

“The End is Where We Start From”¹.

*Afterlife in the Fourth Gospel*²

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In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the Word was God (John 1:1).

It may seem strange to introduce this chapter on Johannine eschatology with this opening verse of the Gospel, but in fact, if we are to understand Johannine eschatology we must first have some grasp of Johannine protology since in this Gospel, *death* is return, and therefore *eschatos* and *protos* are two sides of the one coin³.

The Word exists with God in a dynamic communion of shared life so that “what God was the Word was”⁴ (1:1). This communion of life, when revealed in human experience, is described analogically as the loving relationship between Father and Son (1:18). The Gospel says little more than this about “in the beginning” but it is enough to gain some understanding of what might lie “in the end”. For the Word and God there is mutual indwelling, mutual self-giving and self-revealing in love. Since this is “the beginning” then this is also “the end” to which the Son returns. But there is more.

1 T. S. ELLIOT, *Four Quarters*, Little Gidding V.

2 I am grateful to the Australian Research Council for a grant enabling me to participate in this Conference and to pursue further research on the Fourth Gospel.

3 Although coming from a different perspective, Dorothy Lee reaches this same conclusion: “At the same time, this eschatology is also protology, a return to the beginnings. In the transfiguration of flesh to reflect the divine glory, the lost image is restored through the one who is the Image of the Father, and creation becomes what it was always intended to be – what it was created for – formed in the shape of an original beatitude”. See D. A. LEE, *Flesh and Glory: Symbolism, Gender and Theology in the Gospel of John*, New York 2002, 233.

4 F. J. MOLONEY, *John*, SP 4, Collegeville 1998, 42.

If, in divine terms, the Son returns to the same presence with the Father that he enjoyed "in the beginning", what purpose was there in his being sent into the world? The answer to this question is given in the Prologue - so that those who believe in his name can become children of God (1:12). This verse sums up the heart of Johannine eschatology. The Son is sent into the world of human existence, to draw humanity with him, into the divine communion, that is, to participate in his own filial relationship with and in God. In the words of C. H. DODD, "The Father, the Son, and the disciples dwell in one another by virtue of a love which is the very life and the activity of God"⁵. The communion of life enjoyed by the Son in all time is offered as a gift of love, for all men and women. In the language of the Gospel, this communion of being in God, is called "life", and "eternity life"⁶; it is a gift offered by Jesus to those who desire it and can believe in him, as such it is a gift enjoyed already in this world which physical death cannot annul. The gift of a new quality of life with God is, I suggest, the starting point for considering Johannine eschatology. In this I strongly agree with the insight of Raymond BROWN that, "Johannine eschatology is not simply the product of sophisticated theological reflection but mainly the articulation of community spirituality"⁷. Before examining the specific aspects of Johannine eschatology, I will first briefly outline elements of Jewish eschatology.

1. Jewish Eschatology

Jewish eschatology, while a late theological development, is grounded in the long experience of Israel's faith in God's promises. At first, these promises were directed towards a more immediate future, but in time, particularly after the exile, faith in the fulfillment of God's promises shifted to a more distant future. In the words of CRAIG EVANS, "Over centuries, however, it became clear that Israel (and later Judah) could not bring about the perfect Kingdom of God... Yet future expectations and the hope for a better world did not die; instead, the horizon shifted to the end times"⁸. EVANS goes on to speak of prophetic eschatology where the oppression of the Jews by other nations is interpreted as Israel's punishment for breaking the covenant (e.g., Amos 4-8; Hos 4-10; Jer 2-8), and apocalyptic eschatology where the oppression is linked to a cosmic struggle between God and other powers⁹ (e.g., Isa 24:17-23; Dan 7:1-8). It is important to state here, that there is no single, unified doctrine of the end times. Some views allowed for an end time resolution of this oppression within history, while other lines of thought, particularly within the apocalyptic tradition, placed such resolution beyond history, when this world or this age is brought to an end and a new age comes into being¹⁰. What is consistent is the conviction "that human failure has so corrupted life on this earth that only a radical transformation initiated by God alone could make things right"¹¹.

Ideas of an "afterlife" developed within these theological considerations and under the influence of Hellenistic thinking¹². To paraphrase the words of Daniel Harrington, at the heart of notions of an "afterlife"

5 C. H. DODD, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, Cambridge 1953, 196.
 6 The expression ζωή αἰώνιος πτλ. occurs in 3:14, 16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2; and αἰώνιος ζωή in 17:3. I use the expression "eternity life" in an attempt to put the emphasis on the qualitative nature of the life Jesus offers, and not simply its extension in time as never-ending life. Dodd understands this expression in the Fourth Gospel to mean "the life of the Age to Come, qualitatively as well as quantitatively different from this life". See DODD, *Interpretation* (s. note 5) 144-49. In this qualitative sense, the adjective 'eternity' describes a quality of the divine in the writings of Plato and Philo (DODD, *ibid.*, 149-50).
 7 R. E. BROWN, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, ed. F. J. Moloney, ABRL, New York 2003, 247, note 57.

8 C. A. EVANS and P. W. FLINT, "Introduction", in: *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature*, C. A. Evans and P. W. Flint (eds.), Grand Rapids 1997, 1-2.
 9 EVANS and FLINT, *Introduction* (s. note 8) 2.
 10 Hultgren comments: Eschatology concerns itself with "a future coming age, a period of transformed existence that God will bring about - either within history or beyond it". See A. HULTGREN, "Eschatology in the New Testament: The Current Debate", in: *The Last Things: Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Eschatology*, C. E. Braaten and R. W. Jenson (eds.), Grand Rapids 2002, 67.
 11 D. E. GOWAN, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, Philadelphia 1986, 122.
 12 Stanley Porter argues, persuasively in my opinion, that ideas about an afterlife, particularly the concept of Resurrection, only arose through contact with Hellenism. "The tenor of Jewish thought until the Hellenistic period seemed to accept a high degree of finality to death, even if there was continued existence in Sheol. It was not until the Hellenistic period that there was any thought of a bodily resurrection, and even here the evidence was never particularly strong. Greek thought, however-

is the problem of theodicy: "How can the all-powerful and just God allow righteous people to suffer?"¹³ Whether the justification of the righteous happens within this historical world or in the New Age, the problem still remains – how can those who have died, particularly through martyrdom for their Torah loyalty, be vindicated? One solution is found in the books of *Daniel* (12:2–3) and *Maccabees* (2 Macc 7:9, 14), where those who have died before the end will be raised¹⁴. In this scenario, the *afterlife* involves a final *judgement* for the ultimate vindication of the just one before his/her enemies. The righteous then enjoy the blessings their behaviour deserved but which were denied them in life, while the wicked receive condemnation for their evil deeds. In order to have such a final *judgement* the dead must first be raised to life, in order to appear before the Divine judge. *Resurrection* is therefore a necessary part of the *afterlife*. This schema is termed "*Resurrection Eschatology*" by Sandra SCHNEIDERS¹⁵, and is the schema we find in the writings of Paul and the Synoptic Gospels, illustrated especially in Matt 25:31–46.

