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The Perfect Tense in John 8:12-59

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The Perfect Tense in John 8:12-59

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Résumé

Le passage des livres Synoptiques à l'Évangile de Jean se remarque par un style d'écriture mettant en valeurs certains détails qui n'apparaissent pas dans les trois premiers évangiles. La méthode et le style que Jean utilise ont un caractère particulier (i.e., qui le distingue bien). L'objet de la narration est semblable dans ces quatre évangiles, mais le point de vue que Jean apporte s'élève et l'horizon s'élargit. L'auteur ne s'attarde pas simplement sur les faits historiques ou didactiques du ministère de Jésus, mais il met également en évidence l'essence même de Jésus (étant l'envoyé du Père, le Fils de l'homme et le Fils de Dieu). Ainsi, nous remarquons ce style particulier qu'apporte Jean à son évangile par sa théologie, ses indications géographiques, sa chronologie, son vocabulaire et sa stylistique.

L'objet de cette étude est de porter une attention particulière au vocabulaire utilisé. Nous allons principalement nous concentrer sur l'utilisation du parfait dans Jean 8. Le but de ce mémoire est donc de faire une analyse structurelle et littéraire sur l'utilisation des verbes au parfait dans Jean 8. Par conséquent, nous cherchons à identifier et à examiner les hypothèses suivantes: 1) quel est la structure de Jean 8:12-59; et 2) quelles sont les verbes utilisés au parfait, et en quoi consiste leurs fonctions (Ici non attention se portera à tout l'Évangile de Jean et non seulement au texte de Jean 8: 12-59. Ainsi, nous pourrons élaborer une analyse critique sur l'utilisation des verbes au parfait pour en déterminer leur fonction respective dans l'ensemble du texte présentement étudié, Jean 8:12-59). De plus, nous y ferons une étude synchronique.

L'étude de ce texte débute par une présentation du texte grec de Jean 8:12-59. Un état de la question permet de faire ressortir les enjeux majeurs liés à l'étude du parfait dans Jean 8:12-59. Ensuite, une analyse structurelle, telle que pratiquée par M. Girard dans *Les Psaumes: analyse structurelle et interprétation* (Montréal: Bellarmin,

1994) est appliquée au texte de Jean 8:12-59. Au premier niveau, nous avons établi la *méga-structure* de Jean 8, c'est-à-dire l'emplacement du chapitre dans l'ensemble de l'évangile. Au deuxième niveau, c'est la *maxi-structure* du chapitre 8: une brève analyse des deux sections principales qui forment le chapitre: vv. 1-11 et 12-59.

Ayant choisi les vv. 12-59 pour notre étude, la prochaine phase de notre démarche est une étude des unités *intra-sectionnelles*, c'est-à-dire les divers segments qui forment l'ensemble de notre péricope. Chaque segment est étudié en profondeur (i.e., nous étudions les rapports des mots et des phrases récurrents).

Une fois le découpage du texte complété, nous aborderons l'analyse des quelques verbes au parfait, notamment les verbes *λαλέω* (je parle) et *ὄραω* (je vois). La procédure pour chaque verbe est identique. Après une brève analyse philologique et statistique, nous étudierons l'emploi de notre verbe au parfait dans la péricope à l'aide de la structure précédemment établie. Par la suite, nous examinerons l'emploi du verbe à l'aoriste dans la péricope (s'il y'a lieu) et dans l'ensemble de l'Évangile. En conclusion, nous pourrons vérifier notre hypothèse concernant l'utilisation des verbes employés au parfait dans l'Évangile de Jean.

L'ensemble de la démarche présentée dans ce mémoire démontre que même si Jean utilise le verbe au parfait dans son aspect usuelle, il ne s'y tient pas sans exception. Il y a un certain nombre de cas où la différence entre le parfait et l'aoriste est quasi inexistante. Dans des études subséquentes, il restera à répondre, le plus adéquatement possible, aux questions concernant l'emploi des autres verbes dans l'Évangile de Jean et de l'utilisation qu'en fait Jean.

Mots clefs: Nouveau Testament, verbes (parfait/aoriste), Évangile de Jean, analyse structurelle, parallélisme, chiasme, Jésus/Juifs.

Summary

This thesis is a study of verbs in the perfect tense in the Gospel of John, in light of literary and structural analysis. There are two primary purposes to our investigation: 1) what is the structural analysis of our selected text (John 8: 12-59), and 2) which verbs are found in the perfect tense, and how are these verbs used, not only in our particular text, but within the Gospel as a whole.

This study is based primarily within a synchronic approach to the text. The text of John 8: 12-59 is given in full, first in Greek, then in French (divided into the sections corresponding our structural analysis). Immediately following this is the state of current scholarship, where scholarly literature is reviewed and examined.

Following this, a detailed structural analysis of John 8: 12-59 is presented, following the example of structural analysis as effectuated by M. Girard in his *Les Psaumes: analyse structurelle et interprétation* (Montréal: Bellarmin, 1994). This is done first by preparing a mega-structure of John 8, i.e., the function of John 8 within the Gospel as a whole, followed by a maxi-structure of vv. 12-59, consisting of dividing these verses into smaller pericopes of text, for a more detailed analysis.

Once the structural analysis of the various sections is completed, we move on to analyzing several verbs in the perfect tense, notably *λαλέω* (I speak) et *ὁράω* (I see). The procedure adopted is identical for each verb analyzed. Following a brief philological and statistical analysis for the select verb, we now examine the verb (used as a perfect) within the context of our pericope, especially in light of our structural analysis which we have produced. Following this, we examine the use of the same verb as an aorist, first within our pericope (if it occurs) and then within the Gospel as a whole. This should provide use with a sufficient basis in order to determine what is the particular

use of the perfect in John.

The conclusion we have reached concerning John's use of the perfect is as follows. Although John does in fact use verbs with the usual aspectual force of the perfect tense, there are occasions where the distinction between the force of the perfect and that of the aorist is perplexing, indeed difficult to preserve. If this is so with our two verbs, the suspicion is that there may be other cases involving verbs used as perfects but with no apparent aspectual difference from aorists. This is something reserved for further study.

Key words: New Testament, verbs (perfect/aorist), Gospel of John, structural analysis, parallelism, chiasm, Jesus/Jews.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A. General Abbreviations

Apoc.	Apocrypha
a.k.a.	also known as
BDF	Blass-Debrunner-Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the N. T.</i>
ca	<i>circa</i> , about
cent.	century
cf.	<i>confer</i> , compare
chap(s).	chapter(s)
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
DNTT	Dictionary of New Testament Theology
ed.	edition, editors
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i> , for example
<i>et al.</i>	<i>et alii</i> , and others
f., ff.	following
<i>hap. leg.</i>	<i>hapax legomenon</i> , sole occurrence
<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>ibidem</i> , in the same place
i.e.	<i>id est</i> , that is
LXX	Septuagint
ms(s)	Manuscript(s)
N.T.	New Testament
O.T.	Old Testament
p., pp.	page, pages
par(s).	parallel(s)
<i>passim</i>	elsewhere
<i>q.v.</i>	<i>quod vide</i> , which see
<i>sic</i>	an unusual form exactly reproduced the original
<i>v.l.</i>	<i>varia lectio</i> , alternative reading
viz.	<i>videlicet</i> , namely
vol(s).	volume(s)
v, vv	verse, verses

B . Abbreviations of Periodicals and Journals

AthR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BangalTheolFor	<i>Bangalore Theological Forum</i>
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BETL	<i>Bibliotheca Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
Biblica	<i>Biblica</i>

BibSac	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BibTrans	<i>Bible Translator</i>
BVC	<i>Bible et vie chrétienne</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
ChicStud	<i>Chicago Studies</i>
CRBS	<i>Currents in Research: Biblical Studies</i>
EspVie	<i>Esprit et Vie</i>
EstBib	<i>Estudios Biblicos</i>
Études Classiques	<i>Études Classiques</i>
EvanQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
ExpTimes	<i>Expository Times</i>
FilolNT	<i>Filologia Neotestamentaria</i>
Forum	<i>Forum</i>
Gregorianum	<i>Gregorianum</i>
HomPastRev	<i>Homiletic and Pastoral Review</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JourStudNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
LavThéoPhil	<i>Laval Théologique et philosophique</i>
Neo	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NTStud	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
Ntrans	<i>Notes on Translation</i>
NRevTheol	<i>Nouvelle Revue Théologique</i>
NovTest	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
RechSciRel	<i>Recherches de Sciences Religieuses</i>
RAfricThéol	<i>Revue Africaine de Théologie</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RevExp	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
SciEsp	<i>Science et Esprit</i>
SémiotBib	<i>Sémiotique et Bible</i>
SBFLA	<i>Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. Liber Annuus</i>
TynBull	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>

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One of the meanings of the late Middle English word *acknowledge* is “to show or express appreciation or gratitude” for someone or something. I now take this brief opportunity to publicly express my own gratitude towards a number of individuals who have in one way or another contributed to this *mémoire*.

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Introduction

Every conscientious author brings the necessary care and attention to his literary style. Diction is a central element in every writer's style, and proper eloquence usually follows some general elements that readers and other writers share as well. The investigation of an author's style allows the reader to gain a complementary understanding of the text, and is an essential element in the interpretative exegesis. Detailed analysis of the vocabulary will reveal the author's individual preference for particular words and phrases; they connect sentences in a certain way, use specific linguistic devices, use words in their established senses, avoid ungrammatical constructions etc., all with the purpose of either expressing their ideas or influencing their readers.

In detailed word studies, the uniqueness of a text comes to the fore. Therefore, in order to understand a statement and correctly assimilate it, we need to consider not just the content of the statement, but also its individual linguistic character, for ascertaining the linguistic peculiarity of each text is an indispensable step in any linguistic-syntactic analysis.

It is fascinating to both contemplate and appreciate how unique the Gospel of John is. When we pass from the Synoptic Gospels to that of John, we enter a different world, unique to itself. Although the object of the narration remains the same in all four, the perspective in John is now focused on a "higher" level. We are no longer primarily focused on Jesus as Israel's *μεσσίας*, but on Jesus as *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*, the manifestation of divinity. As D. Guthrie cogently noted, more of the inner consciousness of Jesus is revealed in John than in the Synoptics.¹

The distinctive character of the fourth Gospel is reflected not only by its structure but likewise by its style, especially when compared to that of the other three. Whereas the style of Greek found in the Gospel of Mark is sometimes described as grammatically "poor," that of Matthew as semitically influenced, and Luke's as elegant

¹ D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*. 4th ed. (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1990), p. 252.

and literary, the style of John is more like the vernacular κοινή γλῶσσα τῶν Ἑλλήνων. Some scholars have described the Gospel as written in vernacular Greek but the thought behind it is cast in Hebrew.² Godet's description of John style is worth noting:

There is nothing analogous to it in all literature, sacred or profane; childlike simplicity and transparent depth, holy melancholy and vivacity no less holy; above all, the sweetness of a pure and gentle love.³

Godet's inference is that "in the language of John, the clothing only is Greek, the body is Hebrew."⁴ Luthardt pointedly describes the style as that of a Hebrew soul which lives in the speech of the evangelist.⁵ But despite the Hebrew influence, no one doubts that this Gospel was written in Greek, and even a superficial study of it is sufficient to reveal many peculiarities, which give the narrative its distinctive character, reflective in mood (viz, a literary style usually described as simple, but highly symbolic).⁶

Especially characteristic is the *vocabulary* and *locution*. John's vocabulary pool

² There are a few Hebraisms (ex. υἱοὶ φωτός [Jn. 12:36], ἴδε / ἴδου, the repetition of ἀμήν ἀμήν λέγω ὑμῖν, καί used as "and yet" [=Heb. וְ; cf. BDF, §4]).

³ F. Godet, *Commentary of the Gospel of John*, 2 vols. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1886), vol. 1, p. 134.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 137; cf. the comments of Keim as quoted in Godet, p. 138.

⁵ C. E. Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, trans. R. C. Gregory (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1876), p. 56; "He who, when he took the trouble to write in Greek for Greeks, could not disown the Hebrew sources of his thought and the Hebrew soul of his language" (p. 61; cf. the entire discussion on Hebraisms, pp. 50-61). Although John has been appraised as possessing some Hebraic influence, it must be remembered that such coloring can be found in other N.T. writers as well. Genuine Greek locutions/phraseology in John are by no means rare.

⁶ It was the opinion of some exegetes that John may have been originally penned in Aramaic, but this theory has not gained much support among scholars (cf. C. F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922]; *The Poetry of our Lord* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925]; C. C. Torrey, *The Four Gospels: A New Translation* [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1934]).

is less rich in peculiar expressions than that of Paul or Luke: in fact he uses slightly over 110 words not found in any other N.T. writer.⁷ There is little variety of diction, and terms and phrases are often repeated (a deliberate stylistic approach, or indication of limited linguistic resource?). More numerous are the expressions which are used more particularly by John than by the other writers. Studies on vocabulary, such as E. A. Abbott's *Johannine Vocabulary*,⁸ G. Barth's study on πίστις, R. Bultmann's analysis of πιστεύω and γινώσκω among others,⁹ clearly reveal the full extent to which John uses these select words. Characteristic and key words are repeated often¹⁰ despite the fact that other significant vocabulary of the N.T. are not once found (ex. ἐκκλησία, εὐαγγέλιον, μετάνοια, παραβολή, πίστις [as a noun], σοφία).¹¹ Admittedly John writes with a modest

⁷ Thayer (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962], provides the following statistics regarding words peculiar to John: *Gospel*--114 unique words (12 questionable); *Epistles*--11; *Gospel & Epistles* combined--8 (1 questionable; these statistics have not been checked). However, a more detailed study is found in Abbott, *Johannine Vocabulary*, pp. 155-187 [§ 1665-1696].

⁸ London: Adam and Charles Black, 1905.

⁹ Cf. the various entries found in G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds) *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76) as well as the abridged *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985).

¹⁰ Ex. ἀγαπάω, ἀλήθεια ἁμαρτία, ἄρτος, γινώσκω, ὄξα, ζωή, ἐπάνω, κόσμος, κρίσις, λόγος, μαρτυρέω, ὄνομα, πιστεύω, σκότος-φῶς, ὕδωρ, ὠρα. John stresses the concept of "believing." The verb "to believe" (πιστεύω) is found 98 times in the Gospel, though the noun "belief/faith" (πίστις) does not occur. For John, saving faith is a verb, carrying the sense of active trust in Jesus (as compared to its use in Paul).

¹¹ Case in point: a computer search revealed that πίστις is found 243 times, and this is distributed in every book of the N.T. except 2 and 3 John! There is only one (uncharacteristic) case found in 1 John 5:4 (ὅτι πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ νικᾷ τὸν κόσμον· καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ νίκη ἢ νικήσασα τὸν κόσμον, ἢ πίστις ἡμῶν). Πιστεύω (verb form) is found some 98 times in John, but only 143 times throughout the remainder of the N.T.! E. Abbott was well aware of this dilemma: "Did, or did not, Jesus of Nazareth use, and use repeatedly, such words as 'faith,' 'repentance,' 'forgiveness?' Did he condemn 'hypocrisy?' did He bid men 'watch' and 'pray?'...If He did, as assuredly He did, how was it possible that a Fourth Gospel—even a supplementary Gospel—could give a fair and truthful account of Jesus and set down at great length His discourses, both to the disciples and to others, without so much mentioning one of these fundamental words?" (*Johannine Vocabulary*, pp. viii-ix). However, Abbot himself cautions against exaggerating the differences between John and the Synoptics: "Where he had appeared to be taking up entirely new ground, he was

vocabulary, but his words are charged with symbolism.

Along other lines of distinctive literary style is John's grammatical use of particles, pronouns, prepositions, and verbs.¹² His expressions are likewise distinguished by many peculiarities -- asyndeton, reduplication, repetition, etc.¹³ The brief analysis by N. Turner in his *Syntax* volume, A. T. Robertson in his *Grammar*, or even a perfunctory survey of E. A. Abbott's monumental *Johannine Grammar*¹⁴ is enough to convince any reader regarding the atypical use of a vocabulary/grammar at once unique to John but also *vis-à-vis* the Synoptic Gospels.

Scope of present study

It is necessary to explain why the present thesis focuses on John's use of the perfect. First, John's obvious preference for this tense requires some explanation, especially when compared with the fact that he employs this tense far beyond all other N.T.

sometimes saying the same thing as one or more of the Synoptists, only in a different way" (*Ibid*).

¹² For example, well known is John's extensive use of οὖν (200 times) as compared with the Synoptics (95 times) or the rest of the N.T. (204 times)!

¹³ Cf. how often Jesus begins solemn messages by saying, ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, "Truly, truly I say to you." (1:51; 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, 24, 25; 6:26, 32, 47, 53; 8:34, 51, 58; 10:1, 7; 12:24, 13:16, 20, 21, 38; 14:12; 16:20, 23; 21:18). Occasionally John makes a "literally inaccurate but practically accurate assertion" (so Abbott), as when, for example, John writes at 4:1-2 "Now when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself **did not baptize**, but only his disciples)." John first states that Jesus was baptizing, but then immediately corrects this by adding that it was his disciples who were in fact baptizing. Why not simply omit that Jesus was "baptizing" in v. 1? Cf. 3:22, where no parenthetical note is joined to clarify an indefinite expression.

¹⁴ N. Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 4, *Syntax* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1976), pp. 76-77; A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), pp. 133-134; E. A. Abbott, *Johannine Grammar* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906); cf. also Abbott's *The Fourfold Gospel* (Cambridge: University Press, 1913). Indeed supplementary examples and observations are found in the meticulous discussion of Luthardt, *St. John's Gospel*, pp. 20-50;

writers. Second, the occurrence of this tense within particular settings, especially in relation to central Johannine theological framework raises questions as to the deliberate choice of the perfect tense (i.e., for theological emphasis?). Third, the question is raised as to if the perfect tense has simply encroached upon the domain of the aorist, and if this is an alternate explanation for John's abundant use.

It would have been impossible, within the confines of this thesis, to undertake a complete and exhaustive study of all the perfects in John's Gospel. Therefore, certain limits were introduced in order to make this examination more manageable. After some initial statistical surveys of the Gospel, it was decided that chapter 8 presented an adequate and suitable unit of text to carry on our research. Considering the fact that vv. 1-11 form part of the controverted *pericope adultera*, it was decided best that the focus of our attention should primarily be directed to the ensuing verses of 12-59.

The scope of the present thesis will limit itself, therefore, to John 8:12-59. But here again, it was not possible to examine in detail each and every instance of a verb used in the perfect tense. Once again, certain restrictions were adopted, with the conclusion that our present thesis will focus primarily on two select verbs, viz, λαλέω (I speak) and ὁράω (I see).

The methodology used falls within the general domain of a *synchronic* reading of the Biblical text. This will be done by a structural analyses of our text, following the method as outlined by M. Girard in *Les Psaumes: analyse structurelle et interprétation*.¹⁵ Once the initial structural analysis of the pericope is complete, we will carefully examine the verbs in question, their use both as a perfect and aorist, and draw some basic conclusion based on our survey.

¹⁵ Recherches, Nouvelle Série 2, vol. 1 (Montréal: Bellarmin, 1994), pp. 31-136.

Chapter 1 - Survey of Relevant Studies

D) Text of John 8:12-59

For the benefit of the reader, we provide the complete text of John 8:12-59 in Greek. The text chosen is that found in both the Nestle-Aland²⁷ and United Bible Societies *Greek New Testament*⁴ (N-A/UBS). These two texts are judged, by the majority of N.T. scholars, as the best representatives of what the original text most likely read. Since all our structural analysis is done from the Greek text (and not a translation), this is provided for reference purposes.

12 Πάλιν οὖν αὐτοῖς ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου· ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἐμοὶ οὐ μὴ περιπατήσει ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ, ἀλλ' ἕξει τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς. 13 εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι· σὺ περὶ σεαυτοῦ μαρτυρεῖς· ἡ μαρτυρία σου οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθής. 14 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· κἂν ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἑαυτοῦ, ἀληθής ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία μου, ὅτι οἶδα πόθεν ἦλθον καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγω· ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἔρχομαι ἢ ποῦ ὑπάγω. 15 ὑμεῖς κατὰ τὴν σάρκα κρίνετε, ἐγὼ οὐ κρίνω οὐδένα. 16 καὶ ἐὰν κρίνω δὲ ἐγὼ, ἡ κρίσις ἡ ἐμὴ ἀληθινή ἐστιν, ὅτι μόνος οὐκ εἰμί, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ. 17 καὶ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ δὲ τῷ ὑμετέρῳ γέγραπται ὅτι δύο ἀνθρώπων ἡ μαρτυρία ἀληθής ἐστιν. 18 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ. 19 ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ· ποῦ ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ σου; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· οὔτε ἐμὲ οἴδατε οὔτε τὸν πατέρα μου· εἰ ἐμὲ ᾔδειτε, καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου ἂν ᾔδειτε. 20 Ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐλάλησεν ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ· καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπίσασεν αὐτόν, ὅτι οὐπω ἐληλύθει ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ. 21 Εἶπεν οὖν πάλιν αὐτοῖς· ἐγὼ ὑπάγω καὶ ζητήσετέ με, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτία ὑμῶν ἀποθανεῖσθε· ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν. 22 ἔλεγον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· μήτι ἀποκτενεῖ ἑαυτόν, ὅτι λέγει· ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν; 23 καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· ὑμεῖς ἐκ τῶν κάτω ἐστέ, ἐγὼ ἐκ τῶν ἄνω εἰμί· ὑμεῖς ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου ἐστέ, ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμί ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. 24 εἶπον οὖν ὑμῖν ὅτι ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν· ἐὰν γὰρ μὴ πιστεύσητε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι, ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν. 25 ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ· σὺ τίς εἶ; εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τὴν ἀρχὴν ὃ τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν; 26 πολλὰ ἔχω περὶ ὑμῶν λαλεῖν καὶ κρίνειν, ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με ἀληθής ἐστιν, κἀγὼ ἂ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ ταῦτα λαλῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον. 27 οὐκ ἔγνωσαν ὅτι τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῖς ἔλεγεν. 28 εἶπεν οὖν [αὐτοῖς] ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὅταν ὑψώσητε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, τότε γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι, καὶ ἀπ' ἑαυτοῦ ποιῶ οὐδέν, ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ ταῦτα λαλῶ. 29 καὶ ὁ πέμψας με μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐστιν· οὐκ ἀφήκέν με μόνον, ὅτι ἐγὼ τὰ ἀρεστὰ αὐτῷ ποιῶ πάντοτε. 30 Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν. 31 ἔλεγεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς πρὸς τοὺς πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ Ἰουδαίους· ἐὰν ὑμεῖς μείνητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ ἐμῷ, ἀληθῶς μαθηταὶ μου ἐστέ 32 καὶ γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς. 33 ἀπεκρίθησαν πρὸς αὐτόν· σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐσμεν καὶ οὐδεὶς δεδουλεύκαμεν πώποτε· πῶς σὺ λέγεις ὅτι ἐλεύθεροι γενήσεσθε; 34 ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν δοῦλός ἐστιν τῆς ἁμαρτίας. 35 ὁ δὲ δοῦλος οὐ μένει ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ὁ υἱὸς μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. 36 ἐὰν οὖν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλευθερώσῃ, ὄντως ἐλεύθεροι ἔσεσθε. 37 Οἶδα ὅτι σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε· ἀλλὰ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτεῖναι, ὅτι ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. 38 ἂ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ·

καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν ἃ ἠκούσατε παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ποιεῖτε. 39 ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ ἐστιν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε, τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε· 40 νῦν δὲ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτεῖναι ἄνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἢν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ· τοῦτο Ἀβραάμ οὐκ ἐποίησεν. 41 ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν. εἶπαν [οὖν] αὐτῷ· ἡμεῖς ἐκ ποριείας οὐ γεγενήμεθα, ἕνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν. 42 εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἦν ἡγαπάτε ἂν ἐμέ, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἤκω· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ ἐλήλυθα, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνός με ἀπέστειλεν. 43 διὰ τί τὴν λαλιὰν τὴν ἐμὴν οὐ γινώσκετε; ὅτι οὐ δύνασθε ἀκούειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν. 44 ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν. ἐκεῖνος ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλήθεια ἐν αὐτῷ. ὅταν λαλή τὸ ψεῦδος, ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων λαλεῖ, ὅτι ψεύστης ἐστὶν καὶ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ. 45 ἐγὼ δὲ ὅτι τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω, οὐ πιστεύετέ μοι. 46 τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐλέγχει με περὶ ἁμαρτίας; εἰ ἀλήθειαν λέγω, διὰ τί ὑμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετέ μοι; 47 ὁ ὢν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀκούει· διὰ τοῦτο ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἀκούετε, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἐστέ. 48 Ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· οὐ καλῶς λέγομεν ἡμεῖς ὅτι Σαμαρίτης εἶ σὺ καὶ δαιμόνιον ἔχεις; 49 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἐγὼ δαιμόνιον οὐκ ἔχω, ἀλλὰ τιμῶ τὸν πατέρα μου, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀτιμάζετέ με. 50 ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ ζητῶ τὴν δόξαν μου· ἔστιν ὁ ζητῶν καὶ κρίνων. 51 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐάν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ, θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. 51 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐάν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ, θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. 52 εἶπον [οὖν] αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· νῦν ἐγνώκαμεν ὅτι δαιμόνιον ἔχεις. Ἀβραάμ ἀπέθανεν καὶ οἱ προφῆται, καὶ σὺ λέγεις· ἐάν τις τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσῃ, οὐ μὴ γεύσῃται θανάτου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. 53 μὴ σὺ μείζων εἶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ, ὅστις ἀπέθανεν; καὶ οἱ προφῆται ἀπέθανον. τίνα σεαυτὸν ποιεῖς; 54 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἐάν ἐγὼ δοξάσω ἐμαυτόν, ἡ δόξα μου οὐδὲν ἐστίν· ἔστιν ὁ πατὴρ μου ὁ δοξάζων με, ὃν ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι θεὸς ἡμῶν ἐστίν, 55 καὶ οὐκ ἐγνώκατε αὐτόν, ἐγὼ δὲ οἶδα αὐτόν. κἂν εἶπω ὅτι οὐκ οἶδα αὐτόν, ἔσομαι ὅμοιος ὑμῖν ψεύστης· ἀλλὰ οἶδα αὐτόν καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ τηρῶ. 56 Ἀβραάμ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἡγαλλιάσατο ἵνα ἴδῃ τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμὴν, καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐχάρη. 57 εἶπον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι πρὸς αὐτόν· πεντήκοντα ἔτη οὕτω ἔχεις καὶ Ἀβραάμ ἐώρακας; 58 εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραάμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί. 59 ἦραν οὖν λίθους ἵνα βάλωσιν ἐπ' αὐτόν. Ἰησοῦς δὲ ἐκρύβη καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ.

