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Echoes of Elisha in John's Gospel:

A Case for the Elisha Cycle as Intertextual Type-Narrative

By
Jonathan M. Ray

A Project Submitted to
the Faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Theology.

Saint Louis, Missouri

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Abstract

This thesis proposes that the Elisha cycle (2 Kings 2–8; 13) may serve as an overarching narrative plot structure for portraying Jesus in the Gospel of John. Though John never directly quotes or references Elisha, this thesis argues that Jesus' seven sign miracles in John intentionally correspond to episodes from the ministry of Elisha. Specifically, evidence is presented for a macro-level Elishianic "type-narrative" that spans Jesus' seven signs in John 1–11, as well as other micro-allusions to Elisha throughout the Fourth Gospel. In doing so, John portrays Jesus as one who parallels, yet ultimately transcends, all of Israel's prophets including Elisha.

Chapter 1 lays the groundwork by situating this study within the broader field of biblical scholarship and delimiting the scope of the study. A survey is conducted on prior research on Elisha's role in the Gospels, noting the scholarly contributions and gaps.

Chapter 2 defines and illustrates the unconventional term "type-narrative" and differentiates it from other literary devices like intertextuality and type-scenes. The chapter then illustrates the phenomenon with Greco-Roman examples like Virgil's use of Homer, as Jewish texts from the intertestamental period and the Hebrew Bible itself. These examples are used to demonstrate how literary adaptation of earlier textual archetypes was a widespread technique when the Gospel of John was written, a technique that serves to set up readerly expectations through recurring motifs and plot structures.

Chapter 3 refines Richard B. Hays' criteria for detecting scriptural echoes, extending them to encompass macro-allusions like type-narratives. The study outlines multiple indicators specific to macro-allusions like similar language, actions, text length,

sequence, and themes which can be used to assess proposed allusions between John's Gospel and the Elisha cycle.

Chapter 4 takes a deep dive into the Elisha cycle, demonstrating how his miracles of water, healing, and resurrection serve as typological antecedents for Jesus' ministry in John. Elisha is shown as a prophet like Moses whose narratives are structurally parallel to Elijah's, establishing a precedent for the proposal that Jesus in John is portrayed as a Mosaic prophet whose miraculous signs are structurally parallel to Elisha's miracles.

Chapter 5 represents the bulk of the study. It assesses the validity of proposed parallels between Elisha's miracles and Jesus' seven signs, focusing on water, healing, and resurrection motifs. This chapter argues that John intentionally mirrors the Elisha narratives to elevate Jesus as a prophet who corresponds to and yet transcends Elisha's role, culminating in Jesus identifying as the "resurrection and the life" to which Elisha's ministry foreshadowed.

The thesis concludes by evaluating the significance of these findings regarding the Jewishness and literary complexity of John's Gospel. While Elisha is not presented as the hidden key to interpreting the text, his narrative provides an important, though overlooked, dimension. This study broadens the discussion on conflated macro allusions and opens the door for further research into how type-narratives shape biblical narratives.

To my wife, Melanie

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Illustrations

Acknowledgements

Unless otherwise noted, translations come from the NASB (1995 Update) because of its hyper-literalness as an aid for comparing parallel texts: New American Standard Bible® (NASB®), Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. lockman.org.

When comparing the NT to the LXX, primarily the NETS is used (Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint (Primary Texts)* [New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007]), and alternatively the LES (*The Lexham English Septuagint* [Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012]). The LXX edition used is Rahlfs (*Septuaginta: With Morphology*, electronic ed. [Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979]).

Abbreviations

All abbreviations follow those provided Society of Biblical Literature, *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd edition (Atlanta, Georgia: SBL Press, 2014). Listed below are abbreviations not found in the *SBL Handbook.*

CCBNT   Classic Commentaries on the Greek New Testament

LEH   *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, Revised Edition.

NIVAC   NIV Application Commentary

NTM   New Testament Monographs

SBSlov   *Studia Biblica Slovaca*

LES   *The Lexham English Septuagint*

Chapter 1

Introduction

What indeed does Elisha have to do with Jesus? The question alludes to Tertullian's "What indeed does Athens have to do with Jerusalem?"[1]—a rhetorical challenge to the religious and academic syncretism of Tertullian's day. Typically, when authors use allusions like the one that begins this very paragraph, they do not decode them. They leave them unmarked and unexplained, trusting that readers will catch the reference. Explaining an allusion is like explaining the punchline to a joke.[2] Any punch the allusion could have had is lost if it requires explanation.

Such is demonstrably not the case for John. One can see how seldom John marks his allusions by comparing how many times each Gospel directly quotes the OT: 124 for Matthew, 70 for Mark, 109 for Luke, and only 27 for John.[3] Instead of direct citations, John prefers a multitude of unmarked OT allusions, which he assumes at least some of his readers will appreciate.

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[1] Tertullian, *Praescr.* 7.

[2] On the extended metaphor of joke as a hermenutical practice, see Peter J. Leithart, *Deep Exegesis: The Mystery of Reading Scripture* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 109–39.

[3] C. K. Barrett, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," *JTS* 48, no. 191/192 (1947): 155. Barrett's calculations are based on Westcott and Hort's critical edition of the Greek New Testament, as noted in both Brown and Hays: Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, AYB 29 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), lx; Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 78. Counts are sometimes calculated differently, but the disparity between John and the Synoptic Gospels remains. D. A. Carson totals John's OT quotations at 25: D. A. Carson, "John and the Johannine Epistles," in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 246; the most recent dictionary on the NT use of the OT totals John's OT quotes at 17: G. K. Beale et al., *Dictionary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2023), 686.

When Jesus proclaims, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), John does not pause and explain that "I am" is a reference to Exod. 3:14, and that by echoing this passage, Jesus was claiming to be the LORD incarnate.[4] Rather than pouring cold water on Jesus' inflammatory statement in 8:58, John leaves the allusion unmarked, unexplained, and unsung, trusting his readers to understand the reference and discern its significance. These kinds of allusions abound in John, like John the Baptist's reference to "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (1:29) or to Jesus' statement that Nathaniel "will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man" (1:51). Readers unfamiliar with the OT lamb symbolism and its connection to sacrifice and sin[5] or Jacob's dream of the Lord standing on a ladder in Gen. 28:10–22 can still understand their surface meaning but cannot appreciate them fully without understanding the background. Like viewing a painted portrait, one can see the subject's features without grasping the artist's choice of landscape in the background.

So, what indeed *does* Elisha have to do with Jesus in John? On the surface, not much. That is to say, Elisha is not present in the *foreground* of John's portrait of Jesus. Elisha's name does not occur at all in John, and explicit quotations to the Elisha cycle (2 Kgs. 2–13) are non-existent.[6] Against this light, this thesis may seem audacious, for it

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[4] See esp. G. K. Beale's discussion of John 5:58's use of Exod. 3:14 as well as Isa. 43:10, 13; and 43:25: G. K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*, JSNTSup 166 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 324–30; for a tie-in of John's I AM sayings to Elijah and Elisha, see Lissa M. Wray Beal, *1 & 2 Kings*, ApOTC (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 328.

[5] For the various resonances with lamb imagery in the OT, Apocrypha, and pseudepigraphal writings, see D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 148–151. Carson notes the likely difference between what John the Baptist may have meant by the term and what the narrator, writing from a post-Easter perspective, means by it.

[6] Andreas Köstenberger, for instance, does not include any references from 1–2 Kings in his list of "verifiable OT allusions and verbal parallels in John's Gospel," though he does pursue Elishianic allusions

will argue that the Elisha cycle is a key interpretive lens through which the author sees Jesus in Fourth Gospel.

Commentators consider echoes of Elisha in John 6:1–14 and 9:7 with 2 Kgs. 4:42–44 and 5:10, mainly because of shared language.[7] These bare-bones artifacts alone are not enough to argue for a wide-ranging influence of Elisha on the Fourth Gospel. Suggestions to the contrary have been met with about as much skepticism as the early explorers of the Amazon faced when they brought back shards of pottery and textiles as proof of a vast, ancient civilization in South America. A handful of artifacts was not enough to overturn an established, Eurocentric paradigm. Today, satellite imagery shows an intricate system of ancient, interconnected roads and ruins that provide conclusive proof that the early Amazon explorers were right. Some early Johannine explorers such as Günter Reim unearthed many echoes of Elijah and Elisha in John, but his work remained at the level of excavating individual passages and never the satellite view.[8]

In recent decades, several scholars have "zoomed out" as it were on the Gospels to consider an overarching interconnectedness of certain ancient narratives within the

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in the detailed commentary that follows: Andreas J. Köstenberger, "John," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 415–420, 467, 444.

[7] E.g., John Henry Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, ICC (Edinburgh: Clark, 1929), 175; Walter Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr; P. Siebeck, 1933), 92; Brown, *John I–XII*, 101, 233–35, 246, 372–73; Günter Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 207; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 207; F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel and Epistles of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), 214; Ernst Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 271–72; Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 270; Rodney A. Whitacre, *John*, IVPNTC 4 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 145; Andrew T. Lincoln, *The Gospel According to Saint John*, BNTC 4 (Peabody, MA; Hendrickson, 2005), 212–13; Colin G. Kruse, *John: An Introduction and Commentary,* TNTC (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity, 2008), 162; Dale C. Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 269n192, 271–272.

[8] Reim, *Hintergrund*, *et passim*; Günter Reim, "Die Sondersprache des Evangelisten Johannes – oder: warum spricht er so, wie er spricht?," *BZ* 49, no. 1 (2005): 93–102.

Gospel landscape. Mark and Luke have received the most attention from scholars like Thomas Brodie and Adam Winn,[9] while the Gospel of John remains virgin territory in this respect. Others like Raymond Brown, Joel Marcus, and Iain Provan have pointed out the considerable similarities between Jesus and Elisha using data points from all four Gospels.[10] Recently, Sukmin Cho, Christos Karakolis, and Matthew Klem have attempted to map out the interconnectedness of OT prophetic allusions in John, highlighting many unmarked allusions to Moses, Elijah, and Elisha.[11] Their work complements mine while differing on the size of Elisha's role in John.

D. G. Bostock set a precedent by proposing that each of Jesus' seven signs in John parallels episodes from the Elisha cycle.[12] To my knowledge, his nearly 45-year-old, three-page article remains the only study to suggest Elisha's overarching influence at

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[9] Thomas L. Brodie, "Luke 7:36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4:1-37: A Study in Luke's Use of Rhetorical Imitation," *Biblica* 64, no. 4 (1983): 457–85; Thomas L. Brodie, *The Crucial Bridge: The Elijah-Elisha Narrative as an Interpretive Synthesis of Genesis-Kings and a Literary Model for the Gospels* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2000); Adam Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative: Considering the Practice of Greco-Roman Imitation in the Search for Markan Source Material* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010). Other treatments of Elisha within Mark and Luke will be discussed in the next chapter.

[10] Raymond Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," *Perspective* 12, no. 1–2 (1971): 85–104; Joel Marcus, *John the Baptist in History and Theology*, Studies on Personalities of the New Testament (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2018), 87–89; *cf.* 46–61; Iain W. Provan, *1 & 2 Kings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012), 172–234, esp. 233–234; Gary L. Shultz Jr., "The Spirit in Elisha's Life: A Preview of Jesus Christ and the New Covenant," *Themelios* 47, no. 1 (April 2022): 36–48; Walter Brueggemann, "Elisha as the Original Pentecost Guy: Ten Theses," *Journal for Preachers* 32, no. 4 (2009): 41; Peter J. Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2006), 171–72 *et passim*.

[11] Sukmin Cho, *Jesus as Prophet in the Fourth Gospel*, NTM 15 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006), *et passim*; Matthew J. Klem, "Retelling the Resurrection: An Experimental Intertextual Reading of John 21:15–19 in Light of 2 Kings 2:1–18" (MST Thesis, Yale Divinity School, 2020); Matthew J. Klem, "John 21:15–19 as a Prophetic Succession: A Reading in Light of 2 Kings 2:1–18," *JBL* 142, no. 3 (September 15, 2023): 513–31; Matthew J. Klem, "Elijah and Elisha in the Signs of the Gospel of John: Assessing Prophetic Christologies," *CBQ* 86, no. 3 (November 2024): 528–49; Christos Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet According to the Witness of the Fourth Gospel? A Narrative-Critical Perspective," in *Christ of the Sacred Stories*, WUNT. 2. Reihe 453 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 119–39, https://www.academia.edu/40255097.

[12] D. G. Bostock, "Jesus as the New Elisha," *ExpTim* 92 (1980): 39–41.

this macro level in John.[13] Bostock's suggestive proposal provides the launching pad for this study.

At the broad level, I seek to (1) define an intertextual allusion called "type-narrative," (2) propose a methodology for detecting it, (3) examine the possibility of its use in John with the Elisha cycle, and then (4) evaluate the findings.

Specifically, evidence will be presented for a macro-level Elishianic type-narrative that spans Jesus' seven signs in John 1–11, as well as micro-level allusions to the Elisha cycle that spans all of John. While John does allude to prophets like Moses and Elijah, this thesis argues that the Elisha cycle may serve as an overarching narrative plot structure and that recognizing this well-attested literary technique can lead to fruitful engagement with the author's intention. Although Elisha will not be presented as the hidden key to the Fourth Gospel, he will be seen as an overlooked dimension.[14]

Qualifiers

Several assumptions underlie this thesis, each of which may bolster the overall argument, but none are essential to it. Space constraints prevent full-orbed discussions.

First, this study analyzes John's Gospel in its final form, consciously setting aside investigations of its editorial history while still being informed by source-critical studies.

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[13] Because his article was so brief, he was not able to mount a thorough defense. Craig Keener notes how Bostock's proposal is "reasonable but lacks adequate supporting evidence" (Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012], 434n42).

[14] In contrast to hyperbole found in Thomas L. Brodie, "Jesus as the New Elisha: Cracking the Code," *ExpTim* 93, no. 2 (1981): 39–42; Wolfgang Roth, *Hebrew Gospel: Cracking the Code of Mark* (Oak Park, IL: Meyer-Stone, 1988); Wolfgang Roth, "Mark, John and Their Old Testament Codes: John and the Synoptics," in *John and the Synoptics*, BETL (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 458–65.

Secondly, this study uses the traditional designation of "John' for the anonymous author of the Fourth Gospel. While the case can be made for John the son of Zebedee as the author,[15] this study does not assume or depend on it. I also do not assume this same "John" wrote Revelation, though if he did, it would lend support to my argument. Revelation is widely recognized for its pastiche of Old Testament apocalyptic imagery[16] and a literary structure partly modeled on Moses' signs in Exodus.[17] Shared authorship would imply a consistent use of sophisticated, unmarked allusions and compositional structuring across both books.

Third, I assume that John drew upon oral traditions that undergird the Synoptic Gospels or possibly in some stage of their written form.[18] If this assumption is valid, the overall argument is strengthened as it relates to the question of John the Baptist's identity

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[15] Westcott's argument for John, the son of Zebedee, as the Fourth Gospel's author has been foundational for supporters of this view. He argues that the author was (a) a Jew, (b) a Palestinian Jew, (c) an eye-witness, (d) an apostle, (d) and the apostle John (Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John: Introduction and Notes on the Authorized Version*, CCGNT (London: J. Murray, 1908), v–xxviii.) Witherington makes the case for Lazarus as the author of the Fourth Gospel as well as 1–3 John: Ben Witherington, *What Have They Done with Jesus? Beyond Strange Theories and Bad History — Why We Can Trust the Bible* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006), 141–56; Ben Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians* (Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: IVP Academic; Apollos, 2006), 395–99. For an overview of the debate and options, while defending the traditional view of John the son of Zebedee, see D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 229–53. For a catalog of the most pertinent secondary literature on this question, see Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 10–12.

[16] G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 1999), 76–99; G. K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*, 75–126, 295–317; Craig R. Koester, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AYB (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 123–25; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Revelation*, BECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2023), 46–50. Schreiner notes the tendency in Revelation to allude to the OT instead of quoting it, so while there may be as many as 1,000 OT allusions in Revelation there are *zero* formal quotations! (Schreiner, *Revelation*, 49).

[17] See Beate Kowalski, "Selective versus Contextual Allusions: Reconsidering Technical Terms of Intertextuality," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, LNTS (New York: T&T Clark, 2019), 99–101.

[18] For a succinct and convincing case, see Lincoln, *Gospel According to Saint John*, 26–39, as noted in David Ford, "Meeting Nicodemus: A Case Study in Daring Theological Interpretation," *SJT* 66, no. 1 (2013): 213.

in John 1:19–34, for if John's audience were already familiar with the analogue between Elijah and John the Baptist in the Synoptics[19] and if John is drawing upon that familiarity, then the case for a further analogue between Elisha and Jesus would be stronger. Furthermore, when an account is included in all four Gospels like the water-waking and feeding miracles, if John's account diverges from the Synoptics and aligns closer with an episode in the Elisha cycle, the case for an intentional allusion to Elisha is strengthened. But again, the significance of any divergence from the Synoptics rests upon John's familiarity with their accounts.

Next, the literary focus in this thesis on the Fourth Gospel should not be taken as a rejection of its historicity, nor should the emphasis on John's possible compositional adaptation from the Elisha cycle and any affinities with Greco-Roman *mimesis* be seen as John's attempt to craft a literary fiction from apocryphal Jesus stories.[20] Because I hold to a high view of Scripture and its historical claims, the theological implications of this study may be more impactful to those of similar convictions but will not obstruct readers who approach John from a strictly narrative-critical perspective.

Finally, the central focus of this thesis is on the narrative portions of John in which Jesus' signs occur and not on the discourse material.[21]

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[19] Viz. Matt. 11:14; 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13; Luke 1:17.

[20] Hamilton expresses the sentiment well: "The authors of the biblical narratives are not heavy handed, nor do they invent material or falsify history. They do, however, make significant choices about which events or aspects of events to record, and they make linguistic choices regarding how to describe those events. These choices can function as intentional, if subtle, allusions to earlier narratives, and they can point us to the ways in which the biblical authors frame their interpretation of history to match earlier biblical patterns" (James M. Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah? Tracing the Typological Identification between Joseph, David, and Jesus," *SBJT* 12, no. 4 [2008]: 54).

[21] In John, the short narratives form the skeleton of the Gospel, and the lengthy discourses are the meaty portions attached to the bones. Flipping through a red-letter Bible shows just how lengthy the Johannine

Chapter 2

Type-Narrative

Definitions

Two terms are used repeatedly throughout this study—"type-narrative" and "intertextuality." The first term is unconventional, and the second can be ambiguous. Both require tactical definitions before continuing on.

Currently, there is no single term that applies to the study of the NT, OT, early Jewish and Christian texts, and Greco-Roman literature that describes a narrative modeled on an extended sequence from another narrative, spanning multiple episodes and characters in parallel—a modeling that becomes a pattern for subsequent narratives. In this study, that phenomenon is referred to as "type-narrative."

The term "type-narrative" originates from Paul Noble in an article that compares the OT stories of Jacob and Esau, Judah and Tamar, and Joseph and his brothers.[22] Noble builds on Robert Alter's popularization of "type-scenes."[23] Alter's "well motif" type-scene is a good example: the betrothal of Isaac involves a journey to a foreign land, a chance encounter at the well with the future bride, who, after water is drawn from the well, rushes home to inform the household, and finally a celebratory meal with the family

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discourses are. It is easy for readers to get lost in the Red Sea of letters and forget where they are in the narrative, but when the narratives and discourses are separated, then it is easier to step through the Gospel.

[22] Paul R. Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph: Criteria for Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," *VT* 52, no. 2 (2002): 233. Noble's article appears to be the first use of this term, but I would not be surprised to find that it has previously been used in passing by others.

[23] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 47–62. Alter borrows the terminology from Homeric studies, which will be discussed below.

and the stranger (Gen. 24:10–67).[24] In a nearly identical sequence of events, Jacob finds

his bride at a well (Gen. 29:10, 28). So, when Moses meets Zipporah at the well with all

the above plot elements included (Exod. 2:15–21), readers may with good reason expect

Moses to marry her. And he does. Thus, a type-scene plays off the readers' familiarity

with a narrative archetype and its subsequent manifestations to set up readerly

expectations for the story at hand. The narrator does not need to say, "By referencing this

scene at the well, I am recalling similar scenes..." Biblical authors prefer *showing* over

telling.[25] While a direct quotation would explicitly tell, a type-scenes implicitly shows.

The word "type" in "type-scene" implies a *pattern* is at work, a comparison that

occurs *multiple* times. Instances of one-off comparisons between two stories do not

constitute a type-scene, even if the point-for-point parallels span multiple episodes.

Examples of detailed one-off comparisons—sometimes called "narrative analogies"[26]—

occur regularly in the OT and repay careful study.[27] Narrative analogies and type-

narratives both include extended parallels between a narrative and its archetype, but type-

narratives involve more than two instances of a strikingly similar narrative mold. With

this in mind, it will be argued that because John depicts Jesus in a prophet-like-Moses

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[24] Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 52.

[25] C. John Collins, *Reading Genesis Well: Navigating History, Poetry, Science, and Truth in Genesis 1-11* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 46.

[26] Seth D. Postell, "Reading Genesis, Seeing Moses: Narrative Analogies with Moses in the Book of Genesis," *JETS* 63, no. 5 (2022): 437–55.

[27] E.g., Michael Avioz, "The Analogies Between the David-Bathsheba Affair and the Naboth Narrative," *JNSL* 32, no. 2 (2006): 116; Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph," 249–52; Seth D. Postell, "Abram as Israel, Israel as Abram: Literary Analogy as Macro-Structural Strategy in the Torah," *TynB* 67, no. 2 (November 2016): 163–64; Seth D. Postell, "Potiphar's Wife in David's Looking Glass: Reading 2 Samuel 11–12 as a Reflection Story of Genesis 39," *TynB* 71, no. 1 (May 2020): 97–98; Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah?," 54; Yair Zakovitch, "Assimilation in Biblical Narratives," in *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 175–96; Yair Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...: The Concept of Exodus in the Bible* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1991).

pattern and a prophetic succession pattern (Moses-Joshua; Elijah-Elisha; John the Baptist-Jesus), "type" is more appropriate than "analogy."

Along with the tautological clarity the term "type-narrative" provides, it is advantageous because it does not carry much baggage or preconceived ideas, unlike the term *mimesis* (Greek: μίμησις; Latin: *imitatio*), which can connote imitation in general, a student's ethical imitation of his master,[28] the imitation of literary style, or the imitation of an archetypal text.[29]

Lastly, the use of "intertextuality" calls for comment. Russell Meek, in a plea for consistent terminology, helpfully distinguishes between "intertextuality," "inner-biblical allusion," and "inner-biblical exegesis."[30] Although Meek traces the origins of "intertextuality" to reader-response criticism that is opposed to author-based analyses, the term has evolved beyond its original meaning. It is widely used in the broad sense of "the interpretative relationships that pertain between texts."[31] This study adopts that usage.

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[28] Cornelis Bennema, "Moral Transformation in the Johannine Writings," *IDS* 51, no. 3 (2017); Cornelis Bennema, "A Shared (Graeco-Roman) Model of Mimesis in John and Paul?," *JSNT* 43, no. 2 (2020): 173–93; Mirjam Zimmermann and Ruben Zimmermann, "Mimesis in Bible Didactics: An Outline in the Context of Religious Education," *HTS* 71, no. 1 (2015): 1–6.

[29] In like manner, the term "hypertextual imitation," used by Kristian Larsson is not employed here because it can give the impression of literary borrowing of one text but not necessarily a narrative pattern (Kristian Larsson, "Intertextual Density, Quantifying Imitation," *JBL* 133, no. 2 [2014]: 309).

[30] Intertextuality, in its original usage, refers to the interconnectedness of texts in a way that is *reader*-determined and unconcerned with authorial intent or providing proof for the reader's textual connections; inner-biblical allusion involves an author's intentional reference to some other text or corpus without necessarily adapting it; and inner-biblical exegesis includes authorial intent, putting the onus on the exegete to demonstrate author's conscious borrowing from the receptor text (Russell Meek, "Intertextuality, Inner-Biblical Exegesis, and Inner-Biblical Allusion: The Ethics of a Methodology," *Biblica* 95, no. 2 [2014]: 280–91). Similarly, Geoffrey David Miller, "Intertextuality in Old Testament Research," *CBR* 9, no. 3 (June 2011): 283–309. See further, Robert L. Hubbard, "Reading Through the Rearview Mirror: Inner-Biblical Exegesis and the New Testament," *The Covenant Quarterly* 72, no. 3–4 (August 2014): 125–39.

[31] Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph," 219n1; *Cf.* Doosuk Kim, "Intertextuality and New Testament Studies," *CBR* 20, no. 3 (June 2022): 238–60. Kim provides a helpful overview of the current state of intertextual studies and the variations in definitions.

Examples of type-narratives will now be examined from Greco-Roman writings, the OT, intertestamental literature, and the NT to showcase its widespread use in the literary climate around the time the Gospel of John was written.[32]

In Greco-Roman Literature

Roman authors, typically writing in Latin, were famous for practicing literary imitation of their Greek forebearers, repackaging classic models in new contexts.[33] This practice of literary imitation and emulation cut across all genres, including rhetoric, tragedy, comedy, fable, history, and all strands of poetry. Imitation was not confined to copying another's *style*; it could include wholesale adaptation of plot structure, character development, thematic motifs, and individual episodes.[34] By performing literary one-upmanship with classic Greek archetypes, Roman writers were trying to stand on the shoulders of giants—being helped *by* them but now *above* them.[35] Roman authors also

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[32] Type-narratives from rabbinic and early Christian texts could be provided, but doing so would simply prove that the practice extended beyond the time John was written.

[33] The following perusal of Greco-Roman imitation is adapted heavily from the survey in Thomas L. Brodie, *The Birthing of the New Testament: The Intertextual Development of the New Testament Writings* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006), 3–22. For other helpful overviews, see Matthew Ryan Hauge, "The Forgotten Playground," in *Christian Origins and the New Testament in the Greco-Roman Context: Essays in Honor of Dennis R. MacDonald* (Claremont, CA: Claremont, 2018), 148–78.

[34] Comedies like that of Plautus and Terence represent Greek plots from Menander with Roman contexts; in pastoral poetry, Virgil draws heavily from Theocritus; in didactic poetry, Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* is a merger of multiple Greek influences; the tragedies of Ennius, Accius, Ovid, and especially Seneca rework Greek tragedians like Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; and a Roman historian like Livy rearranges and reworks Polybius.

[35] Forms of literary *mimesis* continued long after the first century AD, as seen in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, in which Virgil is a character who guides Dante through the realms of Hell and Purgatory, meeting Homer in Limbo, the first circle of Hell.

In the past century, James Joyce's *Ulysses* served as a modern adaptation of the *Odyssey*, the name Ulysses being the Latinized form of Odysseus. In *Ulysses*, the main character Leopold Bloom reflects a twentieth-century Odysseus journeying through the streets of Dublin in a single day. Divided into eighteen chapters like the number of books in the Odyssey, each chapter in Ulysses also corresponds to a recognizable character or theme in the *Odyssey*, starting with "Telemachus," Odysseus' son in chapter 1.

imitate their fellow Romans, as seen with Horace and Virgil, showing that the practice widespread and multidirectional.[36]

The kinds of imitation Roman authors employed are varied. Thomas Brodie summarizes the varieties as elaboration (expanding upon a text), compression (summary allusion), fusion (multiple elements into one complex allusion), substitution of images (text allusion using different terms), positivization (turning a negative element into a positive one), internalization (spiritualizing concrete details), and form-change.[37]

A prime example of Greco-Roman imitation comes from Virgil's *Aeneid*, written a few decades before the birth of Christ. Virgil, a Roman author, wrote the *Aeneid* as an overarching imitation of Homer's Greek epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, with the hero Aeneas being Virgil's Roman version of Homer's Odysseus.[38] Classical scholars universally acknowledge Virgil's adaptation of Homer, making his work an undisputed example of how *mimesis* works.[39] The overarching narratives of the *Aeneid* and the *Iliad*/*Odyssey* provide point-for-point parallels, both on the macro level with plot

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Most recently, the Cohen brothers' film, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* released in 2000 adapts the *Odyssey* in an American context in its depiction of Ulysses Everett McGill and his cohorts who have recently escaped from prison and are journeying home.

[36] The satirist Horace refines Lucilius before him and influences Perseus and Juvenal after him. In the first century AD, Virgil became a model for other Roman writers like Silius Italicus' *Punica*, Statius' *Thebaid*, and Lucian of Samosata's *A True Story*, which satirically parodies both Homer and Virgil.

[37] Brodie, *Birthing*, 9–13.

[38] Virgil wrote the *Aeneid* between 19 and 29 BC, and Homer wrote his epics 700–800 years prior, which means that Homer and Virgil were about as chronologically distanced as T. S. Eliot was from Dante.

[39] Gransden gives a helpful introduction to Virgil, and Ziolkowski and Putman give a comprehensive reception history of Virgil's works for the first 1,500 years after their production, including primary source material on Virgil's imitation of Homer: K. W. Gransden, *Virgil: The Aeneid*, 2nd ed., Landmarks of World Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Jan M. Ziolkowski and Michael C. J. Putnam, *The Virgilian Tradition: The First Fifteen Hundred Years* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008). Winn uses Virgil's *Aeneid* as a basis for establishing allusion detection criteria partly because of its undisputed imitation of Homer, making it an excellent *comparandum* for comparative analysis (Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 19–20).

movements, modeled characters, near-identical episodes and at the micro level with shared language, locations, and motifs, By George Knauer's exhaustive catalog, there approximately 4,800 Homeric allusions in the *Aeneid*.[40] And yet, from within the *Aeneid* itself, Virgil *never explicitly* acknowledges his dependence on Homer. He does not have to, for he assumes his readers are familiar enough with Homer's epics to recognize the narrative landscape for what it is.[41]

Virgil rather ingeniously incorporates intertextual links to Homer that are unmarked but still obvious. The *Aeneid*'s opening lines conflate the very first words of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[42] The *Aeneid* begins with, "Arms and the man I sing" and references "the wrath of sleepless Juno."[43] This opening is a nod to the *Iliad*, which starts, "Of the wrath of Achilles, sing…" and to the *Odyssey*: "Tell me of the man, O muse."[44] By doing so, Virgil artfully telegraphs that his work weaves together classic Homeric themes and language into a new story for a new era.

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[40] Georg Nicolaus Knauer, *Die Aeneis und Homer: Studien zur poetischen Technik Vergils mit Listen der Homerzitate in der Aeneis*, Hypomnemata, Heft 7 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), 371–431, cited in Garrett E. Best, "*Immitatio Ezechielis*: The Irregular Grammar of Revelation Reconsidered" (PhD diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2021), 111.

[41] Virgil's allusions to Homer were recognizable and recognized, as shown by references in other Greco-Roman literature. Propertius, a contemporary of Virgil's who wrote during the reign of Augustus, says of Virgil, "Make way, Roman authors, make way Greek authors, for a greater *Iliad* is being written." (*Elegies* 2.34.65) (Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 19n1).

[42] Translations here are my own. Virgil fronts the word "arms" (*Arma*) in the same way Homer fronts "wrath" (μῆνιν), making them both difficult to translate into English without changing the word order. Standard English translations of the *Odyssey* and *Aeneid,* as well as their Greek and Latin editions, are freely accessible via the online Perseus Library at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu. Versification follows the Latin and Greek editions, which may differ from English translations.

[43] Latin: *Arma virumque cano* […] *memorem Iunonis ob iram*.

[44] *Iliad* 1.1: μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος…; *Odyssey* 1.1: ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα...

In "canonical texts" like the *Odyssey* or the *Aeneid*, their opening lines seem to be the most memorable, similar to how the words "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times…" are evocative of the opening to Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*, even to those who have never read it.[45] It makes good sense, then, why Virgil would evoke the first lines of the *Odyssey* if he were attempting to signal his Homeric awareness and dependence from the get-go.

With this "opening link technique" in mind, one can appreciate how the Gospel of John begins with "In the beginning was the Word" (Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος), alluding to Gen. 1:1 for its Jewish readers.[46] This challenges the idea that John modeled his Gospel on pagan sources like Euripides, with Jesus as the Christianized Dionysius.[47] Though John

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[45] Bruce Longenecker demonstrates this in his fascinating article on the graffiti cataloged at the ancient city of Pompeii. He found that references to Virgil's works dominated the literary allusions, and 72% of the references to the *Aeneid* came from the opening lines of Books 1 and 2. The Pompeiian graffiti evidence offers a rare look at how the man on the street, as opposed to the literary elite, might have appropriated the Greco-Roman canon (Bruce W. Longenecker, "Intertextuality in Pompeian Plaster," in *Practicing Intertextuality: Ancient Jewish and Greco-Roman Exegetical Techniques in the New Testament* [Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2021], 54). By Longenecker's count, 78 of the Pompeiian graffiti allude to canonical Greco-Roman texts per the following totals: Homer, 1; Seneca, 1; Tibullus, 1; Ennius, 4; Lucretius, 7; Ovid, 8; Propertius, 9; Virgil, 48. Of Virgil's references, 36 allude to the *Aeneid*, 12 of them to the start of Book 1, 14 to the start of Book 2, and the remaining 10 to other *Aeneid* passages.

[46] Gen. 1:1 LXX: Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν. No other book in the LXX begins with Ἐν ἀρχῇ. John's Prologue continues with a description of the creation of the world and its Creator, as does the rest of Gen. 1. A case can be made for seeing an allusion in Mark 1:1 to Gen. 1:1, for Mark begins with Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ]. What weakens the case is that Mark's prologue emphasizes the beginning of the Gospel, not the beginning of the world (*cf.* Mark 10:6; Hos. 1:2a LXX). See further, Ronald F. Hock, "Reading the Beginning of Mark from the Perspective of Greco-Roman Education," *PRSt* 44, no. 3 (2017): 291–309.

[47] Dennis MacDonald presents the most recent extended argument for a Dionysian background to John's Gospel (albeit a "primitive version" of it), in Jesus' water-into-wine miracle at Cana and beyond: Dennis R. MacDonald, *The Dionysian Gospel: The Fourth Gospel and Euripides* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2017), 38 *et passim*. For a critique, see Fergus J. King, "Hit or Myth? Methodological Considerations in Comparing Dionysus with the Johannine Jesus," *BTB* 51, no. 2 (May 2021): 95–97. Förster sees the Jewish background of Moses as primary in Jesus' miracle at Cana: Hans Förster, "Die Perikope von der Hochzeit zu Kana (Joh 2:1-11) im Kontext der Spätantike," *NovT* 55, no. 2 (January 2013): 124–25; contra Peter Wick, "Jesus gegen Dionysos?: ein Beitrag zur Kontextualisierung des Johannesevangeliums," *Biblica* 85, no. 2 (2004): 179–98, who does not consider possible allusions to Jewish water transformation miracles; and contra Wilfried Eisele, "Jesus und Dionysos: göttliche Konkurrenz bei der Hochzeit zu Kana (Joh 2,1–

and Virgil use the same opening link technique, they are signaling their dependence on and allegiance to very different canons.[48]

In *Aeneid* 1.8–10, a muse is summoned to narrate Aeneas' tempestuous voyage, just like the *Odyssey* begins.[49] Homer established the epic archetype with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey,* in which the muse's invocation signals the epic's main themes. Subsequent poets like Apollonius, Virgil, and Statius followed this Homeric model by invoking a muse at the story's beginning to forecast the main conflict to follow.[50] This represents a commitment to specific narrative structures from a literary lineage, i.e., a type-narrative.

Not only does Virgil signal his model text from the *Aeneid*'s opening scene, but he also employs other methods of signaling unmarked allusions. Aeneas' name comes from a character in Homer's *Iliad*, who Poseidon prophesies will become a great Trojan ruler (20.307). This prophecy becomes reality in *Aeneid* 3.97–98 but without explicitly

11)," *ZNW* 100, no. 1 (2009): 1–28, who does not see Jesus as the Christianized Dionysus in John 2:1–11 but still sees the Dionysian cult as the primary background polemic against which John portrays Jesus.

[48] See Margalit Finkelberg, "Homer as a Foundation Text," in *Homer, the Bible, and Beyond: Literary and Religious Canons in the Ancient World* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 75–96. On the apt comparison between Homer and Moses in their respective contexts, see Stanley Harstine, *Moses as a Character in the Fourth Gospel: A Study of Ancient Reading Techniques*, JSNTSup (London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 131–60.

[49] K. W. Gransden, *Virgil*, 23–24. Greek mythology had nine goddesses called muses, each associated with a particular domain of human activity: Calliope (epic poetry); Clio (history); Erato (love poetry); Euterpe (music and lyrical poetry); Melpomene (tragedy); Polyhymnia (sacred poetry); Terpsichore (dance); Thalia (comedy); Urania (astronomy).

