Christological Transformation of the Motif of “Living Water” (John 4; 7):
Prophetic Messiah Expectations and Wisdom Tradition

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Abstract
“Living water” connects Jesus’s dialogue with the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well (John 4) with his teaching in the temple at the festival of Sukkot (John 7). Referring to a multifaceted biblical imagery, the theme of water interweaves elements of well stories, including Moses traditions (especially the gift of water out from the rock in the desert, later parallelized with the gift of the Torah), eschatological hopes (the fountain coming forth from the temple, the outpouring of the spirit), and sapiental images (wisdom and teaching, or the Torah, as fountain of life). Providing the life-giving water, Jesus is presented on the one hand as the “prophet like Moses” depicted in Deut. 18. On the other hand, he acts in the role of Wisdom, who invites those who are thirsty to come. In John 4 as well as in John 7, the gift of the water of life is connected with messiah discourses. While alluding to popular expectations of “the prophet” and “the messiah,” the Fourth Gospel’s presentation of the Χριστός goes beyond. Integrating the Wisdom strand with the concept of the Logos into its Christology, Jesus is portrayed to be more than a/the prophet.

[248] The motif of “living water,” which establishes an intratextual relationship between John 4:10–15 and 7:37–38, refers to a rich tradition of the imagery in the Hebrew Bible and in Jewish literature. Accordingly, Jesus’s dialogue with the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob in John 4 develops a subtle water symbolism on several levels. The motif occurs again in chapter 7, where Jesus’s teaching in the temple is situated at the feast of Tabernacles with its solemn water ceremony. In both chapters the theme of water interweaves “messianic” expectations and wisdom traditions, which hints at the identity of the Johannine Jesus. As the one who gives (and is) the living water, he is presented on the one hand as (the)1 “prophet like Moses” (cf. Deut. 18:15–19; 34:10–12),2 and at the same time as surpassing the Moses

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1 Cf. the characters’ voices in John 6:14; 7:40 reflecting popular expectation, including 1:21, 25 in relation to John the Baptist.
tradition (in the frame of the Gospel’s overall development of the Mosaic theme) by connecting [249] it with other lines of tradition and especially the Wisdom strand. A similar blending of messiah expectations and sapiental motifs can be detected in 1 Enoch 48–49. The Fourth Gospel though goes a step further in relating wisdom traditions to the Χριστός. So, in its analysis of the water imagery in John 4 and 7, particularly in the context of contemporary “messianic” hopes linked to the theme of water, this paper shows how popular expectations, including that of “the prophet (like Moses)”, are taken up and creatively transformed in an intertextual reading of the Hebrew Bible that is rooted in Jewish tradition.

A. John 4

1. Setting

In search of deeper levels of meaning derived from intertextual links to biblical tradition, the location of the story in John 4 and its configuration of the main characters can offer some of the first clues. The χωρίον “that Jacob gave to his son Joseph”

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3 See, for example, the surveys in Wayne A. Meeks, The Prophet-King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology, NovTSup 14 (Leiden: Brill, 1967); Marie-Émile Boismard, Moses or Jesus: An Essay in Johannine Christology, trans. B. T. Viviano, BETL 84A (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993); Reim, Jochanan, 110–44; Matthias Gawlick, “Mose im Johannesevangelium,” BN 84 (1996): 29–35; Andreas Lindemann, “Mose und Jesus Christus: Zum Verständnis des Gesetzes im Johannesevangelium,” in Die Evangelien und die Apostelgeschichte: Studien zu ihrer Theologie und zu ihrer Geschichte, WUNT 241 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 288–308; Stefan Schapdick, “Autorität ohne Inhalt: Zum Mosebild des Johannesevangeliums,” ZNW 97 (2006): 177–206. Stanley D. Harstine, Moses as a Character in the Fourth Gospel: A Study of Ancient Reading Techniques, JSNTSup 229 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), examines the function of the “off-stage” appearances of the Moses figure for plot development. John Lierman, “The Mosaic Pattern of John’s Christology,” in Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John, ed. John Lierman, WUNT II/219 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 210–34, shows parallels by referring to the exalted position of Moses in Second Temple Judaism. Beyond the explicit mentions of Moses in the first half of the Gospel, there are also implicit references to the Mosaic tradition that have to be considered; see e.g. the allusions to Deuteronomy in the farewell discourses, where, for example, Jesus teaches the commandments κοθός ἑνεχείσακεν μοι ὁ πατὴρ (14:31; cf. Deut. 1:3; 4:5, 14; 6:1; 28:69; 34:9; and 18:18; particularly in the LXX), or cf. the intercessory prayer in Exod. 32 // John 17.

4 The concepts of “prophet” and “messiah,” stemming from different strands of tradition and linked with distinct types of eschatological figures, are, of course, not synonymous, but both are situated in a broader set of “messianic” expectations and thus interrelated in the Fourth Gospel: cf. the parallel statements in John 7:40–41; in 6:14–15 the people call Jesus “the prophet” who is to come and want to make him king, which shows a blurring of the lines. Meeks, Prophet-King, and Lierman, “Pattern,” 217–23, refer to traditions depicting Moses as king (see, for example, Philo, Mos. 1:158: ἀνόμωσθη γὰρ ὥς οὖν τοῦ ἔθνος θεὸς [cf. Exod. 4:16; 7:1] καὶ ἑαυτῷ λαβών; the tradition of a heavenly enthronement can already be found in the Exagoge of Ezekiel the Tragedian).
(John 4:5; cf. Gen. 48:22; Josh. 24:32) refers to Shechem, in the vicinity of which (πλησίον) Sychar is thus located, functioning as Samaritan [250] center. Jesus’s encounter with the nameless γυνὴ ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρείας (John 4:7; vis-à-vis Jesus as Ἰουδαῖος, cf. vv. 9, 20–22) at the “well of Jacob” (πηγὴ τοῦ Ἰακώβ, v. 6) recalls Genesis 24 and particularly 29, furthermore Exod. 2:15–22. Female figures serving as representatives or even symbols for a land or city conform to biblical conventions (cf. Zion, but also narrative characters such as Judith). As regards Samaria, Jer. 3:6–13 has to be mentioned, where Israel and Judah are portrayed as adulterous sisters. Even more drastically, Ezekiel 23 unfolds this imagery, describing Samaria as elder sister of Jerusalem (cf. Ezek. 16:46–63, including Samaria in the future restoration: see 16:53, 55, 61; cf. Jer. 3:18).