However, this is not the only possible *afterlife* scenario. In the last century of the biblical period, perhaps as late as 50 CE¹⁶, an Alexandrian Jew, writing within the *Wisdom* tradition, presented an alternative

er, much earlier engaged in serious discussion about the *afterlife*, including the *immortality* of the *soul* and rewards and punishments for the good and wicked behaviour of humans on earth. There was even a tradition of *resurrection* preceding the Hellenistic period ...". See S. E. PORTER, "Resurrection, the Greeks and the New Testament", in: *Resurrection*, JSNTSup 186, S. E. Porter, M. A. Hayes, and D. Tombs (eds.), Sheffield 1999, 80.

Harrington continues with the statement: "*Apocalyptic* solves this problem by deferring the full manifestation of God's power and righteousness to the last *judgement*". See D. J. HARRINGTON, "Afterlife Expectation in Pseudo-Philo, 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch, and their Implications for the New Testament", in: *Resurrection in the New Testament*, FS J. Lambrecht, BETL 165, R. Bieringer, V. Koperski, and B. Lataire (eds.), Leuven 2002, 32. See also, M. O'BRIEN, "Theodicy and Eschatology: Old Testament Considerations", in: *Theodicy and Eschatology*, *Task of Theology Today* 4, B. Barber and D. Neville (eds.), Adelaide 2005, 1–17.

This eschatological understanding will not be developed here. For detailed discussion of the *afterlife* envisaged in *Daniel* and the Books of the *Maccabees* see M.-E. BOISMARD, *Our Victory over Death: Resurrection?*, trans. M. Beaumont, Colledgeville 1999, chapters 1 and 2.

S. M. SCHNEIDERS, *The Johannine Resurrection Narrative: An Exegetical Study of John 20 as a Synthesis of Johannine Spirituality*, D.S.T. (unpublished), Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana 1975, 76. Boismard also distinguishes two different eschatological understandings that he calls "a *resurrection* current" and "an *immortality* current". See BOISMARD, *Our Victory over Death* (s. note 14), viii.

John Collins suggests that this was written in Alexandria between 30 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. See J. J. COLLINS, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, Edinburgh 1997, 179. David Winston places it in Alexandria during the reign of Caligula (37–41 C.E.); see D. WINSTON, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, AB 43, New York 1979, 23.

understanding, not only of the *afterlife* but of this life as well¹⁷. The sage was probably reflecting on the historical situation of conflict between the Torah loyal Jew in the Diaspora and his more lax co-religionists who were succumbing to Hellenistic influences. Therefore, while the oppressive situation is no longer from outside, as in the situation of *Daniel* and the *Maccabees*, there is still the issue of theodicy. In this Hellenistic setting, the writer of *Wisdom* is influenced by Greek philosophy as well as Jewish theology; in fact he may even deliberately draw on philosophical ideas and terminology in order to "set forth a Judaism that was more attuned to Greek cultural ideas"¹⁸. The writer seems acquainted with Plato's theory of a pre-existent *soul* (8:19–20; 9:15) but there is no sense in the Book of *Wisdom* that an embodied *soul* is a fall from a higher state¹⁹. The anthropology of *Wisdom* draws on both Semitic and Hellenistic understanding of the human person in way that creates some tension if not contradiction in the text. In words echoing the creation of Adam in Gen 2:7²⁰, he describes those who fashion idols: "he failed to know the one who formed him and inspired (*em-pneusanta*) him with an active *soul* (*psychon*) and breathed (*emphysanta*) into him a living spirit (*pneuma*)" (Wis 15:11). Here, the *soul* is the vital breath of life given by God. This breath of life is lent (Wis 15:8) to humans and at *death* it is withdrawn by God and the human person returns to the earth and ceases to live. There is no immortal *soul* existing independently of the human *body*. *Body* and *soul* together constitute the human person, and the *Wisdom* teacher does not distinguish among *soul* (*ψυχή*), *mind* (*nous*), or *spirit* (*pneuma*)²¹. "Both [pneuma and psyche] designate the vital breath lent by God to humans, and by God withdrawn at the moment of *death*"²².

17 There is debate over the composition of the Book of *Wisdom*, with some scholars suggesting multiple authors. The position taken here is that of Winston and Boismard who propose one author working with earlier material, revising and editing over a period, to form the final document. See WINSTON, *Wisdom of Solomon* (s. note 16) 12–18; BOISMARD, *Our Victory over Death* (s. note 14) 65–66.

18 "The author of the book of the *Wisdom* of Solomon, sought to represent the teachings of Judaism in a fashion that would maintain the integrity of Jewish faith, but in a decidedly Hellenistic guise that would allow for adaptation to the dominant cultural and intellectual forms common to the period". See, L. G. PERDUE, *Wisdom and Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature*, Nashville 1994, 292.

19 COLLINS, *Jewish Wisdom* (s. note 16) 185.

20 "And God formed the human from dust from the earth and breathed (ἐνεπνεύσεν) on its face a breath (πνοήν) of life and the human became a living being (ψυχήν)" (Gen 2:7).

21 PERDUE, *Wisdom and Creation* (s. note 18) 296.

22 BOISMARD, *Our Victory over Death* (s. note 14) 67.

An alternative anthropology is proposed in 9:15. Where Wis 15:11 draws on Genesis and shows its traditional Semitic anthropology, Wis 9:15 reflects Platonic thinking: "for a perishable *body* weighs down the *soul*, and this earthy tent burdens the thoughtful mind"²³. The dualistic thinking evident in this verse, as well as the concept of the *immortality* of the *soul* borrows from Hellenistic philosophy rather than Semitic anthropology²⁴.

Epicurean philosophy held that the gods had material existence but lived forever because they were incorruptible²⁵. They enjoyed this state of incorruptibility because they were able to feed on ambrosia, the nectar of the gods, which enabled them to overcome the usual forces that dissipate atoms causing material things to decay²⁶. Therefore, incorruptibility, or *immortality*, is a divine quality; only God is immortal. When considering human existence, the author of *Wisdom* presents an interpretation of the two creation accounts in Genesis 1-3. Because human beings are made in the image of God (Wis 2:23) they can participate in God's *immortality*²⁷. God's own incorruptible Spirit (Wis 12:1) maintains life and is God's gift to the righteous (Wis 8:21) allowing them to enjoy life forever "in the hand of God" (Wis 3:1). Life, properly understood, is more than mere existence, but is communion with God enjoyed by the just (Wis 4:10-14) and physical *death* neither destroys nor interrupts this. In fact, for the righteous physical demise is not really *death*, for they only "seem to die" (Wis 3:2).

