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John's Farewell Discourse under the Shadow of Mark

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ABSTRACT: The lengthy discourses of John's Gospel are a feature of the Evangelist's writing which has contributed to the idea that he wrote independently of other Gospels. The absence of such discourses in the Synoptics might suggest that John's discourses are idiosyncratic vehicles for theologizing, wherein Jesus' speech mirrors Johannine idiom. In this article, I re-examine Jesus' farewell discourse in John 13–17 in light of the view that John is dependent on Mark's Gospel. Although John 13–17 is not often considered a connection between these Gospels, I argue that John built this material from Mark 12–14, seeking to improve and expand Mark in a competitive literary marketplace and to persuade his readers to view Jesus and themselves in a particularly Johannine way. John's compositional practices in his farewell discourse material will be compared with two Jewish texts (Chronicles and *Jubilees*) which reinterpret earlier source material to create farewell discourses.

KEYWORDS: John's Gospel, compositional practices, rewriting, *Jubilees*, Chronicles, Mark's Gospel, Second Temple Judaism

For decades now, John's Gospel has been categorised as a 'genre-bending' text.[1] That is, John[2] borrows from varying but recognisable literary conventions, combining and tweaking them in order to create his kaleidoscopic portrayal of Jesus – a portrayal often recognised for its peculiarity and difference when compared with earlier Gospel texts like Mark.[3] John 13–17 is an example of Johannine difference, since this portion of his Gospel provides readers with lengthy speeches from Jesus not found elsewhere. While peculiar, John 13–17 also represents an example of John's manipulation of recognisable generic

1 H.W. Attridge, "Genre Bending in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 121/1 (2002) 3–21; K.B. Larsen (ed.), *The Gospel of John as Genre Mosaic* (SANt 3; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2015).

2 I refer to the Fourth Evangelist as 'John' without further assumptions about the precise identity of the author, except that he was a Jewish Christian writing at the end of the first century. There are ambiguities that arise when considering whether multiple authors are involved or what to make of the designation 'beloved disciple', and these issues need not be rehashed here. See A. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St. John* (BNTC 4; London – New York: Continuum 2006) 17–26.

3 Here I follow the widely supported date ranges for Mark and John. John is usually dated 90–110 (see S. Porter, "The Date of John's Gospel and Its Origins," *The Origins of John's Gospel* [eds. S.E. Porter – H.T. Ong] [JS 2; Leiden: Brill, 2015] 11–29). Mark is usually dated 66–75 (see E.-M. Becker, "Dating Mark and Matthew as Ancient Literature," *Mark and Matthew*. I. *Comparative Readings: Understanding the Earliest Gospels in Their First-Century Settings* [eds. E.-M. Becker – A. Runesson] [WUNT 271; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2011] 123–143).

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forms, since he couches these sayings of Jesus in the form of a 'farewell discourse'. Much has been written about this literary convention,[4] but it suffices to say that, by John's time, this was a common vehicle for writers to communicate important teaching from a notable person.[5] In Jewish texts, this often takes the form of a major figure's final exhortations to his children or to the nation of Israel just before his death (e.g., Jacob in Gen 49). Though the form and content of such discourses vary, they typically feature the speaker reflecting on his life and discussing how he accomplished his purpose, calling listeners to remembrance of God's commands or the speaker's teachings (and sometimes giving new commands), naming some sort of successor(s), and calling his listeners to faithfulness.[6] Since readers would consider a major figure's final words to have utmost importance, the authors of these discourses could use this literary form as a way to shape reader interpretation and to speak to a later context. For John, Jesus' farewell discourse represents his disciples' final encounter with him prior to his death, and therefore, it represents an opportunity to convey essential information to readers.

Jesus' final speeches are in the context of Passover, in the context of his last evening with his disciples. Initially, Jesus is at a meal with his disciples, and in keeping with the Johannine emphasis on Jesus being in total control of himself and having all knowledge, the narrator indicates that Jesus was aware of his imminent death (13:1). After washing his disciples' feet as an example of how they should serve each other, Jesus predicts his betrayal (13:21, 26). After Judas departs, Jesus gives a 'new' command to his disciples to love one another (13:34), just before predicting Peter's threefold denial (13:38). Jesus then speaks of the nature of his departure (14:1–4), corrects his disciples' misunderstandings of his death and his identity (14:5–14), and then describes his 'successor', who is the Spirit (14:15–31). This is followed by exhortations for his disciples to remain 'in' Jesus and faithful to his teaching (15:1–17), with predictions of opposition (15:18–25) and another promise of a successor (15:26–27). Jesus then gives a rationale for heeding his words: that the disciples

4 F. Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word: The Johannine Call to Abide* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 1991); E. Bammel, "The Farewell Discourse of the Evangelist John and its Jewish Heritage," *TynBul* 44/1 (1993) 103–116; M. Winter, *Das Vermächtnis Jesu und die Abschiedsworte der Väter: Gattungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der Vermächtnisrede im Blick auf Joh. 13–17* (FRLANT 161; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1994); C. Dietzfelbinger, *Der Abschied des Kommenden: Eine Auslegung der johanneischen Abschiedsreden* (WUNT 1/95; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1996) 1–14; J.C. Stube, *A Graeco-Roman Reading of the Farewell Discourse* (LNTS 309; London – New York: Clark – Bloomsbury 2006); R. Sheridan, "John's Gospel and Modern Genre Theory: The Farewell Discourse (John 13–17) as a Test Case," *ITQ* 75/3 (2010) 287–299.

5 As A. Kolenkow puts it, 'Death was believed to be a time when God granted prophetic knowledge and visions of the other world to the righteous. Testaments were viewed as authoritative because no person would be expected to tell an untruth at the hour of death/judgment' (from "Testaments," *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* [eds. R.E. Kraft – G.W.E. Nickelsburg] [Philadelphia, PA: Fortress 1986] 259).

6 Interpreters agree that the presence of these elements is a fundamental feature of the generic form; cf. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 384; D.M. Reis, "Jesus' Farewell Discourse, 'Otherness,' and the Construction of a Johannine Identity," *SR* 32/1–2 (2003) 39–58; C.S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson 2005) II, 896–897.

would not fall away when they are opposed (16:1–6).[7] After once more promising his successor (16:7–15), he speaks about his disciples' imminent difficulties, clarifies their misunderstandings, and provides encouragement (16:16–33). Finally, a lengthy prayer is included where Jesus states his accomplishments (17:1–14), asks for the disciples' protection (17:15–19), and for the blessing of future believers (17:20–24). Jesus concludes by praying about accomplishing his revelatory mission (17:25–26). Although debate continues about the development or redaction of individual sections within John 13–17, these chapters are unified around (1) Jesus' departure, (2) his command to love (of which he provides the example), (3) the provision of the Spirit, and (4) exhortations to his disciples to continue his work.[8]

Despite the many ways that John 13–17 does conform to the generic framework of ancient farewell discourses, it is also different in important respects. For example, Jesus is presented differently than other figures in the way that he returns to where he once was, and Jesus' experiences before death are not suffering but glorification, and finally, unlike other similar ancient examples, Jesus does not use the 'blessing' formula of a figure like Moses in Deut 33, but commissions his disciples to be sent as he was sent (John 17:18).[9] Beyond this, Jesus does not join his ancestors, but returns to his Father. In such ways, John stretches expectations for the use or performance of genres, even while he appeals to recognisable forms, and thus proves that his 'genre bending' classification is apt. Of course, the biggest difference of all between John's farewell discourse and other similar examples is that Jesus rises after dying, which is perhaps the ultimate form of genre-bending.[10] Jesus' death is reinterpreted as his true glorification; what was shameful becomes the culmination of Jesus' loving obedience of the Father and the means by which God displays and secures Jesus' identity as his Son.[11]

John does more than bend genres, however. In what follows, I suggest that John also 'bends' his source material by his reuse, reinterpretation, and reimagining of it. Subsequently, I propose a different way to read John's farewell discourse material, based on the view that John knows Mark's Gospel and uses it as his primary source. The idea that John is dependent on (at least) Mark has had a resurgence in recent years, which is remarkable

7 John 16:2 is a clear point of evidence that the narrator was structuring this discourse to speak to the needs of his context, given the mention of the disciples being put out of the synagogue. As with other farewell discourses, these statements serve as the narrator's opportunity to shape the tradition to serve his readers. I will return to this point below.

