

The Gospel of John 1-12

The Gospel of John is the **fourth Gospel** in the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are generally called the **Synoptic Gospels**, while John is distinguished from them both literarily and theologically. The word **Synoptic** means “seeing together.” Matthew, Mark, and Luke contain many events from the life of Jesus in similar forms and often in similar order. John, however, frequently presents the same events in a different manner and gives them a deeper theological interpretation.

1. Author

Traditional Author: John the Apostle, son of Zebedee and brother of James. One who had personally witnessed the events concerning Jesus, one who saw and testified to them wrote this Gospel (19, 35; 21, 23. 4).

He is known as “The Beloved Disciple” (“The disciple whom Jesus loved”: The Gospel itself does not explicitly identify its author by saying, “I, John, wrote this Gospel.” Instead, it repeatedly refers to a figure known as: “The disciple whom Jesus loved.” (John 13, 23; John 19, 26; John 20, 2; John 21, 7; John 21, 20)

Surname given to two brothers- James and John: Boanerges (meaning "Sons of Thunder," shared with his brother James — Mark 3:17).

Earliest Patristic Attestation: St. Irenaeus of Lyons recorded that John published the Gospel while residing in Ephesus (180 AD).

Date of the Writing: Though we cannot provide an exact date for the Gospel, a frequently suggested period is: A.D. 90–100

2. Purpose and Intended Audience

Target Audience: Second- and third-generation Christians across the Greco-Roman world (both Hellenistic Jews and Gentile converts).

Stated Purpose (Thesis Statement): *"These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."* — **John 20:31**

Theological Context: Refuting early heresies such as **Gnosticism** and **Docetism** (which denied Christ's true human incarnation).

3. Division of the Gospel

Renowned biblical scholar **Raymond E. Brown** structured the Gospel into four primary sections:

1. **Prologue:** Chapter 1:1–18 (The Incarnation of the *Logos*).
2. **The Book of Signs:** Chapter 1:19 through Chapter 12:50 (Jesus' public ministry and miraculous signs).
3. **The Book of Glory:** Chapter 13:1 through Chapter 20:31 (The Passion, Crucifixion, and Resurrection).

4. Epilogue: Chapter 21 (Resurrection appearance by the Sea of Tiberias).

4. The Seven "I AM" (Ego Eimi) Statements

The expression "Ego eimi," meaning "I am," is used by God to reveal himself to Moses (Ex 3:13–14). The evangelist uses this same expression to reveal the identity of Jesus. It points to the divinity of Jesus. In the Gospel of John, there are seven major "I am" statements through which Jesus reveals his identity:

1. **"The Bread of Life"** — John 6:35
2. **"The Light of the World"** — John 8:12
3. **"The Door of the Sheep"** (or Gate) — John 10:7
4. **"The Good Shepherd"** — John 10:11
5. **"The Resurrection and the Life"** — John 11:25
6. **"The Way, the Truth, and the Life"** — John 14:6
7. **"The True Vine"** — John 15:1

Theology

The theological character of the Gospel of John has been recognized from the earliest centuries. The evangelist's aim was to nourish his community through theological reflection. The central focus of all these reflections is the recognition of who Jesus is. The author's purpose is to demonstrate that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah) and the Son of God. The reader is expected to arrive at this recognition and, by believing it, to attain life (Jn 20:30–31). By stating in the Prologue that Jesus is the Word made flesh, the author establishes that Jesus is the Son of God. Since Jesus is the Word of God, he is the means through which God enters into dialogue with humanity. Through him, God reveals who he is (1:18). The Gospel, which begins with the affirmation that Jesus is God, concludes with the confession of faith by the Apostle Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" (20:28).

Analysis of Verses

1:1: In the beginning: This is also the first word of Genesis (Hebrew: "Bereshit"; Greek: "en archē"). Through the expression "in the beginning," John alludes to the creation of the universe (Gen 1:1) and directs our attention toward the new creation in Christ (1:14; Rev 21:1–5). Was: The Greek imperfect verb "ēn" indicates that the Word already existed before the "beginning," that is, that the Word transcends space and time. With God: Here the Greek word used for "with" is "pros" (English: "toward"). This dynamic term can be translated as "toward God." It denotes an active relationship with the Father. It is this profound relationship (cf. 1:18) that enables the Son to reveal the Father fully. The Word was God: What is meant here is that "the Word itself was God." This expression emphasizes both the divinity of the Son and the distinction of the Son from God the Father.

