangelist says in 12:40, “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they might not look with their eyes, and understand with their heart and turn – and I would heal them.” (Isaiah 6:9-10) These words explain their unbelief and reinforce the foundational irony of reversal. In 15:25, the reprise of foundational reversal irony resurfaces with the words, “they hated me without a cause” (Psalm 35:19; 69:4).

Based on my reading of the Gospel, intertextuality connects irony in each direct reference to the Old Testament. Furthermore, as explained earlier, these direct references in the Gospel are Christological in nature. They either reinforce the divine origin of the Johannine Jesus, or they focus on the task (as detailed by the fourth evangelist) that God sent Jesus to accomplish.

5. The fourth evangelist uses irony as a means of expressing theology.
 - (i) The evangelist uses irony to invoke a mode of divine-self communication that invites the reader into a deeper relationship with “the man” whom the evangelist identifies as the divine Son.⁷⁴⁴ This means that irony in the Gospel is revelatory

⁷⁴³ See Table 8 above.

⁷⁴⁴ O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 31-32.

language.⁷⁴⁵ In other words, irony is a vehicle of truth and God's self-disclosure. Therefore, irony is a means by which God informs the reader that something is hidden, that is worth discovering, and that it needs to be unwrapped. The fourth evangelist is inviting the reader to take hold of the irony and come to a deeper understanding of God through it.

(ii) By using the "shadow" and "mystery" of irony, the fourth evangelist produces insight, knowledge and engagement for the reader.⁷⁴⁶ The reciprocal benefit is satisfaction for the implied author.

(iii) Using the same argument, irony enhances "pleasure and perception" for ideal readers, enabling them "to see and perceive truth".⁷⁴⁷ Again, this provides satisfaction for the implied author.

By offering these possibilities, I demonstrate that there are multiple answers to the question: why did the fourth evangelist use irony? A text with covert irony provokes interest in the reader. In like manner, the irony of the Fourth Gospel creates reader interest in the Gospel and, for some, interest also in irony theory.

Ironic Instability Restated

I begin here with a restatement of my argument. In this thesis, my concern is the stability of irony in the Fourth Gospel, whether stable and resolved or unstable and unresolved. In Chapters Five and Six I identify and describe 118 examples of irony in the passion narrative. Of these, only five demonstrate ironic instability, and two of these are perplexing irony.⁷⁴⁸

I revisit here the first demonstration of ironic instability in the Fourth Gospel. This core or foundational ironic instability of reversal in the Gospel is God's specific, identified and unmet desire for the world. In summary, the Johannine Jesus reveals God's desire that the world find salvation through him, God's one and only Son (3:16-17). Yet, the Fourth Gospel clearly teaches that not everyone will choose to follow Jesus (1:10f; 3:12, 18; 5:37-47; 6:36, 44-47, 64-66; 7:5; 8:45, 55; 10:25-27; 12:26, 37-40; 16:9).

⁷⁴⁵ O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative mode and theological claim*, 31-32.

⁷⁴⁶ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 112.

⁷⁴⁷ See Bell, *The Midwife of Truth: The Nature of Irony and a Rationale for its Prevalence in the Gospel of John*; Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in Literary Design*, 165, 178.

⁷⁴⁸ In the Fourth Gospel passion narrative, stable ironies outnumber unstable ones in the ratio of 23.6 to 1.

For example, in 18:35 we read, “Pilate replied, ‘I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?’” The most obvious understanding of the Johannine Pilate’s questions is that the implied author intended that they be taken literally. So presumably, Pilate is portrayed as questioning Jesus’ reasons for creating hostility between *hoi Ioudaioi* and himself that warrant their insistence that Jesus face execution. However, I bring another possible understanding. I propose that the evangelist is using Pilate to remind the implied reader of this foundational irony of reversal based on God’s purpose for Jesus: to save the world (3:17; 4:42; 12:47).

Nevertheless, God’s desire persists. It will remain an unmet desire because God gives the choice to every person, whether or not to follow Jesus. The reality is that not every person will choose to follow Jesus. Ironically, God becomes the victim because God has compassion for the world. God does not force people to believe into Jesus, however delights for those who follow to introduce others to Jesus. For example, Jesus calls Philip, and Philip introduced Nathanael to Jesus. Expressing joy, Jesus gives great promises (1:43-51). When people believe into Jesus it brings great delight to God who honours them (12:26). Conversely, when people refuse to believe into Jesus, God’s desire for all to be saved remains unmet. The result is persistent paradoxical unstable irony.

A second example is also worth repeating here. This is the major demonstration of ironic instability in all four gospels. It is the ironic story concerning Jesus’ suffering and death, and the amazing event that followed it.⁷⁴⁹ For Jesus to suffer condemnation as the innocent One and to die as a criminal was tragic.⁷⁵⁰ The evangelist portrays the religious authorities as the ones who perpetrated this act upon Jesus.⁷⁵¹ For Jesus to undergo such cruelty knowingly and willingly was indeed courageous. The crucifixion

⁷⁴⁹ See my comments on this example of irony in my exegesis of John 19 in Chapter Five of this thesis.

⁷⁵⁰ Pilate declared that Jesus was innocent according to Roman law (19:6).

⁷⁵¹ *Hoi Ioudaioi* who were present at Jesus’ trial before Pilate had perverted the course of justice by influencing the verdict and sentencing-decision of Pilate. They had resorted to ‘lynch law’ “to secure Jewish unity at the expense of a scapegoat” (John 11:49-53). Schneider, "Writing in the Dust: Irony and lynch law in the Gospel of John", 32.

of Jesus was the demise of the protagonist as ironic instability *par excellence*. Matthew Schneider comments concerning the ironic instability of the victimisation of Jesus through his passion and death.

Jesus ultimately fell victim to the [characteristically ironic] ...instability [that] ...does not, of course, invalidate either that irony or the truth it uncovered.⁷⁵²

The passion narrative is one of deep tragedy. However, on the first day of the week, after the crucifixion of Jesus, the tomb in which his corpse had been laid was empty of Jesus. All four different gospel accounts claim that Jesus' tomb had no corpse. The tragedy of Jesus' death was overturned by his resurrection. The ironic instability that the evangelist portrays because of the victimisation of the protagonist was only for a period of time. The victim became the victor and the unstable irony was reversed and resolved. Further than that, the resurrection does two things concerning the irony. First, it reverses the unstable irony of Jesus' suffering, converting it into perplexing irony of reversal. The second outcome of the resurrection is that it alters the cross' irony dramatically because it resolves the ironic instability. In this act, the resurrection overcomes the victimisation of Jesus, and life conquers death (5:24).

There are several other less significant examples of resolved reader 'entrapment' or 'victimisation' in the Fourth Gospel. The resolved rhetoric, that both Eugene Botha and Jeffrey Staley put forward, are good examples of reader entrapment or victimisation as discussed in Chapters Two and Seven.

The Impact of Unstable Irony: Persistent or Perplexing

Tragedies cause deep sadness and grief for the surviving victims, their families and supporters. The impact of experiencing tragedy can be discouragement, depression, hopelessness and despair. The performance of ancient tragedies, by contrast, was often cathartic offering not only memorable stories but also an intensified experience of life. Bruce Fraser, commenting on Aristotle says, "[he] held something like a process model

⁷⁵² Schneider, "Writing in the Dust: Irony and lynch law in the Gospel of John", 34.

of mental apprehension. [He believed that the] ...value of tragic poetry lies in its evocation of feelings (...pity ... fear) which have the effect of an emotional purge".⁷⁵³

There is, however, a different journey for those experiencing perplexing irony. When the irony resolves unexpectedly, there is a sense of wonder and awe.

When the implied reader sees a resolution to the victimisation, then a different outcome from that of persistent ironic instability can be expected. Hope, joy, and contentedness come from hearing the good news. Furthermore, a plot that ends well brings confidence to the ideal reader that God's purpose can unfold despite the most hopeless circumstances.

Conclusion

The fourth evangelist demonstrates five main purposes for the irony he uses in the Gospel. They are: (i) to connect the reader with the stated purpose according to 20:30-31, which is that readers will come to faith in Messiah Jesus. (ii) To enhance the relationship between himself and the reader. (iii) To portray the polemic of a double-layered drama concerning the historical Jesus on one layer, and the struggles of the Johannine community on the other. (iv) To emphasise the significance of intertextuality and irony. And (v) To demonstrate that irony in the Gospel is the vehicle for highlighting truth and conveying theological mystery and revelation.

Furthermore, in this chapter, I have argued for intentional irony. There is a purpose for all intended ironies in the Fourth Gospel, whether resolved or unresolved. By including persistent and perplexing irony, the implied author connects with the suffering experienced through life for all humanity. Furthermore, regardless of whether the irony is persistent or perplexing, if Jesus had not suffered as a victim, the Fourth Gospel story would have been meaningless for the reader who suffers.

The message of the Fourth Gospel is that both God and Jesus suffer as victims of ironic instability. God's situation is unresolved because there are always some people who will not believe into the divine Son whom God sent. Additionally, the ironic instability

⁷⁵³ Fraser, *The Influence of Greek Tragedy* [Web page] (Cambridge University, 25 September 2016 1997); available from <http://people.ds.cam.ac.uk/blf10/links/trag-theory.html>.
<http://people.ds.cam.ac.uk/blf10/links/trag-theory.html>

is perplexing in the second example. Jesus, the protagonist, suffers as a victim. In the end, before daybreak on the third day, after the tragedy of crucifixion, death and burial, all is resolved. Amazingly, the victim becomes the victor, and the Johannine Jesus transforms death into life in his resurrection body.

Thus we can say, *Ironic Authority* helps connect the authority of the implied author with that of the actual author and through them to the authority of God, who “authors” this divine drama.⁷⁵⁴ Diagram 11 below is a graphical portrayal of this phenomenon.

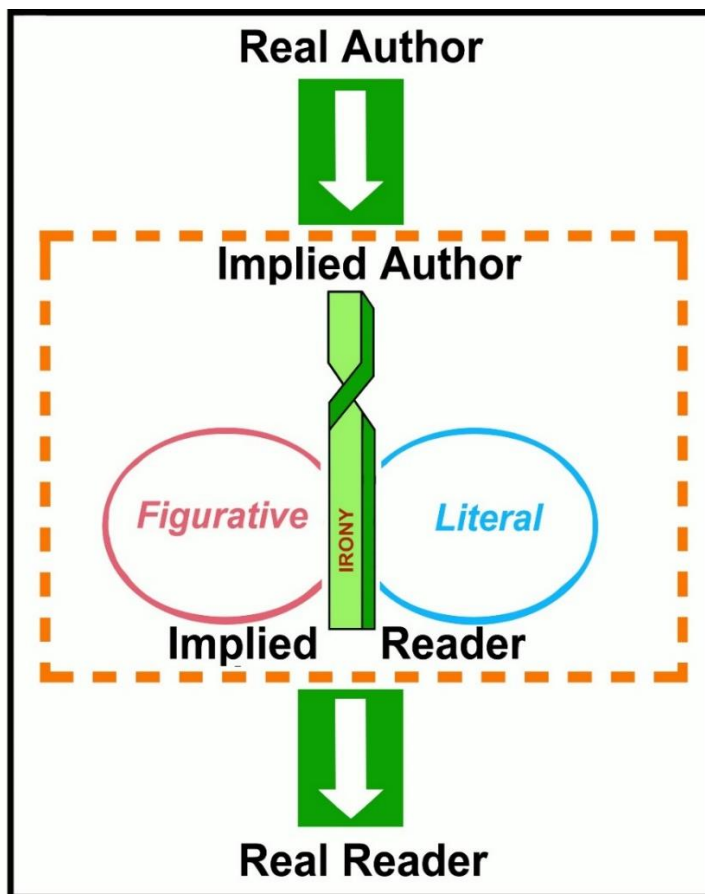


DIAGRAM 11: The Effect of Ironic Authority

In Diagram 11, the implied author and the implied reader are connected because of the intended open-ended irony. The intended irony comes from the real author through the

⁷⁵⁴ I am using “God as author” in a generic sense as the “source of authority”, and not in the sense of specifying a particular model of scriptural inspiration.

implied author, but, to be appreciated, the irony needs to be found in the text by the real reader. At the same time, both figurative and literal meanings are able to be discerned alongside each other. The same is true for stable, unstable and perplexing ironies because all are intended.