The book of *Wisdom* makes the claim "God did not make *death*" (Wis 1:13) then offers two explanations about the origins of *Death*. One explanation draws on the popular Middle Eastern mythology of a Kingdom of *death*, Hades/Sheol. In this tradition, *Death* was a deity in his own right. Within monotheistic Judaism, *death*, while not considered a deity, still represents a mythical power²⁸. The wicked invited this power of *Death* into the kingdom of God's creation. "But ungodly men by their words and deeds summoned *death*; considering him a

friend, they pined away, and they made a covenant with him, because they are fit to belong to his party" (Wis 1:16). The second explanation for the experience of *death* in a creation made for *immortality* (Wis 1:14) draws once again on the creation story of Adam and Eve. For the first time in the Scriptures the serpent of Gen 3:1 is identified with the devil, and it is the envy of the devil for human *immortality* that leads to the temptation of Eve and Adam to eat of the forbidden fruit (Wis 2:24). Through human sin *death* entered into the world.

Against this large horizon of the possibility of immortal life and the possibility of *death*, the *Wisdom* writer urges his audience to choose the way of righteousness as the choice for eternal life. Therefore, human beings exist now participating in either eternal life²⁹, or eternal *death*. The demise of the *body* in physical *death* simply confirms this choice. The just remain at peace in the hand of God while the wicked become "ignominious carcasses"³⁰. The Book of *Wisdom* does not make explicit whether the just pass from *death* immediately into heavenly existence with God, or whether there is some intermediate state. While the statement is made that their *soul* lives on in a place of peace (Wis 3:23), in the hand of God (Wis 3:1), it is not clear that this is "heaven" as this expression may simply mean protected by God³¹ (cf. Deut 33:3). What is clear is that there is continuous life, that the person is not reduced to non-existence. The evil doers go to Sheol and will remain in Sheol. Therefore, while there still may be some time in Sheol for the just and the wicked, these *souls* are not mere shades without life, but remain alive awaiting the time when, for the righteous, they will "abide with him in love" (Wis 3:9). However, there is no sense here of bodily *Resurrection*. It is the *soul*, the centre of one's personality, which will enjoy the blessings of heaven.

There are different opinions about whether the book of *Wisdom* envisages a final end-time *judgment*. There does seem to be something more to come in the future, rather than the *soul* going to dwell with God immediately after *death*, for Wis 3:7 speaks of a future "visitation": "In the time of their visitation (*episkope*) they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble". The verb *episkopeō* means to examine and this verse suggests that there may be a future examina-

23 Cf. "such a *soul* is weighed down by this and is dragged back into the sensible world" (Plat Phaed 81C).

24 Winston points out a number of critical differences between the Book of *Wisdom* and Hellenistic philosophy: the pre-existence of the *soul*; the *soul*'s fall, the transmigration of *souls*, the divisions within the *soul*, and particularly the *immortality* of the *soul* "by its nature", since *Wisdom* describes *immortality* as a gift to the righteous. See WINSTON, *Wisdom of Solomon* (s. note 16) 26-30.

25 COLLINS, *Jewish Wisdom* (s. note 16) 186.

26 J. M. REESE, *The Book of Wisdom*, Song of Songs, Old Testament Message 20, Wilmington 1983, 42.

27 WINSTON, *Wisdom of Solomon* (s. note 16) 29-30.

28 COLLINS, *Jewish Wisdom* (s. note 16) 189.

29 PERDUE, *Wisdom and Creation* (s. note 18) 301.

30 WINSTON, *Wisdom of Solomon* (s. note 16) 32.

31 BOISMARD, *Our Victory over Death* (s. note 14) 72.

tion by God¹², then the just "will abide with him in love" (Wis 3:9)³³. Chapter 5 seems to describe a final *judgment* where the virtuous will judge peoples and nations, reigning as kings but Collins suggests that this scene may be a literary fiction to dramatize the miscalculation of the wicked¹⁴. Whether this *judgment* is thought of as a future reality or if it is a literary fiction, there is no suggestion of bodily *Resurrection*. For the martyrs, *death* is a moment of exaltation, while for those who do not experience martyrdom, *death* is a "taking up" or assumption (Wis 4:10-14).

There are two major issues in the Book of *Wisdom* that distinguish its theology from that of *Daniel* and *Maccabees*. The first is what is meant by the term "life". In the book of *Wisdom*, this means more than mere existence but is a participation already in the *eternity* life that is the Divine prerogative. This quality of life is a gift for those who embrace *Wisdom* and physical *death* will not destroy or even interrupt it. Physical *death* will be a transition for the immortal *soul/spirit*. In physical *death*, there is the separation of spirit and *body*, but the spirit continues to participate in life or remains in its state of deadliness. The second issue is that this theology does not seem to require bodily *Resurrection*, for the inner spirit/*soul* lives on. Bodily *Resurrection* on the last day may happen but is not essential in this schema. In this schema, there is no need for a final *judgment* as judgment is already made in the choices operating in a person's lifetime. The end time will be a manifestation and confirmation of these choices. With no final *judgment*, and the spirit continuing to live on beyond the grave, there is no need of *Resurrection*, understood as the re-uniting of *body* and spirit. While there is no necessity for bodily *Resurrection*, this eschatological framework does not rule out the possibility of *Resurrection*. We therefore find in the book of *Wisdom* a type of realized eschatology where end time realities impinge on life in this world. With this as background, where can we situate the Gospel of John? What eschatological framework operates in this text - *Resurrection* eschatology or the *immortality* eschatology found in the Book of *Wisdom*³⁵?

32 Cf. Wis 1:6 where God is called "the true *episkopos* of the heart."

33 Wright argues from the use of the term *episcopos*, that after *death*, there is a time of rest and only at the end of time will there be a genuine revival when the just will receive their reward. He therefore sees the Book of *Wisdom* in continuity with *Daniel* and *Maccabees*. See N. T. WRIGHT, *The Resurrection of the Son of God, Christian Origins and the Question of God 3*, London 2003, 169-176.

34 COLLINS, *Jewish Wisdom* (s. note 16) 186.

2. Wisdom and the Fourth Gospel

There have been a number of studies on the influence of *Wisdom* Literature on the Fourth Gospel. Some of these deal with specific themes or sections of the Gospel³⁶, while Michael WILLETT, Sharon RINGE, Ben WITHERINGTON III and Martin SCOTT present a systematic study of *Wisdom* across the entire Gospel³⁷. Here, I will briefly outline some major points of contact³⁸.

The Prologue offers the first clue that the Gospel is influenced by Israel's *Wisdom* traditions in the close similarities drawn between the Johannine Word (*logos*) and the Old Testament personification of *Wisdom* (*sophia*)³⁹. In considering the possible background to the Prologue, Schnackenburg states: "The closest parallels in thought are to be found in Jewish *Wisdom* speculation"⁴⁰. The Word, like *Wisdom* pre-exists with God (Sir 1:1; Prov 8:23; John 1:1) is an active agent in creation (Prov 8:27-31; John 1:3), and has come to dwell in Israel (Sir 24:8-12; Bar 3:36-4:1; John 1:11a). Like *Wisdom*, there have been varied responses to the Word, both rejection and acceptance (1 En. 42:1-2⁴¹; John 1:11b). The Gospel narrative continues to present similarities as the Word, like *Wisdom*, gathers disciples inviting them to dwell with

35 Schneiders calls the eschatological picture that emerges from the book of *wisdom*, "*Immortality*-Eschatology". See SCHNEIDERS, *Resurrection Narrative* (s. note 15) 76.