Drawing water at noon (John 4:6: ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη; cf. 19:14) seems to be unusual (see Gen. 24:11). Is this an allusion to Gen. 29:7? But similarly Josephus lets Moses in Midian (εἰς τε πόλιν Μαδιανὴν ἀφικόμενος; cf. John 4:5: ἔρχεται οὖν εἰς πόλιν τῆς Σαμαρείας λεγομένην Συχὰρ) take his seat “at (or even: on) a well” (ἐπί τινος φρέατος; cf. Exod. 2:15 LXX; in John 4:6: ἐπὶ τῇ πηγῇ) to rest ἐκ τοῦ κόπου καὶ τῆς ταλαιπωρίας (cf. John 4:6: κεκοπιακὼς ἐκ τῆς ὁδοιπορίας) at noon (μεσημβρίας οὔση), not far from the town.

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5 Gen. 33:18–20 reports the erection of an altar.
6 The sanctuary on Mount Gerizim and the submontane city were destroyed under John Hyrcanus (cf. Josephus, Ant. 13.255–256).
8 Cf. the explicit references to Jacob in John 4. At the well, a family story starts which leads to the 12 tribes of Israel. In Jewish tradition the story in Genesis 29 becomes increasingly miraculous, which is reflected in the Palestinian targums (cf. e.g. Tg. Neof. Gen. 28:10: overflowing of the well). Furthermore, it is linked to the tradition of the well accompanying Israel on the wanderings in the desert (cf. the well in Num. 21:16–18 and 1 Cor. 10:4); on this, Olsson, Structure, 162–73; Jerome H. Neyrey, "Jacob Traditions and the Interpretation of John 4:10–26," CBQ 41 (1979): 419–37 (422–23).
10 As to representative characters in the Fourth Gospel, cf. e.g. Craig R. Koester, Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 32–73 (regarding the Samaritan woman, see 48–51).  
13 However, the Samaritan woman speaks of a φρέαρ (cf. vv. 11–12).
14 Josephus, Ant. 2.257.
2. Water Symbolism on Several Levels

Subsequently to Jesus’s request δός μοι πεῖν (v. 7), the story in John 4 takes a different turn than e.g. in Gen. 24:14–21, for the woman points to the conventional barriers between her as a Samaritan and him as a Jew (cf. v. 9). In a role reversal, though, Jesus now offers her “living water” (v. 10; but see the intervention of Jacob in Gen. 29:10 or of Moses in Exod. 2:17), at the same time posing the central question that pervades their conversation (τίς ἐστιν ὁ λέγων σοι), relating to his identity, which is revealed in several steps (an answer is given in v. 26 by the first “I am”-revelation of the Fourth Gospel: ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι).

The following dialogue unfolds the theme of water (an archetypal symbol of life), which gives coherence to the sections of the composition. According to the double (or multiple) encoding of key terms, which characterizes Johannine dialogues playing with several levels of meaning, a multilayered water symbolism  

overlies the superficial story-level. Among the biblical reference texts for the motif of living  

water, Jeremiah 2–3 takes special position, since it shows a similar metaphorical interaction of the imageries of water, marriage and true worship of God, on the one hand, and, on the other, it focuses on Israel as sister of Judah. In Jer. 2:13 YHWH complains about his people, whose love in the time of betrothal he recalls (v. 2): “They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters (LXX: πηγὴν ὕδατος ζωῆς), to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water” (cf. 17:13 LXX: ἐγκατέλιπον πηγὴν ζωῆς τὸν τὸν [252] κύριον). In 2:18 the motif of drinking appears, and in v. 25 the motif of thirst (for a spiritual understanding, cf. also Ps. 42:2).

When in John 4:15 the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for the living water (κύριε, δός μοι τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ), so that she has no thirst any longer and does not need to come here to draw water any more (for a metaphorical understanding of ἀντλεῖν, see

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15 As to the water symbolism in the Fourth Gospel, see e.g. Koester, Symbolism, 155–84; Larry Paul Jones, The Symbol of Water in the Gospel of John, JSNTSup 145 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1997).


18 For God as the fountain of life, cf. also Ps. 36:9–10 (35:10 LXX: ὅτι παρά σοι πηγή ζωῆς...). In Isa. 58:11 the people is described: ἐσῃ ὡς κῆπος μεθύων καὶ ὡς πηγή ἣν μὴ ἐξέλιπεν ὕδωρ.

19 In contrast to v. 9, from v. 11 on she uses this form of address. Note the Johannine irony: While designating Jesus explicitly as a “prophet” (v. 19), at the same time she points to the true identity of the one who can give her τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ζῶν.
Isa. 12:3\(^{20}\)), he responds with the strange request to call her husband (v. 16). However, following the line of Jeremiah 2–3, where the water symbolism is embedded in the theme of covenant, the breaking of which is portrayed as adultery (Israel serves as example for Judah), the marital theme does not come as a surprise after all. So the five husbands\(^{21}\) the Samaritan woman had (John 4:18) may allude to the foreign gods of the five\(^{22}\) nations colonized in Samaria (2 Kgs 17:24–41), and her present husband (negated by her and Jesus) to the current Samaritan cult.\(^{23}\) That the issue is the true worship of God, which Jesus as prophet (cf. John 4:19) is expected to reveal,\(^{24}\) is shown by her reference to the different places of worship in Samaritan and Jewish tradition (v. 20; hence, this is no change of subject, which it has often been understood to be). But there are some more relevant intertexts offering a deeper level of understanding.

3. A Prophet like Moses?

[253] As noted above, the setting in John 4 establishes intertextual relations to Exod. 2:15–22 (and its, e.g. Philonic, reception); however, the theme of water also recalls more specific Moses traditions. In Exod. 17:1–7 he gives water to the people thirsting in the desert (in v. 2 LXX they urge him: δὸς ἡμῖν ὕδωρ, ἵνα πίωμεν) by bringing forth water out of a rock.\(^{25}\) Like Moses, Jesus gives water to drink, being thus depicted as the expected\(^{26}\) Mosaic prophet. While the Jacob tradition is referred to explicitly, the allusions to Moses arise on a more subtle level. As prophetic messiah, Jesus meets the Samaritan expectations of an eschatological messianic figure, as they are delineated in John 4. At first, the Samaritan woman

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\(^{20}\) LXX: καὶ ἀντλήσετε ὕδωρ μετ’ εὐφροσύνης ἐκ τῶν πηγῶν τοῦ σωτηρίου.