The presence of this perplexing irony in the Gospel encourages the implied reader to be an ideal reader and discover that Jesus is Messiah and believe into Jesus. Fourth Gospel irony underlines the importance of discerning the revelation that Jesus is the divine Son, and serves as an impetus helping the implied reader progress in the journey of faith.

Fourth Gospel irony facilitates faith by employing this literary device to create interest in the reader. It echoes what God desires for everyone, namely a relationship with God through Jesus. The fourth evangelist achieves the purpose of drawing the reader to a relationship of intimacy with God.

CONCLUSION

“Ironic Authority”, as the thesis title suggests, draws together many of the instances of irony identified in this research project. By focussing this thesis on the Johannine passion narrative, an example of sustained irony, I have demonstrated a significant incidence of irony associated with Jesus suffering adversity. Jesus’ suffering is at the hands of “authority figures” including the Sanhedrin, the High Priests Annas and Caiaphas, the guards and soldiers, and Pilate. From a literary perspective, each of these characters contribute to the abuse of Jesus. Yet, the passion narrative is so presented by the fourth evangelist that the abusers become the victims of the irony in each case. Those who appear on the surface to have the upper hand in the passion narrative become the “losers”. The “winner” is Jesus, the one who is abused, harangued and crucified. This indeed is the incongruent twist to emphasise his authority.

The preceding eight chapters have set forth my understanding of various aspects of the stability of Fourth Gospel irony. I have defined the three classifications of irony: stable, unstable and perplexing ironies. I have examined the work of scholars who wrote concerning literary devices, and their research has been arranged into various schools of thought.

The three families of irony (verbal, situational and dramatic), and the seventeen different types of irony from the Gospel have been the basis for classifying all Johannine ironies. These include: (verbal) double-meaning, metaphor, sarcasm, satire and unanswered question; (situational) reversal, prolepsis, analepsis, juxtaposition, paradox, and dualism; and (dramatic) understatement, hyperbole, misunderstanding, parody, double standard, and double entendre.

Rhetorical criticism has been a useful tool to analyse the Johannine passion narrative. The results of examples of rhetoric and irony were tabulated. Examples of unstable and perplexing irony, a description of the importance of intentional ironies, and my exploration of the impact of these on the implied reader were offered. The results of the analysis confirm that the fourth evangelist does use unstable and perplexing ironies.

There are five main purposes of irony in the Fourth Gospel. These are: (i) Irony enhances the relationship between the author and readers of the Gospel. (ii) Irony helps readers of the Gospel to believe into Jesus as Son of God, and have eternal life through him. (iii) Irony serves as a persuasive tool to draw attention and offer hope to readers. This concerns the two major problems facing the Johannine community in the later part of the first century: the problem of the authority and power of Rome, and the clash with a hostile group of Judeans. (iv) The fourth evangelist emphasises the value of the Old Testament Scriptures for the Johannine community by providing an incongruent twist each time a direct reference is made. This is to highlight that the Scriptures are an important guide to comprehending the gospel story and to matters of faith and life. And, (v) irony demonstrates the importance of truth, theology, mystery and revelation. These five key purposes, provide us with sufficient evidence for the authorial intent of stable, unstable and perplexing ironies. Furthermore, they demonstrate to us why the incidence of irony is so prolific and pervasive in the text.

In this conclusion I now turn to several significant insights from my research,

Insights and Discoveries

The first two discoveries are general ones, which I restate in my own words, and the last six have been the result of my argued position. In my concluding section I offer future research possibilities. In my research I have found the following.

Elusive Nature of Irony

First, irony is difficult to grasp. It is much easier to discover an example of it than to explain its meaning and significance.⁷⁵⁵ So, when people think they have understood ironic instability they need to be careful that they do not become the victim of the irony they define or try to understand.⁷⁵⁶ In this thesis, I catalogue the types of irony in the Gospel's passion narrative.⁷⁵⁷ These types of literary devices are the foundation upon which identification of the various irony types is made. Irony cannot be tamed. There

⁷⁵⁵ See Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, 13.

⁷⁵⁶ See Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 4.

⁷⁵⁷ Duke says, "No one ... has ever been deluded enough to charge into the mists of irony in hopes of emerging with a complete catalogue of types". Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*, 18.

will always be more to be discovered about Fourth Gospel irony as it is slippery and elusive.⁷⁵⁸

Double-Layered Drama & Irony

Secondly, the fourth evangelist uses irony to tell his double-layered story in the Gospel.⁷⁵⁹ On one hand, the overt layer of the Gospel narrative reveals an eye-witness account of the historical Jesus. On the other hand, the hidden layer depicts a different time and place, highlighting the struggles of the Christian community towards the end of the first century.⁷⁶⁰ The fourth evangelist tells the first layer of the story using sustained irony in his Gospel. The two passages of sustained irony, the narrative of the man born blind (9:1-41) and the passion narrative (18:1-19:16a) are windows into the covert narrative.

The pervasive use of irony in these passages serves as a one-way window, taking us from the layer of the historical Jesus to the layer of the Christian community. In John 9, the hidden drama reveals the struggle that the Johannine community has with a hostile group of *hoi Ioudaioi* from Judea.

When we turn to the passion narrative, the conflict in the obvious layer of the drama happens as Jesus comes face to face with Pilate, the Roman official in Jerusalem. The fourth evangelist portrays Jesus as one who submits to Roman torture and death by crucifixion, a form of state-imposed stamp of authority.⁷⁶¹ However, christologically, the Johannine Jesus is king. Jesus remains in control, in spite of Pilate declaring that he has the power over Jesus' life and death. The hidden layer of the drama underlying this struggle with worldly power tells the story of the conflict the Johannine community has with authority from outside its borders.⁷⁶² The hidden story concerns its Jewish members who are being forced to withdraw from synagogue worship on the risk of expulsion.⁷⁶³ The polemic of the passion narrative provides community members with strategies to deal with the oppression they face from outside. We can see this in the

⁷⁵⁸ See Stibbe, "Elusive Christ: a new reading of the Fourth Gospel".

⁷⁵⁹ See Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd edn), 89.

⁷⁶⁰ See Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd edn).

⁷⁶¹ Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 382-383.

⁷⁶² See Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd edn), 89.

⁷⁶³ See Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd edn), 46-66.

obvious drama that unfolds and the incidence of sustained irony, that highlights this double layer.

This thesis examines this double-layered drama from the perspective of ironic authority. That is, in the Johannine passion narrative, those who appear to have authority in the top layer of the drama (the Judean authorities and the Roman officials) are the victims of irony. They become the laughingstock for the implied reader. Conversely, those who suffer abuse become the winners in the eyes of the fourth evangelist. With such a perspective of their adversity, this thinking would have brought hope to readers of the Fourth Gospel.

Christology & Paradoxical Irony

We can see from Appendices 1 and 2 that most instances of paradoxical irony in the Gospel's passion narrative are connected to the big picture of God or Jesus. The divine character as well as divine desires and plans are the subject of these paradoxical ironic situations.

Irony is strongly connected with the high Christology of the pre-existent Logos. In the Gospel Prologue the evangelist writes that the Logos is the divine being who became the divine Son. He writes, "The word became flesh and dwelt among us" (1:14). Whenever the evangelist makes the true identity of Jesus the focus of the narrative, irony is never far away. For example, the arguments Jesus has with *hoi Ioudaioi* are concerned with his origin, his pre-existence, his identity or his mission as Son of God (2:18-25; 5:16-18; 6:41-52, 60-66; 7:40-52; 8:33-59; 10:24-39; 11:46-57). The irony becomes apparent to the implied reader, since these details about Jesus were revealed at the beginning of the Gospel in the Prologue (1:1-18). The reader is privy to the true identity of Jesus, while hapless characters blunder their way through the drama to create irony, emphasis and fascination for the reader.

Power & Powerlessness

On examination, the passion narrative highlights the prominence of power and powerlessness for the fourth evangelist. The evangelist uses the characters of Jesus, Judas, the arresting group, Pilate, soldiers, guards, officials, the chief priests and *hoi*

Ioudaioi to highlight the clash of the authorities of Rome and of God.⁷⁶⁴ The evangelist describes this theme using ironies of paradox (nine times), reversal (nine times), misunderstanding (eight times), parody (seven times), double meaning (five times), satire (five times), double standard (five times) and sometimes double entendre (three times).⁷⁶⁵ This demonstrates that there are three significant occasions where the fourth evangelist brings issues of power and powerlessness into vivid focus for the reader.

The first section of the passion narrative, that focusses the implied reader's attention on issues of power and powerlessness, is the scene of the arrest in the garden (18:1-14). The ironic themes include: (i) the huge number in the arresting group who come apprehensively and armed to arrest an unarmed, calm man; (ii) the misunderstanding of the arresting group concerning the identity of Jesus and their falling down when they hear him speak the divine name; (iii) the confrontation between Jesus (the betrayed) and Judas (the betrayer); and (iv) Peter's use of a weapon to try to defend Jesus.

The second section that deals with the power and powerlessness theme, is the beginning of John 19. Here, three significant things happen: (i) Pilate flogs Jesus (19:1); (ii) the soldiers dress him in "royal" garb and mock him, unaware that Jesus is the true king (19:2-3); and (iii) Pilate attempts to ridicule Jesus as "the man", in front of *hoi Ioudaioi* (19:5).

The third significant section is 19:11-15 that deals with Pilate's exhibition of positional authority at the end of Jesus' trial. The issues relating to this theme here are the following. (i) The double entendre is of who has the greater sin / authority: Pilate, *hoi Ioudaioi*, or Judas? (19:11). (ii) The ambiguity of what Jesus says to Pilate concerning the origin of Pilate's authority, that it is *ἀνωθεν* (from above). This ambiguity makes the reader uncertain whether Pilate hears that his authority is positional "from Caesar" or a gift "from God" (19:11). (iii) The evangelist conveys ambiguity and irony concerning who sits on the judgment seat, whether Pilate or Jesus (19:13). (iv) Pilate's mocking declaration to *hoi Ioudaioi*: "Here is your king!" is significant (19:14). (v) When *hoi Ioudaioi* respond saying, "ἄρον ἄρον (Lift him away! Lift him away!)", they

⁷⁶⁴ The following statistics are based on Appendices 1 and 2.