For the readers benefit, a translation supplement has been provided (containing a standard English translation, the *New American Standard Version*). Furthermore, for easier reference, this has been divided according to our structural analysis (cf. our discussion in chapter 2, esp the *mini-structures of John 8*).

1) John 8: 12-20

8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; the [one] following me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life. 13 The Pharisees therefore said to him, You are bearing witness of yourself; your witness is not true. 14 Jesus answered and said to them, Even if I bear witness concerning myself, my witness is true; for I know where I came, and where I am going; but you do not know from where I come, or where I am going. 15 You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. 16 But even if I judge, my judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I and the [one] who sent me. 17 And even in your law it has been written, that the testimony of two men is true. 18 I am the [one] who bears witness concerning myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness of me. 19 And so they were saying to him, Where is your Father? Jesus answered, You know neither me, nor my Father; if you knew me, you would know my Father also. 20 These words he spoke in the treasury, teaching in the temple; and no one seized him, because his hour had not yet come.

2) John 8: 21-30

21 He said therefore again to them, "I go away, and you shall seek Me, and shall die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come." 22 Therefore the Jews were saying, "Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?" 23 And He was saying to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. 24 "I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He*, you shall die in your sins." 25 And so they were saying to Him, "Who are You?" Jesus said to them, "What have I been saying to you *from* the beginning? 26 "I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world." 27 They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father. 28 Jesus therefore said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. 29 "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him." 30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

3) John 8: 31-36

31 Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." 33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's offspring, and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You shall become free'?" 34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. 35 "And the slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. 36 "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.

4) John 8: 37-41a

37 "I know that you are Abraham's offspring; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 38 "I speak the things which I have seen with *My* Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from *your* father." 39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham. 40 "But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do. 41 "You are doing the deeds of your father."

5) John 8: 41b-47

They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God." 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me; for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. 43 "Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. 44 "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*; for he is a liar, and the father of lies. 45 "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. 46 "Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me? 47 "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God."

6) John 8: 48-59

48 The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" 49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. 50 "But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges. 51 "Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death." 52 The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets *also*; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he shall never taste of death.' 53 "Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out *to be*?" 54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God'; 55 and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar like you, but I do know Him, and keep His word. 56 "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad." 57 The Jews therefore said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" 58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." 59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple.

II) Present State of Research

A) P. Chantraine

Pierre Chantraine, in his *Histoire du parfait grec*,¹⁶ gave extensive attention to the temporal and aspectual development of the perfect tense from Homer to the Hellenistic period. For Chantraine, the Greek verb has its force in its ability to represent *aspect* and *time*. In classical Greek, the perfect aspect indicated “un état atteint à la suite d’un procès antérieur, mais il est une chose qu’il n’indique pas, c’est que ce procès passe sur un objet.”¹⁷ The perfect’s force is in its expression of a *state of being*: “Le parfait, qui signifie d’abord l’état, s’emploie aussi dès l’époque la plus ancienne quand il exprime un résultat qui persiste dans le sujet lui-même.”¹⁸ As far as time goes, the perfect belongs to the past: “Le parfait [est] un présent d’une espèce particulière qui exprime l’état acquis, au lieu de peindre le développement de l’action.”¹⁹ It can reflect a present state which is the result of a past action (a present state which has its cause in the past). Here however, the perfect may at times resemble a nuance of the present.²⁰

¹⁶ Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1927. Chantraine’s analysis on the evolution of the perfect tense was motivated by the earlier researches of M. Wackernagel (*Studien zum griechischen Perfektum*) and by the various articles by M. Meillet (*Bulletin de la Société de linguistique*, XXIII (p. 64); XXIV (p. 110); XXV (p. 95), although these were his sources primarily for *classical* Greek. For the perfect in the N.T., Chantraine depended heavily on the Blass-Debrunner *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (it is most likely that Chantraine used English 5th ed. (corrected), published in 1921).

¹⁷ Chantraine, *Histoire*, p. 4.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁰ Ex., the perfect form (κέκραγα) of the verb κράζω, “I cry out,” cannot be used to illustrate the difference between the perfect and the present: both demonstrate the state of being, that of *crying out*.

Chantraine's diachronic coverage of the perfect tense ultimately reached the Hellenistic era, and here the Septuagint (LXX) and the N.T. come into prime focus.⁵³ So singular is the use of the *resultative* perfect that Chantraine posits the Synoptics and Paul against the Johannine tradition (i.e., the Gospel and Revelation).⁵³ Furthermore, there are signs that, as far as the Synoptics are concerned, the perfect tense is slowly being replaced by the aorist, whereas in John the distinction remains strong.⁵⁴

Chantraine briefly examines the use of the perfect tense in the Synoptics and Paul in order to determine exactly how it is used (i.e., transitive-intransitive). He feels that the Synoptics and Paul form one group and that John and the Apocalypse form another;⁵⁵ but insists that this opposition should not be presumed to be the result of "une différence dialectale," but rather a question of style. And John's "expressive"

Chantraine's conclusion is that the perfect 1) expresses the state of a subject, and 2) it relates to the present (*Ibid.*, p. 20).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 214-215.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 229. The "resultative" perfect is used to emphasize the results produced by past action (cf. D. B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996], pp. 574-576).

⁵⁴ "Le fait est frappant: dans les autres évangiles se trahissent les premiers symptômes de la disparition de ce temps. L'Apocalypse se trouve dans une situation analogue à celle de l'Évangile de Jean, mais moins nette. Le texte en est rempli de vulgarismes et à chaque instant le parfait et l'aoriste y semblent confondus. Au contraire dans l'Évangile de Jean, le parfait garde toujours une valeur assez nette: chez les autres évangélistes il tend à disparaître" (p. 230). It should not be deduced that the perfect *never* infiltrates the semantic ranges of the aorist tense, for this does happen occasionally, even in John's Gospel: ex. 12:40 "Τετύφλωκεν αὐτῶν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ ἐπώρωσεν αὐτῶν τὴν καρδίαν" "Dans cet exemple la valeur des deux verbes est la même: l'emploi du parfait semble tout arbitraire" (p. 238); "Les variations des synoptiques, les variantes des manuscrits semblent témoigner d'une certaine indétermination dans l'emploi du parfait et de l'aoriste. De plus en plus les deux temps se rapprochent et ils ne se distinguent que par une nuance qui se définit assez mal. L'étude du texte des évangiles confirme cette impression. Souvent l'aoriste et le parfait sont employés côte à côte sans que la raison du choix apparaisse très nettement" (p. 237).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

style (as seen in his numerous word/phrase repetitions,⁵⁶ predilection for asyndeton,⁵⁷ occasionally unusual word order,⁵⁸ etc.) has also inundated into a more expressive use of the perfect tense. For example, the perfect is used in contexts where it (or the passage in general) is emphatic, dramatic and/or solemn (ex. Jn. 1:34; 4:18; 20:25).⁵⁹

Eventually the use of the perfect became more artificial⁶⁰ and obsolete. Chantraine concludes:

Le parfait exprime donc une nuance affective. Et ce n'est pas un hasard si l'évangéliste qui emploie le parfait de beaucoup le plus fréquemment est précisément celui qui a le style le plus solennel et le plus tendu.⁶¹

B) M. S. Enslin

M. S. Enslin appears to be one of the first to devote special attention to the perfect tense in the Gospel. His study, published in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*⁶² brought to light the extensive and single use of this tense throughout the Gospel of John. He refers to such a particular usage as a "theological" use "for want of a better name." Enslin admits that this excessive use of the perfect by John is neither due to

⁵⁶ Cf. Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, pp. 437-465 [§2587-2627].

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-73 [§1996-2008].

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 401-436 [§2544-2586].

⁵⁹ Cf. Chantraine, *Histoire*, pp. 230-232.

⁶⁰ "A mesure que l'on avance dans l'histoire de la langue, le parfait devient une forme de plus en plus artificielle, et l'emploi qu'en font les écrivains ne répond à rien dans l'usage." (*Ibid.*, p. 244); "A l'époque byzantine, le parfait n'existe plus comme thème vivant dans la flexion verbale" (p. 245).

⁶¹ Chantraine, *Histoire*, p. 232.

⁶² "The Perfect Tense in the Fourth Gospel." *JBL* 55 (1936) pp. 121-131.

the (later) breakdown of the distinctions and boundary between the aorist and perfect tense, nor merely as a stylistic feature: the “real” reason was “the growing fondness for forms of expression linking a past act with its present consequence, especially if the event was but recent.”⁶³ A few examples will illustrate this.

1) 18:37: εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος, Οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ; ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι. ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἵνα μαρτυρήσω τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς.

“Pilate said to him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.’”⁶⁴

That εἶπεν and ἀπεκρίθη are used in typical aorist fashion comes as no surprise, as is the case with γεγέννημαι as a perfect; but what is interesting is the use of ἐλήλυθα (ἔρχομαι) as a perfect rather than the simple 2nd aorist ἦλθον. This choice was, for Enslin, governed by John’s desire to accent the abiding result of Jesus’ coming.⁶⁵

2) 5:22: οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ κρίνει οὐδένα, ἀλλὰ τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν δέδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ

“The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son,”

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 123. Enslin cites an interesting example from Socrates, who writes: “τεκμαίρομαι ἕκ τινος ἐνυπνίου ὃ ἐώρακα ὀλίγον πρότερον ταύτης τῆς νυκτός” (from something a dream that which I saw a little earlier this night). Despite the fact that Socrates was now awake, yet the vision he had the preceding night was still vivid before his eyes.

⁶⁴ Another example can be found in John 16:28: “ἔξηλθον παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον· πάλιν ἀφήμι τὸν κόσμον καὶ πορεύομαι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα” “I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 125-126.

The meaning of this verse (and implication regarding the person of Jesus) is hardly baffling: although God has always been regarded as the supreme Judge of all mankind, He has now imparted this function to the Son, a function *given to the Son sometime in the past* (pre-incarnation?) *and is still true in Jesus' lifetime* (as in the days of John's writing). Thus John is simply accentuating the continuing result of the Father's action, in giving all judgement over to the Son.⁸⁵

Other examples could be cited, but these suffice. It is clear that John sees in words and deeds the abiding work of Jesus as the one who was sent by the Father. These examples lead Enslin to reach two conclusions: *first*, the perfect is more frequent in John than in the Synoptics,⁸⁶ and *second*, this use was to stress the abiding effect of Jesus' words and actions, many years after the incidents took place.⁸⁷

C) Nigel Turner

Contrary to what other writers have said on this subject, Nigel Turner explains this predilection for the perfect tense primarily in the unique literary style of John.⁸⁸ Turner describes certain tense variations (ex. alternating between the aorist and perfect forms of the same verb) as "pointless variety," using "needless" synonyms for nouns, verbs, etc.. Turner considers that the *principle* reason for such variety is not to be found in

⁸⁵ Cf. the comments by L. Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1971), p. 315. As far as δέδωκεν goes, Morris simply writes "there is an air of finality about the perfect δέδωκεν."

⁸⁶ Enslin counts c. 195 instances of the perfect in John, but disregards οἶδα, ἔστηκα and γέγραπται (when used as a formula to introduce an O.T. quotation), all textual variants (including the *pericope adultera*) and all passive perfects. In the present study, we have included all perfects, totaling 284 instances.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

⁸⁸ *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 4, *Syntax* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1976), pp. 76-77.

any idiosyncratic Johannine theology or Christology, but rather for the simple “avoiding of monotony.”⁷¹ As far as John’s extended use of the perfect tense, Turner sees little purpose to such variations.⁷² But Turner stops short of disallowing *any* purpose for this particular style: he allows that “Perhaps something theological enters here,” but “if so, the evangelist has not made his theology consistent always with his syntax.”⁷³ In other words, although Turner does allow for a “theological use” of the perfect tense, he nevertheless considers its use as somewhat arbitrary. This particular claim by Turner needs to be taken into account after we have examined the text of John ourselves and propose our own evaluation.

D) I. De la Potterie

Ignace de la Potterie is no stranger to Johannine studies. His monumental two vol. work, *La vérité dans St. Jean*,⁷⁴ remains a model of extensive research and sober judgement. True to his style, de la Potterie has brought his detailed analysis to johannine vocabulary, in particular the verbs οἶδα and γινώσκω in an article published in *Biblica*.⁷⁵ Contrary to the opinion of numerous respected exegetes,⁷⁶ de la Potterie

⁷¹ Turner cites by way of example John 11:36-37 where the verbs alternate between ἔλεγον (imperfect) and ἔειπεν (aorist).

⁷² Turner asks: “What is the difference between *I HAVE* (perfect) *come into the world as light* 12⁴⁶, and *I DID* (aorist) *not come to judge the world* 12⁴⁷? Why the perfect of *send* 5^{33.36} 20²¹ and the aorist everywhere else? Why the perfect *have known* 5⁴² 6⁶⁹ 8^{52.55} 14⁹ 17⁷, alongside the regular aorists?” *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Analecta Biblica* 73-74, 2 vols. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1977).

⁷⁵ “Οἶδα et γινώσκω, les deux modes de la connaissance dans le quatrième Évangile.” *Biblica* 40 (1959), pp. 709-725.

⁷⁶ C. K. Barrett, C. H. Dodd, R. Schnackenburg among others (*Ibid.*, p. 709, n. 1).

maintains that οἶδα and γινώσκω are not synonymous: there is a clear distinction in meaning, and this distinction is preserved within the 4th Gospel.⁷⁷ De la Potterie first examines the meanings and usage of οἶδα and γινώσκω within classical Greek and concludes as follows:

οἶδα: “reste lié au verbe «voir,»” “οἶδα est un parfait et sert de parfait à γινώσκω; il désigne la connaissance en tant qu’acquise, considérée en elle-même.”⁷⁸

γινώσκω: for the Greeks, this referred primarily to “arriver à connaître...le verbe γινώσκω désigne donc l’acquisition d’une connaissance, non sa possession réalisée.”⁷⁹

If this be the case de la Potterie asks, “Peut-on dire que ces nuances propres aux deux verbes se sont maintenues dans saint-Jean? Il semble que oui, sauf évidemment qu’on n’y trouve plus le contexte philosophique caractéristique de la pensée grecque.”⁸⁰ In other words, the distinction between οἶδα and γινώσκω, apparent in classical Greek, has been carried over into John’s Gospel. The reply to this challenge now forms the major part of de la Potterie’s study. De la Potterie examines the various uses of οἶδα and γινώσκω found throughout the Gospel and concludes that John clearly distinguishes between these two types of “knowing,” as illustrated by his deliberate use of both verbs within particular contexts. This is done so as to allow the readers a deeper glimpse into the duality of the human/divine nature of Jesus as well as to sympathize with the

⁷⁷ This despite the fact that these two verbs are close enough in meaning to be classified together within the same semantic range-group.

⁷⁸ “Οἶδα et γινώσκω,” p. 710-711; cf. the discussion in Abbott, *Johannine Vocabulary*, pp. 120-125 [§1621-1629].

⁷⁹ “Οἶδα et γινώσκω,” p. 710. Note the definition given by G. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1922), p. 92 “[γινώσκω], to know by observation and experience is thus prop. disting. from οἶδα, to know by reflection (a mental process, based on intuition or information).”

⁸⁰ “Οἶδα et γινώσκω,” p. 711.

disciples' (mis)understanding.

Even though the focus of de la Potterie's study was on οἶδα and γινώσκω⁴⁹ in general, the perfect tense of these verbs did not escape his notice.⁵⁰ Οἶδα serves well in these contexts to indicate how Jesus "knew" divine things: "Le Christ, et lui seul, déclare de façon absolue, en parlant de Dieu: "ἐγὼ οἶδα αὐτόν."⁵¹ An analysis of all the occurrences of οἶδα and γινώσκω studied by de la Potterie reveals the ensuing list:

Jesus (οἶδα, perfect tense): 3:11; 5:32; 6:61; 7:29; 8:14, 55; 12:50; 13:1; 16:30; 18:4; 19:28; 21:17;

(οἶδα, other tenses): 6:64; 11:42; 13:11.

Disciples (οἶδα, perfect tense): 1:26; 4:22, 32; 11:22, 24; 14:5; 16:18; 19:35; 21:12, 24⁵²

(οἶδα, other tense): 1:31, 33; 4:10; 20:9, 14; 21:4.

In conclusion, de la Potterie's remarks that the clear-cut distinction between the two verbs merits close attention in all Johannine exegesis:

On le voit, pour la connaissance du Christ comme pour celle des disciples, saint Jean distingue de façon très consciente, deux types de connaissance, exprimées respectivement par les verbes οἶδα et γινώσκω .
En ce qui concerne le Christ, cette différence nous a permis de plonger un

⁴⁹ γινώσκω is used 7 times as a perfect in John, including twice within our selected pericope: 5:42; 6:69; 8:52,55; 14:7, 9.

⁵⁰ οἶδα is used 84 times throughout John, 68 times as a perfect and 16 times in all other tenses.

⁵¹ "Οἶδα et γινώσκω," pp. 715-716; cf. John 7:29; 8:55.

⁵² Underlined references are to οἶδα used "positively" regarding the disciples knowing who Jesus is.

regard dans le mystère de sa personne, où Dieu et l'homme se rencontrent. Quant à la connaissance des disciples, elle se distingue, elle aussi, par une dualité...Saint Jean a un vocabulaire très précis. Puisque le thème de la connaissance reçoit chez lui une telle ampleur et que l'auteur l'exprime par deux termes différents il serait regrettable de négliger leurs nuances respectives...Ce sont elles qui confèrent à ce thème toute sa richesse.⁵⁸

E) C. Traets

Traets' book, *Voir Jésus et le Père en lui selon l'évangile de saint Jean*, had its origin in a doctoral thesis presented in 1964.⁵⁴ In a nutshell, Traets' book can be divided in four principal sections. In chapter 1, Traets introduces the main thesis of his work: the verbs relating to "seeing," viz, βλέπειν, θεωρεῖν, θεᾶσθαι, and ὁρᾶν. These verbs are analyzed as to frequency,⁵⁵ parsing, and theological/non-theological usage.⁵⁶

Traets is not the first to trod down this particular path. W. Grossouw,⁵⁷ G. L.

⁵⁸ "Οἶδα et γινώσκω," p. 725.

⁵⁴ Thesis defended in June 1964 at the Université Grégorienne (Rome); the book was later published in the *Analecta Gregoriana* series, Rome: Libreria Editrice dell'Università Gregoriana, 1967.

⁵⁵ Cf. Traets, *Voir*, pp. 7-11, 247-248 for full details.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-52, esp. 39-52. In the Gospel of John these verbs are used as follows: βλέπω, 17 times (never as a perfect); θεωρέω, 24 times (never as a perfect); θεάομαι, 6 times (once as a perfect (1:32)); ὁράω, 30 times (20 as perfect): cf. Traets, *Voir*, p. 247. For a useful survey of John's concept of "seeing" analogous to Traets' study, see C. Brown, (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), vol. 3, pp. 516-517.

⁵⁷ "La glorification du Christ dans le quatrième évangile" in *L'Évangile de Jean. Etudes et problèmes* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1958), pp. 131-145.

Phillips,⁵⁸ E. A. Abbott,⁵⁹ O. Cullmann⁶⁰ and W. Michaelis⁶¹ are but a few who already studied this question in some detail. Traets embarks upon the dominant purpose of his work, i.e., to examine the meaning of “seeing” in the fourth Gospel, in particular when the person of Jesus was the object of such “seeing.” Traets investigated this topic with a two-fold purpose: *first*, what did John mean when he described people as “seeing” Jesus, and *secondly*, to what extent the Father was revealed in Jesus. It is along these main themes that Traets develops his investigation.

In chapter 2 Traets focuses his attention primarily within the context of “seeing” the Father and Jesus. There is no doubt that ὁράω refers primarily to seeing not only the person of Jesus, but seeing him in his earthly ministry and the events surrounding it. However, the door now opens for the exercise of faith: those who “see” are those who look beyond the earthly manifestation and see Jesus for who he really is, whereas others reject any divine manifestation and are willingly “blind”—having eyes to see, they refuse to “see” (i.e., acknowledge) who Jesus is.

Chapter 3 specifically focuses on Jesus’ public ministry (his signs, works, revelation of the mystery of the Father and the Son) as well as the manifestation of the Son for who he is when his “hour” (καίρος) has finally arrived.⁶² Traets understands this within the context of successive theological revelation and understanding. The

⁵⁸ “Faith and Vision” in *Studies in the Fourth Gospel* (London, 1957), pp. 83-96.

⁵⁹ *Johannine Vocabulary. A Comparison of the words of the Fourth Gospel with those of the Three (Diatessarica V, London, 1905), pp. 104-114 [§1597-1611].*

⁶⁰ “Εἶδεν καὶ ἐπίστευσεν. La vie de Jésus, objet de la «vue» et de la «foi» d’après le quatrième évangile” in *Aux sources de la tradition chrétienne. Mélanges offerts à M. Maurice Goguel, Bibliothèque théologique* (Neuchâtel-Paris, 1950), pp. 52-61.

⁶¹ “ὁράω” in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1954), pp. 315-384.

⁶² Cf. John 2:4; 7:6, 8:20 where Jesus’ time of manifestation is not yet fulfilled, but in 12:23, 13:1 and 17:1 his hour has come and he is ready to be made manifest to the world.

focus of “seeing” is never exclusively on the materialistic (although that is the starting point), but rather on the spiritual, or what is seen by faith. Thus, of the seven miracles of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John, five are described as “signs” (σημείον). According to John 10:32-33 the Jews “saw” the miracles from a purely earthly perspective, without perceiving the manifestation of the unity between Father and Son, which was the more pertinent and fundamental role of the miracles.⁹⁵

For Traets, Jesus’ person and ministry usher’s in a new era in the relation between God and man. For those who believe in him, this new era is made manifest by his works, his words, and his very person. His ministry challenged his listeners to a new relationship with the Father, and he oriented their sight towards this new life of faith. All of this has led up to what Traets considers as foundational two cardinal texts from the Gospel: 12:45 (“And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.”) and 14:9 (“Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’”?).⁹⁶ These text are extensively examined in chapter 4.

Once Traets’ study is complete, he believes that the Johannine usage clearly demonstrates a successive stage of theological enlightenment and understanding with the verbs “see.” Although there is the more customary use of such verbs in ἡ κοινή διάλεκτος usage (Traets’ “usage neutre des verbes”), there is also the distinctive theologically charged usage of these selfsame verbs, viz, not only to see Jesus face to

⁹⁵ So L. Cerfaux: “Jean n’a pas choisi sans dessein le terme σημεῖον pour désigner les miracles. Dans les synoptiques, les miracles sont des δυνάμεις, qui manifestent la puissance, l’autorité du Christ; le mot σημεῖον nous demande de creuser leur valeur d’événements significatifs et représentatifs de cette autorité.” “Les miracles, signes messianiques de Jésus et oeuvres de Dieu, selon l’évangile de Saint Jean” *RecCerf II*, p. 44.

⁹⁶ 12:45 “καὶ ὁ θεωρῶν ἐμὲ θεωρεῖ τὸν πέμψαντά με.” 14:9 “λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Τοσοῦτω χρόνῳ μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἶμι καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωκάς με, Φίλιππε; ὁ ἑώρακώς ἐμὲ ἑώρακεν τὸν πατέρα· πῶς σὺ λέγεις, Δείξον ἡμῖν τὸν πατέρα;”

face, but to “see” Jesus for who he really is—a manifestation of the Father.⁹⁷

The analysis of Traets best expresses the value of these characteristic verbs:

Le regard de l’homme veut-il atteindre Jésus dans sa vraie dimension? Il doit être en même temps un βλέπειν, un θεωρεῖν, un θεᾶσθαι, un ὁρᾶν. Il faut en effet avoir des yeux pour voir (βλέπειν dans son emploi absolu). Pour voir réellement, il faut observer (θεωρεῖν) c’est-à-dire porter les yeux sur l’objet, ce que Dodd appelle une «discerning vision.» Pour discerner, le regard doit être pénétré de respect, empreint de réceptivité à l’égard des dimensions de l’objet (θεᾶσθαι), conditions nécessaires pour saisir le mystère (βλέπειν - ὁρᾶν) en s’engageant dans la foi.⁹⁸

Traets maintain that each particular verb is used by John to express a different theological teaching:

Dans ces passages, nous nous trouvons donc en présence de plusieurs verbes (βλέπειν, θεωρεῖν, ὁρᾶν) qui expriment une pénétration théologique différente. La force de cette pénétration n’est pas propre à chacun des verbes comme tel, mais elle est déduite principalement du contexte.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Cf. Traets division of the verbs into two categories: “l’usage neutre des verbes” and “l’usage théologique des verbes.” This last category is further divided as representing the successive stages of faith: stage 1, stage 2, stage 3 (*Voir*, pp. 34-50).

⁹⁸ *Voir Jésus*, p. 52. If there is to be a critique of Traets, it could only be that his treatment of the verbs is scattered throughout the entire work on a thematic approach rather than dealing exclusively with each verb in a lexical manner. This forces the reader to pore over several times in order to gain a complete picture for each verb. Despite this minor criticism, however, Traets’ work remains a model of scholarly research, commanding a comprehensive overview of the subject matter, detailed philological analysis and competent exegesis.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

Traets cannot but be intrigued by John's use of ὁράω, especially in its perfect tense. He asks: "Par la notion d'effet permanent, qui lui est propre, le parfait enrichit-il le verbe d'une valeur théologique? Ce point est discutable, surtout quand on part de son emploi dans la koinè, où le parfait est en quelque sorte «fossilisé» dans un nombre restreint de verbes."¹⁰⁰ Ultimately Traets answers this question affirmatively. Most of the instances of ὁράω as a perfect are discussed by Traets, some in detail. For example, Traets is especially struck by the fact that John 1:32, 34; 3:11, 32 and 19:35 combine the verbs "witness" and "see" in the perfect tense.¹⁰¹ There is no doubt in his mind that there is more here at stake than mere stylistic considerations—there is a theological development at work. He concludes:

Résumons: en nombre assez important les parfaits de «voir» désignent, positivement ou négativement, l'approfondissement du voir, en tant qu'il demeure en ses effets. Toutefois le dernier critère qui permette de conclure à un tel approfondissement doit être cherché, non pas dans la forme verbale comme telle, mais dans le contexte du verbe.¹⁰²

All of this leads Traets to the following observation:

Ces parfaits ont 20 fois sur 21 comme objet plus ou moins direct Dieu ou la personne de Jésus et ses signes. Qu'il s'agisse du regard de Jésus ou

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁰¹ Ex. cf. 19:35: καὶ ὁ ἑωρακῶς μεμαρτύρηκεν, καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύ[σ]ητε. "ἑωρακῶς du v. 35 a pour objet le double événement historique des vv. 33.34, ainsi que leur sens, perçu grâce à la foi;" "«Pour que vous aussi croyiez»...semble indiquer que ἑωρακῶς qui se réfère, à cause de sa connexion avec les vv précédents, à un fait de caractère indubitablement historique, implique en même temps, par voie d'approfondissement, une vision de foi." (p. 157; cf. the complete discussion, pp. 156-165).