John 1:5: Light (in Greek Phos) and darkness (in Greek Skottia): This expression, which symbolizes the struggle between good and evil (1 Jn 2:8–11), is also found in the scrolls discovered in the Qumran caves. Light is an important term in the writings of John. The very definition given to God is: "God is light" (1 Jn 1:5). The true light, who is Jesus (1:9; 8:12), drives away death, hypocrisy, and the devil (1 Jn 3:8). Light (8:12). Overcome: The powers of darkness and death could not defeat Jesus, who is the Light. Rather, through his Resurrection, Jesus overcame them (cf. 12:35; Wis 7:29–30). Here we find the first indication of his passion, death, and resurrection.

John 1:6: John: John (the Baptist) was sent as part of God's plan of salvation. In the Fourth Gospel, it is not John the Baptizer who is presented primarily as the one who baptizes, but John as the one who bears witness.

1:7: Testimony/Witness: John presents the theme of "witness" as though Jesus were on trial throughout the whole period of his ministry. John the Baptist, the Samaritan woman, the Sacred Scriptures, Jesus' miraculous works, the crowds, the Holy Spirit, and the disciples all bear witness to Jesus. To believe: While the verb "to believe" (Greek: "pisteuō") is used 45 times in the New Testament, 35 of these occurrences are found in the Gospel of John. The verb is used to emphasize a dynamic faith that leads one toward Jesus. Cf. 1 Jn 11:27.

1:9: Coming into the world: In the early centuries, this passage was translated from the Greek in two different ways: "the true light that enlightens everyone coming into the world" and "the true light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world." Modern interpreters generally adopt the second translation, understanding the passage to refer to the coming of Jesus, the true Light.

John 1:10: The world: In the Gospel of John the Greek word, "kosmos" can refer to the universe created by God (1:10), humanity living in sin and in need of salvation (3:17), or the demonic realm that rebels against God and opposes the truth (15:18–20).

1:12: Those who believe in his name: Literally, "to believe into the name." In Semitic thought, a person's name is not something distinct from the person; the name and the person are one. The Greek word "eis" used here means "into" or "toward." Since it indicates movement, the expression refers to a faith that is deepening and active. Cf. 1 Jn 1:7. Children of God: When, by God's grace, we are born of God, we are filled with divine life and reborn as children of the Father (1 Jn 3:1–9). Those who believe in Jesus receive the right to become children of God (Gal 3:6, 27). Power/authority: The Greek word "exousia" used here can mean power, authority, or right.

1:13: They were born ...: All Greek manuscripts give the plural form. "They" refers to the birth of believers from God (1 Jn 5:18). However, citations found in the works of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Augustine, and others, which are earlier than the currently available manuscripts, testify to the singular form. Syriac manuscripts also use the singular. The singular form, "he," is understood as referring to the virginal birth of Jesus. It means: "He was born, who is believed in his name, not of blood." Not of blood: In Greek, literally "not of bloods," that is, not from the union of a man and a woman. John emphasizes here that by natural birth alone, a human being does not attain a heavenly relationship with God (cf. Wis 7:1–2).

1:14: Became flesh: The word "flesh" (Greek: "sarx") denotes what is human, worldly, and natural (3:6; 6:63; 1 Jn 4:2). The Apostle Paul, however, uses "sarx" in a negative sense to refer to the sinful flesh. Dwelt among us: The Greek word "eskēnōsen" is related to the Hebrew word "Shekinah," meaning "tent." The tent evoked the presence of Yahweh dwelling in the midst of Israel (Ex 40:34; 1 Kgs 8:10–11, 27). Jesus is the tent of God's divine presence among us. This is the meaning conveyed by the Greek text (Rev 21:3). The Only-Begotten: Cf. 1 Jn 1:18.

Grace and truth: In Greek these are "charis" and "alētheia," and in Hebrew "hesed" and "emet." Jesus is the embodiment of God's mercy and faithfulness. These terms, which indicate Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel, refer to the "mercy and faithfulness" praised in the Old Testament (Ex 34:6; Ps 25:6; 89:1; Prov 20:28). Cf. Lk 6:36.

His glory: The glorious, radiant presence of God manifested in the fiery cloud covered the Tent of Meeting in the wilderness (Ex 40:34–35) and later the Temple of Jerusalem (1 Kgs 8:10–11). The supreme fullness of God’s glory is hidden in the humanity of Jesus.

1:16: Grace upon grace: The expression “charin anti charitos” can be understood in different ways: (1) grace instead of grace—the Law (Torah) being replaced by grace (Jesus); (2) grace upon grace, that is, abundant grace; (3) grace corresponding to grace, that is, the grace in Jesus received by those who believe in him. All three interpretations are possible, but the third is more appropriate. The expression “grace upon grace” means grace corresponding to the grace that has become a reality in Christ.