⁷⁶⁵ I find that 58 out of 118 examples (about half) of the occurrences of irony in the passion narrative deal with issues of power, authority and powerlessness. Other types not listed here include sarcasm (twice), hyperbole (twice) and unanswered question (once).

unknowingly exalt him (19:15).⁷⁶⁶ And (vi) the response of the chief priests in making a confession of allegiance to the authority of a foreign polytheistic dictator is an utter betrayal of their covenant relationship with God (19:15).

For example, Pilate questions Jesus: “Where are you from?” (19:9). Jesus does not answer him. Reacting to being ignored by Jesus, Pilate asserts his position as Roman official saying twice, “I have the authority...” (19:10).⁷⁶⁷ However, the implied reader already knows that Jesus is the Logos who co-created the world (1:1-3); and that when the Johannine Jesus speaks the divine name, his aggressors want to kill him (8:58-59), or they fall down (in worship) involuntarily before him (18:6). The type of irony in Pilate’s response is misunderstanding.

These three sections within the passion narrative become progressively more intense as the abuse and irrational behaviour towards Jesus escalates. This is seen in the third section where the evangelist highlights this absurdity by using ironic language to subvert or reverse the Roman power structures. It is the Roman Empire versus Jesus’ kingdom. With the help of the fourth evangelist’s use of rhetoric and irony, Jesus overturns the human authority with his kingdom’s values. The effect of this clash is to bring hope to those who suffer injustice, because, according to the evangelist, God’s authority wins against human regimes. This was the covert message the evangelist brought to the Johannine community and, by way of extension, now brings to the ideal reader who undergoes adversity.

Perplexing Irony

When the fourth evangelist resolves unstable irony in his story of Jesus, perplexing irony results. In the process of resolving ironic instability, the evangelist draws on the Old Testament as a fertile resource to find examples of perplexing irony. Moreover, the resolution of unstable ironies (and hence the creation of perplexing irony) brought hope to members of the Johannine community who were suffering. These members might then expect that their adversity would be short-lived. This is because the God of the Fourth Gospel brings hope, even in the midst of great suffering. Additionally, by extension, the Gospel offers hope to believers who experience adversity.

⁷⁶⁶ This is my translation.

⁷⁶⁷ This is my translation of ἐξουσίαν ἔχω.

Crucicentrality

This thesis affirms that the climax of the Fourth Gospel is found in the narratives of the cross and resurrection. There are two significant reasons for this claim. First, there is a host of ironies that either look forward to the cross, the death and the resurrection, or are directly associated with these narratives. This feature happens nowhere else in this Gospel.

The second reason is in the evangelist's usage of the word μέσος (= in the midst / central). The word μέσος is used to locate the cross of Jesus at Golgotha (19:18), and also it is used in conjunction with the resurrection appearances where it is repeated for emphasis (20:19, 26). But, μέσος has an ironic double meaning in that it also speaks of a recognised theological position for this Gospel. The research shows that μέσος focusses the implied reader's attention on the cross.

Future Research Possibilities

I believe that the "well is deep" (4:11) regarding Fourth Gospel irony.⁷⁶⁸ This thesis is not the last word concerning irony in the Fourth Gospel. It is my hope that this research will be a catalyst for further study. I am of the opinion that there are further possibilities for ongoing Johannine research in the areas of (i) how the evangelist uses irony as a literary technique and what its effect is on the reader, (ii) how Johannine irony is connected with Jesus' relationship with the world, and (iii) an application of careful nuancing of these categories, families and types to other Johannine passages, especially John 9.

Final Summary

Irony was the best way of telling the story of Jesus, the divine Son, who willingly chose the path of suffering and death to bring life. It appears that the most fruitful way for the fourth evangelist to express the story of Jesus was by using a wide variety of irony among other literary and rhetorical devices. The stable, unstable and perplexing ironies of his story of Jesus are all covert, as are all its stable and unstable examples of rhetoric. These literary devices abound throughout the narratives and discourses, especially in

⁷⁶⁸ Moore, "Are There Impurities in the Living Water that the Johannine Jesus Dispenses? Deconstruction, feminism, and the Samaritan woman", 227.

the passion narrative. More than this, irony shapes the Gospel. The prevalence, complexity, and profound theology that come from these seventeen types of irony shape the Johannine Gospel. They have also contributed to its appeal to readers throughout the centuries.

While the conflict between hostile opponents – depicted as *hoi Ioudaioi* – and some members of the Johannine community continued in the late first century, the perplexing irony of the Gospel encouraged Christian believers. Even in the midst of their adversity, its quality of resolving the most drastic of situations was incentive for them to continue to have hope and take courage (16:33). Modern readers face different conflicts too, yet, even though separated by time, language, culture and transmission issues, all readers will still benefit from encountering the truth embodied by the Johannine Jesus.

The climax of the Fourth Gospel is found in the passion narrative. The ironic authority of the divine Son is demonstrated in his crucifixion, death and resurrection. The prolific concentration of irony and rhetoric reinforces the importance and centrality of these narratives for the Johannine community and for all who believe into Jesus. Furthermore, paradoxically, the cross is the place where Jesus is enthroned and glorified as King and Messiah. It is also the place where the people of the world may come and be “at-one” with God. ω

APPENDIX 1: IRONIES IDENTIFIED IN JOHN 18:1-19:16a

John 18

Verse	Description	Irony Type
2-3	Size of arresting group is much more than needed	Hyperbole
2-3	Huge size of arresting group to arrest one person is comedic	Satire
2-4	'Come and see' builds Jesus' ministry, Judas comes to end it	Reversal
2-11	Jesus' unmet desire to unite all, resolved through the cross	Paradox (PLX)
3	Many with weapons cannot overpower the unarmed Jesus	Paradox
3	They light torches to find the Light of the World	Understatement
3	They light torches to find the Light of the World	Dualism
3	They light torches to find the Light of the World	Parody
3-10	Uselessness & futility of weapons to arrest Jesus	Satire
4	Seeking Jesus for the gift of life (1:38) or for his death (v4)	Analepsis
4	Jesus prevents Judas, the betrayer, from betraying him	Reversal
4	Judas, the betrayer, imitates betraying Jesus	Parody
4	Judas, one of the twelve, is the betrayer	Misundstng
4	Arresting group is fearful, while Jesus is calm	Juxtaposition
4	Jesus knew they were coming to arrest him and was ready	Paradox
4	Arresting group did not expect Jesus to be awaiting his arrest	Misundstng
4-5	Arresting group don't understand Jesus' identity	Misundstng
4-8	Jesus arrests the arresting party	Reversal
6	Arresting group imitates worship as they fall down	Parody
6	Falling down – an ironic posture of worship, scorning arrest	Satire
6	Jesus uses the divine name "I Am". Who can arrest God?	Paradox
6	Jesus, the betrayed, confronts Judas, the betrayer (13:19)	Paradox
10	Peter misunderstands Jesus' mission; weapons not needed	Misundstng
10-11	Flash forward to the 'cup' of Jesus' suffering	Prolepsis
11	Jesus rebukes Peter for using a sword to defend him	Sarcasm
11	Peter learns about the mission of Jesus	Unanswered Q
12	Arresting group is not in control of the arrest, Jesus is	Dble entdr
12	Arresting group is not in control of the arrest, Jesus is	Paradox
12-14	Arresting group assumes they have control of Jesus' arrest	Misundstng
12-14	The Son who is the Liberator, is bound	Metaphor
12-14	The Son who sets us free is bound	Reversal
12-14	Flash back to Caiaphas: He sees Jesus' death as collateral damage	Analepsis
12-14	Caiaphas is unaware that his prophecy is being fulfilled	Misundstng
12-14	Caiaphas' prophecy has double meaning: Sanhedrin / Readers	Dble entdr
15-27	Peter denies discipleship outside / Jesus affirms disciples inside	Juxtaposition
17	Peter's confession: 'I am not' / Jesus disclosure: 'I Am'	Reversal
17	Peter's denial is flash back to JBap: 'I am not Messiah' (1:20)	Analepsis
17	Peter's denial is flash back to his death promise (13:37)	Analepsis
17	Peter's denial is flash forward to Galilean breakfast (21:15ff)	Prolepsis
17	Peter, the best confessing witness, denies his discipleship	Dble Standard
19-24	Jesus taught publicly, but Sanhedrin deal secretly	Dble Standard
21-27	Jesus affirms disciples inside / Peter denies (x2) discipleship outside	Juxtaposition
22-23	Official operates outside the law, slapping Jesus in the face	Dble Standard
22-23	A culpable one is unpunished while the innocent one is assaulted	Paradox
22-23	A culpable one is unpunished while the innocent one is assaulted	Dble Standard
22-23	A culpable one is unpunished while the innocent one is assaulted	Reversal
22-30	<i>Hoi Ioudaioi</i> are more insolent than Jesus is to his assailant	Dble Standard
25	Peter's confession: 'I am not' / Jesus disclosure: 'I Am'	Reversal
25	Peter's denial is flash back to his death promise (13:37)	Analepsis
25	Peter's denial is flash forward to Galilean breakfast (21:15ff)	Prolepsis

John 18

Verse Description

25	Peter, the best confessing witness, denies his discipleship	Dble Standard
27	Peter's denial is flash back to his death promise (13:37)	Analepsis
27	Peter's denial is flash forward to Galilean breakfast (21:15ff)	Prolepsis
27	Peter, the best confessing witness, denies his discipleship	Dble Standard
28	<i>Hoi Ioudaioi</i> observe religious purity, yet kill innocent Jesus	Misundstng
28	<i>Hoi Ioudaioi</i> observe religious purity, yet kill innocent Jesus	Dble Standard
33	'Are you king of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> ?' Pilate makes fun of Jesus	Parody
33-34	Jesus, the one being interrogated, interrogates the interrogator	Reversal
35a	'I'm not a Jew, am I?' While scolding <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> , Pilate risks joining them	Satire
35a	'I'm not a Jew, am I?' Superficial answer: 'NO'; hidden agenda: 'YES'	Unanswered Q
35b	The ones Jesus came to save handed him over to Pilate	Reversal (UPI)
35b	The Father's desire, to save all, is denied him by <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i>	Paradox (UPI)
35c	'What have you done?' Is Pilate questioning or accusing?	Dble Mng
36	Jesus' servants don't fight to prevent his arrest, yet Peter did	Paradox
36f	God's kingdom isn't violent, even though Jesus suffers violence	Paradox
38	'What is truth?' Judicial or relational truth?	Dble Mng
38	When Jesus does not answer, readers are to go back to understand	Unanswered Q
38	'What is truth?' Pilate is unaware that Jesus, the Truth, is on trial	Misundstng
38	The trial should prove Jesus innocent; instead injustice prevails	Dble Standard
39-40	When Pilate releases Barabbas, Jesus faces condemnation	Juxtaposition
39-40	The wrong 'son of the father' is released when Barabbas is freed	Misundstng
39-40	Barabbas and Jesus are both "sons of the father"	Dble Mng
40	Barabbas the bandit is free, yet Jesus the innocent one is detained	Reversal