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 46.

de celui des disciples, l'objet du voir est régulièrement une révélation, un témoignage ou une annonce. Il n'est donc pas improbable que les parfaits expriment ici un effet permanent: parce qu'on a vu, on est dès lors engagé, en étant institué témoin.¹⁰⁸

F) Conclusion

What can be deduced from these studies is undoubtedly the importance of οἶδα and ὁρᾶω in the perfect tense. Chantraine is clear as to the importance and prominence of the perfect tense in John. Enslin and Turner likewise recognize John's preference for this tense, and plainly associate it with his theological outlook, despite certain reservations. Less concentrated squarely on this tense, but nonetheless relevant, De la Potterie emphasizes the distinction between οἶδα and γινώσκω, focusing on the theological importance of οἶδα, whereas Traets's attention was on seeing the Father in Jesus.

All in all, these writers have proposed a threefold explanation for such a literary technique: *first*, the author of the Fourth Gospel displays a certain fondness for the perfect tense; *second*, in some cases this distinct use is pregnant with theological overtones and is due to his conviction of the eternal significance and abiding reality of the work and words of Jesus Christ (not only as the divine Son of God but as a manifestation of deity itself); *third*, in other cases no such theological emphasis can be determined. As such it appears that it is used as an aorist, despite the fact that the context is theological.

As this *Present State of Research* is concerned primarily with collecting scholarly opinion solely regarding one aspect of Johannine composition, we must now turn our attention to a more specific, synchronic word analysis. We see how anterior research

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

has demonstrated that the style of John shows a certain predilection for using verbs in the perfect tense, when one would normally expect another simple past tense to be used, such as the aorist or imperfect. But it is not simply that John uses a perfect verb when another writer would use another past tense, but that John uses the perfect tense far and above what the Synoptics (and every other N.T. writer) did. By way of illustration, a word count of the perfects found throughout the N. T. reveals interesting statistics (see table 1). The chart clearly reveals the propensity of perfect found in John as compared to every other N. T. writer.¹⁰⁴ It is quite obvious that John prefers the perfect tense above the Synoptics, despite the fact that he has the least amount of vocabulary within his Gospel. Several grammarians and exegetes contend that in John the perfect tense is richly attested, in contrast to the Synoptics where is evidenced a decrease in the popularity and use of this tense. Although the “clear-cut” uses of the aorist and perfect sometimes overlap, in John this happens quite infrequently. There is a great simplicity of style coupled with a profound message found in the Gospel of John. The scholarship of the 17th-19th century certainly addressed the issue of Johannine style (esp. in contrast with that of the Synoptics) with great vigor during the exegetical and polemical debates, especially with regards to the authenticity of the Gospel. The 20th cent. has no less produced numerous literary studies, as even a cursory examination of van Belle’s “Johannine Bibliography” adequately testifies.¹⁰⁵

Chantraine, Traets and de la Potterie are lead representatives of scholars who have paid close attention to John’s distinctive use of verbs. But despite their

¹⁰⁴ For statistical purposes the Nestle-Aland 27th / UBS 3rd Greek N.T. have been used, along with the *Bible Windows* software program for all word searches/counts.

¹⁰⁵ G. Van Belle, *Johannine Bibliography 1900-1985* (Leuven: University Press, 1988), esp. pp. 114-146. Van Belle’s *Bibliography* is one of six major published bibliographies available for the Johannine Gospel and Epistles. To the writing of commentaries there is no end. Within the last 10 years alone (1990-2000), no less than 19 commentaries in English have been published on the Gospel of John, and over 115 commentaries have appeared in English since 1900.

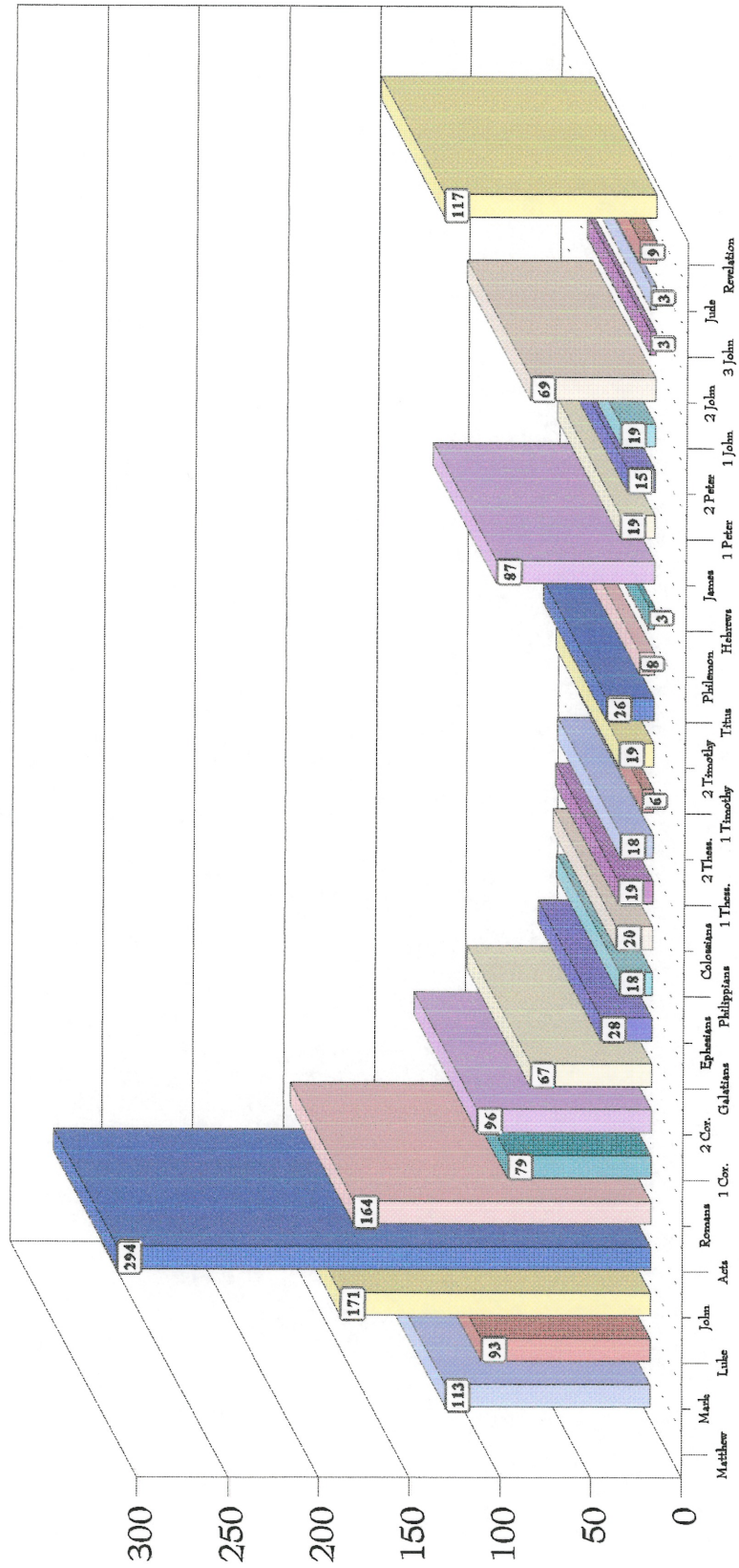
meticulous research, M. S. Enslin's article, "The Perfect Tense in the Fourth Gospel" still appears to be the *only* article published which dealt *exclusively* with trying to understand how and why John so favored the perfect tense. By and large this concern has not lured the attention of expositors on any grand scale.¹⁰⁶ In fact, there has been only one doctoral dissertation¹⁰⁷ and only a handful of studies which have (in passing) addressed the issue. Nevertheless, the fact still remains that John's distinctive use of the perfect tense is quite out of the ordinary and certainly worthy of more in-depth study than has been given hitherto. The paucity of available research, and a genuine intrigue about John's style has led the present author to focus his attention to the particular case of the perfect-tense-verb found in the Gospel of John.

¹⁰⁶ As compared, for example, with other literary aspect of John which have engaged the interest of exegetes, such as the literary structure of John 1:1-18, fundamental vocabulary (eg. terms such as life, light, the Jews etc.), style (eg. ἀμήν ἀμήν, ἐγὼ εἰμί), parenthetical remarks, the "misunderstandings" etc.. Standard Greek grammars deal with the perfect, but their respective discussion of the tense alongside John varies unevenly (cf. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, pp. 572-582 and the bibliography associated with the chapter).

¹⁰⁷ The only doctoral dissertation this writer is aware of is that of A. Deroubaix, *Études sur la valeur et le sens du parfait grec dans le quatrième Évangile* (Louvain: Louvain-la-Neuve, 1981). Unfortunately, this bibliographical entry in Van Belle appears to be wrong, since there is no record of *any* dissertation by Deroubaix presented at Louvain-la-Neuve! Consequently it has not been possible to acquire (what would have been) a valuable and important study for the present thesis.

Table 1 – Number of perfects found throughout the New Testament

Perfects in the N.T.



Chapter 2 - Structure of John 8

D) The Mega-Structure of John

The basic plan of the Gospel is quite simple, of which there is general agreement among most exegetes. Beginning with the prominent divisions, scholars have split John into two essential portions of unequal length: chs. 1-12 and 13-20. Although this serves as a convenient and comprehensive outline, beyond this point there is a variety of detailed outlines proposed. Further segmentation into a fourfold division (such as that of R. E. Brown) is quite common:¹⁰⁸

Table 2 - Outline of John's Gospel

<i>Prologue</i>	<i>Book of Signs</i>				<i>Book of Glory</i>			<i>Epilogue</i> ¹⁰⁹
	1:19 - 12:50				13:1 - 20:29			
1:1-18	1:19 - 2:11	2:12-4	5-10	11-12	13-17	18-19	20:1-31	21:1-25
<i>pre-existence</i>	<i>account of public ministry</i>				<i>final week/Passion: post-resurrection appearances</i>			<i>Galilean resurrection</i>

Excluding John 1:1-18 as a prologue, chs. 1:19 - 12:50 represents the *public ministry*

¹⁰⁸ R. E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), pp. 334-335. For a slightly different division see W. G. Kummel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), pp. 194-196.

¹⁰⁹ R. E. Brown, *Introduction*, p. 334, borrowing his outline from C. H. Dodd (who has "Book of Signs" and "Book of the Passion", *Interpretation*, p. 289). Bernard (*Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, pp. xxx-xxxiii) presents the following divisions: *Prologue* (1:1-18), *Part I* (1:19 - 6:71), *Part II* (5:1 - 12:50, *Part III* (13:1 - 20:31) and the *Epilogue* (21). But Bernard ascribes to the theory of dislocations in the text of John, thus allowing for numerous transpositions of entire units of texts from the usual traditional order (ex. the transposition of the order of chs. 4-6 to 4-6-5; inserting chs. 14-16 within ch. 13, thus creating the following segmented order: 13:1-20; vv. 21-30; v 31a, chs. 15-16; 13:31b - 38 + ch. 14 (cf. xvi - xxx).

of Jesus, whereas 13:1 - 20:31 reflect events in the final days of ministry, more specifically the account of the last meal with the disciples and the subsequent arrest, trial and crucifixion. The events found in John 8 can be attributed to Jesus' second year of ministry, for, among other things, two Passovers have already past, while the third (and final) Passover is yet to come.

John 8 falls within a major section of the Gospel, in what appears to be a grouping of argumentative discourses extending from 7:1 to 10:21. There are two principal clues which warrant this division.

First, 7:1-2 provides both a *geographical* indicator (7:1 "After this Jesus went about in Galilee; he would not go about in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill him") and a *chronological* indicator (7:2 "Now the Jews' feast of Tabernacles was at hand") that indicate the start of a new section.¹¹⁰ In John 6 Jesus is presented as ministering in Galilee, specifically in and around Capernaum, around the time of the *Passover*. In John 7 the new context is now the seven-day Jewish *Feast of Tabernacles*, circa six months later.

Secondly, 10:22 reads "It was the feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem." The *Feast of Dedication* (a.k.a. *Hanukkah* and the *Feast of Lights*) was an important feast, which took place a few months *after* that of Tabernacles (during the month of Chislev, corresponding to November-December). Because Tabernacles was in September-October, John is moving his narrative along several months, albeit Jesus appears to

¹¹⁰ What first attracts our attention is the confinement of the narrative to the chronicling of events which took place primarily in Judea and Jerusalem. John reports far more of Jesus' ministry in the Judean district and Samaria than in Galilee, whereas the focus of the Synoptics is the exact opposite (omitting *all* mention of Jesus' evangelistic ministry in Samaria). Of Jesus' ministry in Galilee John relates but a few events, without dwelling on details, and of these events only two -- the multiplication of the loaves and fishes (6:1-16), and the sea-voyage (6:17-21) -- are already related in Synoptic parallels. Furthermore, the Synoptics record only *one* journey to Jerusalem (explicitly sated in Luke 9:51//Matt. 19:1; 20:17//Mk. 10:1, 32-33, 11:1ff) but there are multiple journeys in John (2:13; 5:1; 7:10). In light of this fact, some scholars have proposed that the main object of John, who wrote after the other evangelists, was to supplement their narratives, which were almost confined to the ministry in Galilee (cf. G. Báez-Camargo, *Archaeological Commentary on the Bible* [New York: Doubleday & Company, 1984]).

still be in Jerusalem. In fact the following list of indications should provide a good idea of the makeup of chaps. 7-10 (chronological indicators are italicized):

Table 3 – Geographical and Chronological indicators in John 7-10

Geography	Chronology
7:1 Jesus in Galilee	
	7:2 <i>Feast of Tabernacles (15-21 Tishri)</i>
7:9 Jesus remains in Galilee	
7:10 Jesus goes to Jerusalem	
7:14 Jesus goes to the Temple	
	7:37 <i>last day of Feast (21 Tishri)</i> ¹¹¹
8:1 Jesus goes to Mount of Olives	
8:2 Jesus returns to the Temple	8:2 <i>following day</i>
8:20 controversy within Temple treasury	
8:59 Jesus leaves Temple	
	[8:59 to 9:1 → undefined amount of time]
9:1 Jesus remains in Jerusalem	
	9:14 healing of blind man on <i>Sabbath</i>
	10:22 <i>Feast of Dedication</i>
10:23 teaching in Solomon's Porch	
10:40 Jesus leaves, goes beyond Jordan	

These geographical and chronological indications allow us to demarcate chaps. 7-10 as a unit regarding events in the last year of Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem from September-December.

¹¹¹ It is not evident as to whether the reference to the last day refers to day *seven* (21 Tishri) or to the following *eighth* day: for a good discussion cf. Carson, *John*, pp. 321; Beasley-Murray, *John*, pp. 113-114.

II) Maxi-Structure of John 8

A) John 8:1-11

There is a clear break in John 8 from vv. 1-11 and the remainder of the chapter. This section is commonly known as the *pericope de adultera*, or the story of the woman caught in adultery (specifically 7:53–8:11).¹¹² Although its vocabulary¹¹³ and themes generally fit within the basic framework of the fourth Gospel, in light of the external/internal evidence, the authenticity of *pericope adultera* remains improbable. As far as internal evidence goes, in general the style of the pericope is not Johannine either in vocabulary or grammar. Among modern commentators and textual critics, it is a foregone conclusion that the section is not original but represents a later addition to the text of the Gospel. The standard presentation of the evidence can be found in B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*.¹¹⁴ In the final analysis, the weight of evidence in this case must go with the external evidence. The earliest and best manuscripts do not contain the pericope. It is true with regard to internal evidence that an attractive case can be made for inclusion, but this is by nature subjective. In terms of internal factors like vocabulary and style, the pericope does not stand up very well.

¹¹² Apart from the textual variation to be expected in the text of the Gospel, there are three portions of the Johannine text which present significant variations among the mss, and consequently are seriously contested by modern textual critics. These are the *angel at the pool* (Jn. 5:3b-4), the *pericope adultera* (7:53-8:11) and the *appendix* to the Gospel, ch. 21. The canonicity of these passages poses no great problem, so it remains a *text critical* problem.

¹¹³ Bernard provides a list of non-johannine words and expressions found in the pericope (ex. τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν. (verse 1), Ὁρθρου (verse 2), οἱ γραμματεῖς (verse 3), μοιχευομένη (verse 4), ἐπέμενον (verse 7), εἰς καθ' εἰς ἀρζάμενοι, κατελείφθη (verse 9), κατέκρινεν (verse 10), ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν (verse 11)) and the frequent use of δέ rather than John's preferred οὖν (*John*, vol. II, pp. 715-721).

¹¹⁴ London: United Bible Societies, 1971, pp. 219-222.

Regardless of whether these verses were originally in the autograph of John or whether they were added later by John or by someone else, Metzger still maintains that this story “has all the earmarks of historical veracity.”¹¹⁵ No questionable doctrine is present in this text, and the event is certainly characteristic of the way Jesus met such circumstances. It could be viewed as topically appropriate in this place, since the theme of judging is introduced in 7:51; although from a linguistic/literary perspective, 7:52 and 8:12 naturally flow together without the interruption of this pericope.

B) John 8: 12-59

Following the episode of the *pericope adultera*, the controversy between Jesus and the Jews begins afresh and continues for the remainder of the chapter. This particular disputation distinguishes itself by the oppositions and contrasts invoked: *light vs darkness, things from above vs those from below, freedom vs liberty, children of God vs children of the devil.*

Inclusions

The identification of John 8:12-59 as a discourse unit comes fairly easily when the greater context is examined. That this particular pericope is a *narrative* is clear, but it can more precisely be identified as an *argumentative discourse*, since the totality of the passage is permeated with polemical and aggressive arguments between Jesus and the Pharisees/Jews.

There are a series of inclusions found between the beginning and end of this text

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 220; cf. the discussion of Carson, *John*, pp. 333-337; Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. 2, pp. 162-169; Brown, *John*, vol. 1, pp. 332-338; Bernard, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, pp. 715-721 as well as any critical commentary at this passage.

that neatly compartmentalizes the pericope. Examples of these verbal parallels can be found in the following verses:

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8:12 | I am the light of the world | (ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου) |
| 8:58 | before Abraham was I am | (πρὶν Ἀβραάμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί) |

Jesus' referring to himself (ἐγὼ εἰμί) is a clear inclusion between vv. 12 and 58: this allows us to delineate this section from its immediate context of chapters 8:1-11 and 9. Other possible inclusions can be found in the following:

- | | | |
|------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 8:19 | You know neither me nor my Father | (οὔτε ἐμὲ οἴδατε οὔτε τὸν πατέρα μου) |
| 8:55 | you do not know him | (οὐκ ἐγνώκατε αὐτόν) |
| 8:20 | he taught in the Temple/Treasury | (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ) |
| 8:59 | Jesus...went out of the Temple ¹¹⁶ | (ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ) |

Typically, inclusions are found at the opposite limits of a text – they serve to delineate a text from its immediate context. Although the preceding two examples are not, strictly speaking, true inclusions, they do facilitate justifying the limits of vv. 12-59, since both examples present key words and continuous theme found at both ends of the pericope. In v. 19 Jesus tells his listeners (the Pharisees) that they do not know the Father, because they do not know Jesus. In v. 55 Jesus again repeats his declaration (to the Jews) that they do not know the Father. Finally, the double

¹¹⁶ A parallelism can be made between the Temple of vv. 1 and 59, if we allow the passage of the *Pericope Adultera* to remain in its traditional place. However, since vv. 1-11 is a segment all to itself, the parallel with v. 20 will suffice. Assuming that the *pericope* 7:53-8:11 is not part of the original, the conjecture proposed by F. J. A. Hort (*The New Testament in the Original Greek*, vol. 2: *Introduction; Appendix* (Cambridge & London: Macmillan, 1881), pp. 87-88) is that the backdrop of 8:12 is the lighting of the candelabra in the Court of Women, and this may offer a plausible setting to the proclamation by Jesus that he is the Light of the world (Hort's conjecture is adopted by many modern writers, such as Bernard, Brown, Beasley-Murray, Schnackenburg and others).

reference by John to the Temple in vv. 20 and 59 culminate the linguistic correspondence which establish the limits of the pericope.

Text divisions

Scholars have generally divided John 8 into three main sections.¹¹⁷ Despite this seeming agreement among scholars, Brown has well noted that to compose a satisfactory structure for this section “is perhaps more difficult than that of any other chapter or long discourse in the first part of the Gospel.”¹¹⁸ The following table illustrates several proposed outlines for John 8 and reveals several common points (cf. chart following page).¹¹⁹

Although each of the sections will be more fully discussed below, a brief overview and comprehensive observation as to the underlying plan will be immediately presented. Briefly stated, the discourse is divided into three sections introduced by the words “again therefore he said” (vv. 12, 21) (cf. 10: 7) or “Jesus therefore said” (v. 31), and is broken by hostile interruptions of the Pharisees (v. 13), the Jews (vv. 22, 25), and the Jews who ‘believed’ in Him (vv. 33, 39, 48, 52, 53, 57), by which the progress of the discourse is conditioned and directed.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Cf. the outline proposed by P. von Gachter, “Strophen im Johannesevangelium” in *ZKT* 60 (1936), pp. 402-412 as well as that of W. von Kern, “Der Symmetrische Gesamtaufbau von Jo 8, 12-59.” Advantageous as both outlines are, the present study works along different sequences of segment breakdown.

¹¹⁸ Brown, *John*, p. 342.

¹¹⁹ R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John—A Commentary*, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), divides chapter 8 into several disjointed segments: vv. 13-20; 48-50, 54-55; 41-47, 51-53, 56-59; 12, 21-29; 30-40.

¹²⁰ Some scholars consider the interchange between “the Jews” and “the Pharisees” refers to the same protagonists (i.e., are synonymous), while others suggest that the difference in terms reflect different sources. But for the present thesis such a shift between the two terms only demonstrates how interwoven the material is.

Table 4 – Structural Proposals for John 8: 12-59

Luthardt ¹⁸⁷⁷	12-20	21-29	30-59				
Meyer ¹⁸⁸⁴	12-20	21-29	30-59				
Godet ¹⁸⁸⁵	12-20	21-29	30-59				
Brown ¹⁹⁶⁶	12-20	21-30	31-59				
Barrett ¹⁹⁷⁸	12-20	21-30	31-59				
Carson ¹⁹⁹¹	12-20	21-30	31-59				
Bernard ¹⁹²⁸	12-20	21-30	31-34	35-51		52-58	59
Morris ¹⁹⁷¹	12-20	21-24	25-30	31-47			48-59
Snackenburg ¹⁹⁸⁰	12-20	21-29	30-36	37-47		48-59	
Beasley-Murray ¹⁹⁸⁷	12-20	21-29	30-36	37-40	41-47	48-59	
Arcieri	12-20	21-30	31-36	37-41a	41b-47	48-59	

The *first section* is found in vv. 12-20. Verse 12 now begins a new discussion following the *pericope adultera* section. The inclusion found between vv. 12 and 20 (v. 12 “Jesus spoke to them, saying” with 20 “he spoke in the treasury”)¹²¹ facilitates our division (as does the new heading in v. 21). Thus the editorial comment at v. 20 neatly encloses this initial dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees.

The *second section* begins with v. 21 and ends at v. 30. Verses 21-30 form an independent section, and all save Morris keep these 10 verses intact. The οὐν πάλιν expression indicates a break in the sequence of events, but if there is some interval of time is unknown. There is an inclusion between vv. 21 and 30 (“Then he said to them again” with “As he spoke thus”) which provide a key as to the structure of this unit. There is some debate as to the exact limits of this unit. Numerous scholars (Luthardt, Meyer, Godet, Schnackenburg, Beasley-Murray) understand the section as

¹²¹ The word “treasury” does not refer to the storage room, but to the part of the Court of the Women where people came to cast offerings. Thirteen trumpet-shaped collection boxes were located here, each with an inscription denoting the use to which those offerings placed in it would be put.

ending at v. 29, and the new and subsequent section *beginning* with John’s editorial insertion at v. 30. Others (Bernard, Brown, Morris, Carson) interpret v. 30 as the *conclusion* to the previous discussion, and v. 31 now introduces a new discourse between Jesus and the Jews “who had believed in him.”¹²² For the present study, we have adopted to divide the section at v. 30 (vide our discussion below).

The *third* and last section is quite intricate in composition and contains a several overlapping themes. Although most have sought to keep vv. 30-59 as a single unit, more recent exegetes have attempted to split it up into heterogeneous units. Scholars have divided this section of text in numerous ways:

Table 5 – Structural Proposals for John 8:30-59

Luthardt, Meyer, Godet	30-59			
Brown, Barrett, Carson	31-59			
Morris	31-47			48-59
Schnackenburg	30-36	37-47		48-59
Beasley-Murray	30-36	37-40	41-47	48-59
Bernard	31-34	35-51		52-58 59

It appears that most of the commentators examined here (six out of ten) have simply allowed the whole portion to stand as one substantial portion and allow the exegesis to fully explain the diversity of subject matter. This comes as no surprise, as the text does not lend itself easily to any opportune division. A second group (Morris, Schnackenburg and Beasley-Murray) allow the final section (vv. 48-59) to stand as a distinct unit from vv. 30-47, although Beasley-Murray follows Schnackenburg in further

¹²² Cf. the discussions in Brown, *Gospel According to John*, p. 351 and Schnackenburg, *Gospel According to St. John*, pp. 203-204.

dividing the section at vv. 30-36 as one unit. Bernard splits of this section in four units, but stands quite alone, due to his own “reorganizing” of the Johannine material. As can be seen from Table 3, our own structural analysis has led us to adopt a text-division quite close to that found in Schnackenburg and Beasley-Murray, although we have not hesitated in differing from them when need be. The rationalization for our particular text-divisions will be found in the next section.

III) Mini-Structures of John 8

Now that we have established the global unity of vv. 12-59, we now turn our attention to the individual sections found in vv. 12-59. As previously mentioned in our Introduction, the arrangement adopted is a structural analysis for the whole section, following the principles and procedures as presented by M. Girard in his *Les Psaumes: analyse structurelle et interprétation*.¹²³

The 48 verses which constitute our pericope are divided into 5 main segments of text, each segment being further subdivided into multiple units. This is followed by general heuristic and hermeneutical analyses of each section/unit, providing the main arguments as to its segmentation and the subsequent exegesis of the Greek text.

¹²³ (Recherches, Nouvelle Série 2), vol. 1 (Montréal: Bellarmin, 1984), pp. 31-136; cf. also P. Létourneau, *Jésus, fils de l'homme et fils de Dieu* (Montréal: Éditions Bellarmin, 1992), pp. 16-27. Other valuable perspectives can be found in R. Meynet, *L'analyse rhétorique* (Paris: Cerf, 1989); J. Breck, *The Shape of Biblical Language* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1994); D. Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis?* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) and *id.*, *Structural Exegesis: From Theory to Practice* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978).