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1:21: Elijah?: Since the prophet Malachi had prophesied that Elijah would complete the preparations for the coming of the Messiah (Sir 48:10; Mal 4:5), the people of Israel believed that the prophet Elijah would return. The Prophet?: The people of Israel were awaiting the coming of another prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15–19; Acts 3:22). It was Jesus who fulfilled the mission of the new Moses (4:20–26; 6:14; 7:40).

1:23: I am the voice of one crying out: Here John quotes the prophet Isaiah, who came as a voice announcing liberation from the Babylonian captivity. The words here are a reinterpretation of Isaiah 40:3: “A voice cries out: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord.” Cf. Lk 3:4–6.

1:28: Bethany: This was an unidentified place east of the Jordan River (10:40), distinct from the Judean village of the same name near Jerusalem (11:18). According to Origen, the place referred to here may have been the location called “Bethabara” mentioned in the Talmud.

1:29: The Lamb of God: This title points to the sacrificial character of Jesus’ mission. The Old Testament speaks of the lamb that God himself would provide (Gen 22:8), the Passover lamb (Ex 12:13), and the lamb that bears the sins of the people. Isaiah 53:7–8 presents the Suffering Servant as a lamb being led to slaughter. The lamb offered daily in the Temple is also significant here. In Rev 5:6 and 17:14, John also refers to the Lamb who has power to destroy evil. Takes away sins: John uses the Greek word “hamartia” for sin.

1:32: In the form of a dove: The dove (Greek: “peristeran”) is a symbol of the new creation in the Book of Genesis (Gen 8:8). This sign may also refer to the community of Israel (Hos 11:11). Remained: Here we find for the first time the Greek verb “menein,” meaning “to remain” or “to abide,” which the evangelist uses several times. This Greek expression is used to describe the intimate relationship between the Father and the Son (14:10; 15:10) and the indwelling of the Holy Trinity in believers (6:56; 14:17; 15:4–7).

1:37: Having heard what he said: Hearing is the beginning of faith and discipleship. What is meant here is the inner hearing of the disciples (10:27). Followed: The Greek verb “akolouthēō,” found in the New Testament, is used metaphorically to indicate discipleship (8:12; 10:4–27; 12:26; 13:36).

1:39: The tenth hour: According to Roman tradition, this was approximately four o’clock in the afternoon.

1:41: The Messiah: In Hebrew word, “Messiah” (Greek: “Christos”) means “the Anointed One.” Cf. Lk 2:1. In the New Testament, the term “Messiah” is used only here and in 4:25. Elsewhere, the Greek word “Christos” is used.

1:43: Philip: Literally, “lover of horses.” Philip represents another aspect of discipleship (6:7; 12:21–22; 14:8–9). Although he was slow to understand what Jesus said, he was zealous in following Jesus.

1:44: Bethsaida: A village situated at the northern end of the Sea of Galilee.

1:48: The fig tree: This reference may be connected with the Jewish rabbinic tradition that rabbis sat under fig trees to study the Torah. Some also understand the reference as indicating an atmosphere of peace (1 Kgs 4:25; Mic 4:4; Zech 3:10). It may be understood here that Nathanael was waiting for the coming of the Messiah, the giver of peace.

1:51: Truly, truly: (Very truly) - This expression is a distinctive feature of John’s Gospel and occurs 25 times. Ascending and descending upon the Son of Man: This alludes to Jacob’s dream (Gen 28:11–15). The “Son of Man” refers to the heavenly figure in Dan 7:13. Here Jesus occupies the place of the ladder that leads to heaven. The Son of Man is the ladder that connects heaven and earth (3:13; 6:62; 14:4–6). As a ladder by which people are raised to higher places through steps, it can also be understood as a symbol of the Passion. It also signifies God revealing himself to his people through the Incarnation. Jesus: the Son of Man (Lk 17).

2:1: The third day: This recalls the self-revelation of Yahweh on Mount Sinai on the third day (Ex 19:16). The third day can be understood as the day of the manifestation of the Lord’s glory. It is on the third day that Jesus rises from the dead (Mt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19).

The wedding feast: In the Old Testament, this is a symbol used to portray the abundance and joy of the Messianic kingdom (Hos 2:19–20; Isa 25:6–8; Jer 3:12). In the Old Testament, marriage is a symbol of the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel (Isa 54:5–6; Jer 2:2), while in the New Testament it symbolizes the relationship between Christ and the Church (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25–26).

2:4: Woman: This form of address alludes to God’s promise that the offspring of the woman would crush the head of the serpent (Gen 3:15). In the presence of the New Eve, Jesus, the New Adam, begins his saving mission.