36 See for example, J. ASHTON, *The Transformation of Wisdom: A Study of the Prologue of John's Gospel*, NTS 32 (1986), 161-86; C. CORY, *Wisdom's Rescue: A new reading of the Tabernacles Discourse* (John 7:1-8:59), JBL 116 (1997), 95-116.

37 M. E. WILLETT, *Wisdom Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, San Francisco 1992; M. SCOTT, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, JSNTSup 71, Sheffield 1992; B. WITHERINGTON III, *John's Wisdom: A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel*, Louisville 1995; S. H. RINGE, *Wisdom's Friends: Community and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, Louisville 1999.

38 See also a summary of "Wisdom Motifs" in BROWN, *Introduction* (s. note 7) 259-265.

39 For a recent discussion on the distinction between "hypostatizing" and "personifying" see BROWN, *Introduction* (s. note 7) 260, note 93. Hypostatizing indicates an independent being, while personifying is "a representation in personal terms" of an attribute.

40 R. SCHNACKENBURG, *The Gospel According to St John*, trans. K. Smyth et al, 3 vols., HTCNT, London 1968-1982, 1:481. See also DODD, *Interpretation* (s. note 5) 274-275, for a chart showing parallels between the Prologue and *Wisdom*.

41 "*Wisdom* went out in order to dwell among the sons of men, but did not find a dwelling; *wisdom* returned to her place and took her seat in the midst of the angels" (1 En. 42:1-2).

her⁴² (Sir 5:123; John 1:35-51), offering them nourishment (Sir 24:19-22; Prov 9:1-6; John 6) and salvation⁴³ (Wis 9:18; John 3:16). The disciples of *Wisdom* are called children/sons (Prov 2:1; Sir 2:1; 4:10-11; Wis 2:13; John 13:13), and friends (Wis 7:27; John 15:15). *Wisdom* lives with God and is loved by God (Prov 8:30-31; Wis 8:3; John 5:20; 10:17); she is an initiate in the knowledge of God and an associate in God's works (Wis 8:4; John 8:29, 38, 42, 55). I conclude this very brief overview with the words of Michael WILLET:

"*Wisdom* strides through the Gospel in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. He is *Wisdom* incarnate, God reaching out to humanity to the fullest extent, as a human being"⁴⁴.

3. Wisdom Eschatology in John

In his study on the Johannine *Resurrection*, Maarten MENKEN draws attention to the fact that in the Fourth Gospel, unlike the Synoptics, there is no prediction of *death* and *Resurrection*⁴⁵. There is a statement about *death*, described as a lifting up (John 3:14), but this is not followed by a statement about being raised. Indeed, throughout the Johannine narrative, the *death* of Jesus is presented as the culmination of Jesus' hour, his moment of exultation and glorification. The only time the "three day" language associated with the Synoptic *Resurrection* predictions is used is when Jesus speaks of raising the temple "in three days" (2:19). Although two verses later, this Temple is identified as "the Temple of his body" (2:21) the statement about destroying and raising the Temple takes on far broader meaning than simply the *death* and *Resurrection* of the *body* of Jesus⁴⁶.

42 André Feuillet notes the similarity between the disciples of Jesus and the disciples of *Wisdom* even though the latter are never called "disciples". See A. FEUILLET, *Johannine Studies*, Staten Island 1965, 89-91.

43 On *wisdom's* role in salvation, see A. SINNOTT, *Wisdom as Saviour*, Australian Biblical Review 52 (2004), 19-31.

44 WILLET, *Wisdom Christology* (s. note 37), 127. See also the discussion of the Johannine sapiential voice and style in WITHERINGTON III, *John's Wisdom* (s. note 37) 18-27.

45 M. J. J. MENKEN, *Interpretation of the Old Testament and the Resurrection of Jesus in John's Gospel*, in: *Resurrection in the New Testament*, FS J. Lambrecht, BETL 165, R. Bieringer, V. Koperski, and B. Lataire (eds.), Leuven 2002, 189-205; 197.

The emphasis throughout the Gospel on the cross as the exaltation and means of return to the Father leaves little need for *Resurrection*. This is confirmed by Jesus himself when he declares from the cross, "It is finished" (19:30). Jesus' *death* is not presented as requiring any further vindication. The *Resurrection* narratives in John therefore must have an entirely different function to that of the Synoptics. These considerations lead to an initial hypothesis that the Fourth Gospel is not working from *Resurrection* eschatology but from the type of *immortality* eschatology found in the book of *Wisdom*. I now turn to passages in the Gospel to test this hypothesis.

4. Eternity life in John

Eternity life in the Gospel of John is primarily associated with the person of Jesus. In the words of Udo Schnelle, "In a concrete, historical person, divine life is present in the cosmos"⁴⁷. Those who believe in him have/should have *eternity life* (3:14, 16, 36; 5:24; 6:40, 47). Those given by the Father to Jesus (17:2) and who follow him (10:27-28) have this life. Even the words of Jesus have *eternity life* (6:68; cf. Wis 16:26). This is also the promise of *Wisdom*: "When I considered these things inwardly, and thought upon them in my mind, that in kinship with *Wisdom* there is *immortality* (*athanasia*)" (Wis 8:17).

The second major association with *eternity life* is the food and drink that Jesus will give: water (4:14), food (6:27), flesh and blood (6:54). Again, this harkens back to the figure of *Wisdom* who is credited with saving the people of Israel in the Exodus experience, providing them with water and bread in the wilderness:

A holy people and blameless race *Wisdom* delivered from a nation of oppressors; ... she guided them along a marvellous way, and became a shelter to them by day, and a starry flame through the night. She brought them over the Red Sea, and led them through deep waters; *Wisdom* prospered their works by the hand of a holy prophet. They journeyed through an uninhabited wilderness, and pitched their tents in

46 I have argued that the raising of the New Temple is the action of Jesus on the cross when he forms the new "Household of God". See M. L. COLOE, *God Dwells with Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, Collegeville 2001, 179-190.

47 U. SCHNELLE, *The Human Condition: Anthropology in the Teachings of Jesus*, Paul, and John, Edinburgh 1996, 142.

untrodden places. When they thirsted they called upon thee, and water was given them out of flinty rock, and slaking of thirst from hard stone (Wis 10:15, 17-11:4).

...thou didst give thy people food of angels, and without their toil thou didst supply them from heaven with bread ready to eat, providing every pleasure and suited to every taste (Wis 16:20).

Whether it is described as belief in Jesus or eating and drinking, *eternity life* is something predominantly related to present experience. Of the 17 times the expression *eternity life* is used, only twice is it directed towards the future (John 4:14; 12:25). In 4:14 the emphasis is on the future gift of water while 12:25, which uses the present tense, is in the centre of two indefinite conditions expressed in the subjunctive and so this verse also carries the subjunctive sense "if anyone"⁴⁸. Eleven times the expression is used with a verb in the present (3:36; 4:36; 5:24; 5:39; 6:27; 6:47; 6:54; 6:68; 10:28; 12:50; 17:3) and on four occasions with the subjunctive (3:14, 16; 6:40; 17:2) which has no time significance since it describes a possibility or a probability⁴⁹. Thus, the Johannine use of the term *eternity life* places this life in the present, which is consistent with the theology of the Book of *Wisdom* as argued above.