\(^{21}\) Cf. the Hebrew term baʿal.

\(^{22}\) Josephus, *Ant*. 9.288 highlights the number five: ἕκαστοι κατὰ ἔθνος ἴδιον θεὸν εἰς τὴν Σαμάρειαν κομίσαντες (πέντε δ᾿ ἦσαν).


\(^{24}\) Cf. Memar Marqah IV:12 about the Taheb as restorer of the true worship (see below).

\(^{25}\) Cf. Num. 20:2–13; in 21:16–18, note the connection with the tradition of a well/φρέαρ. See furthermore the reference in Deut. 8:15 (LXX: τοῦ ἐξαγαγόντος σοι ἐκ πέτρας ἀκροτόμου πηγὴν ὕδατος), followed by the feeding with manna in v. 16. Besides, see the miracle of Marah in Exod. 15:22–26 (cf. also Elisha in 2 Kgs 2:19–22).

\(^{26}\) 1QS IX, 11 refers to the coming of a prophet. 4QTest 5–8 cites Deut. 18:18–19. See also 1 Macc. 4:46; 14:41 (ἔος τοῦ ἀναστῆσαι προφήτην πιστών). For a “messianic” reading of Deut. 18:15, cf. Acts 3:22 (citation also in 7:37).
wonders if he is “greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well,” and drank of it himself and his children and his cattle” (John 4:12). But as the conversation continues, she calls Jesus a prophet (v. 19: θεωρῶ ὅτι προφήτης ἐστὶς). Finally, she invites her people (and the readers) in v. 29: “Come, see a man who told me all the things (cf. v. 25 about the expected Μεσσίας, borrowing Jewish terminology) that I have done, is not this the messiah (ὁ ἀντιτύπος)?”

It is difficult to judge from the later sources to what extent the narrative reflects the contemporary Samaritan expectations. Given the unique status Moses holds in Samaritan tradition, the basic concept seems to derive from Deuteronomy 18. In Memar Marqah (4th century CE), many features of the Taheb are modeled on Moses’s. Once the motif of living water in the history of tradition has been transferred to the Torah, the gift of the water by Moses is paralleled to the gift of the Torah. So Memar Marqah VI:3 refers to the Torah as “a well of living water dug by a prophet whose like has not arisen from mankind” (cf. Deut. 34:10).

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27 According to Josephus, Ant. 11.341, the Samaritans claimed to be descendants of Joseph’s sons Ephraim and Manasse. So the Samaritan woman speaks of τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰακώβ, ὃς ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν τὸ φρέαρ (in Josh. 24:32 the inheritance of Joseph’s children is founded; cf. Gen. 48). With her reference to οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν worshiping “in this mountain” in v. 20, she points to a chain of tradition beginning with Jacob (cf. Gen. 33:18–20; as a matter of fact, there is a Moses connection as well: the Samaritan Pentateuch identifies the mountain in Deut. 27:4–5 as the Gerizim; cf. also the insertion after the tenth commandment in Exod. 20:14). The importance of Joseph in Samaritan tradition is attested in Memar Marqah IV:12: “There is none like Joseph the king and there is none like Moses the prophet. [...] Moses possessed prophethood, Joseph possessed the Goodly Mount. There is none greater than either of them!” (Quoted from Memar Marqah: The Teaching of Marqah: The Translation, ed. and trans. John MacDonald, BZAW 84 [Berlin: Töpelmann, 1963], 186.) Furthermore, the Samaritan woman can call Jacob “our father” because she, the Samaritan, and Jesus, the Jew, share Jacob as a common ancestor.

28 As to the phrase οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ θρέμματα αὐτοῦ, cf. Exod. 17:3.

29 ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνος, ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα. Cf. Memar Marqah III:2: “When the Taheb comes he will reveal the truth...” or IV:12: “The Taheb will come in peace to possess the places of the perfect ones and to manifest the truth” (Memar Marqah, trans. MacDonald, 70, 186). Cf. Moses in II:8: “Come in peace, O great prophet Moses, who reveals the truth...” (63).


31 Similarly, Jesus’s prophetic knowledge leads to Nathanael’s confession of faith in 1:48–49. Cf. the criterion of the true prophet in Deut. 18:22.


33 The importance of Deuteronomy 18 is attested in the Samaritan Pentateuch, which cites vv. 18–22 after Exod. 20:18. In medieval sources the verse “is clearly applied to the coming of the Taheb” (Meeks, Prophet-King, 250; cf. his analysis in 250–253). See also Boismard, Moses, 3–4.

34 The relation of the Taheb to Moses as the ultimate prophet is not entirely clear in Samaritan sources.

35 See below for further comment.


37 Memar Marqah, trans. MacDonald, 222. Cf. the passage about “the waters” in V:3.
In the Fourth Gospel, though, the christological claim in Jesus’s mediating “the gift of God” (John 4:10) goes beyond the Moses tradition\(^{38}\) (see also the \([255]\) “I am”-saying in 4:26,\(^{39}\) where Jesus reveals his messianic identity). While in Num. 21:16 it is explicitly YHWH who gives the water\(^{40}\) (LXX: δώσω αὐτοῖς ὕδωρ πείνιν; cf. YHWH as the fountain of living water in Jer. 2:13), John 4 points to Jesus (v. 14: ὃς ἂν πίῃ ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος οὗ ἐγὼ δώσω αὐτῷ...) and so extends the role of the mediator (cf. also 6:32–35).

4. Mediating the Gift of God—in the Role of Wisdom

The water given by Jesus will become in the recipient “a well of water springing up to eternal life” (John 4:14: πηγὴ ὕδατος ἁλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον). A similar imagery is employed by wisdom texts such as Prov. 18:4 (LXX: ὕδωρ βαθὺ λόγος ἐν καρδίᾳ ἀνδρός, ποταμὸς δὲ ἀναπηδύει καὶ πηγὴ ζωῆς). In the sapiental tradition, the teaching (תַּרְוֹת) of the sage is called “a fountain of life” (cf. e.g. Prov. 13:14\(^{42}\)). In Sir. 15:3 Wisdom feeds the god-fearing one who holds fast to the Law (v. 1) with the bread of insight and gives him\(^{43}\) to drink ὕδωρ σοφίας. So she is the one who gives and at the same time the gift (cf. the Johannine Jesus who gives and is the bread of life coming down from heaven).\(^{44}\) In Sirach 24 the water imagery, interwoven with other metaphoric themes (e.g., garden symbolism), also comprises erotic connotations.\(^{45}\) Longing for Wisdom means hunger and [256] thirst that cannot be

\(^{38}\) In this regard, it may be also interesting that the wedding of Cana in John 2 reveals intertextual relations (see, for example, the motif of the “third day”) to the Sinai theophany in Exod. 19, where Moses acts as mediator (cf. Olsson, Structure, 102–9; Hartwig Thyen, Das Johannesevangelium, 2nd ed., HNT 6 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015], 152). In rabbinic tradition, the Sinai covenant (with the gift of the Torah) is interpreted as engagement/wedding of YHWH and Israel (cf. Ruben Zimmermann, Christologie der Bilder im Johannesevangelium: Die Christopoetik des vierten Evangeliums unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Joh 10, WUNT 171 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004], 211).