2:6: Six stone jars: These could hold a total of approximately 120 gallons of water. The water contained in them for ritual purification (Num 19:11–22) symbolizes the Law of Moses. If the number “six” (one less than seven) signifies imperfection, Jesus here surpasses the incompleteness of the Mosaic Law.

2:10: The finest wine: This symbol in Sacred Scripture has several levels of meaning: (1) the abundance of wine as a symbol of the Messianic age (Isa 25:6; Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13); (2) the joy of marital love (Song 1:2; 4:10; 7:9); (3) a foretaste of Jesus giving himself to the world, as he transforms the substance

of the wine (6:53; 1 Cor 10:16); and (4) the wedding feast of the Lamb, symbolizing heavenly life (Rev 19:7–9). It is noteworthy that in Hebrew poetry grape juice is referred to as “blood” (Gen 49:11; Deut 32:14).

John 2:13: The Passover of the Jews: This was the feast celebrated by the Israelites in spring to commemorate their liberation from slavery in Egypt (Exod 12). John also refers to the Passover feast in John 6:4 and 13:1. See also the Passover feast in John 6:4.

John 2:14: Oxen, Sheep, and Doves: John alone mentions the oxen and sheep intended for sacrifice. Doves were the sacrificial offering of the poor (Lev 5:7).

Money changers: According to the law, every Jew who had completed 19 years of age was required to pay a half-shekel as the Temple tax (Exod 30:11–16). Since Roman and Greek coins bore the image of the emperor, the Temple tax had to be paid in Tyrian coinage. Cf. Matt 21:12.

In the Temple: The Temple of Jerusalem consisted of several courts. The outermost court, known as the Court of the Gentiles, had become a place for selling sacrificial animals and exchanging money.

John 2:17: “Zeal for Your House Will Consume Me”. The Old Testament speaks of zeal for God (Num 25:11; 1 Kgs 19:10). The expression in Psalm 69:9, “has consumed me,” is here changed into the future tense, “will consume me,” with reference to Jesus. The meaning of “consume” as “destroy” and the sacrificial background provide an indication here of Jesus’ death on the cross.

John 2:20: “It Has Taken Forty-Six Years”: According to the indications given by the Jewish historian Josephus (*The Jewish War* 1.21.1 §401; *Antiquities of the Jews* 15.11.1 §380), Jesus may have made this statement in the spring of A.D. 28. This calculation must be understood against the background of King Herod’s beginning the reconstruction of the Temple in 21–20 B.C. Cf. Luke 3:1.

John 3:3: “Again”: The Greek word *anōthen* has two meanings: “again” and “from above.” Jesus corrects Nicodemus, who understands Jesus as requiring a physical second birth. The use of a word with a double meaning, which is initially misunderstood and subsequently clarified, is a literary technique frequently employed by John.

John 3:8: “Wind”: The Greek word *pneuma* has the meanings “wind,” “spirit,” and “breath.” The movement and destination of the wind are unknown to us; even more mysterious is the work of the Holy Spirit in believers.

John 3:14: “To Lift Up”: The Greek verb *hypsōō* points to the threefold “lifting up” of Jesus in the Paschal Mystery: 1. upon the cross, 2. from the tomb, 3. from the earth into heaven (8:28; 12:32). Moses made a serpent of bronze and lifted it up on a pole (Num 21:9), and everyone who looked upon it lived. Through the “lifting up” of Jesus in his death on the cross and his glorification, all people enter into new life and the Kingdom of God.

John 3:16: “He Gave His Only-Begotten Son”: Here, instead of saying that God “sent” Jesus, the text uniquely says that God “gave” him (Greek *didōmi*). God gave his only-begotten Son as a gift in order to express the depth and breadth of his love for humanity (Rom 5:8; 8:32; Eph 2:4–5; 1 John 3:16). The word “give” is frequently used in this Gospel to show that God is the source of everything that Jesus gives to the world (3:35; 5:22, 26, 36).

John 3:27: “Unless It Is Given from Heaven”: This is not merely a general principle; rather, it is one of the important themes of this Gospel: those who come to Jesus are people given by God (6:39; 10:29; 17:9, 24), and everything that Jesus possesses is a gift from the Father.

John 3:30: “He Must Increase”: The Greek word *dei*, which expresses necessity, is used here to indicate that this is part of God’s plan.

John 3:36: “The One Who Believes ... The One Who Does Not Obey”: The Gospel tradition uses the word *apeitheō* (“to disobey” or “to refuse to believe”) only here. Faith is not merely an intellectual decision at the cognitive level that remains separate from a person’s actions (Jas 2:14–26). Faith and fidelity expressed in one’s works are two sides of the same coin. Cf. John 1:7.