8 See T. Engberg-Pedersen, *John and Philosophy: A New Reading of the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2017) 255–284. Here I will not analyse redactional layers within John 13–17, though I recognise that unusual characteristics in the text may suggest that John 15–17 is secondary to John 13–14. Even so, theories about how Markan/synoptic material may have been incorporated into later Johannine redactions strike me as excessively complicated, and, as Engberg-Pedersen argues in the work cited above, John 13–17 is sufficiently unified as it stands. If John 15–17 was secondary, it would have been added only a very short time after John 13–14, and thus my arguments throughout this paper are generally unaffected by this possibility.

9 See M. Coloe, "John 17:1–26: The Missionary Prayer of Jesus," *ABR* 66 (2018) 3.

10 Sheridan, "John's Gospel and Modern Genre Theory," 287–299.

11 Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 399.

given the dominance of independence-oriented readings of John throughout much of the twentieth century.[12] While John's dependence on Mark does not currently represent a consensus position, I follow the growing dependence-oriented view here and seek to contribute to its advancement by highlighting how John may have engaged with Mark in a part of his Gospel which is not often considered in dependence-oriented arguments – the lengthy discourse(s) of John 13–17. After providing an overview of John's relation to Mark and why dependence is plausible, I will rationalise my reading of John's farewell discourse as a rewritten text by examining two examples of Second Temple-era Jewish texts (Chronicles and *Jubilees*) which rewrite source material in a creative way, demonstrating a broad spectrum of similarity and difference from their sources. Specifically, I will examine how these texts rewrite the last words of major figures, noting how each creates expansive farewell discourses out of sparse source material to show how such examples could be analogues to John's source use. Finally, I will analyse the transformation of Mark 12–14 in John 13–17 and will suggest several possible motivations for John's compositional practices.

1. The Relationship Between John's Gospel and Mark's Gospel

Given that there is a consensus that Mark was the first written Gospel text,[13] it is at least possible that John's Gospel is dependent on Mark. But the fact that this is possible does not necessarily mean that it is plausible or likely. Other factors must be taken into consideration to build such a case. Whether a later text uses an earlier text as a source should be assessed as a function of various internal and external criteria. Internal criteria are textual elements, such as alignments in order, structure, wording, and narrative features, all of which can exist in degrees from minor connections to major agreements. A major agreement between two texts might be the presence of distinctive details which are difficult to explain otherwise. External factors are contextual elements, such as the date for each text, the accessibility of the earlier text, and the literary environment or culture (i.e., the extent to which similar source use was observable in other texts around the same time).

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12 See H.W. Attridge, "John and other Gospels," *The Oxford Handbook of Johannine Studies* (eds. J. Lieu – M.C. de Boer) (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2018) 44–62; E.-M. Becker – H.K. Bond – C.H. Williams (eds.), *John's Transformation of Mark* (London – New York: Clark – Bloomsbury 2021); W. Bowes, "The Relationship between John and the Synoptic Gospels Revisited," *JETS* 66/1 (2024) 113–132; J. Barker, *Writing and Rewriting the Gospels: John and the Synoptics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2025); M. Goodacre, *The Fourth Synoptic Gospel: John's Knowledge of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2025). Classic examples of the independence perspective include C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1968); D. Moody Smith, *John among the Gospels: The Relationship in Twentieth-Century Research* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 1992).

13 See P. Foster, "The Rise of the Markan Priority Hypothesis and Early Responses and Challenges to It," *Theological and Theoretical Issues in the Synoptic Problem* (eds. J.S. Kloppenborg – J. Verheyden) (LNTS 618; London – New York: Clark – Bloomsbury 2020) 89–113.

In terms of internal criteria, John has general sense of alignment in structure and order with Mark (e.g., both begin with John the Baptist, both have similarly placed feeding-crossing narratives). An example of a major agreement is the parallel Bethany anointing narratives, which have unusual verbatim connections unlikely to have emerged by coincidence (e.g., John 12:3 and Mark 14:3). In terms of external criteria, typical dates given for these texts would allow for a distance of a few decades, and the reception and transformation of Mark by both Matthew and Luke means that Mark was widely circulated in a short amount of time, which implies its accessibility. Additionally, the many other texts from the Second Temple era which reuse and rewrite earlier texts, interpreting them and extending their voice into more developed, autonomous narratives (e.g., the 'Rewritten Scripture' texts) provide points of comparison from John's wider Jewish literary milieu which suggest that his reuse of Mark's Gospel would not be considered unusual.[14]

Often, independence-oriented interpreters have alleged that John's similarities with Mark could be explained through divergent streams of oral tradition.[15] The ancient world of the first century was certainly a mixed-media environment, where oral tradition played an important role alongside written texts, but the problem with an appeal to oral tradition is that oral tradition is so malleable that such appeals are ultimately unfalsifiable, since we have no access to it. It must be acknowledged that a text exhibiting wide-ranging similarity and difference with theorised source material cannot be presumed independent from that source material purely on the basis of inconsistent degrees of similarity, since there are many examples of texts with major differences from undisputed sources (e.g., Philo's *De Vita Mosis* in its reuse of Exodus–Numbers, or *4 Macc* in its reuse of 2 Macc). Moreover, it is precarious to compare John's possible reuse of Mark with the reuse of Mark found in Matthew and Luke, since the frequent copying utilised by these texts has actually been shown to be quite anomalous in their literary context.[16] Given how other ancient Jewish texts use earlier source material, it seems more likely that John knew and used Mark, transforming its content for a later audience with different concerns.

At this point, it must also be acknowledged that whether John reuses Mark's Gospel is a different question than whether he reuses all three Synoptics, and here I focus only on Mark. His knowledge of both Matthew and Luke is possible, but the difficulties that arise with this possibility are sometimes understated by those who hold that view. Connections between John and Matthew are sometimes intriguing, but the texts have so little alignment (in structure/order, linguistic parallels, and theological emphases) that a proposed relationship between them seems to create more questions than answers. In Luke's case, there are a few plausible examples of connection, but there is also the problem of how Luke should

14 See C. Williams, "John's 'Rewriting' of Mark: Insights from Ancient Jewish Analogues," *John's Transformation of Mark* (eds. E.-M. Becker – H.K. Bond – C.H. Williams) (London – New York: Clark – Bloomsbury 2021) 51–66.

15 E.g., J. Dunn, "John and the Oral Gospel Tradition," *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition* (ed. H. Wansborough) (JSNTSup 64; London: Clark 1991) 351–379.

16 See S. Mattila, "A Question Too Often Neglected," *NTS* 41/2 (1995) 199–217.

be dated; it is at least possible that Luke's Gospel is a second century text, contemporaneous with or even later than John's Gospel. Thus, there is less plausibility to the idea that John does meaningfully engage with Luke, even if we allow for the possibility that there were multiple 'editions' of John's Gospel.[17] Such concerns cannot rule out John's familiarity with these Gospels, but if John knows any other Gospels at all, it is just more likely that he knows Mark.

With these considerations in mind, the case for a direct literary relationship between John and Mark is plausible. However, it is not enough to assume that John's farewell discourse material must derive from Mark solely on this basis, since John's access to Mark need not mean that he had access only to Mark. That is, John's differences from Mark with respect to John 13–17 are significant, and such difference merits further explanation; if John 13–17 is indebted to Mark, why did John rewrite Mark in the way that he did? One way to approach this question is to highlight other ancient literary examples of texts which rewrite earlier source material in a similar way, with a comparable spectrum of similarity and difference. Consequently, in what follows I want to focus on how John's farewell discourse can be compared to other examples of farewell discourses in rewritten Jewish literature, namely the discourse of David in 1 Chr 28–29 (which rewrites 1 Kgs 2:1–12) and the discourse of Abraham in *Jub.* 20:1–23:8 (which rewrites Gen 25:1–11).[18] Afterwards, I will discuss how these findings can inform our understanding of the purpose and function of John's Gospel *vis-à-vis* Mark's Gospel.

2. David's Farewell Discourse from 1 Kgs 2:1–12 to 1 Chr 28–29

1 Kgs begins with an aged David needing to negotiate Adonijah's claim to the throne, followed by his own proclamation of his son Solomon as king.[19] In 1 Kgs 2:1–12, David gives a final speech to Solomon, acknowledging his imminent death and calling Solomon to courage and faithfulness. David then asks Solomon to deal harshly with his enemies and kindly with his friends and finally provides instructions about one particular enemy (Shimei) before he dies and is buried. Despite David's importance in Israel's history, this episode is an example of David's mixed portrayal throughout Samuel–Kings. While the text exhibits a concern for the establishment of a clear succession and a sense that David's accomplishments continued, David is also portrayed as a feeble man who is concerned as much with vengeance as he is about Solomon's preparation (2 Kgs 1:5–6, 8–9).