\(^{39}\) Judith E. McKinlay, Gendering Wisdom the Host: Biblical Invitations to Eat and Drink, JSOTSup 216 / OCT 4 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 189, points to “a double layer of meaning,” distinguishing between the story context and reader associations (see in addition to YHWH also the “I” of Wisdom). When Jesus reveals the name of God (cf. John 17:6), he surpasses Moses as the agent sent from God in Exod. 3:14–15.

\(^{40}\) Cf. also Neh. 9:15, 20; Isa. 43:20; 48:21; Ps. 78:15, 16, 20; 105:41; 114:8. Passivum divinum in Wis. 11:4.

\(^{41}\) Cf. John 4:11.

\(^{42}\) LXX: νόμος σοφοῦ πηγὴ ζωῆς. See also Prov. 10:11; 14:27; 16:22; Sir. 21:13. Rabbinic evidence for the metaphoric drinking from the water of a teacher can be found in Str-B 2:436.

\(^{43}\) The masculine pronoun is used here in order to correspond to the gender language in the text, which describes a male-female relationship between the one seeking Wisdom and Wisdom herself. In Sir. 15:2 Wisdom is pictured as his mother or his young wife.

\(^{44}\) See John 6:31–38.

\(^{45}\) Cf. Carmichael, “Marriage,” 335n12: “the metaphorical use of water in regard to Wisdom owes much to its related and prior use in regard to women.” As to the intertextuality with the Song of Sol., cf., for
satisfied. The one who drinks her will thirst for more (v. 21: οἱ πίνοντες μὲ ἐτι διψήσουσιν; cf. John 4:13 about the water from the well of Jacob: πᾶς οἱ πίνον ἐκ τοῦ ὅθατος τοῦτο ἐτι διψήσει πᾶλιν), whereas whoever drinks of the water Jesus gives will never thirst again (John 4:14: οὐ μὴ διψήσει εἷς τῶν αἰώνων; cf. 6:35). After the identification of Wisdom with the Mosaic Torah in Sir. 24:23 (γύμον ὅν ἐνετείλατο ἡμῖν Μωϋσῆς), the water symbolism is developed further in the imagery evoking, on the one hand, the rivers watering the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:10–14) and, on the other, the tradition of the fountain coming forth from the temple,⁴⁶ which in Ezekiel 47 grows to a river with life-giving water.

This strand of tradition that transfers the water imagery to (the) תּוֹרָה seems to be widely known (and is broadly received in rabbinic exegesis). Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, there is evidence for the symbolism of the Torah as the well of living water in the Damascus Document (see e.g., the allegorical reading of Num. 21:18 in CD VI 3–11⁴⁷, decoding the well as the Law in VI 4).⁴⁸ Philo associates several wells in biblical stories with wisdom (cf. Ebr. 112–113: Num. 21:17–18; σοφίαν...ἃν ἀπεικάζει φρέατι; Post. 136–138 and Fug. 195: Gen. 24:16).⁴⁹

Following the sapiental tradition, the motif of living water in John 4 can be interpreted as pointing, on the one hand, to the wise teaching of Jesus (as eschatological תּוֹרָה), who, on the other hand, is presented from the beginning as incarnated Wisdom. Against the foil of Sirach 24, Wisdom as well as the water imagery are not confined to the Mosaic Torah. According to John 1:17, the Law was given through Moses (cf. also 7:19), whereas Jesus conveys—not to be understood as its substitution⁵⁰—ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια⁵¹ (cf. 1:14, referring to the example, Nuria Calduch-Benages, “Ben Sira 24:22 – Decoding a Metaphor,” in Vermittelte Gegenwart: Konzeptionen der Gottespräsenz von der Zeit des Zweiten Tempels bis Anfang des 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr., ed. Andrea Taschi-Erber and Imtraud Fischer, WUNT 367 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 57–72 (62–66). Cf. also the love imagery in the Fourth Gospel.

⁴⁶ See discussion below.
⁴⁸ Cf. also CD-A III, 16; CD-B XIX, 34.
⁴⁹ Cf. also Somn. 1.6 (Gen. 28:10; σώμβολον εἶναι τὸ φρέαρ ἐπιστήμης); 2.271 (Num. 21:17).
⁵¹ Cf. פָּנִים יְהוָה in Exod. 34:6 (of YHWH). In Exod. 33:18 Moses asks to see the glory of God, but his wish is only partly fulfilled (see, in contrast, John 1:14; cf. 12:45; 14:9); John 1:18 states: “no one has ever seen God” (but see 6:46).
δόξα of the λόγος; ἀλήθεια occurs again in 4:23–24); he is the true exegete of God (cf. 1:18). Receiving his revelation satisfies the thirst definitively. Thus, in Proverbs and Ben Sira, Wisdom speaks as prophetic mediator of the divine Word and so connects prophetic and sapiental tradition, and similarly in the Fourth Gospel, it is Jesus who is the Logos incarnate.

5. True Worship—in Spirit

In John 4:20 the theological discussion shifts to the place of worship: Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem? If we consider the tradition of the fountain or “living water” flowing out from the temple in Jerusalem, the whole composition proves to be determined by the major theme of water.

The emphatic pronomina “we” and “you” in 4:20 and 22 signal the differing group identities, which ought to be transcended by οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνηταί who worship the Father “in spirit and truth” (4:23–24: ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ). The hope for the reunion of the people of God in a new/everlasting covenant that is expressed in Jer. 31:31–34 (see also Jer. 3:18) and Ezek. 37:15–28 becomes present reality (John 4:23, νῦν). At the end of the story, the people of Sychar, whose representative function is indicated by the designation οἱ Σαμαρῖται (John 4:40), even adopt a universal perspective: οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτήρ τοῦ κόσμου (v. 42).