The wrath of God: The evangelist uses this expression only here. Although the term occurs five times in the Gospels, three of these occurrences come from the lips of John the Baptist (Matt 3:7; Luke 3:7; John 3:36).

John 4:5: Sychar: This was probably the town associated with the field that Jacob had purchased and which was anciently known as Shechem (Gen 33:18–20). The Jewish Targum contains an indication that Jacob’s well was located here.

John 4:6: Jacob’s well: Genesis 48:22 speaks of the land given to Joseph. Although the Old Testament does not record where this place was located, according to traditional belief, it was situated at the foot of Mount Gerizim.

In the Old Testament, several encounters at wells lead to marriage: Rebekah meets Abraham’s servant at a well (Gen 24:1–67); Jacob meets Rachel (Gen 29:7); and Moses meets Zipporah (Exod 2:15–22). In this Gospel, Jesus, the divine Bridegroom, comes to the well seeking those who are to become his covenant bride (3:29). The well itself may also be a symbol of God, who is the source of living water (Jer 2:13).

The sixth hour: This was about noon. Although it was externally bright, the Samaritan woman was, by implication, in spiritual darkness.

John 4:18: “Five Husbands”: The reference to five husbands may point to the history of the Samaritans. According to 2 Kings 17:24–31, five foreign peoples intermarried with the Israelites of northern Palestine and introduced their five gods among the Israelites. These idols were addressed by the name “**Baal**.” The word *Baal* has two meanings: “lord” and “husband.” The five husbands may therefore refer symbolically to the five gods worshipped by the Samaritans. The prophets warned the people of Israel that serving foreign gods was an act of infidelity toward Yahweh, the covenant Husband. Nevertheless, Israel continued to hope that God would have mercy on his people and that, through a new covenant, God would once again become their covenant Husband (Hos 2:16–20). When Jesus says, “the one you now have is not your husband,” there may be an implication that this person is the sixth. Jesus is the seventh. In him every thirst is quenched. Cf. John 4:6.

4: 20 On this mountain: As an alternative to Mount Zion in Jerusalem, the Samaritans worshipped on Mount Ebal/Gerizim. Although the Temple built there (Deut 27:4) had been destroyed, they continued to worship at the site.

To worship: Since there could be only one place designated for the worship of God's people (Deut 12:2–12), the Samaritans believed that the coming of the Messiah would resolve their dispute with the Jews.

It is noteworthy that the conversation about the woman's husband now turns into a discussion about true worship of God.

4: 22 You worship what you do not know: Since the Samaritans accepted only the Pentateuch, their knowledge of God was incomplete. Their worship, in which faith in the God of Israel was mixed with pagan idolatry (2 Kgs 17:29–34), was therefore incomplete.

Salvation is from the Jews: The Jews expected the Messiah to come from the descendants of King David, who belonged to the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10).

4: 35 Harvest: In the Old Testament, this term refers to the eschatological judgment (Joel 3:13) and to the gathering together of the scattered people of Israel (Isa 27:12).

While the parables of harvest in Matthew's Gospel (chapter 23) refer to the final harvest at the end of time, John refers to a harvest that is already taking place in the time of Jesus.

While the Synoptic Gospels describe the missionary activity among the Samaritans as beginning after Jesus' resurrection, the Gospel of John presents it as beginning already during Jesus' public ministry.

John 4:44: "A Prophet Has No Honor in His Own Country": Here the word "own" (Greek *idios*) is included to refer to the Jews as his own people (1:11).

John 4:52: "At the Seventh Hour": This was approximately one o'clock in the afternoon.

5: 2 The Sheep Gate: This was an entrance gate in the northeastern wall of Jerusalem through which sheep needed for Temple sacrifices were brought (Neh 3:1).

Bethzatha: Manuscripts contain two forms of the name: the Hebrew expression **Beth-Hesda**, meaning "House of Mercy," and the Hebrew expression **Bethzatha**, meaning "separated place." The Qumran scrolls mention a double pool in the northeastern part of the Temple area bearing the name Bethzatha.

5: 5 Thirty-eight years: The duration of the man's illness may allude to the thirty-eight years during which the Israelites wandered in the wilderness after turning against God at Kadesh (Num 13:25–14:11; Deut 2:14).

5:15: "Reported": The Greek word **anangelō** is used in this Gospel in the sense of "proclaimed" or "announced" (4:25; 16:13–15).

5:17: "My Father Is Working, and I Also Am Working": The Jewish observance of the Sabbath is connected with the fact that God rested on the seventh day (Gen 2:2–3; Exod 20:11).