John 19

1-3	Royal garb for mockery, Jesus wears as regal robes to his exaltation	Paradox
1-6	Pilate's words & actions are incongruent: he flogs the innocent Jesus	Dble Standard
1-16	Jesus suffers, dies as victim of tragedy; later rises to life	Reversal (PLX)
2-3	Soldiers dress Jesus in symbolic royal garb to poke fun	Parody
2-3	Soldiers pay cynical homage to Jesus as 'king'	Sarcasm
2-5	Crown and purple robe are symbols of royal paraphernalia	Metaphor
2-5	The parody designed to ridicule Jesus reverses to exalt him	Reversal
2-6	Jesus' true kingship not recognised by those he came to rule	Paradox
3	Jesus is the true king, yet soldiers mock his kingship	Reversal
3	Jesus is the true king, yet soldiers are never aware of it	Misundstng
3	Jesus is <i>no</i> king to Pilate, yet to author he is the <i>real</i> one	Misundstng
3	Jesus is more than King of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> , his kingdom is God's	Understatement
5	<i>ἰδοὺ</i> is unintended double meaning: For crowd or reader?	Dble Entdr
5	Is 'the man' a throne name? Or harmless caricature?	Dble Mng
5	'Look at the human being' is a cutting remark victimising Jesus	Sarcasm
5	'Look at the human being' is poking fun at Jesus	Parody
5	Hailed as a mortal here, yet author portrays Jesus as 'Word of God'	Paradox
5	In FG, Jesus' signs define him as more than 'a man'	Understatement
6	<i>Hoi Ioudaioi</i> ask Pilate to judge, yet don't accept verdict	Dble Standard
6-11	Pilate thinks he has power, but alongside Jesus he has none	Misundstng
8	Pilate cannot save the supernatural Jesus	Paradox
9b	'Where are you from?': Pilate doesn't understand Jesus' mission	Misundstng
9b	'Where are you from?': a geographical or spiritual home?	Dble Mng
9b	When Jesus does not answer, readers are to go back to understand	Unanswered Q
9-10	Pilate overestimates his authority compared with Jesus	Hyperbole
9-10	Pilate doesn't realise his authority doesn't match Jesus'	Misundstng
10	Pilate identifies himself with God, yet this is only true of Jesus	Reversal

John 19

Verse Description

11	Who has greater sin / authority? Pilate, <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> or Jesus?	Irony Type
11	<i>Anōthen</i> (from above) is a symbolic of God's name (see 3:3,7)	Dble entdr
13	'Sat on the judge's bench' has no subject: Pilate or Jesus?	Metaphor
13	If Jesus sits, is it symbolic enthronement or Pilate's incompetence?	Dble Mng
13	Does Pilate Judge Jesus? Or does Jesus judge all?	Satire
13	Narrator is deliberately ambiguous to emphasise Jesus' control	Reversal
13-14	While judgment happens, saving Passover lambs are prepared	Misundstng
14	Is 'your king' a throne name? Or harmless caricature?	Juxtaposition
14	Day of preparation (of Passover) flash back to JBap (1:35, 39)	Dble Mng
14	Day of preparation (of Passover) flash forward to Jesus' death	Analepsis
14	Jesus is <u>no</u> king to Pilate, yet to author he is the <u>real</u> one	Prolepsis
14c	Pilate intends his reference to 'Jesus your king' as mockery	Misundstng
14-16	Lamb of God saves the world/ Passover lambs save <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i>	Parody
14-16	Passover lambs are slaughtered, while the Lamb of God dies	Reversal
14-16	Passover is crucial for the covenant; <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> kill wrong lamb	Juxtaposition
15a	<i>Hoi Ioudaioi</i> actually exalt Jesus unknowingly: 'Aron'='lift up'	Paradox
15a	When <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> exalt Jesus it is a flash forward to the cross	Parody
15b	Instead of pledging allegiance to God / Jesus, they apostasise	Prolepsis
15b	Betrayal of Salvation history by those God chose to come to him	Reversal
16a	The cross is a parody of Jesus' exaltation	Paradox (UPI)
		Parody

UPI = Unstable Persistent Irony;

PLX = Perplexing Irony

TOTAL = 120

APPENDIX 2: IRONIES IDENTIFIED IN JOHN 19:16b-20:31

John 19

Verse	Description	Irony Type
17	Shouldering the wooden cross-beam is symbolic of sacrifice	Metaphor
17	βασιτάζω refers back to Isaac carrying wood for his sacrifice (Gen 22:6ff)	Analepsis
17	<i>Hoi Ioudaioi</i> take up stones to kill him (10:31), yet he takes up the cross & dies	Reversal
18	μέσος means both “in the middle” and “central”	Dble Mng
18	μέσος emphasises the centrality of the cross in Johannine theology	Dble Entdr
18	μέσος emphasises the kingship of Jesus in Johannine theology	Metaphor
18	Jesus receives royal treatment in his death reinforcing his kingship	Paradox
18	The cross becomes Jesus’ throne	Paradox
18	The cross ridicules his enthronement	Parody
18	Jesus does not save himself from the cross demonstrating his kingship	Reversal
18	<i>Hoi Ioudaioi</i> fail to get to know Jesus despite him being μέσον (cf. 1:26)	Paradox
18	Jesus’ death is both a “lifting up” and “exaltation” (ὑψώω)	Dble Mng
18	ὑψώω is symbolic of Jesus’ crucifixion (12:32)	Metaphor
18	Crucified ones are elevated above those who condemn them	Reversal
18	The crucified Jesus is elevated above those who desire his death and condemn him	Paradox
18	Jesus’ crucifixion refers back to ὑψώω in 3:14f	Analepsis
18	Jesus’ crucifixion refers back to ὑψώω in 8:21-30	Analepsis
18	Jesus’ crucifixion refers back to ὑψώω in 12:28-34	Analepsis
18	From Rome’s perspective, elevation of crucified ones mimics their pretention	Satire
18	From Rome’s perspective, elevation of crucified ones mimics their pretention	Parody
18	Jesus truly is King, even though they mock his authority; mocking the mockery	Parody
18-30	The One who promised “abundant life” (10:10) hangs dying on a Roman cross	Paradox
19	The notice: “Nazarene” NTZR sounds like NTSR in Heb. Branch = Messianic title	Dble Mng
19	The notice: “Nazarene” NTZR sounds like NTSR in Heb. Branch = Messianic title	Metaphor
19	The inflammatory notice: “King of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> ”. He wasn’t their king, yet he was	Reversal
19	The inflammatory notice: “King of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> ”. He wasn’t their king, yet he was	Dble Entdr
19	The notice’s message raises conflict between <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> & Jesus’ kingdom (18:36)	Reversal
19	Pilate treats <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> with contempt by wording the notice as he does	Sarcasm
19	With the notice Pilate intends both to proclaim Jesus as King and mock his authority	Dble Mng
19	Jesus’ kingdom is not of the world (18:36), yet the notice declares him the world’s king	Paradox
19	Pilate probably picked up this double meaning and used it for his own advantage	Dble Entdr
19-22	The chief priests would have preferred to give Caesar allegiance (19:15) than Jesus	Reversal
22	The notice stays as is; Pilate acts unaware of Jesus’ identity, yet knows he is king	Dble Entdr
22	Pilate ignores <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> , with contempt; he knows, yet acts unaware of Jesus’ identity	Dble Mng
22	Pilate ignores <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> , with contempt; he knows, yet acts unaware of Jesus’ identity	Sarcasm
22	Pilate ignores <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> , with contempt; he knows, yet acts unaware of Jesus’ identity	Dble Entdr
23f	The divine Son hangs naked while the clothed soldiers divide up his clothes	Reversal
23f	The divine Son hangs naked while the clothed soldiers divide up his clothes	Parody
24	Untorn garment is a flash forward to 21:11	Prolepsis
26-30	Jesus is the “Resurrection and the Life” (11:25f), yet he dies	Paradox
28	Jesus thirsts; yet he desires to fulfil Scripture as much as he wants a drink	Reversal
28	Jesus thirsts; it means both needing fluid and has a deep desire	Dble Mng
28	Jesus thirsts; this is symbolic of fulfilling Scripture	Metaphor
28	Jesus, who offers living water (7:37f), is thirsty	Paradox
28f	Hyssop was used on first Passover to dab the blood on doorposts (Exodus 12:22)	Analepsis
28f	Hyssop was used to cleanse and purify (Ps 51:7); Jesus symbolises pure sacrifice	Metaphor
30	Atonement through Jesus’ death: He draws all to himself = “at one” with God	Reversal
30	God cannot die, yet Jesus, who is God, dies	Paradox
30	Jesus gives over his spirit = breathes on the Johannine community below (20:22)	Dble Mng

John 19

Verse Description

		Irony Type
30	Jesus gives over his spirit = breathes on the Johannine community below (20:22)	Prolepsis
30	Jesus gives over his spirit: Symbolic act of breathing the Spirit onto them	Metaphor
30	Jesus gives over his spirit: Symbolic act of empowering the Johannine community	Paradox
30	Jesus dies so the community will live	Reversal
31	<i>Hoi Ioudaioi</i> show moral bankruptcy. They only desire ritual purity, not compassion	Dble Std
31	Day of Preparation of Passover lambs; Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God (1:29)	Dble Mng
31	Day of Preparation of Passover lambs; Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God (1:29)	Metaphor
31	Day of Preparation of Passover lambs; Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God (1:29)	Analepsis
31	Passover lambs were symbolic of salvation	Metaphor
32-36	No bones broken, yet Jesus' body was broken through his sufferings & death	Reversal
32-36	No bones broken, yet Jesus' body was broken symbolically as Bread of Life (6:35)	Metaphor
32-36	No bones broken, flash back to Jesus as Passover lamb (1:29)	Analepsis
32-36	No bones broken, flash back to Passover lamb (Exodus 12:46; Num 9:12; Ps 34:20)	Analepsis
39f	Joseph used 100 times more unguent than Mary used to anoint Jesus (12:1-3)	Hyperbole
42	Day of Preparation of Passover lambs; Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God (1:29)	Dble Mng
42	Day of Preparation of Passover lambs; Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God (1:29)	Metaphor
42	Day of Preparation of Passover lambs; Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God (1:29)	Analepsis
42	Passover lambs were symbolic of salvation	Metaphor