True worship of God is now to be rendered “neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem” (4:21). The dichotomy is transcended by stressing that worship is not contingent on a physical location claiming to mediate God’s presence (cf. the skepticism regarding the temple in 1 Kgs 8:27; Isa. 66:1), but “is a matter of spirit and truth,” since “God is spirit” (v. 24). The invisible God’s presence is revealed through Jesus. In the farewell discourses, he promises to send the Paraclete, who is

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52 As to the key term ἀλήθεια, which constitutes the true prophet, see also, for example, 8:40, 45–46; 16:7; 17:17; 18:37. In 14:6 Jesus is ἡ ἀλήθεια.
53 See her presentation in Prov. 1:20–21 and 8:1–3 like a prophetess, and her coming from the mouth of the Most High in Sir. 24:3 (on this, cf. Isa. 45:23; 48:3; 55:11). As to ἐν...ἀληθείᾳ, see Ps. 145:18 (144:18 LXX).
55 The keyword προσκυνέω (9x in vv. 20–24) occurs also in 2 Kgs 17:35–36 (προσκυνήσατε in 4 Kgdms 17:35–36 as in John 4:21). As to ἐν...ἀληθείᾳ, see Ps. 145:18 (144:18 LXX).
57 This conforms to the universalism of Prov. 8:32, in contrast to the Zion-related reinterpretation of Sirach 24 (cf. Baruch 3–4).
59 See e.g. Jörg Frey, “Wer mich sieht, der sieht den Vater’: Jesus als Bild Gottes im Johannesevangelium,” in Vermittelte Gegenwart: Konzeptionen der Gottespräsenz von der Zeit des Zweiten Tempels
called τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀλήθειας (14:17; 15:26; 16:13) and will be ἐν ὑμῖν (14:17; cf. Ezek. 36:26–27; 37:14).  

As the key term πνεῦμα indicates, the water symbolism also refers to the (gift of the) spirit, especially in the larger context of the first chapters of the Fourth Gospel. When the theme of water is first introduced in John 1 with John the Baptist, he distinguishes his baptism ἐν ὕδατι (1:26, 31, 33) from Jesus’s baptizing ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ (v. 33). In Jesus’s conversation with Nicodemus, water and spirit appear in close connection (3:5: ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος). 61 Directly before Jesus’s encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well, the motif of competition with the Baptist emerges again (3:22–4:3; as to the keyword “water,” see 3:23). Focusing on τὸ πνεῦμα, John 4:23–24 follows 1:32–33; 3:5–8, 34. Finally, in 7:39 the living water is identified with the spirit.

A metaphorical blending of water and spirit already occurs in Isa. 44:3, where the gift of water is paralleled to the gift of the spirit (LXX: δώσω ὕδωρ / ἐπιθήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου), 62 or in the outpouring of the spirit in Ezek. 39:29 (upon the house of Israel); Joel 3:1–2 (upon all flesh to be inspired to prophesy); Zech. 12:10 (upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem). Ezekiel 36:25–27 links the motifs of cleansing water (cf. Zech. 13:1) and God’s spirit (36:26–27 LXX: πνεῦμα κατον / τὸ πνεῦμά μου δόσο ἐν ὑμῖν); 63 the gift of the spirit will make Israel follow God’s commandments. In Prov. 1:23 Wisdom proclaims to pour out her spirit (and to make known her words). Endowment with the spirit is closely associated with prophetic mission. 64 Sometimes prophetic and sapiental elements converge: In Isa. 11:2 God’s spirit resting upon the Messiah is described as πνεῦμα σοφίας. 65

B. John 7

1. Water Symbolism of Sukkot

In John 7 Jesus has moved to the spatial center of Jewish belief: At the feast of Tabernacles he teaches in the temple (vv. 14–44). Sukkot commemorates Israel’s wanderings in the desert, including the miraculous provision of water, and


60 Cf. also IQS IV, 19–22.

61 Cf. 1 Cor. 12:3 (related to baptism): πάνες ἐν πνεύμα ἐκποίησεν.

62 Cf. also the metaphorical interaction in Isa. 32:15.

63 Cf. IQS IV, 21.


65 As to ἀνανεώσω, cf. e.g. also Deut. 34:9. Even closer is the relation of spirit and wisdom in Wis. 1:6 (φιλάνθρωπον γὰρ πνεῦμα σοφίας); 7:7 (πνεῦμα σοφίας); 7:22 (ἐν αὐτῇ πνεῦμα); cf. the parallelization in 9:17.
anticipates the hoped-for future blessings. So the “theme of water is evoked in both its dimensions of remembrance and anticipation” of eschatological expectations. A central element of the feast providing the background of the Johannine narrative is the daily ritual of drawing water from the fountain of Gihon, which at the altar of burnt offerings in front of the temple is poured into a silver funnel, flowing from there into the ground. This should guarantee the life-bringing rain (cf. Zech. 14:16–19). The symbolic context of the ritual, presupposed in John 7, is reflected in rabbinic sources. The ceremony of the water-drawing that is documented in m. Sukkah 4:9–10 is linked in y. Sukkah 5:1 with the outpouring of the spirit, thereby quoting Isa. 12:3, where Israel is promised to “draw water from the wells of salvation”.

T. Sukkah 3:3–10 refers to the tradition of the life-giving water flowing from below the temple in Ezekiel 47; Zech. 13:1; 14:8, while 3:11 mentions the tradition of the wandering well in the desert. The setting in John 7 [260] points to the fulfillment of the festival symbolism and the temple-related messianic predictions in Jesus as the true source of the water of life.