John 5:22: "Judgment": The Greek word **krisis** means "separation." The judgment of the Son separates life from death and salvation from condemnation. Those who respond positively to the Son are admitted by him into life and salvation. The Son becomes the Judge because one's response to him becomes decisive for salvation or condemnation.

5: 35 Lamp: This refers to the temporary mission of John the Baptist. The Psalmist's statement, "I have prepared a lamp for my anointed one" (Ps 132:17), refers to King David. The reference to a lamp in Sirach 48:1 concerns Elijah.

John 5:41: "Glory": The Greek word **doxa** means "praise" or "honor received from others." When the source is God, the word takes on the meaning of "glory." These verses describe Jesus beginning to pronounce judgment upon the Jews who do not believe in him.

6: 4 Passover: John refers to the Passover three times (2:13; 6:4; 11:55). The account of the multiplication of the loaves is narrated against the background of the Passover. Exodus imagery is found throughout this account (6:12–32, 49, 58).

6: 7 Denarius: A Roman coin. In Matthew 20:2, this coin is described as the equivalent of a day's wage.

6: 11 He gave thanks: The Greek word **eucharisteō** is the source of the English word "**Eucharist**."

6:19 Walking on the sea: John's account resembles the expression in Job 9:8: "He tramples upon the waves of the sea." The distance of twenty-five or thirty **stadia** would be approximately five or six kilometres.

6: 41 They grumbled: This recalls the Israelites' grumbling against God and Moses in the wilderness (Exod 15:24; 16:2, 7, 12; Num 11:1).

6:56 Abides: The Greek word **menō** ("to abide" or "to remain") used here indicates that the relationship between the believer and Jesus is a continuation of the relationship between the Son and God the Father.

John 6:70: "Did I Not Choose You?" : The Greek word **eklegomai** ("to choose") in this Gospel refers specifically to Jesus' choosing people to follow him (6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19).

John 7:6: "My Time": The Greek word **kairos** means "the appropriate time" or "the appointed time." It is similar to the Greek word **hōra** ("hour"), which John uses in reference to Jesus' "hour" (John 4:20). Here it refers to the time of Jesus' Passion and death, in which the fullness of his glorification is manifested (7:30; 13:1).

John 7:12: "Speaking Secretly / Grumbling": The Greek word **gongyzō** used here can also be translated as "to grumble" (cf. 6:41, 43, 61).

John 7:22: Circumcision : Circumcision was the external sign of the covenant God made with Abraham (Gen 17:10–14). Later, it was incorporated into the Mosaic covenant (Lev 12:3). According to Jewish tradition, a male child had to be circumcised on the eighth day. If the eighth day fell on the Sabbath, circumcision had to be performed even though this involved an apparent violation of the Sabbath regulations.

John 7:42: "The Scripture": Several passages speak of the Messiah's Davidic lineage: 2 Samuel 7:12–14; Isaiah 9:6–7; Jeremiah 23:5; and Ezekiel 34:23–24. Micah 5:2 identifies Bethlehem as the place of his birth.

John 8:1: The Mount of Olives: Although this place is mentioned several times in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt 21:1; 24:3; 26:30; Mark 11:1; 13:3; 14:26), this is the only place where it is mentioned in the Gospel of John.

John 8:14: “My Testimony Is True”: Here Jesus emphasizes that he comes from the Father and that, therefore, his mission is divine.

Where I am going: The verb **hypagō** (“to go away” or “to depart”) in this Gospel refers to Jesus’ departure from this world through his death, resurrection, and glorification (7:33; 8:21; 13:3, 33, 36; 14:28; 16:5, 10).

John 8:17: “The Testimony of Two”: According to Jewish law, the testimony of two or three witnesses was required for a matter to be established as true (Deut 17:6; 19:15).

John 8:39: “Children of Abraham”: Instead of the Greek word **sperma** (“offspring” or “seed”), used in 8:33, the Greek word **tekna** (“children”) is used here. This word is used in 1:12 in the sense of “children of God.” Therefore, the evangelist ultimately emphasizes here the relationship with God.

John 8:41: “We Are Not Illegitimate Children”: In the Old Testament, adultery is used as a symbol of idolatry (Hos 1:2; 2:4–5). By saying that they are not illegitimate children, they claim that they are themselves true worshippers of the true God.

John 8:56: “Abraham Rejoiced”: There are two traditions of interpretation concerning this statement: 1. It refers to **Isaac**, whose name means “he laughs” (Gen 17:17–19; 18:9–15; 21:6). Jewish tradition interprets Abraham’s laughter at the birth of Isaac as an expression of his joy. 2. Based on the Jewish tradition that God had granted Abraham foreknowledge concerning the future, the statement can mean that Abraham rejoiced because he knew that Jesus would come.