17 See the discussion in M.C. de Boer, *John 1–6* (ICC; London – New York: Clark – Bloomsbury 2024) 99–153.

18 There are other Jewish texts which include farewell discourses (and discourses which sometimes end in final prayers), such as Josephus' *Antiquities* or the *Testament of Naphtali*. I highlight these examples for the sake of space, and because they represent particularly expansive farewell discourses crafted by Jewish writers whose texts have an undisputed relationship of dependence with earlier sources.

19 For background information on 1 Kgs, see L.M. Wray Beal, *1 & 2 Kings* (ApOTC; Downers Grove, IL: IVP – Apollos 2014) 21–60.

Writing at some point in the Persian era, the Chronicler augmented and transformed this earlier account.[20] The secondary transformations in 1–2 Chr are clear enough that it has long been categorised as one of the earliest members of the corpus of texts called 'Rewritten Scripture'. These Second Temple-era texts were written in a period of textual fluidity, after some authoritative texts existed but before any concept of a fixed canon.[21] Texts within this group (such as Temple Scroll and *Genesis Apocryphon*) display similar features of broad textual reuse and transformation of at least one antecedent source, utilising techniques like addition, omission, rearrangement, and paraphrase in order to produce an entirely new, independent composition.[22] Within such writings, an author's purpose for reusing earlier texts is not always clear, but most assume exegetical motivations.[23] That is, one or more source texts are rewritten to interpret them in light of the needs of readers in a different context.[24] In the 'Rewritten Scripture' texts, exegetical changes can range from relatively minor to highly creative, with the writer intending to extend the authoritative message of an earlier text, to participate in its discourse, and to limit misinterpretation. These texts are worth highlighting here, not in order to argue that John's Gospel belongs to this corpus, but to show that such texts existed in the Second Temple era and their existence attests to certain practices and techniques of transforming earlier written tradition which were not unprecedented by John's time.

In his exegetical changes, the Chronicler improved the portrait of David that he inherited and re-interpreted it for his later context. In this case, the Chronicler begins by narrating the end of David's life in 1 Chr 28 by describing David summoning the heads of Israel to assemble at Jerusalem. He discusses his desire to build a temple, but relays that YHWH did not allow him to do so, saying that YHWH chose David's family to lead the nation and had specifically chosen his son Solomon. In a speech likely influenced by Deuteronomic

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20 For background information on Chronicles, see R. Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 2006) 1–50.

21 The literature on Rewritten Scripture is immense, but see principally S.W. Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (SDSSRL; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2008); J. Zsengellér (ed.), *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques? A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes* (JSJSup 166; Leiden – Boston, MA: Brill 2014); M. Zahn, *Genres of Rewriting in Second Temple Judaism: Scribal Composition and Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2020). For discussions of textual fluidity in a pre-canonical era, see T.H. Lim, *The Formation of the Jewish Canon* (AYBRL; London – New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 2013); E. Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Developmental Composition of the Bible* (VTSup 169; Leiden – Boston, MA: Brill 2015); E. Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2016).

22 See A.K. Petersen, "The Riverrun of Rewriting Scripture: From Textual Cannibalism to Scriptural Completion," *JSJ* 43/4–5 (2012) 475–496, esp. 486 (reprint *CBÅ* 16 [2012] 7–19).

23 In Crawford's words, these texts rewrite 'for the purpose of exegesis' (*Rewriting Scripture*, 13).

24 In M. Zahn's words, these texts function 'interpretively to renew (update, correct) specific earlier traditions by recasting a substantial portion of those traditions in the context of a new work that locates itself in the same discourse as the scriptural work it rewrites … (they) provide a version of past tradition that better reflects the concerns and ideology of their community' (*Rethinking Rewritten Scripture: Composition and Exegesis in the 4QReworked Pentateuch Manuscripts* [STDJ 95; Leiden – Boston, MA: Brill 2011] 286).

language,[25] David urges obedience to YHWH's commands and then specifically addresses Solomon. David urges Solomon to be faithful to YHWH, charges him to build the sanctuary, and gives Solomon the plans that the Spirit had put into David's mind. Solomon is enabled to understand this plan, and David assures Solomon that Israel will listen to him. In 1 Chr 29, David speaks again to the whole assembly, addressing Solomon's age and giving of his own wealth to the temple. The people then give of their own resources and David rejoices with the people. Then, the Chronicler includes a final prayer (1 Chr 29:10–19) and calls the assembly to praise God. The next day, sacrifices are made, Solomon is installed and exalted, and David's life is summarised and he dies (1 Chr 29:26–28). Similarities and differences between the two episodes are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. A comparison of David's final sayings in 1 Kgs and 1 Chr

1 Kgs 2:1–12	1 Chr 28–29
2:1: Introductory statements by narrator (David about to die, gives charge to Solomon)	28:1: Introductory statements by narrator (David summoned a large assembly)
	28:2–8: David's first speech to the assembly
	28:2–3: David explains his plans for the temple
	28:4–5: Solomon is chosen to rule
	28:6–7: Solomon must build the temple
	28:8: David charges the assembly to obey YHWH
2:2–9: David's speech to Solomon	28:9–21: David's speech to Solomon
2:2–4: Exhortations to strength, faithfulness	28:9: Exhortations to acknowledge, seek YHWH
	28:10: Exhortation to build the temple, strength
2:5–9: Instructions about certain parties	
2:5–6: Deal with Joab son of Zeruiah	
2:7: Show kindness to the sons of Barzillai	
2:8–9: Deal with Shimei son of Gera	
	28:11–19: David gives Solomon building plans
	28:20–21: Exhortation to strength, reminders
	29:1–9: David's second speech to the assembly
	29:1–5: David calls for communal consecration
	29:6–9: The people respond, all rejoiced
	29:10–20: David's final prayer
	29:10–13: Praises, affirmations of YHWH
	29:14–17: Statements about the people
	29:18–19: Statements about remaining faithful
	29:20: Collective call to praise
	29:21–25: People, YHWH acknowledge Solomon
2:10–12: Concluding statements by narrator	29:26–30: Concluding statements by narrator
2:10: David rested with his ancestors	
2:11: He reigned forty years	29:26–27: David was king, ruled forty years
2:13: Solomon sat on David's throne	29:28: Solomon succeeded him
	29:29–30: Reference to source materials

25 S. Ahn, *The Persuasive Portrayal of David and Solomon in Chronicles: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Speeches and Prayers in the David-Solomon Narrative* (MBS 3; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock 2018) 195.

I want to emphasise the various forms of rewriting utilised by the Chronicler. He retains the basic framework from 1 Kgs, but engages in extensive expansion and elaboration, incorporating additions, omissions, rearrangements, and paraphrase to create a more seamless narrative and an improved portrayal of David. As Ahn observes, although the relationship between 1–2 Chr and Sam–Kgs is not in doubt, David's final speeches in 1 Chr 28–29 'have no parallels in Samuel–Kings'.[26] These speeches are better understood as intentional rhetoric, directed toward the readers to address issues pertinent to their later context.