2. Rivers of Living Water

Embedded in scenes which display (life-threatening) controversies about the question of who he really is, the narrative in John 7 gives some clues about the identity of the Johannine Jesus. In 7:16–18, Jesus legitimates the authority of his διδαχή by attributing it to God who has sent him (cf. also 7:28–29, 33), thereby presenting himself as (the) prophet in the succession of Moses who shall speak all that God commands him, as depicted in Deut. 18:18 (cf. Jer. 1:7, 9, and John 12:49–

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67 Zech. 14:21 is alluded to in John 2:16.
68 Gen. Rab. 70.8.3, which reads Gen. 29:2–3 in the light of the temple celebration of Tabernacles (among other interpretations), employs the image of “drinking of the spirit”.
69 Cf. also b. Meg. 31a.
71 Cf. v. 1, 19–20, 25, 30, 32, 44. According to Deut. 18:20, the false prophet should be put to death (cf. 13:2–6). Against this, Jesus’s fate is depicted as standing in the line of the rejected-prophet tradition.
72 The motif of sending combines prophetic (see e.g. Exod. 3:12–15; Num. 16:28; Isa. 6:8; Jer. 1:7; Zech. 12:12–15) and Wisdom traditions (cf. Wis. 9:10). The use of the sending formula in conjunction with “father” / “son” language indicates, though, an intimacy beyond prophetic mission.
As “prophet like Moses” he argues the true interpretation of the Law given by—or, according to 1:17, through—Moses (7:19–24; demonstrated in the halachic justification of the healing on the Sabbath). After this, there follows a debate about his messiahship.

When Jesus exclaims on the “last” (presumably seventh), climactic day of the feast of Tabernacles (7:37: ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ μεγάλῃ τῆς ἑορτῆς), at the height of the solemn ceremony: ἓν τις διψάω ἐρχέσθω πρὸς μέ κατὰ πινέτω, his words recall Isa. 55:1 as well as Prov. 9:5; Sir. 24:19. Like the prophet as God’s mouthpiece or Wisdom (or the sage in Sir. 51:23–24), Jesus invites those who are thirsty to come to him. The picture of Jesus standing in the midst of the people and mediating the divine word puts him, on the one hand, into the role of the Mosaic prophet commissioned by God, to whom they shall listen (cf. Deut. 18:15–19). On the other hand, acting in the role of personified Wisdom, his teaching indicates more explicitly its heavenly origin.

The quotation in 7:38 (καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή), without a clearly assignable source, could be inspired by the sapiential literature, too. In this verse, the theme of “living water” appears again, expanded with the motif of rivers flowing from “his

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75 Cf. furthermore Exod. 4:12 and Num. 16:28 with John 8:28–29 (John 8:29 also evokes Exod. 3:12 which is alluded to in John 3:2); 14:10, 24; 17:8, 14. A contrastive foil is provided by the voice of “some of the Pharisees” (9:16; from 9:18 οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in John 9:29: ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεῖ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἴδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν. An essential aspect of Moses as true, paradigmatic prophet is his direct contact to God (cf. Exod. 33:11; 34:5–6, 29–35; Num. 12:8; Deut. 5:4–5; 34:10). However, his intimate relationship with God is exceeded by the μονογενής in John 1:18 (cf. 6:46; furthermore, 3:13–15: v. 13 may reflect the tradition of Moses’s heavenly ascent).

76 Cf. his qualification as ἀληθής in 7:18 (as ὁ πέμψας με is ἀληθινός in v. 28) and the key term ἀλήθεια throughout the Gospel. The criterion is τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν (v. 17; in Wis. 9:9–10 Wisdom communicates what is pleasing to God). So his opponents should come to a “just judgement” (v. 24).

77 Cf. the summary of the prophetic office in Fischer, “Prophetieverständnis,” 154: “Mittleramt in der Nachfolge des Mose, vermittelt/aktualisiert die Tora.” The Mosaic Torah remains the valid basis of reference for his teaching. Cf. Zumstein, Johannesevangelium, 297, referring to the perfect form δέδωκεν in 7:22: “Diese Gabe ist nicht hinfällig geworden, sondern behält ihre volle Gültigkeit.” (Cf. furthermore Wengst, Johannesevangelium, 291; Lindemann, “Mose,” 300; Schapdick, “Autorität,” 205.) See also Moses’s function as witness in 5:45–47 (cf. 1:45): In this context, the true disciple of Moses, or of the Torah (cf. 5:39), is understood to be Jesus’s disciple (in contrast to establishing antithetic alternatives, as reflected in 9:28).


79 See also Rev. 22:17 (ὁ διψῶν ἐρχέσθω); cf. 21:6; furthermore, 1 En. 48:1 (see below).

80 Cf. Theobald, Evangelium, 537: Jesus speaks “in persona sapientiae.” As to his standing and crying, cf. also Prov. 8:1–3 where Wisdom appears as a prophetess speaking in the public (cf. 1:20–21; Sir. 24:1–2). John 7:34 takes up the widespread biblical motif of seeking and finding which is transferred to Wisdom in Prov. 1:28; 8:35–36.

81 For possible reference texts, as well as parallels in the Dead Sea Scrolls, see e.g. Edwin D. Freed, Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John, NovTSup 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 21–38. Reim, Jochanan, 70–88, refers to Isa. 28:16 (cf. 1 Pet. 2:4). In tracking the source for the scriptural reference, the best solution may be to think of a combination of motifs and themes that are reflected in several intertexts. For such a “composite” background of John 7:38, see also Brown, Gospel, 323.
innermost" (ποταμοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ῥεύσουσιν ὕδατος ζῶντος), which evokes the already quoted passage in Prov. 18:4. Who is the source of the “rivers of living water”: who is meant by αὐτοῦ? The correspondence [262] with the imagery in John 4:14 seems to point to the believer, but the pronoun could also—especially in this context—refer to the wise teacher.

In Ps. 78:15–16, 20 the motif of flowing ποταμοί is linked to the tradition of the miraculous gift of water out of the rock (cf. Ps. 105:41). In the course of the Gospel narrative, Psalm 78 has already been cited in John 6:31 (see Ps. 77:24 LXX). These intertexts (Pss. 78 and 105) lead back to the festival symbolism, which in turn connects the remembrance of the events of salvation history with eschatological expectations, such as those reflected in the tradition of the river of life-giving water flowing from the rock underneath the temple. In the Fourth Gospel, the metaphors of the eschatological temple are transferred to Jesus (cf. explicitly John 2:21), who is the new center of gravity of eschatological hopes. The rivers of living water are flowing out of him, who is (like Wisdom) the wise teacher sent from above.