[50] Apollonius of Rhodes begins his epic, *Argonautica,* by invoking Calliope, the muse of epic poetry; Statius begins *Thebaid* by singing with his "spirit is stirred by Pierian fire," a reference to the divine inspiration bestowed by the muses. Lucian of Samosata's *A True History* is a parody of the epic poetry model. In his opening lines (cited in Karl Olav Sandnes, "Imitatio Homeri? An Appraisal of Dennis R. MacDonald's 'Mimesis Criticism,'" *JBL* 124, no. 4 [December 2005]: 730), he states that everything he will tell is false, which turns the epic tradition on its head by *not* claiming divine inspiration or historicity.
    Less subtle in their initial intertextual linking are Phaedrus and Quntinus Ennius. Phaedrus, the Roman author of fables, begins his work by acknowledging his inspiration and indebtedness to Aesop: "What from the founder Esop fell / In neat familiar verse I tell" (Phaedrus, *Fables* 1.1, noted in Brodie, *Birthing*, 7). In a similar vein, Quntinus Ennius began his epic *Annales* by claiming that Homer had visited him in a dream and transferred to Ennius his soul, making Ennius Homer reincarnate! (Peter Aicher, "Ennius' Dream of Homer," *AJP* 110, no. 2 [1989]: 227). These examples represent more of the exception than the rule; the intertextuality among the contemporaneous Roman authors is not so "on the nose."

referring to the prophecy.[51] In addition, Virgil shares language between the *Aeneid* and the *Iliad*/*Odyssey* but without ever directly citing the work.[52] These are but a few ways in which Virgil alludes to Homer at the micro-level without saying so.

At the macro level, the *Aeneid* picks up where the *Iliad* ends, after the Greeks' triumph in the Trojan War.[53] As the stories progress, both heroes—after facing divine wrath and shipwreck and then hospitably received on a foreign shore—recount their adventures in a series of flashbacks during a feast (*Odyssey* 9–12, *Aeneid*, 2–3).[54] The following "satellite view" provided by Adam Winn helps to show the major movements of the *Aeneid* compared with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[55]

Table 1. Greco-Roman Example: the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and *Aeneid*

Iliad and *Odyssey*: General Structure	*Aeneid*: General Structure
A. War between Greeks and Trojans—climax Achilles defeats Hector (*Iliad*)	C. Home is overrun by outsiders—the Greeks
B. Hardship-plagued sea voyage home (*Odyssey*)	B. Hardship-plagued sea voyage to new home
C. Home overrun by outsiders—the suitors (*Odyssey*)	A. War between Trojans and Italians—climax Aeneas defeats Turnus
D. Old home is restored (*Odyssey*)	D. New home is established

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[51] Gransden, *Virgil*, 24–25.

[52] To take but one example, in Book 1 Aeneas says, "O thrice and four times blessed those Danaans who died in Troy" (*Aeneid* 1.94–95), mirroring the *Odyssey*'s "O thrice and four times blessed those whom it befell to die at Troy" (5.305). Translations here come from Gransden, *Virgil*, 27: *O terque quaterque beati, quis ante ora patrum Troiae sub moenibus altis contigit oppetere!*; τρὶς μάκαρες Δαναοὶ καὶ τετράκις, οἳ τότ᾽ ὄλοντο Τροίη.

[53] In the *Iliad*, Odysseus is, of course, on the side of the victorious Greeks, but in Virgil's *Aeneid*, the hero Aeneas is a Trojan. Thus, where the Greek Odysseus ends his first epic as a hero, the Trojan Aeneas begins his journey as a defeated foe.

[54] Gransden, *Virgil*, 27–29.

[55] Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 22.

In the table above, each of the *Aeneid*'s broad movements corresponds to one in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, even though they are out of sequence. The matching movements between the narratives provide weighty proof of literary imitation.

Zooming in to the episodic level, Virgil repeatedly and creatively adapts episodes from Homer.[56]

Table 2. Greco-Roman Example: *Odyssey* and *Aeneid* Episodes

Odysseus Arrives at Thrinacia (12.260–450)	Odysseus Arrives at Circe's Island (10.133–173)	Aeneas Arrives at Libya (1.157–560)
Suffers Loss: Odysseus has lost six men to the monster Skylla		Suffers Loss: Aeneas has lost all but seven ships in a storm
Description of a Harbor: sweet water, presence of a hollow cave, presence of nymphs		Description of a Harbor: sweet water, presence of a hollow cave, presence of nymphs
Odysseus departs to explore	Odysseus departs to explore	Aeneas departs to explore
	Odysseus climbs a mountain for a better view	Aeneas climbs a mountain for a better view
	Odysseus kills a large stag with his spear	Aeneas kills seven large stags with a bow
Odysseus finds his crew eating forbidden meat	Odysseus brings meat back to his mourning crew	Aeneas brings meat back to his mourning crew
Odysseus foreshadows the crew's future destruction at the hands of the gods		Aeneas foreshadows the crew's future success promised by the gods
Odysseus' ship is struck by lightning from Zeus and his ship and its crew are lost		Aeneas is led by Venus to Carthage where his lost ships/crews are restored to him

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[56] The table is provided by Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 24–25.

The preceding table showcases examples of imitative techniques Virgil uses throughout the *Aeneid*.[57] Most noticeably, Virgil conflates two episodes into one seamless scene.[58] He also transforms any negative images of Odysseus into positive images for Aeneas: the gods forecast destruction for Odysseus but success for Aeneas; Odysseus loses his ship and crew while Aeneus' ships and crews are restored. Not only does Aeneas reverse Odysseus' negative features but also intensifies his heroic actions: Odysseus kills a large stag to feed his crew, but Aeneas kills *seven* large stags for his crew in the parallel narrative. Again, all this is done without blatantly informing the reader a comparison and literary one-upmanship is happening.[59]

At the end of both epics, Odysseus makes it home and sets his house in order, while Aeneas sets up a new home and a new kingdom that eventually becomes imperial Rome. Aeneas is the greater hero, the new hero, the distinctly *Roman* hero. Virgil, of course, does not actually *say* that; he *shows* it.

In conclusion to this section, it should be stressed that, while Virgil uses a wide variety of techniques to imitate Homer, he does not use formal quotations. Virgil leaves

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[57] Insights in this paragraph come from Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 24.

[58] Virgil *often* conflates multiple Homeric scenes (see Best, "Immitatio Ezechielis," 111–12 *et passim*.). The importance of literary conflation can be seen in John's allusions to Elisha in Chapter 5.

[59] Another example of Virgil's unmarked allusions to Homer is worth noting. One of the most famous stories in the *Odyssey* is Odysseus' battle with the one-eyed giant named Polyphemus. Odysseus outwits the giant by blinding him with a burning stake. Odysseus and his crew escape the island as the Cyclops chases them (*Odyssey* 9.105–566). In the *Aeneid*, Virgil has Aeneas stop at the island of the Cyclopes and rescue Achaemenides (invented by Virgil), a crewmember that Odysseus had abandoned (*Aeneid* 3.568–683). Aeneas becomes the Roman hero who not only did not lose a crewmember but saved the one the Greek hero had abandoned. It is as if Virgil tips his hat to Homer and, at the same time, reveals Homer's hero Odysseus to be flawed (see Austin Busch, "New Testament Narrative and Greco-Roman Literature," in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative* [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016], 66). This is about as overt as an unmarked allusion gets—when a character in one text rescues a character from another text. The example also demonstrates the multi-level reading possibilities of Virgil. An audience unacquainted with Homer can still understand the basic crewmember rescue narrative, but acquaintance with Homer allows one to understand the narrative and appreciate the similarities and contrasts.

his allusions unmarked, though they are still "broadcasted" to the reader.[60] He signals the allusive road to Homer—not with a road sign and flashing lights but familiar markers along the trail. In other words, he does not use the criteria that are the most privileged in NT studies for detecting intertextual references.[61] Virgil shows that standard detection criteria for allusions must be revised for type-narratives.

In the Old Testament

Virgil is a prime example of literary *mimesis*, but he is far from the only example. The same type of overarching parallelism can just as easily be found in Jewish writings, starting with the Hebrew Bible of itself.[62]

One of the most repeated type-narratives in the OT begins with Adam and Eve in Genesis 1–3, which describes their creation, blessing, communion with God, commission, transgression, and the curse of sin manifested in their sons. In Genesis 5, Noah is introduced. God makes a covenant with him, mirroring God's relationship with Adam and Eve. The main plot points of the Noah narrative parallel Adam's so strongly that Noah emerges as Adam's counterpoint, a "new Adam," albeit one that repeats

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[60] Sandnes, "Imitatio Homeri?," 728.

[61] If explicit quotations were the only device examined in Virgil, then one might say Virgil never once referenced Homer! If verbal similarity were the chief determiner in examining Virgil's allusions to Homer, then one might say Virgil simply "bears some resemblances" to Homer. That will not do. As Thomas Brodie notes, the rhetoricians Cicero, Quintilian and Horace all "explicitly discouraged word-for-word adaptation" (Brodie, *Birthing*, 8). Brodie cites Cicero, *De Optimo Genere Oratorum* 14; *DeFinibus* 3.4.15; Quintilian, *Inst*. *Orat*. 1.9.2; Horace, *Ars Poetica* 133.

[62] This is not to say that OT texts do not co-opt elements from their Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) neighbors, often in a polemical way. The scholarly consensus is that this happened to an extent, though it is difficult to prove which sources were adapted and to what end (Brodie, 24).

similar mistakes and suffers frighteningly similar effects of sin's curse. The following

table shows the correspondence between Adam and Noah.[63]

Table 3. Old Testament Example: Adam and Noah

Adam (Gen. 1–3)	Noah (Gen. 5–9)
Implied covenant with Adam and Eve (1:28–30; 2:15–17)	Covenant with Noah (6:18; 9:11)
God brings the animals to Adam, who is tasked with naming them (2:19–20)	God brings all the animals to Noah, who is tasked with saving them (7:13–15)
Aftermath of Adam's sin: the promise of a **cursed ground** and **toil** (3:17)	Introduction to Noah as a promise of rest from the **curse** of the **ground** and **toil** (5:29)
Adam hides from God after sinning while the LORD **walks** in the garden (3:8).	Noah **walks** with God blamelessly (6:9)
Creation out of the chaotic **waters** (1:2–10); separation of waters (1:6–7); **dry land** appears (1:9)	Recreation out of the flood **waters** (6:13–17); waters recede (8:11); **land** is **dry** again (8:14)
God **curses the ground** (3:17)	God promises to never **curse the ground** again (8:21)
Animals and creeping things created, command to be fruitful and multiply (1:21–22, 24a)[64]	Animals and creeping things exit the ark, command to be fruitful and multiply (8:17)

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[63] Text in **bold** indicates a shared Hebrew lexeme. Table 3 is adapted from and expanded upon Michael D. Williams, *Far as the Curse Is Found: The Covenant Story of Redemption* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005), 92; Michael A. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 318–22, 372–373. See further, Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 113; C. John Collins, *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2006), 87–88; Tremper Longman, *How to Read Genesis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005), 117.

[64] The shared language is quite dense: "So God created the great sea creatures and **every living creature** that moves, with which the waters **swarm**, according to their kinds, and every winged **bird** according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, '**Be fruitful and multiply** and fill the waters in the seas, and let **birds multiply on the earth**.'" (1:21–22 ESV); "Let the earth **bring forth living creatures** after their kind: **cattle** (בְּהֵמָה) and **creeping things**." (1:24a) // "**Bring out** with you **every living thing** that is with you of all flesh—**birds** and **animals** (בְּהֵמָה) and **every creeping thing** that creeps on the earth—that they may **swarm** on the earth, and **be fruitful and multiply on the earth**." (8:17 ESV)

Adam (Gen. 1–3)	Noah (Gen. 5–9)
First family created, blessed, and assigned to populate the Earth (1:28)[65]	One family left, blessed, and assigned to populate the Earth (9:1–2)
Humanity to rule over all creation; plants for food (1:28–29)	Humanity to rule over all creation; plants and animals are for food (9:2–3)
Humanity (אָדָם) **made in the image of God** (1:26–27)	**Humanity** (אָדָם) retains **the image of God** in which he was **made** (9:6)
Adam has three sons: Cain, Abel, Seth	Noah has three sons: Shem, Ham, Japheth
Adam experiences shame and **nakedness** after eating from the fruit of the tree (3:6–10)	Noah experiences shame and **nakedness** after drinking from the fruit of the vine (9:20–24)
Cain is **cursed** because of what he **did** to his brother (4:10–11)	Ham is **cursed** because of what **did** to his father (9:24–25)
Cain will **work** (עבד) the ground (4:12)	Ham will **serve** (עבד) his brothers (9:25)

Though the similarities are pervasive between the two narratives, they are all

unmarked.[66] Considering the narratives have shared language, themes, and plot sequence

across multiple episodes and characters in texts of similar size, an argument for

coincidence is simply unsustainable.[67]

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[65] Again, verbatim shared language can be seen: "**And God blessed** them, and God **said unto them**, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth**…" (1:28a KJV) // "**And God blessed** Noah and his sons, and **said unto them**, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth**." (9:1 KJV)

[66] An exception might be the word "as" in 9:3, as Fishbane points out: Noah and his descendants are permitted to eat meat just "as (כְּ) I gave you the green plants" (ESV), hearkening back to when God gave the greens plants to Adam and Eve to eat (1:29) (Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 318). Even here one must infer the referenced text. "As" does not a citation formula make.

Some of the OT uses of the OT involve large adaptations like 1–2 Chronicles use of 1 Samuel–2 Kings and to a lesser extent Deuteronomy's use of Exodus, which present canonical history with a new emphasis (Brodie, 24). Even in these cases where the primary source material is a given, explicit citations of the source text are very rare (Susan Docherty, "Crossing Testamentary Borders: Methodological Insights for OT/NT Study from Contemporary Hebrew Bible Scholarship," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, LNTS 597 [New York: T&T Clark, 2019], 19). This applies not only to cases like that of Deuteronomy use of Exodus but also to type-narratives.

[67] For further analysis and convincing parallels between the two narratives, see K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 348–349.

The significance of the Adam/Noah comparison for this study is that the analogy's common denominators are repeated in the OT when God makes a covenant with someone (Table 4). We may call this the "covenant type-narrative," for key language and narrative elements recur when God covenants with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David. Shared language includes blessing, multiplication of descendants, fruitfulness, and land.[68] With few exceptions, those in covenant with God receive important tasks, enjoy a close relationship with God, face tests of faith, experience marital conflicts, and construct altars for sacrifices. In addition, their family dynamics include sons embroiled in sibling rivalries characterized by deceit and violence, with the younger son typically assuming the privileged status of the firstborn.[69]

Table 4. Old Testament Example: Covenant Type-Narrative

	Adam Gen. 1–4	**Noah** Gen. 6–8	**Abraham** Gen. 11–26	**Moses / Israel** Exod.–Duet.	**David** 1–2 Sam.
Covenant: descendants, blessing, land	1:28–30	9:1–17	12:1–3; 15; 17:6–8; 22:17–18[70]	Exod. 1:7; 6:7–8; 19–24; Deut. 30:16	2 Sam. 5:1–3; 7:8–29
Close Relationship with the Lord	3:8 Walked with God in the Garden	6:8–9 Found favor in the eyes of God	15:6 Believed God[71]	Exod. 33:11 Face-to-face with God	1 Sam. 13:14 Man after God's own heart

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[68] Many of the points for this comparison were inspired by class lectures and notes in Covenant Theology by the faculty of Covenant Theology Seminary, which included Michael D. Williams, Jay Sklar, David W. Chapman, and Aaron Goldstein. However, any use of their material does not suggest their endorsement of every point I make here. Another source woven into this fabric is Gordon J. Wenham, *Story as Torah: Reading Old Testament Narrative Ethically* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 24–43.

[69] See Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 373; William A. Tooman, "Scriptural Reuse in Ancient Jewish Literature: Comments and Reflections on the State of the Art," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, LNTS 597 (New York: T&T Clark, 2019), 34.

[70] *Cf.* Isa. 51:2.

[71] Later Bible passages speak of Abraham as "the friend of God" (Isa. 41:8).

	Adam Gen. 1–4	**Noah** Gen. 6–8	**Abraham** Gen. 11–26	**Moses / Israel** Exod.–Duet.	**David** 1–2 Sam.
Assigned a Task by God	2:15 Keep the Garden	6:14–16 Build the ark	12:1 Leave your country	Exod. 3:10 Lead Israel out of Egypt	2 Sam. 5:1–3 Rule over Israel
Testing	2:17 prohibition of the tree	6–8 The Flood	22:1–18 Sacrifice of Isaac	Wilderness wandering	1 Sam. 17, 21–31 Goliath, Saul
Built Altars / Sacrificed	3:21[72]	8:20	12:7; 13:18	Exod. 17:15; 24:4–8	2 Sam. 24:18-25; 1 Chron. 16:1
Marital Conflicts	3:6 Eve gives fruit to Adam		16:1–6 Sarai gives Hagar to Abraham	Exod. 4:24–26; Num. 12:1 Zipporah's resentment	2 Sam. 6:16–23 Saul gives Michal to David
Sinful Flaw	3:6–19 Rebellion, exiled from the Garden	9:20–27 Drunkenness	12:10–20; 20:1–18 Deception	Num. 20:10–12 Disobedience, could not enter Canaan	2 Sam. 11–12 Adultery, murder, could not build the temple
Younger son instead of elder son	4:25–26 Seth		17:19–20; 21:12 Isaac	Exod. 4:14–16; Num. 12:2–8 Moses	1 Sam. 15:6–13; 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Kgs. 1:13, 17, 30 David, Solomon
Younger sibling sins against father or older son	4:3–8 Cain killed Abel, cursed	9:20–27 Ham sees Noah's nakedness, cursed	21:9 Ishmael mocks Isaac	Num. 12:1–15 Miriam murmurs against Moses, leprosy	2 Sam. 13:24–29 Absalom murders Amnon, killed in battle

Detailed comparison charts could be created for each one of these characters like

Table 3 for Adam and Noah, showing shared wording, motifs, and events, but the

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[72] Arguably, the slaying of animals by the Lord to provide clothes for Adam and Eve could be seen as a prototype of animal sacrifice.

overview above should suffice to demonstrate the pattern. In each case, there are variations on the common threads. Whereas sibling rivalry occurs between Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, and arguably Ham and his brothers—all of whom were sons of those with whom God had covenanted—in the case of Moses, *he* is the one who experiences sibling rivalry. For David, both he *and* his sons are involved in sibling rivalry involving matters of primogeniture.[73] By the time God covenants with David (2 Sam. 7), a biblical pattern has occurred several times already, setting up the audience to suspect that David will be one who walks with God in a special way, builds altars, is tasked and tested by God, and may experience problems in marriage and raising sons. And so it is.

It is important to note that no other character in the Bible includes all of these patterned elements: not Joseph, Joshua, any of the judges, Ruth, Boaz, Samuel, Saul, Job, any of the prophets, any of the kings, Ezra, or Nehemiah. The general narrative framework, key terms, and thematic motifs collectively belong only to those with whom God made or affirmed a covenant.[74] It is this uniqueness, combined with the dense narrative similarities that one might, with good reason, rule out coincidence as a cause and embrace literary and theological strategy instead.

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[73] The patriarchal narratives of Isaac and Jacob largely adhere closely to this type-narrative, although technically God reaffirms, rather than establishes, his covenant with them. Even so, both Isaac and Jacob are promised blessing and multiplied descendants (Gen. 26:3–4; 28:3, 35:11) and are given commands involving journeying (Gen. 26:2; 31:3). Both build altars (Gen. 26:25; 28:12–22; 35:1–7), personally encounter the Lord (Gen. 26:24; 32:22–32), experience marital conflict (Gen. 27:1–46; 29:31–30:24), have sinful flaws of deception (Gen. 26:7–11; 27; 37), and bear sons who fight over birthright and blessing (Gen. 25:29–34; 27; 37). Joshua, too, exhibits many of these traits but not all e.g., marital conflict and sibling rivalry. Like Isaac and Jacob, God *reaffirms* the Mosaic covenant with Joshua but does not *establish* it with him (Josh. 1:5–6).

[74] Theologians—particularly covenant theologians—stress the continuity between these narratives and have emphasized the promise-fulfillment aspect. Yet, as important as this aspect is for understanding the Bible's grand story of redemption, the common type-narrative can go overlooked. See Collins, *Genesis 1–4,* 87–88 on how these kinds of patterns are ultimately realized in the NT.

Intertestamental Literature

Moving on from Greco-Roman and OT type-narratives, the same kind of literary phenomena are common in intertestamental Jewish texts, where biblical frameworks frequently shape their literary structure.[75] Though there are many examples of type-narrative in this corpus, Tobit and Judith are representative and will be examined here. Tobit and Judith follow the biblical archetypes of Job and Jael respectively.

Tobit

If a Protestant Bible student heard a story of a godly, upright, and prosperous man who lost his wealth and health, was provoked by his wife, wished to die, but was ultimately vindicated and restored with health, wealth, and family, odds are the book of Job would come to mind. And yet this is, in broad strokes, the story of Tobit from the Apocrypha… and Job. Devorah Dimant demonstrates the macro-allusions in the following chart, showing how Tobit aligns with Job in both order and theme.[76]

Table 5. Intertestamental Example: Job and Tobit

Motifs	Job	Tobit
The hero is pious and righteous	1:8; 2:3	1:6–12, 16–17; 2:2–5
He is prosperous	1:2–3	1:13

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[75] Devorah Dimant's short article is a compression of her fuller treatment: Devorah Dimant, "Literary Typologies and Biblical Interpretation in the Hellenistic-Roman Period," in *Jewish Civilization in the Hellenistic-Roman Period*, JSPSup 10 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1991), 73–80; Devorah Dimant, "Use and Interpretation of Mikra in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading, and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, CRINT 2 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 379–419. See also, Tooman, "Scriptural Reuse."

[76] Dimant, *Mikra*, 418. I have slightly expanded Dimant's table and edited it for stylistic purposes. The table reveals that the similarities between Job and Tobit are concentrated at their stories' beginning and end, most likely because the bookends are the only portions in Job that are not poetic speeches.

Motifs	Job	Tobit
His family's feast is turned into mourning through death	1:4–18	1:1–6
He is deprived of his possessions	1:14–19	1:15–20
He is crippled by illness	2:7–8	2:9–10
His wife works for others	2:9 (LXX); 31:10	2:11–14
He is provoked by his wife	2:9 (LXX)	2:14
He prays and wishes to die	3, 6:8–9; 7:15–16[77]	3:1–6
His final vindication and restitution of health and wealth	42:16–17	14:2–3
He dies in old age, blessed with offspring and wealth	42:16–17	14:11–12

Further similarities can be added. In both Job and Tobit, angelic and demonic forces are at work. Satan[78] repeatedly attacks Job and kills his *seven* sons (1:6–19; 2:1–8), and the demon Asmodeus kills each of Sarah's *seven* husbands on her wedding night (3:7–15). Additionally, at the end of Tobit the angel Raphael, who had been in disguise, reveals himself to Tobit and Tobias (12:15–22); at the end of Job, the Lord reveals himself to Job (38–41). The stories are also connected by key themes like doing good deeds, giving to the poor, seeking forgiveness for unknown sins for other family members, and blessing the Lord after losing health and wealth.[79]

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[77] Other passages in Job regarding his wish for death include 10:18–22; 14:13; and perhaps 19:25–27.

[78] In Hebrew, "satan" (שָׂטָן) includes the definite article (הַשָּׂטָן), originally making this more a title ("the adversary," "the enemy") than a formal name (see *HALOT*, s.v. "שָׂטָן"). Having the demonic opponent not be directly named adds to the dimension of hiddenness and concealment in the story.

[79] On good deeds: Tob. 1:16; 14:10–11; Job 1:1–5; 31; On giving to the poor: Tob. 4:7–11; Job 29:12–16; 31:16–22; on seeking forgiveness for family members: Tob. 3:3; Job 1:5; on blessing the Lord despite hardship: Tob. 3:1–6; Job 1:21–22.

The correspondence between Tobit's wife and Job's wife agrees with the Septuagint (LXX) against the Masoretic Text (MT). Tobit's dispute with his wife (Tob. 2:11–14) parallels Job 2:9 LXX, which is seven times longer than the MT and describes Job's wife working as a servant[80] (a detail absent in the MT). Since Tobit was almost certainly written in either Hebrew or Aramaic originally, having shared language that matches variants in a specific textual edition strongly points to intentional intertextuality.[81]

All of Tobit's compositional reworking of Job is, as Dimant notes, "without any explicit reference to Job or the Book of Job."[82] The effect achieved by Tobit's imitative structural and thematic plot is that Tobit is cast in the character of Job, the archetype of righteous suffering and theodicy.[83]

Judith

Like Tobit, the book of Judith is an apocryphal work that mirrors a biblical prototype. In this case, Judith is cast as a Jael character who kills a sleeping enemy

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[80] From the word λάτρις. See *LEH* s.v. "λάτρις,-ιος"; *LSJ* s.v. "λατρις."

[81] Dimant, "Mikra," 418–19. Lester L. Grabbe suggests that the *Testament of Job* (see esp. *T. Job* 21–25; 39–44, esp. 21:1–3) aligns more with Tobit than Job in the depiction of Job and his wife's conflict (Lester L. Grabbe, "Tobit," in *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 740). The *Testament of Job*, as is typical of the OT Apocrypha, reshapes a variety of biblical texts. An example in *T. Job* can be seen at its conclusion when Job is taken into heaven by a chariot (*T. Job* 56.6–12), an unmistakably but unmarked allusion to Elijah's earthly departure (2 Kgs. 2:11). A later text continues the chariot ride to heaven motif (3 Enoch 6:1).

[82] Dimant, "Mikra," 419.

[83] Dimant, 419. Novick has also pointed out Tobit's allusions to Genesis 22 and the Abraham and Isaac story, incorporating yet another biblical characterization: Tzvi Novick, "Biblicized Narrative: On Tobit and Genesis 22," *JBL* 126, no. 4 (2007): 755–64. Allison demonstrates the same kind of macro-allusion in *T. Ab.* 1–4 (first or second century AD Jewish work) with Job LXX: Dale C. Allison Jr., "Job in the Testament of Abraham," *JSP* 12, no. 2 (October 2001): 131–47, esp. 139. A pattern can therefore be seen, making Tobit and Job not a narrative analogy but part of a type-narrative with Job as the archetypal text.

general in a tent through deceptive means to win the battle for her people. When Judith is introduced (Jdt. 8:1), she is described as a descendent of Gideon and thereby situated in the lineage of Israel's judges.[84] This acts as the initial link that signals the intertextual model to a female hero from the book of Judges.

Nathanael Vette shows how the Jael narrative in Judges 4–5 acts as a type-narrative in Judith and the pseudepigraphal work *LAB*.[85] Much like Virgil's conflation of two Homeric episodes seen earlier, *LAB* conflates the heroic stories of Jael (Judg. 4-5) and Judith (Jdt. 10–13).[86]

Table 6. Intertestamental Example: Judith, Judges, and *LAB*

Judith 10–13	Judges 4–5	*LAB* 31
Judith "was beautiful in appearance" (8:7; 10:4).		Jael "was very beautiful in appearance" (31:3).
Judith adorns herself with jewelry before meeting Holofernes (10:3–4; 12:15).		Jael adorns herself with jewelry before meeting Sisera (31:3).
Holofernes invites Judith into his tent (12:5, 13).	Jael invites Sisera into her tent (4:18).	Jael invites Sisera into her house (31:3).
Holofernes desires to sleep with Judith (12:12, 16).		Sisera desires to marry/sleep with Jael (31:3).

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[84] Jan M. Kozlowski, "Jesus's Conception as a Triumph Over Satan: An Intertextual Analysis of Luke 1," *Eirene* 58 (2022): 415. Kozlowski focuses on the links between Judith and Mary in Luke 1:42. See also, Jacob P. B. Mortensen, "Signs of Greek Education in the Book of Judith," *JSJ* 51, no. 4/5 (July 2020): 468.

[85] Nathanael Vette, "Scripturalized Narrative in the Gospel of Mark and the Second Temple Period" (SBL Annual Meeting, Boston, 2020), 3–5, https://www.academia.edu/44302164; Nathanael Vette, *Writing with Scripture: Scripturalized Narrative in the Gospel of Mark* (New York: T&T Clark, 2022), 96–97. *LAB* is an abbreviation for *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (first century AD), sometimes referred to as Pseudo-Philo or *Biblical Antiquities*. The text does not claim Philo of Alexandria as its author, and so it is not properly a pseudepigraphal work.

[86] The texts in this comparison represent a mix of languages. Judges was written in Hebrew. Judith's oldest extant manuscripts are Greek but most likely have a Semitic origin (Hebrew or Aramaic). *LAB*'s text survives in Latin but was likely written in Hebrew originally. This complexity makes any verbatim matches impossible between *LAB* and the other two texts.

Judith 10–13	Judges 4–5	*LAB* 31
Judith drinks wine with Holofernes until he becomes drunk (12:20; 13:2)	Jael gives Sisera milk to drink (4:19; *cf.* 5:25).	Jael gives Sisera wine mixed with milk to drink so that he becomes drunk (31:6).
Because of the wine, Holofernes falls asleep in the tent with Judith (13:2).	After drinking, Sisera falls asleep in the tent with Jael (4:19, 21).	Because of the wine mixed with milk, Sisera falls asleep in the house with Jael (31:6).
Judith takes Holofernes' sword and approaches the bed (13:6–7).	Jael takes a tent peg and a hammer in her hand and approaches Sisera (4:21).	Jael takes a stake in her left hand and approaches Sisera (3:7).
Judith prays, "Give me strength today, O Lord God of Israel" (13:7).		Jael prays, "Strengthen in me today, Lord" (13:7).
Judith beheads Holofernes with the sword (13:8).	Jael drives the tent peg into Sisera's temple (4:21; 5:26).	Jael hammers the stake into Sisera's temple (31:7); Barak beheads Sisera (31:9).
Judith rolls Holofernes' body off the bed (13:9).	Sisera sinks and falls at Jael's feet (5:27).	Jael pushes Sisera onto the ground off the bed (31:7).
Judith shows Holofernes' head to the leaders of Bethulia (13:15) and Achior (14:6).	Jael shows Sisera's body to Barak (4:22).	Jael shows Sisera's body to Barak (31:9); Barak shows Sisera's head to Sisera's mother (31:9).
Achior praises Judith, "Blessed are you in every tent of Judah!" (14:7).	Deborah praises Jael, "of tent-dwelling women most blessed" (5:24).	
Victory is won "by the hand of a woman" (prophesied in 9:10; 13:15; 16:5).	Deborah prophesies Sisera will fall "into the hand of a woman" (4:9).	Sisera falls "into the hand of a woman" (31:1, 7, 9).

Table 6 demonstrates another example of macro-level conflation of multiple texts,

not in a pagan text but in an early Jewish writing.[87] This kind of literary modeling or

scripturalization (or whatever term one wants to use for it) was widespread in the

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[87] John's allusions to Elisha in Chapter 5 highlight the significance of this procedure.

intertestamental and second temple literature.[88] Just as in Greco-Roman and OT

examples, allusions are signaled but unmarked. They are structurally sequential at the

macro level but only occasionally share verbatim language at the micro level.

In the New Testament

The advent of the New Testament did not entail abandoning the literary

conventions of the Greco-Roman world, the OT, or Jewish intertestamental texts. The

evidence presented thus far indicates such practices were common in the environment in

which the Gospel of John was written, allowing for the possibility that the NT might also

use these conventions.[89] However, this does not mean that the NT authors regarded their

writings as fictional, like Homer or Virgil viewed their works. Though the NT Gospels

use conventional literary devices, they present themselves as reporting factual history, not

inventing literary fiction.[90]

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[88] For examples in *LAB*, 1QapGen, 1 Macc., Testament of Abraham A, see Vette, "Scripturalized Narrative," 4–10; Vette, *Writing With Scripture*, 42–43, 51–52, 59–60, 71–72, 83, 104–5; see discussion in Docherty, "Crossing Testamentary Borders," 19. Research into this area of scripturalization in Jewish and early Christian texts is nascent and promising.

[89] Philo's use of allegory is an example of how a Jewish writer adapted literary techniques from his wider Greco-Roman milieu. Clement and Origen are examples of later Alexandrians doing the same thing. Alexandrians allegorized their canonical texts of Homer and Hesiod long before Philo, Clement, and Origen allegorized the biblical canon. See further, Maren R Niehoff, "Jüdische Bibelexegese im Spiegel alexandrinischer Homerforschung," *BN* 148 (2011): 19–33.

[90] In contrast to the conclusion of Dennis MacDonald, who sees Greco-Roman *mimesis* of the Homeric epics and related literature in the Gospels, leading him to conclude that the Gospel writers thought of their works in the same way that Virgil would have viewed the *Aeneid* (see note 47). For critiques of MacDonald's main arguments, see Sandnes, "Imitatio Homeri?" and Larsson, "Quantifying Imitation."
　　This is not to deny that some early Christian writers alluded to pagan texts like Homer. On Clement of Alexandria's multiple quotations from the *Odyssey*, his allusion to Jesus' superiority to Odysseus, and quotations from Euripides in *Protrepticus* [Exhortations to the Heathen] 12, see Sandnes, "Imitatio Homeri?," 725.

Scholarly interest in Gospel type-narratives has grown, especially regarding Mark and Luke. Thomas Brodie is the leading advocate of the influence of "Elijah-Elisha"[91] narratives on Luke and the Synoptics,[92] and others have made similar but less elaborate suggestions concerning Luke.[93]

Treatments on OT type-narratives in the Gospel of Mark prominently feature the work of Wolfgang Roth and Adam Winn.[94] Both present the Elijah-Elisha narrative as playing a significant role in framing Mark. Winn, a protege of Brodie, adeptly utilizes Virgilian *mimesis* principles to assess how Mark incorporates the Elijah-Elisha material, and his approach provides a critical examination of Roth's extensive earlier studies.

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[91] It is common for scholars to treat the Elijah and Elisha cycles as one unit and to refer to both prophets as "Elijah/Elisha." Raymond Brown cautioned against the practice of treating both figures as basically the same person (Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 85). His warning has largely gone unheeded.

[92] Brodie, "Luke 7:36-50 as an Internalization"; Thomas L. Brodie, "Greco-Roman Imitation of Texts as a Partial Guide to Luke's Use of Sources," in *Luke-Acts: New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature Seminar* (New York: Crossroad, 1984), 17–46; Thomas L. Brodie, "The Departure for Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-56) as a Rhetorical Imitation of Elijah's Departure for the Jordan (2 Kgs 1:1-2:6)," *Biblica* 70, no. 1 (1989): 96–109; Brodie, *Crucial Bridge*; Brodie, *Birthing*; Thomas L. Brodie, "Luke's Use of the Elijah-Elisha Narrative," in *The Elijah-Elisha Narrative in the Composition of Luke*, LNTS 493 (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 6–29, 61–64. Brodie's treatments of John have less to do with the mimesis of the OT than they do with source-critical studies on John's use of Mark. Therefore, Brodies sees John as using Elijah-Elisha material indirectly as mediated through Mark.

[93] E.g., Craig A. Evans, "Luke's Use of the Elijah/Elisha Narratives and the Ethic of Election," *JBL* 106, no. 1 (March 1987): 75; Robert J. Miller, "Elijah, John, and Jesus in the Gospel of Luke," *NTS* 34, no. 4 (October 1988): 611–22; Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke-Acts* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001); Monique Cuany, "'Physician, Heal Yourself!'—Jesus' Challenge to His Own: A Re-Examination of the Offense of Nazareth in Light of Ancient Parallels (Luke 4:22-30)," *NovT* 58, no. 4 (2016): 347–68; Jonathan. Huddleston, "What Would Elijah and Elisha Do? Internarrativity in Luke's Story of Jesus," *JTI* 5 (2011): 265–82; J. C. Poirier, "Jesus as an Elijianic Figure in Luke 4:16-30," *CBQ* 71, no. 2 (2009): 349–63; Lissa M. Wray-Beal, "Setting the Table for Christ in the Elisha Narratives in 1 and 2 Kings," in *Interpreting the Old Testament Theologically: Essays in Honor of Willem A. VanGemeren* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 165–75.
    In a recent collaborative monograph (John S. Kloppenborg, ed., *The Elijah-Elisha Narrative in the Composition of Luke*, LNTS 493 [London: Bloomsbury, 2014]), Thomas Brodie, John Shelton (a fellow advocate for Brodie's thesis), and several other scholars discussed the influence of the Elijah-Elisha narratives on Luke, with all contributors acknowledging the use of Elijah-Elisha but persisting at loggerheads regarding the extent.

[94] Roth, *Hebrew Gospel*; Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*; see also Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 95; *cf.* Vette, *Writing with Scripture* Vette prefers different terminology but overlaps with what I am describing as "type-narrative."

When it comes to type-narratives in John, 1967 marked a pivotal year with Wayne Meeks' publication of *The Prophet-King*. Meeks argued that John portrays Jesus as a prophet like Moses, something that would strongly resonate with a Samaritan audience.[95] Since then, numerous scholars have explored the idea of Moses as a type-character in John or the narratives in Exodus and Numbers as structural blueprints for John.[96] Subsequently, Bernard Robinson proposed that the Johannine Jesus is depicted as a northern prophet in the mold of an Elijah-Elisha amalgam, a framework that other scholars have also adopted.[97] Most recently, Andreas Köstenberger has suggested John structured his Gospel using Isaiah's "signs theology."[98] To date, D. G. Bostock stands out as the only scholar who has proposed a type-narrative in John based specifically on the Elisha cycle.[99] With all that said, proposing a type-narrative for John is not a novel idea.