The Chronicler goes to great efforts to portray David as a priestly figure. David directs and organises the community's worship, and thereby, readers come to a different understanding of David's role and legacy.[27] This was certainly important for the Chronicler's audience, possibly dealing with a crisis in the Persian period, after their collective identity was challenged following the exile (and the disappearing of cultural identity markers like the monarchy and the temple).[28] The anchoring memory of David as a faithful, unifying figure–one who gave clear instructions for the future–becomes increasingly important. Minor alterations improve the perception of David's piety (e.g., an exhortation to strength in 1 Kgs 2:2 becomes a call to seek YHWH in 1 Chr 28:9). 1 Chr 29 also includes a lengthy final prayer from David, not included in the source material. In this prayer, David puts his donations towards the temple in theological perspective and prays for the realisation of the temple's construction. The commands to Solomon about executing vengeance are absent, and the transition to Solomon's enthronement is peaceful, seamless, and divinely guided.[29] That is, the prayer serves to emphasise that the temple plans were given by YHWH, and that YHWH elected Solomon for this task.[30] David's moral character is moved to the background, and his liturgical role is brought to the forefront. These changes were part of the Chronicler's narrative and rhetorical goals, as he was keenly interested in legitimising a certain understanding of both the temple and of David's role.[31] David is here a man who is given special, private revelation from God about his role in the establishment of the temple, and his final prayer is highly poetic, giving readers an image of the king as a psalmic figure.[32]

For the Chronicler, David's legacy was of utmost importance; his last days were not characterised by weakness and conflict, but by the effective establishment of his legacy as an effective governor and military leader, and as the founder of the temple. In these final days of his life, 'David visibly enters into competition with Moses: Like the latter in the Priestly tabernacle account, David receives from YHWH a blueprint [...] of the sanctuary to be

26 Ahn, *The Persuasive Portrayal*, 188.
27 K. Hoglund, "The Priest of Praise: The Chronicler's David," *RevExp* 99/2 (2002) 189–190.
28 Ahn, *The Persuasive Portrayal*, 2–3, 15.
29 J. Hutzli, "David in the Role of a Second Moses – The Revelation of the Temple-Model (tabnît) in 1 Chronicles 28," *Chronicles and the Priestly Literature of the Hebrew Bible* (eds. J. Jeon – L.C. Jonker) (BZAW 528; Berlin – Boston, MA: De Gruyter 2021) 322–336, esp. 330.
30 Ahn, *The Persuasive Portrayal*, 188.
31 S. Joo, "Past No Longer Present: Revision of David's Legacy in Chronicles," *SJOT* 26/2 (2012) 235–258.
32 Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 532.

built. Furthermore [...] David took the lead in donating to the temple.'[33] Here, the Chronicler was likely concerned with the reconstruction of his reading community; his rhetoric 'serves to reconstruct the community identity through the Jerusalem temple, revealing the continuity of the covenant relationship between YHWH and Israel.'[34] The Chronicler is also concerned with communicating to the audience that obedience to YHWH will assure possession of the land, the exile resulted from forsaking YHWH, and that readers prospering in their current situation will depend on seeking YHWH.[35]

The Chronicler's shaping of this discourse (with its broad spectrum of similarity and dissimilarity with his source) would have had import for his audience in a precarious and uncertain context, especially if they applied David's exhortations to faithfulness (that David prayed for them, that YHWH would keep their hearts faithful to him forever; 1 Chr 29:18) to their own situation. As I will show, in terms of correspondence, degree of change, and rhetorical aims, the Chronicler's rewriting practices are similar to what we find in John's farewell discourse material, from his reshaping of material for a later audience to his inclusion of a final prayer for a central figure who is being spotlighted. Thus, 1 Chr 28–29 could provide a helpful example of a similar type of rewriting, or the utilisation of similar types of literary strategies that may be at work in John's reworking of Mark.

3. The Last Words of Abraham from Gen 25:1–11 to *Jub.* 20:1–23:8

For the second text comparison we turn to the end of Abraham's life in Genesis, and its corresponding elaboration in Jubilees. In Gen 25, the narration of the end of Abraham's life is sparse. Readers are told that the patriarch gave gifts to his sons and left much of his wealth to Isaac, and that he lived 175 years, died, and was buried with Sarah. Abraham's last words are recorded in Gen 24, involving an oath he asks of his household servant to get a wife for Isaac, but no other information is provided before the narrative shifts toward Isaac and Jacob. Like David in Samuel–Kings, Genesis provides readers with a 'mixed' portrait of Abraham; the text illustrates a concern for continuity and succession with respect to the covenant promises made to Abraham about his future, but he fades from the literary scene in a rather abrupt fashion.

Likely written in the mid-second-century BCE, *Jubilees* creatively rewrites Gen 1–Exod 12 and, in its features and function, it similarly belongs to the corpus of texts called 'Rewritten Scripture'.[36] Like the Chronicler, the author of *Jubilees* augmented and transformed the rather undetailed account of Abraham's end and provides Abraham with a lengthy and

33 Hutzli, "David in the Role," 322.

34 Ahn, *The Persuasive Portrayal*, 2–3.

35 J. Wright, "The Founding Father: The Structure of the Chronicler's David Narrative," *JBL* 117/1 (1998) 55–57; Ahn, *The Persuasive Portrayal*, 193–5.

36 For the background of *Jubilees*, see J. VanderKam, *Jubilees: A Commentary in Two Volumes* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 2018) 1–121.

detailed farewell discourse in *Jub.* 20:1–23:8 (which, like John 13–17, is actually a series of discourses).[37] In *Jub.* 20, Abraham calls his sons to righteousness, imploring them to observe circumcision and to avoid idolatry, and proceeds to give them gifts. In *Jub.* 21, Abraham speaks directly to Isaac, instructing him concerning idolatry, the manipulation of blood, and the proper way to offer sacrifices. In *Jub.* 22, Isaac and Ishmael visit Abraham in his final days. Isaac gives a sacrifice, and the sons and their father have a meal together. Finally, as with the Chronicler's David, Abraham is provided with a final prayer in *Jub.* 22:6–9. This is a prayer of thanksgiving, a prayer about the identity of YHWH, and a prayer for mercy and peace on Abraham's sons. In *Jub.* 22:10, Abraham calls Jacob and asks for God's blessing on him, and there is a series of sayings about Jacob's blessing (22:11–24). Jacob sleeps in Abraham's arms (22:25–26), and Abraham blesses him once more (22:27–30) on the last night before Jacob wakes to find that Abraham has died (*Jub.* 23:1–3). Similarities and differences are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. A comparison of Abraham's final sayings in Genesis and in *Jubilees*

Gen 25:1–11	***Jub.* 20:1–23:8**
25:1–4: Abraham's descendants by Keturah listed	20:1: Abraham calls his sons, and sons by Keturah
	20:2–10: Abraham's first speech to his sons
	20:2–3: righteousness, circumcision commanded
	20:4: Punishments for sexual immorality
	20:5: Abraham recalls judgment of giants, Sodom
	20:6: Exhortations against uncleanness
	20:7–8: Prohibition of idolatry
	20:9–10: Call to worship God, blessing promised
25:5: Abraham leaves everything to Isaac	20:11b: He gives everything to Isaac
25:6: Abraham gives gifts to his other sons	20:11a: He gives gifts to other sons, sends them out
	20:12–13: Other sons go to the East, called Arabs
	21:1–26: Abraham's second speech to Isaac
	21:1–4: Abraham speaks of his own faithfulness
25:7: Abraham lived 175 years	21:2: 'I am 175 years old…'
	21:5–20: Exhortations about various laws
	21:21–25: Call to turn away from wickedness
	21:26: Isaac goes out rejoicing
	22:1–5: Isaac, Ishamel celebrate the Feast of Weeks
	22:6–9: Abraham blesses, thanks God
	22:10–15: Abraham prays for Jacob
	22:16–25: Abraham exhorts Jacob to faithfulness
	22:26: Jacob and Abraham sleep, rejoice
	22:27–30: Abraham prays for Jacob again
	23:1: Abraham blesses Jacob and died
25:8: Abraham died	23:2–6: His sons, Rebecca, find him and mourn
	23:7: Isaac and Ishmael buried him with Sarah
25:9–10: Isaac and Ishmael buried him with Sarah	
25:11: God blesses Isaac	

37 This is one of many striking similarities between John and Jubilees; see further B.E. Reynolds, "The Necessity of Form and Spatial Content for Defining 'Apocalypse' and 'Apocalyptic'," *JSP* 33/3 (2024) 187–197.