In this regard, it is interesting to have another look at Sirach 24, where a similar combination of the motifs temple, water, and Torah can be found. Here the motif of the river with living water flowing out from Jerusalem is transferred to Wisdom/Torah, or wise teaching. At first, Torah, filled with wisdom (so there is no exact

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82 LXX: ὕδωρ βαθὺ λόγος ἐν καρδίᾳ ἀνδρός, ποταμὸς δὲ ἀναπηδύει καὶ πηγὴ ζωῆς.
83 For the history of exegetical discussion, cf. e.g. Brown, Gospel, 320–21; Schnackenburg, Johannesevangelium, 212–13; Theobald, Evangelium, 537–38.
84 See the arguments put forth by Reim, Jochanan, 56–70. C. K. Barrett, The Gospel according to St John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text (London: SPCK, 1967), 271, seems to harmonize the alternatives: “Christ is himself the fountain of living water, but it is a valid inference that the believer, being joined to him, is also, in a secondary way, a source of living water.” Cf. the image of the well with living water flowing on all sides (= generating disciples) in Sifre Deut. 11:22 (84a).
85 In addition, transferring the ποταμοί ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ to the one who drinks (from them), does not suit the image here (cf. also Rudolf Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes, KEK 2, 14th ed. [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956], 228n6). For a christological interpretation, it is not necessary to think of 19:34 (cf. 1 John 5:7–8) immediately.
86 See Ps. 77:15–16 LXX: διέρρηξεν πέτραν ἐν ἐρήμῳ καὶ ἐπότισεν αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐν ἀβύσσῳ πολλῇ καὶ ἐξήγαγεν ὕδατα ἐκ πέτρας καὶ κατήγαγεν ὡς ποταμοὺς ἐκ τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀρνίου.
88 See above. Cf. also Rev. 22:1: ποταμὸν ἰδέατος ζωῆς...ἐκπορευόμενον ἐκ τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀρνίου.
89 In 1 Cor. 10:4 Christ is explicitly identified with the rock.
identity), is compared to rivers full of water (24:25–29), which allude to the rivers of Paradise (Gen. 2:10–14). Then the sage himself is portrayed ὡς διῶρυξ ἀπὸ ποταμοῦ (Sir. 24:30) watering the garden (24:31), thereby growing to a river, and pouring out teaching like prophecy (24:33: διδασκαλίαν ὡς προφητείαν ἐκχεῶ). As the imagery is transferred to him, he seems to “embody” Wisdom. With Torah and teaching as the water of life, the basis for a future community without temple is laid.

Transcending the narrated teaching situation, John 7:39, on the other hand, explains that Jesus speaks of the spirit (cf. y. Sukkah 5:1). As a “parenthetical comment” on a meta-level of the story, it refers to the sending of the Paraclete (narratively realized in John 20:22). Now the underlying metaphorical blending of water and spirit (which is inherited from tradition; cf. e.g. Isa. 32:15; 44:3; Ezek. 36:25–27; 39:29; Joel 3:1–2; Zech. 12:10) is decoded explicitly. The reference to the πνεῦμα puts Jesus’s teaching in the frame of messianic hopes linked to the gift of the spirit. It also recalls the spiritualization of the temple theme in John 4:23–24.

3. The Prophet / the Messiah?

Jesus’s words are interpreted by his audience on the story level in another way. The following debate reflects the popular expectations of “the prophet” (John 7:40: οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ προφήτης) and “the messiah” (7:41: οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός).

The question of Jesus’s messiahship has already arisen in 7:26. Criteria established in these controversies are (a) the provenance of the messiah (7:27–29: as to the putative knowledge about Jesus, see the irony regarding his heavenly origin as hidden messiah; 7:41–42: Davidic descent, Bethlehem), or of the prophet (7:52: not

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91 Cf. the “spring of living water”, related to the teacher, in 1QH XVI (= VIII), 16–23.
92 Cf. Ego, “Strom,” 212. See also the “house” of teaching in Sir. 51:3.
93 Brown, Gospel, 324.
94 See Zimmermann, Christologie, 152–53, for the “Horizontverschmelzung der Zeiten” (153).
95 The same titles appear in 1:20–21, 25, addressed to John the Baptist, who rejects them.
96 Cf. also John 6:42; 8:14; 9:29–33.
97 Theobald, Evangelium, 505, shows the correspondence of Christology and scenic dramaturgy: “Wenn Jesus sich in den ‘Weisheitsworten’ 7,33f. und 37f. als die leibhaftige ‘Weisheit’ präsentiert, die aus der Verborgenheit Gottes zur festgesetzten Zeit hervortritt, um den Ort ihres Auftritts nach einer ‘kleinen Weile’ (7,33b) wieder zu verlassen (vgl. 33c.d; dann v.a. 8,59c.d), dann hat diese Weisheitschristologie in Joh 7 ihr genaues szenisches Pendant: Jesu überraschendes Hervortreten aus seiner Verborgenheit in der Mitte des Festes dient ihrer narrativen Veranschaulichung.”
98 Cf. p66.
from Galilee; cf. 7:41\(^{99}\), and (b) authenticating signs (7:31; cf. Deut. 34:11\(^{100}\)). Due to Jesus’s revelation to give the water of life, some among the crowd thus think of him as the Mosaic prophet. In 6:14, seeing the sign of the feeding of the multitudes (cf. the manna miracle)\(^{101}\) the people call Jesus in a similar way ὁ προφήτης\(^{102}\) (with the Johannine addition ὁ ἐρχόμενος\(^{103}\) εἰς τὸν κόσμον, which is attributed to the title of the messiah in 11:27). Interacting with the messiah discourses of the first century, the Fourth Gospel takes up these popular expectations, but its presentation of the Χριστός goes beyond, alluding to and at the same time transforming prophetic as well as sapiential traditions (and also conventional messianology).

C. Messiah Expectations and Wisdom Tradition in 1 Enoch 48-49

How far are the messiah expectations interwoven with the wisdom tradition? A similar convergence of these strands emerges in 1 Enoch 48–49,\(^{104}\) where the revelation of the hidden Chosen One is framed by sapiental water symbolism:

(48:1) In that place I saw the spring of righteousness, and it was inexhaustible, and many springs of wisdom surrounded it; And all the thirsty drank from them and were filled with wisdom;\(^{105}\) and their dwelling places were with the righteous and the holy and the chosen. (2) [265] And in that hour that son of man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, and his name, before the Head of Days.

1 En. 48:3 highlights such a “pre-existence” of the “son of man” in the language of Prov. 8:24–26, whereas in the following he is also characterized in the light of

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\(^{99}\) John 7:41 Μὴ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ὁ Χριστὸς ἔρχεται; and 7:52 προφήτης ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας οὐκ ἐγείρεται (cf. Deut. 18:15, 18: ἐς). Boismard, Moses, 8, concludes “that there was a transference of the theme of the Judean origin of the Christ, according to Micah 5:1 (7:41–42), to ‘the Prophet’ spoken of in 7:40 and 7:52”. However, the significant Johannine question is not whether Jesus comes from Galilee or Judaea, but whether he is from God.