Two chapters in the Fourth Gospel bear directly on the Johannine understanding of *eternity life*, refracted through the theology of *Wisdom*, namely chapters 6 and 11.

4.1 JOHN 6

John 6 recalls the Exodus event with the double miracle of the feeding in the wilderness (vv. 1-14), and the sea crossing (vv. 16-21). The crowd, who had experienced the miracle of the loaves, responds by seeking him but Jesus challenges them to look beyond the material nature of the miracle to its deeper significance and to seek food that endures for *eternity life* (vv. 26-27). When the crowd replies by demanding a sign, pointing to the sign of the manna (v. 31), Jesus answers with a discourse on the "true bread from heaven" (v. 32).

48 There is a similar saying to 12:25 in Luke 17:33 that expresses this same idea in the subjunctive. See R. E. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John*, 2 vols., AB 29-29A, New York 1966, 1976, 1:473-474, for discussion of similar synoptic statements.

49 W. D. MOUNCE, *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar*, Grand Rapids 1993, 282-283.

The imagery of the discourse, "bread from heaven", draws together a number of strands in Jewish tradition, the manna as a symbol of spiritual food, the Torah⁵⁰, the messianic eschatological banquet⁵¹, and particularly *Wisdom's* banquet⁵². The *Wisdom* tradition is obvious in Jesus' repetition of the expression "come down from heaven" to describe the bread God gives, i.e. Jesus himself (6:33, 38, 41, 42, 50, 51, 58). According to FEUILLET, the closest expression to this phrase is found in the description of *Wisdom* coming down from heaven to dwell with people (Sir 24; Bar 3:29-38; Wis 9:1-18)⁵³. Already in the Deuteronomic tradition there is evidence of a spiritualising of the manna.

According to Deuteronomy, the real purpose of the miracle of the manna was not to provide material food, but to teach the Hebrews that the word of God and His commandments are also food ...

"He therefore let you be afflicted with hunger and then fed you with manna, a food unknown to you and your fathers, in order to show you that not by bread alone does man live, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God (Deut 8:3)"⁵⁴.

This tradition is continued in the *Wisdom* literature where the purpose of the manna, the bread of angels, was »so that your children, whom you love, O Lord, might learn that it is not the production of crops that feeds humankind, but that your word preserves those who trust in you« (Wis 16:26). The notion of "preserving those who trust in thee" is similar to the promise of life given earlier in this book, "in kinship with *Wisdom* there is *immortality*" (Wis 8:17). In the *Wisdom* literature, eating and drinking of *Wisdom's* food is a metaphor for listening to and learning from her teaching⁵⁵, and even a metaphor for obedience to Torah⁵⁶.

50 The symbolism of the manna applied to the Torah is well-developed in later rabbinic literature and DODD, *Interpretation* (s. note 5) 336, dates this tradition back to the first century C.E. to Eliezer ben Hyrcanus.

51 The Messianic Age was associated with a second gift of manna from heaven (2 Bar. 29:8).

52 FEUILLET, *Johannine Studies* (s. note 42) 57.

53 FEUILLET, *Johannine Studies* (s. note 42) 83.

54 FEUILLET, *Johannine Studies* (s. note 42) 62.

55 "She will feed him with the bread of understanding, and give him the water of *wisdom* to drink" (Sir 15:3).

56 "Come to me, you who desire me, and eat your fill of my produce. For the remembrance of me is sweeter than honey, and my inheritance sweeter than the honeycomb. Those who eat me will hunger for more, and those who drink me will thirst for more. Whoever obeys me will not be put to shame, and those who work with my help will not sin. All this is the book of the covenant of the Most

In John 6 eating the bread Jesus offers has, at first, a similar metaphorical sense of believing his teaching. The memory of the manna and its usage in the *Wisdom* tradition is clearly alluded to: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and who believes in me will never be thirsty" (6:35; cf. Wis 24:20)⁵⁷. When understood metaphorically labouring for the food which endures to eternal life (6:27) has the same meaning as »he who believes has eternal life« (6:47; cf. 6:40). The image of eating bread as a metaphor for believing in Jesus as the means of eternal life continues to v. 51b. The metaphor changes abruptly in v. 51c when Jesus equates the "bread" he shall give with his flesh. Not only does the imagery change, bread/flesh, but the tense of the verb from present to future. Until 51c, all the references to 'bread' have been in the present tense. "My Father gives you the true bread from heaven" (v. 32c).

"For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world" (v. 33) "They said to him, Lord, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst" (33-35).

"I am the bread of life" (v. 48).

"This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever" (vv. 50-51b);

At v. 51c the verb shifts to the future: "and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh". It is at this point that most scholars see a change in the meaning of the "bread" to a sacramental sense of the future Eucharistic experience of the community and the future giving of Jesus' flesh as a reference to his crucifixion⁵⁸. When the physical

57 High God, the law which Moses commanded us as an inheritance for the congregations of Jacob" (Sir 24:19-23).
On the sapiential character of the "I Am" statements, see WITHERINGTON III,

58 John's Wisdom (s. note 37) 156-158.
A helpful discussion of the criteria for deciding when John shifts from metaphor to sacrament can be found in F. J. MOLONEY, "When is John talking about Sacraments?", Australian Biblical Review 30 (1982), 11-33; revised and reprinted in F. J. MOLONEY, "A Hard Saying": The Gospel and Culture, Collegeville 2001, 109-130. See also C. H. COSGROVE, The Place Where Jesus Is: Allusions to Baptism and the Eucharist in the Fourth Gospel, NTS 35 (1989), 522-539. Cosgrove discusses and presents arguments against Bultmann's theory of an "ecclesiastical

presence of Jesus is no longer in the world, future believers can still 'come to him' and express their belief in him in the Eucharistic celebrations of the community.

4.2 JOHN 11

John 11, more so than John 20, provides a clear Johannine understanding of the meaning of life, *eternity life, death and Resurrection*. A recent monograph by Wendy Sproston North argues that chapters 11 and 12 in the Fourth Gospel have been deliberately created by the evangelist to teach afresh that "to believe in Jesus is to possess eternal life that death cannot vanquish"⁵⁹. The long introduction to the miracle establishes that Jesus has deliberately delayed going to Bethany when he waits two days before making the journey into Judea (v. 6)⁶⁰. When Jesus makes this decision he speaks of Lazarus as one who "has fallen asleep" (v. 11). The association of *death* and sleep emerges late in Israel's Scriptures, and is more common within the post-exilic and *Wisdom* writings, possibly reflecting the developing notion that *death* is not an end, but that there will be a time when the 'sleeper' will awaken (Deut 31:16; Ps 133; Jer 51:39, 57; Dan 12:2; 4 Ezra 2:31; 7:32, 35; Sir 46:19, 20; 2 Macc 12:45; Wis 17:14)⁶¹.