John 9:2: “Who Sinned?”: Cf. John 5:14. The Jews believed that a person’s illness could be caused either by the sins of his parents (Tob 3:3) or by sins committed by the person himself (Job 31:3; Ps 107:17).

John 9:4: “The Light of the World”: See John 8:12.

John 9:6: “He Made Mud with Saliva”: Some interpreters connect this action with the creation of the first human being (Gen 2:7). The belief that saliva possessed healing power was also widespread at that time.

John 9:7: “Go and Wash in the Pool”: Cf. 2 Kings 5:10–14.

The Pool of Siloam: This was a water reservoir located in the southern part of ancient Jerusalem and hewn out of stone. King Hezekiah had constructed it to provide water for the city of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 20:20; 2 Chr 32:30). The name **Siloam** means “sent.” It is therefore a symbol of Jesus, who was sent by the Father (9:4; 12:44). Its symbolic meaning here is that salvation comes through believing in Jesus, the One who has been sent.

John 9:22: “For Fear of the Jews”: The evangelist repeatedly states that fear of the Jews was the reason people remained silent about Jesus (7:13; 19:38; 20:19).

To confess: The Greek word **homologeō** (“to confess”) means believing that Jesus is the Christ and publicly proclaiming that faith before others. **To be put out of the synagogue:** The practice of expelling from the synagogue those who publicly confessed Jesus as the Christ is traditionally associated with a development around A.D. 80.

John 9:28: “They Reviled Him”: The Greek word **loidoreō** occurs only here in the Gospels. Beyond merely expressing a verbal rebuke, in the New Testament it can refer to serious verbal abuse (Acts 23:4) and situations involving religious persecution (1 Cor 4:12; 1 Pet 2:23).

John 9:29: “God Spoke”: The fact that God spoke to Moses is central to the Old Testament narratives (Exod 33:11; Num 12:2, 8). Yet they fail to recognize Jesus, who himself is the Word of God.

John 9:31: “God Hears Prayer”: The blind man uses the Jewish belief that God does not hear the prayers of sinners (Job 35:13; Ps 66:18; Isa 1:15) as an argument against the Pharisees. He points out that the blind man received his sight because God heard Jesus’ prayer. Thus, we see the blind man refuting the Pharisees’ claim that Jesus was a sinner.

John 9:32: No one has ever opened the eyes: Even Tobit’s blindness lasted only for a few days and was subsequently healed. He had not been blind from birth (Tob 2:9–10; 11:7–15; 14:1–2).

John 9:38: “He Worshipped Him”: The Greek word **proskyneō** is used in this Gospel to indicate the worship of God (4:20–24; 12:20). The man recognizes Jesus as divine, bows down before him, and worships him.

John 10:6: “Figure of Speech”: The Greek word translated here as “figure of speech” is **paroimia** (16:25, 29; 2 Pet 2:22; corresponding to the Hebrew *mashal*). Such a literary form is used when the speaker intends to convey several layers of meaning. John invites his listeners to grasp a meaning that goes beyond the literal words.

There is also an implied suggestion here that the Pharisees are thieves and robbers, together with allusions to the themes of **“his own people”** (1:11) and **“hearing his voice”** (5:37; 12:47).

John 10:11: The good shepherd: The Greek word **kalos** can mean “good,” “beautiful,” “noble,” “ideal,” or “genuine.” **Lays down his life:** The good shepherd is the one who lays down his life for the sheep. There is a messianic prophecy that the death of the shepherd is necessary for the purification of the flock (Zech 13:7–9). Through Jesus’ death on the cross, the salvation of God’s people is accomplished (10:15–18; 13:37–38; 15:13; 1 John 3:16).

John 10:12: The hired man: The Old Testament contains several references to shepherds who have no genuine concern for the well-being of the sheep (Ezek 34:5–6; Jer 23:1–3; Zech 11:15, 17). **The wolf:** The wolf is a traditional symbol used to represent spiritual enemies (Matt 7:15; 10:16; Acts 20:29).

John 10:22: The Feast of Dedication: This feast is also called **Hanukkah**. Three months after the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2), it was celebrated for eight days in December as a feast of light and joy. The feast commemorated the rededication of the Temple and the renewal of the altar by the Maccabees in 164 B.C., after they had defeated King Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who had desecrated the Temple in Jerusalem (Dan 8:13; 9:27; 1 Macc 1:54–61). See also 1 Maccabees 4:36–59 and 2 Maccabees 10:1–8.

John 10:23: Solomon's Portico: A colonnade had been constructed around the Jerusalem Temple. The colonnade on the eastern side was known as Solomon's Portico (Acts 3:11). It provided protection from the cold winds coming from the wilderness.