A) John 8: 12-20

A 8:12 Πάλιν οὖν αὐτοῖς ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων·
 ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου· ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἐμοὶ οὐ μὴ περιπατήσει ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ, ἀλλ' ἔξει τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς.

8:13 (a) εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι·
 (b) οὐδὲν σοὶ περὶ σεαυτοῦ μαρτυρεῖς·
 (c) ἡ μαρτυρία σου οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθής.

B 8:14 (a') ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·
 (b') καὶ ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἑμαυτοῦ,
 (c') ἀληθής ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία μου,

C (a) ὅτι οἶδα πόθεν ἦλθον καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγω·
 (a') ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἔρχομαι ἢ ποῦ ὑπάγω.

D 8:15 (a) ὑμεῖς κατὰ τὴν σάρκα κρίνετε, (b) ἐγὼ οὐ κρίνω οὐδένα.
 8:16 (b') καὶ ἐὰν κρίνω δὲ ἐγώ, (a') ἡ κρίσις ἡ ἐμὴ ἀληθινή ἐστιν,

B' ὅτι μόνος οὐκ εἰμί, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ.
 8:17 καὶ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ δὲ τῷ ὑμετέρῳ γέγραπται ὅτι δύο ἀνθρώπων ἡ μαρτυρία ἀληθής ἐστιν.
 8:18 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἑμαυτοῦ καὶ μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ.

C' 8:19 ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ· ποῦ ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ σου; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς·
 (a) οὔτε ἐμὲ οἴδατε (b) οὔτε τὸν πατέρα μου·
 (a') εἰ ἐμὲ ᾔδειτε, (b') καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου ἂν ᾔδειτε.

A' 8:20 Ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐλάλησεν ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ· καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπίασεν αὐτόν, ὅτι οὐπω ἐληλύθει ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ.

Form / Structure

As can be seen from the initial analysis of inclusions, vv. 12-20 neatly group themselves as a self-contained unit. On this point there is a general consensus among commentators. Even if we omit the *pericope adultera* and link 8:12 with 7:52, the concurrence of exegetes still admit that we have a new section starting with 8:12. The introductory “Again he said to them” is in fact repeated at the beginning of two separate sections:

v. 12 Πάλιν οὖν αὐτοῖς ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς

v. 21 Εἶπεν οὖν πάλιν αὐτοῖς·

The editorial comment by John in v. 20 neatly delineates the passage from the ensuing text. Furthermore, there is a noticeable change in themes between vv. 12-20 and 21-30. In 12-20, the key theme distributed throughout these verses is that of *witness* (μαρτυρία / μαρτυρέω), whereas the theme in vv. 21-30 is more along the lines of *dying in sin*.

This entire section is divided as follows: A B C / D / B' C' A'. This particular (and somewhat uncommon) chiasmic structure is what Girard refers to as a “parallélisme asymétrique” with a “pointe émergente.”¹²⁴ Whereas A / A' constitute the inclusions which delimit the unit, D represents the turning point of the discussion: B and C serve as arguments leading up to D, and B' and C' function as the subsequent supporting arguments.

As already mentioned, the inclusion found in **Blocks A / A'** is primarily the

¹²⁴ Girard, *Les Psaumes*, p. 69. Girard himself characterizes this particular chiasmic structure (a) (b) (c) (b') (c') (a') as one which departs from the more customary rules of parallel symmetry (rather than, for example, the familiar (a) (b) (c)/(c') (b') (a') or (a) (b) (c)/(a') (b') (c')); nevertheless, it is a valid pattern which is found in several Psalms (cf. 113:7; 143:4; 118:5).

repetition of Πάλιν οὖν αὐτοῖς ἐλάλησεν (v. 12)¹²⁵ with ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐλάλησεν (v. 20). It should be pointed out that whereas the repetition of ἐλάλησεν is strictly a *verbal* parallel, the introductory clauses (πάλιν οὖν αὐτοῖς and ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα) corresponding as well.¹²⁶ Note how ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ serves as a indicator of place,¹²⁷ as well as a close to the unit. The concluding words καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπίασεν αὐτόν, ὅτι οὕτω ἐληλύθει ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ are reminiscent of 7:30b: καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπέβαλεν ἐπ' αὐτόν τὴν χεῖρα, ὅτι οὕτω ἐληλύθει ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ.¹²⁸

Blocks B / B' parallel each other by the repetition of the key word “witness:” μαρτυρία (alone in section 12-20, vv. 13, 14, 17) and μαρτυρέω (alone in section 12-20, vv. 13, 14 and 18^{bis}). Block B divides itself nicely into the structure (a) (b) (c)/(a') (b') (c⁻¹) representing an *antithetic parallelism*.¹²⁹ This means that the initial statements in (a) (b) (c) are set in opposition those in (a') (b') (c⁻¹). Thus at (a) the Pharisees speak, in (b) they state a fact, and (c) they argue against that fact; this is countered by Jesus (a'), who reiterates and affirms the validity of the stated fact (b'), affirming that his witness is true (c⁻¹).

¹²⁵ The narrative begins with “Therefore, he said to them again.” The difficulty arises in whom “to them” refers to (assuming the *pericope adultera* is not original). “Them” may refer to the Pharisees of 7:47, but the text remains somewhat vague.

¹²⁶ That ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα is emphatic see Abbott, *Grammar*, §2553c.

¹²⁷ Cf. 1:28; 6:10, 18, 23, 59; 11:18, 30; 21:8 for other examples where other geographical locators are indicated in the text subsequent the activity recorded in the narrative.

¹²⁸ Further references to ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ / ἡ ὥρα μου are as follows: John 2:4; 4:52, 53; 16:4, 21; 19:27.

¹²⁹ Cf Girard, *Les Psaumes*, pp. 61-62.

There is a further verbal parallel between vv. 13, 14 and 18 (blocks B and B´):

- 13 (b) σὺ περὶ σεαυτοῦ μαρτυρεῖς
 14 (b´) κἀν ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἑμαυτοῦ
 18 ἐγὼ εἶμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἑμαυτοῦ¹⁸⁰

Blocks C / C´ present themselves as parallels in which a key Johannine term and theme is recapitulated, that of οἶδα (vv. 14^{bis}, 19^{tres}). The theme repeated in both blocks is *knowledge vs ignorance*. Jesus knows where he is from, where he is going, and who his Father is. The Pharisees, on the other hand, do not know who Jesus is nor his Father. An antithetic parallelism can be detected in both blocks, the main clause in each block is repeated to form antithetic parallels:

- C (a) ὅτι οἶδα πόθεν ἦλθον καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγω.
 (a⁻¹) ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἔρχομαι ἢ ποῦ ὑπάγω.

- C´ (a) οὔτε ἐμὲ οἴδατε (b) οὔτε τὸν πατέρα μου.
 (a⁻¹) εἰ ἐμὲ ᾔδειτε, (b⁻¹) καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου ἂν ᾔδειτε.

Block D is the climax of the section. The key vocabulary in this block is κρίσις, both as a verb and noun: κρίνω (vv. 15, 16) and κρίσις (v. 16 alone in this section). Verses 15-16ab are structured as an *antithetic chiasmus*, (a) (b)/(b⁻¹)(a⁻¹). The judgement by the Jews “according to the flesh,” is set in direct contrast to the “true judgement” effectuated by Jesus. In other words, they ((a) the Pharisees) judge κατὰ

¹⁸⁰ Cf. 5:31 where Jesus states “If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.” These two passages appear to manifest a contradiction: does Jesus judge, or doesn’t he? It appears that the answer is a both/and rather than either/or situation. Jesus was sent by the Father for salvation, not judgement (3:16), but on the other hand Jesus witness has an intrinsic eschatological dimension, in that it evokes decision and judgement (3:17-21). The statements are not contradictory (cf. Carson, *John*, pp. 259-260; Brown, *John*, p. 340, 345).

τὴν σάρκα, but Jesus himself does not (b) (ἐγὼ οὐ κρίνω οὐδένα). However, even if Jesus would judge (b⁻¹), his judgement would be valid (a⁻¹) because he does not judge alone, but with the Father (ὅτι μόνος οὐκ εἰμί, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ). This can be illustrated as follows:

(a) you judge according to the flesh (b) I judge no one [κατὰ τὴν σάρκα - according to the flesh]
 (b⁻¹) and even if I judge, (a⁻¹) my judgement is true,
 because I am not alone, but I and the Father who sent me¹⁸¹

Comment

Within this first section, we find parallel ideas already referred to in the previous chapters (esp. chs. 5 and 7): Jesus validates and authenticates his mission. Block A contains a typically Johannine dualism, viz, *darkness vs light*.¹⁸² Block A' provides a circumstantial detail placing this episode in a definite, historical context. Jesus was teaching in the Temple, specifically in the treasury (area).¹⁸³ It can be suggested that

¹⁸¹ It is true that we have ὁ πέμψας με in both blocks D and B' (vv. 16 and 18). The identical repetition of this important clause could be used as a clue to a different text structure than what is presented here. However there are two mitigating factors that argue against this. Significant key words such as κρίσις and μαρτυρία parallel each other and remain united in blocks D and B'. Furthermore, ὁ πέμψας με is an adjectival participle (attributive, modifying πατήρ), and as such remains subordinate to the main clause. In light of this, the present model seems to suit adequately to the vocabulary itself.

¹⁸² The symmetry of v. 20 (faith in Jesus overcomes *darkness* and brings up *light*) correlates well with what was already said at 3:19 (men loving *darkness* rather than *light*: αὕτη δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ κρίσις ὅτι τὸ φῶς ἐλήλυθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον καὶ ἠγάπησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι μᾶλλον τὸ σκότος ἢ τὸ φῶς· ἦν γὰρ αὐτῶν πονηρὰ τὰ ἔργα.) and 5:24 (passing from *death* to *life*: Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὁ τὸν λόγον μου ἀκούων καὶ πιστεύων τῷ πέμψαντί με ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται, ἀλλὰ μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν.); cf. the discussion by Brown, *John*, p. 340.

¹⁸³ It is true that ἐν + dative has the primary meaning of "in" ("in the treasury"), but in this context ἐν has more of the force of "near" (in the immediate vicinity?). Certainly Jesus did not teach "in" the actual treasury room (cf. Brown, *John*, p. 342). Note the opposition to the subject (not explicitly stated) with the verb ἐλάλησεν: he spoke ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ ↔ διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ.

there is another parallel between ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων (v. 12) and ἐλάλησεν ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ (v. 20) in that claiming to be the “light of the world” represents what he was “teaching” them in the Temple.

The Pharisees’ objection was that Jesus’ self-testimony was not valid vis-a-vis Deut. 19:15 as well as by Rabbinical tradition.¹⁰² The primary explication of block B is found in its counterpart, block B’.¹⁰³ Brown cogently notes that the additional testimony of “two men” referred to in Deut. 19 “usually means two persons besides the one actually concerned.”¹⁰⁴ In this case, therefore, Jesus actually has only one additional witness, namely his Father (who cannot, physically speaking, actually witness!). Jesus explains to his objectors that though he does in fact bear witness regarding himself, his witness is nonetheless true. This is because he is not alone, but the Father (who sent him) also testifies in his behalf.¹⁰⁵ Jesus’ legitimate judgement against the judgement according to the flesh forms the central argument to the whole section. Having previously affirmed his divine origin (cf. 7:27-29), he does not need the testimony of another. The Jews regarded only the physical origin of Jesus (7:41) and thus were unable to see beyond mere appearances.

When the content of vv. 13-19 are examined, we can see why John identified this as a ‘teaching.’ If we briefly illustrate the teaching involved within each section, our

¹⁰² Deut. 19:15 states “A single witness shall not suffice to convict a person of any crime or wrongdoing in connection with any offense that may be committed. Only on the evidence of two or three witnesses shall a charge be sustained.” (cf. also 17:6) and the Rabbinical interpretation develops this as follows: “No man is authenticated through his own testimony...No man can bear testimony on his own behalf.” (Mishnah *Kethuboth*. 2:9).

¹⁰³ Brown (*John*, p. 343) states that vv. 14c, d and 15-16 “interrupt the sequence between 14b and 17” and opines that section 12-20 is actually composite from the parallel in chap. 5: 31-39. Although such form-critical questions are beyond the scope of the present study, nevertheless in our present structure, the development of B C / D / B’ C’ follows quite nicely in this present, final form.

¹⁰⁴ *John*, p. 341.

¹⁰⁵ For the seeming disassociation between Jesus and the Law of Moses (“your Law”) cf. Brown, *John*, p. 341, n. 17; Bernard, *John*, p. 296.

outline looks like this:

- A** **Jesus spoke these things**
 B my witness is true
 C you do not know me
 D you judge according to flesh
 B' my witness is true
 C' you do not know me nor my Father
A' **Jesus spoke these things**

The introductory statement that Jesus is the light of the world now introduces the section: his self witness as reliable because his origin and destiny are with the Father (vv. 13-14), and such testimony fulfills the requirement of the Law, because the Father also testifies to the Son (vv. 16b-18). Furthermore, the Pharisees do not know who Jesus is, because they do not know who the Father is (vv. 14b and 19). All of this is climaxed by the fact that it is because Jesus' opponents judge solely by what is visible that they do not recognize his divine origin (vv. 15-16).

The question "where is your father?" (19a) reveals the inability of the Jews to see beyond mere tangible manifestations. The ensuing answer by Jesus illustrates this: the triple references to "my Father" (vv. 16, 18, 19) clearly refer to the heavenly Father and not to the carpenter from Nazareth. Jesus clearly affirms his divine parentage, and this pretension is one of the principle grievances which the Jews hold against him.¹³⁸ To know Jesus was to know the Father, because ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἓν ἐσμεν (10:30).

¹³⁸ Cf. 5:18: διὰ τοῦτο οὖν μᾶλλον ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτείνειν, ὅτι οὐ μόνον ἔλεγε τὸ σάββατον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγε τὸν θεὸν ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ θεῷ.

B) John 8: 21-30

8:21 Εἶπεν οὖν πάλιν αὐτοῖς·
ἐγὼ ὑπάγω καὶ ζητήσετέ με, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ὑμῶν ἀποθανεῖσθε·

A (a) ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἔλθειν.

8:22 (b) ἔλεγον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι·
μήτι ἀποκτενεῖ ἑαυτόν, ὅτι λέγει·

(a') ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἔλθειν;

8:23 καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς

B (a) ὑμεῖς ἐκ τῶν κάτω ἐστέ, (b) ἐγὼ ἐκ τῶν ἄνω εἰμί·

(a') ὑμεῖς ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου ἐστέ, (b') ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμι ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.

A' 8:24 (a) εἶπον οὖν ὑμῖν ὅτι ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν·

(b) ἐὰν γὰρ μὴ πιστεύσητε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι,

(a') ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν

C 8:25 ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ· σὺ τίς εἶ; εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τὴν ἀρχὴν ὃ
τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν; 8:26 πολλὰ ἔχω περὶ ὑμῶν λαλεῖν καὶ κρίνειν,
ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με ἀληθής ἐστιν, καὶ γὰρ ἃ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ ταῦτα
λαλῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον. 8:27 οὐκ ἔγνωσαν ὅτι τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῖς
ἔλεγεν.

D 8:28 εἶπεν οὖν [αὐτοῖς] ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὅταν ὑψώσητε τὸν υἶόν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,
τότε γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι,

C' καὶ ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ ποιῶ οὐδέν,
ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ ταῦτα λαλῶ.

8:29 καὶ ὁ πέμψας με μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐστιν· οὐκ ἀφήκεν με μόνον, ὅτι ἐγὼ
τὰ ἄρσενά αὐτῷ ποιῶ πάντοτε

8:30 Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν

Form / Structure

This sequence of ten verses neatly cluster into two primary groups, represented by the blocks A/B/A' (*cluster 1*) and A/B/A' (*cluster 2*). We will first consider both clusters individually regarding their respective structure, but will consider the whole development from v. 21-30 in the following *Comment* section.

Cluster 1

As previously mentioned, v. 21 clearly indicates the start of a new section, so the argument need not be repeated again. **Blocks A/A'** contain distinct verbal parallels, and these confine around the center block B. **Block B** constitutes the pivot between the two and serves to bridge blocks A to A'.

The inclusion which delineates this unit of A/A' is based upon the following repetition:

A v. 21 ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ὑμῶν ἀποθανεῖσθε

A' v. 24 ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν

ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν¹⁸⁹

The fact that this is repeated three times reveals the gravity of Jesus' words vis-à-vis

¹⁸⁹ It is apparent that at v. 21 the text reads ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ὑμῶν ("in your sin") as a singular, but the parallel text of v. 24 is plural ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν ("in your sins"). Perhaps the interpretation is simply using the singular in a collective sense, but this variation is deliberate (cf. esp. Abbott, *Grammar*, §2544-2545). The change from "sin" to "sins" may be intentional rhetoric inclusive of one *sin* (unbelief) to the numerous manifestations of *sins* (ex. their hatred of him, accusations, plot to kill him, etc.). For the correlation between Jesus' "I am he" of 8:24 and Is. 43:10 "γένεσθέ μοι μάρτυρες καὶ γὰρ μάρτυς λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς καὶ ὁ παῖς ὃν ἐξελεξάμην ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι ἔμπροσθέν μου οὐκ ἐγένετο ἄλλος θεὸς καὶ μετ' ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔσται" (LXX) cf. Abbott, *Grammar*, §2223-2228 and the commentators.

his Jews opponents. Both blocks A and A' contain within themselves a chiasmus. In block A, the initial clause spoken by Jesus (ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν)¹⁴⁰ is reiterated by the Pharisees, and his statement that he will “go away” is misconstrued by his audience as a reference to suicide (μήτι ἀποκτενεῖ ἑαυτόν-- go away → kill himself). In block A' Jesus twice repeats the statement made previously, that they would ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν. Contrary to the initial statement in v. 21, this particular announcement is conditional: if they do not believe that he is the one,¹⁴¹ then they would indeed die in their sins. Jesus is categorical in his statements: he rebukes the Pharisees of their incredulity and warns them of his imminent departure. This is the second and final of such warnings, and the repetition between 8:21 and 7:33-34 is conspicuous:

7:33-34		8:21	
1. A little time I am with you	7.33 εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς: ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι	1.	8.21 Εἶπεν οὖν πάλιν αὐτοῖς:
2. I am going to the one who sent me	καὶ ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με.	2. I am going	ἐγὼ ὑπάγω καὶ
3. You will seek me	7:34 ζητήσετέ με καὶ	3. You will seek me	ζητήσετέ με, καὶ
4. You will not find me	οὐχ εὕρησετέ [με], καὶ	4. You will die in your sin	ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ὑμῶν ἀποθανεῖσθε.
5. Where I am you are not able to come	ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν.	5. Where I am going you are not able to come	ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. the parallel passage at 13:33 “τεκνία, ἔτι μικρὸν μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι· ζητήσετέ με, καὶ καθὼς εἶπον τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν, καὶ ὑμῖν λέγω ἄρτι.” (cf. Abbott, *Grammar*, §2578).

¹⁴¹ I.e., the Messiah (cf. 13:19 “ἀπ' ἄρτι λέγω ὑμῖν πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι, ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅταν γένηται ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι”).

In 7:33-34 the context of Jesus' statement is focused around the Jews seeking him; this is especially apparent in the fourth statement. However, in 8:21 the focus is now on those seeking him, and their inability to find him, because they will *die in their sin* (note in particular the contrast between "you will not find me" and "you will die in your sin").

Block B presents itself as the pivotal point in the argument between A/A'. The structure is formed with antithetic parallels of (a)/(b)/(a')/(b'). The antithesis is accomplished by the dualism which opposes he whose origins are "from above" versus those whose origins are "from below." The sharp contrast that Jesus establishes is a question of origins: whereas his adversaries are (a) ὑμεῖς ἐκ τῶν κάτω ἐστέ and (a') ὑμεῖς ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου ἐστέ, he is, on the other hand, (b) ἐγὼ ἐκ τῶν ἄνω εἰμί· and (b') ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμί ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.¹⁴²

Cluster 2

As in the previous section, the following segment likewise divides itself into a C/D/C' structure. The parallel between αὐτοῦ ταῦτα λαλῶ and ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος serves to bring up the conclusion to the unit. The Jews fail to understand Jesus' statements, not only regarding himself (vv. 21, 23) but regarding them as well (vv. 22 and 24). The question in v. 25, "who are you?" is the impetus for the developing argument in this new section.

The strength of the parallels between **Blocks C and C'** lies in the parallels. There are two verbal parallels and one thematic:

¹⁴² That Jesus' use of ἐγὼ εἰμί refers to the "I am" of the O.T. see esp. Beasley-Murray, *John*, pp. 130-131; Schnackenburg, *St John*, pp. 79-89; Abbott, *Grammar*, §2221b.

C	v. 26	ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με ἀληθῆς ἐστίν, κάγὼ ἃ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ	ταῦτα λαλῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον.
C'	v. 28b-29	ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐστίν·	ταῦτα λαλῶ.

The parallels between these two blocks are obvious. ὁ πέμψας με and ταῦτα λαλῶ are both found in C/C' and are clear parallels and serve as inclusions to the basic C/C' blocks. The terms κάγὼ ἃ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ and καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ, although not verbal parallels, certainly are thematically related, if not even interchangeable. Whereas the clauses κάγὼ ἃ ἤκουσα... and ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με... introduce the reasons as to why Jesus will only speak as he does: Jesus defines the nature of his teachings as coming not from himself, but from the Father:

C	v. 26	the things which I heard from him	these I speak
C'	v. 28	as the Father taught me	these I speak ¹⁴³

In the middle of this parallel is v. 27, which acts as parenthesis associated with the incomprehension of the Jews.¹⁴⁴

Block D represents a crucial statement in the present unit. There is an obvious correlation between the logion of the "lifting up" of the son of man in 8:28 and with

¹⁴³ Note the case of *hendiatriis* with λαλέω in vv. 26, 28 and 30:

v. 26 αὐτοῦ ταῦτα λαλῶ

v. 28 ταῦτα λαλῶ

v. 30 Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος

The clause ταῦτα λαλῶ (οὔτος + λαλέω) is definitely a Johannine expression, found 19 times in the N. T.: three times in the Synoptics (Matt 9:18; 13:34; Luke 24:36) 14 in John (John 8:20, 26, 28, 30; 12:36; 14:25; 15:11; 16:1, 4, 6, 25, 33; 17:1, 13) and two in Paul (1Cor 9:8; Titus 2:15).

¹⁴⁴ Note the use of οὐ + γινώσκω. Other examples of this combination to describe incomprehension can be found at 1:10; 3:10; 8:43, 55; 10:6; 12:16; 14:9; 16:3; 17:25 (cf. the discussion by de la Potterie, "Οἶδα et γινώσκω," p. 718f).

3:14; 12:32, 34. In the previous section, v. 13 introduces a objection posed by the Pharisees to Jesus, and the resultant discourse developed an answer to their protest. The present section follows the outline along the same general train of thought. Verse 25 contains a (mocking) question posed by the same Pharisees to Jesus—"who are you?" Jesus reaction to this question and the ensuing theological development is preserved in vv. 25b-29.¹⁴⁵

Comment

The seriousness of the discussion can be felt in the warnings of Jesus: when he is gone, *then* they will seek him, but this will prove futile. This was to be a warning as to the consequences of their unbelief and judgment, and is reminiscent of that found in Ezekiel 3:18.¹⁴⁶ There are a number of verbal parallels between vv. 21-30 and 7:33-36.¹⁴⁷ In v. 23 τούτου τοῦ κόσμου probably refers to more than the spatial or temporal

¹⁴⁵ The discussion is occasioned by the question "who are you?" (v. 25a), which has an immediate link to the previous claim made by Jesus (ἐὰν γὰρ μὴ πιστεύσητε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, ἀποθανεῖσθε ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν). At the same time, it reveals a complete misunderstanding of who Jesus is. Jesus immediately responds to the question (v. 25b) with τὴν ἀρχὴν ὃ τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν. This construction is a well-known syntactical difficulty within the Gospel. Brown (*John*, pp. 347-348) and Schnackenburg (*John*, vol. 2, p. 200-201) deal adequately with the various interpretations advanced from a difficult construction, and Brown's suggested translation, "what I have been telling you from the beginning" is most probable.

¹⁴⁶ Ezek. 3:19 "καὶ σὺ ἐὰν διαστείλῃ τῷ ἀνόμῳ καὶ μὴ ἀποστρέψῃ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομίας αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ αὐτοῦ ὁ ἄνομος ἐκεῖνος ἐν τῇ ἀδικίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἀποθανεῖται καὶ σὺ τὴν ψυχὴν σου ῥύσῃ" (cf. Prov. 24:9).

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Brown, *John*, p. 349 for a convenient list of parallels. Brown considers that John has simply "preserved two different forms of the same scene" (*ibid*). It is interesting to note the consistent misunderstanding of Jesus' audience. Whereas Jesus' initial prediction of his departure caused bafflement (7:35, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?"), in v. 22 they now think he is contemplating suicide ("Then the Jews said, "Is he going to kill himself? Is that what he means by saying, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?""). The words were a mystery to the Jews who heard them, but the reader of the John's Gospel understood full well that the departure was nothing more than his returning to the Father.

concepts of the world. It probably has an anthropological connotation of the world at enmity with the Father.¹¹⁶

The response of v. 25 illustrates precisely what Jesus said in v. 23. The Jews are offended by Jesus' speech and scornfully ask "who are you?" This question reveals that they still don't know who he is, because they refuse to hear his word. Admittedly, Jesus' reply to this question in v. 25 (τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν) is a *crux interpretum*, and is certainly one of the more difficult verses to interpret and translate in John. The Greek words do not actually form a sentence *per se*, and can be associated together in a number of ways. Brown¹¹⁷ and Schnackenburg¹¹⁸ have summarized the three most plausible replies:

1. From the beginning I have been speaking to you (*affirmation*)
2. How is it that I speak to you? (*question*)
3. Why am I speaking with you! (*exclamation*)

Of the three options, it is most likely the third which is to be preferred. It represents Jesus as exasperated at his audience in the face of a question to which could not be more obvious at this point. It likely reveals the frustrating experience of the unwillingness of the Jews to understand who Jesus is and what he is saying. In other words, since Jesus had already made himself sufficiently known (through his previous 3 years of ministry), he was now content to rest on his previous affirmations.¹¹⁹ He had

¹¹⁶ Vide "world" in J. B. Green, S. McKnight, I. H. Marshall (eds), *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1992) and R. P. Martin, P. H. Davids (eds), *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1997).

¹¹⁷ R. Brown, *John*, pp. 347-348.