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[95] Wayne A. Meeks, *The Prophet-King. Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology*, (Leiden: Brill, 1967); see also Wayne A. Meeks, "Moses as God and King," in *Religions in Antiquity. Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough*, SHR 14 (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 354–71.

[96] Jacob J. Enz, "The Book of Exodus as a Literary Type for the Gospel of John," *JBL* 76, no. 3 (September 1957): 208–15; Rainer K. W. Behrens, "The Use of the Moses Traditions in the Gospel of John: A Contribution to John's Use of the Old Testament" (PhD diss., University of Gloucestershire, 2004); Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Exodus in John," in *Exodus in the New Testament*, LNTS (London: T&T Clark, 2021).

[97] Bernard P. Robinson, "Christ as a Northern Prophet in St John," *Scripture* 17, no. 40 (1965): 104–8; George Wesley Buchanan, "The Samaritan Origin of the Gospel of John," in *Religions in Antiquity. Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough*, SHR 14 (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 149–75; Allan Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha in John's Signs Source," *ExpTim* 99, no. 6 (June 1, 1988): 171–73; Wolfgang Roth, "Scriptural Coding in the Fourth Gospel," *BR* 32 (1987): 6–29; Roth, "Mark, John and Their Old Testament Codes"; Edward W. Klink, "What Concern Is That to You and to Me? John 2:1–11 and the Elisha Narratives," *Neot* 39, no. 2 (2005): 273–87; Gary T. Manning, "I Am Not Elijah: The Use and Non-Use of Elijah/Elisha Material in the Gospel of John" (Paper, Evangelical Theological Society, New Orleans, LA, November 2009), https://www.academia.edu/32968507; Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet"; Maurizio Marcheselli, "The Range and Significance of the References to Elijah in John's Gospel," *SBSlov* 12, no. 2 (2020): 227–51; Klem, "Retelling"; Klem, "John 21."

[98] Andreas J. Köstenberger, "John's Appropriation of Isaiah's Signs Theology: Implications for the Structure of John's Gospel," *Themelios* 43, no. 3 (December 2018): 376–86.

[99] Bostock, "Jesus as the New Elisha."

The novelty of this thesis lies in conducting a detailed investigation into the possibility of a distinctly Elishianic type-narrative in John.

Proposed Type-Narrative in John from Elisha

At the end of John's Gospel, the purpose statement is given for the whole book. Readers are told that "Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these [signs] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God…" (John 20:30–31 ESV).[100] This indicates that though Jesus did many other signs that could have been included, John specifically selected the ones "in this book" for a purpose.

Although there remains some debate about which of Jesus' actions John considers to be a "sign," there is widespread agreement among commentators that Jesus performed seven signs total in John.[101] The Johannine signs provide a structure for the first half of

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[100] That "these" refers to the signs John includes in the Gospel, see Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12-21*, The NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 318–19; Colin G. Kruse, *John: An Introduction and Commentary* TNTC (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity, 2008), 380; Robert W. Yarbrough, *John: With a New Preface and Bibliography*, Everyman's Bible Commentary (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 205.

[101] Six are specifically deemed signs: (1) water into wine at Cana (2:1–11); (2) healing the nobleman's son (4:46–54); (3) healing the paralytic (5:1–15); (4) feeding the multitude (6:1–15); (5) healing the blind man (chap. 9); and (6) resurrection of Lazarus (chap. 11) (Andreas J Köstenberger, "The Seventh Johannine Sign: A Study in John's Christology," *BBR* 5 [1995]: 88–89; *cf.*, Köstenberger, "John, Use of the Old," 423). Typically, Jesus walking on the water is included in the list of seven signs (my view), yet Köstenberger argues for the temple cleansing instead (Köstenberger, "Seventh Johannine Sign," 97–103).

the book,[102] with the lengthy discourses elucidating the signs.[103] It is against this signs

structure that Bostock sees a type-narrative with the Elisha cycle.[104]

Table 7. Type-Narrative in John: Jesus and Elisha

	Elisha in 2 Kings	Jesus in the Gospel of John
1.	At the Jordan River with his predecessor, heavens open; spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha; begins leading the sons of the prophets[105] (2:1–18)	At Jordan River with his predecessor, heavens open; Holy Spirit rests on Jesus; begins leading a group of disciples (1:28–51)
2.	Turns bad water potable (2:19–22)	First sign: turns water into wine (2:1–11)
3.	Resurrects boy who died of a[n apparent] fever (4:18–37)	Second sign: heals boy at the point of death with a fever (4:46–54)
4.	Naaman the leper is healed in the Jordan River (5:1–27)	Paralytic man is healed in the pool of Bethsaida (5:1–17 *cf.* chap. 9)
5.	Feeding miracle with multiplication of barley loaves with leftovers (4:42–44)	Feeding miracle with multiplication of barley loaves with leftovers (6:4–14)
6.	Axehead floats on water in front of sons of the prophets (6:1–7)	Jesus walks on water in front of disciples (6:16–21)
7.	Opens blinded eyes, spiritually and physically (6:16–20)	Opens blinded eyes, both spiritually and physically (9:1–7 *cf.* 9:39, 12:40)
8.	Final miracle: Resurrection of man in Elisha's grave (13:11)	Final sign: Resurrection of Lazarus; Jesus' own resurrection (11; 20)

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[102] Hans Förster, "Die johanneischen Zeichen und Joh 2:11 als möglicher hermeneutischer Schlüssel," *NovT* 56, no. 1 (2014): 1–23.

[103] Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, cxxxix.

[104] Table 7 is my modified, expanded version of Bostock, "Jesus as the New Elisha," 40–41. Items 2–8 in the table have traditionally been considered Jesus' seven signs, as outlined by Bostock.

[105] Later texts from Josephus, the Pseudepigrapha, rabbinic literature, and the early church fathers that refer to Elisha use the term "disciples" (μαθητής) when referring to the sons of the prophets and "signs" (σημεῖον) when referring to Elisha's miraculous deeds (see Roger David Aus, *Feeding the Five Thousand: Studies in the Judaic Background of Mark 6:30-44 Par. and John 6:1–15*, Studies in Judaism [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010], 42–44.).

Based on the previous examples of type-narratives in this chapter, the proposed type-narrative for John fits within the same framework and employs many of the same imitative techniques at the macro level. It is hard to imagine this type of point-by-point parallel is a coincidence for John. Some elements are out of order between the two narratives, starting with the feeding miracle in John 6:4–14, but as noted, not all narrative movements must align so rigidly (e.g. Table 1). The more important aspect is that *all* of Jesus' signs in John parallel one in the Elisha cycle, and several signs are analogous to *no* other OT character but Elisha.

In the next chapter, criteria will be established to better assess the proposal of a Jesus-Elisha type-narrative in John. The rest of this study will progress in showing the shared themes, uniqueness, structural parallels, and linguistic matches between Jesus and Elisha in John and then parse the results of the findings.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Indicators

Methodology

The previous chapter ended with a side-by-side comparison of Jesus' sign

miracles in John and miracles from the prophet Elisha (Table 7). On its own, the

comparison is ultimately subjective. What may seem like a "striking" similarity to some

may seem strikingly subjective to others. What is needed is a set of measurements that

are objective as possible to evaluate proposed allusions.

Similar to the grading criteria for textual variants,[106] Richard B. Hays developed

seven criteria for evaluating literary allusions or "echoes": availability, volume,

recurrence, thematic coherence, historical plausibility, history of interpretation, and

overall satisfaction.[107] Since Hays' landmark, his criteria have been evaluated, criticized,

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[106] In 1881, B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort (hereafter WH) canonized a set of principles for evaluating textual variants e.g., prefer the shorter reading, prefer the more difficult reading, etc. See Brooke Foss Westcott, Fenton John Anthony Hort, and Philip Schaff, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1881), lxii–lxiv. Schaff writes the introduction, where WH's rules are summarized. WH's grading system is rooted Johann Albrecht Bengel's magisterial *Gnomon of the New Testament* nearly a century and a half before WH's Greek NT edition.

     Since then textual committees have put to use a refined version of WH's rules and employed a grading system A, B, C, and D when evaluating variant readings—{A} (certain), {B} (almost certain), {C} (chosen with difficulty), and {D} (chosen with great difficulty). See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/German Bible Society, 1994), xxviii.

[107] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Yale University Press, 1989), 29–32; expanded upon in Richard B. Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination: Essays on Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 34–45. Hays' criteria can be summarized as follows: (1) Availability. Was the proposed source of the echo available to Paul and/or his original readers? (2) Volume. How "loud" is the echo; that is, how explicit and overt is it? (3) Recurrence. How often does Paul elsewhere cite or allude to the same scriptural passage? (4) Thematic coherence. How well does the alleged echo fit into the line of argument Paul is developing? (5) Historical Plausibility. Could Paul have intended the alleged meaning effect of any proposed allusion, and could his first-century readers have understood it? (6) History of Interpretation. Have other readers in the tradition heard the same

and polished;[108] nevertheless, it represents a watershed moment in its field, in part by seeking to establish a baseline set of measurements despite the inevitability of judgment calls. Just as textual criticism is "an art as well as a science,"[109] so is literary criticism, but using established grading criteria to evaluate allusions helps remove some subjectivity in this artful science.

The issue is that not all literary allusions are created equal. The term "allusion" is an umbrella category to describe a "literary device that an author intentionally employs to evoke a prior text in a new context."[110] Allusions can be grouped into micro- and macro-allusions as concentric circles, with macro-allusions having the ability to contain an assortment of micro-allusions (see Figure 1).[111]

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echoes that we now think we hear? (7) Satisfaction. Does the proposed intertextual reading illuminate the surrounding discourse and make some larger sense of Paul's argument as a whole?

[108] For an assessment of Hays' impact on biblical studies concerning his method and criteria, see esp. Docherty, "Crossing Testamentary Borders," 11–22; David M. Allen, "The Use of Criteria: The State of the Question," 129–41. *Cf.* the critique of Haysian method in Paul Foster, "Echoes Without Resonance: Critiquing Certain Aspects of Recent Scholarly Trends in the Study of the Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament," *JSOT* 38, no. 1 (September 2015): 96–111.

[109] Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, xxviii.

[110] Beale et al., *Dictionary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 688.

[111] E.g., within their narratives, macro-allusions can contain direct quotations, paraphrases, and echoes— and from multiple texts. A narrative analogy that spans multiple episodes and characters can contain multiple type-scenes, not all of them alluding to the same text. And finally, on the farthest circle of the intertextual spheres is the type-narrative, which can contain any of the other intertextual categories.

Figure 1. Concentric Circles of Allusions: Micro and Macro
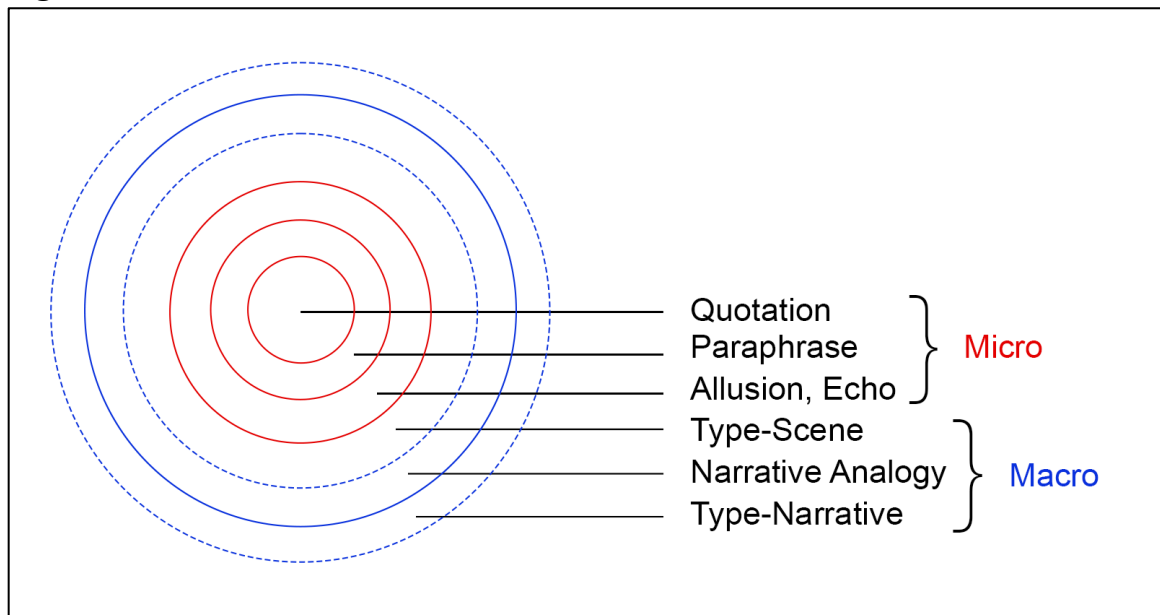
Hays centered on micro-allusions or "echoes," not macro-allusions like type-narratives. Evaluating allusions is procedurally different between the micro and macro categories, like the difference between doing textual criticism on the Hebrew OT and the Greek NT. There is considerable overlap, but the established guiding principles do not entirely apply to both categories because the nature of the evidence is different.[112] As a result, one may not detect macro-allusions using methods designed for micro-allusions for the same reason a treasure hunter is unlikely to find diamonds and rubies with a metal detector. The difference in kind requires an analogous but nuanced approach.

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[112] I.e., textual criticism for both the NT and OT aims to accurately reconstruct the original text, but the nature of the manuscript evidence makes the OT much more amenable to conjectural emendation. Similarly, micro- and macro-allusions share many common traits. Still, micro-allusions rely heavily on shared language, whereas for macro-allusions shared language is not as central, though still important.

Most studies of the NT's use of the OT, especially in John, focus on quotations and clear allusions.[113] And understandably so. Micro-allusions are more straightforward to detect. However, a focus on the bullseye category of quotation and not expanding to other intertextual circles means literary territory goes unexplored and exegetical diamonds and rubies go unearthed.[114] While several scholars have proposed criteria for detecting macro-allusions, none have gained traction like Hays' work. This lack of canonized criteria is especially problematic for John, as Hays notes, because John's allusions evoke imagery rather than using direct citation.[115] Thus, traditional methods for detecting OT allusions may not work for John's unique literary style. To address the issue, this chapter compiles what appear to be the most sensible and evidence-based criteria for detecting John's allusions, drawing from studies on intertextual echoes,[116]

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[113] E.g., Edwin D. Freed, *Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John*, NovTSup 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1965); Martin Hengel, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," *HBT* 12, no. 1 (June 1990): 19–41; Glenn Balfour, "The Jewishness of John's Use of the Scriptures in John 6:31 and 7:37–38," *TynB* 46, no. 2 (1995): 357–80; M. J. J. Menken, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel: Studies in Textual Form* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 1996); M. J. J. Menken, "Observations on the Significance of the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," *Neot* 33, no. 1 (1999): 125–43; Hans Hübner, "The New Testament Interpretation of the Old Testament," in *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 358–62; Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament in the New: An Introduction*, Continuum Biblical Studies (New York: Continuum, 2001), 63–74; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "John, Use of the Old," 415–512; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "The Use of the Old Testament in the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles," *SwJT* 64, no. 1 (2021): 41–55; Andrew Montanaro, "The Use of Memory in the Old Testament Quotations in John's Gospel," *NovT* 59, no. 2 (2017): 147–70; Jen-Chieh Wang, "'It Is They That Testify about Me': The Use of Explicit OT Quotations in the Gospel of John as an Index of John's Christology" (PhD diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2018), 147–222.

[114] See Dimant, "Literary Typologies," 77. Andreas Köstenberger explains in his most thorough treatment of John's use of the OT, "It is often precarious to identify OT allusions, especially in light of the standard applied in the present study: authorial intention as expressed in the text" (Köstenberger, "John, Use of the Old," 419). The question, of course, is how to determine if an author intends an allusion and *expresses* it in the text without explicitly telling the reader.

[115] Hays, *Reading Backwards*, 78.

[116] Hays, *Echoes*, 29–32; Hays, *Conversion*, 34–45; Timothy W. Berkley, *From a Broken Covenant to Circumcision of the Heart: Pauline Intertextual Exegesis in Romans 2:17–29*, Dissertation Series 175 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000).

inner-biblical allusions,[117] and macro-level allusions.[118] The ten indicators I propose are

accessibility, awareness, initial link, similar attributes, uniqueness, pattern of dependence,

intelligibility of differences, omissions, narrative coherence, and reception history.

Instead of referring to "criteria," the term "indicators" will be used because an

indicator denotes a piece of evidence that contributes positively to a cumulative argument

while a criterion denotes a standard or principle that is more determinative on its own.[119]

Taking an approach akin to grading textual variants, a grade for each purported

allusion will be attributed after considering the cumulative argument—either "{A} highly

probable," "{B} probable," "{C} possible," or "{D} unlikely."[120] Determining the

likelihood that similarities between two texts are intentional is a matter of "probability-

judgements,"[121] of likelihood and not certainty. It is essential to note that one indicator

alone may not be worth a second look, but the addition of indicators increases the

likelihood of an intentional allusion.

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[117] Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 319–379; Paul N. Anderson, "Gradations of Symbolization in the Johannine Passion Narrative: Control Measures for Theologizing Speculation Gone Awry," in *Imagery in the Gospel of John: Terms, Forms, Themes, and Theology of Johannine Figurative Language* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 157–95, esp. 179–191; Jeffery M. Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions: Psalm 78 as a Test Case," *JBL* 127, no. 2 (2008): 241–65; Jeffery M. Leonard, "Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Intertextuality," in *Literary Approaches to the Bible*, Lexham Methods (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2018), 49–64; Larsson, "Intertextual Density"; Meek, "Intertextuality"; Joachim J. Krause, "Aesthetics of Production and Aesthetics of Reception in Analyzing Intertextuality: Illustrated with Joshua 2," *Biblica* 96, no. 3 (2015): 416–27; D. Allen Hutchison, "A Blameworthy Burial: A Methodology for Inner-Biblical Allusion with a Case Study from Chronicles," *JSOT* 46, no. 4 (June 2022): 530–47.

[118] Brodie, *Crucial Bridge, et passim*; Brodie, *Birthing*, 7–22, 43–49; Larsson, "Intertextual Density"; Sandnes, "Imitatio Homeri?"; Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative, et passim*.

[119] For similar cautions on the use of "criteria," see Allen, "Use of Criteria," 133–36. Each of the following indicators would apply to any of the macro-allusion rings from Figure 1, not solely to a type-narrative.

[120] Similar to that of Jon Paulien, "Elusive Allusions: The Problematic Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *BR* 33 (1988): 46–47.

[121] Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph," 249.

Indicators

#1—Accessibility

Put simply, a text must be *in existence* and *accessible* for an author to reference it. Accessibility, then, is not so much an intertextual indicator but rather the one non-negotiable *criterion*.[122] When comparing two OT texts, establishing the direction of dependence is tricky due to questions regarding their final composition dates,[123] but in the case of John and 2 Kings, the former undoubtedly postdates the latter. Hence, the "chicken and egg" conundrum is not an issue with the parallels proposed in this study.[124]

#2—Awareness

For a literary allusion to be meaningful, awareness of the pre-text is necessary. Several levels of awareness should be distinguished: awareness on the part of the *author*, *reader*, *narrator*, and *characters*.

At the first level of the author, if it can be demonstrated that an author was *aware of* a pre-text, the case for an intentional allusion is at least possible. If awareness stops at this level, then the allusion may only be meaningful to the *author* and may have no hermeneutical relevance. As Krause puts it, "To be influenced by a text, however, is not the same as intending to refer to that text."[125]

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[122] Brodie, *Birthing*, 44.

[123] See Cooper Smith, "Inner-Biblical Allusion and the Direction of Dependence: Toward a Comprehensive List of Criteria," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 22 (June 2023), 1–26.

[124] Accessibility does not necessarily imply the author accessed it; rather, it indicates the text was available. If awareness of can be proven (indicator #2), the access question is settled. John 1:21, 25 shows characters' awareness of Elijah, and verbatim parallels between John and 1–2 Kings suggest the author's awareness.

[125] Krause, "Aesthetics of Production," 418.

To use a modern example, the storyline of the Disney film *The Lion King* is "anchored" to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, yet most of the target audience (children) are unlikely to catch the reference. This structural borrowing aided the *creators*, not the *viewers*.[126] In contrast, another recent film, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* openly draws from Homer's *Odyssey*, making its dependence overt and inviting audience recognition.[127] The first example uses a classic for *composition*, while the second crosses the boundary from composition to *comprehension*.[128]

Returning to the case of John, it is at least conceivable that some OT material was used at the purely compositional level,[129] that is, the OT narratives helped shape the outline of his story and if any of his readers recognized the similarities, it would merely

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[126] I.e., any *mimesis* or modeling was not to help the reader appreciate the story but for the author to craft the story. In the case of the Disney film The Lion King, it may be surprising to learn of its overarching similarities with Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Hamlet: Prince of Denmark*. Both tales showcase a prince as the main character (Simba; Hamlet), whose father dies at the hands of the prince's uncle (Scar; Claudius). Both characters run away in guilt and return to reclaim their rightful place, resulting in the death of the uncle who dies by the same method he used to kill the king. All these allusions are macro-level, but they unsurprisingly include micro-allusions too. Both protagonists are visited by ghosts of their fathers and are told repeatedly to "remember." Both uncles recite the ominous words, "Long live the king" before murdering the king. And the list goes on. See further, Austin Tichenor, "Can You Feel the Shakespeare Love Tonight?," July 26, 2019, https://www.folger.edu/blogs/shakespeare-and-beyond/lion-king-shakespeare-hamlet-hal-falstaff-henry-iv/. Though the creators anchored their story to *Hamlet*, they muted overt allusions they had originally included. The reason may be that the point was not to reimagine *Hamlet* with animated animals but to use plot points of *Hamlet* as a rough template and create something timeless as Shakespeare had done.

[127] See note 35 above.

[128] In the same way, a hymn writer might incorporate a chord progression from Bach for the composer's sake, not necessarily so that listeners will recognize and appreciate a component that is distinctly Bachian. Contrast this to how Martin Luther purportedly composed hymns—by taking tunes from popular folk songs and applying Christian words. The main purpose of the adaptation was for the *audience*. Luther co-opted popular tunes *because* his audience was familiar with them.

[129] Winn and Vette take this view regarding the Mark's use of the Elijah and Elisha material: Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 81; Vette, "Scripturalized Narrative," 2–5 *et passim*. For the distinction between compositional use and expositional use, see Dimant, "Literary Typologies," 74; Dimant, "Mikra," 382; Steve Smith, "The Use of Criteria: A Proposal from Relevance Theory," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, LNTS 597 (New York: T&T Clark, 2019), 150.

be a "happy coincidence." If John only used the OT compositionally, then reading into the similarities would be to commit eisegesis.[130]

The first chapter of John demonstrates that his usage of the OT is not primarily compositional.[131] Much like Virgil clearly evokes Homer from the very first line, John evokes Moses from the first line with "In the beginning…" And like the rest of Gen. 1, John's prologue continues to describe the creation of the world.[132] The Law and Moses are explicitly referenced in John 1:17, demonstrating the author's and narrator's awareness. Characters dialog about the Messiah, Elijah, and "the prophet" (1:20–21, 25). Another character directly quotes Isaiah (1:23). Characters demonstrate a knowledge of Jewish eschatology foretold in "Moses and the prophets" (1:45) and of Palestinian geography (1:19, 28, 46). John openly claims to draw from other OT texts and assumes the audience's familiarity with them.[133] Considering this, to an audience broadly *un*familiar with the OT, the opening of John's Gospel would be nearly *unintelligible*.[134]

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[130] Barnabas Lindars criticizes a proposed Mosaic background to the first chapter of John. He concludes that such an "artificial" imposition of this background structure, "is far more likely to distort the author's meaning than to elucidate it." (Barnabas Lindars, "The Place of the Old Testament in the Formation of New Testament Theology," *NTS* 23 [October 1976]: 65)

[131] The four Gospels have often been referred to as different portraits of Jesus. In John's portrait, he does not appear to use the OT *primarily* as compositional material like paint for a brush. By all indications, John paints his portrait of Jesus using materials his audience will recognize and assign meaning through association. John did not feel the need to annotate each element in his portrait.

[132] See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017), 308–11.

[133] Jean Zumstein, "Intratextuality and Intertextuality in the Gospel of John," in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel As Literature*, trans. Mike Gray, RBS 55 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 121–22. For the significance of one text overtly claiming dependence on another, see Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 258. Other more implicit allusions from John 1 could be listed like the reference to Jacob's ladder in 1:51 without mentioning Jacob by name.

[134] Jörg Frey, "The Diaspora-Jewish Background of the Fourth Gospel," *SEÅ* 77, no. 1 (October 1, 2012): 177. Frey notes that in John 1, "The intended reader's horizon is shaped by Scripture" and is "totally incomprehensible for non-Jews possessing no knowledge of Jewish traditions and life" (ibid., 179).

John, therefore, presumes upon his ideal reader's awareness of the OT intertexts and of the significance thereof.

#3—Initial Link

It follows that if an author wanted his text read in light of another text, he would likely establish the link early and clearly.[135] And this is the exact practice commonly used around the time John was written—for pagan, Jewish, and Christian cultures alike (see Chapter 2).[136] An early activation trigger signals an intertextual avenue worth exploring and invites readers to compare the texts.[137] These "pivotal leads or clues"[138] can manifest through the narrator's *explicit mention* of textual dependence, references to *characters* or distinctive *language* from another text, or *settings* reminiscent of another text.[139]

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[135] Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 107 *et passim*; Krause, "Aesthetics of Production," 426. Krause does not comment on the anterior aspect as much as the conspicuous aspect of establishing an intentional, extended allusion. For the same rhetorical instruction from first-century rhetoricians like Seneca the Elder, see Hauge, "The Forgotten Playground," 161–62.

[136] For additional examples of anterior intertextual linkage, see Sean A. Adams, "Memory as Overt Allusion Trigger in Ancient Literature," *JSP* 32, no. 2 (2022): 125–26. The initial link in John to the Elisha narratives will be explored in Chapter 5.

[137] Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah?," 67; Brodie, *Birthing*, 46; Ziva Ben-Porat, "Forms of Intertextuality and the Reading of Poetry: Uri Zvi Greenberg's Basha'ar," *Prooftexts* 10, no. 2 (1990): 258. Ben-Porat's seminal work ("The Poetics of Literary Allusion," *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 1 [1976]: 105-28) on this aspect of literary allusion is fleshed out by Chana Kronfeld, "Allusion: An Israeli Perspective," *Prooftexts* 5, no. 2 (1985): 137–63.
   Dimant describes the process well: "The technical procedure by which the allusion is triggered is similar in all types of allusions. It consists of interweaving into a new composition motifs, key-terms and small phrases from a specific and recognizable biblical passage. The reader is referred back to the original context by the combinations of these elements, even though no explicit mention of the original context is actually made" (Dimant, "Mikra," 410.).

[138] Brodie, *Birthing*, 46.

[139] Avioz says the "preliminary link" in the narrative analogy between the Ahab and Naboth on the one hand (1 Kgs. 20, 22) and the David and Bathsheba on the other hand (2 Sam. 10, 12) is the *setting*: the king sins; God sends a prophet to confront the king and announce his punishment; the punishment is reduced or delayed: Avioz, "Analogies Between David-Bathsheba and Naboth," 118.

Geographic Links

Whether in Virgil's use of Homer or Joshua's use of Moses, shared geography between texts can signal an intentional connection. The more distinctive the locale's occurrence or description, the more apparent the connection will be.

For instance, Shittim is mentioned in only two Bible passages (Num. 25:1; Josh. 2:1; 3:1), both involving Israelite men interacting with foreign harlots, albeit with ironically contrasting outcomes. This connection might easily be missed had Joshua not included the otherwise superfluous location name.[140] Similarly, Solomon's temple was built "in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah" (1 Chron. 3:1), recalling David's sacrifice and the only other occurrence of "Moriah" with Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 22:2).[141]

An example from Virgil involves an unnamed cave (*Aeneid*, 1.168–169).[142] By itself, an unnamed cave may have little triggering effect. But here it is the location's *description*—a hollow cave that has fresh water and a home to nymphs—that sounds the alarm bells, for it is the exact *kind* of location in the *Odyssey* and under a similar set of circumstances (12.305–319).

#4—Similar Attributes

4.1 Language

Shared language between texts remains the most persuasive indicator of intentional intertextuality. Whether the linguistic matches are verbatim or semantic,

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[140] Krause, "Aesthetics of Production," 424.

[141] Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 368.

[142] See Table 2.

shared language provides concrete evidence of literary resemblance.[143] Unsurprisingly,

detection criteria like Jeffrey Leonard's which revolve entirely around shared language

have gained traction, for they are precise and measurable.[144] However, several important

considerations when evaluating shared language are *rarity*, *form*, and *context*.

Concerning *rarity*, Seth Postell notes that the word "ark" (תֵּבָה) in the Hebrew

Bible is used *only* in the stories of Noah and Moses (Exod. 2:3 KJV; Gen. 6:14), and these

unusual or contextually loaded terms act like literary fingerprints, uniquely tying one text

to another.[145] Had both texts used a more common word for "ark," then an intentional

link would be less likely. Common words, by their very nature, are less attention-

grabbing and therefore less likely to trigger a reader's memory about another text.[146]

Shared language can manifest in different *forms*. *Verbatim* matches are the most

straightforward to identify. *Semantic* matches, on the other hand, involve the use of

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[143] Larsson, "Intertextual Density," 311; Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 246.

[144] Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 246–51; cited and put to good use in Victoria K. Tatko, "Reading Poetry as Learning: The Pedagogical Impact of the Readerly Interpretive Process in Proverbs 31:1–9" (MAET Thesis, Covenant Theological Seminary, 2022), 38.
  Leonard's principles include: (1) shared language is the single most important factor in establishing a textual connection, (2) shared language is more important than nonshared language, (3) shared language that is rare or distinctive suggests a stronger connection than does language that is widely used, (4) shared phrases suggest a stronger connection than do individual shared terms, (5) the accumulation of shared language suggests a stronger connection than does a single shared term or phrase, (6) shared language in similar contexts suggests a stronger connection than does shared language alone, (7) shared language need not be accompanied by shared ideology to establish a connection, (8) shared language need not be accompanied by shared form to establish a connection. Leonard lays out his methodological guidelines more fully in his most recent work: Leonard, "Literary Approaches."

[145] Postell, "Reading Genesis, Seeing Moses," 440. To use a more recent example, the term "Middle-earth" recalls not simply fantasy fiction in general but very specifically J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* series. It is unmistakably distinct language. Hauge refers to this phenomenon as a "mimetic flag," defined as "a characteristic uncharacteristic of the genre as a whole, such as a proper name, a telling word or phrase, literary context, or motif": Hauge, "The Forgotten Playground," 174. Determining what is and is not a "mimetic flag" will ultimately be subjective; some examples are clearer than others.

[146] Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 251.

different words or phrases that convey the same meaning.[147] It would be unreasonable to

assume that all meaningful intertextual matches must be exact, especially since the texts

in question might be written in different languages, thus ruling out the possibility of

verbatim matches altogether.[148] Especially when an intertextual link has already been

established as in the rare word for "ark," subtler semantic matches can reinforce the

connection without seeming mechanical.

In addition to rarity, *context* is critical when assessing shared language. Kristian

Larsson, in an assessment of Dennis MacDonald's work on *mimesis*, warns against an

overreliance on "decontextualized bulk density" for determining literary imitation.[149]

Shared language—whether verbatim or semantic—is an important indicator but not

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[147] Advanced computer software makes finding verbatim matches easier than ever. But even with important advances in technology, the ability to perform a *semantic* search across the biblical corpus has not yet been developed. As a result, two words like "covered" and "pitch" that describe the arks in the verses discussed above are not as easily spotted by humans or machines, because though they are semantically synonymous, they come from different Hebrew words. This example illustrates that at the pericope level, shared language need not always be verbatim to be valid. Note that "cover": חמר (Exod. 2:3), כפר (Gen. 6:14); "pitch": זֶפֶת (Exod. 2:3), כֹּפֶר (Gen. 6:14). The LXX has the same root word for "pitch" (ἄσφαλτος) in both texts, perhaps implicitly linking the texts. Most modern English translations, unfortunately, obscure the intertextual link of the "ark" in Exod. 2:3 and Gen. 6:14.

[148] An outstanding example of this is Virgil's allusions to Homer. A Latin text like Virgil's *Aeneid* will never have a verbatim match to a Greek text like Homer's *Odyssey*. Semantic matches in this case are "the only game in town." This evidently was not a problem for Virgil, for he proves quite capable of signaling specific intertextual connections in Homer despite the language difference (see Chapter 2). For other related examples, see Adams, "Allusion Trigger," 116.

    As it relates to John's Gospel, comparing the Greek text to the LXX allows scholars to circumvent the language impasse of comparing a Greek NT text to a Hebrew or Aramaic OT text. However, it is easy to over-rely on verbatim matches in the LXX and discount semantic matches. Assumptions that can underly such comparisons are (1) "the Septuagint" John had at his disposal was basically what we have today in the Rahlfs or Göttingen editions, and (2) John used said LXX as his primary OT source (see the brief warning in Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 12–13). Both assumptions are fragile. While we can be confident in the overall reliability of modern LXX editions, an overoptimistic view of its reconstruction could lead to undervaluing the semantic matches to the MT or LXX. It is notoriously difficult to determine what source John may have used for an OT quotation—whether the MT, LXX, a personal paraphrase, or a conflation of texts and sources (See esp. Charles Goodwin, "How Did John Treat His Sources?," *JBL* 73, no. 2 (1954): 61–75). The point is that one must be careful not to fall into an exegetical fallacy of assuming that John *would have* used a certain word—one that lines up perfectly with Rahlfs' LXX—had John intended to signal a connection.

[149] Larsson, "Intertextual Density," 309.

conclusive on its own. As William Kynes notes, the absence of reworking by an author, formulaic language, stronger connections elsewhere, or equal connections in multiple passages can all contraindicate an allusion, even if the shared language is dense.[150]

4.2 Action

Do the texts share similar actions or narrative movements?[151] Here we are considering a plot sequence, which may be one part of an episode or span multiple complete episodes.[152] Specific actions recall specific stories, and a specific *combination* of actions may converge to evoke a specific scene or type-scene, as in Robert Alter's famous "well motif" example.[153]

To take an illustration from the life of Jesus, there is a story in which we find Jesus asleep. This action alone does not signal any specific intertext. However, once more details are added, the reader's memory may be triggered: Jesus is asleep and (1) on a boat, (2) in the middle of a storm, (3) is awakened by frightened crew members, (4) and ultimately, calms the storm himself. Jonah anyone?[154] Any of the five actions on their own may not be enough to warrant juxtaposing the storm scenes from Jesus and Jonah, but with the addition of each action, the specificity of the imagery is refined, and the

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[150] William L. Kynes, *My Psalm Has Turned Into Weeping: Job's Dialogue With the Psalms* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 38–42.

[151] Brodie, *Birthing*, 45.

[152] I use the terms "pericope" and "episode" synonymously, though a more careful usage may be to stair-step the terms from scene to pericope to episode to section to book.

[153] See pages 8–9 above.

[154] On this parallel, see Hanna Stettler, ",,Mehr als Elia": Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund der Wunder Jesu," *TBei* 51 (2020): 178. Stettler sees Mark's account as being painted with the textual colors of Jonah's story and the miracle it contains but not a superficial reimagination of it.

probability of an intended connection is compounded (*cf.* Mark 4:35–41; Jonah 2:3–15).[155] This phenomenon is also referred to as recurrence,[156] density,[157] or clustering.[158] The addition of shared actions or episodes between two narratives compounds the likelihood that the connections are authored in some way.[159]

An illustration from statistical probability may help put this into perspective.[160] Let us say there are two dodgeball teams composed of seven players each. The odds that at least one player on Team A has the same birthday as a player on Team B is 1 in 8 (12.6%)—an interesting coincidence but nothing to suggest an intentional match.[161] But if there are more matching birthdays between the two teams, the likelihood of sheer coincidence drops exponentially. If there are 3 birthday matches out of 7, it is a 1 in 40,160 chance; for 5 out of 7, it is 1 in 18 million; and a perfect 7 out of 7 matches is a 1 in 882 *quadrillion* chance.

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[155] Note that intentionally shared action between two texts may—and typically does—involve similar language, but the shared language may not need to be as triggering if the overall shared imagery already is. When comparing the storm episodes of Mark and Jonah (LXX), the words for "boat" (πλοῖον), "sea" (θάλασσα), "calmed down" (κοπάζω), "great" (μέγας), "feared greatly" (ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν), and "perishing" (ἀπόλλυμι) are the same, but key words like "wind," "wave," match semantically.

[156] Hays, *Echoes*, 26–27; Hays, *Conversion*, 37–39. Leonard calls this "the accumulation of shared language": Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 253; Leonard, "Literary Approaches," 57.

[157] Larsson, "Intertextual Density."

[158] Berkley, *From a Broken Covenant*, 61–62.