This portion of *Jubilees* represents what van Ruiten calls 'an enormous expansion in details that are not present in the story of Genesis.'[38] Compared with Gen 25:1–10, the version in *Jubilees* does have some similarities, but it is characterised mostly by extensive expansions. Some of these expansions improve Abraham's character, but also retroject features of Torah-obedience to Abraham and his sons, thus improving their portrayal and making them Law-observant prior to the giving of the Law. An interesting feature along these lines is the weight that the author gives to the command from Lev 19:18 to love one's neighbour, a command also found in Noah's farewell discourse earlier (*Jub.* 7:20–39).[39] Abraham begins first with an acknowledgement and awareness of his death, describes the present situation in which he gives his final speech(es), summarises the past, and points ahead to the future in order to instruct his sons in what they should do. Here, the author of *Jubilees* has his readers in mind; the point is not Abraham's death but the future life of his descendants. Abraham's final speeches are an opportunity to extend the authoritative voice of the patriarch and provide instruction to a later audience in a different context – probably a situation after Antiochus Epiphanes, where readers may have needed to reorient their collective identity.[40]

In the author's reworking of Abraham's last days, we see an example of both his later perspective and his rhetorical intention for his audience. For example, on his last day, Abraham celebrates the Festival of Weeks with Isaac and Ishmael (*Jub.* 22:1–9), although, as I just noted, from a literary perspective this festival was unknown prior to Moses. The notion of law-observant patriarchs is a window into the author's exegetical perspective, in that these additions fill gaps in his source material but also advance the view that the Torah did not begin with Moses but began with God, and thus it always existed and was always authoritative. Such additions make sense when they are viewed with their audience in mind. *Jubilees* extends the voice of the earlier material, building a fuller picture of Abraham where the source material was sparse. For the audience to view Abraham as continuing in righteousness to the end, teaching his sons to be righteous, and insisting that they refrain from idolatry (*Jub.* 20:2–10), the audience (viewing themselves as Abraham's descendants) can further understand the importance of these exhortations for their own sense of identity. As with the Chronicler, we see an authorial effort to impart a sense of secure identity in a different (possible precarious) context.

Finally, as with David in Chronicles (and Jesus in John 17), in *Jubilees*, Abraham is given a lengthy final prayer. The prayer calls for blessing on Abraham's children and emphasises the author's view about Israel as a chosen people, different than other nations (*Jub.* 22:10). Here, we see a similar series of rewriting practices as we find in Chronicles; *Jubilees* utilises additions, omissions, rearrangement, and paraphrase to create a more seamless narrative

38 J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees: The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26–25:10 in the Book of Jubilees 11:14–23:8* (JSJSup 161; Leiden: Brill 2012) 253.

39 Aside from being an example of Abraham's proleptic Torah obedience, it also is yet another similarity with John's Gospel, since this command is found in John 13:34.

40 On *Jubilees*' situation, see J.C. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (CBQMS 18; Washington, DC: CBA 1987) 18–50.

with different aims, extending the voice of an authoritative figure to a later time, while exhibiting a wide range of similarity and dissimilarity with the source. As we return to John's Gospel, such examples provide a basis for understanding how other Jewish texts rewrote and transformed antecedent source material with a broad spectrum of similarity and difference, and why they may have done so. I suggest that, while John is not precisely the same type of text as 1 Chronicles or *Jubilees*, he is doing something similar to these texts in terms of his engagement with Mark's Gospel as his source material. This suggestion prepares us for a more detailed analysis of his farewell discourse material.

4. The Last Words of Jesus from Mark 12–14 to John 13–17

Mark 12–14 has Jesus in Jerusalem as conflicts with the religious authorities continue toward the crucifixion. This section of Mark's Gospel begins after the climactic temple disturbance (which John has rearranged to an earlier place as a framing device; John 2:13–22), where Jesus speaks against the religious authorities and subsequently is caught in several controversies. Mark 13 records a final discourse from Jesus about the future, a discourse which likely reflects Mark's close proximity to the events of the Jewish-Roman War. In Mark 14, Jesus is anointed, prior to the Last Supper with his disciples (Mark 14:1–26). After going to the Mount of Olives, Jesus predicts Peter's denial and prays in Gethsemane prior to his arrest (Mark 14:27–42). John 13–17 (summarised in the introductory section) has Jesus' final discourse set entirely in the context of his final meal with his disciples, just before his arrest. In keeping with the two prior examples, similarities and differences are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. A comparison of Jesus' final sayings in Mark and in John

Mark 12:1–14:42	John 13–17
12:1–12: Parable of the vineyard tenants	(15:1–8: Saying about vines and branches)
12:13–27: Controversies over taxes and marriage	
12:28–37: Controversies over law and Messiah	
12:31: Command: Love your neighbour as yourself	(13:34: 'New' commandment: love one another)
12:38–44: Sayings about teachers, offering	
13:1: Jesus' disciples comment on the temple	
13:2: Jesus predicts the destruction of the temple	
13:3–4: Four disciples ask Jesus about the end, signs	
13:5–37: Eschatological speech	
13:5–8: Deception, false Christs, wars, disasters	(16:21–22: Saying about anguish of birth pains)
13:8b: '[...] beginning of birth pains'	
13:9–11: You will be witnesses, flogged, arrested	
13:12: There will be betrayal, rebellion	(15:18–21: Sayings about the world hating disciples)
13:13: All will hate you, stand firm	
13:14–17: Sayings about fleeing, abomination	
13:18–20: Sayings about distress, time	
13:21–25: Warnings about false Christs, distress	

Mark 12:1–14:42	John 13–17
13:26–27: The return of the Son of Man	
13:28–31: Sayings about fig tree, imminence	
13:32–37: Exhortations to be on guard, watch	(16:1: 'so that you will not fall away')
14:1–9: Jesus anointed at Bethany	(12:1–8: Jesus anointed at Bethany)
14:10–11: Judas goes to priests to betray Jesus	
14:12–16: Jesus sends disciples to prepare Passover	13:1: Just before the Passover Festival
	13:2–17: Jesus washes disciples' feet
14:17–21: At table, Jesus warns about betrayal	13:18–26: At table, Jesus warns about betrayal
	13:27–30: Satan enters Judas, he goes out
	13:31–35: Sayings about departure, love
14:22–26: Saying about bread, cup, covenant	
14:27–28: Jesus predicts disciples' abandonment	(16:32: Jesus predicts disciples' abandonment)
14:29–31: Jesus predicts Peter's denial	13:36–38: Jesus predicts Peter's denial
	14:1–4: Jesus comforts, exhorts disciples
	14:5–14: Responses to Thomas, Philip, about identity
	14:15–21: Exhortations to obedience, Spirit promised
	14:22–31: Sayings about Jesus' words, Spirit, peace
	15:1–17: Sayings about vines, branches, remaining
	15:18–16:11: Sayings about opposition, Advocate
	16:12–15: Sayings about the coming Spirit of truth
	16:16–24: Sayings about leaving and returning
	16:25–33: Sayings of clarity of speech, belief
14.32–40: Prayer in Gethsemane	17:1–26: Jesus prays (18:1: in a garden)
	17:1–5: Prayer to be glorified
	17:6–19: Prayer for the disciples, protection
	17:20–23: Prayer for believers, unity
	17:24–26: Prayer about glory, sending, revelation
14.33–39: Jesus prays that he would be delivered	(12:27: Jesus speaks against praying for deliverance)
14.41: 'hour has come … Son of Man is delivered'	(13:1: Hour had come) (13:31: Son of Man glorified)
14.42 'Let us go' betrayer comes	(18:2–3: Judas comes)

Rather than assuming that John's differences from Mark in Jesus' discourse provide evidence for his literary independence, these texts and their practices can provide helpful reference points for understanding John as dependent on Mark, even while different from Mark. The fact that other Jewish writers rewrote earlier sources and created expansive farewell discourses for key characters does not, in itself, establish that John did the same with Mark, but I am suggesting that the existence of established literary precedents in texts like Chronicles and *Jubilees* can increase the plausibility that John did this.[41]

41 For examples of interpreters who consider John to be relying on (at least) Mark's Gospel in John 13–17, see K. Kleinknecht, "Johannes 13, die Synoptiker und die >>Methode<< der johanneischen Evangelienüberlieferung," *ZTK* 82/3 (1985) 361–388; H. Thyen, "Johannes und die Synoptiker: Auf der Suche nach einem neuen Paradigma zur Bieschreibung ihrer Beziehungen anhand von Beobachtungen an Passions- und Ostererzählungen," *John and the Synoptics* (ed. A. Denaux) (BETL 101; Leuven: Peeters – Leuven University Press 1992) 81–107; J. Beutler, "Synoptic Jesus Tradition in the Johannine Farewell Discourse," *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* (eds. R.T. Fortna – T. Thatcher) (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox 2001) 165–174; M. Jennings, "The Fourth Gospel's Reversal of Mark in John 13,31–14,3," *Bib* 94/2 (2013) 210–236; Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 362–441; E.-M. Becker, "John 13 as Counter-Memory: How the Fourth

If we could consider John as doing something similar to Chronicles and *Jubilees* in his effort to communicate an authoritative message to an audience in a different situation, this prepares us to consider the possibility that John's Gospel can be understood as a rewritten text, one which transposes Markan content in a different key. That is, John can be understood as an 'inspired interpreter',[42] reimagining earlier written traditions about Jesus and reinterpreting them for his audience in a distinct, autonomous narrative (i.e., not simply a 'second edition' of Mark). As with Chronicles and *Jubilees*, John's situation was likely a precarious one, with his audience being familiar with war, opposition, and schism, especially if, as most interpreters assume, the situation underlying John's Gospel reflects a situation of recent division and conflict with other Jewish groups and growing resistance to a Johannine understanding of Jesus, which had threatened the social identity of the audience.[43] John may have considered their identity formation as a motivating factor in his composition and arrangement of this material, and guided him in his reshaping of what he had received.