¹¹⁸ Schnackenburg, *John*, p. 200-201.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Carson, *John*, pp. 345-346; Abbott, *Grammar*, §2154-2156. Vv. 25-27 are quite problematical, as is shown by the exegetes difficulties and by the conjectures advocated. Beasley-Murray

disclosed to them all that they needed to know, and any additional information would probably be pointless (hence his refrain from further discussion (v. 26)).¹⁵²

Despite the fact that Jesus has “many things to speak about them,” (v. 26) his words remain baffling, something which John points out in v. 27. But why are Jesus’ words still mysterious to his hearers, especially since vv. 16-18 are primarily focused on the identity of “the one who sent me” and “the Father.”

In v. 28 Jesus affirms another way in which his incredulous audience may come to know him: when they have lifted up the Son of Man, then they will know that he is the one. This is the second of three “lifting up” sayings,¹⁵³ and is a key verse in the section. His crucifixion (with the burial, resurrection and ascension implied), far from being the mere execution of a blasphemer, would in fact be his vindication as to who he was, and who his Father was.¹⁵⁴ The discourse ends with the affirmation that many believed on him (v. 30). But in light of the discussion what follows (cf. v. 31), it becomes clear that this faith was superficial.

Jesus task was not in judging, but “as calling into being God’s saving

describes v. 25 as the most obscure verse in the entire Gospel (*John*, p. 125). There have been no less than six solutions proposed:

- i. “Why do I speak to you at all?” (fathers, many scholars);
- ii. “Primarily what I am telling you” (Bernard)
- iii. “(I am) from the beginning what I tell you” (Barrett);
- iv. “(I am) what I have been telling you from the beginning” (many scholars);
- v. “I told you at the beginning that which also I am speaking to you (now)” \wp^{∞}
- vi. “I am the beginning, that which I am saying to you” (*lat*).

As worthwhile as these conjectures are, they do not fully explain this enigma. But it is to be noted that to answer a question by another question is a well known procedure of Jesus (ex., Matt. 12:10-11; 15:2-3; 19:3-4, 16-17; 21:23-25; John 18:33-34).

¹⁵² Cf. Abbott, *Grammar*, §2062, 2451.

¹⁵³ Cf. 3:14; 12:32-34, analogous to the three passion predictions preserved within the Synoptic tradition (cf. Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34 and parallels). The lifting up of the Son of Man is a moment of judgement because it confronts the Jews with the truth of Jesus’ identity.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. John 3:14-17; 12:32, 34.

judgement."¹²⁸ He already twice said that they would die in their sins (vv. 21, 24), and resumes what he has already stated in v. 16: his judgement was true, not because it was his own, but because it reflected the judgement of the Father. Although he could say a lot more about them, it would probably be nothing other than a hard judgement.

C) John 8: 31-36

A	8:31 ἔλεγεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς πρὸς τοὺς πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ Ἰουδαίους· ἐὰν ὑμεῖς μείνητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ ἐμῷ, ἀληθῶς μαθηταὶ μου ἔστε 8:32 καὶ γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς.
B	8:33 ἀπεκρίθησαν πρὸς αὐτόν· σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐσμεν καὶ οὐδενὶ δεδουλεύκαμεν πώποτε·
A'	πῶς σὺ λέγεις ὅτι ἐλεύθεροι γενήσεσθε
B'	8:34 ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν δοῦλός ἐστιν τῆς ἁμαρτίας
A''	8:35 ὁ δὲ δοῦλος οὐ μένει ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ὁ υἱὸς μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. 8:36 ἐὰν οὖν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλευθερώσῃ, ὅντως ἐλεύθεροι ἔσεσθε.

Form / Structure

This section is divided in a concentric structure of A/B/A'/B/A''. **Blocks A/A'/A''**

¹²⁸ Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. 2, p. 201. This is clearly tied in with the previous claim in 5:30, Οὐ δύναμαι ἐγὼ ποιεῖν ἀπ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐδέν· καθὼς ἀκούω κρίνω, καὶ ἡ κρίσις ἡ ἐμὴ δικαία ἐστίν, ὅτι οὐ ζητῶ τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἐμὸν ἀλλὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με. The authority to judge is relegated to Jesus, and the one who was sent by the Father; his judgements are true because they reflect the judgements of the Father himself.

and **Blocks B/B'** both contain thematic and verbal parallels. At least four parallels can be detected in our segment: ἐλευθερώσει - ἐλεύθεροι - ἐλευθερώση - ἐλεύθεροι (A/A'/A''); δεδουλεύκαμεν - δοῦλός (B/B'); γενήσεσθε - ἔσεσθε. (A'/A''); ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς - ὁ υἱὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλευθερώση, ὅντως ἐλεύθεροι ἔσεσθε (A/A''). At the centre (A') there is a question: "how" to become free? The whole pericope pivots around this question and provides an answer for it, not only in sections A and B, but in B' and A'' as well. A key term here is ἐλευθερώ. This word is found twice in John (vv. 32 and 36) and serves as the inclusion to the present section,¹⁵⁶ although its presence in A' is to be noted. Jesus informs his listeners that if they remain in his word "ἀληθῶς μαθηταὶ μου ἔστε." This parallels the final conditional clause in that those who adhere to the son would be set free.

The parallels can be illustrated as follows:

A	8:31	ἀληθῶς μαθηταὶ μου ἔστε
	8:32	καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς.
B	8:33	οὐδενὶ δεδουλεύκαμεν πώποτε·
A'		πῶς σὺ λέγεις ὅτι ἐλεύθεροι γενήσεσθε;
B'	8:34	πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν δοῦλός ἐστιν τῆς ἁμαρτίας.
A''	8:36	ἐὰν οὖν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλευθερώση, ὅντως ἐλεύθεροι ἔσεσθε.

Verses 31 and 35 both contain an initial statement which presents itself as either conditional or factual; and vv. 32 and 36 bring up the result of both propositions: *freedom*. The truth spoken of in vv. 31-32 is the emancipation from the slavery of sin.

¹⁵⁶ This expression is characteristic of Paul, as it occurs 5 out of 7 times in the pauline letters (Rom. 6:18, 22; 8:2, 21; Gal. 5:1).

The contrast is laid between freedom and slavery. This is further developed in vv. 35-36 using the metaphor of the son/slave.

Blocks B / B' contains the obvious parallel between δεδουλεύκαμεν and δοῦλος. In that they describe themselves as never having been slaves οὐδενί, Jesus contrasts this claim by asserting that they are in fact slaves τῆς ἁμαρτίας. Thus v. 34 is a direct rebuttal to the affirmation of v. 33.

Comment

Jesus begins by addressing those Jews who “believed in him;” they were to remain in his word to truly be his disciples. Yet in a short while these “believers” would be attempting to stone Jesus. This paradox is not easily explained, although the most probable solution is that their supposed faith was superficial and capricious.¹⁵⁷ The supposed faith was insubstantial, and Jesus knew it; 31b expresses the characteristic of the *true* disciple.

Verse 32 contains three important themes found in John’s Gospel: knowledge, truth, and freedom. These concepts presuppose an advancement or evolution in true faith. The initial stage is *knowledge*, precisely knowledge of the *truth*.¹⁵⁸ This knowledge of truth has the result in freedom, specifically freedom from *sin*. The Jews object and retort that they have never been slaves. Once again, John presents them as misunderstanding Jesus: whereas he is speaking of slavery to sin, they understand slavery from a political perspective (v. 33).¹⁵⁹ Beasley-Murray correctly notes that the

¹⁵⁷ “Almost certainly the words of Jesus in this section were addressed to the same type of unbelievers that we have been encountering all along.” (Brown, *John*, p. 354); see also Beasley-Murray, Carson and Morris for the fuller observations and comments.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. how ‘truth’ is personalized in Jesus (14:6).

¹⁵⁹ They conveniently ‘forgot’ that their entire history has been of enslavement and deliverance (Egypt, the period of the Judges, the Assyrian and Babylonian deportations, Greece and Rome). “With a

present (and subsequent) dialogue rests on a double misunderstanding vis-à-vis the meaning of freedom and Abraham’s true progeny.¹⁶⁰

Vv. 35-36 present a metaphor regarding the unbelieving Jews. Whereas Pharisees misunderstand Jesus’ reference to freedom, they claim to never having been enslaved to anyone. Jesus however is speaking concerning slavery to sin. The *slave* is not free (by the very nature of the principle), and though he might live in the master’s house, he can be expelled (esp. if the slave offends the master). On the other hand, the *son* is the heir to the father and consequently has a permanent place in the home. The purpose of this metaphor seems to be as a warning to the Jews that they, as slaves to sin, are in real danger of being cast out of the house of God because of their rejection of Jesus.

D) John 8: 37a-41a

A	8:37a	Οἶδα ὅτι σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε	ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ὁ πατήρ ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ ἐστίν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε, τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε·	8:39	A'
B	8:37b,c 38a	ἀλλὰ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν, ὅτι ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. ἄ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ·	νῦν δὲ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν ἄνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ· τοῦτο Ἀβραάμ οὐκ ἐποίησεν.	8:40	B'
C	8:38b	καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν ἄ ἠκούσατε παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ποιεῖτε.	ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν.	8:41a	C'

superb disregard for the facts of the situation as typified by the Roman yoke they maintain emphatically that they have never been in a state of subjection” (Morris, *John*, p. 457).

¹⁶⁰ *John*, p. 133-134.

Form / Structure

Dissenting from the previous sections, this section does not adopt a chiasmic structure, but rather parallel sections (“volets”). These appear to best represent, not only the verbal parallels, but also to allow a smoother flow of thought as the arguments develop. The primary reading of the text normally follows a linear route; that is, one would read the text above in the order of ABC / A´B´C´. The flow of the argument along these lines follows smoothly and naturally.

Segment 1 (37a // 39) provides the initial commentary: on the one hand, Jesus admits that they in fact σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε (=ὁ πατήρ ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ ἐστίν.) but then appears to question this in v. 39 where he says εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε.¹⁶¹ The following exchange reveals more substantially the veritable meaning of Jesus words.

Segment 2 (37b // 40) likewise includes identical terms. Both sections begin with a conjunction (ἀλλὰ and νῦν δέ),¹⁶² and Jesus twice reminds the Jews that ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνει. The two explanations illustrating their murderous desire may appear dissimilar at first glance, but a closer look reveals that the motive is really the same. The entire segment can be split up into 3 clauses. The *first* clause (37b / 40a) has Jesus twice reiterating the fact that his opponents are seeking to kill him.¹⁶³ The

¹⁶¹ This is a first class conditional clause, that is, the assumption of truth for the sake of the argument. In this context, Jesus argument would be: If you are the children of Abraham (and let us assume that you are), then... (cf. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, p. 689).

¹⁶² νῦν δέ is particularly favored by John, who uses it 7 times in his Gospel (8:40; 9:41; 15:22, 24; 16:5; 17:13; 18:36) as compared to the Synoptics (Luke 16:25; 19:42; 22:69); the phrase is, however, most popular with Paul, at 12 times (Romans 11:30; 1Cor. 5:11; 7:14; 12:20; 14:6; Gal. 4:9; Eph. 5:8; Phil. 3:18; Col. 1:26; Heb. 2:8; 11:16; 12:26).

¹⁶³ Regarding the difficulty involved in interpreting ἄνθρωπον see Brown, *John*, p. 357; Abbott, *Grammar*, §1934-1935, 2412a.

second clause (37c / 40b) provides the reason for their killing desire: his word has no place in them (ὅτι ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν.) and this word is the truth (τὴν ἀλήθειαν). The final clause (38 / 40c) provides the source of Jesus word: his relationship with the Father. “I have seen with my Father” (ἃ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ) and “I have heard of God” (ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ) are equivalent, and similar expression are used in vv. 26 and 28.

Segment 3 (38b // 41) is the final part to both rows. The key terms τοῦ πατρὸς ποιεῖτε are repeated in both columns, and reveal to what extent Jesus’ opponents misunderstand what he is talking about.¹⁶⁴

Thus the parallelism is quite complete, as can be seen below:

A	8:37a	I know that you are descendants of Abraham	↔	They answered him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children	8:39	A’
B	8:37b,c 38a	but ye seek to kill me, because my word has no place in you	↔	But now ye seek to kill me, a man that has told you the truth	8:40	B’
C	8:38b	therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.	↔	you are doing the deeds of your father.	8:41a	C’

Comment

This section focuses primarily on the heritage of the Jews as the descendants of

¹⁶⁴ Regarding the possibility the Jews may have been insinuating that Jesus was born illegitimately (“We were not born of illegitimate [but you were]”) see Brown, *John*, p. 357; Beasley-Murray, *John*, p. 135; Schnackenburg, *St John*, p. 212.

Abraham. Although they argue that they are children of Abraham (physically), Jesus redirects their attention to their spiritual heritage. Their antagonism towards Jesus showed that they were not spiritually akin to Abraham, who was a man of faith and obedience. On the one hand, to say that the Jews are descendants of Abraham is *true*, but inadequate because they viewed the merits of Abraham as covering their own faults. On the other hand, to say that those Jews are descendants of Abraham is *false* because they are seeking to kill a man who has spoken to them the truth he heard from God.

E) John 8: 41b-47

A	8:41b 8:42	εἶπαν [οὖν] αὐτῷ· ἡμεῖς ἐκ πορνείας οὐ γεγεννημέθα, ἓνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν. εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἦν ἠγαπάτε ἂν ἐμέ, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἤκω· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ ἐλήλυθα, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνός με ἀπέστειλεν.	ὕμεις ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν. ἐκεῖνος ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλήθεια ἐν αὐτῷ. ὅταν λαλή τὸ ψεῦδος, ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων λαλεῖ, ὅτι ψεύστης ἐστὶν καὶ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ.	8:44	A'
B	8:43	διὰ τί τὴν λαλιὰν τὴν ἐμὴν οὐ γινώσκετε; ὅτι οὐ δύνασθε ἀκούειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν	ἐγὼ δὲ ὅτι τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω, οὐ πιστεύετε μοι. τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐλέγχει με περὶ ἁμαρτίας; εἰ ἀλήθειαν λέγω, διὰ τί ὑμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετε μοι; ὁ ὢν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀκούει· διὰ τοῦτο ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἀκούετε, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἐστέ	8:45 46 47	B'

Form / Structure

As in the previous group, this next section likewise presents itself as corresponding tables (“diptyque” schema).¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Girard, *Les Psaumes*, 80-81.

Segment 1, A/A' provides a development in the argument originally introduced in the previous section. The key phrase repeated is ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ ὑμῶν with ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστὲ. The use of the εἰ...ἂν construction indicates a “contrary to fact” conditional clause.¹⁶⁶ Thus whereas in v. 42 Jesus presents an assumption (which is, in reality, contrary to fact), in v. 44 he openly denounces them and speaks factually: God is not their Father, and they are not children of Abraham. Having God as Father would result in the Jews loving Jesus (v. 42); but since they have the devil for father, they hate him, because they fulfill their father’s desire (v. 44).

The contrast is really between origins: Jesus came forth from God (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξηλθον καὶ ἤκω) whereas the Jews are described as being from the devil (ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου). Furthermore, the phrase ἓνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν has an antithetic parallel in v. 47 with ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἐστὲ. These two clauses also serve as inclusions to this unit, delimiting the boundary of the text. The false profession of the Jews “we have one Father–God” is summarily considered, evaluated and rejected by Jesus, who concludes “you are not of God.”

Segment 2, B/B' provides the climax of this increasingly hostile verbal exchange, and the association is twofold. There are a number of verbal parallels within these two segments of text. The introductory question introduced by διὰ τί finds its parallel in the response also introduced by διὰ τοῦτο; the word which Jesus speaks (τὴν λαλίαν τὴν ἐμὴν) is equated with the truth (τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω), and this word the Jews do not know (οὐ γινώσκετε) and do not believe (οὐ πιστεύετε); Jesus twice tells the Jews that they are simply not able to hear his words (οὐ δύνασθε ἀκούειν // οὐκ ἀκούετε); finally, as previously mentioned, the closing comments, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἐστε, not only parallels ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἐστὲ (v. 41b) but now brings to a conclusion this argument. The Jews “do not

¹⁶⁶ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, p. 694.

understand his speech” (i.e., lack the spiritual understanding of his message) because they cannot “hear” (i.e., accept) his word. This corresponds with the fact that they cannot “hear” him, because they refuse to accept the truth.¹⁶⁷ The rhetorical question simply confirms their guilt and provides them with no escape. Within the B´ block, verses 45 and 46 form a parallel:

(a) ἐγὼ δὲ ὅτι τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω, (b) οὐ πιστεύετε μοι. (c) τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐλέγχει με περὶ ἁμαρτίας;
 (a´) εἰ ἀλήθειαν λέγω, (b´) διὰ τί ὑμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετε

Comment

The debate begun in v. 13 is coming to a close. Jesus claims in v. 43 that the members of his audience do not understand what he is saying because they “are not able to hear his word.” Their slavery to sin has totally impaired them from receiving his words. The judgment is now pronounced: they are children of the devil, and the desire’s of their father is what they do. Jesus offers his own reason (v. 44b) for naming the devil as their father: he is a murderer, a liar and dishonest.

Having their filiation to Abraham eliminated, the Jews now return and make a new appeal: they were not born illegitimately, but have God for father.¹⁶⁸ Jesus responds by once again turning their attention to the fact that they cannot be children of God, for they are rejecting his words (B and B´). Because they reject his words, they

¹⁶⁷ Regarding λαλιάν (v. 43) cf. Abbott, *Grammar*, §2251.

¹⁶⁸ Denying that the Jews were the sons of Abraham is tantamount to claiming that they are unfaithful to the covenant between Abraham and God. In the O.T. ‘fornication’ was used as a symbol for idolatry (Hosea 1:2; 2:4-5; 4:13-14). The covenant has been portrayed as a marriage between Yahweh and his people (cf. Hosea 2:21; Jer. 2:2) and breaking the covenant was being guilty of fornication. If the Jews are not part of that covenant/marriage, then they would be considered illegitimate (so Beasley-Murray and Schnackenburg; Barrett and Brown understand the objection of the Jews as an attack upon Jesus for the rumors about his birth).

reveal their true filiation: they are children of the devil (A').¹⁶⁹ It is possible that Jesus' description of the devil as a liar¹⁷⁰ and murderer is a correlation with the lie and murder referred to in Gen. 3 and 4, but this remains equivocal.¹⁷¹ In any case, it is this murderous hate which motivates the Jews in hating Jesus.

The contrast between Jesus' words and those of the devil is further expressed if we compare works of Jesus against those of the devil:

44 He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.	VS	In him was life	1:4
Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own for he is a liar, and the father of lies	VS	I am...the truth	14:6
	VS	I speak the truth	8:43, 45
	VS	I speak these things as the Father taught Me	8:28

For every statement made about the devil, John presents the person of Jesus as constituting the exact opposite. Especially pertinent to our analysis is the source of the devil's words. Being by nature a liar and a murderer, whenever the devil speaks it is fundamentally deceptive and false. The fact that Jesus speaks the truth has been stressed as an indication that he comes from the Father; so too the lie is indicative of diabolic origin.

¹⁶⁹ The point is not that the Jews have been lying, for they have not been charged as liars up to that point (cf. v. 55), but rather that they are following the guiding of their father the devil, who is both a murderer and a liar, in seeking to kill Jesus (v. 40). Because they are children of the devil (whose nature contains no truth), this explains why they cannot hear or accept the words of Jesus—he speaks the truth. The Jews' failure to understand Jesus speech has been demonstrated by the many instances of their misunderstanding within chap. 8 (vv. 33, 39, 41) and is here attributed to their inability to understand his language.

¹⁷⁰ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν: is ἔστηκεν a 3rd indicative *imperfect* active or 3rd indicative *perfect* active of στήκω? The perfect form is preferred, yet the force of the perfect tense here is presumably as a *present*.

¹⁷¹ So Brown, John, pp. 357-358; Beasley-Murray, Schnackenburg and Carson think "liar" and "murderer" refers primarily to the lie and death of Adam and Eve (cf. 1 John 3:8, 12).

F) John 8: 48-59

A 48 Ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· οὐ καλῶς λέγομεν ἡμεῖς ὅτι Σαμαρίτης εἶ σὺ καὶ δαιμόνιον ἔχεις; 49 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἐγὼ δαιμόνιον οὐκ ἔχω, ἀλλὰ τιμῶ τὸν πατέρα μου, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀτιμάζετε με.

50 ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ ζητῶ τὴν δόξαν μου· ἔστιν ὁ ζητῶν καὶ κρίνων. 51 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εἴαν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ, θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

B 52 εἶπον [οὖν] αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· νῦν ἐγνώκαμεν ὅτι δαιμόνιον ἔχεις. Ἀβραάμ ἀπέθανεν καὶ οἱ προφῆται, καὶ σὺ λέγεις· εἴαν τις τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσῃ, οὐ μὴ γεύσῃται θανάτου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

C 53 μὴ σὺ μείζων εἶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ, ὅστις ἀπέθανεν; καὶ οἱ προφῆται ἀπέθανον. τίνα σεαυτὸν ποιεῖς;

B' 54 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· εἴαν ἐγὼ δοξάσω ἑμαυτὸν, ἡ δόξα μου οὐδέν ἐστιν· ἔστιν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ δοξάζων με, ὃν ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι θεὸς ἡμῶν ἐστιν, 55 καὶ οὐκ ἐγνώκατε αὐτόν, ἐγὼ δὲ οἶδα αὐτόν. κἂν εἶπω ὅτι οὐκ οἶδα αὐτόν, ἔσομαι ὅμοιος ὑμῖν ψεύστης· ἀλλὰ οἶδα αὐτόν καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ τηρῶ. 56 Ἀβραάμ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ἠγαλλιάσατο ἵνα ἴδῃ τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμήν, καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐχάρη

A' 57 εἶπον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι πρὸς αὐτόν· πενήκοντα ἔτη οὕτω ἔχεις καὶ Ἀβραάμ ἐώρακας; 58 εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραάμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί. 59 ἦσαν οὖν λίθους ἵνα βάλωσιν ἐπ' αὐτόν. Ἰησοῦς δὲ ἐκρύβη καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ

Form / Structure

This final section of 12 verses presents itself with a number of overlapping verbal parallels. The repetition of identical and synonymous terms makes distinguishing the structural outline more difficult than the previous sections. Proof of this can be seen by the fact that all commentators examined (with the exception of Bernard)¹⁷² do not divide vv. 48-59 into any segments, but simply offer a straightforward commentary on the text.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, for the present study we have proposed the following chiasmic structure along with appropriate comments. Overall, the argument develops as follows:

- A Jews reject Jesus; “you have a demon”
- B I do not seek my own glory / keep my word
- C Abraham and prophets died—who are you?
- B’ Father glorifies me / I keep his word
- A’ Jews reject Jesus; “I Am”

More than anything else, it is the identity of Jesus that distinguishes this section from the proceeding. Whereas vv. 41b-47 focused on the identity of the Jews (i.e., as not being neither children of God nor Abraham), this section now centralizes around the identity of Jesus: Jesus has a demon (vv. 48, 49, 52); Jesus and Abraham (vv. 52, 53, 56, 57, 58); Jesus and God (v. 54), concluding with a self-disclosure incorporating the most important of all the *ἐγὼ εἶμι* sayings (v. 58).

Blocks A / A’ operate as the beginning and conclusion of this final section. Admittedly there are fewer verbal parallels than one could have desired, but the thematic opposition which these blocks present still allows us to delineate some basic

¹⁷² Bernard offers a division of the passage, but this is due to his theory of “dislocations.”

¹⁷³ At best, commentators split vv. 30-59 into two substantial groups (vv. 30-47 and 48-59; cf. Table 5).

units. The first opposition is found between vv. 48 and 57. Jesus states that they reject God's words, and this is demonstrated by their sneering. The second opposition, between vv. 48 and 58 represents a blatant contrast in claims: the Jews accuse Jesus of being demon possessed (A), and Jesus responds by making the supreme of all ἐγὼ εἰμί claims (A'). The final pair of verses is not so much an opposition as perhaps a complimentary explanation: Jesus states that the Jews dishonor him, and prove him right by attempting to stone him!

Blocks B / B' contain several parallels. The initial statement by Jesus in v. 50 (ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ ζητῶ τὴν δόξαν μου) has its correlative in v. 54 (ἐὰν ἐγὼ δοξάσω ἑμαυτόν, ἡ δόξα μου οὐδὲν ἐστίν). Despite the lexical differences, the expressions are synonymous. The terms δόξαν / δοξάσω correspond to each other in vv. 50 and 54, both being quite unique to this particular section in John 8. The term γινώσκω is found in both vv. 52 and 55, itself being an important Johannine term.¹⁷⁴ Τηρέω is used both in keeping Jesus' words (v. 51) and in keeping the Father's word (v. 55).

Block C is the pinnacle of the section. The height of the argument is reached when the Jews berate Jesus and ask τίνα σεαυτὸν ποιεῖς? The succeeding sections (B' and A') preserve the heated argument which follows this reproach.

Comment

The entire section is modeled primarily upon an acrimonious question/reply format, headed by way of objections by the Jews against Jesus. Verse 47 now signals a new development in the debate. Within the preceding sections, Jesus' listeners responded to Jesus' speech by defending themselves and their heritage; but now they go on the offensive against him.

The Jews are not of God because they reject God's word (i.e., the teaching of

¹⁷⁴ *Vide supra* the study of de la Potterie on this regard.

Jesus, which he heard from God himself). They protest, and accuse Jesus of being a Samaritan and demon possessed (twice!). Fundamentally the Jews do not “know” the Father—thus they cannot keep His word, and consequently reject the words of Jesus (who was taught by the Father).

Verses 48-59 contains the climax of the debate between Jesus and the Jews. Verse 48 is the answer to the question raised in v. 46 (“why do you not believe me?”). To the Jews initial *ad hominem* attack that Jesus is a Samaritan and demon possessed, he answers that in reality he is merely honoring his Father, whom they do not know (vv. 48-51). Their ignorance of the Father explains their opposition to Jesus. His life and teaching is proof that he honors the Father. The next affirmation (“if anyone keeps my word, he shall never see death”) serves as a catalyst for the remainder of the discussion.

In verses 52-55 the argument revolves around the person of Abraham. Jesus’ motive in making such astonishing claims is not self-glory: rather he is merely doing the work the Father has given him to do. The Jews are provoked by what Jesus says because they are not “hearing” from the proper perspective. Whereas they consistently understand Jesus’ words from a human, physical point of view, he is speaking to them from a divine, spiritual perspective. The scornful reproach “whom do you make yourself *to be*?” is the turning point of the argument, since everything else that follows revolves around this question. The Jews bring up the person of Abraham anew, and Jesus answers their question by a statement which truly puzzles them.