Martha professes faith in Jesus' ability to heal when she states, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died" (v. 21). Jesus replies simply, "your brother will rise again". Martha understands this as a reference to the end-time *Resurrection* following the understanding of *Resurrection* references in *Daniel* and *Maccabees* as discussed above.⁶² "I know that he will rise again in the *Resurrection* on the last

redactor" adding 51c-59, and Bornkamm's theory of this insertion as an anti-
cetic polemic.

59 W. E. SPROSTON NORTH, The Lazarus Story within the Johannine Tradition, JSNTSup 212, Sheffield 2001, 130.

60 See SPROSTON NORTH, The Lazarus Story (s. note 59) 132, on the evangelist's motive for this delay.

61 For a discussion of the historical development of this idiom see WRIGHT, The Resurrection of the Son of God (s. note 33) 108-15.

62 SCOTT, Sophia (s. note 37) 201 comments that "she appears to be presenting a form of one particular Jewish theology of the *resurrection*, possibly that of Pharisaic origins". See also the comment by Moloney that Martha seems to accept the relatively new idea in Jewish thought about life after *death*; F. J. MOLONEY, Can Everyone be Wrong? A Reading of John 11:1-12:8, NTS 49 (2003) 505-527, 513. See also Moloney's judgments on Martha's faith confession (v. 27) where he argues, rightly in my opinion, that for all its lofty titles, it is not correct Johannine faith (idem, 513-514).

day" (v. 24). However, Jesus' reply directs her away from this model of "end-time" *Resurrection* as he makes the *Resurrection* a present reality in his own person⁶³. "I am the *Resurrection* and the life" (v. 25)⁶⁴. Jesus then elaborates on this realised eschatological claim when he speaks about believers who have died (Lazarus), and current believers (readers).

"The one who believes in me, though he die (like Lazarus), shall live (v. 25)". Jesus is here refuting the Jewish notion of *death* as going into some type of non-life in the underworld while awaiting the end time *Resurrection* back to life. Lazarus, even though dead, lives on, as the miracle will soon demonstrate. Lazarus can be called back into this earthly life, prior to a final *Resurrection*. He has not passed through *death* to non-existence.

"Whoever lives and believes in me shall never die" (v. 26). The Gospel has consistently linked belief in Jesus to *eternity life*, most recently in the parable of the Good Shepherd (10:28), so that for the believer "life" is not simply existence, it is a quality of life given by Jesus that will not perish. This is the understanding of life for the righteous that is found in the Book of *Wisdom*. For the righteous *death* has no final reality, "they only appear to die" (Wis 3:2). "Because of her I shall have *immortality*" (Wis 8:13). The physical *body* undergoes normal corruption but the spirit/*soul* lives on in the "hand of God" (Wis 3:1).

The fact that Lazarus has been in the tomb for four days is significant, as this would be the time when the processes of physical decay become obvious. In Jewish tradition, this process identifies when the *soul* has definitely left the *body*⁶⁵. "Lazarus is dead" (11:14), but as a friend of Jesus and a believer, "though he die, he shall live". Jesus calls Lazarus by name and commands him to come forth. Since this miracle is brought about only by the word of Jesus, Lazarus must still be alive, able to hear the voice of Jesus and to follow him as Jesus leads him out

63 This approach is also taken by DODD, Interpretation (s. note 5) 147, and most recently by J. FREY, Die johanneische Eschatologie: Die eschatologische Verkündigung in den johanneischen Texten, vol. 3, WUNT 117, Tübingen 2000, 455.

64 *Wisdom* is said to have power over life and *death*, "For you have power over life and *death*; you lead men down to the gates of Hades and back again" (Wis 16:13). Lightfoot quotes Genesis Rabba: "The very height of mourning is not till the third day. For three days the spirit wanders about the sepulchre, expecting if it may return into the *body*. But when it sees that the form or aspect of the face is changed, then it hovers no more, but leaves the *body* to itself." See J. LIGHTFOOT, A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica, 4 vols., Peabody 1979, 3:367. See also H. STRACK and P. BILLERBECK, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, 6 vols, Munich 1922-61, 2:544-545.

of apparent *death* to life⁶⁶. The tomb of Lazarus, his *death*, has not meant non-existence in Sheol. The raising of Lazarus thus demonstrates the *immortality* or *Wisdom* perception of life after *death*.

4.3 "RESURRECTION OF THE BODY" WITHIN JOHANNINE REALISED ESCHATOLOGY

Finally, what can we make of the times when Jesus and the Gospel use *Resurrection* language? Is this an inconsistency in the text or is it evidence of "another hand" adding to the text⁶⁷?

There are four main clusters of passages in the Gospel where *Resurrection* type language is employed: John 2:19, 20, 22, in association with the Temple; John 5:21, 25-29 linked to the Sabbath healing; John 6:39, 40, 44, 54, in the Bread of Life discourse, and Lazarus 11:24, 25; 12:1, 9, 17. The rest of this chapter will address chapters 5 and 6 since I have dealt with the raising of the Temple episode elsewhere⁶⁸, and with Lazarus earlier in this study.

Jesus' discussion with "the Jews" following the healing of the crippled man on the Sabbath rests on the principle stated in v. 17, "My Father is working still, and I am working", followed by the short parable:

"the son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the father doing; for whatever he does, that the son does likewise. For the father loves the son, and shows him all that he himself is doing" (vv. 19-20).

C. H. DODD drew attention to these verses as a parable reflecting the learning of a trade by a son in a Middle Eastern family⁶⁹. A second theological principal operating in this chapter is that on the Sabbath day

66 Most commentators note that the raising of Lazarus dramatises what was earlier stated in 5:28: "Those who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out". SPROSTON NORTH, The Lazarus Story (s. note 59) 91, argues even further: "the Lazarus story was produced as a second exposition of the tradition in 5:24, picking up on the positive elements in the first, and expressing the whole through the medium of narrative".

67 This is the position taken by BOISMARD, Our Victory over Death (s. note 14) 119, R. BULTMANN, The Gospel of John: A Commentary, trans. G. R. Beasley Murray et al., Oxford 1971, 238; SCHNACKENBURG, The Gospel According to St. John (s. note 40), 2: 116, and BROWN, The Gospel According to John (s. note 48), 1: 221. Against this notion Barrett comments on John 5, "There is no reason whatever for regarding vv. 28f. as a supplement to the original Johannine discourse". See C. K. BARRETT, The Gospel According to St. John, London² 1978, 263.

68 COLOE, God Dwells with Us (s. note 46) 65-84.

69 C. H. DODD, "A Hidden Parable in the Fourth Gospel", in: C. H. Dodd, More New Testament Studies, Manchester 1968, 30-40.

God is permitted two works – that of creating life (v. 21) and that of *judgement* (v. 22), since birth and *death* still occur on the Sabbath⁷⁰. As the son authorised by the Father, Jesus claims that he also can do these two works on the Sabbath (26, 27).