John 10:34: "You are gods": This is a quotation from Psalm 82:6.

John 10:36: Consecrated: Jesus' words here are spoken against the background of the Feast of Hanukkah, which commemorated the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem (1 Macc 4:48), and also against the earlier background of the dedication of the wilderness Tabernacle (Num 7:1). In place of these ancient holy places, we are now given the new and anointed Temple, the body of Jesus (John 2:20–21). The Greek word **hagiazō** also carries the meaning "to sanctify" or "to set apart as holy." The Father has sanctified and set apart Christ so that the world may be sanctified by the truth (17:19).

John 11:11: Lazarus has fallen asleep: The Greek word **koimaō** means "to sleep" and, figuratively, "to die" (Matt 27:52; 1 Cor 7:39; 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess 4:13–15).

John 11:12: He will recover: The Greek word **sōzō** means not only "physical healing" but also "salvation" (cf. Mark 5:28, 34; 10:52). The disciples, however, do not recognize the symbolic meaning here either.

John 11:14: Plainly: The Greek word **parrēsia** indicates that Jesus now expresses in ordinary and direct language what he had previously stated metaphorically (cf. 10:24; 16:25, 29).

John 11:16: Didymus: This Greek word means "twin." The Aramaic word for "twin" is **Thomas** (*Ta'oma*). Such a reference to the meaning of Thomas's name is also found in a very ancient Syriac version and in the Gospel of Thomas.

John 11:18: Fifteen stadia is approximately three kilometres. This reminds the reader that Jerusalem, where Jesus' life was in danger (10:31, 39; 11:8), was very close.

John 11:33: He was deeply moved: The literal meaning of the Greek word **embrimaomai** can be "to become angry" or "to be indignant" (Dan 11:30; Matt 9:30; Mark 1:43; 14:5). The Greek word **tarassō**, which follows, literally means "to be troubled" or "disturbed."

John 11:41–42: The prayer of Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus has several distinctive features: 1. He raises his eyes toward heaven (17:1). 2. He addresses God as "**Father**" (Matt 26:39, 42; Mark 14:36; Luke 10:21; 22:42; 23:43, 46). 3. He expresses thanksgiving (cf. Ps 118:21). 4. He expresses confidence that God hears his prayer (14:13–14; 15:7, 16; 16:23–24, 26).

John 11:49: That year: Caiaphas served as high priest during A.D. 18–36. Historically, Caiaphas was removed from office toward the end of Pontius Pilate's period of governorship (A.D. 26–36) (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.35, 95).

John 11:53: They planned: The Greek word **bouleuomai** means "to make a deliberate or authoritative decision." This can be regarded as the first clear step toward Jesus' death.

John 11:54: Ephraim: This town was situated approximately 18 kilometres northeast of Jerusalem.

John 12:2: Dinner: The Greek word **deipnon** is used in this Gospel here and in the passages referring to Jesus' Last Supper (13:2, 4; 21:20). Because of the growing conflict with the Jews, Jesus gathers with those whom he loves. It is noteworthy that from this point onward Jesus speaks only with them.

John 12:3: At Jesus' feet: The anointing of Jesus' feet here can be understood as a prophecy of his death (cf. 12:7). In Mark 14:3 and Matthew 26:6, Mary pours the ointment on Jesus' **head**, symbolizing royal and messianic anointing.

John 12:5: Three hundred denarii: If one denarius was equivalent to one day's wage (Matt 20:2), this amount would represent approximately one year's income.

John 12:13: Palm branches: During the Feast of Tabernacles, the Israelites waved palm branches. Palm branches were also used to welcome great conquerors (1 Macc 13:51; 2 Macc 10:7). **Hosanna:** It means "Save us," or "Save, please" (Ps 118:25). **"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord":** This belongs to the group of **Hallel Psalms** (Pss 113–118), which the Israelites sang during the great feasts. By quoting Psalm 118, which depicts the welcoming of a victorious king, John presents Jesus as King.

John 12:14: A young donkey: The dominant symbolism here is that of peace (Zech 9:9).

John 12:15: Do not be afraid: The expression "rejoice" in Zechariah 9:9 has been rendered here as "do not be afraid." This is a recurring expression in the Old Testament and indicates the presence of God (Gen 15:1). This expression makes clear that Jesus is not a victorious warrior but the presence of God.

John 12:24: Unless it dies: The Greek word **apothnēskō** means "to die" or "to perish."

John 12:29: Thunder: Thunder was regarded as a sign of the presence of God (Exod 4:23; Ps 29:3–9).