Verses 56-58 contain the climax of the entire argument, begun in v.12. Regardless of the fact that Jesus was a man not yet in middle life, Abraham both “saw” and “rejoiced” in Jesus’ “day.”¹⁴⁸ This statement opens up an entirely new perspective regarding who Jesus is. Jesus not only welcomes the comparison between himself and

¹⁴⁸ Despite the difficulty in its exact meaning, the main thrust is not primarily that Abraham *rejoiced*, but rather that he “saw” Jesus’s day. Regarding the meaning of this verse, cf. esp. Abbott, *Grammar*, §2688-2689, Schnackenburg and Beasley-Murray on this point.

Abraham (the second greatest figure in Judaism next to Moses), but goes on to state that Abraham saw and rejoiced at Jesus' day.

This causes a confused and harsh reaction by the Jews ("how have you, a man not yet 50 years old, seen Abraham?"). The climax to it all is found in Jesus' last rebuttal to the Jews: Abraham was able to see his day because even before Abraham existed, Jesus already was. This proves that Jesus not only was in fact greater than the prophets and Abraham, but that he was the I AM of the O.T. The section concludes by stating that Jesus hid himself from their murderous actions.

Conclusion

This second of the two great discourses against the Jews (5:19-47 and 8: 12-59) is in extent the most considerable. With these two extended discourses, the undeveloped discourses in 12:44-50 and 13:31-36 and the short substantial utterances contained in ch. 7 are closely associated, and their adequate interpretation depends upon this material being taken as one whole in which the words of the prologue "he came unto his own, and his own received him not" (1:11) are expanded and explained. As in the discourses to the disciples (chs. 14-16) the themes remain constant throughout – the origin and destiny of Jesus, the nature of His witness to Himself, and the judgement pronounced upon the Jews – and characteristic phrases or key words tend to recur; but at each repetition of theme or phrase or key word its significance is extended by some modification in its application, so that the meaning of any single passage depends upon nuance of allusion rather than upon directness of statement.¹⁷⁶

The removal of 7:53 - 8:11b from the text of the gospel brings the discourse in ch. 8 into closer connection with ch. 7 (as already mentioned above). The scene is the

¹⁷⁶ Ex. compare 5:30-37 - 7:16, 28, 29 - 8:13-18, 28, 42 - 12:32, 49; 5:22, 30 - 7:24 - 8:15, 16 - 12:48; 7:34-36 - 8:21, 22; 7: 20 - 8:48, 52; 5:39-40, 45-47 - 7:19 - 8:39; 5:35 - 8:12 - 12:35-36, 45; see also 7:37, 38).

same: Jesus is teaching in the Temple (cf. 7:14, 37, with 8:20, 59).¹⁷⁷ The impression left upon the readers of the gospel is that the Feast of Tabernacles is still in progress, and that the themes propagated in the discourses of Jesus recorded in ch. 7 are again picked up and developed in a continuous discourse. The relation between chs. 7 and 8 is not unlike the relation between ch. 14 and chs. 15-16, the break at 7:52 corresponding with the break at 14:31.

¹⁷⁷ Even his exact position near the Treasury being carefully noted (8:20).

Chapter 3 - Johannine Use of the Perfect

Introduction

Before delving into John's particular use of the perfect tense, it may be worthwhile to review what the perfect tense is and how it is used. The perfect indicative in Greek denotes that the action of the verb is regarded as complete (at the time of speaking), and that its results are regarded as still existing. Wallace describes the function of the perfect tense as describing "an event that, completed in the past...has results existing in the present time (i.e., in relation to the time of the speaker)"¹⁴⁶ and Zerwick describes the use of the perfect tense as "indicating not the past action as such but the present 'state of affairs' resulting from the past action."¹⁴⁷ In other words, the characteristic aspect of the perfect tense is found in that, whereas it reflects the "completed action" of the aorist, it also exhibits the "existing results" of the present tense.¹⁴⁸

John contains a far more verbs in the perfect tense than any other book in the N.T. John chapter 3 records the highest number (21) of perfects, followed by with chaps. six and eight with 20 each. Apart from chaps. 2, 10 and 21 which score the lowest in all the Gospel, there remains a high number of perfects in each chapter. If we turn our attention to chap. 8 in particular, we note the following perfects:

¹⁴⁶ D. B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, p. 573.

¹⁴⁷ So quoted in Wallace, *ibid* (cf. the discussion on pp. 573-574 for further definitions).

¹⁴⁸ Turner (*Syntax*, pp. 84-85) specifically cites 2 Tim. 4:7 as an illustration of the force of the perfect: τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα ἠγώνισμαι, τὸν δρόμον τετέλεκα, τὴν πίστιν τετήρηκα "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." In these cases, the perfect conveys a sense of finality with the results extending to the present: Paul has fought, finished and kept in the past and *until now*.

Table 6 – Complete listing of all perfects in John 8:12-59

0.3	ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· κἂν ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἑμαυτοῦ, ἀληθῆς ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία μου, ὅτι οἶδα πόθεν ἦλθον καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγω· ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἔρχομαι ἢ ποῦ ὑπάγω.	οἶδα
17	καὶ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ δὲ τῷ ὑμετέρῳ γέγραπται ὅτι δύο ἀνθρώπων ἡ μαρτυρία ἀληθῆς ἐστίν.	γράφω
19	ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ· ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ σου; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· οὔτε ἐμὲ οἴδατε οὔτε τὸν πατέρα μου· εἰ ἐμὲ ᾔδειτε, καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου ἂν ᾔδειτε.	οἶδα
31	ἔλεγεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς πρὸς τοὺς πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ Ἰουδαίους· ἐὰν ὑμεῖς μείνητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ ἐμῷ, ἀληθῶς μαθηταὶ μου ἔστε	πιστεύω
33	ἀπεκρίθησαν πρὸς αὐτόν· σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐσμεν καὶ οὐδενὶ δεδουλεύκαμεν πώποτε· πῶς σὺ λέγεις ὅτι ἐλεύθεροι γενήσεσθε;	δουλεύω
37	Οἶδα ὅτι σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε· ἀλλὰ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν, ὅτι ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν.	οἶδα
38	ἂ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ· καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν ἂ ἠκούσατε παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ποιεῖτε	ὁράω
40	νῦν δὲ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν ἄνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἣν ἠκούσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ· τοῦτο Ἀβραάμ οὐκ ἐποίησεν.	λαλέω
41	ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν. εἶπαν [οὖν] αὐτῷ· ἡμεῖς ἐκ πορνείας οὐ γεγεννημέθα, ἕνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν.	γεννάω
42	εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ ὁ θεὸς πατήρ ὑμῶν ἦν ἠγαπάτε ἂν ἐμὲ, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἦκα· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ ἐλήλυθα, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνός με ἀπέστειλε	ἔρχομαι
44	ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν. ἐκεῖνος ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλήθεια ἐν αὐτῷ. ὅταν λαλή τὸ ψεῦδος, ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων λαλεῖ, ὅτι ψεύστης ἐστὶν καὶ ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ	στήκω
52	εἶπον [οὖν] αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· νῦν ἐγνώκαμεν ὅτι δαιμόνιον ἔχεις. Ἀβραάμ ἀπέθανεν καὶ οἱ προφῆται, καὶ σὺ λέγεις· ἐὰν τις τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσῃ, οὐ μὴ γεύσεται θανάτου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.	γινώσκω
55	καὶ οὐκ ἐγνώκατε αὐτόν, ἐγὼ δὲ οἶδα αὐτόν. κἂν εἶπω ὅτι οὐκ οἶδα αὐτόν, ἕσομαι ὅμοιος ὑμῖν ψεύστης· ἀλλὰ οἶδα αὐτόν καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ τηρῶ	γινώσκω οἶδα
57	εἶπον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι πρὸς αὐτόν· πενήτηντα ἔτη οὕτω ἔχεις καὶ Ἀβραάμ ἐώρακας;	ὁράω

This inventory will serve as the basis of our investigation. In the final analysis, only 2 verbs have been specifically chosen for a more detailed analysis. This was done so as to keep our investigation within reasonable limits as well as to serve as a test case for further study.

Before beginning our detailed analysis of verbs in the perfect tense, a word needs

to be said for those which have been eliminated. Far from being ‘discarded’ because of some relative unimportance, these verbs are quite important both within our pericope and in Johannine theology as a whole. But space restrictions have forced us to adopt a more pragmatic approach, and so certain decisions had to be made as to which verbs would be examined and which would be set aside for subsequent examination.

The following verbs will not be considered in this thesis: οἶδα (vv. 14, 19, 37, 55), γινώσκω (vv. 52, 55), γράφω (v. 17), πιστεύω (v. 31), δουλεύω (v. 33), γεννάω (v. 41), ἔρχομαι (v. 42) and στήκω (v. 44). Certain considerations had to be weighed in the balances regarding which verbs were to be studied and which were to be left out, and the following should provide a brief explanation. To begin, as far as οἶδα and γινώσκω were concerned, the masterful study by de la Potterie provided enough of a framework and persuasion that it was thought unnecessary to re-invent the wheel, as it were.¹⁴⁹ De la Potterie has presented a convincing case in considering both terms as having a particular ‘function’ in John, that it was thought best to address other verbs. γράφω was abandoned simply because in all 14 instances found in John, it was used either to introduce an O.T. quotation, or used as a reference to the O.T. Thus γράφω is commonly used (in the perfect tense) to describe things which have been written in the past and are still ‘preserved’ in writing, not only in John but throughout the N.T. as well.¹⁵⁰ πιστεύω is found six times as a perfect and 33 times as an aorist in John. It was wondered whether anything new could be added to the already multitudinous studies already available regarding πιστεύω, and so it was decided that perhaps a fresh investigation of a unrenowned term would be more appropriate.¹⁵¹ δουλεύω in found only

¹⁴⁹ Vide supra, pp. 14-20.

¹⁵⁰ Ex. John 6:31: οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν τὸ μάννα ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, καθὼς ἔστιν γεγραμμένον· ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.'"

¹⁵¹ Cf. "πιστίς" in C. Brown, *DNTT*, vol I, pp. 593-606.

once in John, precisely at 8:33.¹⁸⁴ It is impossible therefore to determine whether or not John's use as a perfect is particular, since there is no basis of comparison with other instances, either as a perfect or as an aorist. γεννάω is used six times as a perfect and twelve times as an aorist. Like γράφω, the instances γεννάω is used as a perfect in reference to being born, or giving birth. There is nothing unusual about such a usage, and so was dropped from consideration.¹⁸⁵ ἔρχομαι is found 11 times as a perfect but 62 times as an aorist. In this particular case, the sheer quantity of examples to be studied played against choosing ἔρχομαι as a sample, all the while recognizing its importance within Johannine theology.¹⁸⁶ The final verb, στήκω, was abandoned for study because, like δουλεύω, it is found only once as a perfect (8:44) and no cases as an aorist.¹⁸⁷ Thus, the two remaining verbs, namely λαλέω (v. 40) and ὁράω (v. 38, 57) will be examined in detail and will serve as our test cases for testing our hypothesis.

In order to determine whether or not the Johannine perfect has a particular value, a comparison will be made between the verbs λαλέω and ὁράω used as aorists and perfects. This is because the closest reflection to the meaning of the perfect tense is probably found in the aorist. As McKay already noted, the perfect was gradually supplanted by the aorist tense (even in N.T. times). There is more correlation between the aorist and perfect than between the imperfect and perfect. Hence this study will focus primarily between these two tenses.

¹⁸⁴ This verb is found 25 times in the N.T.: five times in the Synoptics, twice in Acts, and the remaining 17 instances in Paul.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. "γεννάω" in C. Brown, *DNITT*, vol I, pp. 176-179.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. "ἔρχομαι" C. Brown, *DNITT*, vol I, pp. 319-322.

¹⁸⁷ In the N.T. στήκω is found as a perfect only here at 8:44 and no cases as an aorist. It is found 10 times in other tenses, twice in the Synoptics, and seven in Paul.

A) λαλέω

The computerized search throughout the N.T. revealed the following statistics regarding λαλέω. Its distribution throughout the N.T. is as follows: Synoptics, 78 times; John, 59; Acts, 59; Pauline epistles, 76; Catholic epistles, 12; Revelation, 12.¹⁸⁸ According to the Liddell-Scott *Greek-English Lexicon*, the original meaning of λαλέω was to ‘talk’, ‘chatter,’ or ‘prattle;’ to utter a voice or emit a sound.¹⁸⁹ It was used to describe the sound of inanimate things, such as streams of water, thunder, musical instruments. In persons, it was a reference to the faculty of speech (i.e., the ability to utter articulate sounds, to speak)—it was onomatopoeic for the unassisted expressions of small children. Then, transferred to adult usage, it came to mean ‘chatter,’ ‘prattle,’ in deliberate contrast to reasonable speech. In later writers λαλέω = λέγω and meant to ‘speak’ or ‘to talk.’ Subsequently its meaning was related to speaking, to use words in order to declare one’s mind and disclose one’s thoughts.¹⁹⁰

De la Potterie has noted John’s fondness for the verb λαλεῖν.¹⁹¹ He observes that John’s use is practically never in regards to a ordinary conversation, but rather is used

¹⁸⁸ R. Morgenthaler, *Statistik des Neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes*, (Zurich: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1982), p. 116.

¹⁸⁹ For further discussion and many examples, cf. “λαλέω” in H. Balz and G. Schneider (ed), *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981); C. Brown, (ed). *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978). According to Hübner, λαλέω is eleventh in frequency among N.T. verbs (*ibid.*).

¹⁹⁰ In the LXX λαλέω is found some 1105 times, primarily for the Hebrew דבר, as well as for אמר. In the N.T. there are no less than 12 separate words sharing identical root with λαλέω (cf. X. Jacques, *List of New Testament Words Sharing Common Elements* [Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1969]; W. C. Trenchard, *The Student’s Complete Guide to the Greek New Testament* [Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1992]).

¹⁹¹ In John λαλέω is found as follows: 25 times as a present tense; 3 as Imperfect; 13 as Aorist; 13 as Perfect; 5 as Future, and none as a Pluperfect.

to describe Jesus as the subject doing the ‘speaking’ (47 times out of 60).¹⁶⁰ In the present section, we will examine all the uses of λαλέω as found in 8:12-59, with an extended analysis where it appears as a perfect.

1) λαλέω in John 8:12-59

Within our text of 8:12-59 λαλέω is found in the following verses: 12, 20, 25, 26^{bis}, 28, 30, 38, 40, 44^{bis}. It is necessary first to examine and evaluate the occurrences in our pericope, and then examine those occurring outside our text.

a) 8:12, 20

In the previous chapter we attentively outlined and examined each mini-structure of John 8. Taking up anew our structure, verses 12 and 20 parallel each other as follows:

	8:12	Πάλιν οὖν αὐτοῖς ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων·
A		ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου· ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἐμοὶ οὐ μὴ περιπατήσει ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ, ἀλλ’ ἔξει τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς.
A’	8:20	Ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐλάλησεν ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ· καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπίσασεν αὐτόν, ὅτι οὐπω ἐληλύθει ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ.

As we have previously noted in our structural analysis, the verbal parallel of ἐλάλησεν with Jesus as the referent in both cases (vv. 12 and 20) confirm our argument that they

¹⁶⁰ “Jean, qui se sert 266 fois du verbe λέγειν ...ne l’utilise jamais pour la révélation proprement dite, c’est-à-dire pour la communication directe d’une «parole» céleste, faite par Dieu, l’Esprit ou un ange. Dans ce cas, il emploie λαλεῖν.” I. De la Potterie, *La vérité dans Saint Jean*, 2 vols. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1977), vol. 1, p. 56 (cf. also p. 40).

are inclusive indicators to the whole pericope. Whereas v. 12 simply depicts Jesus as ‘speaking to them’ John now characterizes this as ‘teaching’ (v. 20).¹⁹³ As John 7:53-8:11 would have been unknown to John,¹⁹⁴ and as Jesus had no part in the discussions found in 7:40-52, the remaining reference is to John 7:37-39; πάλιν ἐλάλησεν functions then as a continuation, an augment of the preceding discourse.¹⁹⁵

Jesus is not merely speaking to a multitude of people about human affairs—he is teaching them about the relationship between himself and his Father, their acceptance/rejection notwithstanding. As Schnackenburg observes, the ῥήματα of Jesus “are more than human words; they are divine words of revelation (3:34; 8:47; 12:47-48)”¹⁹⁶ and these words Jesus spoke (ἐλάλησεν) about himself as the ‘light of the world.’ ἐλάλησεν of v. 20 undoubtedly refers to the discourse preserved in the previous verses. In both cases ἐλάλησεν has a reference to the fact the act of Jesus is here viewed as a whole.¹⁹⁷

b) 8:25, 26^{bis}, 28, 30

Inasmuch as we have already examined in greater detail the complete structure of 8:21-30 previously, we will here focus exclusively on the section containing λαλέω. There is

¹⁹³ As Brown notes in his commentary, the repetition of ἐλάλησεν functions as the inclusions to this pericope; they serve to delineate this section, not only from 8:1-11, but from v. 21 onwards (*John*, 342; agreeing with Brown are Schnackenburg, Beasley-Murray, Barrett and Carson regarding the use of πάλιν ἐλάλησεν). Just as in v. 21, the similar transition and the recurring πάλιν introduce again a new discourse.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. our discussion in the *Maxi-Structure of John 8* (p. 41-43).

¹⁹⁵ Bernard, *John*, vol. 2, p. 291 states that πάλιν does not fit the context of the discourse which follows, for it is merely resumptive or indicative of the beginning of a new section, as at v. 21.”

¹⁹⁶ Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. 2, p. 195.

¹⁹⁷ The aorist here may be viewed as a complexive/constantive aorist, where the teaching of Jesus is summed up in the clause Ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐλάλησεν.

a close correspondence regarding several points found in blocks C and C' (ex. the relationship of Jesus and his Father, including several thematic and verbal repetitions, carefully arranged within the developing argument; cf. chart on next page).¹⁹⁸ In particular a generous number of occurrences of λαλέω (five in six verses). In all five cases λαλέω is the term used to delineate the source of his message: it is from the Father.

Four times Jesus tells his audience that he does and speaks nothing of his own accord; but rather he openly attributes the source of his teaching to the Father. Even though he could have said and judged many things on their account (v. 26), nevertheless he was faithful to the task to which he was sent by the Father, viz, to only speak what he heard and was taught by the Father.¹⁹⁹

In all five cases λαλέω is used in the present tense. The kind of action represented here is durative or prolonged.²⁰⁰ From the beginning Jesus was speaking only that which he heard and was taught by the Father. What he speaks to the world is a continuing testimony (see chart next page).

¹⁹⁸ For a detailed examination of the same pericope but from a different perspective see P. Létourneau, *Jésus, fils de l'homme et fils de Dieu* (Montréal: Éditions Bellarmin, 1992), pp. 273-284.

¹⁹⁹ The use of λαλέω here reflects the act of continuous speaking, as can be inferred from the immediate context (esp. vv. 23-24). λαλεῖν καὶ κρίνειν (as infinitives, both direct objects of ἔχω) reflect Jesus' understanding of his mission: it informs us that he does not say many things which he has to speak and judge of them, but only that which he heard from him who sent him, i.e., to communication of divine truth to the world.

²⁰⁰ These could be classified as a "Descriptive Present" (cf. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, pp. 518-519).

C	²⁵ ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ· σὺ τίς εἶ; εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τὴν ἀρχὴν ὃ τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν;	<i>Identity of Jesus unknown</i>
	²⁶ πολλὰ ἔχω περὶ ὑμῶν λαλεῖν καὶ κρίνειν, ↔ ἀλλ' ὁ πέμψας με ἀληθὴς ἐστίν, καὶ γὰρ ἃ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ ↔ <u>ταῦτα λαλῶ</u> εἰς τὸν κόσμον.	<i>Jesus and the Father</i>
	²⁷ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν ὅτι τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῖς ἔλεγεν.	<i>Reaction #1: unbelief</i>
D	²⁸ εἶπεν οὖν [αὐτοῖς] ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὅταν ὑψώσητε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, τότε γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι,	<i>Identity of Jesus revealed</i>
C'	καὶ ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ ποιῶ οὐδέν, ↔ ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ <u>ταῦτα λαλῶ</u> . ²⁹ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐστίν· ↔ οὐκ ἀφήκέν με μόνον, ὅτι ἐγὼ τὰ ἄρεστὰ αὐτῷ ποιῶ πάντοτε	<i>Jesus and the Father</i>
	³⁰ Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν	<i>Reaction #1: unbelief</i>

Furthermore, ταῦτα λαλῶ is one of key phrases linking C and C', further illustrating their mutual interdependence. In both C and C' the discourse of Jesus is complimentary. He openly admits that his message is not his own, but is exclusively that of the Father. He only speaks what he heard (v. 26) or what he was *taught* (v. 28b) from the Father. The correlation between the duplicate use of ταῦτα λαλῶ, both connected with a subordinate clause, can be characterized as follows:

C	²⁶ καὶ γὰρ ἃ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ <u>ταῦτα λαλῶ</u> εἰς τὸν κόσμον.
	↕ ↕
C'	²⁸ ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ <u>ταῦτα λαλῶ</u>

What Jesus is speaking to them now is ἃ ἤκουσα παρ' αὐτοῦ ταῦτα λαλῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον: he says what he heard from the Father.²⁰¹ These phrases are not uncommon in

²⁰¹ Bernard submits that the demonstrative ταῦτα with λαλῶ refers to the specific teaching of this particular section (*John*, vol. 2, p. 304).

John (cf. the following: 8:38, 40; 15:15, as well as 3:31-32, 12:49). What we are presented with in these passages is the revelatory mission imparted to the Son by the Father. What the Son has heard with the Father (v. 26) and what the Father taught the Son (v. 28) is the substance of Jesus' teaching. The characteristic trait which appears between these two verses is the apparent equivalence of ἤκουσα and ἐδίδαξέν as the source of Jesus teaching on the one hand, and the direct connection between what he heard/was taught from the Father and what he is now presently speaking to the world.

This verse gives the crucifixion/resurrection/ascension an explicit revelatory significance—"you will know that I am." The lifting up will confirm what Jesus has been saying all along: he does nothing of his own (8:28b; 5:19, 30) and speaks what the Father has taught him (8:26c, 28b).

The link between blocks C/C' and D becomes clearer as the debate progresses. On the one hand, the contention within the text develops along the progression of the argument: at the beginning the identity of Jesus is unknown, whereas it will be revealed at the crucifixion. The first reaction to Jesus' proclamation is that of unbelief and ignorance, whereas as the debate advances, the second reaction is now one of belief.²⁰² What is prominent throughout is the perspective by which Jesus portrays himself in relation to the Father. All the things which he heard and was taught by the Father—and these things alone—are what he speaks to the Jews and to the world. These words are therefore revelatory words: they reveal the Father.

²⁰² Verse 30 presents the participle λαλοῦντος (together with αὐτου, functioning as a genitive absolute). The present tense here most likely reflects the contemporaneous action, "while he was speaking." Schnackenburg, who splits the section from vv. 21-29, considers v. 30 as an editorial note setting apart vv. 30-36; Brown likewise considers the genitive absolute (rare in John) as "the editors device for splitting the discourse into divisions," but divides the next section at v. 31 (*John*, vol. 1, p. 348).

c) 8:38, 40

A	8:37a	Οἶδα ὅτι σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε	ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ ἐστίν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε, τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε·	8:39	A'
B	8:37b,c 38a	ἀλλὰ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν, ὅτι ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. ἃ ἐγὼ <u>ἑώρακα</u> παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ <u>λαλῶ</u>	νῦν δὲ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν ἄνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν <u>λελάληκα</u> ἢν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ· τοῦτο Ἀβραάμ οὐκ ἐποίησεν.	8:40	B'
C	8:38b	καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν ἃ ἠκούσατε παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ποιεῖτε.	ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν.	8:41a	C'

The present section of text reveals increasingly hostile and irate Jewish opponents towards Jesus. Jesus himself is developing an even greater gap between himself and his audience, especially in the introduction of a new theme in v. 38 (not found in previous sections examined). These units of texts present us with several complimentary as well as antithetical parallels, all pregnant with meaning, and all within a relatively condensed text.

To begin, the question of 'fatherhood' is introduced in v. 37a and v. 39:

A Οἶδα ὅτι σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε

A' εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε, τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε.²⁰³

²⁰³ The condition in this verse is difficult to translate because it is a mixed condition in the Greek text (i.e., the verb in the protasis (εἰ "if") is present tense, while the verb in the second clause is past tense. Perhaps it is best to translate as "If you really are the children of Abraham, then you would be doing the works of Abraham" (cf. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 225).

In these verses Jesus directly engages the Jews' protest found in v. 33 ("we are Abraham's offspring, and have never yet been enslaved to anyone"). He grants their claim and does not deny their physical descent from Abraham, but proceeds to contrast this claim with their behavior (vv. 37, 39, 40)—a behavior not compatible with a true descendant.¹⁷² The desire to kill Jesus has been a constant part of the make up of chaps. 7-8,¹⁷³ and Jesus now identifies that desire as the result of the absence of his word in them. In fact the developing argument found in both ABC/A'B'C' develops along the following lines:

A	offspring of Abraham	children of Abraham	A'
	↓	↓	
B	my Father	my Father	B'
	<i>I speak what I saw</i>	<i>I speak what I heard</i>	
	↓	↓	
C	your father	your father	C'
	<i>You do what you heard</i>	<i>you do the works of your father</i>	

The fundamental contrast that Jesus is forcing the Jews to be aware of is not so much a question of the paternity of Abraham, but a contrast between his Father and their father, between his words and their reaction to it (i.e., their works). Jesus acknowledges their lineage from Abraham but that is as far as it goes; true descent is that which hears and accepts the message from the Father (as did Abraham) and the message is brought to them by the messenger sent from the Father, Jesus himself. The shift from "descendants" (σπέρμα) to "children" (τέκνα) of Abraham introduces a new theological metaphor into the debate. Its use here suggests that the ultimate focus of

¹⁷² Paul argues along similar lines in Rom. 2:28-29, where he makes the contrast between the external Jewishness (circumcision of the flesh) vs. internal Jewishness (circumcision of the heart).

¹⁷³ Cf. 7:1, 25, 30, 44-45; 8:20, 59).

the debate is on the relationship to God as Father and not Abraham.²⁰⁶ Having rejected his word, the Jews are ‘disqualified’ from any claim to Abraham. And the rejection of Jesus’ word (blocks B/B´) opens up the next fundamental contrast within this section involving the term λαλέω.

The contrast between B/B´ and C/C´ is closely linked along the following lines:

B	ἄ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ	B´	λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ·
C	ἄ ἠκούσατε παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ποιεῖτε.	C´	ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν.

In v. 40 the Jews’ desire to kill Jesus is measured up against two standards. First, it is measured against the truth from God which Jesus speaks; second, it is measured against the works of Abraham. The contrast is immediately set up between the words which Jesus is speaking (with the present λαλῶ and the perfect λελάληκα) and the actions of the Jews.