The two issues here, of giving life, and of *judgement* must not be subsumed into one “end-time” event. The giving of life is a present reality, not something still to come as evidenced by the use of the present tense⁷¹: “For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will” (v. 21). In this expression, ‘the dead’ does not refer to physical *death* and end-time *Resurrection* but to those who are spiritually dead in the present because they have not heard or have rejected the word of Jesus. This verse and verse 24 must be read in concert: “He who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life”. The son’s purpose in coming into the world was to give life, not physical life, but *eternity life* (3:16), life in abundance (10:10).

“His [Jesus] coming to reveal God in history has made it possible for man to move from the sphere of *death* into that of life and to achieve his true existence, the life that he was intended to lead⁷².”

Those who do not have this quality of life are said to be “dead” even though they exist. The Father’s action of “raising the dead” metaphorically expresses accepting the word of Jesus⁷³. This same sense of “the

dead” as those spiritually dead recurs in v. 25: “The hour is coming *and now is*, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live⁷⁴. The present reality is emphasised by the phrase, “and now is⁷⁵. The Father, who has life in himself has granted the Son life in himself⁷⁶, and so the Son of God, now present in history, is able to give life to those previously “spiritually dead” (v. 26)⁷⁷. The expression, “and now is” has a two-fold temporal sense. It refers to the narrative time of Jesus and the possibility of those who hear his voice and believe receiving his gift of life. In addition, the expression is also the prophetic experience of the post-Easter community who now, as they hear the Gospel narrative, have the same opportunity to believe and come to life⁷⁸.

Just as “raising the dead” and giving them life is a present reality, so too is *judgement*. *Judgement* is being made here and now by the stance one takes towards Jesus⁷⁹. The word Jesus speaks is already judging each person, or in a sense, each person brings *judgement* on themselves by their choice of belief or unbelief in Jesus. “He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge; the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day” (12:48). As this verse makes explicit, there is a close relationship in the Fourth Gospel between revelation and *judgement*.

70 DODD, Interpretation (s. note 5) 320–21, lists a number of rabbinic authorities on God’s Sabbath activity.

71 M. Astedu-Peprah notes the use of present tense verbs and adds: “the implication is that, these actions [giving life and judgement] are continually carried out and can therefore not be seen as actions to be accomplished at the end-time”. See M. ASIEDU-PEPRAH, *Johanneine Sabbath Conflicts as Juridical Controversy*, WUNT 2.132, Tübingen 2001, 85, note 136; similarly when commenting on v. 24, “the term *thánatos* should not be understood in the sense of physical *death*”, idem, 89. This is also the position taken by Frey in his magisterial work on *Johanneine eschatologie*: “Diese Ausdrucksweise hat Konsequenzen für das Verständnis von Leben und Tod. Der Evangelist bezeichnet mit diesen Begriffen nicht einfach physische Lebendigkeit bzw. deren Abwesenheit. Wo er vom physischen Leben reden will, verwendet er gerade andere Termini als ζῶν bzw. ζῆν (z. B. ψυχῆ Joh 12,25). Das Leben, die ζῶν, ist vielmehr grundsätzlich durch die Beziehung zu dem bestimmt, der das Leben in sich hat und von dem alles Leben kommt, durch Gott bzw. durch den Sohn, der vom Vater gleichermaßen das Leben erhalten hat. Auf der anderen Seite ist der Tod ... Der Mensch, sofern er nicht im Glauben an das menschgewordene Leben existiert, befindet sich nach johanneischem Verständnis im Machtbereich des Todes”. See J. FREY, *Die johanneische Eschatologie* (s. note 63) 3:375.

72 SCHNACKENBURG, *The Gospel According to St John* (s. note 40) 2:99.

73 For a discussion of “raising the dead” as a metaphor for belief see X. LÉON-DU-FOUR, *Lecture de l’Évangile selon Jean*. 4 vols, Parole de Dieu, Paris 1988, 1990, 1993, 1996, 2:48.

74 Strangely, Barrett interprets “the dead” in v. 21 as physically dead while in v. 25 as spiritually dead; see BARRETT, *The Gospel According to St John* (s. note 67) 260–262; similarly BROWN, *The Gospel According to John* (s. note 48) 1: 215. I see no need for this change and interpret “the dead” in both verses in the sense of spiritually dead.

75 “The present tense of the verbs used in verse 21 ff. are very striking and point clearly to the fact that Jesus’ giving life and judgment take place here and now in the present ... in our acceptance or rejection of the word spoken by the Son”, see SCHNACKENBURG, *The Gospel According to St John* (s. note 40) 2:106. For a similar interpretation of v. 25 as a present experience, see idem, 111.

76 Von Wahlde discusses the background to the phrase, “life in himself” and shows its association with *Wis 15:16–17*. His article adds further evidence of the influence of the Book of *Wisdom* in the anthropology and eschatology of the Fourth Gospel. See U. C. VON WAHLDE, *He Has Given to the Son to Have Life in Himself* (John 5:26), *Biblica* 85 (2004), 409–412.

77 On the use of the title Son of God within a Father-Son relationship see F. J. MOLONEY, “The Johannine Son of God”, *Saesianum* 38 (1976), esp. 73–77.

78 FREY, *Die johanneische Eschatologie* (s. note 63), 3:378.

79 See SCHNACKENBURG, *The Gospel According to St John* (s. note 40), 2: 106.

Judgment in the Fourth Gospel is intimately linked with revelation (see 3:19; 8:16; 12:31; 16:8, 11), and the judgment spoken of in vv. 24-25 refers to this self-judgment of men [sic] in their reaction to the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is continued in v. 27: *judgement takes place in the Son of Man* ... "The Son of Man", then, appears to be a title used almost in a passive sense of a "*locus revelationis*".⁸⁰

While *judgement* is already being made, the Fourth Gospel, in keeping with Christian tradition⁸¹, does not reject an end-time manifestation of that *judgement*. Here again we see evidence of the influence of the book of *Wisdom*, which combined *immortality* with a final cosmic revealing of the destinies of the just and the wicked. Where traditional eschatology required the end-time *judgement* as a way to reverse the fate of the just and grant them the reward of life with God, this is not the eschatology of John. There is no need for a final *judgement* or reversal of fate since those who believe in Jesus already come into eternal life in the present and this will not be destroyed by physical *death*. Similarly, those who do not accept Jesus bring *judgement* on themselves and remain in a state of spiritual *death*.

For the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear the voice of him and come forth, those doing good, into the *Resurrection* of life, those doing evil, into the *Resurrection* of *judgement* (vv. 28-29).

This verse has clear echoes of Isaiah 26:19 (LXX) which reads, "The dead shall rise, and they that are in the tombs shall be raised". At this point, the gospel addresses the future for those who have died⁸². On the last day, all those "in the tombs", who are those who have passed from this earthly existence and continue to exist with *eternity life*, or in *death*, will come forth, i.e. their state of life or *death* will be made manifest. The evangelist does not speak of "those in the tombs" being raised, as the language of being raised from *death* to life has just been used to describe the present transition into *eternity life* of those who come to believe in Jesus (5:21). The good will come forth "to the *Resurrection* of life". The present state of their participating in *eternity-life* will be made manifest. The term "life" qualifies the type of *Resurrection* existence for the good. Conversely, evil doers will come forth "to the *Resurrection* of *judgement*". The *judgement* they brought upon themselves in their earthly existence will be manifest. The term "judgment"

80 MOLONEY, The Johannine Son of man 84-85.

81 See Rom 2:6-10; 2 Cor 5:10; Acts 17:31; 1 Pet 4:5; 2 Tim 4:1 for evidence of a Christian tradition of eschatological *judgement*.