Even if the above comparisons are considered important, independence-oriented interpreters could allege that the differences between the material in John 13–17 and the material in Mark 12–14 are simply too vast. Admittedly, at first glance, a relationship between these particular sections could appear far-fetched (when compared with clearer points of overlap, like John 6:1–15 and Mark 6:30–44). But I purposefully discuss this comparison between John and Mark after examining Chronicles and *Jubilees*, because both earlier examples have very few contacts with their primary source material. While these two certainly appealed to a wide array of traditions, their primary source material is not in question. And yet, their transformational techniques, while more conservative in some places, are quite extensive in the instances I have explored here.[44] If John's Gospel is similar to other Jewish texts like these, and if his situation provided a reason for engaging in this type of exegesis, it

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Gospel Revises Early Christian Memory," *The Gospel of John as Genre Mosaic* (ed. K.B. Larsen) (SANt 3; Göttingen – Bristol: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2015) 269–281; K.L. Yoder, "Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John," *ETL* 92/4 (2016) 655–670; K.O. Sandnes, *Early Christian Discourses on Jesus' Prayer at Gethsemane: Courageous, Committed, Cowardly?* (NovTSup 166; Leiden – Boston, MA: Brill 2016) 187–189; B. Mathew, *The Johannine Footwashing as the Sign of Perfect Love* (WUNT 2/464; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2018) 129–165; K.B. Larsen, "The Lord's Prayer in the Fourth Gospel: Jesus' Testamentary Prayer (John 17) as Rewritten Prayer," *The Lord's Prayer* (eds. B. Langstaff – L. Stuckenbruck – M. Tilly) (WUNT 1/490; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2022) 173–188; A. Hentschel, *Die Fußwaschungserzählung im Johannesevangelium: Ein Beitrag zur johanneischen Ekklesiologie* (WUNT 1/493; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2022): 216–218; E. Corsar, "The Imitable Ethic of Self-Sacrificial Love: Johannine Ethics as a Reworking of Markan Ethics," *The Ethics of John: Retrospect and Prospects* (eds. J. van der Watt – M. den Dulk) (BibInt 227; Leiden – Boston, MA: Brill 2025) 125–141, esp. 135–138.

42 For the language of 'inspired interpretation', see D. Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE* (TSAJ 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1992) 196–198.

43 De Boer, *John 1–6*, 98–99.

44 In some cases, Jewish rewriters may follow their source material very closely (e.g., *Jubilees'* rather close reproduction of the Aqedah from Gen 22:1–19 in *Jub.* 17:15–18:19), but in other cases there may be extensive departures (11QT 56–59 completely departs from Deuteronomy, although its reuse is conservative elsewhere). Whether there are minimal or extensive departures may depend on the author's intention for his audience.

is possible that this is precisely what John did for his own readers. John could have been the sort of Jewish writer who served as an 'inspired interpreter' of earlier tradition, reshaping it in order to address the needs of his audience and their situation. Specifically, I suggest that John incorporated Markan material from throughout Mark 12:1–14:42 into John 13–17, adding, omitting, rearranging, and paraphrasing as he saw fit, refashioning this material into the form of a farewell discourse in order to address the needs of his readers and guide their understanding of Jesus.[45]

Beginning in John 13, Jesus has a final meal with his disciples, just as in Mark, but John focuses on Jesus' exemplification of ethical practice rather than on the institutionalisation of a ritual meal.[46] This is not to suggest a Johannine antipathy toward this ritual, but it can be understood as a way to tie together Mary's earlier paradigmatic action of anointing Jesus' feet and the later exhortation of Jesus to his disciples that they love one another on the basis of Jesus' paradigmatic action. In some sense, Jesus' 'transformation' from incarnate Word to one who washes feet is highly ironic, and could be an intentional reversal of some key Markan ideas. Feník and Lapko have argued that John means for Jesus to engage in a type of 'inverse transfiguration' here, in that Jesus manifests the attributes of an enslaved person tending to his disciples, rather than manifesting divine attributes to his disciples on a mountain.[47] Moreover, John's presentation of Jesus' glorification in John 13–14 already reverses Mark's future-oriented understanding of Jesus' glorification, since for John, Jesus is glorified 'now' (John 13:31), not necessarily only at his future return, as is the emphasis in Mark's discourse material (cf. Mark 13:26).[48] As Corsar has recently noted, the 'new' commandment that Jesus gives his disciples (to love one another; John 13:34) could be understood as 'a reworking of the love commandment in Mark' (Mark 12:31).[49] The command to love one's neighbour as oneself is modified to love others as Jesus has loved them, thus adjusting the point of reference. Finally, John follows Mark quite closely in his inclusion of Jesus' prediction of Peter's three denials (John 13:36–38; Mark 14:29–31).

In John 14, Jesus comforts his disciples (and John comforts his audience) through the promise of Jesus' future return (John 14:3, 18, 28), which is an especially important element of Mark's final discourse (Mark 13:28, 35–36). Additionally, John addresses his audience through Jesus (John 14:12–14) and assures them of their reception of the Spirit (John 14:15–17) before he prepares to be confronted by Satan (John 14:30) in a similar way (and with similar language) as he is confronted by Judas in Mark (Mark 14:42). Jesus goes willingly to his fate because it was commanded beforehand (John 14:31), just as in Mark

45 To rearrange and distribute source material from other contexts (within the same text) in this way has precedent in other Jewish interpretive texts (e.g., the rewriting of Korah's Rebellion in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 16:1–8, where the author borrows elements from Num 16 as well as the surrounding context of Num 15–17).

46 Becker, "John 13 as Counter-Memory," 280.

47 J. Feník – R. Lapko, "Jesus' Inverse Transfiguration in John 13," *Neot* 55/2 (2021) 347–364.

48 Jennings, "The Fourth Gospel's Reversal of Mark in John 13,31–14,3," 217.

49 Corsar, "The Imitable Ethic," 136.

he actively confronts 'the hour' (Mark 14:41), telling his disciples, 'let us go' (Mark 14:42) as his betrayer approaches.

In John 15, Jesus' sayings about the vine and branches (John 15:1–8) could be inspired by and connected to Mark's parable of the tenants (Mark 12:1–12), as Cespedes has recently suggested.[50] Both Evangelists draw on imagery from Isa 5 and Ps 80 in each case. Mark's parable is clearly an indictment of the religious authorities opposing Jesus, to cast them as unfruitful and illegitimate workers in the 'vineyard' of Israel, deserving of God's judgment, who will be supplanted in their role by 'others' (Mark 12:9). Following Cespedes, I suggest that John draws from Mark here to present Jesus' disciples as those 'others', who are the legitimate, fruitful workers in the 'vineyard' of Israel, which is represented by Jesus himself as the 'vine'. Both Mark's parable and John's vine metaphor involve the divine mission, as in Mark, the vineyard must continue to be tended even without the former tenants (Mark 12:9), and in John, the branches which are not burned must remain on the vine and bear fruit (John 15:6–8).[51] Beyond this, John's language of the world hating the disciples (John 15:18–16:4) finds a parallel in the similar language of Mark's discourse (Mark 13:9–13).[52]

While there may be comparatively few parallels with Mark in John 16–17, some minor overlaps are still present (e.g., Jesus using 'birth pain' language to refer to the difficult future experience of the disciples; John 16:21–22 and Mark 13:8). Of course, the idea that Jesus prayed in the presence of his disciples before his betrayal finds its earliest expression in Mark's Gethsemane, but other connections between Jesus' prayer in John 17 and Jesus' prayer in Mark 14 are sparse. As a result, the seeming idiosyncrasy of this prayer (compared to Jesus' prayer in Mark 14:32–40) has long contributed to independence-oriented arguments.[53] Even so, I suggest that John knew Mark's Gethsemane prayer material, placing his prayer in the same location but expanding it in order to communicate important information to his audience.[54] Through Jesus' prayer, part of what John communicates is that the disciples (who, thus far in the narrative, have frequently failed to understand) begin to come to a fuller understanding of Jesus' identity and message (e.g., John 16:29–30), and also that the audience still needs to understand Jesus' identity and message (e.g., John 17:20).