The contrast at this point is sharply set between the words which Jesus is speaking (v. 38a λαλῶ ↔ λελάληκα v. 40) and the actions of the Jews (v. 38 ποιεῖτε. ↔ ποιεῖτε. v. 41a). Because of the close connection between blocks B and B´ the question arises as to how the use of λαλέω as a present in v. 38a (λαλῶ) differs from that a perfect in v. 40 (λελάληκα)? Admittedly the perfect tense involves a present state of being which has resulted from a past action (a combination of linear and punctiliar action). But in the present case it is rather perplexing to retain a manifest distinction between the two tenses. Our structural analysis has allowed us to divide vv. 37a-41a as a separate unit of text as well as permitted us to recognize the corresponding segment units. That blocks ABC/A´B´C´ share verbal and thematic parallels indicate a tightly knit structure, the interpretation of which is based on the mutually interpretative blocks of text.

²⁰⁶ “Children” is used two other times in John and in both cases refers to “children of God” (1:12; 11:52).

The relationship is expressed between the truth spoken and the reaction to it. If the Jews were really τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ their works would reveal this: they would not be trying to kill a man who is speaking the truth which he heard from God. Abraham was a man who did not reject the truth from God but accepted it. This the Jews are not doing. The distinction between ποιεῖτε and λαλῶ appears to reflect itself in that “Jesus *speaks* the truth which the Father has given Him, but the Jews *do* the sinful things which the devil suggests, the present tense ποιεῖτε indicating a continual *doing*.”¹⁷⁵ The truth which Jesus is speaking is that ἦν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, an expression which describes the perpetual teaching of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, sc. that His words reveal the teaching and will of the Father.¹⁷⁶

It is somewhat puzzling to observe how John has set up a contrast between what Jesus *says* and what the Jews *do*. ποιεῖτε in both cases is a present tense, signifying a continual doing. This is used in contrast to what Jesus says, λαλῶ and λελάληκα. There does not appear to be any hard difference in the use of the present and perfect at this point.

The phrase τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα does not refer merely to ‘disclosing the truth’, but rather its meaning specifically refers to the proclamation of the truth of (divine) revelation. As for v. 40, it is in Jesus’ speech that “God reveals his truth and

¹⁷⁵ Bernard, *John*, vol. 2, p. 310. Beasley-Murray does not dwell on the variety of tenses represented by ἐώρακα/λαλῶ on the one hand and λελάληκα/ἤκουσα on the other. But Beasley-Murray is aware of the difference tenses, for he translates v. 38 as “I am speaking what I have seen in the presence of (my) Father” and v. 38 “...a man who has proclaimed to you the truth which I heard from God.” (*John*, p. 124); Morris (*John*, pp. 459-460) specifically refers to “speak” and “do” (i.e., λαλῶ and ποιεῖτε) as being both “continuous tenses. Jesus is referring to his constant message and their persistent practice” while Carson (*John*, p. 351) takes no notice of the variations. Barrett (*John*, p. 346) simply comments on the passage without referring specifically to the tenses: “Jesus does not speak of himself, but reveals what he has seen in the Father’s presence” (*John*, p. 346); as for λελάληκα of v. 40, this refers to “not simply ‘what is true’ but ‘the truth’ revealed in the whole mission of Jesus from God.” (*ibid.*, p. 347).

¹⁷⁶ See Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. 2, p. 490, n. 88. Schnackenburg observes (v. 38) that “Jesus’ task is to announce (λαλῶ) the revelation which is directly available to him through ‘seeing’ in the Father’s presence” (*John*, vol. 2, pp. 210-211).

his saving will.”²⁰⁹ The two occurrences are set up against one another within the blocks B/B’:

B ἂ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ ↔ λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ· B’

Our structural analysis and exegesis have not permitted us to distinguish any particular characteristic with the use of the perfect in block B’. This is inasmuch as both the present λαλῶ and the perfect λελάληκα are both set side by side as comparable to each other, if not even interchangeable. It can hardly be argued that there is an important difference between what Jesus ‘saw’ with the Father and what he ‘heard;’ the two terms appear to be interchangeable.

Likewise, the fact that the present tense λαλῶ is placed opposite the perfect λελάληκα likewise leads one to conclude that in this particular section the two terms are most likely interchangeable. As Wallace, Blass-Debrunner-Funk and Turner have well pointed out, the perfect sometimes functions with a *present* force and there is little distinction between the act and the results.²¹⁰ In other words, λελάληκα is a perfect tense but without the usual aspectual significance.

To conclude, this analysis has displayed the two fundamental contrasts between Jesus and the Jews: the Father of Jesus and the father of the Jews; the words of Jesus and the works of the Jews. The Jews’ *works* invariably exposes who their real father is, and Jesus *words* reveal his Father. His words (=the truth which he heard from the Father) has no place in them (v. 37b) and so they are seeking to kill him, because they neither know him nor the one who sent him. Despite the fact that within the initial stages of investigation the primary force of the perfect was used as our starting point,

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

²¹⁰ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, pp. 579-580; BDF, *Greek Grammar*, §341 (p. 176); Turner, *Syntax*, pp. 81-86.

our structural analysis and the indistinguishable use of $\lambda\alpha\lambda\acute{\omega} \leftrightarrow \lambda\epsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\kappa\alpha$ have led us to judge otherwise. At this point we can discern no indisputable distinction between the two.

d) 8:44^{bis}

A	8:41b 8:42	εἶπαν [οὖν] αὐτῷ· ἡμεῖς ἐκ πορνείας οὐ γεγεννημέθα, ἕνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν. εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἦν ἠγαπάτε ἂν ἐμέ, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἤκω· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ ἐλήλυθα, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνός με ἀπέστειλεν.	ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν. ἐκεῖνος ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλήθεια ἐν αὐτῷ. ὅταν λαλήῃ τὸ ψεῦδος, ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων λαλεῖ, ὅτι ψεύστης ἐστὶν καὶ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ.	8:44	A'
B	8:43	διὰ τί τὴν λαλίαν τὴν ἐμὴν οὐ γινώσκετε; ὅτι οὐ δύνασθε ἀκούειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν	ἐγὼ δὲ ὅτι τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω, οὐ πιστεύετε μοι. τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐλέγχει με περὶ ἁμαρτίας; εἰ ἀλήθειαν λέγω, διὰ τί ὑμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετε μοι; ὁ ὢν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀκούει· διὰ τοῦτο ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἀκούετε, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἐστέ	8:45 46 47	B'

As explained in the previous section, Jesus was erecting a contrast between his Father and the father of the Jews. Their rejection of him as the one sent from the Father revealed their twofold condition: *first*, their desire to kill him disqualified them from any filial claim to Abraham; *second*, their rejection of his words (i.e., the truth he heard from the Father) was a clue as to their true filiation to some other 'father.'²¹¹ In the present section, the identity of that father is now exposed.

This is the last time λαλέω is used within our pericope, and in both cases it is used as a present tense. Jesus now explicitly states that the father of the Jews is the

²¹¹ He provides two different but complementary explanations for their murderous desire. They reject him because:

- a) 8.37 ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν → *explicit reason*: his word has no place in their hearts
 b) 8.40 τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα → *implicit reason*: they reject the truth which condemns them

devil himself, and that their desires originate with the devil himself. But Jesus further qualifies the work of the devil in regards to *truth vs falsehood*: the devil speaks the lie (λαλή τὸ ψεῦδος), because it is within his nature to do so. It is interesting to note the particular use of λαλή at this point, especially in relation to the devils' speech. The words which Jesus speaks (B/B') are now contrasted with the words which of the devil (A')

B' τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω vs ὅταν λαλή τὸ ψεῦδος, ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων λαλεῖ, A'

Within our pericope as a whole (vv. 12-59) we have been accustomed to associating λαλέω with the revelatory words of Jesus. Associating this particular verb now with the lying words of the devil is more difficult to explain. The words of Jesus are words of truth, and the words of the devil reveal his innermost being, as a liar and murderer.

It is therefore paradoxal that Jesus uses the same verb λαλέω, a term he previously used to describe his own speech (ἄνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ), now suggesting that what the devil speaks can be tentatively understood as 'revelatory,' "une sorte de révélation à rebours."²¹² In other words, the use of λαλέω in relation to the words of the devil are meant to present an antithetic parallel to the revelatory words of Jesus. Whenever the devil speaks that which is false he speaks out of his inmost nature—"ces mots λαλεῖν τὸ ψεῦδος caractérisent l'action du diable comme contraire à celle de Jésus...le λαλεῖν diabolique consiste par conséquent à proposer une contre-révélation: non pas une révélation autonome et parallèle qui concurrencerait celle de Jésus, mais une parole qui tend à étouffer dans «les fils du diable» la croissance intérieure de la vérité de Jésus."²¹³

Even though we have initially sought to maintain a rigid distinction

²¹² De la Potterie, *La vérité*, p. 930.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 931.

between the perfect and the present tense, our examination has forced us to reconsider and reassess our initial opinion. We have examined the use of *λελάληκα* (in block B') within the unit as a whole as well as in contrast with block B, and have not been able to detect any obvious difference in meaning in regards to *λαλέω* as a present or a perfect.

2) *λαλέω* in the rest of John

α) *λαλέω* as an aorist

As previously mentioned, there are 13 cases of *λαλέω* as aorist in John. A closer inspection of these 13 occurrences reveals a particular stylistic pattern utilized by John. Many of these can likely be classified as *constative aorists*, i.e. they express an action as a completed whole without regard to length of time elapsed to accomplish it. These can be summarized as follows:

0.324	ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ ὑπηρέται· οὐδέποτε ἐλάλησεν οὕτως ἄνθρωπος.	The officers answered, “Never did a man speak the way this man speaks.”
12:36b	ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς, καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἐκρύβη ἀπ’ αὐτῶν.	These things Jesus spoke , and He departed and hid Himself from them.
0.528	ταῦτα εἶπεν Ἡσαΐας ὅτι εἶδεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐλάλησεν περὶ αὐτοῦ.	These things Isaiah spoke , because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.
12:48-49	48 ὁ ἀθετῶν ἐμὲ καὶ μὴ λαμβάνων τὰ ῥήματά μου ἔχει τὸν κρίνοντα αὐτόν· ὁ λόγος ὃν ἐλάλησα ἐκεῖνος κρινεῖ αὐτόν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ. 49 ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐξ ἑμαυτοῦ οὐκ ἐλάλησα, ἀλλ’ ὁ πέμψας με πατὴρ αὐτός μοι ἐντολὴν δέδωκεν τί εἴπω καὶ τί λαλήσω.	48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. 49 For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak.
0.64	εἰ μὴ ἦλθον καὶ ἐλάλησα αὐτοῖς, ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ εἶχσαν· νῦν δὲ πρόφασιν οὐκ ἔχουσιν περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν.	If I had not come and spoke to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.
0.209	Ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς	These things Jesus spoke ;

18:20-21, 23	20 ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς· ἐγὼ παρρησίᾳ λελάληκα τῷ κόσμῳ, ἐγὼ πάντοτε ἐδίδαξα ἐν συναγωγῇ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, ὅπου πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι συνέρχονται, καὶ ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν. 21 τί με ἐρωτᾶς; ἐρώτησον τοὺς ἀκηκοτάς τί ἐλάλησα αὐτοῖς· ἴδε οὔτοι οἴδασιν ἃ εἶπον ἐγώ...23 ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ· εἰ δὲ καλῶς, τί με δέρεις;	20 Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret. 21 "Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; behold, these know what I said."...23 Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?"
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Most of these examples are straightforward enough, and cause no difficulty in understanding the function of the aorist. Thus at 7:46 ἐλάλησεν refers to the speech which the officers previously heard; ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς at 12:36 and 17:1 likewise refers to the speech immediately spoken of by Jesus, and these three examples are analogous to the text found in our pericope at 8:20, i.e., ἐλάλησεν here simply refers to the speech as a whole.²¹⁴ Once again the verb λαλέω as an aorist is used to refer to the discourse Jesus has just uttered before his disciples.

A similar instance may be understood in 12:41, where Ησαΐας . . . ἐλάλησεν περὶ αὐτοῦ has a reference to the words spoken by Isaiah centuries before. Admittedly this particular interpretation by John reflects his own Christological view of Jesus as pre-existent, which he associates with the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy. Without downplaying the theological importance of the passage, ἐλάλησεν here directly refers to the words spoken of by Isaiah in the past. At 12:48-49 Jesus refers to his own words as those which shall judge the world.²¹⁵ The focus of the aorist here is not to the

²¹⁴ As Barrett notes, the word ταῦτα alludes to the farewell discourses of chs. 13-16 (i.e., to the words which he pronounced before his disciples *prior* to his high-priestly prayer). "Ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἐπάρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπεν" clearly distinguish between the words already spoken and those about to be pronounced. A few mss (N W 579) read λελάληκεν, but this is a harmonization to the immediate context, since 16:33 reads ταῦτα λελάληκα (with the necessary alteration from *first* person to *third* person; cf. Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. 3, pp. 433-434).

²¹⁵ These words are those καθὼς εἶρηκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ, οὕτως λαλῶ (cf. 7:16). Consequently the words of salvation which he pronounced during his ministry will become the words of judgement and

content of the message spoken but to the fact that the revelation was made in the past.¹⁸⁴ Along the same line, 15:22 contains Jesus' reference to his witness *against* the world. Here again ἐλάλησα refers collectively to the words spoken by Jesus, words which consisted of the revelation brought by Jesus. Since that revelation is from the Father who sent him, it entails the rejection of God himself.¹⁸⁵

In the final example (18:20-21, 23) Jesus is on trial before the priests, and there is an interesting interchange between the aorist and the perfect:

- 20 ἐγὼ παρρησίᾳ *λελάληκα* τῷ κόσμῳ
ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν
- 21 ἐρώτησον τοὺς ἀκηκοότας τί ἐλάλησα αὐτοῖς
- 23 εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ

There are four references to speaking during this exchange, but only one is a perfect – *λελάληκα*.¹⁸⁶ It appears that the repetitions of ἐλάλησα (aorists) are simply references to Jesus' public ministry of speaking and teaching: he spoke nothing in secret (v. 20). The private instructions which he gave his disciples are not denied, but the ministry

condemnation at the final judgement.

¹⁸⁴ De la Potterie pointed out how that in the particular uses of λαλέω here (in vv. 48-50) we have “en pleine lumière la portée révélatrice *des* paroles de Jésus: elles se ramènent toutes à *sa* parole, venue *du* Père” (*La vérité*, p. 44).

¹⁸⁵ “Jesus' words and works are evidence of his divine origin and they provide this proof in an indissoluble relationship with each other.” (Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. 3, p. 116; cf. Bernard, *St. John*, vol. 2, p. 494).

¹⁸⁶ Most mss (P^{66vid} C^c D^{supp} KMUWΓΘΛΠ ΞR f¹³ re//) have a simple aorist (ἐλάλησα), whereas others (SAB*C*D^{sup} LNΔΨ f¹ 33 565 pc and the text adopted by NA²⁷/UBS⁴) have the perfect *λελάληκα*. It appears that the most mss may have simply harmonized to the immediate context and used the aorist rather than the perfect.

as a teacher of the people is here in question.¹⁸⁷ But the use of the perfect is peculiar here. What does *λελάληκα τῷ κόσμῳ* mean? Turner describes its use here as an example of the perfect functioning as an aorist.¹⁸⁸ However this is not necessarily so. The use of the perfect may be in order to place an emphasis on the continuing results and effects of Jesus' testimony to the world. What he spoke to the disciples is set in contrast to what he spoke to the world, the continuing effect of his revelation (=his teaching). Analogous to this is the *ταῦτα λαλω* (present tense) of 8:26 in our pericope, where there is question of a perpetual 'speaking' (of the Father's revelation) which he testifies to the world. Whereas in 8:20 the emphasis is on the continual speaking, in 18:20 the emphasis may very well be upon the abiding effects of his testimony. Contrary to the aorist, the use of *λελάληκα* here appears to be with the purpose of accentuating the enduring and continued results of Jesus' testimony to the world, clearly set in contrast to the words which he spoke privately to his disciples.

6) λαλέω as a perfect

As in the case of the aorist tense, there are 13 instances of *λαλέω* as a perfect in John. Ten of these are found in the words of Jesus himself, while two others are in references to divine utterances. We will begin by examining these two unique examples first.

¹⁸⁷ *λαλέω* here in vv. 20-23 reflect the revelatory teaching of Jesus during his public ministry. De la Potterie expounds as follows: "ici de nouveau, le verbe λέγειν se réfère simplement à la la parole de Jésus sous son aspect humain, à sa prédiction que «connaissent» les Juifs; λαλεῖν la dépeint davantage comme une révélation faite ouvertement au monde, comme il ressort de l'inclusion antithétique du v. 20 (ἐγὼ παρησιάζω λελάληκα τῷ κόσμῳ, ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν)" *La vérité*, p. 57, n. 48 (*vide also idem*, p. 370).

¹⁸⁸ Turner, *Syntax*, pp. 69-70. Brown (*John*, vol. 2, p. 825) approvingly refers to Turner's explanation regarding the alteration between aorist and perfect at this point.

- i) 9:29 ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεὶ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἴδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν. “We know that God **has spoken** to Moses: but as for this man, we do not know where he is from.”

The O.T. allusions are obvious at this point (ex. Ex. 33:11; Num. 12:2-8).²²¹ God “spoke” to Moses is not simply a reference to the revelatory dialogue between God and Moses (as a historical event), but also that these words were recorded and subsequently preserved. Used in this context λελάληκεν is analogous to using γράφω as a perfect (i.e., “it is written”).²²² It seems to be used to emphasize that the written word still exists, and the significance of this seems to be that of present and binding authority.

- ii) 12:29 ὁ οὖν ὄχλος ὁ ἐστὼς καὶ ἀκούσας ἔλεγεν βροντὴν γεγονέναι, ἄλλοι ἔλεγον ἄγγελος αὐτῷ λελάληκεν. “The people therefore, who stood by and heard it, were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, An angel **has spoken** to him.”

The use of λαλέω as a perfect here is quite peculiar. The immediate context of v. 29 provides the necessary explanation to the crowds reaction:

27 Now my soul has become troubled; and what shall I say; ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 “Father, glorify your name.” There came therefore a voice out of Heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.”

The people have misunderstood the divine voice. Some have suggested that a clap of thunder occurred at that very moment, whereas others reasoned that some sort of divine intervention occurred, interpreting it as angelic in origin. But why use λαλέω as

²²¹ Schnackenburg comments on how the Jews, while claiming allegiance to Moses, do not in fact understand Moses because they “face the divine revealer about whom Moses wrote in incomprehension.” (*John*, vol. 2, p. 251).

²²² “The perfect tense ‘hath spoken’ implies that these words stand.” (Morris, *John*, p. 492).

a perfect?

No solution can be proposed at this point, although a tentative explanation can be proposed. It appears that the use of *λελάληκεν* at this point is equal to that of an *aoristic perfect*, i.e., used as a simple tense without concern for present results.²²³ In any case, no argument of permanence of revelation can legitimately be made at this point.²²⁴

iii) 6:63 et al. The remaining 10 examples are exclusive to Jesus' personal reference to his own teachings. He is providing a witness to himself, and characterizes his words in a unique fashion:

6:63	τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν τὸ ζωοποιῶν, ἡ σὰρξ οὐκ ὠφελεῖ οὐδέν· τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λελάληκα ὑμῖν πνεῦμά ἐστιν καὶ ζωὴ ἐστιν.	“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”
14:25	Ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν παρ' ὑμῖν μένων·	“These things I have spoken to you, being [yet] present with you.”
15:3	ἤδη ὑμεῖς καθαροὶ ἐστε διὰ τὸν λόγον ὃν λελάληκα ὑμῖν·	“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”
15:11	Ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ἡ ἐμὴ ἐν ὑμῖν ἦ καὶ ἡ χαρὰ ὑμῶν πληρωθῆ.	“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy might remain in you, and [that] your joy might be full.”
16:1	Ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα μὴ σκανδαλισθῆτε.	“These things I have spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.”
16:4	ἀλλὰ ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἡ ὥρα αὐτῶν μνημονεύητε αὐτῶν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἶπον ὑμῖν. Ταῦτα δὲ ὑμῖν ἐξ ἀρχῆς οὐκ εἶπον, ὅτι μεθ' ὑμῶν ἦμην.	“But these things I have spoken to you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.”
16:6	ἀλλ' ὅτι ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἡ λύπη πεπλήρωκεν ὑμῶν τὴν καρδίαν.	“But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart.”

²²³ Cf. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, p. 301; BDF, §343, where John 12:29 is specifically mentioned.

²²⁴ Commenting on v. 29 in particular, de la Potterie simply writes “le même verbe reparait pour dire qu'un ange a parlé (λελάληκεν) à Jésus...à chacun de ces endroits, la connexion entre le terme λαλέω et l'idée de révélation est manifeste” (*La vérité*, p. 40).

- 16:25 Ταῦτα ἐν παροιμίαις λελάληκα ὑμῖν· ἔρχεται ὥρα ὅτε οὐκέτι ἐν παροιμίαις λαλήσω ὑμῖν, ἀλλὰ παρρησίᾳ περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀπαγγελωῦ ὑμῖν. “These things **I have spoken** to you in proverbs; but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.”
- 16:33 ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα ἐν ἐμοὶ εἰρήνην ἔχητε. ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ θλίψιν ἔχετε· ἀλλὰ θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον. “*These things I have spoken* to you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”
- 18:20 ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς· ἐγὼ παρρησίᾳ λελάληκα τῷ κόσμῳ, ἐγὼ πάντοτε ἐδίδαξα ἐν συναγωγῇ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, ὅπου πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι συνέρχονται, καὶ ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν. Jesus answered him, “**I have spoken** openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.”

There is an interesting stylistic pattern observable. John employs οὗτος + λαλέω 14 times in his Gospel, seven of them as ταῦτα λελάληκα (14:25; 15:11; 16:1, 4, 6, 25 and 33).²²⁵ But why is there the use of λαλέω as a perfect in these particular instances?

In these examples, Jesus is not simply referring to his speaking ministry, but rather to the permanent value of revelatory teaching that he has transmitted. The words which Jesus spoke to the disciples will remain with them long after he is gone. The use of the perfect here would reflect therefore the enduring worth and immutable results of his words. In the seven examples with the idiomatic expression ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν, four of them constitute an ἵνα + subjunctive construct, indicating a purpose-result clause:

- 15:11 ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν → *in order that* my joy be in you, and your joy be full
 16:1 ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν → *in order that* you be kept from stumbling
 4 ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν → *in order that* you may remember that I told you
 33 ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν → *in order that* in me you may have peace

²²⁵ The remaining seven are found at 8:20, 26, 28, 30; 12:36; 17:1, 13. Cf. John 12:36 “ὡς τὸ φῶς ἔχετε, πιστεῦτε εἰς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα υἱοὶ φωτὸς γένησθε. ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς, καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἐκρύβη ἀπ’ αὐτῶν.” and John 17:1 “*Ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἐπάρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπεν· πάτερ, ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα· δόξασόν σου τὸν υἱόν, ἵνα ὁ υἱὸς δοξάσῃ σέ,* where we have ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν used as a narrative tool to “close” a segment of text where Jesus is teaching.

In each case the words which Jesus spoke has an abiding effect on the disciples: the words which Jesus spoke was applicable not only to the disciples who shared the last supper with him, but their permanence would endure afterward.

In the remaining three cases *λελάληκα* is used as descriptive of Jesus' language:

14:25	ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν →	while abiding with you
16:6	ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν →	sorrow has filled your heart
25	ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν →	in figurative language

The close relationship between Jesus and the disciples afforded them assurance from conflict, fear and doubt. Furthermore this can by extension be applied to the readers of John's Gospel as well. The return of Jesus to the Father was not the 'end' of communication with believers: the words of the Gospel remain, as does the continuing testimony of Jesus. The particular use of *ταῦτα λελάληκα* here reinforces the abiding and permanent value of Jesus' words.¹⁹⁴

In all the texts examined it is applied directly to the communication or transmission of the divinely revealed word, regardless of whether it is an oracle from God to Moses, the word from the Father to the son, or even the farewell discourse of Jesus to his disciples. The choice of the perfect was deliberate. The emphasis upon revelation and the preservation of the words of Jesus is clear.

¹⁹⁴ De la Potterie has also noted this particular turn of phrase and concludes that, far from being mere coincidence, "plusieurs indices suggèrent même que la formule s'élargit jusqu'à comprendre l'ensemble de l'enseignement de Jésus ici sur terre: les paroles de Jésus (τοὺς λόγους μου) se sont fondues dans l'unique parole (ὁ λόγος), venue de Père qui l'a envoyé (v. 24), et cette unique parole, Jésus la proclame (*λελάληκα*) et les disciples l'ont entendue." (*La vérité*, p. 362) and "c'est comme si Jean avait voulu insister sur le fait même des révélations accordées par Jésus et sur leur valeur permanente" (*Ibid.*, p. 42); cf. Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, pp. 463-464 [§ 2625].

3) Conclusion

We first began by examining all the instances of where λαλέω occurred within John 8:12-59, paying closer attention to the unit of text comprised in 8:37a-8:41b, where a close parallel is set between λαλέω as a present and perfect. The initial conclusion we reached was that there was no rigid distinction between the two. Indeed our structural analysis leads us to believe that the two tenses corresponded closely one to another so that an indisputable difference between the two could not be adequately maintained.

Keeping this in mind and to provide a basis of comparison with our initial assessment, we examined λαλέω throughout John both as an aorist and as a perfect. We have observed in these cases that the uses of λαλέω as an aorist remained constant throughout, where ἐλάλησεν usually referred to a past occurrence. As a perfect the emphasis focused not so much on the historical fact as it did on the abiding results and permanent value of the words of Jesus. John may have used λαλέω as a perfect more often to emphasize the existing results and abiding value, it appears that he did not do so mechanically. We have seen at least two examples (8:40 and 12:29) where the usual aspect of the perfect tense does not apply.

B) ὁράω

The computerized search throughout the N.T. revealed the following statistics regarding ὁράω. Its distribution throughout the N.T. is as follows: Synoptics, 34 times; John, 30; Acts, 16; Pauline epistles, 16; Catholic epistles, 10; Revelation, 7. According to the Liddel-Scott *Lexicon* ὁράω (used in a durative sense) has several meanings, primarily related to the act of “seeing:” to see, behold (i.e., physical); to see with the mind (perceive); to take heed, beware.¹⁹⁵ In the N.T. the stem of ὁράω is ορα, used only for the *present*¹⁹⁶ and *perfect* tenses. In the *aorist* the root is (F)ιδ (= εἶδα and εἶδον) while the root for the *imperfect*, *pluperfect* and *future* is οπ (= ὄψομαι, ἴδετε). In John ὁράω as an aorist is used 37 times, as a perfect 20 times, and 10 times as a Future (there are no occurrences as a Present, Imperfect or Pluperfect). As with λαλέω, we will first examine ὁράω within our pericope, and subsequently examine its use as a perfect and an aorist.