John 20

1	Mary comes in the dark; to see Jesus who is the light of the world (8:12)	Dualism
1	The sun has not risen, yet Jesus has risen	Reversal
1	In the Fourth Gospel, darkness is symbolic of the absence of Jesus	Metaphor
1	In the Fourth Gospel, darkness also means the absence of Jesus	Dble Mng
1-10	Resurrection provides a flashback to Lazarus being freed from his burial wrap (11:44)	Analepsis
8	The beloved disciple believed, resolving the unstable irony of Jesus' suffering & death	Reversal PLX
8	The beloved disciple believes without seeing which is a flash forward to 20:28	Prolepsis
13-15	The implied reader knows. Seeking a dead Jesus, Mary does not understand that Jesus is alive	Misundstng
13-15	Mary seeks a dead Jesus, yet he is living	Reversal
13-15	Mary weeps for a dead Jesus, yet he is living	Reversal
15	Mary uses polite address, <i>Κύριε</i> meaning "sir" when the implied reader knows it is the Lord	Misundstng
17	The cultural norm preferred male testimony, yet Mary becomes the "apostle to the apostles"	Reversal
19	<i>μέσος</i> means 'in the midst', but also indicates the centrality of the resurrection	Dble Mng
19	<i>μέσος</i> is symbolic of the centrality of the resurrection	Metaphor
22	Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit which is a flash back to 7:39	Analepsis
22	Breathing on the disciples is symbolic of the Holy Spirit	Metaphor
23	Some will never choose to follow Jesus, thwarting God's desire to save all	Paradox UPI
24f	Thomas (as protagonist) was victimised by not meeting the risen Jesus = outsider	Reversal UPI
26-28	The unstable irony resolves as Jesus appears to Thomas and he believes	Reversal PLX
28	Thomas believes because he sees, yet the beloved disciples believes without seeing (20:8)	Juxtaposition
28f	The implied reader's flash-back to 1:18 where the evangelist claims no one has seen God	Analepsis
28f	Thomas sees God, who is invisible	Paradox

UPI = Unstable Persistent Irony;

PLX = Perplexing Irony

TOTAL = 89

APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED LITERARY DEVICES IN PASSION NARRATIVE

1. Ironies in Chapter 5 (18:1-19:16a): 120

VERBAL: Double Meaning (7); Metaphor (3); Sarcasm (3); Satire (5); Unanswered Q (4). Total = 22.

SITUATIONAL: Reversal (17); Prolepsis (6); Analepsis (7); Juxtaposition (6); Paradox (16); Dualism (1). Total = 53

DRAMATIC: Understatement (3); Hyperbole (2); Misunderstanding (16); Parody (9); Double Standard (11); Double Entendre (4). Total = 45

2. Ironies in Chapter 6 (19:16a-20:31): 89

VERBAL: Double Meaning (11); Metaphor (15); Sarcasm (2); Satire (1); Unanswered Q (0). Total = 29.

SITUATIONAL: Reversal (18); Prolepsis (3); Analepsis (12); Juxtaposition (1); Paradox (12); Dualism (1). Total = 47.

DRAMATIC: Understatement (0); Hyperbole (1); Misunderstanding (2); Parody (4); Double Standard (1); Double Entendre (5). Total = 13.

3. Combined Ironies in Passion Narrative: 209

VERBAL: Double Meaning (18); Metaphor (18); Sarcasm (5); Satire (6); Unanswered Q (4). Total = 51.

SITUATIONAL: Reversal (35); Prolepsis (9); Analepsis (19); Juxtaposition (7); Paradox (28); Dualism (2). Total = 100

DRAMATIC: Understatement (3); Hyperbole (3); Misunderstanding (18); Parody (13); Double Standard (12); Double Entendre (9). Total = 58

4. Ironies In Order of Frequency (most to least)

Reversal (35), Paradox (28), Analepsis/Prolepsis (28), Misunderstanding (18), Double Meaning (18), Metaphor (18), Parody (13), Double Standard (12), Double Entendre (9), Juxtaposition (7), Satire (6), Unanswered Q (4), Sarcasm (3), Understatement (3), Hyperbole (3), Dualism (2).

5. Frequency of Stable Rhetoric in the Passion Narrative: 118

Historic Present Tense (45), Analepsis (40); *Inclusio* (9); Repetition (7); Metaphor (6); Double Drama (5); Chiasm (3); Misunderstanding (1); Gap in the Story (1); Revolving Platform (1). Total = 118

6. Unstable Rhetoric in the Passion Narrative: 4

Victimised Reader (4) Three of these are persistent (USR) and one perplexing (PXR).

APPENDIX 4: RHETORIC IDENTIFIED IN THE PASSION NARRATIVE

John 18

Verse	Description	Type
1	ἐξῆλθεν (he left) is the identifying word at the start of the passion narrative (19:5, 17)	<i>Inclusio</i>
1	κῆπος (garden) is the identifying word at the start of the passion narrative (19:41; 20:15)	<i>Inclusio</i>
3	“comes”	Hist Pres
3	The cohort is symbolic as it cannot be taken literally	Metaphor
3	Judas’ actions “come and see” are a flash back to 1:39	Analepsis
3	Judas’ actions “come and see” are a flash back to 1:46	Analepsis
3	Judas’ actions “come and see” are a flash back to 4:29	Analepsis
3	Judas’ actions “come and see” are a flash back to 11:34	Analepsis
3-8	The events of Jesus’ arrest correlate with events in fledgling church	Dbl Drama
3-10	Judas as betrayer is the central point in Jesus’ arrest	Chiasm
4	“says”	Hist Pres
5	“says”	Hist Pres
5	The name “I Am” symbolizes God	Metaphor
6	The name “I Am” symbolizes God	Metaphor
8	The name “I Am” symbolizes God	Metaphor
9	Jesus is arrested, and his disciples go free is flashback to 15:13	Analepsis
11	Jesus speaks symbolically of “drinking the cup” of suffering	Metaphor
15-16	Identity of unnamed disciple is withheld. (Reader Victimisation)	USR
16-17	The “gate” is a flashback to 10:9	Analepsis
16-17	The “gate” is a symbol of entry to a desired place (10:9)	Metaphor
17	“says” (x2)	Hist Pres
19, 24	Both Annas & Caiaphas have the same title, which is confusing	Misundstng
22	The suffering of Jesus is a flashback to the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 50:5-6)	Analepsis
24-28	Johannine narrative has no detail of what happens before Caiaphas	Gap
25	A reprise of Peter warming himself in front of the fire (18:18)	Repetition
26	“says”	Hist Pres
28	“says”	Hist Pres
28	“Passover” is the identifying word before and after the trial with Pilate (19:14)	<i>Inclusio</i>
28ff	The central point is that Jesus is presented as King	Chiasm
28ff	Scene changes seven times while Pilate is “in charge” of Jesus	RevPlatfm
29	“says”	Hist Pres
32	Jesus will be “lifted up” to die on a Roman cross flashes back to 3:14	Analepsis
32	Jesus will be “lifted up” to die on a Roman cross flashes back to 8:28	Analepsis
32	Jesus will be “lifted up” to die on a Roman cross flashes back to 12:32f	Analepsis
37	Pilate’s 4 th question “So you are a King?” is a flashback to 16:33	Analepsis
38	“says” (x3)	Hist Pres

John 19

4	“says”	Hist Pres
4	Pilate reaffirms Jesus’ innocence (18:38; 19:6)	Repetition
5	“says”	Hist Pres
5	ἐξῆλθεν is an identifying word as Jesus is presented to <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i>	<i>Inclusio</i>
5	ἐξῆλθεν is active voice, indicating a flashback to 10:17	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is an intertextual link back to 1 Samuel 9:17	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is an intertextual link back to Zechariah 6:12	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is a flashback to 2:19	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is a flashback to 3:2	Analepsis

John 19

Verse Description

		Type
5	“Look at the human being” is a flashback to 6:46	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is a flashback to 7:17	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is a flashback to 8:40-42	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is a flashback to 9:33	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is a flashback to 13:3	Analepsis
5	“Look at the human being” is a flashback to 16:27-30	Analepsis
6	“says”	Hist Pres
6	Pilate declares again “there is no case against Jesus” (18:38; 19:4)	Repetition
9	“says”	Hist Pres
9	Jesus’ silence is an intertextual link back to Isaiah 53:7	Analepsis
10	“says”	Hist Pres
11	Jesus’ use of ἄνωθεν is a flashback to 3:3&7	Analepsis
14	“says”	Hist Pres
14	“Look at your King” is a flashback to 1:49	Analepsis
14	“Look at your King” is a flashback to 6:15	Analepsis
14	“Look at your King” is a flashback to 12:13-15	Analepsis
14	“Look at your King” is a flashback to 18:33-39	Analepsis
15	“says”	Hist Pres
17	ἐξῆλθεν is a connecting word at the beginning, middle & end of passion narrative	Inclusio
17	Shouldering the wooden cross-beam is an intertextual link to Genesis 22:12	Analepsis
18	μέσος is the keyword referring to the positions of the cross & the risen Jesus (20:26)	Inclusio
19f	“Nazarene” is a keyword (homonym) for “Branch” (Isaiah 11:1) = Messiah (20:31)	Inclusio
25f	Beloved disciple’s name is withheld; Reader Victimisation	USR
26	“says”	Hist Pres
27	“says”	Hist Pres
28	“says”	Hist Pres
28	Jesus is thirsty. It is a flashback to 4:7	Analepsis
31	“The day of Preparation”: 2 nd occurrence in the passion narrative (19:14,42)	Repetition
39	Joseph’s use of an unguent on Jesus is a flashback to 12:1-3	Analepsis
41	κῆπος (garden) is the identifying word at the middle of the passion narrative (18:1; 20:15)	Inclusio
42	“The day of Preparation”: 3 rd occurrence in the passion narrative (19:14,42)	Repetition

John 20

1	“comes”	Hist Pres
1	“is”	Hist Pres
1	“sees”	Hist Pres
2	“runs”	Hist Pres
2	“comes”	Hist Pres
2	“says”	Hist Pres
2	Beloved disciple’s name is withheld; Reader Victimisation	USR
5	“sees”	Hist Pres
6	“comes”	Hist Pres
6	“looks at”	Hist Pres
10f	Importance of revelation that Jesus is risen & community’s response	DblDrama
12	“look at”	Hist Pres
13	“say”	Hist Pres
13	“says”	Hist Pres
14	“looks at”	Hist Pres
15	“says” (x2)	Hist Pres
15	Repeated question to Mary Magdalene “why are you crying?” (20:13)	Repetition
16	“says” (x2)	Hist Pres

John 20

Verse Description

		Type
16	“turns”	Hist Pres
16	Mary recognizes Jesus’ voice: flashback to 10:27	Analepsis
17	“says”	Hist Pres
17	Jesus must depart so he can send his Spirit: flashback to 13:1	Analepsis
17	Mary is the example of faith for the Johannine community	DblDrama
18	“comes”	Hist Pres
19	“says”	Hist Pres
19	Fear of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> is a flashback to 7:13	Analepsis
19	Fear of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> is a flashback to 9:22	Analepsis
19	Fear of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> is a flashback to 12:42	Analepsis
19	Fear of <i>hoi Ioudaioi</i> is a flashback to 19:38	Analepsis
19	μέσος (where Jesus is standing in their midst), is a flashback to 19:18	Analepsis
21	Jesus repeats the “Shalom” greeting (20:19)	Repetition
22	“says”	Hist Pres
23	Forgiveness of sins is a critical message for the Johannine community	DblDrama
25-29	Jesus’ appearance to Thomas is central to Thomas’ confession of faith	Chiasm
26	“comes”	Hist Pres
27	“says”	Hist Pres
28	Thomas’ confession is an intertextual link back to Exodus 33:18-20	Analepsis
29	“says”	Hist Pres
30f	Author has set out his portrait of Jesus for the Johannine community	DblDrama
31	“Messiah” is a keyword linking “Nazarene” (homonym from “Branch” = Messiah)	<i>Inclusio</i>
31ff	Implied Reader thinks this is the end, but another 25 vv follow; Reader Victimization This is resolved when author discloses to reader that Jesus is on the shore (21:4)	PXR

TOTAL = 122 Rhetorical Devices

(118 Stable Rhetorical Devices; 3 USR; 1 PXR)

USR = Unstable Rhetoric (Persistent)

PXR = Perplexing Rhetoric

APPENDIX 5 My Translation

JN 18:1 Having spoken these things, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron ravine, where there was a garden into which he and his disciples entered. ² Now even Judas, the betrayer, had known the place because Jesus and his disciples were often gathered there. ³ So Judas, having taken the cohort of soldiers along with officials from the chief priests and from the Pharisees, comes there with lanterns, torches and weapons. ⁴ Therefore Jesus, knowing all the things coming upon him, went out and says to them, “Whom are you seeking?” ⁵ They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth”. He says to them, “I Am”. Now, Judas, the one who was betraying him, also continued to stand with them. ⁶ Now as he said to them, “I Am”, they went backwards and they fell to the ground. ⁷ So again he questioned them, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth”.