[159] At the type-narrative level, it is the combination of episodic analogies that compounds the probability that an overarching allusion is at work e.g., if two texts have seven episodes each, the more matching narrative analogies between the texts, the more likely the texts are intentionally linked.

[160] An adapted and expanded version of the example in Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph," 250–52.

[161] The assumptions for this calculation are (1) an even distribution of birthdays for the group throughout the year i.e. each player's birthday is equally likely on any day of the year and (2) each team of players has birthdays independent of others.

As suggested in Table 7, I am proposing that *all seven* of Jesus' signs in John are analogous to seven of Elisha's miracles. Now, that is not to say that if all seven are truly analogous matches there is a mere 1 in 882 quadrillion chance that this is a coincidence! The point is that the more unique matches, the exponentially greater chance of intentionality. In addition, there are other important variables to consider—*text length* and *sequence*.

4.3 Text Length

Returning to the dodgeball team illustration, the smaller the size of the groups, the less likely matches will occur; the larger the groups, the higher the chance for matches.[162] If both groups had 10,000 players, the odds of at least 7 matching birthdays are high.

Although there are many other considerations if one were to apply statistical probabilities to literary criticism, the same basic concept holds true for literary correspondences between two texts. Especially if the texts share a genre and general subject matter, the greater the size of each text, the higher the chances for analogous actions or "matches."[163]

It is this consideration of text length that renders suspect several proposals of macro-modeling in the four Gospels and Acts. A mark against Dennis MacDonald's overall thesis the Gospels draw from Greco-Roman texts is the length and breadth of the

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[162] Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph," 250–51.

[163] E.g., A pericope consisting of 100 words that have 5 truly analogous actions to another text of similar length is much *less* likely to be a coincidence than the same pericope having 5 analogous actions to a 100,000-word narrative. For example, it would be unsurprising to find at least 5 shared actions between a Tom Clancy novel and Melville's *Moby Dick*, but this would hardly be a convincing argument for literary dependency, for the textual pool from which to draw is greatly diluted.

material. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* alone total approximately 277,000 words compared to about 49,000 words in Luke-Acts.[164] Wolfgang Roth proposes the first half of John is modeled on the first five books of Moses for the first five signs and the Elijah-Elisha cycle in reverse order (!) for the sixth.[165] Others see the life of Moses or the whole of Exodus as John's model,[166] and these models can be quite elaborate.[167] Thomas Brodie opens himself up for similar criticism by proposing the Elijah-Elisha cycle is a distillation of the entire Hebrew canon to that point.[168] He also concludes John is modeled after the five books of Moses.[169] While one should not rule out the possibility *a priori* that a text is modeled on a much larger corpus, such proposals make it easier to find "matches."

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[164] See the trenchant but valid critique of Dennis MacDonald's core theses by Kristian Larsson (Larsson, "Intertextual Density"). Larsson notes that MacDonald parallels the demoniac episode in Mark to a Homeric text whose word count is 10 times longer and his comparison of a text in *Acts of Andrew* with a text in Plato's *Phaedo* that is 30 times longer (ibid., 326–327). See further, Sandnes, "Imitatio Homeri?"
    Dennis R. MacDonald's main contributions include: Dennis R. MacDonald, *Christianizing Homer: The Odyssey, Plato, and the Acts of Andrew* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Dennis R. MacDonald, *Does the New Testament Imitate Homer?: Four Cases From the Acts of the Apostles* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003); Dennis R. MacDonald, *Luke and Vergil: Imitations of Classical Greek Literature* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014); Dennis R. MacDonald, *The Dionysian Gospel: The Fourth Gospel and Euripides* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2017).

[165] Wolfgang Roth, "To Invert or Not to Invert: The Pharisaic Canon in the Gospels," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, JSNTSup 148 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 65.

[166] Enz, "Book of Exodus," 208–15.

[167] Robert Houston Smith, "Exodus Typology in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 81, no. 4 (1962): 329–42. Hansen's critique of Smith's proposal is telling: "[He] proceeds to trace a very elaborate scheme of typology whereby a great many events connected with Moses in Exodus have their counterpart in the Fourth Gospel. The scheme grows more and more improbable as he proceeds until we reach a position where the plague on the cattle in Exodus 9 corresponds to the official's son being cured in Jn 4.43–44; and the plague of boils that follows the cattle plague in Exodus 9 corresponds to the healing of the man at the pool of Bethzatha in John 5. It seems that typology is in danger here of becoming allegory" (A. T. Hanson, "John's Use of Scripture," in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* [Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1994], 363–64).

[168] Brodie, *Crucial Bridge*, 38–68.

[169] Thomas L. Brodie, *The Quest for the Origin of John's Gospel: A Source-Oriented Approach Account* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 163–167, 175–176. Brodie's use of sources is critiqued in passing by Paul N. Anderson, "The *Sitz Im Leben* of the Johannine Bread of Life Discourse and Its Evolving Context," in *Critical Readings of John 6* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 8n15. Brodie's modeling proposal

At other points, Brodie recognizes the positive indicator of similar text lengths and notes the length of Mark as compared to the Elijah-Elisha cycle, in contrast to the *Life of Moses* from Philo, which is over 100 pages in length. Brodie notes the overall size of the text of the Gospels and that the size of their episodes is short compared to Greco-Roman models,[170] while Mark's 16 chapters, for instance, are comparable to the roughly 19 chapters in the "Elijah-Elisha" cycle.[171] The same would apply to the Elisha cycle and the Gospel of John, for the first half of the gospel that contains the seven signs is 11,262 words and the Elisha cycle (2 Kgs. 2–8, 13) is 7,427.[172] From the outset, two texts of the comparable length sharing dense similarities makes for a more plausible case for macro-allusion than the opposite. It is more remarkable to catch many fish in a little pond than many fish in the Pacific Ocean.

Equally important as knowing the text size is knowing the number of episodes and correspondent actions in the comparison texts. In the Elisha cycle, there are

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for John makes no mention of the cycles of Elijah and Elisha even though Brodie saw Elisha as the key to "cracking the code" of John 9 in an article over a decade prior: Brodie, "Jesus as the New Elisha."

[170] Brodie, *Crucial Bridge*, 88–89.

[171] Brodie, *Crucial Bridge*, 88. Adam Winn, Brodie's protégé, elaborates on this fact and posits that a dense number of legitimate correspondences between these two similar-sized texts would point to a higher likelihood of intentionality and design (Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 87–88).

[172] Word counts based on the NASB, not including verse numbers or editorial text headings. Taken from the LXX, 2 Kgs. 2–8, 13 has 5,981 words, and the Greek text of John 1–11 (UBS5) has 9,150 words.

approximately 16 pericopae,[173] and in John 1–11 there are approximately 18.[174] By no

means are these exact numbers, for the numbers all depend on what counts as a

pericope.[175] The overall point is that the number of episodes in John 1–11 and the Elisha

cycle are roughly the same. One is not ten times the size of the other.

　　The number of miracles by Jesus in John 1–11 and Elisha is also comparable. For

Elisha, the stereotypical count is 18, but I count 22.[176] For Jesus in John, there appear to

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[173] Typically, Elijah's calling of Elisha is not included in the Elisha cycle proper, nor is the start to 2 Kgs. 9, which mentions Elisha its beginning. All of the episodes come from 2 Kings: 1) Elisha succeeds Elijah (2:1–18), (2) Elisha heals the waters (2:19–22), (3) Elisha curses the Bethel boys (2:23–25), (4) Elisha provides water for Jehoshaphat's army (3:1–27), (5) Elisha and the widow's oil (4:1–7), (6) Elisha and the Shunammite woman (4:8–37), (7) Elisha purifies the poisoned stew (4:38–41), (8) Elisha feeds a hundred men (4:42–44), (9) Naaman healed of leprosy (5:1–19), (10) Gehazi's greed and leprosy (5:20–27), (11) the floating axe head (6:1–7), (12) Elisha traps Arameans (6:8–23), (13) famine in Samaria (6:24–7:20), (14) the Shunammite's land restored (8:1–6), (15) Hazael murders Ben-Hadad (8:7–15), and (16) Elisha's final prophecies and death (13:14–21).

[174] This count includes the Prologue (1:1–18) and the *Perciope de Adulterae* (7:53–8:11): (1) Prologue (1:1–18), (2) Prelude to Jesus' ministry (1:19–51), (3) Sign: Changing the Water into Wine (2:1–12), (4) Cleansing of the Temple (2:13–25), (5) Discourse/Conversation: The New Birth (3:1–36), (6) Discourse/Conversation: The Water of Life (4:1–42), (7) Sign: Healing of the Nobleman's Son (4:46–54), (8) Sign: Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (5:1–18), (9) Discourse: The Divine Son (5:19–47), (10) Sign: Feeding the Multitude (6:1–14), (11) Sign: Walking on the Water (6:15–25), (12) Discourse: The Bread of Life (6:26–71), (13) Discourse: The Life-Giving Spirit (7:1–52), (14) [Conversation: Woman Caught in Adultery (7:53–8:11)], (15) Discourse: The Light of the World (8:12–59), (16) Sign: Healing the Man Born Blind (9:1–41), (17) Discourse: The Good Shepherd (10:1–42), and (18) Sign: Raising Lazarus from the Dead (11:1–46).

[175] For instance, should the raising of Lazarus be considered one episode (11:1–46) or three (11:1–16; 11:17–37; 11:38–44)? Similar questions apply to the lengthy episode in the Elisha cycle, which culminates in the raising of the Shunammite's son (2 Kgs. 4:8–37).

[176] Those who list Elisha's miracles tend to omit fulfilled prophecy. I have included them in the following list, all taken from 2 Kings: (1) Parting the Jordan (2:14), (2) Healing the waters of Jericho (2:19–22), (3) Judgment by bears (2:23–25), (4) Providing water for the army (3:16–17, 20), (5) Fulfilled prophecy of (partial) success in battle (3:18–27), (6) Multiplying the widow's oil (4:1–7), (7) Fulfilled prophecy of a birth for the barren Shunammite woman (4:14–17), (8) Resurrecting the Shunammite son (4:32–37), (9) Purifying the poisoned pot (4:38–41), (10) Multiplying barley loaves for a hundred men (4:42–44), (11) Healing Naaman's leprosy (5:1–14), (12) Clairvoyance regarding Gehazi's actions (5:25–26), (13) Cursing Gehazi with Naaman's leprosy (5:25–27), (14) Causing the axe head to float (6:1–7), (15) Revealing secrets of the Aramaean king (6:8–10), (16) Blinding the Aramean army (6:18), (17) Restoring the Aramean army's sight (6:19–20), (18) Fulfilled prophecy of the end to famine in Samaria (7:1–2), (19) Fulfilled prophecy of the death of the doubting officer (7:17–20), (20) Fulfilled prophesy of Hazael's kingship and Ben-Hadad's death (8:7–15), (21) Fulfilled prophecy of three victories over Aram (13:14–19), and (22) Resurrecting a man who touched Elisha's bones (13:20–21).

be 10 in the first half and 6 in the second.[177] Again, one may rightly quibble with what does or does not count as a miracle, but the key takeaway here that is their total number of miracles is comparable.

Any attempt to calculate the probability that seven of Elisha's miracles are analogous to seven of Jesus' signs is problematic. Unlike the analogy of the dodgeball players and their birthdays that assumes each player has a birthday, i.e., a potential match, one cannot assume that John's seven signs *will* correspond to a miraculous event in the OT *a priori*. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that *if* John had chosen Jesus' seven signs to correspond to at least one OT miracle (examined in Chapter 5), the probability that seven of Elisha's 20 miracles are randomly analogous to one of Jesus' signs is incredibly low.

4.4 Sequence

Another indicator that can greatly affect the probability of an intentional allusion is sequence, which refers to analogous details in shared order. Terms for this phenomenon vary, such as "common linear development"[178] or "order."[179] As an intertextual indicator, sequence helps rule out unconscious imitation based on shared

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[177] In addition to the seven sign miracles listed in notes above, miracles in John 1–11 include (1) Demonstration of clairvoyance regarding Nathanael (1:47–48), (2) Passing through the crowd unharmed (8:58), and (3) Predictive knowledge that Judas would betray him (6:70–71). Miracles in John 12–21 include: (1) Prediction of Judas' betrayal (13:18-30), (2) Prediction of Peter's Denial (13:36-38), (3) Soldiers fall to the ground upon hearing Jesus say, "I am he." (18:6), (4) Healing Malchus' ear (18:10-11), (5) The resurrection (20:1-18), and (6) Miraculous Catch of Fish (John 21:1-14).

[178] Berkley, *From a Broken Covenant*, 64.

[179] Hauge, "The Forgotten Playground," 173.

cultural language.[180] It is reasonable that stock phrases could enter ones writing

unintentionally, but when wording, actions, or entire pericopae from another text occur in

ones writing in sequence, subconscious borrowing becomes much less likely. One reason

for this, as Brodie mentions, is that shared sequential order is difficult to achieve without

intentionality involved. He uses the following scenario to illustrate:

> If two people, independently of each other, arrange the numbers 1 to 5 at random, the chance that they will arrange them in the same order is less than one in a hundred. If the numbers are 1 to 10, the chance is less than one in a million.[181]

In the case of John and 2 Kings, the chances of 6 of Jesus' 7 signs in John

matching the sequence of Elisha's analogous miracles is 1 in 103, indicating a 99.028%

that such a sequential ordering is *not* due to chance.[182] This is separate from the

likelihood that 7 out of 7 are analogous events to begin with. Adding the sequence factor

compounds the probability of non-coincidence to any other positive factors.

Figure 2 below, from Larsson, helps visualize intertextual sequence and

density.[183] The denser and tighter the correspondences the stronger the case for conscious

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[180] Hauge, "The Forgotten Playground," 173; Brodie, *Birthing*, 45.

[181] Brodie, *Birthing*, 45. Brodie may be rounding here. The matching of random arrangements of 1 to 5 is 1 in 120, and the same kind of random arrangement of 1 to 10 is 1 in 3,628,800. The calculation is based on a permutation probability, e.g., 5! (5 factorial) = $5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 120$, meaning there are 120 different ways the numbers 1 to 5 can uniquely be arranged. Once the first person arranges the set of numbers, the second person has a 1 in 120 chance of randomly choosing that exact sequence. Therefore, the chance of both sets of randomly ordered numbers from 1 to 5 is 120.

[182] The combinatorial probability formula used here deals with the likelihood of various outcomes based on the arrangement and combination of items. It is stereotypically used for calculating probabilities of being dealt a specific hand in a card game or the odds of lottery number combinations.
    Here we are calculating the probability of two sequences of 7 events having 6 events in the same order. This involves (1) determining the total permutations for 7 items (7! = 5040), and (2) identifying ways to choose and position the outlier. For each of the 7 possible outlier items, there are 7 possible positions for it: ($7 \times 7 = 49$), and (3) dividing the favorable outcomes by the total outcomes: $\frac{49}{5040} = \frac{1}{102.857} \approx 0.00972 =$ 0.972% probability of chance and a 99.028% probability of non-chance.

[183] Larsson, "Intertextual Density," 321.

modeling. In Figure 3, the same visualization is applied to John 1–11 and the Elisha cycle, illustrating the density and sequence of the proposed parallels to Jesus' signs.[184]

Figure 2. Hypertext and Hypotext

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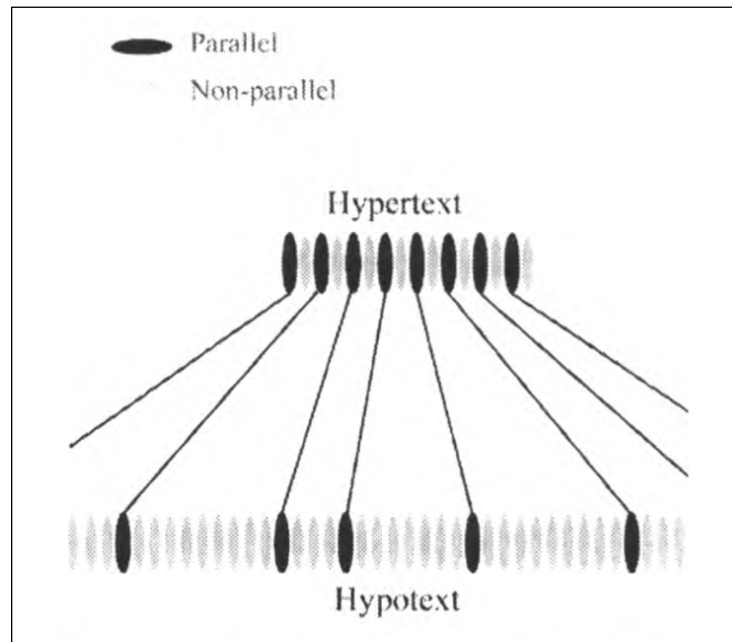
[184] Figure 3 does not include other allusions to Elisha, some of which involve entire episodes.

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Figure 3. Parallel Episodes in John 1–11 and the Elisha Cycle
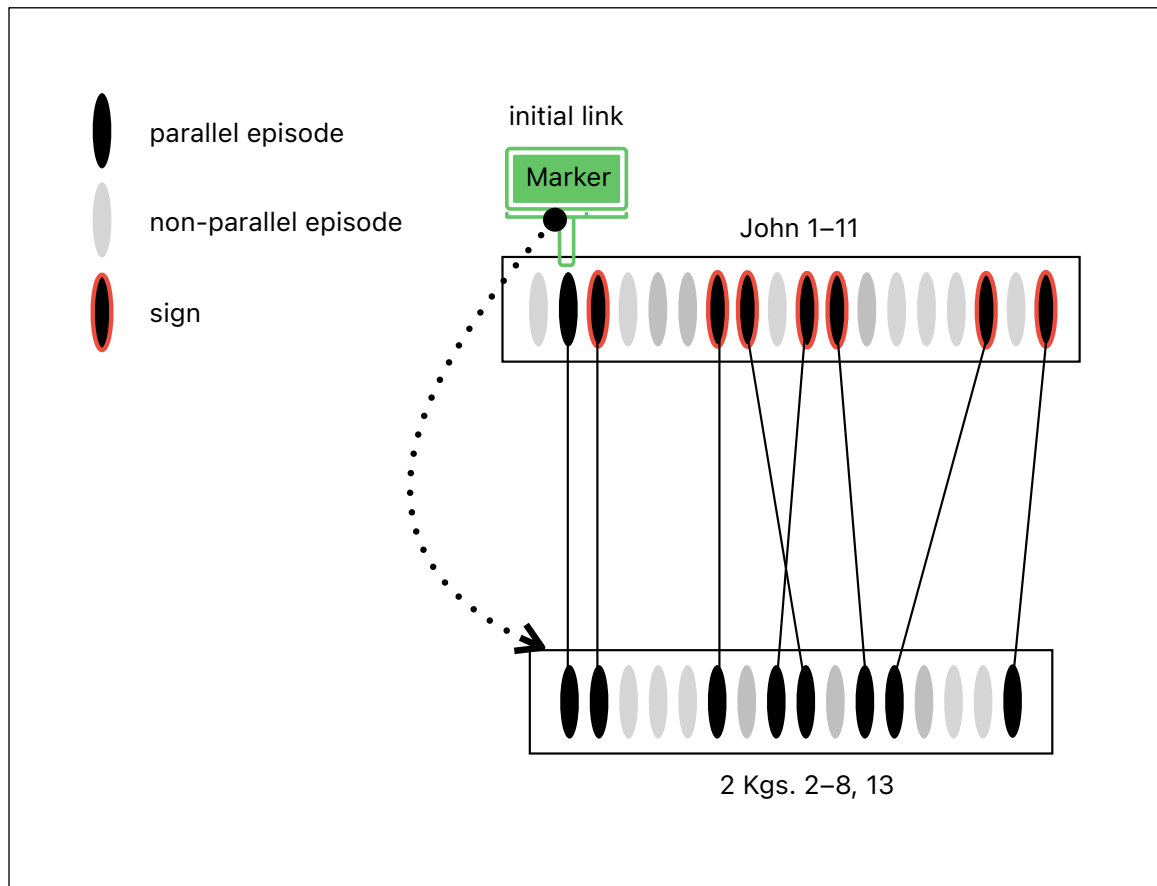
4.5 Theme

Shared language and themes tend to function like Siamese twins when one text is alluding to another.[185] That is, if two texts include similar language, the presence of thematic similarities helps to confirm the allusion; but if the texts share similar themes without similar language, this becomes a Siamese twin without one of the twins. Shared language and theme typically do not exist apart in an allusion.[186]

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[185] Berkley, *From a Broken Covenant*, 63–64.

[186] Brodie, *Birthing*, 44–45.

For instance, Elijah and Jesus both journey to the wilderness, fast for forty days, go up a mountain, and are ministered to by angels (1 Kgs. 19; Matt. 4:1–11). These shared actions, if considered in isolation, may be an intertextual indicator. However, the themes between these wilderness accounts clash. For Jesus, the theme concerns his resisting of temptation and affirmation of his mission, while Elijah's account concerns receiving divine support during a crisis of faith. Both accounts share a wilderness motif in which angels provide sustenance, a type-scene that may well recall a larger bucket of texts.[187] Yet, Jesus' wilderness account does not recall Elijah's *in particular*.

One can observe, therefore, that thematic similarity by itself provides for the *possibility* of intentional intertextuality,[188] but thematic *dis*similarity can be a strong indicator *against* it.

#5—Uniqueness

When an element in two texts like wording, setting, or theme is not only shared but *unique* within the comparative corpus, this is an indication of intertextuality.

Returning to the previous example, another reason Matt. 4:1–11 and 1 Kgs. 19 are likely not linked is the stronger parallel to Adam's temptation in the Garden and Israel's

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[187] Walter Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 240. Brueggemann notes the likelihood that Elijah's narrative in 1 Kgs. 19 is closest to Hagar's in Gen. 21. The shared location of Beer-sheba, specific actions, sequence of events, themes, and shared language do make for a solid case. See further, Smith, "Use of Criteria," 147–48.

[188] Brodie, *Birthing*, 44–45.

time in the wilderness. A better match with a *specific* passage or *specific* type-scene through *unique* similarities strengthens the intertextual indication.[189]

Authors understand that if they do not provide a specific enough textual marker that is attention-grabbing, the audience may either not recognize it at all or not be reminded of the authorially intended text(s).[190] A unique textual similarity provides a literary fingerprint match. Because of this, an argument for a certain text as the *primary* model or referent can safely be dismissed if (1) the linking characteristics are not unique to the two texts and (2) an alternate overarching scheme fits better.[191]

Ancillary resonances with less specific texts are possible,[192] but an allusion typically references one text or category of texts, not multiple texts for multiple reasons. Multi-layered allusions are possible, but the marker would need to simultaneously include multiple textual fingerprints to multiple reader-recognized texts—a difficult thing indeed. If room should be made for several "faint echoes" accompanying the loud noise

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[189] See John H. Walton, *Genesis*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 204–6 for a convincing case for an allusion to Adam in the Garden of Eden, though Walton points to Matthew's parallel in Luke 4:5–7. The similarities between Gen. 3 and Matt. 4:1–11 are many: the unique personal appearance of Satan on Earth (*cf*. Rev. 12:9), Satan's temptation of an innocent person to eat forbidden food, Satan's questioning of God to encourage doubt, and the role of angels at the end of the story. The texts share themes of food, seeing, desiring, eating, temptation, and death/perishing. *Cf*. Collins, *Genesis 1–4*, 186–88.

[190] Smith, "Use of Criteria," 145.

[191] This is one of Sandnes' and Larsson's most persuasive counterarguments to Dennis MacDonald's thesis that Mark's primary literary model for Jesus was Homer (see notes 47, 90, 164 above). A strong case for an alternative primary model would fundamentally undercut MacDonald's proposal. Likewise, a strong case for the Elisha cycle as John's primary model for Jesus' signs undercuts alternative models that see Moses, Elijah, or an Elijah-Elisha amalgam in this role.

[192] For various methods, see Tooman, "Scriptural Reuse," 36–37.

of a primary allusion, these "faint echoes" may still have "a faint effect on the reader," but it may be hard to distinguish it from background noise.[193]

Uniqueness plays a big role at the macro-level for Elisha in John. If the proposed Elisha-Jesus correspondences are valid (see chapter 5), Elisha would be the *only* OT character with miracles that correspond to each of Jesus' signs in John. Consequently, Elisha would rank as the top contender for an overarching allusion in John's seven signs, since no other biblical character performed miracles uniquely analogous to John's Jesus.

As a final note concerning uniqueness, textual variants can create an interesting, unintended layer of intertextuality. For example, Tobit includes details aligning specifically with the LXX of Job rather than the MT (see Table 5). The textual variant itself was likely unintentional but is still valuable, as it links not only to Job but to a particular textual tradition (the LXX). Therefore, due to textual variants, a unique intertextual link can exist that the author did not consciously create.

#6—Pattern of Dependence

A proposed allusion is more probable in texts that frequently reference other works.[194] While this pattern alone is not definitive, it is suggestive, especially if the text

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[193] Steve Moyise, "Concluding Reflection," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, LNTS 597 (New York: T&T Clark, 2019), 184. Here, Moyise discusses whether the use of μαστοῖς "breasts" in Rev. 1:13 function as an intentional allusion to the male lover in Song 5:2. I find this unlikely.

[194] Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 262. Leonard uses this indicator to help determine intertextual directionality i.e. which text is doing the borrowing, but the indicator equally applies to determining a type-narrative's existence.

regularly alludes to the specific work in question. This indicates that such an allusion is in keeping with the author's established pattern.[195]

#7—Intelligibility of the Differences

When comparing two texts, differences can be as suggestive as the similarities. A key deviation between two parallel episodes may highlight one character's superiority over another. For example, Homer's Odysseus brings his hungry men a stag, whereas Virgil's Aeneus brings his men *seven* stags (Table 2). This communicates superiority i.e., "My hero is better than your hero." Similarly, in Luke 9, Elijah—the one who called down fire to consume his enemies in 2 Kgs. 2— is mentioned three times and makes a literal appearance (Luke 9:8, 19, 30). Near the end of the chapter, Jesus refuses to call down fire from heaven to consume those who mistreated him (Luke 9:54–55), showing an unexpected break with Elijah's fiery judgment on his enemies.[196] This literary "rhyming"[197] makes stories sound similar enough to be linked and different enough for the latter story to play off the former.

#8—Omissions

Demonstrating that an author drew from sources but omitted certain details can be significant, especially if these omissions align better with an allusion being proposed.

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[195] See examples in Hutchison, "Blameworthy Burial," 534; Klem, "John 21," 528.

[196] Brodie, *Birthing*, 46. Luke is not directly judging the ethics of Elijah's actions but rather highlighting Jesus' departure from Elijah's treatment of Samaritan outsiders. This signals a new era for Gentile inclusion, not vengeance. See further, David W. Pao and Eckhard J. Schnabel, "Luke," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 316.

[197] Richard B. Hays, "Figural Exegesis and the Retrospective Re-Cognition of Israel's Story," *BBR* 29, no. 1 (June 2019): 36.

This is the most subjective indicator in the list, as it is based on presumed sources and arguments from silence. Even so, evidence from omissions can support a cumulative argument once other indicators are considered.

If John used the Synoptics or traditions underlying them, omissions might indicate a modeling of Jesus' signs on Elisha's miracles. For instance, the fact that Jesus does not perform any exorcisms in John, despite their abundance in the Synoptics,[198] may intentionally align with the absence of exorcisms in the Elisha cycle.

The same type of reasoning could be considered for John's lack of Jesus-Elijah comparisons, unlike the Synoptics. John excludes mention of Elijah at the cross,[199] the transfiguration (*cf.* Luke 9:30), and any other *direct* Jesus-Elijah comparison.[200] In John, Jesus does not rebuke his disciples for the suggestion of calling down fire (Luke 9:54–55) or prohibiting farewells to parents (*cf.* 1 Kgs. 19:20–21; Luke 9:61–62). John does not include the detail about Jesus fasting for forty days and nights (*cf.* Mat. 4:1–2; Mark

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[198] See Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 92–93; Ivan Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent to Jesus," in *Jewish Civilization: Essays and Studies* (Philadelphia, PA: Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, 1985), 31. Brown and Caine point to the lack of exorcisms in Elisha's ministry as one of the only dissimilarities between Jesus and Elisha, but this difference only applies to the Synoptics.

[199] There, Jesus cries in Aramaic, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?", which caused some to think Jesus was calling for Elijah (Matt. 27:46–49; *cf.* Mark 15:34–36).

[200] As will be argued in Chapter 5, indirect comparisons and narrative analogies between Jesus and Elijah *do* occur in John. For narrative analogies: Elijah encounters the widow of Zarephath (1 Kgs. 17:2–16) // Jesus encounters the woman at the well (John 4:1–45); Elijah resurrects the widow's son (1 Kgs. 17:17–24) // Jesus resurrects the nobleman's son (John 4:46–54); Threefold loyalty test between Elijah and Elisha (2 Kgs. 2) // Three denials of Peter and loyalty test (John 13–17, 21). On the macro-allusions to Elijah in John, see esp. Klem, "John 21"; Klem, "Elijah and Elisha"; Gisela Hommel, "Jüngerschaft und Freundschaft: Elija und Elischa, Jesus und die Jünger," *Wort und Antwort* 34, no. 2 (1993): 86–87.
    For verbal similarities: 1 Kgs. 17:8–16 // John 2:1–11; 1 Kgs. 18:17–40 // John 2:1–11; 1 Kgs. 18:37 // John 11:41–42; 1 Kgs. 17:17–24 // John 4:46–54; 1 Kgs. 17:21–24 // John 20:22–31; 2 Kgs. 2:16–18; John 1:41, 45. For these micro-allusions to Elijah in John, see Reim, *Hintergrund*, 218; Robert Tomson Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessor: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1988), 58; Buchanan, "The Samaritan Origin of the Gospel of John," 108; Marianne Meye Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2015), 114–15; Marcheselli, "Range and Significance," 244; Klem, "Retelling," 97 *et passim*.

1:12–13; Luke 4:1–2) or his ascension to heaven (cf. 2 Kgs. 2:1–14; Luke 24:50–53).

These "omissions," taken together, suggest John intentionally muted such correlations.[201]

But why? For some, the denial by John the Baptist as being Elijah allows John to cast

Jesus as the new Elijah, though more overtly in a primitive version of John's Gospel than

in its final form.[202] While this is certainly possible, the text in its final form, with its noted

absence of the Synoptics' Jesus-Elijah analogues, may just as well indicate that John is

intentionally avoiding a direct Jesus-Elijah analogue and moving in the direction of a

Jesus-Elisha analogue with regards to Jesus' seven signs. Whatever the reason, these

"omissions" should be considered when assessing the validity of an allusion.

#9—Narrative Coherence

Though scholars may differentiate between terms like "coherence," "satisfaction,"

"explication," and "fruitfulness," there is substantial overlap.[203] The key questions are:

does the proposed allusion *fit*, and does it *contribute* to the understanding of the passage?

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[201] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 292–93.

[202] J. Louis Martyn, a chief proponent of this view, calls this perspective the "dominant explanation" in his watershed article on the subject: J. Louis Martyn, "We Have Found Elijah," in SJLA*: Jews, Greeks, and Christians*, vol. 21, Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 186. Martyn's influential proposal is based on the purported existence of an earlier Johannine source that explicitly connected Elijah and Jesus. If Martyn's hypothesis were correct, the most this proves is that John's *source* identified Jesus as Elijah, and the final redactor *intentionally* muted this message. Thus, Martyn is arguing that the text as we have it deliberately does *not* identify John as Elijah.
     Others who conclude with Martyn, though not always on redaction-critical bases, include Hartwig Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 2nd ed., durchgesehene und korrigierte Auflage, HNT 6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 749; Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha in John's Signs Source," 173; C. G. Müller, "Der Zeuge und das Licht: Joh 1,1–4,3 und das Darstellungsprinzip der συγκρισις," *Biblica* 84, no. 4 (2003): 492; Fabien Nobilio, "The Implied Definition of the Prophet and its Middle Platonic Trajectory in the Gospel of John," *Neot* 41, no. 1 (2007): 133–34; Paul N. Anderson, "Jesus, the Eschatological Prophet in the Fourth Gospel: A Case Study in Dialectical Tensions," in *Reading the Gospel of John's Christology as Jewish Messianism* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 13; Paul N. Anderson, "John and Mark: The Bi-Optic Gospels," in *Jesus in Johannine Tradition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2001), 207–8.

[203] E.g. Berkley, *From a Broken Covenant*, 63; Brodie, *Birthing*, 46.

A lengthy list of similarities alone does not an allusion make.[204] If the parallels are random and unrelated, lacking narrative coherence, they will not contribute meaningfully to a reader's understanding and thereby do not evince narrative coherence.[205] However, if an intertextual relationship solves a longstanding textual difficulty or underscores the author's agenda, then the case for the allusion is strengthened.[206]

#10—Reception History

Knowing how others have interpreted the passages under consideration helps to "check and stimulate our perception of scriptural echoes."[207] Unique contributions to biblical studies should probably be looked upon with suspicion if the contributor is apparently the first one in Christian history to have seen some exegetical nugget. Apart from theological concerns, this indicator is practical wisdom.

Case Study

To conclude this section, a case study will illustrate how these intertextual indicators combine to produce meaningful results. Figure 3 below helps to visualize the process of comparing biblical narratives and highlighting intertextual similarities.

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[204] Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph," 249.

[205] Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph," 244.

[206] For examples, see Zakovitch, "Assimilation in Biblical Narratives," 181–96.

[207] Hays, *Echoes*, 31.

Figure 4. Intertextual Visualization: Moses, Elijah, and Elisha

Moses Casting a Branch in the
Bitter Waters (Exod. 15:23-27)

Elijah at the Brook Cherith,
East of Jordan (1 Kings 17:1–7)

Elisha Casting a Branch in the the
Jordan River (2 Kings 6:1–7)
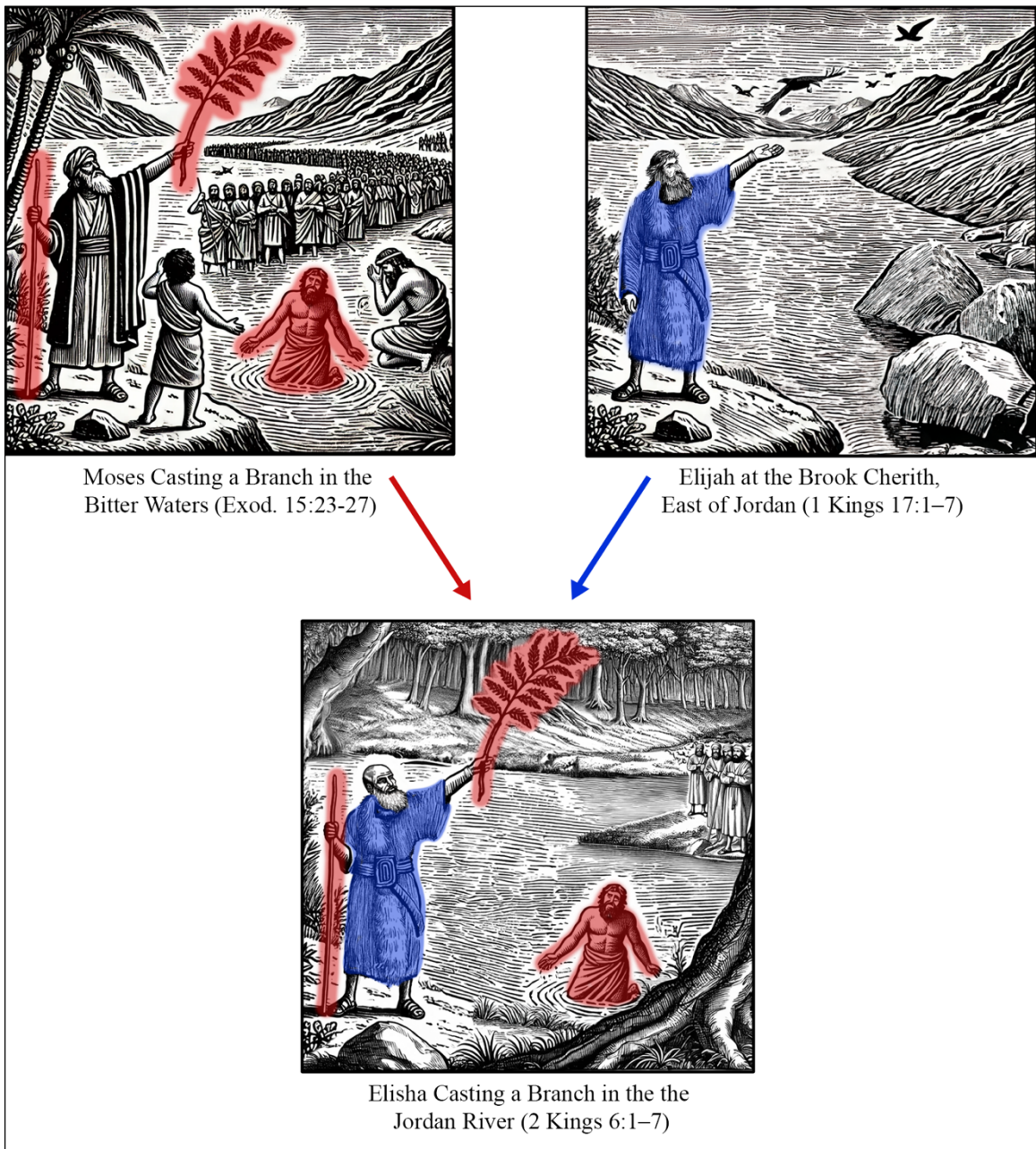
The episodes involving Moses (Exod. 15:23–27) and Elijah (1 Kgs. 17:1–7) share

similarities: both occur in the wilderness, feature the major prophet of the era, and

involve water provided by God in times of desperation. Yet, there is no *distinctive*

wording, actions, or themes that link the bitter waters at Marah with Elijah's stay at the

brook Cherith. Similar elements exist, but nothing that stands out enough to warrant reading one in light of the other. Likewise, when juxtaposing Elisha's axe head incident with Elijah at the brook Cherith, only shallow similarities rise to the surface. Yes, Elisha is portrayed as the new Elijah in Elijah's mantle (2 Kgs. 2). Yes, both episodes involve water, a problem, and a miraculous resolution for the prophet; but again, there is nothing *unique* enough to link these specific texts.[208]

In Elisha's axe head episode (2 Kgs. 6:1–7), the similarities to Moses' episode are not so general. Here, a strange action occurs that is unique to Moses and Elisha: they "cast" (שָׁלַךְ) a "branch" (עֵץ) into the water to affect a miracle for their despondent followers.[209] As the illustration above depicts, Moses' and Elisha's settings and complications are different,[210] but language, actions, themes, text length, sequence, and outcome are similar, and at critical points, utterly unique in the Bible. Plus, by this point

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[208] Contra Rickie Moore, "Finding the Spirit of Elijah in the Story of Elisha and the Lost Axe Head: 2 Kings 6:1-7 in the Light of 2 Kings 2," *OTE* 31, no. 3 (2018). Moore links Elisha in 2 Kgs. 6:1–7 primarily with Elijah in 2 Kgs. 1 and does not consider an Elisha-Moses connection.