1) ὁράω in John 8:12-59

In John 8:12-59 ὁράω is used only twice, *viz*, at vv. 38 and 57. We will examine each occurrence separately and then compare the results.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. “ὁράω” in H. Balz and G. Schneider (ed), *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981); C. Brown, (ed). *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 3 vols (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978). In the LXX ὁράω is used primarily for the Hebrew רָאָה (and הִזִּית).

¹⁹⁶ No present in John, but occurs 20 times throughout the N.T.

a) 8:38bc

A	8:37a	Οἶδα ὅτι σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε	ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῶ· ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ ἐστίν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε, τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε·	8:39	A'
B	8:37b ε 38a	ἀλλὰ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν, ὅτι ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. ἃ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ·	νῦν δὲ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν ἀνθρώπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἢν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ· τοῦτο Ἀβραάμ οὐκ ἐποίησεν.	8:40	B'
C	8:38b	καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν ἃ ἠκούσατε παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ποιεῖτε.	ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν.	8:41a	C'

We have previously examined in detail the ABC/A'B'C' structure in relation to λελάληκα (cf. our study under λαλέω). There is no need to repeat here what we have already uncovered regarding the basic structure and the principal development of the controversy involved, i.e., the contrast between the Father of Jesus and the father of the Jews. This thematic equally applies within our study of ὁράω.

Verse 38a and b correspond to two separate segments within the volets B/B'. As previously mentioned, there are a number of parallels and correspondences between the two sections which need not be repeated here.²²⁹ For the present section, we are disadvantaged here because ὁράω in B has no correlative in B'. But there is an intriguing counterpart found with ἤκουσα; this, and the fact that both parallel sections contain a verb in the perfect tense: ἐώρακα and λελάληκα should assist us in inferring some sort of solution nonetheless.²³⁰ This can be illustrated as follows:

²²⁹ *Vide supra*, pp. 57ff.

²³⁰ These are not the only two perfects which occur in our section of vv. 37-41, as we also find οἶδα (v. 37) and γεγεννημέθα (v. 41). But as already mentioned, these verbs are not analyzed in the present study (cf. pp. 69-70).

ἃ ἐγὼ ἑώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ	↔	τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ
What I have seen with the Father I am speaking		I spoke the truth which I heard with the Father

It is interesting to note how John has juxtaposed ἑώρακα against ἤκουσα at this place. ἑώρακα is used to describe what Jesus *saw* alongside the Father: he is an eyewitness, and what he is speaking (λαλῶ) is the testimony of such a witness.²³¹ Jesus insists that his message is derivative: he both heard and saw his Father, so now he speaks accordingly.²³²

In contrast to this, ἤκουσα is used to describe the same situation, viz, where Jesus *heard* the Father, and now faithfully testifies accordingly. Used within this context the impression is given that the two verbs are used here interchangeably: both what Jesus *saw* and what he *heard* not only refer to the same intimate fellowship which he enjoyed with the Father, but to the source of his message (i.e., his ‘speaking’).²³³

Tentatively it could be argued that the use of the perfect here (rather than the aorist εἶδον) is done so as to deliberately stress the abiding results of what Jesus saw

²³¹ Cf. v 28 in our pericope. In fact, throughout chapter 8 the relation is constantly made between Jesus speaking what he witnessed alongside the Father:

- v. 26 ἃ ἤκουσα παρ’ αὐτοῦ ταῦτα λαλῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον
- v. 28 καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ ταῦτα λαλῶ
- v. 38 ἃ ἐγὼ ἑώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ
- v. 40 τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ.

²³² Some commentators understand what Jesus “saw” and “heard” with the Father originated in the interaction over time (ex. Godet), but most understand this as occurring in Jesus *prehuman* state. Regardless, the point is that he always acts as his Father (cf. 3:11-13, 34; 5:19ff; 6:46).

²³³ This apparent interchangeability between these two verbs is something De la Potterie likewise noticed: “D’après le IV^e évangile, disions-nous, l’objet de la révélation de Jésus est tantôt ce qu’il a *entendu* du Père, tantôt ce qu’il a *vu* auprès de lui: les deux verbes paraissent interchangeables.” (*La vérité*, p. 73; cf.: “Le trait caractéristique de ces différents passages est l’équivalence apparente des verbes «voir» et «entendre».” (*Ibid.*, p. 72)).

with the Father. This privileged fellowship which he enjoyed with the Father had an enduring quality about it which remained with him during his ministry. Brown notes the difference between the tenses in v. 38: *έώρακα* is a perfect tense and stands in contrast with *ήκουσά* and as such the contrast “seem to imply that Jesus had a pre-existent vision which continues into the present.”²⁰² Admittedly, this interpretation (focusing exclusively on *έώρακα*) is plausible. After all, the perfect has its unique force apart from the aorist and should be interpreted accordingly. But our structural analysis (composed independently of the verb tenses) has revealed how vv. 38 and 40 are complementary to one another (verbally and thematically). Can such a distinction be rigidly maintained between *έώρακα* and *ήκουσα*? It does not appear to be the case at this point. Can it be argued that what Jesus *saw* with the Father has an abiding value, but what he *heard* did not?

Perhaps another case of a similar *έώρακα* - *ήκουσα* alignment could shed some light on this. At 3:32 the text reads *ὃ έώρακεν καὶ ήκουσεν τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ, καὶ τήν μαρτυρίαν αὐτοῦ οὐδεὶς λαμβάνει* (what he has seen and heard, of that he bears witness; and no man receives his witness). Here *έώρακεν* and *ήκουσεν* are clearly associated together as one: Jesus is bearing witness of both what he has seen and heard. Can a distinction be maintained that the perfect tense used here is to stress the permanent value of what he saw, but not what he heard? Turner discusses the issue regarding *έώρακεν* and *ήκουσεν* as follows:

it is remarkable that *έώρακα* occurs so often in the N.T. and *ἀκήκοα* comparatively seldom; but to explain the aor. of the latter side by side with the perf. of the former by the theory that to have seen the Lord was a more abiding experience than merely to have heard him, is utterly fantastic.²⁰³

²⁰² Brown, *John*, vol. 1, p. 356.

²⁰³ *Syntax*, p. 85 (note that he specifically cites John 3:32 as an example of this).

In light of the correlative alignment between these two verbs in our blocks B and B' as well as the reciprocal theme found in both, it is not likely that one unit should be interpreted while disregarding its counterpart. Given the possibility that the perfect could function as an aorist, and that there is no theological difference between what Jesus *saw* and *heard* with the Father, it seems more likely that at this point *έώρακα* and *ήκουσα* both function as equivalents.

b) 8:57

The second use of *όράω* is found at v. 57. Within the A/A' blocks there is no counterpart for *όράω*, although there is the use of *είδον* twice in the immediate context of v. 56:

- A 48 Ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· οὐ καλῶς λέγομεν ἡμεῖς ὅτι Σαμαρίτης εἶ σὺ καὶ δαιμόνιον ἔχεις; 49 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἐγὼ δαιμόνιον οὐκ ἔχω, ἀλλὰ τιμῶ τὸν πατέρα μου, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀτιμάζετε με.
- B 50 ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ ζητῶ τὴν δόξαν μου· ἔστιν ὁ ζητῶν καὶ κρίνων. 51 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐάν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ, θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. 52 εἶπον [οὖν] αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· νῦν ἐγνώκαμεν ὅτι δαιμόνιον ἔχεις. Ἀβραάμ ἀπέθανεν καὶ οἱ προφῆται, καὶ σὺ λέγεις· ἐάν τις τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσῃ, οὐ μὴ γεύσῃται θανάτου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.
- C 53 μὴ σὺ μείζων εἶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ, ὅστις ἀπέθανεν; καὶ οἱ προφῆται ἀπέθανον. τίνα σεαυτὸν ποιεῖς;
- B' 54 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· ἐάν ἐγὼ *δοξάσω ἐμαυτόν*, ἡ *δόξα* μου οὐδέν ἐστιν· ἔστιν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ *δοξάζων* με, ὃν ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι θεὸς ἡμῶν ἐστιν, 55 καὶ οὐκ ἐγνώκατε αὐτόν, ἐγὼ δὲ οἶδα αὐτόν. *κἂν* εἶπω ὅτι οὐκ οἶδα αὐτόν, ἔσομαι ὅμοιος ὑμῖν ψεύστης· ἀλλὰ οἶδα αὐτόν καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ τηρῶ. 56 Ἀβραάμ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ἠγαλλιάσατο ἵνα ἴδῃ τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμήν, καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐχάρη
- A' 57 εἶπον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι πρὸς αὐτόν· πεντήκοντα ἔτη οὕτω ἔχεις καὶ Ἀβραάμ *έώρακας*; 58 εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραάμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί. 59 ἦραν οὖν λίθους ἵνα βάλωσιν ἐπ' αὐτόν. Ἰησοῦς δὲ ἐκρύβη καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ

As in the previous section, so here too we have a slight difficulty regarding *έώρακας*, in that there is no counterpart in block A. But this should not be entirely adverse to our

analysis as we attain some resolution nonetheless.

The Jews object that Abraham “saw” Jesus’ day, since Jesus was still a young man. The past tense εἶδεν (v. 56) is ambiguous at this point. Does it refer to Abraham’s lifetime, or to a revelation by God after his lifetime? The Jews appear to have understood Jesus words as referring to the Patriarchs lifetime; Abraham, while alive, had seen Jesus (their response treats his words with ridicule).²³⁶

It should be noted that Jesus himself did not employ ἑώρακα but εἶδον—it is his Jewish opponents that use ἑώρακας.²³⁷ Although this *could* be used to explain the use of ἑώρακα merely as a misrepresentation of what Jesus said, the fact that Jesus not only does not correct them but continues on with an accompanying vindication of his initial premise leads one to suspect that there was no misunderstanding.

Perhaps the Jews misunderstood the phrase that Abraham “saw my day;” did this involve some theophany, or some lasting vision of the patriarch?²³⁸ Schnackenburg’s comment at this point is appropriate: “The tense (ἑώρακας) tends rather to suggest a longstanding relationship between Jesus and the ancestor of the Jews. The purpose of the objection is to express the Jews’ contempt for Jesus: how can you, at your young age, presume to claim dealings with the venerable Abraham? The evangelist uses the objection to prepare the way for Jesus reply.”²³⁹ Additionally,

²³⁶ Cf. 2:19-21; 3:4; and 4:15 for other examples of misunderstanding Jesus’ words.

²³⁷ Morris notes this: “Notice that the Jews do not repeat Jesus exactly. He speaks of Abraham seeing his day, they of Him seeing Abraham” (*John*, p. 473).

²³⁸ De la Potterie writes: “Cette idée d’une sorte de présence de la vérité du Christ, même antérieurement à l’Incarnation, n’est pas étrangère au IV^e évangile: «Abraham, votre Père, a exulté dans l’espoir de voir mon jour» (8,56); «Isaïe dit cela, quand il eut la vision de sa gloire, et c’est de lui qu’il parla» (12,41). Dans ces deux cas, une vision prophétique de l’A.T. est explicitée à la lumière du fait chrétien; dans le deuxième passage, elle devient même une vision de la gloire du Christ” (, p. 631, n. 71). To add to the examples cited by De la Potterie we can add that of Moses (5:45-47). The use of ἑώρακα must mean more than the mere visual contact; that this is a difficult construct is evident.

²³⁹ Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. 2, p. 223.

within the argumentation of chapter 8, this further demonstrates how the Jews are not sons of Abraham. If Abraham really is their father, how can the Jews claim him to be their father if they desire to kill him, whereas Abraham rejoiced to 'see his day'? Abraham is here presented as a witness to Jesus on the one hand and not the father of the Jews on the other.

In v. 58 Jesus' response to the Jews makes clear that it is not an issue of overlapping life spans, but rather it involves his special relationship with the Father. His use of the absolute ἐγὼ εἰμί here express his unity with the Father.²⁴⁰ It appears that here, in contrast to the previous example, ἐώρακας does in fact represent the perfect tense as such and not used in an aoristic fashion. Bernard likewise distinguishes between the tenses and explains ἐώρακα as a reference to "the perpetual vision which the Incarnate Son had of His Father's will".²⁴¹ The words spoken by Jesus, Ἰδοὺ τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμὴν, have now become Ἰδοὺ τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμὴν, and this provides Jesus with a further opportunity to reveal himself.

2) ὁράω in the rest of John

a) ὁράω as an aorist (εἶδον)

Within the Gospel, εἶδον occurs some 37 times. In all but three cases, εἶδον retains the primary meaning of *seeing*, i.e., physical sight. Accordingly regardless of whether εἶδον is used in the context between Jesus with his disciples (1:48, 50; cf. 19: 26), with the crowd (4:48; 6:26), with people in general (6:30), or simply within John's narrative (7:52; 11:32), εἶδον is always used to describe the simple act of seeing.

²⁴⁰ The closest analogous statement to this in John is found in 1:1.

²⁴¹ Bernard, *John*, vol. 2, p. 310.

There are some exceptions to the common use. At 12:40-41 the text here is one among three in which John writes of “seeing” the glory of Jesus.²⁴² This text finds its source in Isaiah 6:1-13, esp. v. 10.²⁴³ The double reference to “seeing” is not the same in both these verses. John’s primary use of this O.T. passage is to explain the unbelief of the Jews vis-à-vis Jesus’ ministry. The reference to the Isaiah passage, along with τετύφλωκεν αὐτῶν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ ἐπώρωσεν αὐτῶν τὴν καρδίαν, ἵνα μὴ ἴδωσιν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ νοήσωσιν (v. 40) are clearly used in a figurative sense. In v. 41, however, John now explains why Isaiah spoke the way he did: he “saw” (in a prophetic vision) the glory of Yahweh in the Temple.

Finally, at 3:3 John writes “ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ.” As Schnackenburg rightly observes, ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ and εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ (3:5) are really one and the same.²⁴⁴ ἰδεῖν here is more than the mere physical seeing—rather it involves to partake of the kingdom, to take part in the resurrection and enjoy eternal life.²⁴⁵ It becomes clear from these examples that there is nothing peculiar or unique about John’s use of εἶδον.

²⁴² Cf. 1:14 (Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας) and 11:40 (λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· οὐκ εἶπόν σοι ὅτι ἐὰν πιστεύσης ὄψῃ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ;).

²⁴³ The glory which Isaiah saw in 6:3 was the glory of Yahweh. Here John speaks of the prophet seeing the glory of Jesus since the next clause “and he [Isaiah] spoke concerning him” can hardly refer to Yahweh, but must refer to Jesus. Since for the Evangelist Jesus is presented as the I AM of the O.T., it presents no problem to him to take words originally spoken by Isaiah of Yahweh himself and apply them to Jesus.

²⁴⁴ Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. I, p. 367 for many parallels.

²⁴⁵ E.g., 8:51 “he will never see death” (ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐὰν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ, θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.); 3:36 “shall not see life” (ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον· ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν τῷ υἱῷ οὐκ ὄψεται ζωὴν, ἀλλ’ ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ μένει ἐπ’ αὐτόν; cf. Carson, *John*, p. 188).

b) ὁράω as a perfect

This verb is found 20 times throughout John as a perfect. Generally speaking, the remaining cases where ἐώρακα is found fall into two broad groups: instances where the referent is Jesus, and those where the referent is the Father. The following cases are the remainder of ἐώρακα in John.²⁴⁶

Jesus as referent

At 4:45 the people of Galilee received Him, “having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast” (πάντα ἐωρακότες ὅσα ἐποίησεν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ). The visit of Jesus to this feast is recorded in John 2:13, 23. Already the text states that “many believed in His name, beholding His signs which He was doing.” After the close of the feast, Jesus departed and, passing through Samaria (4:3-4), he returned to Galilee (4:43). Now the same Galileans who previously were at the feast in Jerusalem immediately recognized and accepted Jesus, “having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast.” The ἐώρακα here is understood in light of the past events in Jerusalem. The abiding and continuing results of Jesus’ signs during the feast were still felt by the Galileans. The use of ἐώρακα here is well understood as emphasizing the abiding results which Jesus’ signs had upon the Galileans.

An analogous situation can also be found in other cases. Thus at 6:36 Jesus tells his listeners that “But I said to you, that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe” (Ἄλλ’ εἶπον ὑμῖν ὅτι καὶ ἐώρακατέ [με] καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε). Note how the perfect ἐώρακα is now set alongside the present πιστεύετε. It is the people of Capernaum that

²⁴⁶ According to K. Dahn, John uses verbs of *seeing* in a threefold sense: (i) perception of *earthly* things and happenings accessible to all men; (ii) perception of *supernatural* things and events, which only certain men enjoy; (iii) perception of an event, i.e., *revelation*; this involves a spiritual act of seeing, the sight of faith (cf. “ὁράω” in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3, pp. 511-518).

Jesus is speaking to (cf. 6:16-17), and these people refuse to believe in him. By placing ἐώρακατε and πιστεύετε together, the impression of continuity is given; the people have seen Jesus and the effect is continual and persisting, but they continually refuse to believe. The conjunction of both terms here reflects the continuous act of rejection. They witnessed Jesus' signs (6:26), but unlike the Galileans, they consistently abstain from believing. Another case involving the emphasis of 'seeing' Jesus along these lines can be found at 9:37, where Jesus commends the blind man because having seen, he now believes (εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καὶ ἐώρακας αὐτὸν καὶ ὁ λαλῶν μετὰ σοῦ ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν).

Analogous to the confession of faith expressed by the blind man in 9:37 there are other confessions directly linked with "seeing": so John the Baptist (1:34 "And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God" (καὶ γὰρ ἐώρακα καὶ μαρτύρηκα ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ)).²⁴⁷ Wallace specifically cites this example of a *consummative perfect*, i.e., it is used to emphasize the completed action of a past action or process from which a present state emerges.²⁴⁸ In other words, "there is stress on his seeing enough of Jesus [completed action] to make a reliable report."²⁴⁹ The author of the Gospel's comment at 19:35 most likely falls under the same category as 1:34.

A similar situation exists with the disciples in relation to the post-resurrection appearances, first with Mary Magdalene (20:18) and later with other disciples (20:25,

²⁴⁷ In 1:32-33 Jesus is the one upon whom the Spirit descends and who baptizes with the Spirit (32-33). John says the Spirit came to rest on (ἐμεινεν) Jesus. Μένω is a favorite Johannine word, used 40 times in the Gospel and 27 times in the Epistles (67 together) against 118 times total in the New Testament. The significance of μένω for John seems to be to express the permanency of relationship between Father and Son.

²⁴⁸ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, p. 577; Young, *Intermediate New Testament Greek. A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach* (Nashville: Broadman & Holmans Publishers, 1994), pp. 126-127.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

29).²¹⁸ Thomas has seen, and now believes because of what he witnessed. This may be a case of a perfect with a present force, where the present state of affairs is emphasized (in this case, the faith of Thomas).²¹⁹ Jesus himself testifies that what he is speaking is based upon what he has seen (3:11, ἀμήν ἀμήν λέγω σοι ὅτι ὃ οἶδαμεν λαλοῦμεν καὶ ὃ ἐωράκαμεν μαρτυροῦμεν). The effect of ‘continuity’ could be seen here by the close association between ἐωράκαμεν and μαρτυροῦμεν (perfect and present).²²⁰

The Father as referent

For the remainder of the examples the referent is the Father himself. No man has seen the Father (1:18; 5:37). At 5:37 in particular the text has perfects lined up one next to another: καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ ἐκεῖνος μεμαρτύρηκεν περὶ ἐμοῦ. οὔτε φωνὴν αὐτοῦ πώποτε ἀκηκόατε οὔτε εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἐωράκατε. These could well be *resultative* perfects, emphasizing the present results or present state produced by a past action. The permanence Only the Son has seen the Father, and keeps what he has seen before him. The contrast between men not seeing the Father and the Son who reveals him is emphasized even more in the following in 6:46, 14:7, 9 and 15:24. In 14:7, 9 the correlation between the two perfects cannot be passed over: they mutually accentuate the reality that the in the Son we have seen the Father, i.e., the Father has been fully revealed. It is clearly stated that no one has seen (ἐώρακα) the Father.

The use of the perfect here imply more than a theophany: it is the enduring

²¹⁸ “The perfect ἐώρακας describes an experience lasting into the present and has here, as in 14:7, 9 and 20:29 (Thomas) primarily a present sense.” Schnackenburg, *John*, vol. 2, p. 254. This is very interesting as it demonstrates that here too ἐώρακα as a perfect stresses the *present* context more than the action of the past (with continuing results).

²¹⁹ Young, *Intermediate*, p. 128 cites 20:29 as a particular example of this.

²²⁰ As for the use of ἐώρακα at 3:32 *vide supra*.

vision of the Father which is something no one has, except the Son.²⁵⁸ In all these cases the emphasis is on the fact that the Son has seen (έώρακα) the Father and further illuminates who the Son really is. It is he who has seen the Father, and what he saw has a lasting and enduring effect. Just as the Son saw (in a permanent and lasting consequence) the Father, so now the disciples can see the Father through Jesus. The effects of this are permanent and lasting, as the force of the perfect implies.

3) Conclusion

That the use of όράω has its particular usage and preference by John cannot be doubted. In other words, it is not merely seeing with the physical eyes, or even metaphorically as understanding; it incorporates both of these, but includes much more. όράω establishes an essential and vibrant link between the perception of earthly things and the perception of revelation/supernatural: this vision reaches its turning point in acknowledging Jesus for who he is. Admittedly όράω converges itself, as true perception, upon a person and upon certain events: Jesus, absorbed in the events of his terrestrial existence, a person and events which now continue on within the life of the Johannine community of believers.

But we have seen other instances where it is more difficult to maintain an uncompromising contrast between the perfect and the aorist. Deliberate as was the choice of όράω by John, there nevertheless remains instances where it is difficult to retain a clear unambiguous distinction between όράω as a perfect and an aorist. In this case we conclude that John does not always preserve a fixed usage of όράω as a perfect.

²⁵⁸ Cf. Ex. 24:9-11 where it is implied that some men have seen God. It is most likely that the John's discourse goes beyond the O.T. theophanies (which could not reveal God's central being), and refers to the fact that in his essential being, God has never yet been "seen" by men. This is not the seeing of the physical eye: God dwells in inaccessible light, he cannot be known except in Jesus, his living image (cf. 6:46 and 14:9). In this comprehension that statement of Deut. 4:12 ("you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form--only a voice") is not in contradiction with Ex. 24, but accords perfectly with John 1:18 *et al.*

Conclusion

The text of John 8:12-59 offers a glimpse into the controversy that Jesus faced with the Jewish leaders of his day. This final period in Jesus' ministry was marked by quarrels and contentions between Jesus as the one who was sent by the Father, and the Jews who held to traditional Judaism. Within these verses John carefully develops his argument and by successive argument furthermore takes this opportunity to reveal who Jesus is, what is his origin and what his teaching is. This debate in chapter 8 is certainly not unique in John, for there are numerous other portions which contain such contentions.²⁵⁴ The structural analysis has allowed us to not only gain a better grasp of the structure of the text, but has also permitted us to ascertain how the argument in general unfolds, together with the particular links between each new segment of text.

In chapter 1 we have presented the reader with the commonly accepted text of 8:12-59, albeit not without underscoring some important textual variants. This was followed by a survey of five authors who have attended to the question of the perfect tense in John. Some writers (ex. Chantraine) view the extensive use of the perfect by John as quite characteristic of John. Chantraine thinks this use of the perfect is particularly important for Johannine exegesis. Others (ex. Turner, de la Potterie), while recognizing the importance of the perfect in John, admit certain limitations: it could be a 'true' perfect but at times is almost indistinguishable from the aorist. In such cases there is no particular meaning or emphasis to be sought out, for John may simply be using a preferred tense form, or it may reflect the intrusion of the perfect tense within the domain of the aorist. The writers have all consistently maintain the importance of the select vocabulary and that this aspect takes precedence of the tense involved.

²⁵⁴ cf. 5:37-47; 6:41-58; 7:14-52; 9:4; 10:22-29 and 12:37-50.

Chapter 2 focused primarily on the structure of our text. Hence our analysis has confirmed the broad limits of our pericope allowed us to demarcate each composite segment. Having established the place and purpose of John 8 within the Gospel as a whole (*mega-structure*), we then confirmed that the chapter is composed of two larger portions. Once vv. 1-11 were eliminated, we then proceeded to analyze vv. 12-59 (*maxi-structure*). We substantiated through our breakdown that vv. 12-59 are composed of six separate units (*mini-structure*). Each self-contained unit not only emphasizes Jesus as the one who speaks for the Father, but allows the argument between Jesus and the Jews to unfold.

Chapter 3 now focused on the verbs used in John 8, particularly those in the perfect tense. Having eliminated some verbs from consideration (for diverse reasons), we settled on two prime verbs as the subject of our analysis: *λαλέω* and *ὀράω*. It was reaffirmed throughout our analysis the importance of the structure as a means to understanding the function of *λαλέω* and *ὀράω*. Once the analysis completed and tentative assessments made, other uses of *λαλέω* and *ὀράω* in John were examined and studied in a systematic fashion. This was done so as to fully understand John's particular use of these two verbs as perfects, and to determine whether or not the force of the perfect was consistently and rigidly maintained throughout. The conclusion reached in our study is that whereas John does maintain a certain coherence, there is no inflexible variance preserved: occasionally we have detected that there is an exception to the general practice in John's usage of the perfect.

In our structural analysis, we have sought to examine and evaluate whether or not there is in fact a particular use of such perfects, and whether there is a consistent use of such in order to emphasize some theological aspect. The conclusion we have reached assents to that expressed by the authors surveyed in our initial survey, viz, that 1) John deliberately prefers the perfect tense to all others and employs habitually; 2) there does not appear to be any rigid or mechanical application of the perfect tense. Our analysis of the structure and its corresponding units of text that, despite a relative

uniformity, there nevertheless are exceptions to this. For *λαλέω* we have seen that at 8:40 it appears to function more as a present than as a true perfect; at 12:29 *λαλέω* has the force of an aorist rather than a perfect. Regarding *ὁράω* we have seen a similar situation, where despite a relative consistency in usage as a perfect, there are exceptions, notably at 8:38 where we have determined that *έώρακα* functions more as an aorist than as a perfect.

These findings have demonstrated the need that further structural analysis needs to be done in John in order to determine where other (if any) instances where the perfect does not retain its usual aspectual force can be found. Had we limited our research to basic word analysis and statistics regarding the perfect tense, we may have reached somewhat different conclusions. But in this case, it was the form and meaning of the words coupled with the structural analysis that prompted us to reconsider the value of the perfect as used by John. Our conclusion is that, by and large John uses the perfect tense with its usual aspectual force, but occasionally deviates from his normal practice. And if this is the case with *λαλέω* and *ὁράω*, then the possibility exists that this may be the case with other verbs as well. Our results have proved promising and what now needs to be done is further detailed examination to other verbs to determine how the perfect tense fares in those cases.

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