⁸ Jesus answered, “I told you that I Am he. Therefore, since you are seeking me, allow these ones to leave”. ⁹ In order that the word that he spoke might be fulfilled, “those you have (permanently) given me, I never ever lost one of them”. ¹⁰ Having a sword, Simon Peter then drew it and struck the right ear of the chief priest’s slave and cut it off. And the name of the slave was Malchus. ¹¹ So, Jesus said to Peter, “Put the sword into the sheath; shall I not drink the cup the father has given me?”

UBS4 Greek Text

JN 18:1 Ταῦτα εἰπὼν Ἰησοῦς ἐξῆλθεν σὺν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ πέραν τοῦ χειμάρρου τοῦ Κεδρῶν ὅπου ἦν κήπος, εἰς ὃν εἰσῆλθεν αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ. ² Ἦιδει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδούς αὐτὸν τὸν τόπον, ὅτι πολλάκις συνήχθη Ἰησοῦς ἐκεῖ μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ. ³ ὁ οὖν Ἰούδας λαβὼν τὴν σπεῖραν καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων ὑπηρέτας ἔρχεται ἐκεῖ μετὰ φανῶν καὶ λαμπάδων καὶ ὄπλων. ⁴ Ἰησοῦς οὖν εἰδὼς πάντα τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἐξῆλθεν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· τίνα ζητεῖτε; ⁵ ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ· Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον. λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἐγὼ εἰμι. εἰστήκει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδούς αὐτὸν μετ’ αὐτῶν. ⁶ ὡς οὖν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐγὼ εἰμι, ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ ἔπεσαν χαμαί. ⁷ Πάλιν οὖν ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτούς· τίνα ζητεῖτε; οἱ δὲ εἶπαν· Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον. ⁸ ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· εἶπον ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι. εἰ οὖν ἐμὲ ζητεῖτε, ἄφετε τούτους ὑπάγειν. ⁹ ἵνα πληρωθῇ ὁ λόγος ὃν εἶπεν ὅτι οὐς δέδωκάς μοι οὐκ ἀπώλεσα ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐδένα. ¹⁰ Σίμων οὖν Πέτρος ἔχων μάχαιραν εἰλκυσεν αὐτὴν καὶ ἔπαισεν τὸν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως δοῦλον καὶ ἀπέκοψεν αὐτοῦ τὸ ὠτᾶριον τὸ δεξιόν· ἦν δὲ ὄνομα τῷ δούλῳ Μάλχος. ¹¹ εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ Πέτρῳ· βάλε τὴν μάχαιραν εἰς τὴν θήκην· τὸ ποτήριον ὃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ οὐ μὴ πίω αὐτό;

^{18:12} Therefore, the cohort of soldiers and the military commander and the officials of *hoi Ioudaioi* took Jesus and bound him.

¹³ First, they led him to Annas, as he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ Now Caiaphas was the one who plotted with *hoi Ioudaioi* that it was necessary that one person die on behalf of the people.

¹⁵ But Simon Peter was following Jesus and another disciple; Now that disciple was known to the high priest and he entered in with Jesus into the open courtyard of the high priest's residence.

¹⁶ But Peter had been standing at the door outside; the disciple, the other one who was known to the high priest, came outside and spoke to the female gatekeeper and brought Peter inside. ¹⁷ So the girl, who was the female gatekeeper, says to Peter, "aren't you also one of the disciples of this man?" He says, "I am not." ¹⁸ Now, having made a coal fire, the slaves and officials were warming themselves, because it was cold. And Peter was also with them warming himself.

¹⁹ Now the high priest asked Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world, I taught everyone in the synagogue and in the temple, where all *hoi Ioudaioi* are coming together, and in secret I said nothing. ²¹ Why do you ask me? You need to ask those who have heard my teaching. Look! they know the things that I said".

^{18:12} Ἡ οὖν σπεῖρα καὶ ὁ χιλίαρχος καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται τῶν Ἰουδαίων συνέλαβον τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸν ¹³ καὶ ἤγαγον πρὸς Ἄνναν πρῶτον· ἦν γὰρ πενθερὸς τοῦ Καϊάφα, ὃς ἦν ἀρχιερεὺς τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐκείνου· ¹⁴ ἦν δὲ Καϊάφας ὁ συμβουλευσας τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι συμφέρει ἓνα ἄνθρωπον ἀποθανεῖν ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ.

¹⁵ Ἠκολούθει δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ Σίμων Πέτρος καὶ ἄλλος μαθητῆς· ὁ δὲ μαθητῆς ἐκεῖνος ἦν γνωστὸς τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ καὶ συνεισηλθεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως, ¹⁶ ὁ δὲ Πέτρος εἰστήκει πρὸς τῇ θύρᾳ ἔξω· ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ μαθητῆς ὁ ἄλλος ὁ γνωστὸς τοῦ ἀρχιερέως καὶ εἶπεν τῇ θυρωρῷ καὶ εἰσήγαγεν τὸν Πέτρον· ¹⁷ λέγει οὖν τῷ Πέτρῳ ἡ παιδίσκη ἡ θυρωρός· μὴ καὶ σὺ ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν εἶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου; λέγει ἐκεῖνος· οὐκ εἰμί· ¹⁸ ἰστήκεισαν δὲ οἱ δοῦλοι καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται ἀνθρακιὰν πεποικότες, ὅτι ψυχὸς ἦν, καὶ ἐθερμαίνοντο· ἦν δὲ καὶ ὁ Πέτρος μετ' αὐτῶν ἐστῶς καὶ θερμαινόμενος.

¹⁹ Ὁ οὖν ἀρχιερεὺς ἠρώτησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδαχῆς αὐτοῦ· ²⁰ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς· ἐγὼ παρρησίᾳ λελάληκα τῷ κόσμῳ, ἐγὼ πάντοτε ἐδίδαξα ἐν συναγωγῇ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, ὅπου πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι συνέρχονται, καὶ ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν· ²¹ τί με ἐρωτᾶς; ἐρώτησον τοὺς ἀκηκοῦτας τί ἐλάλησα αὐτοῖς· ἴδε οὗτοι οἴδασιν ἃ εἶπον ἐγώ·

18:22 Now after speaking these things, one of the officials standing gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying, “Are you answering the high priest this way?”²³ Jesus answered him, “If I spoke badly you must give witness concerning the bad thing, but if a good testimony, why do you hit me?”²⁴ So, having bound him, Annas sent him to Caiaphas, the high priest.

²⁵ But Simon Peter was standing and he was warming himself. Then [the attendant] spoke to him, “Are not you from his disciples?” He denied that he was and said, “I am not.”²⁶ One of the slaves of the high priest speaks, a relative of the one Peter cut off the ear, “Were not you in the garden with him?”²⁷ Therefore, Peter then denied it, and immediately the rooster crowed.

²⁸ So they lead Jesus from the house of Caiaphas into the governor’s residence, and it was early in the morning. But *hoi Ioudaioi* themselves did not enter into the governor’s residence in order that they might not be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover meal.²⁹ So, Pilate went outside to them and says. “What accusation are you bringing against this man?”³⁰ They answered and said to him, “If this person was not doing evil, we would not have handed him over to you.”³¹ So Pilate said to them, “You take him yourselves and you judge him according to your law.” *Hoi Ioudaioi* said to him, “It is not lawful for us to kill anyone.”³² This is in order that the word which Jesus spoke, indicating what sort of death he was about to die, might be fulfilled.

18:22 ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ εἰπόντος εἷς παρεστηκῶς τῶν ὑπηρετῶν ἔδωκεν ῥάπισμα τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰπών· οὕτως ἀποκρίνη τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ; ²³ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ· εἰ δὲ καλῶς, τί με δέρεις; ²⁴ ἀπέστειλεν οὖν αὐτὸν ὁ Ἄννας δεδεμένον πρὸς Καϊάφαν τὸν ἀρχιερέα.

²⁵ Ἦν δὲ Σίμων Πέτρος ἐστῶς καὶ θερμαινόμενος· εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ· μὴ καὶ σὺ ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ εἶ; ἠρνήσατο ἐκεῖνος καὶ εἶπεν· οὐκ εἰμί. ²⁶ λέγει εἷς ἐκ τῶν δούλων τοῦ ἀρχιερέως, συγγενῆς ὢν οὗ ἀπέκοψεν Πέτρος τὸ ὠτίον· οὐκ ἐγώ σε εἶδον ἐν τῷ κήπῳ μετ’ αὐτοῦ; ²⁷ πάλιν οὖν ἠρνήσατο Πέτρος, καὶ εὐθέως ἀλέκτωρ ἐφώνησεν.

²⁸ Ἀγουσιν οὖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ Καϊάφα εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον· ἦν δὲ πρωΐ· καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐκ εἰσῆλθον εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον, ἵνα μὴ μιανθῶσιν ἀλλὰ φάγωσιν τὸ πάσχα. ²⁹ Ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Πιλάτος ἔξω πρὸς αὐτοὺς καὶ φησίν· τίνα κατηγορίαν φέρετε [κατὰ] τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου; ³⁰ ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος κακὸν ποιῶν, οὐκ ἂν σοι παρεδώκαμεν αὐτόν. ³¹ εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐτόν. εἶπον αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα. ³² ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πληρωθῇ ὃν εἶπεν σημαίων ποίω θανάτῳ ἠμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν.

^{18:33} So again Pilate entered the governor's residence and he called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Are you yourself saying this or did others say this about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What did you do?"

³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my servants who belong to me would be fighting in order to prevent me from being handed over to *hoi Ioudaioi*. But now, my kingdom is not from this place."³⁷ So Pilate said to him, "So aren't you a king?" Jesus answered, "You yourself are saying that I am a king. It was for this purpose that I myself have been born and for this purpose I have come into the world, that I might testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice."