[209] Moreover, an Elisha-Moses tie-in may be seen in the *retrieval* of the axe head from the water in connection with Exod. 2:10, in which the rationale of the name "Moses" is given: "Because I drew him out of the water." Lexically, "axe head" in the LXX (σιδήριον) occurs only (Deut. 19:5, 2 Kgs. 6:5, 6; and Ecc.10:10). Deuteronomy 19:5, one of the laws of Moses, details a scenario in which a man may wish to flee to a city of refuge if he is felling a tree and the axe head slips off the handle and kills his neighbor. The rarity of this word, coupled with the circumstances described in both Deut. 19:5 and 2 Kgs. 6 of an accidental loss of an axe head while felling a tree that would result in retributive justice may warrant the possibility of an intertextual connection between Elisha and Moses on the part of the LXX translators. In the Hebrew Bible, though Deut. 19:5 and 2 Kgs. 6:5, 6 share the same word for "axe head" (בַּרְזֶל), the word is less of a rarity, as it occurs 76 times.
       Another lexical connection between Elisha and Moses may be seen in the verbal action of the axe head: Elisha causes the axe head to "float" (צוף), a word occurring only three times in the Hebrew Bible (Deut. 11:4; 2 Kgs. 6:6; and Lam. 3:54). In Deut. 11:4, the Lord causes the waters of the Red Sea to "overflow" Pharoah's army, which matches the only other occurrence in 2 Kgs. 6:5 in the causative hifil stem. Here again is lexical correspondence between Elisha and Moses. On its own, one verbal correspondence between these two characters may indicate very little, but multiple correspondences compound the likelihood that the characters are intended to be linked.

[210] E.g., an oasis in the desert vs. wooded area; undrinkable water vs. lost axe head.

in 2 Kgs. 6, the Elisha cycle has already alluded to Moses and depicted Elisha with Mosaic imagery.[211] Connecting Elisha in 2 Kgs. 6 with Moses in Exod. 15:23–27 may also provide one straightforward reason why Elisha's perplexing axe head episode is included in the first place—to further demonstrate that he is a prophet like Moses.[212] All these indicators compound together to suggest a {A} highly probable allusion to specific Mosaic imagery, a subject explored in the next chapter.

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[211] Prior to 2 Kgs. 6, Elisha had made bitter waters at Jericho drinkable by pouring salt into the spring (2 Kgs. 2:18–22)—a recognized allusion to Moses at Marah (Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 75). Interestingly, it is not uncommon for scholars to refer to Elisha's water transformation in 2 Kgs. 2 as turning bitter waters sweet, even though "bitter" and "sweet" are only used in the Moses episode, not in Elisha's. It is as if scholars subconsciously are connecting the two episodes and not realizing it.

Additionally, Elisha's staff in 2 Kgs. 4 acts as a prophet's badge and a tool to work the miraculous, recalling Moses' staff that did the same—something totally unique among biblical characters (the angel in Judg. 6:21 being an obvious exception since the angel was a prophet).

Some interpreters have linked 2 Kgs. 6:1–7 with Exod. 15:23–27 (e.g., Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers*, JPS Torah Commentary [Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1990], 454; Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 47–48n82; Michael Graves, "Scholar and Advocate: The Stories of Moses in Midrash Exodus Rabbah," *BBR* 21, no. 1 [2011]: 6; Laura Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men: Elijah and Elisha in the Hebrew Bible," in *Credible, Incredible: The Miraculous in the Ancient Mediterranean*, WUNT 321 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013], 341n84), but admittedly, Bible interpreters rarely link the two episodes. This could be because 2 Kgs. 6:1–7 is badly neglected in its reception history to begin with. Elisha's axe head miracle, however, is linked with Moses in another way: the Tosefta suggests how Moses located Joseph's bones by going to the Nile and summoning Joseph's coffin to the surface for retrieval like Elisha did with the axe head (t. *Sotah* 4.3). This is but one example from Rabbinic literature that links Elisha with Moses, though not to the bitter waters at Marah episode specifically. See also *Sif. Deut.* 33; b. *Pes.* 66b., 117a; *Mek. Yish.*, Vayehi Besh. 3; *Gen. Rab.* 77:1.

[212] As a result, there would be no need to suggest, as Gilmour does, that "Elisha's use of a stick is probably mimetic magic where the axe-head floats just as the stick does" (Rachelle Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle*, Library of Hebrew Bible - Old Testament Studies 598 [London: Bloomsbury, 2014], 159).

Chapter 4

Type-Narrative in the Elisha Cycle

Thus far, this study has: (1) highlighted John's tendency for implicit allusion to the OT instead of direct quotation, (2) defined and illustrated an overarching allusion labeled "type-narrative," commonly found in literature from the time of John's writing, (3) and proposed a methodology and set of indicators to detect type-narratives.

As noted, the difference between a narrative analogy and a type-narrative is that the latter involves a recurring pattern. In John's Gospel, Jesus and Elisha do not represent a one-off comparison but are part of a "prophetic succession"—after Moses came Joshua, after Elijah came Elisha, and after John the Baptist came Jesus.[213] If John portrays Jesus as an Elisha or Joshua figure resembling and surpassing his predecessor, this forms a biblical type. This chapter focuses on the first part of this pattern—Moses and Joshua, and Elijah and Elisha—before moving in the final chapter to John the Baptist and Jesus.

Figure 5 below illustrates the Bible's prophetic succession pattern, showing how each successor not only inherits their predecessor's legacy but also reflects traits from

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[213] On the prophetic succession motif with Elijah and Elisha, see Robert P. Carroll, "Elijah-Elisha Sagas: Some Remarks on Prophetic Succession in Ancient Israel," *VT* 19, no. 4 (1969): 400–415; Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 89; Jeffrey J. Niehaus, *Biblical Theology: The Special Grace Covenants (Old Testament)*, vol. 2 (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2017), 407–8; Peter Dubovský, "From Miracle-Makers Elijah and Elisha to Jesus and [the] Apocrypha," *SBSlov* 12 (2020): 35–36; Wesley J. Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*, JSOTSup 286 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 52; Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 74–75; Shultz Jr., "Spirit in Elisha's Life," 41–44. J. Roy Porter notes the succession narrative in Moses to Joshua and Elijah to Elisha, but he argues for a more royal succession vs. a prophetic succession: J. Roy Porter, "The Succession of Joshua," in *Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honour of Gwynne Henton Davies* (Richmond: John Knox, 1970), 121 *et passim*.

earlier figures. The literary influence is not linear; it is multilayered.[214] Consequently, Elisha's portrayal is a composite, even though his primary model is Elijah. Instead of a one-to-one correspondence, the pattern shows how each new leader carries forward the literary "DNA" of their predecessors in multiple layers.

Figure 5. Prophetic Succession Motif
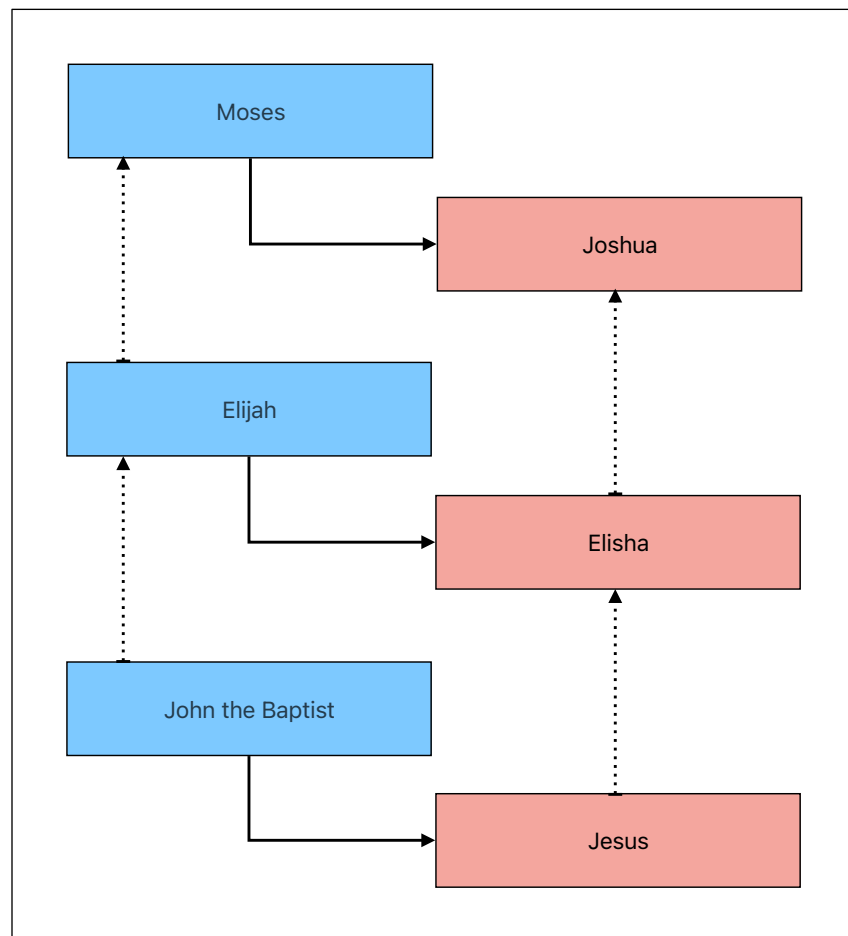
The remainder of this chapter will present evidence for a multi-layered influence in the Elisha cycle. Elisha, it will be shown, is depicted through uniquely shared traits and

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[214] E.g., Elisha succeeds Elijah, taking on his role and completing his mission, like Joshua did for Moses; hence, Elisha shares traits with both Elijah and Joshua. However, Elisha also exhibits characteristics of Moses, because Elijah himself is partly modeled after Moses. See Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 233.

wording as a Joshua figure and a prophet like Moses, but *structurally*, the Elisha

narratives parallel Elijah. Such evidence will seek to demonstrate the both/and nature of

intertextuality in the Elisha cycle, and if successful, may explain why Jesus exhibits the

same kind of both/and intertextuality in John's Gospel.

Elisha: A Prophet like Joshua

Elisha's succession of Elijah mirrors the Moses-Joshua succession in multiple

ways, so much so that Hobbs says the Moses-Joshua succession model "dominates" that

of Elijah and Elisha.[215] Joshua and Elisha are introduced as attendants (שרת) to their

masters (1 Kgs. 19:21; Num. 11:28).[216] Their official ministries begin with God

personally removing their predecessors from the scene east of the Jordan River (Deut.

34:1–6; 2 Kgs. 2:1–11),[217] after which, Joshua and Elisha publicly demonstrate their

possession of their predecessors' spirit (רוּחַ) by parting and crossing the Jordan (Josh. 3–

4; Deut. 34:9; 2 Kgs. 2:15)[218] and performing a miracle in the city of Jericho (Josh. 2–3; 2

Kgs. 2:14–22). In Jericho, Elisha heals the waters, which reverses Joshua's curse on the

city (Josh. 6:26). As Yair Zakovitch writes, the "crossing the Jordan marks the changing

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[215] T. Raymond Hobbs, *2 Kings*, WBC (Waco, TX: Word, 1985), xxix, 19, 27; Dale Ralph Davis, *2 Kings: The Power and the Fury* (Great Britain: Christian Focus, 2005), 32.

[216] Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 150; Gilmour, *Juxtaposition*, 75n3.

[217] Moses' death and Divine burial occur on Mt. Nebo opposite Jericho on the east side of Jordan (Deut. 34:1–5) while Elijah's ascension took place at an unspecified location east of Jordan via a whirlwind and chariot of fire (2 Kgs. 2:9–11).

[218] Gilmour, *Juxtaposition*, 86. Bergen recognizes the connection between Elisha and Joshua regarding the "spirit" they inherit from their predecessors but does not view Elisha's "spirit" as the Spirit from Yahweh: Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*, 62. Bergen argues that Elisha's ethical behavior was deliberately depicted as ambiguous and, at times, scandalous.

of the guards,"[219] and for readers who already know how Joshua's story turned out,

expectations are set up for Joshua's analogue, Elisha.[220] Hence, Elisha is cast repeatedly

as a Joshua figure…but not *only* a Joshua figure.[221]

Elisha: A Prophet like Elijah

There is a reason many have a hard time telling Elijah and Elisha apart. One of

the most agreed-upon attributes of the Elisha cycle is its close structural and thematic

resemblance with the Elijah cycle, particularly regarding the miracles they performed.[222]

The core of the Elisha cycle, namely 2 Kgs. 2–8, is the sequel to the Elijah stories

in 1 Kgs. 16–2 Kgs. 1. Jerome Walsh shows the literary symmetry between the Elijah and

Elisha stories as a convincing chiastic unit, which begins by introducing the line of Ahab

and the influence of Baal (1 Kgs. 16:29–34) and ends with the eradication of Ahab's line

and Baal's influence (2 Kgs. 9:14–11:20).[223] The chiastic center is the transfer of the

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[219] Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son…*, 75.

[220] Just as Moses fell short of his commission from God to lead Israel into the Promised Land, Elijah fell short of fulfilling his commission from God to anoint Hazael and Jehu and rid the land of Baal worship (1 Kgs. 19:15–16). Joshua came behind Moses and finished what Moses started. An audience now aware of Elisha's connection with Joshua may now wonder if Elisha will finish what Elijah started. See Philip E. Satterthwaite, "The Elisha Narratives and the Coherence of 2 Kings 2-8," *TynBul* 49, no. 1 (May 1998): 9–10; W. Brian Aucker, "Putting Elisha in His Place: Genre, Coherence, and Narrative Function in 2 Kings 2–8" (PhD diss., The University of Edinburgh, 2001), 57–59, 67–68; Wray-Beal, *1 & 2 Kings*, 307; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 173; Gilmour, *Juxtaposition*, 86 *et passim*.

[221] It has been suggested that the name meanings of Elisha and Joshua may further indicate an intentional linkage, as Elisha's name means "God saves" and Joshua's name means "the Lord saves" (e.g., Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 173). Because the text draws no attention to the significance of Elisha's name or uses it as a narrative device, this argument should only be considered once the Elisha-Joshua connection is established. From an evangelical perspective the name meanings may be seen as pointing beyond the creative pen of the human writer to the providential pen of the divine Author.

[222] See Robert L. Cohn, *2 Kings*, Berit Olam (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2000), 92–94; Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men," 328–29.

[223] Jerome T. Walsh, "The Organization of 2 Kings 3-11," *CBQ* 72, no. 2 (April 2010): 245, 251. Walsh's outline is adapted from George Savran, "1 and 2 Kings," in *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Cambridge,

prophetic mantle from Elijah to Elisha in 2 Kgs. 2.[224] Before and after this midway point

are parallels of Elijah and Elisha's ministries: parting the Jordan, consulting with

Jehoshaphat, miracles with women and sons, resurrection in an upper room, and

commissioning of Hazael and Jehu. These similar miracle stories of widows, oil, food

supply, and resurrection, along with shared language[225] and geographical locations[226]

point to a highly detailed literary modeling of the Elijah-Elisha narratives.[227]

MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 148–49.

 Baal is introduced to the narrative of Kings subtly when Ahab marries Jezebel (1 Kgs. 16:31). Her very name, Jezebel ("Where is the Prince?"), and the name of her father, Ethbaal ("Baal exists!"), introduce Prince Baal as the invisible character who haunts the story (Walsh, "The Organization of 2 Kings 3-11," 251). Ahab is in bed with Baal, and by extension, so is Israel. From the start, when we hear of Jezebel and her influence, we are to think of Baal and his. Naboth's vineyard is being taken over by Jezebel (1 Kgs. 26:1–10), and so is the holy land by Baal worship. Readers are meant to ask questions: What happens when Israel intermarries the worship of Yahweh with Baalism? God's people, informed by the covenant, should not be surprised by the end of the story. Ahab and his line die bloody deaths and Jezebel is eaten by dogs…in Naboth's vineyard (2 Kgs. 9:21).

[224] See Walsh, "Organization of 2 Kings 3–11," 254; Aucker, "Putting Elisha in His Place," 33–34.

[225] Many distinct instances of shared language could be given. For example, Elisha "stretches himself" (גהר) upon the Shunammite's dead son and prays (2 Kgs. 3:34). The boy's body warms but does not revive. The only other time the word גהר appears in the Hebrew Bible is in connection with Elijah on Mt. Carmel after he tells Ahab to prepare for rain. Elijah "crouched down" (גהר) upon the earth and put his face between his knees in prayer, after which a miracle occurs (1 Kgs. 18:42) (Davis, *2 Kings: The Power and the Fury*, 66). Additionally, in response to Elijah's prayer, after his servant returned the *seventh* time, then the rain came (1 Kgs. 18:44). For Elisha, the boy rose after he had sneezed the *seventh* time (4:35 *cf.* LXX).

[226] Shared geographic locations and similar actions therein include Bethel (2 Kgs. 2:2, 23), Jericho (2 Kgs. 2:4, 19), the Jordan River (2 Kgs. 2:6–8, 14; 5:10–14; 6:1–7), and Mt. Carmel (1 Kgs. 18:20; 2 Kgs. 2:25). See further, Jack R. Lundbom, "Elijah's Chariot Ride," *JJS* 24, no. 1 (April 1973): 71; Joel S Burnett, "'Going down' to Bethel: Elijah and Elisha in the Theological Geography of the Deuteronomistic History," *JBL* 129, no. 2 (2010): 281–97.

[227] See esp. Gilmour, *Juxtaposition*, 39–41 *et passim*; Nachman Levine, "Twice as Much of Your Spirit: Pattern, Parallel and Paronomasia in the Miracles of Elijah and Elisha," *JSOT* 24, no. 85 (September 1999): 25–46. So similar are the narratives that historical-critical scholars think they represent doublets. See Walsh, "Organization of 2 Kings 3–11," 252n37. But a good-faith literary reading gives the author the benefit of the doubt and allows for the possibility that the similarities may be intentional and integral to the message. See Alter, *Art*, 47–62; Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 106.

Elisha: A Prophet Like Moses

Not only is Elisha cast in the mold of Joshua and most notably Elijah, but he is also depicted as a prophet like Moses. Doing so serves to align Elisha with the expectations of a true prophet as described in Deut. 18:15–18, which begins, "The Lord your God will raise up for you *a prophet like me* from among you…" Portraying a prophet as being like Moses and according to Moses' litmus test establishes the prophet's legitimacy. Accordingly, while Deut. 18:15–18 may have an ultimate prophet in view (*cf.* Acts 3:22–23; 7:37), any prophet who prophesied truly and declared God's words accurately showed himself "a true Mosaic prophet."[228] As such, major biblical prophets are painted in distinctly Mosaic colors. What follows is a sampling of the major prophets—Joshua, Samuel, Elijah, and Jeremiah—and their Mosaic traits. Though others could be listed, this sampling should establish the pattern before examining the same phenomenon in Elisha.

The Prophet-Like-Moses Pattern

Joshua

Our brief survey of prophets in the tradition of Moses starts with Joshua, who is never entitled a prophet in Hebrew Bible[229] but is described in the Apocrypha as "a

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[228] See esp. Carroll, "Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 43. Carroll draws from S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, 3rd ed., ICC (Edinburgh: Clark, 1901), 228–29. For similar assessments, see Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy = [Devarim]*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 175; J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, ApOTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 303. For a full-length monograph on "the prophet like Moses," see David Neil DeJong, *A Prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15, 18): The Origin, History, and Influence of the Mosaic Prophetic Succession*, JSJSup 205 (Leiden: Brill, 2022).

[229] Porter, "Succession of Joshua," 120.

successor of Moyses in prophecies (προφητης)" (Sirach 46:1a NETS).[230] Yet, there are

good reasons from within the Protestant canon itself for thinking of Joshua as a

prototypical prophet like Moses.[231] Joshua is imbued with the spirit or Spirit of God

(Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9), he speaks with the prophetic formula, "Thus says the LORD"

(Josh. 7:13; 24:2), and his very specific prophecy concerning the rebuilding of Jericho is

fulfilled (Josh. 6:26; 1 Kgs. 16:34).[232]

Beyond Joshua's role as prophet, he is depicted as mirroring Moses' actions.[233]

For instance, God, as the angel, speaks to Joshua as he did to Moses: both men are

directed to remove their sandals because they are standing on holy ground (Exod. 3:5;

Josh. 5:15). Moses and Joshua both send spies into Canaan (Num. 13; Josh. 2), cleave a

body of water (Exod. 14; Josh. 3),[234] renew covenants (Deut. 29–30; Josh. 24), intercede

for the people (Josh. 7:6–9; Exod. 32:11–13; Num. 14:13–19),[235] and raise their hand to

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[230] Josephus (*Ant.* 4.7.2; 4.8.46) refers to Joshua as a prophet and Moses' successor (George W. Ramsey, "Joshua [Person]," *ABD,* 3:1000). Later intertestamental texts depict Joshua as Moses' successor (T. Mos. 1:7; 10:15) (Keener, *Gospel of John*, 967n325).

[231] See esp. J. J. Routley, "The Prophet Joshua? The Neglected Ministry of the Prophet of the Conquest," *JETS* 65 (2022): 47–59. Moses is designated a prophet in his epitaph (Deut. 34:10) outside the Pentateuch (Hos. 12:13), and indirectly elsewhere (e.g., Deut. 18:15; Num. 11:16–17). For Moses as prophet in and outside the Bible, see Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 75–94.

[232] Ramsey, "Joshua (Person)," 3:1000. 1 Kgs. 16:34 reads in full: "In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the loss of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the loss of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun." The "according to the word of the Lord" language is typical of fulfilled prophecies. See further, William H. Barnes, *1–2 Kings*, CBC (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2012), 147; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 131.

[233] For extensive comparisons, see Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 61–67.

[234] Fishbane draws special attention to Joshua's parting of the Jordan in connecting with Moses' Red Sea crossing: "No more explicit correlation between the conquest and the exodus could be expected: the old exodus imagery of the sea-crossing is strategically used and emphasized, and Joshua is portrayed, in parallel circumstances, as a new Moses" (Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 359; *cf.* 352, 358, 373).

[235] Ramsey, "Joshua (Person)," 3:1000.

win battles (Exod. 17:11; Josh. 8:26).[236] These similarities combine to show that "Joshua,

Moses' disciple and successor, is fashioned in the image of his master."[237]

Samuel

As a pivotal figure in Israel's history, the life of Samuel mirrors Moses at key

points, beginning with Samuel's birth and call stories.[238] Moses and Samuel, after being

nursed by their persecuted mothers, are raised by non-family members at their mothers'

request (Exod. 1:22–2:10; 1 Sam. 2:9–28). Their calls occur with fire-related

theophanies—Moses at the burning bush and Samuel near the lamp of God (Exod. 3:2–6;

1 Sam. 3:3). God calls (קרא) them by name with solemn repetition ("Moses, Moses";

"Samuel, Samuel") and commissions them with difficult tasks (Exod. 3:4; 1 Sam. 3:10).

Though afraid (ירא), they respond, "Here I am."[239]

Samuel's call narrative, sharing the same textual DNA as Moses', sets the tone for

the rest of Samuel's ministry.[240] They both mediate covenants, intercede on behalf of the

people, perform priestly duties, codify laws, deliver messages of judgment, commission

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[236] Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 61–62. Moses holds up a rod (Exod. 17:9–11), while Joshua holds a javelin (Josh. 8:18–26).

[237] Zakovitch, 61.

[238] Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, vol. 7, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 59–60, 84.

[239] Exod. 3:4–6; 1 Sam. 3:4–10, 15–16. Peter J. Leithart, *A Son to Me: An Exposition of 1 & 2 Samuel* (Moscow, ID: Canon, 2003), 49.

[240] The following parallels are culled from Mark Leuchter, "Samuel: A Prophet Like Moses or a Priest Like Moses?," in *Israelite Prophecy and the Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History*, Ancient Israel and Its Literature 14 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 148; Robert B. Chisholm Jr., *1 and 2 Samuel*, Teach the Text Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013), 47; Leithart, *A Son to Me*, 49; Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 59–60; Daniela De Panfilis, "Not Only a Prophet: The Numerous Faces of Samuel," *SBSlov* 12, no. 2 (January 2020): 152; Harvey Minkoff, "Moses and Samuel: Israel's Era of Charismatic Leadership," *JBQ* 30, no. 4 (January 2002): 257, 261.

leaders, and warn the people of the repercussions of having an Israelite king.[241] Through

these recurring parallels, Samuel is cast as a Mosaic prophet, who, like Moses, ushers in a

new chapter in Israel's unfolding story and oversees a significant transition of leadership

(Deut. 31:14-23; 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13). Later texts refer to Moses and Samuel as tandem

archetypes (Jer. 15:1; Ps. 99:6), showing that the two were "regarded in some circles as

parallel prophetic figures."[242]

Elijah

Elijah not only exhibits character traits of Moses, but his narratives are arguably

modeled on Moses at the micro and macro levels.[243] This is most evident in Elijah's Mt.

Carmel confrontation with the prophets of Baal (1 Kgs. 18:20–40), his escape to the

wilderness and theophanic encounter on Mt. Horeb (1 Kgs. 19:1–14), and the uncertainty

surrounding his burial (2 Kgs. 2).[244]

Elijah's bloody confrontation with Israel's Baal worship echoes Moses' reaction

from Mt. Sinai to Israel's idol worship (Exod. 32:1–19) and its subsequent slaughter of

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[241] On mediation of covenants: Exod. 24:3–8; 1 Sam. 12:24–25; on intercession, Deut. 5:4–5; 18:16; 1 Sam. 7:3–14; 12:18–23; on priestly activities: Exod. 24:4–5; 1 Sam 7:9–10; on codification of laws: Deut. 31:9; 1 Sam. 10:25; on messages of judgment: Exod. 7:14–18; 1 Sam 3:11–18; on commissioning of leaders: Deut. 31:14, 23; 1 Sam. 10:17–27; and on warnings about kings: Deut. 17:14–20; 1 Sam. 8:9–22 (Peter J. Leithart, *A House for My Name: A Survey of the Old Testament* [Moscow, ID: Canon, 2000], 131–32).

[242] Leuchter, "Samuel," 148.

[243] A fairly recent dissertation argues for wholesale modeling of the Elijah cycle on Moses: Havilah Dharamraj, "A Prophet Like Moses? A Narrative-Theological Reading of the Elijah Narratives" (PhD diss., Durham University, 2006), 244–47 *et passim*. For a concise but helpful overview, see David J. Zucker, "Elijah and Elisha: Part 1 Moses and Joshua," *JBQ* 40, no. 4 (2012): 226.

[244] Carroll, "Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 408–11. Later legends about Moses death describe an ascension to heaven more akin to Elijah's end rather than an unknown burial site (Josephus, *Ant*. 4.8.48–49; Philo, *Life of Moses* 2.888; *cf.* Deut. 34:5–6).

idol worshippers (Exod. 32:27, 35).[245] Elijah, fearing Jezebel's wrath, escapes to the

wilderness and up Mt. Horeb.[246] The similarities to Moses are numerous: they both are

summoned by God to ascend Mt. Horeb, fast forty days and forty nights, and are visited

by God, where they witness fire, earthquake, and the God's voice.[247] Elijah's actions on

Mt. Horeb seem to echo other Mosaic actions like the escape from a vengeful ruler, the

veiling of the face,[248] the location of the cleft of the rock,[249] and the request of God to

die.[250] Finally, the lives of Elijah and Moses come to a dramatic end in a dramatically

similar way. Both of their departures from the world takes place on the far side of Jordan

opposite Jericho by Divine means.[251] Taken altogether, such intertextuality suggests

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[245] For detailed treatments, see Robert L. Cohn, "The Literary Logic of 1 Kings 17–19.," *JBL* 101, no. 3 (September 1982): 341; Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings*, 132; Moshe Reiss, "Elijah the Zealot: A Foil to Moses," *JBQ* 32, no. 3 (July 2004): 175–76. Wiseman notes that the execution of false prophets too was a fulfillment of Mosaic commands (Deut. 13:5, 13–18; 17:2–5 *cf*. Num. 25:1–13): D. J. Wiseman, *1 and 2 Kings*, TOTC 9 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1993), 182.

[246] Mt. Horeb acts as a key intertextual geographic link. See Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 71.

[247] Exod. 19:18–20; 24:12–18; 1 Kgs. 19:7–13. Deuteronomy 9:9 fills in the details about Moses' forty days on Mt. Sinai and notes that he fasted the whole time—eating no food *or* drinking water.

[248] For Moses, this was Pharoah; for Elijah, it was Jezebel (Exod. 2:11–15; 1 Kgs. 19:1–3). On the veiling of the face (Exod. 34:28–35; 1 Kgs. 19:13), See esp. Brian Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," *CBQ* 64, no. 1 (2002): 37–58.

[249] Exod. 33:18–23; 1 Kgs. 19:9, 13. Because the Hebrew article prefixes "cave," a *particular* cave may be in view, i.e. the specific cleft Moses hid within (Exod. 33:22). See Cohn, "Literary Logic," 342; Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 71; *GKC* §126.q.

[250] Num. 11:14–15; 1 Kgs. 19:4. This last suggestion comes from John W Olley, *The Message of Kings: God Is Present* (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2011), 177–78; William J. Dumbrell, "What Are You Doing Here?: Elijah at Horeb," *Crux* 22 (1986): 14–15.
     Some scholars see more contrast than similarity between the two mountaintop theophanies and conclude Elijah is cast in a very negative light compared to Moses. However, they focus primarily on Moses' initial theophany (Exod. 19:18–20; 24:12–18) and do not consider that Elijah's Divine encounter on Mt. Horeb could be a complex conflation of Moses narratives as I suggest above, which may result in a different assessment: Brevard S. Childs, "On Reading the Elijah Narratives," *Interpretation* 34, no. 2 (April 1980): 135; Reiss, "Elijah the Zealot," 177–78; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 146.

[251] Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 74.

Elijah is not simply depicted as Moses-ish but more like a Virgil's Aeneus to Homer's Odysseus.[252]

Jeremiah

Jeremiah continues the pattern of being portrayed as a prophet like Moses. Fishbane suggests that biblical authors assume "all true prophets are 'like' Moses," and thus depicting a prophet as such serves to "legitimate the mission of this prophet."[253] The book of Jeremiah begins by equating his words with God's (1:1–2).[254] God literally puts his words into Jeremiah's mouth (נָתַתִּי דְבָרַי בְּפִיךָ) (Jer. 1:9)—a sign of a true Mosaic prophet (Deut. 18:18).[255]

Jeremiah's call from God (Jer. 1:5) mirrors the archetypal prophetic call of Moses (Exod. 3).[256] Like Moses, God addresses and commissions Jeremiah (1:1–5; Exod. 3:10),

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[252] See further, Carroll, "Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 411. Elijah is also called a "man of God" (אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים) six times (1 Kgs. 17:18, 24; 2 Kgs. 1:9–13), an epithet first used of Moses (Deut. 33:1) and used repeatedly for him thereafter (Josh. 14:6; Ezr. 3:2; 1 Chron. 23:14; 2 Chron. 8:14; 30:16). Targum Neofiti at Deut. 33:1 reads "prophet of Yahweh," indicating that later synonymous usage for the titles "man of God" and "prophet." (Daniel I. Block, *Deuteronomy*, NIVAC [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012], 788n9). The title appears in the traditional title to Psalm 90, "The prayer of Moses, the man of God." The title is likewise shared with divine messengers of God (Judg. 13:6–8), on which, see N. P. Bratsiotis, *TDOT* s.v. "אִישׁ," 233–235; Victor P. Hamilton, *NIDOTTE* s.v. "אִישׁ," 390.

[253] Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 374.

[254] Louis Stulman, *Jeremiah*, AOTC (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2005), 38.

[255] Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 374.

[256] This call narrative follows a literary pattern established by Moses and is present in the calls of Gideon (Judg. 6:14–22), Isaiah (Isa. 6:5–7), Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:3–3:11), and others. Habel, in his seminal work on this literary type-scene (though he does not refer to it as such), suggests the call pattern consists of: 1. divine confrontation, 2. introductory word, 3. commission, 4. objection, 5. reassurance, 6. sign (Norman C. Habel, "Form and Significance of the Call Narratives," *ZAW* 77, no. 3 [1965]: 298). For the call structure for Jeremiah and Moses, see William Lee Holladay, *Jeremiah 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1-25*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1986), 27–31; Michael A. Fishbane, *Haftarot* (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 2002), 256–57; Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, NTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 53–60.

Jeremiah objects with fear about his speaking ability (1:6; Exod. 3:11; 4:10), and God

reassures him of his enablement and protection (1:7–8; Exod. 3:12, 4:15).[257] Following

Moses' pattern, Jeremiah is "appointed" as a prophet by God (1:5; Exod. 7:1)[258] and "sent

forth to prophesy against his personal inclination but with divine assurances."[259]

Notably, both Jeremiah and Moses end their prophetic careers outside the

Promised Land—Moses in the wilderness and Jeremiah back in Egypt, where Moses

began (Jer. 43:4–7; Deut. 1:37; 3:26; 4:21).[260] Jeremiah's "counter-exodus" may indicate

his ministry acts as a bookend to the ministry of Moses.[261]

Elisha as Prophet Like Moses

Though other OT prophets could be analyzed to establish the prophet-like-Moses

pattern,[262] the list need not be exhaustive to be sufficient. A prophet who does not receive

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[257] Perhaps the most detailed and convincing treatment of Jeremiah's call narrative as alluding to Moses' is from Benedetta Rossi, "Reshaping Jeremiah: Scribal Strategies and the Prophet like Moses," *JSOT* 44, no. 4 (June 2020): 575–93; See further Stulman, *Jeremiah*, 38–42; Hetty Lalleman-de Winkel, *Jeremiah and Lamentations*, vol. 21, TOTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 72.

[258] Stulman, *Jeremiah*, 41.

[259] Fishbane, *Haftarot*, 256. Jeremiah's call sets the tone for the book, primarily composed of poetic oracles against a rebellious and idolatrous people (Jer. 7:25–26; 8:19 *cf*. Exod. 32:9; Deut. 9:7; 10:16; 32:31) (Gary E. Yates, "Intertextuality and the Portrayal of Jeremiah the Prophet," *BSac* 170, no. 679 [2013]: 289). In the prose sections, references to Moses also occur. Jeremiah refers to Moses by name as a model prophet (Jer. 15:1) and overtly references Moses' truth test of Deut. 18:20–22 to vindicate Jeremiah's prediction of Jerusalem's doom against Hananiah's positive prophecy of peace (Jer. 28:5–9). See esp. William Lee Holladay, "Background of Jeremiah's Self-Understanding: Moses, Samuel, and Psalm 22," *JBL* 83, no. 2 (January 1964): 153–64; F. B. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 248.

[260] Yates, "Intertextuality and the Portrayal," 289.

[261] Rossi, "Reshaping Jeremiah," 576.

[262] E.g., Deborah, Nathan, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, etc.

due attention in this context is Elisha.[263] Exploring Elisha's Mosaic traits is valuable for this study because it demonstrates how a character can be primarily associated with one figure yet modeled after another. If this can be shown for Elisha, it supports the possibility that Jesus in the Gospel of John is depicted as a prophet like Moses, while His signs are arranged to align with Elisha.

We start with traits that are completely unique to Moses and Elisha in the OT, namely Elisha's handling of a prophet's staff, healing the polluted water, providing bread for his followers, and healing leprosy.