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50 J. Cespedes, *John's Complementing of Mark's Wicked Tenants Parable in his Metaphor of the True Vine* (PhD Diss. Liberty University; Lynchburg, VA 2023).

51 Cespedes, "John's Complementing," 182–185.

52 Beutler, "Synoptic Jesus Tradition," 171.

53 For examples of this argument, see B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (NCBC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1982) 441–444; M. Coloe, "Sources in the Shadows: John 13 and the Johannine Community," *New Currents through John: A Global Perspective* (eds. F. Lozado – T. Thatcher) (RBS 54; Atlanta, GA: SBL 2006) 69–82.

54 As I noted above, here I focus only on the relationship between John and Mark. While some have argued that John knows Matthew and Luke as well, I do not hold to this view. For an example of a scholar who sees the prayer in John 17 as a reworking of not only Mark but Matthew as well (esp. Matt 6:9–13), see R. Green, "John's Use of the Synoptic Gospels and Jesus' Farewell Prayer (Jn 17)," *Stella Maris* 5/1 (2024) 13–21.

That is, the purpose of this prayer is paraenetic; John intends to shape his audience's view of Jesus and themselves.[55] Within the text-world, the disciples were given an example to follow when Jesus asked them to wash feet as he did (13:15), to do mighty works as he did (14:12–14), to be opposed as he was (15:18), and to be unified as Jesus is with the Father (17:11). Through the rhetorical vehicle of these speeches John calls his audience to unity, to deeper knowledge of God, and to a relationship of abiding (17:20–26). John seeks not merely to theologise but to persuade his readers to take a particular view of Jesus' mission and of themselves in relation to his mission.[56] Jesus' prayer

> reflects the belief that even after his departure Christ's advocacy in prayer supports the mission of his followers. The knowledge that the risen and exalted Christ prays for his followers should be a major factor in shaping their identity and providing reassurance.[57]

Additionally, in a competitive literary marketplace, where other narratives of Jesus' life were being composed, John's portrayal here presents a different perspective than what readers find in Mark.[58] Here, in the final moments before his betrayal, Jesus is more sure of himself and concerned for the welfare of his disciples. This is distinct from the rather mixed portrayal found in Mark's Gethsemane scene (cf. Mark 14:36, John 12:27). In such instances, John could have understood Mark's material as authoritative and useful, but needing improvement, expansion, and reworking, particularly in a context where multiple Gospel writers may have been vying for prominence in a literary marketplace.

John could have many reasons for building a farewell discourse from Mark 12–14, but I suggest that his compositional practices had at least five aims. First, John needed to address the immediate divisions within his own community due to the issue of their removal from certain Jewish assemblies, and this plays a role in the way that Jesus speaks to his disciples about the future.[59] Just as Mark's readers would have found Jesus' predic-

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55 M.P. Hera, *Christology and Discipleship in John 17* (WUNT 2/342; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2013) 96.

56 Recently, A. Grottoli has noted that John's Gospel, as an ancient *bios*, seeks to persuade its audience. This is purpose of the text. Grottoli argues that John rewrites Mark and selectively chooses and shapes certain material in order that readers would see Jesus as John presents him (of course, this is explicitly stated in John 20:30–31). See A. Grottoli, *'But These Things Are Written': Lives, Rewriting, and the Gospel of John* (PhD Diss. University of Edinburgh; Edinburgh 2024) 241–242.

57 Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 440.

58 For the 'competitive textualisation' paradigm, see B. Wassell, "John's Competition with the Synoptics," *From Difference to Deviance: Rivalry and Enmity in Earliest Christianity* (eds. D.A. Smith – J. Verheyden) (BETL 339; Leuven: Peeters 2024) 139–172. On the question of history relative to John's discourse material, see P.F. Bartholomä, *The Johannine Discourses and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics: A Contribution to the Discussion Concerning the Authenticity of Jesus' Words in the Fourth Gospel* (TANZ 57; Tübingen: Francke 2012) 251–306.

59 See M.C. de Boer, "Expulsion from the Synagogue: J.L. Martyn's *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* Revisited," *NTS* 66/3 (2020) 367–391; W.V. Cirafesi, "Rethinking John and 'the Synagogue' in Light of Expulsion from Public Assemblies in Antiquity," *JBL* 142/4 (2023) 677–697. Jesus predicts his people's opposition, describing this as something that affirms their belonging to him (John 15:18–25; 16:1–4).

tions of their persecutions comforting (Mark 13:9–13), this provides meaning for the difficulties that John's readers faced and encouragement to continue. Second, John wanted to present a portrait of Jesus informed by more developed tradition; he writes this section from a later eschatological perspective (that is, through the lens of a realised rather than a future eschatology)[60] as well as a later Christological perspective (that is, through the lens of a clearer, less ambiguous view of the relationship between Jesus and God).[61] Third, John felt the need to more clearly elucidate the role of the Holy Spirit, which is left unclear in Mark.[62] Fourth, John wanted to explain the reason for and necessity of Jesus' departure, and the nature of his present activity.[63] Finally, in the case of the last prayer of Jesus, John wanted to emphasise the importance of the mission of the disciples, which continues in the community of the early church. While the whole discourse is generally participatory, the final prayer is especially participatory; in it, John emphasises the involvement of his audience by portraying the community of Jesus as God's dwelling place.[64] This could clarify some unanswered questions for readers of Mark about what following Jesus looks like in time between his resurrection and his return. Such participatory emphases provide meaning to additional revelation that follows and goes beyond the written text, showing that John means for his text to be considered a product of the Spirit (16:12–15).

One feature of exegetical rewriting in the Second Temple era is in the inclusion of a later eschatological perspective which is imposed onto the earlier material. Texts like Chronicles and *Jubilees* do this in certain places. For example, Chronicles writes with a view to restoration; his emphases on retribution and on God's direct involvement in history suggests that he wanted his readers to look to the future for deliverance and the hope of covenant renewal.[65] *Jubilees* also recasts its Pentateuchal material from the perspective of eschatological expectation, with the author seeking Israel's restoration and shaping the text's angelic discourse to fit that framing.[66] In these sorts of features we see the pilgrimage of tradition in the way that episodes are retold from a later context with a more developed perspective

60 As E. Haenchen puts it, '[t]he expectation of the end, which still lay, for Mark, in an indeterminate future as a cosmic event, was radicalized by John in such a way that chronological time was eliminated and with it the transformation of the world expected by Mark and the first Christians' (*John 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of John, Chapters 7–21* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 1988] 144).

61 Jesus' true identity *vis-à-vis* the Father is clarified in this section (John 14:9–14), as is the extent of his authority (John 17:2) both of which are ambiguous in Mark (2:10; 6:5a; 9:2–7; 10:18).

62 In Mark 1.8, for example, Jesus is identified as one who will 'baptize with the Holy Spirit', but the significance of this is left unclear.

63 This is also ambiguous in Mark. Mark teaches that Jesus will return (Mark 13:26–37; 14:62), but little detail is given about what happens prior to that return.

64 W.H. Oliver – A.G. van Aarde, "The Community of Faith as Dwelling-Place of the Father: 'βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ' as 'Household of God' in the Johannine Farewell Discourse(s)," *Neot* 25/2 (1991) 379–399. The rehearsal of Jesus' commands (i.e., to love) provides a template for John's readers for what faithfulness (and/or 'abiding') looks like in their fraught context (John 14:15–21; 15:1–17).

65 B.E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles* (JSOTSup 211; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1996) 135–185.

66 See T.R. Hanneken, *The Subversion of the Apocalypses in the Book of Jubilees* (EJL 34; Atlanta, GA: SBL 2012).

that the author can present to his audience to guide interpretation. John, I suggest, did something similar in reworking the material about Jesus' last words with his later eschatology, different and developed from Mark's earlier eschatology. We see this most clearly in John's concept of 'the hour'.