³⁸ Pilate says to him, "What is truth?" And having said this he went out again to *hoi Ioudaioi* and says to them, "I myself find nothing in him deserving accusation. ³⁹ It is your custom that I might release one prisoner at the Passover. So, is it your desire for me to release the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*?"

⁴⁰ Therefore, they cried out again saying, "Not this one, but the one we both know, Barabbas." Now, Barabbas was a bandit.

^{18:33} Εἰσῆλθεν οὖν πάλιν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ὁ Πιλάτος καὶ ἐφώνησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; ³⁴ ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἀπὸ σεαυτοῦ σὺ τοῦτο λέγεις ἢ ἄλλοι εἶπόν σοι περὶ ἐμοῦ; ³⁵ ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Πιλάτος· μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖός εἰμι; τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς παρέδωκάν σε ἐμοί· τί ἐποίησας;

³⁶ ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου· εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἦν ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ, οἱ ὑπηρέται οἱ ἐμοὶ ἠγωνίζοντο [ἂν] ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· νῦν δὲ ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν. ³⁷ εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ; ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι. ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἵνα μαρτυρήσω τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς.

³⁸ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· τί ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια; Καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν πάλιν ἐξῆλθεν πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἐγὼ οὐδεμίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν. ³⁹ ἔστιν δὲ συνήθεια ὑμῖν ἵνα ἓνα ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν ἐν τῷ πάσχα· βούλεσθε οὖν ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων;

⁴⁰ ἐκραύγασαν οὖν πάλιν λέγοντες· μὴ τοῦτον ἀλλὰ τὸν Βαραββᾶν. ἦν δὲ ὁ Βαραββᾶς ληστής.

JN 19:1 Then Pilate took and flogged Jesus. ² And having woven a crown out of thorny stems, the soldiers placed it on his head and threw a purple robe around him. ³ And they were coming to him and saying, “Rejoice, king of *hoi Ioudaioi*”. And they were slapping him in the face. ⁴ And again Pilate went outside and he says to them, “I led him outside to you so that you might know that I find no reason for accusation in him.” ⁵ So Jesus went outside wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And [Pilate] says to them, “Look at the human being!” ⁶ So when they saw him, the chief priests and the servants cried out saying, “Crucify! crucify!” Pilate says to them, “You take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no accusation in him.” ⁷ *Hoi Ioudaioi* answered him, “We ourselves have a law, and according to that law, he ought to die because he made himself God’s Son.” ⁸ Now when Pilate heard this word he became more fearful. ⁹ And he entered the governor’s residence again and he says to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus did not give him an answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate says to him, “why aren’t you speaking to me? Don’t you know I have authority to release you and I have authority to crucify you?” ¹¹ Jesus answered [him], “You would have no authority over me unless it had been given to you from above. On account of this, the one who handed me over to you has a greater sin.”

JN 19:1 Τότε οὖν ἔλαβεν ὁ Πιλαῶτος τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐμαστίγωσεν. ² καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται πλέξαντες στέφανον ἐξ ἀκανθῶν ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῦ τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν περιέβαλον αὐτὸν ³ καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ἔλεγον· χαῖρε ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων· καὶ ἐδίδοσαν αὐτῷ ῥαπίσματα. ⁴ Καὶ ἐξῆλθεν πάλιν ἔξω ὁ Πιλαῶτος καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἴδε ἄγω ὑμῖν αὐτὸν ἔξω, ἵνα γνῶτε ὅτι οὐδεμίαν αἰτίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ. ⁵ ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔξω, φορῶν τὸν ἀκάνθινον στέφανον καὶ τὸ πορφυροῦν ἱμάτιον. καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἰδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος. ⁶ Ὅτε οὖν εἶδον αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες· σταύρωσον σταύρωσον. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλαῶτος· λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ σταυρώσατε· ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν. ⁷ ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· ἡμεῖς νόμον ἔχομεν καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὀφείλει ἀποθανεῖν, ὅτι υἱὸν θεοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν. ⁸ Ὅτε οὖν ἤκουσεν ὁ Πιλαῶτος τοῦτον τὸν λόγον, μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη, ⁹ καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον πάλιν καὶ λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ· πόθεν εἶ σύ; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀπόκρισιν οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ. ¹⁰ λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλαῶτος· ἐμοὶ οὐ λαλεῖς; οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχω ἀπολύσαι σε καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαί σε; ¹¹ ἀπεκρίθη [αὐτῷ] Ἰησοῦς· οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν κατ’ ἐμοῦ οὐδεμίαν εἰ μὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν διὰ τοῦτο ὁ παραδούς μέ σοι μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει.

19:12 After this, Pilate made repeated attempts to release him. But *hoi Ioudaioi* cried out saying, “If you release this person you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself the king is speaking out against Caesar.”¹³ Then Pilate, having heard these words, led Jesus outside and he sat on the judgment seat facing a place called “stone pavement”, which in Hebrew is “Gabbatha”.¹⁴ And it was the preparation day of Passover. It was about the sixth hour and [Pilate] says to *hoi Ioudaioi*, “Look at your king!”¹⁵ Then they cried out, “Lift him away! Lift him away! Crucify him!” Pilate says to them, “Do you want me to crucify your king?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king except Caesar!”¹⁶ So then, [Pilate] handed him over to them in order that he might be crucified.

Therefore, they took Jesus,¹⁷ and taking up the cross himself, he went out into what is being called “Skull Place”, which in Hebrew is named “Golgotha”.¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others; one on either side, with Jesus in the middle.¹⁹ And also Pilate wrote a notice and placed it on the cross. It stood written: “JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF *HOI IOUDAIOS*”.²⁰ Many *hoi Ioudaioi* read this notice because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it stood written in Hebrew, in Latin and in Greek.

19:12 Ἐκ τούτου ὁ Πιλάτος ἐζήτει ἀπολύσαι αὐτόν· οἱ δὲ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες· ἐὰν τοῦτον ἀπολύσῃς, οὐκ εἶ φίλος τοῦ Καίσαρος· πᾶς ὁ βασιλέα ἐαυτὸν ποιῶν ἀντιλέγει τῷ Καίσαρι. ¹³ ὁ οὖν Πιλάτος ἀκούσας τῶν λόγων τούτων ἤγαγεν ἔξω τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον, Ἑβραϊστὶ δὲ Γαββαθα.¹⁴ ἦν δὲ παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα, ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη. καὶ λέγει τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· Ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν.¹⁵ ἐκραύγασαν οὖν ἐκεῖνοι· ἄρον ἄρον, σταύρωσον αὐτόν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· τὸν βασιλέα ὑμῶν σταυρώσω; ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς· οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα.¹⁶ Τότε οὖν παρέδωκεν αὐτόν αὐτοῖς ἵνα σταυρωθῇ.

Παρέλαβον οὖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν,¹⁷ καὶ βαστάζων ἑαυτῷ τὸν σταυρὸν ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὸν λεγόμενον Κρανίου Τόπον, ὃ λέγεται Ἑβραϊστὶ Γολγοθα,¹⁸ ὅπου αὐτὸν ἐσταύρωσαν, καὶ μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἄλλους δύο ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐντεῦθεν, μέσον δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν.¹⁹ ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ τίτλον ὁ Πιλάτος καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ· ἦν δὲ γεγραμμένον, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.²⁰ τοῦτον οὖν τὸν τίτλον πολλοὶ ἀνέγνωσαν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἦν ὁ τόπος τῆς πόλεως ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καὶ ἦν γεγραμμένον Ἑβραϊστὶ, Ῥωμαϊστὶ, Ἑλληνιστὶ.

^{19:21} Then the chief priests of *hoi Ioudaioi* were saying to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*’, but ‘this one said, I am the king of *hoi Ioudaioi*’”. ²² Pilate answered, “What I have written, stands written”.

²³ Therefore, when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. [They] even [took] the undergarment. Now the undergarment was seamless, woven as one piece from the top.

²⁴ Then they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it [to see] whose it shall be”. [This happened] in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, “They distributed my outer garments among themselves, and upon my clothes they cast a lot”. The soldiers therefore did these things.

²⁵ Now there were standing beside the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ Then Jesus, having seen [his] mother and the disciple whom he was loving standing by, he says to [his] mother, “Woman, see, your son”. ²⁷ Then he says to the disciple, “See your mother”. And from that hour, that [disciple] took her into [his own] home.

²⁸ Later, having known all these things were complete, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he says, “I thirst”.

^{19:21} ἔλεγον οὖν τῷ Πιλάτῳ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, Μὴ γράφει, Ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἀλλ’ ὅτι ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν, Βασιλεὺς εἰμι τῶν Ἰουδαίων. ²² ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Πιλάτος, Ὁ γέγραφα, γέγραφα.

²³ Οἱ οὖν στρατιῶται, ὅτε ἐσταύρωσαν τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ἔλαβον τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐποίησαν τέσσαρα μέρη, ἐκάστῳ στρατιώτῃ μέρος, καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα. ἦν δὲ ὁ χιτῶν ἄραφος, ἐκ τῶν ἄνωθεν ὑφαντὸς δι’ ὅλου.

²⁴ εἶπαν οὖν πρὸς ἀλλήλους, Μὴ σχίσωμεν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ λάχωμεν περὶ αὐτοῦ τίνος ἔσται· ἵνα ἡ γραφή πληρωθῇ [ἡ λέγουσα], Διεμερίσαντο τὰ ἱμάτιά μου ἑαυτοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἱματισμόν μου ἔβαλον κλῆρον. Οἱ μὲν οὖν στρατιῶται ταῦτα ἐποίησαν.

²⁵ εἰστήκεισαν δὲ παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, Μαρία ἡ τοῦ Κλωπᾶ καὶ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνῆ. ²⁶ Ἰησοῦς οὖν ἰδὼν τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὸν μαθητὴν παρεστῶτα ὃν ἠγάπα, λέγει τῇ μητρί, Γύναι, ἴδε ὁ υἱός σου. ²⁷ εἶτα λέγει τῷ μαθητῇ, Ἴδε ἡ μήτηρ σου. καὶ ἀπ’ ἐκείνης τῆς ὥρας ἔλαβεν ὁ μαθητὴς αὐτὴν εἰς τὰ ἴδια.

²⁸ Μετὰ τοῦτο εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤδη πάντα τετέλεσται, ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή, λέγει, Διψῶ.

^{19:29} A full jar of sour wine was sitting [there], so [using] a hyssop [stick], they brought to his mouth a sponge soaked in sour wine. ³⁰ After Jesus took [some] sour wine he said, “It stands complete”. And having bowed [his] head, he gave over [his] spirit.

³¹ Since it was [the Day of Passover] Preparation, *hoi Ioudaioi* then in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, because that Sabbath day was great, asked Pilate if they might break the legs [of the crucified ones] in order that their bodies might be removed. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first one, and of the other one who was crucified together with him. ³³ But having come to Jesus, they did not break his legs as they saw that he was already dead. ³⁴ Indeed, one of the soldiers lanced his side [with a] spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵ Also, the one having seen [these things] has testified, and his testimony is true. And he knew that he speaks the truth in order that you might believe as well. ³⁶ For these things happened in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, “Not one of his bones will be broken”. ³⁷ And again another Scripture says, “They will look into the one they have pierced”.