First, Moses and Elisha carry a staff as a sort of prophet's badge. They both give their staff to their respective assistants (Aaron, Gehazi) to perform a miracle (Exod. 7:8–13; 2 Kgs. 4:29–37).[264] No other OT character uses a staff to effect miracles.[265]

Secondly, Moses and Elisha perform hydro-centric miracles. In the first instance, Moses turns water into blood before Pharoah, after which the Egyptians dig for seven days in search of water but only find blood (Exod. 7:14–25). In Elisha's case, after three

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[263] Robert Carroll says that any parallels between Elisha and Moses outside of the succession in 2 Kgs. 2 are "minor" (Carroll, "Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 411). Instead, Carroll draws a sharper parallel between Elisha and Joshua. Yet, he overlooks strong parallels like the floating axe head and the curing of the waters, while underplaying the provision of bread similarity.

[264] Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 188. Zucker notes Elisha and Moses elsewhere delegate their authority (2 Kgs. 9:1–3; Exod. 18:24–26, 24:14): Zucker, "Elijah and Elisha: Part 1," 229.

[265] A close match is Joshua's javelin, which recalls the use and function of Moses' staff (Josh. 8:18–26). See further, Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 62–63.
    Several early church fathers, in their own way, connected the staff of Elisha to Moses. For the resurrection of the Shunamite's son, Augustine's treatment is representative: Gehazi's staff represents the Law of Moses, a tool that could not bring life. Elisha lays the staff (the Law) aside and lays himself upon the boy to effect the resurrection, typifying Christ who alone could bring everlasting life (Augustine, *Serm.* [*NPNF*] 86.6; *Contra duas epist. Pelag.* 4.5.11; *Reply to Faustus, the Manichean* 7.35; Cyprian finds a way to defend infant baptism with this account [*Ep.* (ANF) 58.3]; Victorinus, *Const. Apost.* 5.7).

kings journey *seven* days without water, he commands the people to *dig* ditches, God miraculously fills them with *water*, and the water appears as *blood* (2 Kgs. 3:9–22).[266]

Moses' second water transformation occurs at Marah, where he makes the bitter waters sweet by throwing (שלך) a stick (עֵץ) into the water (Exod. 15:20–27). The Lord is declared as the healer (רפא) of his people (Exod. 15:26). In like manner, Elisha turns polluted water wholesome at Jericho by throwing (שלך) salt into the water (2 Kgs. 2:19–22). The Lord is declared as the healer (רפא) of the waters (2 Kgs. 2:21).[267] On another occasion, Elisha throws (שלך) a stick (עֵץ) into the water to retrieve an axehead (2 Kgs. 6:1–7), an episode thought by some to be inconsequential if an intentional parallel with Moses is not considered.[268] Transforming the properties of water and throwing an object into water to enact a miracle are unique to Moses and Elisha in the Bible.

The third unique Moses-Elisha similarity involves a miraculous supply of food for a crowd of followers in a time of scarcity.[269] In Moses' case, it was manna from heaven (Exod. 16:1–36); for Elisha, it was barley loaves (2 Kings 4:42–44). Both accounts

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[266] Zakovitch, 76; Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men," 339; Margaret Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference in the Fourth Gospel*, JSNTSup (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1992), 77. Both stories also mention wood (עֵץ) and stone (אֶבֶן), though in different contexts (Exod. 7:19; 2 Kgs. 3:19, 25). In narrative contexts, the close association of blood and water is only found with Moses and Elisha in the OT. In the NT narratives, blood and water appear together in John 19:34; Rev. 11:6; 16:4—all writings traditionally ascribed to John (*cf.* 1 John 5:6, 8). In non-narrative, blood and water appear in Lev. 14:6, 51, 52; Deut. 12:16; Psalm 79:3; 105:29; Isa. 15:9; Ezek. 16:9; 19:10, and Heb. 9:19. In the Apocrypha, blood and water are paired in 2 Esd. 15:58.

[267] Gilmour, *Juxtaposition*, 94, 97; Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 75.

[268] See pages 64–67 above.

[269] Gilmour, *Juxtaposition*, 142. Elijah's supply of food for the widow at Zarephath comes the closest to these stories (1 Kgs. 17:10–16), the key difference being the recipients were not a crowd of followers.

involve an abundant supply,[270] and Moses and Elisha do a pair of feeding miracles each (Exod. 16; Num. 11:4–9; 2 Kings 4:1–7, 42–44).[271] Later interpreters, like Josephus (*Ant.* 9.73)[272] and a rabbinic tradition (b. *Ket.* 106a),[273] emphasized the Elisha-Moses food link, aligning Elisha's feeding miracles to Moses' provision of manna.

Like Moses, Elisha could bless and give life and curse and take life away (Deut. 28).[274] This blessing and cursing aspect of Moses and Elisha is highlighted dramatically with their healing and inflicting of leprosy.[275] Miriam is struck with leprosy and then healed of it (Num. 12:1–16 *cf.* Exod. 4:6–7); Naaman is healed of leprosy and then

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[270] Carroll notes the theme of abundant supply in Elijah and Elisha with the widows (Carroll, "Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 412), a trait aligning with Moses but not unique to Moses and Elisha.

[271] Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992), 54. Blomberg makes the connection here to Jesus' feeding miracles in Matthew.

[272] Per Josephus, when Elisha prophesies that the starving Samaritan city will enjoy an abundance of bread the next day (2 Kgs. 7:1), the king's messenger says, "What you are saying is unbelievable, O prophet; and just as it is impossible for God *to pour down from heaven waterfalls of barley or wheat flour*, so it is also impossible for the things you have now said to come to pass" (*Ant.* 9.73, translation mine. The Greek text comes from Benedikt Niese, "Flavii Iosephi Opera Recognovit Benedictus Niese ..." (Berolini: apud Weidmannos, 1888–). Josephus' expansion (in italics) is important, for Jewish readers would know that God *can* rain down bread from Heaven, for he already did it for Moses in the wilderness (Exod. 16:4). Thus, Josephus takes language from Moses and refracts it onto Elisha, making the parallel more overt than the biblical account. On Josephus' tendency to assimilate qualities of other Bible characters, see Zakovitch, "Assimilation in Biblical Narratives," 178–79. Ambrose, an early church father, includes the raining down of corn concerning Elisha's prophecy during the siege of Samaria (*De offic.* 3.20.118–23), which aligns with Josephus' Moses-flavored expansion.

[273] Here Elisha feeds over 2,200 men with 20 barley loaves instead of 100 men (b. *Ket.* 106a), possibly to align closer with the massive crowds Moses fed. See John Lightfoot, *A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica: Matthew – 1 Corinthians, vol. 3, Luke – John* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1859. Logos Bible Software), 302. *Cf.* b. *Ket.* 105b; *cf.* b. *Sanh.* 12a.

[274] Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 174.

[275] The standard semantic qualifiers for "leprosy" (Hebrew: צָרַעַת; Greek: λεπρός) apply here, denoting a skin disease that was in most cases not identical with leprosy in the modern sense of Hansen's disease. See further, David P. Wright and Richard N. Jones, "Leprosy," *ABD* 4:277–282.
　　For the likely intentional linking of Elisha to Moses through giving and healing leprosy, see John Gray, *I & II Kings*, Rev. ed., OTL (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1970), 508; Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 77–78. Naaman indirectly links Elisha to Moses in 2 Kgs. 5 by presuming Elisha would "wave his hand over the place" (2 Kgs. 5:11) to work the miracle—a distinctly Mosaic miracle action (Exod. 10:21; 14:21–22).

Gehazi is struck with it (2 Kgs. 5). Both healings occur from a distance after the leper is sent away.[276]

Other Moses-Elisha connections regarding leprosy occur. Both leprosy inflictions involve a foreigner at the center of the discussion (Moses' Cushite wife and Naaman the Aramean). Both involve the prophet's assistant (Miriam and Gehazi) challenging their leader's authority, leaving the prophet's presence, returning after a period, and believing their actions justified.[277] Connecting Elisha's leprosy episode to yet another Moses narrative, Gehazi's skin turned "white as snow" (2 Kgs. 5:27), a descriptor only used in connection with Moses' leprous hand (Exod. 4:6).[278]

Moses and Elisha are the only OT characters to reverse the effects of poison— Moses with poisonous snake bites and Elisha with poisonous food (Num. 21:6–9; 2 Kgs. 4:38–41). These two "deadly"[279] situations arise from lack of food (Num. 21:5; 2 Kgs.

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[276] See Anderson, "Gradations," 15n30. Leprosy as a divine judgment is not unique to Moses and Elisha in the OT, but *healing* from leprosy is. e.g., Uzziah is struck with leprosy on account of sin (2 Kgs. 15:5 // 2 Chron. 26:19), and David seems to curse Joab's family line with it (2 Sam. 3:29). No healing is mentioned for these cases. Also, as Caine points out, Moses is not the healer in Miriam's case; God is (Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 26), even though Moses intercedes on her behalf. With Elisha and Naaman, though God is obviously the ultimate cause of the healing, the truncated nature of the narrative blurs the lines.

[277] D. P. O'Brien, "'Is This the Time to Accept . . .?' (2 Kings v 26b): Simply Moralizing (LXX) of an Ominous Forboding of Yahweh's Rejection of Israel (MT)?," *VT* 46, no. 4 (October 1996): 451; Gilmour, *Juxtaposition*, 152.

[278] O'Brien, "'Is This the Time to Accept . . .?," 451n13.

[279] Though words for "poison" are not used in either episode, the effects of poison are present. People have died and are dying from the fiery serpents (Num. 21:6). Whether or not the "wild gourds" (פַּקֻּעֹת שָׂדֶה) were poisonous or simply inedible, the people exclaim that there is "death in the pot" (מָוֶת בַּסִּיר), the narrator says they "were unable to eat" (לֹא יָכְלוּ), and after Elisha's intervention, the pot did not contain "anything harmful" (דָּבָר רָע) (2 Kgs. 4:40–41). There is also debate as to whether "fiery" (שָׂרָף) serpents refer to a specific species of snake or the burning effect of their bite. In any case, the fact that their bites were deadly indicates the snakes were venomous. For discussion, see R. Dennis Cole, *Numbers*, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 347.; *BDB*, s.v. "שָׂרָף."
    Related to the deadly food is the water in 2 Kgs. 2:19–21, which causes barrenness and death, implying poisonous water. Elisha's healing (רפא) of the waters therefore de-poisons the water. Poisonous food and water are combined and made explicit in Jer. 23:15 as the Lord's instrument of judgment upon the false prophets.

4:38). These are the only instances in the OT where a miraculous remedy for poison is provided, let alone through the direct intervention of the leading prophet of the era.

These shared characteristics are all unique in the OT to Moses and Elisha *alone*. There are no other staff-wielding, poison-canceling, water-transforming, food-multiplying, leprosy-healing biblical characters than them.

Other Mosaic traits that Elisha exhibits that are shared with other prophets include Elisha's title "man of God," used 29 times for him and far eclipsing the number of its designations for any other prophet including Moses.[280] Additionally, Moses and Elisha perform actions that are not identical but similar, like the use of wild beasts—serpents and bears—as tools of judgment (Num. 24:4–9; 2 Kgs. 2:23–25)[281] and the striking of an object twice to perform a water miracle (Num. 20:10–11; 2 Kgs. 2:13–14).[282]

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[280] See Victor P. Hamilton, *NIDOTTE* s.v. "אִישׁ," 390.

[281] One might also mention the sending of wild animals as a form of judgment (fiery snakes for Moses, she-bears for Elisha) to be another pairing (Num. 21:6–9; 2 Kgs. 2:23–24). However, both 1 Kgs. 13:21–28 and 20:36 involve the sending of a lion killing to kill a disobedient prophet. So, a judgment by wild animals may be a Mosaic trait that 1–2 Kings keys in on, but it is not uniquely shared between Moses and Elisha.
　　Many interpreters throughout history have been less than pleased with Elisha's bearish reaction to the boys' taunt. Siccing ferocious bears on the boys to maul them seems like overkill. Some see it as "morally scandalous" (Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 739). Others note that the youths might have been cult priests of Baal at Jeroboam's shrine (Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings*, 175), and therefore more sinister than little boys. But this is, perhaps, to miss the point of the preceding story and the wider context. These bears were not she-bears; they were "covenant bears" (Davis, 2 Kings, 49). In Lev. 26:22, part of the covenant curse is "And *I will let loose the wild beasts against you, which shall bereave you of your children…*" (ESV *cf.* Deut. 32:24). See further Brian P. Irwin, "The Curious Incident of the Boys and the Bears: 2 Kings 2 and the Prophetic Authority of Elisha," *TynBul* 67, no. 1 (2016): 27.

[282] While the MT is debatable on this point, the LXX at 2 Kgs. 2:14 clearly has Elisha striking the waters twice: "And he took the sheepskin of Eliou that fell from upon him and struck the water, *and it did not part* (καὶ οὐ διέστη), and he said, 'Where is the God of Eliou—aphpho?' And he struck the waters, and they burst here and there, and Elisaie went over." See Timo Tekoniemi, "Enhancing the Depiction of a Prophet : The Repercussions of Textual Criticism for the Study of the Elisha Cycle," *BN* 186 (2020): 80–82. After the second mention of Elijah's name, the LXX includes ἀφφώ, a transliteration of אַף הוּא ("he, himself"). See *LEH*, s.v. "αφφω." NETS retains this oddity in translation while LES omits it.
　　Even though 2 Kgs. 2:13–14 includes many shared traits with Num. 20:10–13 and Exod. 14:16, 21, Elisha's striking of the water twice is not typically linked to Moses. Not linking Elisha to Moses can result in some very different understandings of the author's message e.g., Brueggemann suggests Elisha's double striking of the water may reflect "his power may be less than that of Elijah. But it is adequate"

Lastly, a narrative analogy appears in the story of the Arameans' failed attempt to capture Elisha (2 Kgs. 6:8–23), which blends language and imagery from Joseph's capture in Dothan (Gen. 37) and Moses' encounter with Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea (Exod. 14).[283] Although scholarly comparisons between Elisha and Moses in this passage are rare,[284] the following table highlights the distinctly Mosaic elements of this Elisha narrative and its connections to the Joseph story.

Table 8. Narrative Analogy: Elisha and Moses

Moses (Exodus 14)	Joseph (Genesis 37)	Elisha (2 Kings 6)
	Joseph tells his father, **Israel**, his brothers' evil report (2)	Elisha tells the king of **Israel** the Aramean king's plan of attack (9–12)
	Joseph tells Israel and his brothers twice of his dreams (5–9)	Elisha tells the king of Israel twice of the Aramean king's plans (9–10)
	Israel **kept** (guarded) the saying (11)	King of Israel **guards** himself (10)
The **heart** of the **king** of Egypt is hardened (4, 5, 8)	Joseph's brothers hate him for what he has said (4, 5, 8)	The **heart** of the **king** of Aram is enraged (11)
	Joseph asks the question, "**Please tell me**…" (16)	King of Israel asks the question, "**Please tell me**..." (11)
	"**Go** now **and see**" about the welfare of your brothers (14)	"**Go and see**" where he is… (13)

(Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, 297). O'Brien concludes similarly to Brueggemann but suggests a connection with Num. 24:4–9: Mark A. O'Brien, "The Portrayal of Prophets in 2 Kings 2," *ABR* 46 (1998): 12.

Rabbinic tradition says Elisha lost his prophetic agency after becoming angry like Moses after striking the rock (*Sif. Deut.* 33; b. *Pes.* 66b., 117a; *cf.* 2 Kgs. 3:13–15). In an interesting anachronistic twist, *Moses* is like *Elisha* at the Red Sea (*Mek. Yish.*, Vayehi Besh. 3) and the Nile River (t. *Sotah* 4.3). On this, see Graves, "Scholar and Advocate," 6.

[283] Text in **bold** type that indicates a shared Hebrew lexeme. Notice the proposed allusion resembles the conflation seen in Table 2 with Virgil's use of Homer and Table 6 with *LAB*'s use of Jael and Judith

[284] Gilmour briefly notes the connection with Exod. 14 but not Gen. 37: Rachelle Gilmour, "A Note on the Horses and Chariots of Fire at Dothan," *ZAW* 125, no. 2 (2013): 310. Zucker connects the fire, horses, and chariots of Exod. 3, 14, and 15 with 2 Kgs. 2:11 and 6:17: Zucker, "Elijah and Elisha: Part 1," 229.

Moses (Exodus 14)	Joseph (Genesis 37)	Elisha (2 Kings 6)
	Joseph is told his brothers are in **Dothan**. Joseph finds his brothers in **Dothan** (17)	The king is told that Elisha is in **Dothan** (13)
The Egyptians plot to kill the Israelites (5–8)	Joseph's brothers plot to kill him (18–20)	The Arameans plot to kill Elisha (11–13)
Pharoah sends **horses**, **chariots**, **army** to attack (9)		King of Aram sends **horses**, **chariots**, **army** to attack (14)
The people ask Moses in desperation why he has **dealt** (עשה) with them like this (11)		Elisha's assistant asks Elisha in desperation what he is going to **do** (עשה) (15)
Moses responds, "**Do not fear**!" (13)		Elisha responds, "**Do not fear**!" (16)
Moses instructs the people to stand still and **see** the salvation of the Lord (13)		Elisha asks that God allow his servant to **see** the heavenly host of the Lord (17)
A pillar of **fire** provides protection (24)		Chariots of **fire** provide protection (17)
Egyptians are thrown into confusion (24)	Joseph wanders around and is lost (15)	Arameans are struck with blindness (18)
	A **man** tells Joseph that Shechem is not the right city. Joseph is directed to Dothan to **search** for his brothers (15–17).	Elisha says Dothan is not the right city, he will **bring** them to the **man** they are **seeking** (19).
The Egyptians **follow** Israel to their **deaths in the midst of** the sea (27)		The Arameans **follow** Elisha but are spared **death in the midst of** Samaria (19–23)
	Joseph's brothers "raise **their eyes and look, and behold**…" (25)	The Arameans "open **their eyes and look**, **and behold**…" (20)
	Israel's sons desire to capture and **kill** Joseph (20)	The king of Israel desires to **kill** the Arameans whom they have captured (21)
	Reuben says "We **will not take** (נכה) his life" (21)	Elisha says, "You **will not kill** (נכה) them" (21)

Moses (Exodus 14)	Joseph (Genesis 37)	Elisha (2 Kings 6)
	Joseph's brothers eat a **meal** (לחם) (25). Judah insists his brothers do not kill Joseph (27), and they return home.	Elisha insists on feeding the enemies a **meal** (לחם), not **killing** them, and sending them home (22).
	Joseph's brothers listen to Judah (27)	The king of Israel listens to Elisha (21–23)
	The Midianites **lift up** (עלה) Joseph out of the pit (28)	The Arameans **go up** (עלה) and besiege Samaria (24)
	Joseph is **sold** for 20 **shekels of silver** (28)	A donkey's head is **sold** for 80 **shekels of silver**, and dove's dung for five **shekels of silver** (25)
	Joseph's brothers tell **Israel** that his son has been killed. **Israel** exclaims that a wild beast has **eaten** (אכל) his **son**! (33)	A woman tells the king of **Israel** that because of starvation, she has **eaten** (אכל) her **son**! (28–29)
	Israel **tears** his clothes and puts on **sackcloth** (34)	The king of Israel **tears** his clothes and puts on **sackcloth** (30)

Since Dothan appears only in 2 Kgs. 6 and Gen. 37 in all of Scripture, the shared geography uniquely links the texts and invites a comparison.[285] Likewise, the dense cluster of shared descriptions, such as an enraged king sending an army with horses and chariots to kill a meddling prophet, warrants an investigation into the similarities between

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[285] Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings*, 202–3. The mention of Dothan in 2 Kgs. 6:13 gives context as to how far the Arameans walked to Samaria, but other stories in the Elisha cycle function without such detailed geography e.g., 2 Kgs. 8:1; 13:14. The city may be considered an unnecessary detail to the story if it does not point beyond itself.

Elisha's and Moses' predicaments (Exod. 7).[286] The more intertextual indicators are uncovered, the more the intertextual needle moves from possible to plausible to probable.

Comparing Elisha's account with Moses' reveals at least 15 notable shared Hebrew lexemes, with many more than that in the Joseph narrative. The ordering of parallels is almost entirely sequential. An audience that has picked up on the shared settings, language, sequence, themes, and key motifs may expect a slaughter of the Arameans at the end of the story. Instead, in a stunning reversal of the Red Sea narrative, Elisha gives the enemies of Israel bread (לחם) instead of war (לחם),[287] a banquet instead of a battle (Exod. 14:14, 25; 2 Kgs. 6:8).[288] What this narrative analogy shows for this study is that even though the Elisha cycle is Elijah-structured, it is still Moses-flavored.

To end this section on Elisha's connection to Moses, it is fitting to consider how the Elisha cycle itself ends. Before Elisha's death, burial, or final visit with the king, it is said that the Lord provides "a deliverer (מוֹשִׁיעַ)" to save Israel from the Arameans (2 Kgs. 13:5). The deliverer's identity is unspecified, but the word מוֹשִׁיעַ shares its root with "Moses" (מֹשֶׁה) and has the same meaning as Elisha ("the Lord saves"). This "strange way of referring to Elisha"[289] could well be a play on words as a parting literary

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[286] The changing of a king's heart is also found in Deut. 2 with Og, king of Heshbon, and in Dan. 5 with Nebuchadnezzar. The added details of the king sending an army against the prophet make the shared action with Elisha's account unique.

[287] נִלְחָם translated "warring" in 2 Kgs. 6:8 is a nifal masculine singular participle, identical to "fighting" in Exod. 14:25.

[288] One might also see a connection with the word סבב. Joseph dreamed that his brothers (who hated him) gathered around (סבב) him and bowed down to him (Exod. 14:7); Israel's enemies circle around (סבב) the city of Dothan (2 Kgs. 6:15). The brothers also say, "Let us see what will become of his dreams" (Exod. 14:20)—another instance of the wish for sight.

[289] Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 228.

connection with Moses to close out the Elisha cycle.[290] Adding fuel to this suspicion is the sudden and curious mention of "bands of Moabites" that are invading Israel near the grave of Elisha (2 Kgs. 13:20). This otherwise-superfluous detail[291] may remind canonical readers of Moses' burial in *Moab* in an equally unspecified grave (Deut. 34:1, 5–6).[292] By ending their stories with a geographic match and another miracle triggered by the act of casting (שלך) (2 Kgs. 13:21),[293] Elisha's prophetic career is sealed with a sense of Moses… all without referencing Moses by name in the entire Elisha cycle.

Elisha's Affinity with Yahweh

Elisha is portrayed as recalling not only Joshua, Elijah, and Moses but also the acts of God. Yael Shemesh highlights the distinct representation of Elisha as a surrogate for God in the OT, where Elisha's actions and words are often equated with the Lord's (2

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[290] Among those who take the deliverer to refer to Elisha are Aucker, "Putting Elisha in His Place," 241–42; Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings*, 232–33; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 166–67. House says that Elisha here is pictured as the "new Moses": Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings*, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 306. Instead of "a deliverer," the LXX has "The Lord gave salvation (σωτηρία) for Israel" (LES), corresponding to 2 Kgs. 13:17.

[291] So Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, 432.

[292] See Elliot Gertel, "Moses, Elisha and Transferred Spirit: The Height of Biblical Prophecy? Part II," *JBQ* 30, no. 3 (July 2002): 174. Zakovitch makes this connection but concludes Elisha and Moses were both buried in Moab (Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 78). It seems clear, though, that Elisha is buried in Israel and the Moabites were marauding Israel; otherwise, the Moabites strangely would be marauding their own land.

[293] On the significance of casting (שלך) in the Elisha cycle, see Aucker, "Putting Elisha in His Place," 142–44; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 230; John W. Olley, "2 Kings 13: A Cluster of Hope in God," *JSOT* 36, no. 2 (December 2011): 199–218. On the connection of the action to Moses, see pages 81–82 above.

Kgs. 2:21–22).[294] To reject Elisha is to reject God (2 Kgs. 2:23–25)[295] and his miracles, including care for the vulnerable, feeding the hungry, and raising the dead, which reflect the heart of God.[296] The Lord alone gives and takes away blindness and leprosy (Exod. 4:6; Num. 12:10); but so does Elisha (2 Kgs. 5:8–14, 27). Elisha's holiness and "mighty acts" mirror the Lord's (2 Kgs. 4:9, 8:4).[297] And a standard feature of theophanies—chariots of fire—surround Elisha at Dothan.[298]

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[294] Yael Shemesh, "'I Am Sure He Is a Holy Man of God'; (2 Kgs 4:9): The Unique Figure of Elisha," in *And God Said: "You Are Fired": The Narrative of Elijah and Elisha* (North Richland Hills, TX: Bibal, 2007), 36; The prophetic fulfillment formula "According to the word of…" is always applied to the Lord, except in Elisha's case in 2 Kgs. 2:22. See further, Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 22–26.

[295] Shemesh, "I Am Sure He Is a Holy Man of God," 36–37. I disagree with Shemesh that Elisha sent the she-bears, whereas sending animals on a mission is God's domain. Elisha pronounces the curse; he does not determine its punishment or timing.

[296] A rabbinic tract notes Elisha acts as a type of the Lord, who raises the dead, remembers the barren, feeds the hungry, and sweetens the bitter (*Gen. Rab.* 77:1). Elijah is similarly compared in the same tractate.

    At times Josephus' Elisha is more than a prophet. This is most apparent in Josephus' treatment of Elisha healing the waters of Jericho in *J.W.* 4.459-474, which is seven times the length of the biblical account (2 Kgs. 2:19–22) with additions far beyond Josephus' typical dramatic literary flare. In framing Elisha's water miracle at Jericho, Josephus connects the location with Joshua and Canaan. Though not mentioning Joshua's curse on the city, he describes the curse-like effects on the land and people. In an elaborate precursor to the miracle, Elisha raises his "righteous hand" over the waters toward the heavens, pours out a drink offering, prays, and calms the cursed waters. Josephus may be once again casting Elisha in the mold of Moses, for after all, Moses stretched his hand over the Nile before turning the water into blood and over the Red Sea before parting the waters (Exod. 8:5; 14:21, 26–27), making Moses and Elisha the only ones in the OT to stretch out their hand over water in a prelude to a miracle (*cf.* Moses' other uplifted hand miracles in Exod. 9:22; 10:21–22; 17:11–12; Num. 20:11 *cf.* Isa. 11:15; 19:16). This passage resembles Josephus' recounting of Moses' water miracle at Marah (*Ant.* 3.5-8). Not only does Elisha turn bitter water fresh but he also creates a more temperate climate for a fertile land, an abundant harvest, and fertility in childbirth. The water has become super water that gives a sweeter taste and satisfies fuller than any other source (465). The water is potent and powerful and produces various kinds of palm trees, whose fruit produces "honey," and honey sweeter than other honeys (466–470). As for the palm trees, they likely recall Deut. 34:3–4 and its description of Canaanland, the land of milk and honey for God's people. Through Elisha's miracle, Jericho had become "divine" (θεῖος) (469). Hence, Elisha's life-giving water reversed the curse of Jericho and transformed it into Eden.

[297] See Shemesh, 50n72 for the exceptions that prove the rule. Peter Leithart tests the bounds of literary creativity when he describes Elisha as the "God-man" (Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings*, 189).

[298] Nicholas P. Lunn, "Prophetic Representations of the Divine Presence: The Theological Interpretation of the Elijah-Elisha Cycles," *JTI* 9, no. 1 (2015): 55.

A character presented as a representative of God, so much so that roles are blurred in the presentation, makes an ideal candidate for the Gospel writers to use in their presentations of Jesus, the representative of God *par excellence*. In John's Gospel, in which the question of Jesus's identity is forefront, what better biblical character to use as an analogue than Elisha? Chapter 5 seeks to answer that question.

Chapter 5

Type-Narrative in John

In this chapter, we now turn to the Gospel of John to examine Jesus' seven signs and evaluate proposed allusions to Elisha. As noted in the previous chapter, the ministries of Elijah and Elisha mirror those of Moses and Joshua, not in every detail, but enough to indicate a purposeful juxtaposition at the macro and micro levels. Both are depicted as prophets like Moses, though Elijah is the primary analogue. This chapter argues that John the Baptist and Jesus continue the Moses-Joshua and Elijah-Elisha pairing, forming a type-narrative. In the Fourth Gospel, John the Baptist is primarily analogous to Elijah, while Jesus' seven signs (John 1–11) align him with Elisha. Allusions to other OT figures, like Moses and Elijah, do not weaken the case for this Elisha-Jesus analogue, just as allusions to Moses or Joseph in the Elisha cycle do not diminish Elijah as Elisha's primary analogue.[299]

Indicators #1–Accessibilty and #2–Awareness have already been demonstrated in John regarding the Elisha cycle.[300] We move on to look for indications of shared attributes, starting with character traits and then overall literary themes.

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[299] On allusions to Moses and Joseph in the Elisha cycle, see Chapter 4 and esp. Table 8.

[300] See Chapter 3, indicators #1 and #2.

Shared Character Traits

Comparing the lives of Elisha and Jesus reveals many similarities, as seen in all four Gospels.[301] Some of these traits are not unique to Elisha and Jesus, but many are. Both of their official ministries begin at the Jordan River, where they form a group of disciples and begin a prophetic ministry of signs and wonders.[302] They open blinded eyes, heal leprosy, and raise the dead.[303] They work water miracles–both *of* it and *on* it.[304] They provide living water for the thirsty and multiply bread (with leftovers) for the hungry.[305] They minister to Israelites and Samaritans, insiders and outsiders.[306] One of their disciples betrays their loyalty for money.[307] They practice enemy love.[308] People bow

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[301] On the catalog of similarities between Elisha and Jesus, see Brown, "Jesus and Elisha"; Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 22–32; Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings*, 171–72 *et passim*; Brueggemann, "Original Pentecost Guy," 41; Aus, *Feeding*, 28–44; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 172–234, esp. 233–234; Marcus, *John the Baptist*, 87–92; Shultz Jr., "Spirit in Elisha's Life."

[302] Viz. Matt. 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–23; John 1:28–34. Elisha and Jesus' disciples frequent the Jordan, and this is especially apparent in John (2 Kgs. 2:6, 7, 13; 6:2, 4; 7:15; John 1:28; 3:26–27; 10:40). Leading a small group of disciples in an itinerant ministry is unique to Elisha and Jesus in the Bible (see esp. Aus, *Feeding*, 19–23, 42). The exception may be Samuel and his "sons of the prophets," but his leadership role is not as pronounced (see Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 23–24), and the same can be said for the leadership roles of John the Baptist and Elijah too.

[303] For the opening of blinded eyes: 2 Kgs. 6; Matt. 9:27–31; 12:22; 20:29–34; Mark 8:22–26; 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43; John 9:1–7; for healing of leprosy: 2 Kgs. 5; Matt. 8:1–4; Mark 1:40–45; Luke 5:12–16; 17:11–19; for raising the dead: 2 Kgs. 4:35; Matt. 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43; Luke 7:11–17; 8:40–56; John 11:1–44. Two of these three—the healing of leprosy and the opening of blinded eyes—are unique to Elisha and Jesus in all of Scripture up to the time of Jesus. The raising of the dead is unique to Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus. The giving and taking of Miriam's leprosy is attributed to the Lord, not Moses. See pages 81–83 on the similarities in the leprosy inflictions of Miriam and Gehazi; *cf.* Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 26. Raising of the dead is also shared by Elijah (1 Kgs. 17:17–24).

[304] 2 Kgs. 2:14, 21–22; 3:17–20; 6:5; Matt. 8:23–27; 14:22–33; Mark 4:35–41; 6:45–52; Luke 8:22–25; 9:10–17; John 2:1–11; 6:19.

[305] 2 Kgs. 4:42–44; Matt. 14:13–21; 15:32–39; Mark 6:30–44; 8:1–10; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–14.

[306] E.g., 2 Kgs. 4, 5; John 3:1–21; 4:1–45.

[307] Speaking of Gehazi and Judas: 2 Kgs. 5; Matt. 26:14–16; *cf.* John 12:4–6

[308] E.g., 2 Kgs. 6:22–23; Matt. 5:44; John 18:10–11.

before them.[309] Kings seek to kill them.[310] Both men are celibate,[311] clairvoyant,[312] and

sometimes confusing to those who hear them prophesy.[313] Their names have similar

meanings, which are born out in their ministries.[314] Though neither are from the tribe of

Levi, they function as priests[315] and bear the priestly title "the Holy One."[316] As prophets,

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[309] 2 Kgs. 1:13; 2:15; 4:37; John 9:38; 20:28.

[310] 2 Kgs. 6:6–13; Matt. 2:3ff.

[311] The patristics uniformly point to Elisha as an example of chastity and celibacy, often alongside John the Baptist, Elijah, and other biblical figures, including Jesus Himself: Ignatius of Antioch, *IPhld* 4; John Chrysostom, *Hom.* Matt. 68.3; Aphrahat, *Demonstration VI: Of Monks* §5; Ephrem, *The Nisibine Hymns XLI*; Jerome, *Adv. Jov.* 1.5; Ambrose, *De virgin.* 1.9.51; John Cassian, *De Instit. Ceonob.* 1.1; *Conferences* 2.14.4, 3.18.6, 3.21.4; John of Damascus, *De Fide Orth.* 4.24; For parallels with Jesus, see Ps-Clement, *Two Epistles Concerning Virginity* 1.6, 2.14, 15. See esp., Aus, *Feeding*, 29–30.

[312] Clairvoyance—the supernatural knowledge of contemporaneous events happening at a distance—may be a trait of Jesus specific to John (e.g., 1:48; 4:18; 11:11, 14). However, Jesus' knowledge about where the colt is tied may be a Synoptic instance of clairvoyance (Matt. 21:1–3; Mark 11:1–3; Luke 19:29–31). Elisha exhibits clairvoyance at 2 Kgs. 5:26; 6:12, 32. Alter sees clairvoyance as a shared trait between Elisha and Jesus and submits that Elisha served as the literary muse for Jesus' miracles: Robert Alter, *Ancient Israel: The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 745, 755, 757, 760. Regarding the clairvoyance of Elisha and Jesus in John, see Andrew Klauber, "Constructing the Gospels with Elisha's Axe" (MTS Thesis, Harvard Divinity School, 2021), 49; Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 92.

[313] 2 Kgs. 3:17–27; 6:19; 8:7–15; 13:14–19; Matt. 16:5–12; 16:21–23; Mark 8:14–21; 8:31–33; 9:30–32; Luke 9:43–45; 18:31–34; John 2:18–22; 6:52–58; 7:33–36; 11:11–14.

[314] Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 23, 44n70.

[315] While Jesus' priestly role is generally uncontested by scholars, Elisha's requires some defending. Elisha is brought "the bread of the firstfruits" (לֶחֶם בִּכּוּרִים), which were designated only for the priests (2 Kgs. 4:42; Lev. 2:14). When called by Elijah, Elisha "stands to minister" (*cf.* Deut. 18:3–5; 2 Kgs. 3:14; 5:16) and makes a meal, all described in sacrificial language (See Noble, "Cultic Prophecy," 52, 56–57). People "stand before" (וַיַּעֲמֹד לְפָנָיו) Elisha, a phrase associated with priestly activity, and this phrase is never used of any other prophet (2 Kgs. 4:12; 5:15; 8:9 *cf.* Deut. 10:8) (Lunn, "Prophetic Representations," 53). Jesus is portrayed as the walking embodiment of the temple (John 1:14), and the furniture in Elisha's prophet's chamber may subtly reflect this too (2 Kgs. 4:10)—the table (שֻׁלְחָן), lamp (מְנוֹרָה), chair (כִּסֵּא), and bed (מִטָּה) corresponding to those in the holy of holies—the table (שֻׁלְחָן) of shewbread, golden lampstand (מְנוֹרָה), ark of the covenant, and Aaron's rod (מַטֶּה). See Lunn, 55–57; Leithart, *1 & 2 Kings*, 189.

[316] Elisha and Jesus are the *only* two people in the Bible called "the Holy One of God," a priestly title for the Levites (Num. 16:7; 2 Kgs. 4:9; Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; John 6:69). See Aus, *Feeding*, 23; Poirier, "Jesus as an Elijianic Figure in Luke 4," 360. Moreover, they are ascribed this title in the same chapters as their feeding miracle (2 Kgs. 4:9, 42–44; John 6:1–15, 69: "holy man of God" ἄνθρωπος τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιος) for Elisha and "Holy One of God" (ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ) for Jesus. The title in John contains a variant *cf.* KJV: "the Son of the living God (ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος)." The "Holy One of God" reading is found in 𝔓75, א, B, C*, D, L, and W, and it receives an {A} designation from Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 184,

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they are anointed and anoint others.[317] And most significantly, both ministries end on a note of resurrection (2 Kgs. 13:21; John 20).

Considering the overlap between the roles, miracles, and general tenor of ministry of Elisha and Jesus like no other Bible character does, it would be surprising if the Gospels did *not* include an Elisha literary type.