In Johannine perspective, it is not so much that the eschaton is realised already during Jesus' earthly ministry, but more so that the things associated with the eschaton (eternal life, judgment, etc.), while future events, are present in Jesus in his earthly ministry, bound up with his destiny, and initiated by his predetermined 'hour' of suffering and glorification.[67]

For Mark, the 'hour' is the eschatologically pregnant time of Jesus' death and resurrection – the end to which Jesus' earthly ministry had pointed (Mark 14:35). For John, the initiation of this 'hour' in Jesus is nothing less than the inauguration of a new age, one with high eschatological expectation that he wants to encourage his readers to live in now, not await in expectation.[68] The farewell discourse is intended to have an effect on its readers within their situation, and part of the intended effect is that readers would live from this eschatological fulfillment-oriented perspective in the present. In Grottoli's words, John 'picks out the idea (of the 'hour') and not only does he expand and correct it, but more importantly, he repurposes it as the focal point of Jesus' life, to portray him as unequivocally determined to carry out his mission.'[69] That is, for Mark, the 'hour' is the moment when Jesus is handed over – a moment of crisis which shifts the narrative. For John, though, the 'hour' guides the entire narrative; an element of Jesus' purpose is to experience this 'hour', to move toward it and not to resist it, to display total control over it.[70] In such instances, John's differences from Mark can be understood as developments of Mark, contributing to the conviction that John is actually much more 'Markan' than he appears.

Conclusion

Thirty years ago, Hoegen-Rohls convincingly argued that John's farewell discourse should be understood as the hermeneutical key for the way that the whole Gospel functions.[71] John's Gospel should not be viewed simply as a patchwork of oral traditions or as a series of idiosyncratic reflections pieced together in a disorganised way. Rather, its various pieces work together, designed by the author to present the message of Jesus from a self-consciously

67 C. Caragounis, "The Kingdom of God in John and the Synoptics," *John and the Synoptics*, 473–480.

68 J. Frey, "From the Expectation of the Imminent Kingdom to the Presence of Eternal Life: Eschatology in Mark and John," *John's Transformation of Mark* (eds. H.K. Bond – E.-M. Becker – C.H. Williams) (London – New York: Clark – Bloomsbury 2021) 169–186.

69 Grottoli, "'But These Things Are Written,'" 234.

70 To borrow a rather minor element from source material and expand it into a major element of a later narrative is also not unprecedented in other Jewish texts. For example, Jubilees borrows the context of Moses' time of Sinai in order to create a narrative frame for the way that the entire narrative of Genesis is retold (*Jub.* 1).

71 C. Hoegen-Rohls, *Der nachösterliche Johannes: Die Abschiedsreden als hermeneutischer Schlüssel zum vierten Evangelium* (WUNT 2/84; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1996).

later, post-Easter perspective. Through the lens of the farewell discourse, we see how the text functions retrospectively and the concerns of the author's time are weaved into the constructed past of the text-world to shape reader interpretation, which, as I have shown here, is how some other Jewish texts like Chronicles and *Jubilees* function. This is important for reconciling differences between John and Mark, because differences in the presentation of certain episodes become clearer if one considers the text as taking shape in an exegetical and literary milieu similar to (or influenced by) Chronicles and *Jubilees*.

In his influential work on these chapters of John, Käsemann once remarked that 'if the Fourth Gospel took up this Synoptic tradition, then John transformed it to an unusual extent.'[72] I am arguing that in fact, John did transform antecedent written Gospel sources, but that, when compared with Jewish texts like Chronicles and *Jubilees*, John's transformations of his source material become far less 'unusual'.[73] On closer examination, these texts were not outliers in terms of their exegetical practices and rewriting techniques, but such practices have precedent. The commonality of such features can help us to see that John may not be the 'outlier' at all. Rather, as I noted earlier, Matthew and Luke, with their frequent copying and retention of verbatim Markan material, may be the true 'outliers'.[74] If this is correct, it provides a way to understand how John appeals to a recognisable generic form (i.e., the farewell discourse), but not simply as a vehicle for idiosyncratic theologising. Rather, he appeals to this form as a vehicle for transforming and expanding on what he received from Mark. In the process, he 'bends' both genres and sources to his ends, but not in an unprecedented way when compared with other Jewish literature.

John's 'bending' of Mark by his creative reuse, reinterpretation, and reimagining of it may have been motivated by deficiencies that he perceived in Mark's presentation, as well as by the desire to write an improved and expanded life of Jesus in the context of a competitive literary marketplace, where traditions were fluid, the canon was not closed, and Gospels were continuing to be produced. When it comes to his writing techniques, though, I suggest that John, like Chronicles and *Jubilees*, began with rather sparse material found in the source, sought to extend its authoritative voice, and aimed to transform it in a way that spoke to a different situation. It is not so much that John's Gospel is the same type of text as Chronicles or *Jubilees* (i.e., a 'Rewritten Scripture' text), but that in rewriting his source material, John is doing something similar to what these texts do, thereby participating in recognisable streams of Jewish literary culture. When viewed alongside these examples, John's spectrum of similarity with and difference from Mark need not indicate independence from Mark, but a creative, sustained engagement with it – one which provides insight into the diverse and complex world of early Christian literary production.

John's purpose was also related to his context and the situation of his audience. As was the case for other ancient biographers, John sought to persuade his readers to trust his

72 E. Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17* (London: SCM 1968) 4.

73 See Williams, "John's 'Rewriting' of Mark," 51–66.

74 Mattila, "A Question Too Often Neglected," 199–217.

account precisely because of his choice of material – what he included and what he excluded. This is explicit in the narrator's comment in John 20:30–31, where the validity of the account is associated with the narrator's editorial decision-making.[75] John not only seeks to affect his present readers, but to reach future generations as well, as is clear from John 20:29 ('blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed'). The Evangelist expects that, because of his presentation of events, future readers can have continuous access to what Jesus offers. In light of this, it is especially important for John to write with a persuasive purpose; he must convince readers of the authority and truthfulness of his writing, especially in light of their present situation.

While we cannot know the details of the underlying situation of John's audience with certainty, in light of texts like John 16:2, it seems that this was a context fraught with division and uncertainty. The context for John's readers was likely the precarious, post-war years of the late first century, where division with other Jewish groups and the proliferation of different understandings of Jesus motivated the Evangelist to produce his own reading of the life of Jesus – one which built on a prior model, even while departing from it. In some sense, this was an effort to shape the collective memory of his audience, so that they would remember Jesus in a more clearly Johannine way. This was necessary because John's readers needed assurance about Jesus' future and about their own future.[76] I argue that John designed his farewell discourse with his audience in mind, incorporating Mark's Gospel into his own because of his awareness of an emerging, competitive literary marketplace of Gospel texts.

Throughout his Gospel (but especially in the farewell discourse), this new kind of Johannine 'remembering' is presented as a product of the Spirit. As an 'inspired interpreter', one who was considered (or considered himself) to be an authority on Jesus, reinterprets earlier tradition as an act of remembering.[77] Through his writing, John's readers thus acquire a 'new' memory of Jesus, one shaped by their experience and context.[78] Part of the function of this 'remembering' is to ensure that John can limit possible misinterpretation of Jesus' last days, so that readers rightly understand Jesus and themselves, even while the disciples in the narrative context rarely understand.

John's purpose is probably not to create a replacement of Mark, or a newer 'version' of it. Rather, John uses and transforms much of Mark's content, and writes his own Jesus book to shape belief and practice. He does this by providing a new version of Jesus' last days, a new memory that reinterprets Christology and Christian identity for his readers.[79] Even while he may seek to improve what he inherited, John means not to denigrate his

75 Grottoli, "'But These Things Are Written,'" 245–247.

76 Lincoln, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 399.

77 See J.D. Lindenlaub, *The Beloved Disciple as Interpreter and Author of Scripture in the Gospel of John* (WUNT 2/611; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2024).

78 As noted by D.B. Woll, *Johannine Christianity in Conflict: Authority, Rank and Succession in the First Farewell Discourse* (SBLDS 60; Atlanta, GA: SBL 1981) 101–105.

79 Becker, "John 13 as Counter-Memory," 273–275.

source material, but aims to create an account which would be considered authoritative and trustworthy. John did not consider that Mark's Gospel had to be the last word on Jesus' life. Like Chronicles and *Jubilees*, he extended earlier voices, participated in authoritative discourse, and thereby sought to persuade this audience to adopt his view of Jesus and trust the truthfulness of his own presentation. His farewell discourse represents a clear and creative example of this complex process at work.

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