^{19:29} σκεῦος ἔκειτο ὄξους μεστόν· σπόγγον οὖν μεστόν τοῦ ὄξους ὑσσώπῳ περιθέντες προσήνεγκαν αὐτοῦ τῷ στόματι. ³⁰ ὅτε οὖν ἔλαβεν τὸ ὄξος [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Τετέλεσται, καὶ κλίνας τὴν κεφαλὴν παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα.

³¹ Οἱ οὖν Ἰουδαῖοι, ἐπεὶ παρασκευὴ ἦν, ἵνα μὴ μείνη ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ τὰ σώματα ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ, ἣν γὰρ μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου, ἠρώτησαν τὸν Πιλάτον ἵνα κατεαγῶσιν αὐτῶν τὰ σκέλη καὶ ἀρθῶσιν. ³² ἦλθον οὖν οἱ στρατιῶται καὶ τοῦ μὲν πρώτου κατέαξαν τὰ σκέλη καὶ τοῦ ἄλλου τοῦ συσταυρωθέντος αὐτῷ. ³³ ἐπὶ δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐλθόντες, ὡς εἶδον ἤδη αὐτὸν τεθνηκότα, οὐ κατέαξαν αὐτοῦ τὰ σκέλη, ³⁴ ἀλλ’ εἰς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγχῃ αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἔνυξεν, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν εὐθὺς αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ. ³⁵ καὶ ὁ ἑωρακὴς μεμαρτύρηκεν, καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύ[σ]ητε. ³⁶ ἐγένετο γὰρ ταῦτα ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ, Ὅστοῦν οὐ συντριβήσεται αὐτοῦ. ³⁷ καὶ πάλιν ἑτέρα γραφὴ λέγει, Ὅψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν.

^{19:38} But after these things, Joseph from Arimathea having been secretive [about] being a disciple of Jesus because of his fear of *hoi Ioudaioi*, asked Pilate in order that he might lift up the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave permission, so he went and lifted up his body. ³⁹ But even Nicodemus, the one who had first come to Jesus at night, went carrying a mixture of myrrh and aloes [totalling] a hundred litres. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus and they wrapped it in linen strips with the aromatic spices according to Jewish custom. ⁴¹ But, at the place where [Jesus] was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden there was a new grave in which no [body] had ever been placed. ⁴² So, because [it was] the Jewish [Day of] Preparation and the grave [was] nearby, they placed Jesus [in it].

JN ^{20:1} But early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene comes into the grave-yard and sees the stone which had been lifted up from the tomb. ² Then she runs and comes to Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and she says to them, “They lifted up the master from the tomb and we do not know where they have placed him”. ³ Then Peter and the other disciple went out and they were coming to the tomb.

^{19:38} Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἠρώτησεν τὸν Πιλαῶτον Ἰωσήφ [ὁ] ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας, ὡν μαθητῆς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ κεκρυμμένος δὲ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἵνα ἄρῃ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ· καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν ὁ Πιλαῶτος. ἦλθεν οὖν καὶ ἤρεν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ. ³⁹ ἦλθεν δὲ καὶ Νικοδήμους, ὁ ἐλθὼν πρὸς αὐτὸν νυκτὸς τὸ πρῶτον, φέρων μίγμα σμύρνης καὶ ἀλόης ὡς λίτρας ἑκατόν. ⁴⁰ ἔλαβον οὖν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸ ὀθονίοις μετὰ τῶν ἀρωμάτων, καθὼς ἔθος ἐστὶν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἐνταφιάζειν. ⁴¹ ἦν δὲ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη κήπος, καὶ ἐν τῷ κήπῳ μνημεῖον καινὸν ἐν ᾧ οὐδέπω οὐδεὶς ἦν τεθειμένος. ⁴² ἐκεῖ οὖν διὰ τὴν παρασκευὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἦν τὸ μνημεῖον, ἔθηκαν τὸν Ἰησοῦν.

JN ^{20:1} Τῇ δὲ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ ἔρχεται πρῶτὶ σκοτίας ἔτι οὔσης εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον καὶ βλέπει τὸν λίθον ἠρμένον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου. ² τρέχει οὖν καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς Σίμωνα Πέτρον καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἄλλον μαθητὴν ὃν ἐφίλει ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ἔβραν τὸν κύριον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου καὶ οὐκ οἶδαμεν ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν. ³ Ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Πέτρος καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητῆς καὶ ἤρχοντο εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον.

20:4 Now both were running together, and the other disciple was running faster, ahead of Peter, and arrived at the tomb first. ⁵ Having stooped down he sees the linen wrappings lying there, however, he did not enter. ⁶ Then also Simon Peter comes following him, and he entered into the tomb. He sees the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the headpiece that had been on Jesus' head [which was] not lying with the other linen wrappings, but it was in a separate place, still wrapped up. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, went in, and he saw and believed. ⁹ For they had not yet [fully] known the Scripture that it was necessary for him to rise from death. ¹⁰ Then again the disciples went [back].

¹¹ But Mary stayed outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she stooped down into the tomb, ¹² and she watches two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus was lying, one nearer the head and one nearer the feet. ¹³ And they say to her, “woman, why are you crying?” She says to them, “They lifted up my master and I do not know where they have placed him”. ¹⁴ When she had said these things, she turned around and looks at Jesus, but she did not know that it is Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus says to her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?” Supposing that he is the garden-keeper, she says to him, “Sir, if you took him, tell me where you placed him and I will lift him up”.

20:4 ἔτρεχον δὲ οἱ δύο ὁμοῦ· καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητῆς προέδραμεν τάχιον τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ ἦλθεν πρῶτος εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον, ⁵ καὶ παρακύψας βλέπει κείμενα τὰ ὀθόνια, οὐ μέντοι εἰσῆλθεν. ⁶ ἔρχεται οὖν καὶ Σίμων Πέτρος ἀκολουθῶν αὐτῷ καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον, καὶ θεωρεῖ τὰ ὀθόνια κείμενα, ⁷ καὶ τὸ σουδάριον, ὃ ἦν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ, οὐ μετὰ τῶν ὀθονίων κείμενον ἀλλὰ χωρὶς ἐντετυλιγμένον εἰς ἓνα τόπον. ⁸ τότε οὖν εἰσῆλθεν καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητῆς ὁ ἐλθὼν πρῶτος εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐπίστευσεν. ⁹ οὐδέπω γὰρ ἤδεισαν τὴν γραφὴν ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι. ¹⁰ ἀπῆλθον οὖν πάλιν πρὸς αὐτοὺς οἱ μαθηταί.

¹¹ Μαρία δὲ εἰστήκει πρὸς τῷ μνημείῳ ἔξω κλαίουσα. ὡς οὖν ἔκλαιεν, παρέκυψεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον ¹² καὶ θεωρεῖ δύο ἀγγέλους ἐν λευκοῖς καθεζομένους, ἓνα πρὸς τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἓνα πρὸς τοῖς ποσίν, ὅπου ἔκειτο τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. ¹³ καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῇ ἐκεῖνοι, Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; λέγει αὐτοῖς ὅτι Ἔηραν τὸν κύριόν μου, καὶ οὐκ οἶδα ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν. ¹⁴ ταῦτα εἰποῦσα ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ θεωρεῖ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐστῶτα καὶ οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν. ¹⁵ λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς, Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; τίνα ζητεῖς; ἐκείνη δοκοῦσα ὅτι ὁ κηπουρός ἐστίν λέγει αὐτῷ, Κύριε, εἰ σὺ ἐβάστασας αὐτόν, εἰπέ μοι ποῦ ἔθηκας αὐτόν, καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν ἀρῶ.

20:16 Jesus says to her, “Mary”. She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni” (which means teacher).¹⁷ Jesus says to her, “Stop clinging to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father and my God and your God’”.¹⁸ Mary Magdalene comes giving the message to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”, and [telling] the things he said to her.

¹⁹ Then when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, the disciples were behind tightly closed doors for fear of the *Ioudaioi*; Jesus came and stood in their midst and says to them, “Peace be with you”.²⁰ Having said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced having seen the Lord.²¹ Then Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you; just as the Father has sent me, I am also sending you”.²² And having said this, he blew [on them] and says to them, “Take the Holy Spirit;²³ whomever you forgive, they stand forgiven; from whomever you withhold forgiveness, they stand with forgiveness withheld.

²⁴ But Thomas, who was called “twin”, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.²⁵ Then the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord”. But he said to them, “Unless I might see in his hands the nail marks, and I might thrust my finger into the nail marks, and I might thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe”.

20:16 λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς, Μαριάμ. στραφεῖσα ἐκείνη λέγει αὐτῷ Ἑβραϊστί, Ραββουνι (ὃ λέγεται Διδάσκαλε).¹⁷ λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς, Μὴ μου ἅπτου, οὐπω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα· πορεύου δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ εἶπε αὐτοῖς, Ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ θεὸν μου καὶ θεὸν ὑμῶν.¹⁸ ἔρχεται Μαριάμ ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ ἀγγέλλουσα τοῖς μαθηταῖς ὅτι Ἐώρακα τὸν κύριον, καὶ ταῦτα εἶπεν αὐτῇ.

¹⁹ Οὔσης οὖν ὀψίας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τῇ μιᾷ σαββάτων καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Εἰρήνῃ ὑμῖν.²⁰ καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῖς. ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν κύριον.²¹ εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς [ὁ Ἰησοῦς] πάλιν, Εἰρήνῃ ὑμῖν· καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέν με ὁ πατήρ, καὶ γὰρ πέμπω ὑμᾶς.²² καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησεν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον.²³ ἂν τινων ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἀφέωνται αὐτοῖς, ἂν τινων κρατῆτε κεκράτηνται.

²⁴ Θωμᾶς δὲ εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ’ αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς.²⁵ ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί, Ἐώρακαμεν τὸν κύριον. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω μου τὴν χεῖρα εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω.

^{20:26} A week later, his disciples were again inside with tightly closed doors, and Thomas was with them. There comes Jesus and he stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you”. ²⁷ Then he says to Thomas, “Put your finger here and gaze at my hands, and thrust your hand into my side, and stop your state of unbelief, but be one who trusts. ²⁸

Thomas answered and said to him, “My Lord and my God”. ²⁹ Jesus says to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? How blessed are those who have believed without having seen”.

³⁰ Indeed then, Jesus worked many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these things have been written in order that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you might have life in his name.

^{20:26} Καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέρας ὀκτῶ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ’ αὐτῶν. ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν, Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. ²⁷ εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾶ, Φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευράν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός. ²⁸ ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου. ²⁹ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ὅτι ἐώρακάς με πεπίστευκας; μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες.

³⁰ Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν [αὐτοῦ], ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ. ³¹ ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύ[σ]ητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

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