Shared Literary Motifs

Beyond shared themes, John's Gospel and the Elisha cycle (2 Kgs. 2–8; 13) share several literary motifs, and of these, the water motif flows most freely.[318] Elisha in 2 Kings strikes the water (2:14), heals it (2:21–22), is known for pouring it on his master's hands (3:11), prophesies its miraculous supply (3:17–25), instructs Naaman to wash in it (5:12), makes an axe head float on it (6:5), and gives it to his enemies (6:22). Often, when water and Elisha are mentioned together, there is a miracle, and one that gives life when death was expected. In John, Jesus is baptized in water (1:19–34), turns it into wine (2:1–11), discusses "water from above" with Nicodemus (3:1–21), identifies as living water (4:1–45; 7:37–40), tells a paralytic man and a blind man to wash in it (5:1–17; 9:1–41), walks on it (6:19), and pours it on his disciples' feet (13:5). On the cross, water and blood flow from him (19:34). In several of John's water-themed passages, a character

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and is accepted by virtually all critical-text modern English versions. On the titles for a "holy one of God" throughout the Bible (priests, Elisha, Yahweh, Jesus), see William Domeris, "The Office of the Holy One," *JTSA* 54 (1986): 35–38.

[317] Elisha is the only prophet who is anointed (1 Kgs. 19:16); he anoints others by proxy or symbolically (2 Kgs. 8:7–15; 9:1–3). See note 461 for further discussion. Anointings of Jesus, both physical and spiritual, occur in every Gospel: Matt. 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; Luke 4:18–21; 7:36–50; John 1:32–34; 11:2; 12:1–8. On the significance of the connection, see Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 23, 44n70. Only in John does Jesus anoint another person (9:6, 11)

[318] Larry Paul Jones, *The Symbol of Water in the Gospel of John*, JSNTSup 145 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 45. Other *Leitwörter* include bread, healing, and blindness.

identifies Jesus as "the Prophet" (1:25, 45, 4:19, 7:40, 9:17 *cf.* 6:14). Elisha and Jesus (in John especially) may be considered the most hydro-centric characters in the Bible.[319]

Initial Link of Elisha and Jesus in John

John's Gospel starts with evocative language and themes that trigger a familiar type-scene at the Jordan River. John the Baptist's encounter with Jesus at the Jordan intertextually recalls the famous prophetic succession narratives of Moses to Joshua and Elijah to Elisha, and prompts the audience to investigate the link further.[320]

Table 9. Start of Jesus' and Elisha's Ministry

2 Kings 2:1–18	John 1:19–51
Elijah is **sent** by **God** (2:2, 4, 6)	John the Baptist is **sent** by **God** (1:6)
Elijah parts the waters at the **Jordan** (2:7–8)	John baptizes at the **Jordan** (1:23, 29)
Sons of the prophets **stand** by the **Jordan,** watching Elijah and Elisha as they <u>walk</u> (2:7)	John's disciples **stand** [by the **Jordan**], watching Jesus as he <u>walks</u> (1:35–36)
Elijah is taken up into **heaven** in a whirlwind (2:11); Elisha crosses the Jordan; sons of the prophets testify, "The **spirit** of Elijah has <u>rested</u> **upon** Elisha." (2:15 LES)	John testifies, "I have seen the **Spirit** descending as a dove out of **heaven**, and He <u>remained</u> **upon** Him." (1:32)
Sons of the prophets **seek** their master (κύριος), Elijah (2:16); they **searched** but "did not **find him**" (οὐχ εὗρον αὐτόν) (2:17)	Jesus asks John's disciples who they are **seeking** (1:38); disciples return and say, we have **found** the Messiah" (41), "**we have found Him** (εὑρήκαμεν αὐτῷ)" (1:45)

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[319] The densely packed nature of the water motif in the Elisha cycle and John 1–11 is even more impressive than Moses' water motif stretches across Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy (Exod. 2:1–10, 11–15; 7:14–24; 14:21–31; 15:22–27; 17:1–7; Num. 20:1–13; Deut. 32; 33).

[320] Ben-Porat, "Forms of Intertextuality"; Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah?," 67. See further, Chapter 3, indicator #3—Initial Link. In this chapter's tables, words in **bold** represent a shared Greek lemma. The Greek lemma is not typically specified unless the matching lemmas are not obvious when translated into English. <u>Underlined</u> words represent a semantic match without a shared lemma.

Elisha's new disciples bow before him on the ground (2:15)	Nathaniel, a new disciple, says to Jesus, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel" (1:49).

The Jordan River functions as a key geographic link, repeatedly marking a "changing of the guards"[321] in biblical narrative. Just as the Jordan was the site where leadership transitioned from Moses to Joshua and from Elijah to Elisha, here it serves the same function with John the Baptist and Jesus. In all three pairings, an enabling spirit (πνεῦμα) is given to the emerging prophet,[322] who performs a miracle that confirms his role in the eyes of his new followers.[323] These unique narrative actions and themes, combined with similar language[324] and locations are enough to start setting up the audience's expectations concerning the prophet who follows after John the Baptist.[325]

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[321] Zakovitch, *And You Shall Tell Your Son...*, 75.

[322] On the role of the spirit/Spirit in the succession narratives, see Shultz Jr., "Spirit in Elisha's Life," 44.

[323] In both cases, the prophets in training are perhaps better characterized as *duh*-sciples, doing or saying foolish things which their masters must correct (see Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*, *et passim*; Aus, *Feeding the Five Thousand*, 41–44). The big difference between the two colleges is that Jesus' disciples found the Master the sons of the prophets never could.
  The terms "sons of the prophets" and "disciples" are different, but the senses are alike, as noted by Aus, 42. Josephus, when recounting 2 Kgs. 6:32, uses μαθηταῖς (*cf*. John 1:35, 36) to describe the sons of the prophet (*Ant.* 9.68; *Ant.* 9.106). Later Rabbinic sources describe Elisha as the master with a school of disciples, of whom Gehazi plays a recurring and often negative role (*y. Sanh.* 10:2, 29b; *b. Sanh.* 10; *b. Keth.* 106a. See Aus, 43–44).

[324] E.g., "sent" (2 Kgs. 2, 4, 6, 16, 17[x2]; John 1:6, 19, 22, 24, 33), "spirit" (2 Kgs. 2:9, 15, 16; John 1:32, 33[x2]), "seek" (2 Kgs. 2:16, 17; John 1:38), and "find" (2 Kgs. 2:16, 17; John 1:41[x2], 43, 45[x2]).

[325] An important contrast should be noted. From the start, Jesus' disciples identify him as Messiah and Son of God. Though Elisha's disciples "worship" (προσκυνέω) him in some sense (2 Kgs. 2:15), Jesus is worshipped with no qualification. A distinction is made between the Lord (κύριος) God of Elijah and the lord (κύριος) Elijah (2 Kgs. 2:5, 14, 16). No such distinction is made for Jesus. Quite the opposite. Jesus is the Lord (κύριος). Elisha has received the spirit of his father, Elijah; Jesus has received the Holy Spirit from his Father (Brueggemann, "Original Pentecost Guy," 41).

All four Gospels include an early scene with John the Baptist and Jesus at the

Jordan,[326] but John's Gospel differs at key points. John the Baptist baptizes in the Jordan,

but there is no mention of him baptizing Jesus, only the Spirit of God resting on him

(1:32). Additionally, the Gospel of John uniquely includes the transfer of disciples from

John the Baptist to Jesus (1:35–37). These omissions and additions better support the idea

that Jesus mirrors Elisha's actions in John.[327]

However, John the Baptist's trifold negative answer when asked if he is the

Messiah, Elijah, or "that prophet" (1:19–21) is puzzling, considering all three Synoptic

Gospels *explicitly* link him with Elijah.[328] Scholars propose that John the Baptist either

does not understand his Elijah identity[329] or that he is being strictly literal i.e., he is not

literally Elijah reborn.[330] Even though the narrator hints at John the Baptist's

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[326] Matt. 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:28–34.

[327] If John were indeed seeking to align the ministries of Elisha and Jesus, omitting Jesus' baptism in Jordan is unsurprising, since Elijah does not baptize Elisha in the Jordan or anywhere else. That some of the sons of the prophets who start following Elisha were followers of Elijah or at least saw Elijah as their figurehead prophet is an inference I am making, but one that seems valid based on 2 Kgs. 2. Concluding similarly is Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 89; *cf.* Shultz Jr., "Spirit in Elisha's Life," 40–41.

[328] Matt. 11:14; 17:10–13, Mark 6:15; 9:11-13, Luke 1:17; 9:7–8. A crucial distinction can be missed when assessing John the Baptist's denial of being Elijah (1:21). Readers are given no reason to think John was right or wrong about his identity at this early point in the Gospel. And upon closer examination, the Synoptics do not portray him as denying *or* accepting an identification with Elijah. Only in John does the reader hear what the Baptist thinks about the matter. Any identity dysphoria between the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel is apparent to the degree that John the Baptist's understanding of his role is the same as the *author's* understanding. Elsewhere in the Synoptics, John the Baptist is depicted as unsure about Jesus' Messianic identity (Matt. 11:3; Luke 7:22). It may be that John the Baptist had similar misunderstandings at times about his own. Whether one concludes that he was mistaken about his Elijianic identity or that he was denying being a particular kind of Elijah with Messianic overtones, one should not conclude that the Fourth Gospel contradicts the Synoptics until seeing what else the author says about John the Baptist.

[329] E.g. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 143.

[330] Bernard, *Gospel according to St. John*, 37. Gary Manning represents a variant view that John wants to portray Jesus as both Elijah *and* Elisha, but I think Manning's own analysis of the Jesus-Elijah comparisons in John proves that the Elisha parallels eclipse Elijah's: Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 1.

identification with Elijah,[331] John the Baptist is not interested in identifying in any way as

one who comes *before* Jesus.[332] Rather, he emphasizes Jesus' superiority.[333] Indeed, this

is the emphasis of the whole initial scene—the disciples and Jesus himself invite the

audience to "come and see" how Jesus is linked to Moses and the Prophets (1:45),[334]

which sets up the audience's expectations to see "greater things" ahead (1:50).[335]

Mentioning Elijah by name (1:21, 25) indicates that John's narrator knows the

Elijah narratives, expects his readers to know the Elijah narratives, and depicts his

characters as actively looking for an analogue to Elijah, which invites his readers to do

the same. And just like Elisha is Elijah's successor in 2 Kgs., so readers are invited to

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[331] Readers are told that John that Baptist "was not that light (φῶς)" (1:8); later, however, Jesus says that John that Baptist was the burning (καίω) lamp (λύχνος) (5:35), the same imagery used of Elijah in Sir. 48:1: "Then Elijah arose, a prophet like fire, and his word burned (καίω) like a torch" (NRSV). The Baptist is a testimony (witness) to *the* light (1:7-8); Jesus is the light (1:9), and that may be why the Baptist denies being Elijah if by Elijah is meant "the light." See Gail R. O'Day, *John*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 29; Robinson, "Christ as a Northern Prophet," 104n1; David M. Hoffeditz, "A Prophet, a Kingdom, and a Messiah: The Portrayal of Elijah in the Gospels in Light of First-Century Judaism" (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 2000), 231.

    Additionally, perhaps John the Baptist does not identify as Elijah because to do so would be to bear witness of oneself, contrary to the Evangelists' theology (John 5:31; 8:13; 7:18) (Michael Flowers, "The Bystanders at the Cross and Their Expectations about Elijah," *CBQ* 80, no. 3 [July 2018]: 467). Jesus has more than one witness due to the Father and other characters in the Gospel.

[332] Because the Baptist's public ministry began *before* Jesus, John may be trying to avoid giving readers the impression that the Baptist is *superior* to Jesus (Marcus, *John the Baptist*, 85). To quash such a notion, the Evangelist says that Jesus existed before John (1:15). To explicitly equate John with Elijah and Jesus with Elisha would send a contradictory message about temporal sequence and would only confuse things.

[333] Herein is the last mention of Elijah both in the book of John and the Elisha narratives (2 Kgs. 2:15; John 1:21, 25). Elijah and John the Baptist must fade into the distance (John 3:30). Among the Gospels, John is unique in saying that John the Baptist does less baptizing and miracles than Jesus (John 4) (See C. K. Barrett, *New Testament Essays* [London: S.P.C.K., 1972], 40–44).

[334] Klink, "What Concern," 283. On the significance of "come and see," see pages 115–116.

[335] As Richard Hays says, "That summons, 'Come and see,' functions also as an invitation to the reader of the Fourth Gospel, an invitation to discern, among other things, whether the Jesus they will meet in this story is in fact prefigured by Moses and the prophets" (Hays, *Reading Backwards*, 75). The narrator's call to "Come and see" is "a call for a retrospective rereading of Israel's Scripture, a reading backwards that reinterprets Scripture in light of a new revelation imparted by Jesus and focused on the person of Jesus himself" (ibid., 77).

find John the Baptist's successor—his Elisha—within the Gospel of John.[336] Who is this one whose way John has been preparing, and what prophet might we compare him to?[337] If the audience compares Jesus to Elisha, what might they find?

Evaluation of Proposed Allusions

As will be shown, when John's audience does retrospectively read the Scriptures and searches for how Moses and the Prophets wrote about Jesus, they repeatedly meet Elisha in the signs Jesus performs. For the rest of this study, I will consider linguistic parallels between pericopes in John and the Elisha narratives (mainly the miracles he performs) using the LXX.

Sign #1: Water into Wine (John 2:1–11) // Curing of the Waters (2 Kgs. 2:19–22)

Jesus begins his public ministry and demonstration of "greater things" (John 1:50) by turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana, marking his "beginning of signs (σημείων)"[338] (John 2:1-11). This first sign shares similar attributes with the first signs of Moses, Elijah, and Elisha.

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[336] My thanks to Vicki Tatko for this insight. See further Cornelis Bennema, "How Readers Construct New Testament Characters: The Calling of Peter in the Gospels in Cognitive-Narratological Perspective," *BibInt* 29, no. 4–5 (November 12, 2021): 448. Since all three Synoptics include the Elijah-John analogue, John might be assuming his readers are familiar with it.

[337] Jones, *The Symbol of Water in the Gospel of John*, 45.

[338] The word σημείων, used here in John for the first time, is predominantly used in the LXX of Moses' signs (plagues) in Egypt (Köstenberger, "Seventh Johannine Sign," 90–91), hence miracles of judgment and destruction. The term, though not used in the LXX of Elijah or Elisha, evolved semantically to indicate miraculous deeds. In the intertestamental literature, closer to the time of John's writing, Elijah's and Elisha's miracles are commonly referred to as "signs" (*cf.* Sir. 48:12–16; also the Hebrew manuscript tradition of *Lives of the Prophets* 21:4–15, 22:4–17).

Moses performed several water miracles, the closest to Jesus' at Cana being when

he turned water into blood in Egypt (Exod. 4; 7) and bitter water sweet at Marah (Exod.

15:22–27).[339] Comparing John 2:1–11 with Moses' water-into-blood miracle reveals

shared language,[340] the purpose of belief,[341] and the designation of the "first" sign.[342]

Moses' sweetening of the bitter waters is even closer to John 2:1–11, as it involves a

positive transformation, not a negative judgment (Exod. 15:25).[343] More significant for

John 2:1–11 is that Moses' miracles involve *transforming* water, not just *supplying* it.[344]

Elijah also performed water miracles, two of which are often considered allusions

to Jesus' first sign. Elijah's showdown on Mt. Carmel (1 Kgs. 18:17–40) and his supply

of oil and grain for the widow at Zarephath (1 Kgs. 17:8–16) both share verbatim

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[339] Keener, *Gospel of John*, 282; Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 88.

[340] Water is turned into blood in the Egyptians' wood (ξύλοις) and stone (λίθοις) stone vessels (Exod. 7:19) like the stone waterpots (λίθιναι) in John 2:6. The word for "servants" (διάκονοι) at the wedding (John 2:5, 9) is semantically similar to Pharoah's "attendants" (θεραπόντων), before whom Moses turns water into blood (Exod. 7:20). Another similarity is that blood is the same color as the red wine (*cf.* note 264 below).

[341] Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 161. Moses performed signs before Israel and Pharaoh to inspire belief (πιστεύω) (Exod. 4:1, 5, 7–9, 30), as Jesus did in John 2:11.

[342] The Lord says if the people will not believe (πιστεύσωσιν) Moses on account of the first sign (τοῦ σημείου τοῦ πρώτου), they will on account of the last sign (τοῦ σημείου τοῦ ἐσχάτου) (Exod. 4:8) (Thyen, 161; Thompson, *John*, 115). The original hand of 𝔓⁶⁶ has πρωτην αρχην εποιησεν in John 2:11 and not ἐποίησεν ἀρχήν (Haenchen, *John*, 174–75), which may betray an attempt at aligning Moses' first (πρῶτος) sign with Jesus' first sign.

[343] Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha," 172. There is a conditional promise to Israel if they do (ποιέω) the things the Lord says (Exod. 15:26) // Jesus' mother tells the servants to do (ποιέω) whatever Jesus says (John 2:5).

[344] This aspect alone makes the water transformation miracles of Moses and Elisha better contextual parallels than with the Dionysus cult, for in such legends *empty* jugs are miraculously filled with wine e.g., Athenaeus, *Deip.* 1.61; Euripides, *Bacch.* 704–11; Plutarch, *Lys.* 28; Pausanias, *Descr. Gr.* 6.26.1–2. See George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 2nd ed, WBC (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 35. *Cf.* Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha," 171. Barrett sees more congruence than contrast with John 2:1–11 and the Dionysian cult but fails to note the distinction between water transformation and water generation: C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1978), 188. Karakolis mistakenly claims there are no water transformation miracles in the OT (Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 131).

language with John 2:1–11,[345] and the second includes a very similar literary structure in which a woman asks for help, instructions are given, and vessels (ὑδρία)[346] are miraculously filled with the needed substance.[347] Following the miraculous supply of oil, the widow's son dies, and the widow says to Elijah, Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, like Jesus says to his mother at the wedding (John 2:4).[348] Though Elijah's miracles likely influence John 2:1–11, scholars often overlook the closer, more relevant Elisha parallels.[349]

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[345] For the Mt. Carmel confrontation (1 Kgs. 18:17–40), the pitchers of water (ὑδρίας ὕδατος) and use of stones (λίθους) (1 Kgs. 18: 30, 34) are lexically similar to the stone waterpots (λίθιναι ὑδρίαι) at Cana and Jesus' command to fill the waterpots with water (ὑδρίας ὕδατος) (John 2:6, 7). The pool that held two measures (χωροῦσαν δύο μετρητὰς) of seed (1 Kgs. 18:32) is close to the description of the waterpots "containing twenty or thirty gallons (χωροῦσαι ἀνὰ μετρητὰς δύο ἢ τρεῖς) each (John 2:6). These linguistic matches are noted e.g., by Robert Tomson Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs: A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source Underlying the Fourth Gospel* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 58; Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 167–68.

[346] The only time ὑδρία is used in the NT is in John 2:6–7. The word is used repeatedly in the LXX with Elijah's supply of oil and grain (1 Kgs. 17:12, 14, 16).

[347] See Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 534–35; Klem, "Retelling," 50; Catrin H. Williams, "Jesus the Prophet: Crossing The Boundaries of Prophetic Beliefs and Expectations in the Gospel of John," in *Portraits of Jesus in the Gospel of John* (New York: T&T Clark, 2018), 104. Additionally, the widow woman does what Elijah said to do (ἐποίησεν) (1 Kgs. 17:15) as the servants do what Jesus says to do (John 2:5).

 In terms of John's macro-structure, it is frequently noted that Elijah's back-to-back miracles of Elijah in Zarephath are structurally parallel to Jesus' first two signs in Cana of Galilee (Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha," 172–73; Martyn, "We Have Found Elijah," 192, 194–97). This similarity should come with a caveat that these are Elijah's first two positive miracles on behalf of others. Before this, he prophesies a three-year drought (1 Kgs. 17:1) and is provided water and food by the Lord at the brook Cherith (1 Kgs. 17:2–7), but these first two miraculous events for Elijah are almost never considered "signs."

[348] Goodwin, "How Did John Treat His Sources," 62; Reim, *Hintergrund*, 218. Reim does not mention the same idiom used in 2 Kgs. 3:13 with Elisha. Catrin Williams mentions the idiom in 2 Kgs. 3:13 but does not find it relevant (Williams, "Jesus the Prophet," 104n58). The opposite is true for Klink, who focuses on Elisha's use of but not Elijah's: Klink, "What Concern."

[349] Verbatim matches with rare words and idioms are striking between Jesus' first sign and the Elijah narratives, but the usage is so different that a comparison shows a lack of narrative coherence: (1) The idiomatic question Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί; is asked in Elijah's *second* miracle in resurrecting the widow's son, not in the first miracle with the supply of oil and grain; (2) the *widow woman* says to Elijah Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί;, whereas it is Jesus, not the woman, who says this at the wedding (John 2:4); (3) The role of water in Elijah's oil-and-grain miracle relates to the precursor, in which *Elijah* has no water (ὕδωρ) and requests it woman for himself, not the reverse (1 Kgs. 17:7, 10). Moreover, the oil-and-grain miracle does not include anything related to *water*, let alone *transformation* of it; (4) At Mt. Carmel (1 Kgs. 18:17–40), the water is not transformed but poured on an altar, and then afterward the heads of 450 Baal worshippers are decapitated. If John had intended an allusion between his abundant wedding wine and 1 Kgs. 18 beyond

Elisha performed several water miracles which may be considered allusions in Jesus' water-into-wine sign at Cana, beginning with Elisha's sweetening the waters at Jericho (2 Kgs. 2:19–22). After proving he possesses Elijah's spirit at the Jordan, Elisha's new disciples search for three days for Elijah before hearing about the water problem in Jericho (2 Kgs. 2:15–19). In John, after receiving the Spirit at the Jordan, Jesus and his newly gathered disciples (some formerly of John the Baptist) travel for three days[350] to a wedding where he is told there is only water, no wine. In both cases, the prophet intuits the request,[351] and a water transformation miracle that follows involves the bringing of vessels.[352] The shared language, themes, and sequence combine to make Jesus' miracle at Cana one likely allusion to Elisha's water miracle at Jericho, but other miracles from Elisha have resonances too. Arranged in parallel columns, John 2:1–11 can be seen as using elements from three of Elisha's miracles.[353]

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stock terminology for water and vessels, the significance is not evident. For some of these differences, see Hoffeditz, "Portrayal of Elijah," 243; Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 534–35; Klem, "Retelling," 50n24.

[350] The detail about the "third day" in John 2:1 has puzzled commentators. Third day of or from what? Some count a week's worth of days from the first day of John 1 as an extended symbol of the creation week. Others see the third day as the third day of the seven-day wedding week. Others see "third day" as a literary device pointing toward the ultimate third day of Jesus' resurrection. Some combine the options, and others do not settle on any option. Yarbrough says there is no mystery here: "It merely links this incident with the two preceding days when Jesus first began to gather disciples" (Yarbrough, *John*, 29; similarly, Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 189–90; for full discussion, see Keener, *Gospel of John*, 496–98). Very true. But why is the detail included? I suggest it *may* further link Jesus' first sign with Elisha's, which immediately follows his collection of disciples after they searched for Elijah, Elisha's predecessor, for *three days* (2 Kgs. 2:17).

[351] I.e., in neither case is the prophet directly asked to remedy the situation. The men of Jericho and Jesus' mother only point out the problem (2 Kgs. 2:19; John 2:3).

[352] In 2 Kgs. 2:20 a vessel is brought to Elisha at his request though it is a small jar (ὑδρίσκην) to be filled with salt, an obvious difference in usage from the vessels (ὑδρίαι) in John 2:6, 7. Elisha's provision of oil in 2 Kgs. 4:1–7 is closer, though the word for vessels therein is σκεῦος, a non-verbatim match.

[353] Suggested in brief by Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 168. The table is adapted from and expanded upon Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 535–36; Klem, "Retelling," 50–51. See also, Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 98–100. Karakolis suggests a parallel with Elisha's multiplication of barley loaves (Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 130–31), but this seems less likely.

Table 10. Elisha Miracles and John 2:1–11

2 Kgs 2:19–22	2 Kgs 3:4–27	2 Kgs 4:1–7	John 2:1–11
They searched for **three days**… (2:17)			On the **third day**… (2:1)
The water is bad (2:19)	There is no water (3:9)	There is no money (4:1)	There is no wine, only water (2:3, 7)
The men of Jericho ask Elisha for help	The kings ask Elisha for help	A **woman** asks Elisha for help for her <u>sons</u> (4:1)	A **woman** asks her <u>son</u>, Jesus, for help (2:3)
	Elisha says, "**What have I to do with you**?" (3:13) Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί;	Elisha says, "**What** shall I do **for you**?" (4:2) Τί ποιήσω σοι;	Jesus says, "**What have I to do with thee**?" (KJV) (2:4) Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί;
Elisha gives instructions to <u>fill</u> a small <u>vessel</u> (ὑδρίσκην) with salt (2:20)	Elisha gives instructions about digging troughs to be <u>filled</u> with **water** (3:16–17)	Elisha gives instructions about collecting and <u>filling vessels</u> (4:3–4)	Jesus gives instructions about <u>filling vessels</u> (ὑδρία) with **water** (2:6–8)
Vessel is <u>brought</u> (2:20)	Trenches are dug (3:20)	Vessels are <u>brought</u> (4:5–6)	Vessels are <u>brought</u> (2:8)
Water is miraculously transformed from deadly to drinkable (2:21–22)	The troughs are filled with water (3:20); water turns red[354]	The vessels are miraculously filled with oil (4:5–6)	The water in the vessels (ὑδρία) of are miraculously transformed into (red) wine (2:9–10)
[Elisha's first miracle after the Jordan]			"The first of his signs" (2:11)

All three of these Elisha narratives are structurally parallel to John 2:1–11 with the setting, problem, request, response, instructions, and resolution.[355] Seeing a primary,

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[354] Manning marks this "more coincidental connection" with the blood-red color of the water and the red color of the wine and notes that wine is sometimes referred to as red like blood (Gen. 49:11; Isa. 63:2): Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 4n8.

[355] Klink centers solely on the connections between 2 Kgs. 3:4–27, 4:1–7, and John 2:1–11 primarily because of the shared structure and verbatim question. He does not consider that Jesus' first sign may reflect also Elisha's first sign (2 Kgs. 2:19–22) (Klink, "What Concern"). Brown, suggests that Elijah's and

though conflated, allusion to Elisha in Jesus' first sign rather than to Moses or Elijah is worth considering because of the uniqueness found in: (1) Elisha's water transformation (2 Kgs. 2:19–22; 3:4–27) *and* abundant supply (2 Kgs. 4:1–7),[356] whereas Moses and Elijah evince one or the other but not both,[357] (2) the woman (γυνή) approaches Elisha

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Elisha's multiplication of oil miracles anticipate this one (Brown, *John I-XII*, 101). Robinson and Reim link Jesus's miracle at Cana to Elisha's first miracle at Jericho: Robinson, "Christ as a Northern Prophet," 106; Reim, *Hintergrund*, 207.

     Nicol links the accounts of Elisha transforming the Jericho water with Jesus' water-into-wine miracle, and then suggests that John may be casting Jesus as "the second *Elijah.*": Willem Nicol, *The Sēmeia in the Fourth Gospel: Tradition and Redaction* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 89. Unfortunately, this does not appear to be a topographical error for Nicol. It is common for scholars to notice similarities in the Johannine miracles between *Elisha* and Jesus and conclude that John may be alluding to *Elijah*. Mayer's statement may explain the reasoning behind this: "*Although the proposed source follows the pattern of part of the Elisha cycle*, I would suggest that the typology is more concerned with showing Jesus to be the new *Elijah*. The association of the far more influential prophet with Jesus is found elsewhere in the Gospels (*cf*. Mk 6: 15 and pars., Lk 4:25, 26; 9:54) and is related to the expected return of Elijah prophesied in Malachi 4:5-6" (Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha," 172–73. Emphasis mine). Mayer here states that John models his outline on the Elisha cycle but because the Synoptics model Jesus as an Elijah figure, then one should assume the same for John. Similar precarious reasoning is found in Robinson, "Christ as a Northern Prophet," 106. See Brown's article which attempts to sound the alarm on the problems with combining Elijah and Elisha into one figure: Brown, "Jesus and Elisha."

[356] In Josephus's account of Elisha's curing of the waters, abundance plays a major role and reflects Messianic banquet imagery that goes far beyond the biblical profile (see note 296 above): The transformed water has become super water that gives a sweeter taste and satisfies fuller than any other source (*J.W.* 4.465). The water is so potent and powerful that it transforms the land, producing a lush Edenic oasis with date trees that produce the sweetest of honey (*J.W.* 4.466–70; *cf*. Isa. 35:1–7), likely recalling the description of Canaanland (Deut. 34:3–4), the land of milk and honey for God's people. After Elisha's miracle, Jericho becomes "divine" (θεῖος) (*J.W.* 4.469). It can only be conjectured how widespread this view of Elisha's water transformation miracle was at the time John's Gospel was written. It is not conjectural, though, to assert that by the time John wrote his Gospel, legends written in quasi-divine terms on the biblical Elisha had already developed, e.g., Sir. 48:12–16; *Lives of the Prophets* 22:4–17.

     Commenting on Elisha's posthumous resurrection, Josephus says Elisha had divine power (δύναμιν εἶχε θείαν) even after his death (*Ant*. 9.183). Josephus' epitaph for Elisha says Elisha was a doer of "extraordinary works" (παράδοξα ἔργα), the same language used of Jesus in the controversial *Testimonium Flavianum* (*Ant*. 18.63). In fact, the *only* times Josephus ever uses the words παράδοξος and ἔργα to describe a doer of deeds, are with Elisha and Jesus. This is not to suggest that Josephus consciously linked Elisha and Jesus, but that by distinctively describing the two in the same manner, Josephus apparently saw the same kind of traits in Elisha as he did in Jesus. For further discussion, see Eric Eve, *The Jewish Context of Jesus' Miracles*, JSNTSup (London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 38; Keener, *Gospel of John*, 257.

[357] Another contrast to Moses' miracles is that they do not involve mothers and sons as the main characters like the provision miracles of Elijah and Elisha.

about the problem, unlike Elijah,[358] and (3) the miracle is done in secret.[359] Likewise, the enigmatic idiom Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί occurs in the context of a water miracle and on the lips of the prophet (2 Kgs. 3:13), unlike Elijah.[360] Put another way, the kinds of similarities to John 2:1–11 found in Moses or Elijah are all found in abundance in Elisha.[361] In any case, even if Elisha is not John's primary intended allusion, it is likely that Elisha is at least part of prophetic background imagery, and therefore warrants a grade of {B} "probable" (see page 40 for grading schema).[362]

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[358] John 2:3; 2 Kgs. 4:1; *cf.* 1 Kgs. 17:11–12. The widow is the former wife of one of the sons of the prophets (2 Kgs. 4:1). It is interesting that in John, Mary's husband, Joseph, is not mentioned, and he does not appear at the cross (John 19:26). Tradition suggests he had died by this point, making her a widow.

[359] John 2:9; 2 Kgs. 4:4–5; *cf.* 1 Kgs. 17:13–16. Elijah's provision of oil and food may have been done in secret, but the text does not go out of its way to specify this.

[360] The saying occurs 7 times in the LXX and 3 times in the NT: Judg. 11:12; 1 Kgs. 16:10; 17:18; 19:23; 2 Kgs. 3:13; 2 Chron. 35:21; 1 Esdr. 1:24; Mark 5:7; Luke 8:28; John 2:4. On the usage of the saying, see *BDAG*, s.v. "ἐγώ." Jesus' retort to his mother may be odd at first sight, rude even. If it is seen as a triggering device against the background of a prophet who has been called upon to remedy a situation involving a lack of drink, it makes sense (Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 4). This fairly rare and memorable idiom with its rhyme and rhythm may have even acted as a playful clue to Mary regarding what would happen next—a wonder-working prophet is about to bring about a miraculous supply in a surprising way.

[361] Another contrast with Elijah's provision of oil and food is that it is a *continual* supply (1 Kgs. 17:16), not a one-time abundant supply like Jesus and Elisha (*cf.* 2 Kgs. 4:7, 42–44; John 2:1–11; 6:11–13). In any comparison, Jesus' superiority shines through. As Mayer notes, Elijah and Elisha's miracles concerned the supply of need. Water and food are necessary for life. But Jesus came not to simply give life but to give it in abundance. Wine is not necessary for life, but it contributes to an *abundant* life. Jesus did not provide food for sustenance; he provided wine for enjoyment (Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha," 171; See further explanation of the differences in Klink, "What Concern," 282; Roth, "To Invert or Not," 345).

[362] The history of interpretation points in this direction too. Church fathers like Chrysostom, Aphrahat, and Ephrem the Syrian connected 2 Kgs. 4:1–7 and John 2:1–11: Chrysostom, *De stat.* 10.10; Aphrahat, *Demonstration VI: Of Monks* §13; Ephrem, *Feast of Epiphany* 8:12–14. In an early unnamed apocryphal Gospel (Papyrus Egerton 2, 2v.6-14), Jesus is depicted as standing "on the banks of the Jordan" (ἐπὶ τοῦ χείλους τοῦ Ιορδάνου), a Greek phrase only found in the LXX Elisha cycle (2 Kgs. 2:13) out of all Greek literature prior to the twelfth century. A probable reconstruction of this text produces an apocryphal tale of Jesus reenacting an Elishianic miracle by pouring salt in the Jordan (Lorne R. Zelyck, "Elisha Typology in Jesus' Miracle on the Jordan River (Papyrus Egerton 2, 2v.6-14)," *NTS* 62, no. 1 [January 2016]: 149–56). Jesus here is specifically a figure like Elisha, not Moses or Elijah. There are other examples where miracles from both Jesus and Elisha are conflated (e.g., Ps-Pionius, *Life of Polycarp*, 25–26; see other examples from Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 93), demonstrating that others saw the similarities between Elisha and Jesus and conflated them in their own narratives.

Jesus Cleanses the Jerusalem Temple (John 2:18-25) // Elisha Curses the Bethel Boys (2 Kgs. 3)

At first glance, the stories of Elisha cursing the boys at Bethel and Jesus cleansing the temple with a whip have little in common, other than the eyebrow-raising violence they contain. But sequence and geography may point to a possible connection: both Jesus and Elisha "go up" (ἀνέβη) to a temple site (Jerusalem; Bethel)[363] immediately following a water transformation miracle. Nowhere else in Scripture does this kind of plot movement happen. Elisha curses the mocking boys, and the Lord sends she-bears to maul them (2 Kgs. 2:24). Jesus is enraged at the moneychangers and drives them and their animals out with a makeshift whip (John 2:14–15).[364]

If the geographical link is intentional, John is comparing the Jerusalem temple, which the nation prided, to a pseudo-temple and to Baal worship. Like Elisha, Jesus had come to rid the land of false worship, this time not in Samaria but in *Jerusalem*. While there are some similarities between the stories and a way to make sense of the

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[363] Though not mentioned in the narrative, Bethel was home to Jeroboam's temple for Baal worship (2 Kgs. 2:23; Jn. 2:13; *cf.* 1 Kgs. 12:29–33). Some believe the Bethel boys were temple priests, which would strengthen the parallel, but in my judgment, the evidence may be wanting. See note 281 above.

[364] If this allusion has warrant, a further parallel may be detected. In the episode following the Bethel boys' incident, Elisha prophesies the destruction of cities (2 Kgs. 3:20); the kings believe his word (2 Kgs. 3:12); prophecy is misunderstood (2 Kgs. 3:4–27, esp. 20). Jesus prophesies the destruction of the temple (John 2:19); misunderstood by the Jews (John 2:20–21); disciples believe His word (John 2:22).

Fulfilled prophecy is a tenet of being a prophet like Moses (see Adele Reinhartz, "Jesus as Prophet: Predictive Prolepses in the Fourth Gospel," *JSNT* 11, no. 36 [1989]: 3–16; Anderson, "Eschatological Prophet," 106; Klem, "John 21," 529). Elisha's "failed" prophecy in 2 Kgs. 3 should likely be seen in light of the conditional nature of prophecy in general, on which, see Robert B. Chisholm Jr., "Israel's Retreat and the Failure of Prophecy in 2 Kings 3," *Biblica* 92, no. 1 (2011): 77–79; see further, Aucker, "Putting Elisha in His Place," 104; Robert B. Chisholm Jr., "Does God 'Change His Mind'?," *BSac* 152, no. 608 (1995): 387–99; Rachelle Gilmour, "A Tale of the Unexpected: The Ending of 2 Kings 3 Re-Examined," *ABR* 65 (2017): 28–29; Raymond Westbrook, "Elisha's True Prophecy in 2 Kings 3," *JBL* 124, no. 3 (2005): 532.

differences, the lack of narrative coherence between the episodes[365] and the silence from

the history of interpretation[366] result in a grade of {C} possible.[367]

Sign #2: Healing of the Nobleman's Son (John 4:46–54) // Resurrection of the Shunammite's Son (2 Kgs. 4:1–37)

The account of Jesus healing the nobleman's son (John 4:46–54) is often linked to

the resurrections by Elijah and Elisha, especially Elijah's raising of the widow of

Zarephath's son (1 Kgs. 17:8–24). Before raising the nobleman's son, Jesus meets an

outcast woman at a well and asks for water, mirroring Elijah's request to the widow at

Zarephath. Afterward, Jesus heals the boy and declares, "Your son lives,"[368] just as Elijah

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[365] Elisha's bearish attitude to the Bethel boys has received the most widespread negative reaction from ancient and modern audiences (see note 281). More compelling evidence would be needed to make the case that John is mirroring (not contrasting) the actions of Jesus and Elisha here.