\(^{100}\) LXX: σημείοις καὶ τέρασι (cf. John 4:48); similar in Ps. 105:27; Wis. 10:16; Acts 7:36; cf. furthermore Sir. 45:3. For the connection of σημεία and belief, see Exod. 4:1–9, 17, 28–31 and John 2:11, 23; 3:2; 4:48; 6:2, 14, 30; 12:37; 20:30–31.

\(^{101}\) The correspondence of eating and drinking (cf. also the parallelism in John 6:35) is in line with the Moses tradition, but also with the portrayal of Wisdom as hostess (Prov. 9:2, 5; Sir. 24:21; see also 15:3).

\(^{102}\) The man born blind testifies in John 9:17: προφήτης ἐστιν.

\(^{103}\) See also 12:13. Cf. Mal. 3:1 (LXX: οἰκον ἐρχόμενος).

\(^{104}\) Quotations from: George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, 1 Enoch: The Hermeneia Translation (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012).

\(^{105}\) Note that the “springs of wisdom” in 1 En. 48:1 are not related to the Mosaic Torah as in Sirach 24.
messianic traditions (as to his designation “the light of the nations”, cf. e.g. Isa. 42:6; 49:6).  

(6) For this (reason) he was chosen and hidden in his presence, before the world was created and forever.  
(7) And the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits has revealed him to the holy and the righteous; for he has preserved the lot of the righteous. [..]

The “kings of the earth” and “the strong” (1 En. 48:9) “will fall” (48:10),  

For they have denied the Lord of Spirits and his Anointed One.107  
Blessed be the name of the Lord of Spirits.  
(49:1) For wisdom has been poured out like water [...].  
(2) [...] For the Chosen One has taken his stand in the presence of the Lord of Spirits; and his glory is forever and ever, and his might, to all generations.  
(3) And in him dwell the spirit of wisdom and the spirit of insight [...].

In this set of eschatological expectations, the outpouring of wisdom108 (like the spirit) is linked to the revelation of the Chosen and Anointed One in his might and glory, in whom dwells the “spirit of wisdom” (cf. Isa. 11:2; here resting on the messianic figure).109 The repeated connection shows that his relationship with Wisdom seems to be very close (up to an indwelling; but there is no identification).  
1 Enoch 48–49 may illuminate some of the background of messianic ideas that is presupposed in the Fourth Gospel’s water symbolism. With its [266] messianology merging different strands of tradition, it can provide an explanation why the people in John 7:41 conclude from Jesus’s proclamation in vv. 37–38 that he is the messiah (cf. the Samaritan woman in 4:29 after their conversation about the living water).

D. Conclusion  

The Fourth Gospel’s narration works on several levels. While the voices of the people seem to reflect contemporary Samaritan (where the Davidic messianology hardly plays a part) and Jewish expectations of “messianic” figures, these popular notions are transformed and transcended by the voices of Jesus and of the narrator,
integrating the concept of a prophetic messiah, or prophetic mediator,\textsuperscript{110} into the frame of Johannine Christology.\textsuperscript{111}

Since the prophet \emph{par excellence} in Jewish tradition is Moses, speaking of “the prophet” most likely refers to the expectation of a Mosaic figure coined by Deut. 18:15–19; 34:10–12.\textsuperscript{112} The gift of the water establishes a subtle parallelism with Moses on two levels. On the one hand, it recalls the Exodus tradition (Moses providing water out of the rock), the paradigm of salvation. On the other hand, it refers to the gift of the Torah, to which the imagery of life-giving water is transferred in Second Temple literature. As Moses gives the Law,\textsuperscript{113} Jesus gives the water of life by communicating the true understanding [267] of God’s will and word, in correspondence to the promised eschatological outpouring of the spirit.\textsuperscript{114}

The primary task of a prophet is to transmit the word of God and to interpret it for the respective time. In this regard, the Johannine Jesus’s claim to reveal God’s definitive word is authorized from the beginning, since he is introduced into the Gospel’s story as the incarnated Logos conveying God’s gift of ζωή. As such, he reflects traditions about Wisdom, who is also depicted as heavenly teacher and prophetess.\textsuperscript{115}

When in 1 Enoch 48–49 the outpouring of wisdom marks the revelation of the messiah, this further illustrates the association of water imagery and messianic hopes. Differently to the temple-centered symbolism of \emph{Sukkot}, or to the transfer of the metaphors of live-giving water to the Torah, the focus here and in the Fourth Gospel is on a pre-existent messianic figure in whom dwells the spirit of wisdom.

\textsuperscript{110} As regards Moses, cf. Deut. 5:5.

\textsuperscript{111} The prophetic or Mosaic pattern in Johannine Christology is stressed by Meeks, \emph{Prophet-King}; Reim, \emph{Jochanan}, 114–129; Lierman, “Pattern.” Sukmin Cho, \emph{Jesus as Prophet in the Fourth Gospel}, NTMon 15 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006), 274–84, assumes a didactic and apologetic function of the prophetic concept. As to the current skepticism regarding reconstructions of a Johannine development from low to high Christology, see Frey, “Jesus als Bild Gottes,” 190–96. With Adele Reinhartz, “Jesus as Prophet: Predictive Prolepses in the Fourth Gospel,” \emph{JSNT} 36 (1989): 3–16 (10), the prophet Christology in the Fourth Gospel can in short be rated as follows: “The Johannine Jesus is not only the prophet, but the proxhesied, not only the mouthpiece for the divine word but the content of the message itself.”

\textsuperscript{112} For more prophetic features and roles related to the Johannine Jesus (setting him in parallel not only with Moses) see Cho, \emph{Jesus as Prophet}. In John 1:21, 25 δ ἐ προφήτης is distinguished from Elijah.

\textsuperscript{113} As to the phrasing in John 7:19, cf. the customary designation of Moses as “lawgiver”.

\textsuperscript{114} As to the gift of the spirit, cf. the mediatory role of Moses in Numbers 11, where God takes some of the spirit that is on Moses and bestows it on 70 elders (cf. vv. 17, 25–29).

\textsuperscript{115} The Johannine Christology stands in the tradition of Sirach 24, where a similar theological linking of originally independent traditions can be found. On the gender dynamics in the texts, see McKinlay, \emph{Gendering Wisdom}. 
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