82 FREY, Die johanneische Eschatologie (s. note 63) 3:382.

qualifies their experience of *Resurrection*. To summarise: Chapter 5 introduces bodily *Resurrection* (vv. 28-29)⁸³ into an eschatology which is essentially realised but allows for a final manifestation of the victory of good over evil, and the manifestation of the destinies of the good and the evil as a consequence of *judgement* made by their choices during their earthly existence.

In John 6 the expression, "and I will raise him up at the last day" occurs three times (vv. 40, 44, 54) and once with the impersonal "it" rather than "him" (v. 39). Since the major thrust of John 6 has been the present offer of *eternity life*, the introduction of "last day" *Resurrection* seems out of context, contradictory, and, for some commentators, evidence of a later hand. Resorting to a "later hand" seems an act of desperation and not necessary. The eschatology of the Fourth Gospel brings into the present moment the choice of belief or unbelief, the *judgement* that follows this choice and the situation of life or *death* now, which will continue beyond the tomb. While these "end time" realities are brought into the present, as in the Book of *Wisdom*, the experience of Jesus has revealed bodily *Resurrection*, which by the time of the Fourth Gospel has become part of the Christian story⁸⁴. Adding a bodily *Resurrection* to what is otherwise a realised eschatology is not a contradiction rather it is a completion as it gives the human person corporeal participation in end-time realities. The addition of corporeality in this chapter is demanded given the emphasis on the incarnation of the Word. *Wisdom/Word* has become flesh and it is this flesh, the humanity of Jesus, which is given for the life of the world. The choice for or against God's ways is made in response to this fully enfleshed Jesus. Later believers will confront the same choice and make their response by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Crucified and Risen One in their Eucharistic celebrations. The bodilyness of Jesus is an essential feature of the discourse in John 6, and so the bodilyness of par-

83 Bodily *resurrection* from the dead may be assumed by the expression "in the tombs".

84 Jörg Frey explains the presence of both present and future eschatology as a reflection of dual traditions already part of the Johannine community's story prior to the written form of the Gospel. "In der johanneischen-Gemeindefradition waren futurisch-eschatologische Aussagen, Verheissungen der Parusie Christi, der Auferstehung der Toten am letzten Tag, aber auch z. B. eine Unterweisung über das Kommen des endzeitlichen Gottesknechts und die mit dieser letzten Zeit zusammenhängenden Ereignisse, vorgegeben, die in den johanneischen Schriften in unterschiedlicher Weise aufgenommen sind. Daneben lagen in derselben Gemeindefradition auch präsentisch-eschatologische Aussagen vor, wie z. B. die Zusage des ewigen Lebens als eines den Glaubenden gegenwärtig verliehenen Heilsgutes". See FREY, Die johanneische Eschatologie (s. note 63) 3:464.

icipation in eternity-life should not come as a surprise or be thought of as a foreign intrusion. But bodyliness need no longer be configured to temporality as D. A. LEE eloquently states:

"The one who lies in the Father's embrace (1:18) is gathered into flesh; God takes shape in human form, created from clay, subject to *death*, mortal, vulnerable - radiant with deity, yes, but radiant also with the promise of flesh renewed, refined, immortal"⁸⁵.

5. Conclusion

Influenced by the elements of realised eschatology in the Jewish *Wisdom* literature, particularly the book of *Wisdom*, the eschatology of the Fourth Gospel is primarily realised as Bultmann and Dodd maintained⁸⁶. Not only is this eschatology realised, it is also realistic for obviously believers in Jesus die, but this Gospel insists that the life they have received through faith in Jesus will continue through *death*. Whether influenced by Jesus' own apocalyptic teaching⁸⁷, or the Christian revelation of *Resurrection*, the Fourth Gospel also envisages a "last day" raising of the *body* so that the full corporeal experience of human existence can participate in the eternity-life of God⁸⁸. This futurist eschatology need not be interpreted as a later foreign addition, or even as an element of theological confusion on the part of the evangelist. Given his announcement that "the Word became flesh", an eschatology that

85 LEE, *Flesh and Glory* (s. note 3) 49.

86 "... the earlier naive eschatology of Jewish Christianity and Gnosticism has been abandoned, certainly not in favour of a spiritualising of the eschatological process to become a process within man's *soul*, but in favour of a radical understanding of Jesus' appearance as the eschatological event. This event puts an end to the old course of the world"; see, BULTMANN, *The Gospel of John* (s. note 67) 155. "All through the Book of Signs Jesus is represented as conferring on men the light and life absolute which belong to the supernal world, or the Age to Come: in that sense the time which is to come has come - εἰσῆλθαί ἡμεῖς καὶ τὸν αἰῶνα; see DODD, *Interpretation* (s. note 5) 372.

87 BOISMARD, *Our Victory over Death* (s. note 14) 100-120; D. J. GOERGEN, *The Death and Resurrection of Jesus*, A Theology of Jesus. 2, Wilmington 1988, 111-116.

88 FREY, *Die johanneische Eschatologie* (s. note 63) 3:460.

was thoroughly realised would fittingly come to its completion when "flesh" enters into that life with God enjoyed by the pre-existent Word⁸⁹.

And so the story comes full-circle. In the flesh of the incarnate Word, all flesh is offered a participation in the triune communion of divine life. This gift of becoming "children of God" is available in the here and now of human historical existence with the surety that this *eternity life* continues through *death* into God's unending "now"⁹⁰.

89 In attributing the "resurrection passages" in John to a foreign hand, BOISMARD (*Our Victory over Death* [s. note 14] 120) denies that there will be a future *resurrection*, but then, in a somewhat confusing way, suggests that the *soul* does not enter into eternal life "completely disembodied". He then draws on Pauline ideas (2 Cor 5:1) to say: "The *soul* joins a 'heavenly body' at the very moment it leaves this 'earthly body'". This chapter has argued that these *resurrection* passages are not later insertions but are thoroughly Johannine allowing a last day *resurrection* within a realised, *immortality* eschatology. The incarnation principle (1:14), which is the basis for Johannine Christology, would seem to require some type of bodily participation in *eternity life* beyond the grave.

90 Dorothy Lee express this "full-circle" in the following manner: "By becoming flesh, God enters the world in the thin garb of mortality, entering the darkness of creation clad only in the armour of skin and vein, sinew and bone: mortal, vulnerable, naked... The new order of fleshly existence envisaged in the symbolic universe of the Fourth Gospel comes from within, transfigured by the habitation of divine glory in mortal flesh. The enfleshment of the Sophia-Word raises 'all flesh' to the level of divine glory". See LEE, *Flesh and Glory* (s. note 3) 50.