[366] Wolfgang Roth connects Jesus' temple cleansing in John 2 with Joash (Jehoash) in 2 Kgs 12:5–17: Roth, "To Invert or Not," 66–69. As noted, his proposal for overarching structural modeling is too complex to be convincing, considering simpler proposals. Klem suggests parallels between Jesus' zeal in the temple reflects the zeal of Elijah at Mt. Carmel (Klem, "John 21," 529). This seems unlikely.

[367] The closest narratival parallel to Jesus' temple-cleansing episode may be, surprisingly, from Nehemiah. An allusion to Nehemiah is largely unexplored, but there are many similarities: Nehemiah cleanses the temple, drives out Tobiah and his stuff, and prohibits sellers of merchandise and animals in the temple courts (Neh. 13). Mark's version is even closer than John's (*cf.* Mark 11; Neh. 13). It is noteworthy that nowhere in Jesus' temple cleansing accounts in the Gospels does the word "cleansing" actually appear, yet it appears in Neh. 13:9.

[368] "Your son lives" (ζῇ ὁ υἱός σου) (1 Kgs. 17:17) as Jesus says (ὁ υἱός σου ζῇ) (John 4:50). For this connection and others made with Elijah's resurrection of the widow's son, see e.g., Reim, *Hintergrund*, 158–159, 207, 218; Martyn, "We Have Found Elijah," 194; Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha," 171–73; Menken, "Observations," 139; Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 111, 286, 459; Thompson, *John*, 114–15; Brodie, *Crucial Bridge*, 79–97; Marcheselli, "Range and Significance," 244; Klem, "Retelling," 52–53; Williams, "Jesus the Prophet," 104. Klem notes the phrase is similar to "Your sons will live" (οἱ υἱοί σου ζήσεσθε) in the story that precedes Elisha's resurrection of the Shunammite's son (2 Kgs. 4:7) (Klem, "Retelling," 52).

does for the widow's son.[369] In both cases, this healing brings about true faith for the boy's parent and recognition of the prophet's legitimacy (John 4:50, 53; 1 Kgs. 17:24).[370]

This proposed allusion to Elijah is strengthened by Luke's parallel to John 4:44.[371] Right before Jesus heals the nobleman's son, Jesus testifies that "a prophet has no honor in his own country" (John 4:44),[372] nearly identical to Luke 4:24.[373] The significance is that in Luke 4:25–26—the very next verses—Jesus speaks about Elijah being sent to the widow at Zarephath.

In John 4 and Luke 4, dual allusions are made to Elijah's and Elisha's ministries. Luke 4:27 mentions Elisha, and later, Jesus heals a centurion's slave and then resurrects a mother's only son (Luke 7:1–17), just like Elisha's tandem miracles of raising the Shunammite's son and healing Naaman (2 Kgs. 5:1–14; 4:8–37).[374] Here in John, these

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[369] The slight ambiguity about the state of the boy in Elijah's resurrection account (was the boy at the point of death or dead? *cf.* 1 Kgs. 17:17) aligns better with the nobleman's son "at the point of death" (John 4:47). As Walter Brueggemann notes, "We do not know why he is ill, but we notice that the narrative rather carefully avoids the bald statement that he was 'dead'" (Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, 211–12).

[370] John 4:53: "*So the father knew* that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives"; and *he himself believed* and his whole household" // 1 Kgs. 17:24: "Then the woman said to Elijah, '*Now I know* that *you are a man of God* and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth'"
     The connection between healing and being a true prophet of God is witnessed with Abraham, by his healing (רפא) of Abimelech, who was the first canonical Bible character to heal and the first to be called a "prophet" (נָבִיא) (Gen. 20:7, 17).

[371] Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 286; *cf.* 459; Reim, *Hintergrund*, 158–159n90.

[372] It is notable that in John 4:44 the identification of Jesus as a "prophet" (προφήτης) comes not from a minor character or a less-than-reliable witness but from the perspective of the "omniscient narrator" and as a demonstration of narrator's truthfulness as it relates John 1:11 in the prologue: "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him" (Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 240).

[373] "And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown." (Luke 4:24)

[374] In Luke 7:1–17, the order is healing and then resurrection, while the reverse is true for Elisha. The back-to-back occurrence of these miracles is notable between the texts even though the order is not the same. Luke 4:27 is the lone occurrence of Elisha's name in the Gospels. On the likely extended allusion to Elisha in Luke 7:1–10 and the relevance of Luke 4:27 thereon, see John Shelton, "The Healing of Naaman (2 Kgs 5:1–19) as a Central Component for the Healing of the Centurion's Slave (Luke 7:1–10)," in *The Elijah-Elisha Narrative in the Composition of Luke,* LNTS 493 (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 65–87. Shelton does not comment on the Johannine parallel except to say that it exists (ibid., 65n1). A key difference between

same two Elisha miracles appear to be intertextually woven in the background of Jesus'

healing of the nobleman's son. John combines elements from Elisha's *healing of a royal*

official who is dying of leprosy (Naaman) and Elisha's resurrection of *a son who died of*

an apparent fever (Shunammite's son)[375] into the *healing of a royal official's son who*

was dying of a fever![376]

Table 11. Elisha Miracles and John 4:46–54

2 Kgs. 4:18–37	2 Kgs. 5:1–14	John 4:46–54
Shunammite woman is a **prominent** (μέγας) person in her city (4:8–9)	Naaman is a **great** (μέγας) man and official representative of the king (βασιλεύς) (5:1)	Nobleman is an official representative (βασιλικός) of the king (4:46–47)[377]
The Shunammite's **son** has died from an apparent fever (4:19–20)	Naaman is dying of leprosy (5:1)	The nobleman's **son** is about to die from a fever (4:46–47, 52)
The Shunammite woman urgently seeks Elisha for healing (4:22–25)	Naaman seeks Elisha for healing (5:9)	The nobleman urgently seeks Jesus for healing (4:47)
Elisha attempts to heal the Shunammite's son from a distance (4:31–35)	Elisha heals Naaman from a distance (5:10)	Jesus heals the nobleman's son from a distance (4:50)

John and Luke is that the child in John is a boy, which aligns better with Elijah's and Elisha's accounts (Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 101; Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 268).

[375] While it is not certain, it is reasonable to deduce that the Shunammite's son died of a fever from sunstroke, given his cry, "My head! My head!" after working in the fields, likely in the midday heat, as in Jdt. 8:2–3; *cf.* Jonah 4:8. See Karel van der Toorn, "Sun," *ABD* 6:237; John E. Hartley, *TWOT* s.v. "2417 שמש," 941–942. The final grade does not depend heavily on this single correspondence.

[376] To be clear, I am not suggesting John combined these two Elisha stories and crafted a new healing story of Jesus as a fictional literary art piece. I am suggesting that John brought out certain aspects of a healing account of Jesus and arranged it and worded it in such a way as to recall similar miracles by Elisha and thereby invite a comparison. Literary art can still be painted with a historian's brush.

Buchanan considers the healing of the nobleman's son a parallel to the healing of Naaman (2 Kgs. 5:1–14) and not the raising of the Shunammite's son: Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 168–169. Table 10 includes numerous suggested parallels from Buchanan between 2 Kgs. 5:1–14 and John 4:46–54.

[377] The term "nobleman" is the traditional title given the unnamed man in this story, though "royal official" (βασιλικός) (John 4:46) is more precise and matches better with Naaman's role as a prominent ruler (ἄρχων) of the army, a great man (μέγας) before his master, a servant (δοῦλος) of the king (2 Kgs. 5:1, 6).

2 Kgs. 4:18–37	2 Kgs. 5:1–14	John 4:46–54
The Shunammite woman tells her servant to '**Go**' (Πορεύου); Elisha tells Gehazi to 'Go' (4:24–25, 29)	Naaman is instructed to '**Go**' (Πορευθεὶς) to the Jordan by Elisha (5:10)	The nobleman is instructed to '**Go**' (Πορεύου) by Jesus (4:50)
The Shunammite woman believes in Elisha's power (implied by her journey) (4:24)	Naaman initially doubts but later believes Elisha's **word** (λόγος) (5:13–14)	The nobleman believes Jesus' **word** (λόγος) (4:50)[378]
Elisha "**went**" (ἐπορεύθη) up and down in the house (4:35) (LES)	Naaman **went down** (κατέβη) to the Jordan after speaking to his servants (5:13–14)	The nobleman "**went**" (ἐπορεύετο) his way (KJV); he speaks with his servants as he was "**going down**" (καταβαίνοντος) (4:51)
The boy's flesh (σὰρξ τοῦ παιδαρίου) warms and revives (4:34–35)	Naaman's flesh is restored *like* a child (παιδάριον) (5:14)	The child (παιδίον) is restored (4:48)
The Shunammite's son sneezes seven times (ἑπτάκις) when raised (4:35)	Naaman is healed after washing seven times (ἑπτάκις) in the Jordan (5:14)	The nobleman's son is healed at the seventh hour (ἕβδομος) (4:52)[379]
The Shunammite receives her son alive and worships (προσκυνέω) at Elisha's feet (4:36–37)[380]	Naaman **knows** and believes in the true God after his healing (5:15) and plans to worship (προσκυνέω) the Lord in the house (οἶκος) of Rimmon (5:18)	After hearing the news from his servants, the nobleman **knows** that his son is healed (4:53); he and his household (οἰκία) believe (4:53)

[378] As Klem notes, "[B]oth stories are about the prophetic identity. Naaman's healing reveals 'that there is a prophet in Israel' (5:8), and the healing of the official's son manifests Jesus's role as 'prophet' (John 4:44). Both stories highlight the authority of the prophetic word (2 Kgs 5:14; John 4:50). Jesus is a prophet like Elisha" (Klem, "Retelling," 53).

[379] The word ὥρα appears in the Shunammite son's resurrection: "Elisha said to her, 'At this time when the season lives (ὡς ἡ ὥρα ζῶσα), you will embrace a son.'" (2 Kgs. 4:16 LES) // "…his slaves met him, saying that his son was living (ζῇ). So he inquired of them the hour (τὴν ὥραν) when he began to get better…" (John 4:51–52). *Cf.* the LXX variant that excludes the sneezing but retains the number seven: Elisha "*bent over the child* until seven times" (καὶ συνέκαμψεν ἐπὶ τὸ παιδάριον ἕως ἑπτάκις) (2 Kgs. 4:35). Also, *cf.* the similar intertextual link with the number seven between Tobit and Job on page 26.

[380] Mayer notes the superiority of Jesus over Elisha when the stories are compared: "The woman can only fall at Elisha's feet in acknowledgment of his status as a man of God. The man who encounters Jesus believes, and his life is changed along with those of his entire family" (Mayer, "Elijah and Elisha," 172).

The notable items of this comparison to the Elisha stories, even above the Elijah parallels, are the prominence of the parents involved,[381] the detail about the apparent fever, the command to "Go,"[382] the request to the prophet for healing,[383] the numerical link with the number seven,[384] and manner of healing from a distance.[385] These details, along with the shared sequence and support from the history of interpretation,[386] make this proposed allusion being {A} highly probable, even though it is likely shared with Elijah.

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[381] In John and the Elisha accounts, a prominent person in the city is involved (nobleman, a great woman, captain of the Assyrian army), unlike the widow at Zarephath in Elijah's account.

[382] Marcheselli notes the difference in commands between Jesus and Elijah ("see"; "go") but does not consider possible parallels in Elisha's resurrection account: Marcheselli, "Range and Significance," 244. The act of "going" for the nobleman, Naaman, and Shunammite woman appears to function as an act of faith, expecting a miracle from the prophet (John 4:50; 2 Kgs. 4:23; 5:14). On the Shunammite's faith exhibited throughout the story of 2 Kgs. 4, see Mary E. Shields, "Subverting a Man of God, Elevating a Woman: Role and Power Reversals in 2 Kings 4," *JSOT* 18, no. 58 (June 1993): 59–69.

[383] Naaman seeks a cure and *goes to* Elisha. The Shunammite mother travels in earnest to find the prophet and falls at his feet in an apparent posture of pleading (2 Kgs. 4:21–30), which aligns better with the nobleman's urgent plea (John 4:47) than does Elijah's account (Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 101). While she does not explicitly ask Elisha to bring her son back to life, the Shunammite's actions and words imply that she is seeking a resolution to her son's death. The fact that she journeys so far and so quickly to find Elisha suggests she believes he can do something about the situation. Her words are those of a grieving mother (2 Kgs. 4:28), but her posture is one of a pleading mother (2 Kgs. 4:27, 30). In Elijah's case, no travel to the prophet is necessary, for Elijah is already there, and the widow simply berates him for the loss of her child (1 Kgs. 17:18)! However, the fact that Elijah responds to the widow's lament by taking action and reviving her son suggests that he interprets her words as a cry for help, even though it is not a formal request.
    Raymond Brown notes the similarity in Luke's account (Luke 7:11–17) with Elisha's resurrection of the Shunammite's son in that "Elisha comes to the woman from a distance and is not residing with her," but surprisingly he is skeptical that an allusion exists in John's account to the same Elisha story (Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 91–92). This might be because Nain, the location of the Lucan resurrection account, is close to Shunem while Cana and Capernaum in the Johannine account are not as close.

[384] John's inclusion of this detail is, strictly speaking, unnecessary. Similar healings in the Synoptics of the centurion's son prove this: the text simply says, "And the servant was healed that very moment" (Matt. 8:13; *cf*. Luke 7:10). John's bonus detail could be seen as symbolic or as proof of eyewitness reporting, but I submit that this vestigial appendage pointing to its intertextual ancestors in the Elisha cycle.

[385] Elisha attempts a distance healing for the Shunammite's son, and in Naaman's case, he succeeds. Elisha's distance healings are noted in Brown, *John I-XII*, 372; Anderson, "Gradations," 15n30.

[386] E.g., Augustine, *Serm.* (*NPNF*) 86.6; *Contra duas epist. Pelag.* 4.5.11; *Reply to Faustus, the Manichean* 7.35; Cyprian, *Ep.* (ANF) 58.3; Victorinus, *Const. Apost.* 5.7.

Nicodemus (John 3) // Naaman (2 Kgs. 5)

Because Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:1–21) does not include a
miraculous sign, which is this chapter's focus, the similarities between John 3 and the
Naaman's healing (2 Kgs. 5) cannot be explored in depth but are worth summarizing.

Both 2 Kings 5 and John 3 begin with a prominent ruler (ἄρχων) seeking out a
miracle-working prophet (2 Kgs. 5:1; John 3:1, 10).[387] They both require regeneration
either of the flesh or the spirit, and both rebuff the remedy offered.[388] Naaman does not
understand the necessity of washing in the Jordan, and Nicodemus cannot understand
how a man can be born a second time. Neither man can heal themselves—only God can,
as the king of Israel acknowledges (2 Kgs. 5:7). The fact that in John, Jesus offers to heal
both physically and spiritually makes him equal with God.[389]

Following these events, both stories include discussions—between Elisha and
Gehazi, and John the Baptist with his disciples—focusing on themes of purification and

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[387] Naaman is *the ruler* (ὁ ἄρχων) of the army of Syria (5:1); Nicodemus is a ruler (ἄρχων) of the Jews and
the teacher (ὁ διδάσκαλος) of Israel (3:1, 10). Both Naaman and Nicodemus approach the miracle-working
prophet they have heard about (2 Kgs. 5:4, 9; John 3:1).

[388] They are incredibly confused and ask questions (2 Kgs. 5:11–12; John 3:4). They are under the
impression that this cleansing is to be produced through human effort (paying the king; entering the womb
the second time).

[389] The physical maladies and remedies in the Naaman story are spiritualized in John 3. Naaman does not
understand why his native river water will not do: "Are not Abana and Pharphar, rivers of Damascus, better
than the Jordan and all the waters (ὕδατα) of Israel? Going, shall I not wash in them and be cleansed
(καθαρίζω)?" (2 Kgs. 5:12). "Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water (ὕδατος)
and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:12). Naaman requires a literal regenerating
of his flesh (σάρξ) to that of a small child (2 Kgs. 5:14), but Nicodemus needs to be born again, not of the
flesh (σάρξ) but of the *Spirit* (John 3:6–7). Furthermore, when Naaman asks Elisha to pardon his sins,
Elisha does not (2 Kgs. 5:18–19), as that would go beyond his role as a prophet (Bergen, *Elisha and the
End of Prophetism*, 120). When Elisha's tells Naaman to "Go in peace," this is surely more than a farewell
but surely less than formal absolution (see Wiseman, *1 and 2 Kings*, 221). But Jesus is much more than a
prophet and offers pardon and eternal life to a dying world (John 3:14–17).

baptism (2 Kgs. 4:20–27; John 3:22–36).[390] Gehazi's secretive actions to increase his

wealth contrast with John the Baptist's humble refusal to increase.[391] Gehazi illustrates

Jesus' point to Nicodemus that "men loved the darkness (σκότος) rather than the Light,

for their deeds were evil…" (John 3:19–20). John further warns, "He who believes in the

Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of

God abides on him" (John 3:36).[392] Gehazi is exposed in the darkness (σκοτεινόν), and

Naaman's leprosy clings to him forever (2 Kgs. 5:27).

All things considered, shared language, themes, and sequence between these

chapters indicate a {C} possible allusion.[393]

Woman at the Well (John 4) // Elisha's Samarian Ministry (2 Kgs. 6–7)

Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well is his second extended

dialogue in John (*cf.* John 3:1–21). While not involving signs, this conversation may

allude to both Elijah and Elisha. The scene is first reminiscent of Elijah's encounter with

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[390] The Pharisees' dialogue is linked with the Nicodemus dialogue because of the shared themes of water (John 3:5, 23), spirit (John 3:5, 6, 8, 34), heaven (John 3:12, 13, 27, 31), and "again/from above" (ἄνωθεν) (John 3:3, 7, 25, 31). The shared link with the Naaman story seems warranted because of the shared themes of purification (καθαρισμός) (John 3:25), baptism (2 Kgs. 5:14; John 3:26), and the Jordan River (2 Kgs. 5:10, 14; John 3:26). Both texts also include the only explicit times baptism (βαπτίζω) is mentioned in relation to Elisha and Jesus, and both texts make clear that *neither prophet personally did the baptizing* (2 Kgs. 2:14; John 3:22).

[391] Elisha refuses to accept anything from Naaman (2 Kgs. 2:16), but Gehazi secretly receives (ἔλαβεν) the gift, hides it from his master in the dark (σκοτεινόν), and then lies about it (2 Kgs. 2:20–25). John the Baptist tells his disciples, "A man can receive (λαμβάνειν) nothing unless it has been given him from heaven" (John 3:27). Like Elisha, John is not looking to increase but to decrease (John 3:30; 2 Kgs. 5:26).

[392] Echoes of Moses' words from Deut. 29:2–4 can also be heard here: "And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land; 3 the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders. 4 "Yet to this day the Lord has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear." See Duane Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, WBC (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, [1997] 2018), 712.

[393] At least one patristic text (Irenaeus, *Fragments* 34) connects Naaman's "baptism" with John 3:5.

the widow of Zarephath, where he asks, "Give me to drink,"[394] and in return provides her

with food and life for her son (1 Kgs. 17:9, 18). While both accounts mirror the typical

well scenes in the Bible,[395] neither Elijah nor Jesus is seeking to marry the woman,[396] and

in both cases, the women are societal outcasts (1 Kgs. 17:9, 18; John 4:6, 18).[397]

In John 4 we may also hear echoes of Elisha, as Samaria is central to this passage

and several Elisha narratives (2 Kgs. 5–7).[398] Elisha is called "the prophet in Samaria,"[399]

and both he and Jesus are recognized as prophets while in Samaria (John 4:19; 2 Kgs.

5:3; 6:12, 19–20).[400] The phrase "Come and see" (Δεῦτε ἴδετε), used rarely in the LXX

and NT, appears repeatedly in both the Elisha cycle and John, forming a shared

catchphrase (2 Kgs. 6:13; 7:14; John 1:29, 46; 4:29; 11:43).[401] In 2 Kgs. 6:13, "come and

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[394] Gail R. O'Day, "John," in *The Gospel of Luke, the Gospel of John*, NIB (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995), 565; Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 5.

[395] Jean Louis Ska, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4): Using the Old Testament," *Landas* 13, no. 1 (1999): 81–94. See pages 8–9 for examples of the biblical well scene.

[396] Contrast Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel, and Moses and Zipporah (Gen. 24; 29; Exod. 2). The passage may look to the rest of John and its use of *bride* and *bridegroom* imagery, but John 4, like 1 Kgs. 17, is not a betrothal scene in the literal sense at all (see esp. Ska, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman," 83, 93. Note that Ska does not see a primary reference to Elijah.).

[397] Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 6.

[398] The majority of the 108 occurrences of Samaria in the LXX are in the Elijah-Elisha stories, with 51 in 2 Kgs. In the NT, "Samaria" occurs 11 times (1 in Luke, 3 in John, and 7 in Acts), and "Samaritan" occurs 11 times, 6 of which are in John: "Samaria" (Σαμάρεια) at 4:4, 5, 7; "Samaritan" (Σαμαρίτης/Σαμαρῖτις) at 4:9(x3), 39, 40, 8:48. The lone occurrence of Σαμαρίτης in the LXX is in 2 Kgs. 17:29, several chapters after the Elisha cycle ends.

[399] הַנָּבִיא אֲשֶׁר בְּשֹׁמְרוֹן (2 Kgs. 5:3). On Elisha's Samaritan connection, see Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 89.

[400] Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 171.

[401] Contra Davies, *Rhetoric and Reference*, 77, who states, "Apart from the vocabulary in 2 Kings 4, there is no exact correspondence in terminology between 1 and 2 Kings and the Fourth Gospel." Also, Psalm 45:9 [46:8]; Matt. 28:6. In 2 Kgs. 7:14 and Psalm 65:5 [66:5], there is a καί separating the imperatives: Δεῦτε καὶ ἴδετε. Variant and plural forms also occur: ἔρχου καὶ ἴδε (John 1:46; 11:43); Ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε (John 1:39). The meaning is the same, as seen in modern English Bible renderings. Outside of these references, the closest synonymous matches are Isa. 66:18 LXX (ἥξουσιν καὶ ὄψονται), and the textual variant "Come and see" (Ἔρχου καὶ βλέπε) in Rev. 6:1, 3, 5, 7 (*cf.* NASB and KJV; NKJV).

see" is used to invite people to pursue Elisha, who knows the king's secrets—even what happens in his bedchamber—just as the Samaritan woman invites others to see Jesus, who knows all her intimate secrets (2 Kgs. 6:12; John 4:29). Like the lepers in 2 Kgs. 7, the outcast Samaritan woman shares the good news of life with her people. Nathanael, too, is told to "come and see" the one whom Moses and the prophets wrote about—the one who supernaturally saw Nathanael under the fig tree without being present (1:45–48),[402] a distinct trait of Elisha (2 Kgs. 5:26; 6:12, 32).

The uniqueness of the phrase "Come and see," the coherence of themes,[403] and the general geographical association of Samaria combine to produce a {C} possible allusion in John 4 to Elisha.[404]

Sign #3: Healing of the Paralytic Man (John 5:1–17) // Healing of Naaman (2 Kgs. 5:1–27)

Jesus' healing of the paralytic in John 5 appears to be linked intratextually with the healing of the man born blind in John 9, since both healings occur on the Sabbath, result in anger by Jewish authorities, and involve a healing pool and confrontations at the

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[402] Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 2. Philip, the one who calls Nathanael is likewise told to "come and see" (John 1:39) by Jesus. The last use of the phrase is addressed to Jesus to "come and see" where Lazarus is buried (John 11:34), which follows another demonstration of clairvoyance in which Jesus already knows that Lazarus has died (John 11:11–14).

[403] In terms of narrative coherence and making sense of the differences, the realization for John's original audience may be that God's people, the Jews, can learn a lesson from the Samaritans, whom they hate so much. Samaritan enemy soldiers and lepers outside the gate receive from the prophet a feast amidst a famine and sight for their blinded eyes (2 Kgs. 6:20; 7:8), while Jewish insiders like the king and guard desire death for the prophet and cannot see what the seer does (2 Kgs. 6:31; 7:2). The religious elite—disciples of Elisha and Jesus—need their eyes opened to see what is right in front of them. The woman at the well, a total outcast and outsider, receives living water and invites the men of the city to "come and see" the Messiah, the one for whom they have been thirsting.

[404] The sequence of events and text length seem to be the weakest indicators. On the history of interpretation, Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.* 4.35) sees a symbolic connection between the Samaritan woman at the well and the Samaritans to whom Elisha ministered.

temple.[405] Both stories also resemble Elisha's healing of Naaman with John 5 paralleling

the first part, and John 9 the second.[406]

The healings of the paralytic in John 5 and Naaman in 2 Kgs. 5 are, first of all,

similar structurally.[407] Neither Naaman nor the paralytic man has prior knowledge about

the healer or faith in his abilities. They have their own ingrained, misguided ideas about

which bodies of water can heal them,[408] and they either will not or cannot dip themselves

in the water (2 Kgs. 5:10–12; John 5:7).[409] These misguided expectations result in

frustrations. Jesus asks, "Do you want to be healed?" (John 5:6) Naaman's servants ask

him, "If he asked a hard thing, wouldn't you have done it?" (2 Kgs. 5:13) Then, after

obeying the doctor's orders and being healed, they meet with the one who wrote the

prescription and confess the true healer's identity (2 Kgs. 5:15; John 8–9, 5:15).[410] Both

stories share a common ending of outrage from supposed followers of God: the Jews and

Gehazi think the healing was indecent (2 Kgs. 5:20; John 5:10, 16).[411] After Naaman and

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[405] Klem, "Retelling," 54.

[406] Ibid. See further, Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 459; Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 169.

[407] Klem, "Retelling," 54–55. Brown finds no parallel in the Elisha cycle with the healing of the paralytic: Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 92. Perhaps he means that, in the strict sense, there are no paralytics healed in the Elisha cycle, which is true. However, the physical ailments do not have to be identical for the stories to be parallel. The history of connecting the healings of the paralytic man and Naaman goes back at least to John Chrysostom in *Hom. Jo.* XXVI and similarly Ephrem, *Feast of Epiphany*, Hymn 11:2–7.

[408] Naaman thought the rivers in his own land would be better than Jordan, and the paralytic had for 38 years thought the "magical" pool at Bethesda could offer healing. See Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 169.

[409] Klem, "Retelling," 54.

[410] Ibid., 54–55. Naaman confesses that Israel's God is the one true God and the ultimate healer (2 Kgs. 5:15b); the former paralytic identifies Jesus as the healer (John 5:15).

[411] The Jews' complaint with Jesus' healing revolved around Sabbath laws, not from the law of Moses but in the tradition of the elders (m. *Sabb*. 7.2; 10:5), which allowed for acts of mercy like carrying a person *in* a cot but not carrying an empty cot itself (Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 245). Jesus' "crime" in this matter was apparently directing someone else to break the traditional mandate.

the former paralytic "depart" (ἀπέρχομαι), the Jews "persecute" (διώκω) Jesus (John

5:16), just as Gehazi "pursues after" (διώκω) Naaman (2 Kgs. 5:21).[412]

Jesus defends his actions by stating that he was sent by God (John 5:23–24, 30,

33–38), just as John the Baptist was (John 1:6, 33; 3:28, 34). One who is sent by God is

typically a prophet, and so a "sent one" is usually shorthand for "prophet."[413] Indirectly,

then, Jesus is defending his prophetic privilege in a text that probably alludes to the

prophet Elisha. One of the ways Jesus does so is, once again, through his supernatural

knowledge.[414] Jesus saw the paralytic lying there and knew (γινώσκω)[415] about the man's

chronic disability (John 6:6).[416] In John, Jesus routinely displays supernatural knowledge

(e.g., 1:48; 4:17–19, 29, 39; *cf.* 2:24–25).[417] Clairvoyance is a trait Jesus shares with

Elisha but not Moses or Elijah.[418] Also, Jesus' healing of someone with a chronic malady

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[412] Not long after the Naaman story in 2 Kgs. 5, the Arameans seek to kill Elisha (2 Kgs. 6:8–14), and not long after the paralytic is healed, the Jews seek to kill Jesus (John 5:18).

[413] That Jesus was sent by God is emphasized in John repeatedly. Besides John 5, Jesus' "sentness" in John is communicated in 4:34; 6:29, 38–39, 44, 57; 7:16, 18, 28–29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4; 11:42; 12:44–45, 49; 13:16, 18, 20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3, 8 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21. See also, Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 153–59; Williams, "Jesus the Prophet," 105–6; Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 539; Klem, "Retelling," 55.

[414] See the previous section on John 4.

[415] The form of γινώσκω here is γνούς, an aorist active participle, expressing either antecedent or contemporaneous action with the main verb (See Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996], 624–625). Either way, how Jesus knows cannot be determined on grounds of grammar. Because of John's other explicit references to Jesus' supernatural knowledge (see above), "John no doubt thinks of supernatural knowledge, not inference from observation" (Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 254). Others concur: e.g., Brown, *John I-XII*, 208; Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 243; Kruse, *John*, 148; Haenchen, *John*, 245; Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 104–5; Grant R. Osborne, "John," CBC (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2007), 79; contra Bernard, *Gospel according to St. John*, 230.

[416] Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 104. Regarding clairvoyance, see note 312.

[417] Lincoln, *Gospel According to Saint John*, 193–94.

[418] By clairvoyance, I do not mean information that is directly communicated by God, which does happen for Moses and Elijah (e.g., Exod. 32:7–8; 1 Kgs. 21:17–19). By clairvoyance, I mean hidden knowledge or perception of events happening elsewhere without directly being told by God.

finds a parallel in Elisha but not Moses or Elijah, making Elisha the lone counterpart to this Johannine sign.

Though the similarities between the stories are numerous, the differences may be just as telling. First, in an unparalleled fashion, the paralytic man was healed *immediately* at Jesus' word.[419] No elaborate, seven-dips-in-the-Jordan process was involved. A word from the living Word was all that was necessary.

Next, though it may seem Elisha sometimes uses his prophetic powers independently,[420] he is certainly never equated with God. In contrast, Jesus claims equality with God here for the first time in John (John 5:17–18).[421] Jesus discusses his identification as the Father's Son with the Jews, following his healing of the paralytic (John 5:1–17). Here Jesus suddenly starts talking about life and death, which seems disjointed from the conversation about healing and Sabbath observance. With Elisha's story of Naaman in mind, however, Jesus' transition fits, for this is exactly what the king of Israel exclaims, when asked to cure Naaman's leprosy (a disease linked to death): "Am I God, to kill and to make alive?" (2 Kgs. 5:7b). The king knows that life and death are God's domain.[422] An elaboration on God's power over death and life are quite appropriate after healing the paralytic man, since the healing resembles the famous story of Naaman in which themes of healing, death, and life are combined.

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[419] Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 105.

[420] See the section on "Elisha's Affinity with Yahweh" from Chapter 4.

[421] Franz Gordon, "Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda," in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 127. There may also be background overtones of Jesus' superiority over Asclepius, the god of healing, for Bethesda may have been at the time a shrine to Asclepius. See further, Gordon, "Jesus at the Pool," 128–129.

[422] Köstenberger, "John, Use of the Old," 442; Yarbrough, *John*, 61. *Cf.* Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6; 2 Kgs. 4:33–36; Tob. 13:2; Wis. 16:13.

On its own this proposed parallel is graded as {C} possible, but combined with this study's other proposed parallels, it becomes {B} probable.

Sign #4: Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand (John 6:1–14) // The Feeding Miracles (2 Kgs. 4:38–44)

In my judgment, the following may be the strongest piece of evidence for a deliberate allusion to Elisha in John. Bible interpreters, too, are more prone to see an intentional allusion here to Elisha than any other Elisha narrative.[423]

Table 12. Feeding Miracles

2 Kings 4:38–44	John 6:1–14
Elisha sits down with sons of the prophets (4:38).	Jesus sits down with His disciples (6:3).
Elisha interacts with Gehazi about the food problem: the people are "<u>not able</u>" to eat because the pot is poisoned (4:39–41).	Jesus interacts with one of his disciples, Philip, about the food problem: The people cannot eat because the food supply is "<u>not sufficient</u>" (6:7).
Elisha's **attendant** (παιδάριον) heals the food; a man brings **barley loaves** (ἄρτους κριθίνους) (4:41–42).	Jesus's disciple, Andrew, proposes a solution; a **lad** (παιδάριον) brings **barley loaves**" (ἄρτους κριθίνους) and fish (6:8–9)

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[423] E.g., Bernard, *Gospel according to St. John*, 175; Walter Bauer considers Elisha's feeding miracle the prototype (*Urmuster*) for John 6:1–14: Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 92; Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 91; Reim, *Hintergrund*, 207; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 15–16; Haenchen, *John*, 271–72; Udo Schnelle, *Antidocetic Christology in the Gospel of John: An Investigation of the Place of the Fourth Gospel in the Johannine School* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992), 102, 153; Whitacre, *John*, 145; Eve, *Jewish Context*, 382; Lincoln, *Gospel According to Saint John*, 212; Osborne, "John," 93; Allison Jr., *Constructing Jesus*, 268n192; Williams, "Jesus the Prophet," 104; Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 132. Chrysostom (*Hom. Jo.* XLII) says the feeding miracle in John 6:1–14 may have reminded Andrew of the "sign" of Elisha's multiplication of the loaves in 2 Kgs. 4:42–44. By way of allegory, Augustine typifies the five barley loaves as the five books of Moses, and similar but extended associations in this story were made by Thomas and Cyril of Alexandria, as noted in Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 286. Further connections are made in Aphrahat, *of Monks* §13; *cf. of Persecution* §14.

2 Kings 4:38–44	John 6:1–14
Elisha commands the food be **distributed** to the **people** to **eat** (4:42).[424]	Jesus **distributes** the food for the **people** to **eat** (6:11).
Elisha's attendant, Gehazi, protests with a question, "How can I do this before a hundred men?" (4:43 LES)	One of Jesus' disciples, Andrew, protests with a question, "…but what are these for so many people?" (6:9)
The people eat and have leftovers (44).	The people eat and have leftovers (6:12–13).

The narrative sequence and rare wording shared between the accounts are so strong it is difficult to think it is not strategic. The actions and interactions, the settings and materials used, and the problem and resolution, all correspond nicely. But perhaps the most striking similarity is John's use of "lad" (παιδάριον) and "barley loaves" (ἄρτους κριθίνους), terms absent in the Synoptic accounts.[425] The LXX includes the clause "And Elisaie said to Giezi the lad" (Ελισαιε πρὸς Γιεζι τὸ παιδάριον), whereas the MT lacks it. Considering John's demonstrable familiarity with both the MT and LXX,[426] the inclusion of this NT hapax παιδάριον in John 6:9 creates a "the major verbal link"[427] to 2 Kgs. 4:38, 41 and strengthens the case for intentionality. Moreover, παιδάριον and ἄρτους κριθίνους only appear together in these two passages in the entire LXX and NT.

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[424] Elisha commonly employs others to assist in the miracle. This propensity was highlighted first in Alfons Schulz, "Das Wunder zu Kana im Lichte des Alten Testaments," *BZ* 16 (1924): 94 *et passim*.

[425] Details in the Synoptics but not in John include using κλασμάτων for "leftovers" (Matt. 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17; John 6:12–13), while 2 Kgs. 2:44 uses κατέλιπον; and the seating of men in groups of hundreds and fifties (Mark 6:40), parallel to the one hundred men in 2 Kgs. 2:43, while John does not specify group sizes. Certain terms like "sons of the prophets" and "disciples" or "leftovers" (κατέλιπον 2 Kgs. 4:44) and "leftovers" (κλάσματα, περισσεύσαντα John 6:12–13) are non-verbatim matches.

[426] Köstenberger, "John, Use of the Old," 417–18; Reim, *Hintergrund*, 218–23.

[427] Köstenberger, "John, Use of the Old," 444. See also, Aus, *Feeding the Five Thousand*, 47–61, who convincingly argues that John uses the Saul narratives in 1 Sam. 9–11 as a partial backdrop in John 6:14ff.

At the end of the feeding miracle, the crowd reacts: "Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, 'This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world'" (John 6:14). If indeed the feeding miracle reminded the crowd of Elisha's feeding miracle, then it is reasonable that "the prophet" to whom the crowd was comparing Jesus was *Elisha*.[428]

A theological point this allusion would make is that the Lord gives abundantly (*cf.* Jn. 10:9–10)[429] and that Jesus is the Lord. In Elisha's case, the miraculous provision is clearly from the Lord ("according to the word of the Lord" 2 Kgs. 4:43–44). John is equally clear that the Lord (=Jesus) is the one responsible for the miracle (*cf.* Jn. 6:23). Hence, the Lord who multiplied food for the sons of the prophets is the same Lord who does so for his disciples. Readers who have compared Jesus' feeding miracle with Elisha's may conclude that Jesus, who multiplied much more than Elisha with much less, is much more than "the prophet" (John 6:14).[430]

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[428] An allusion to Moses is undeniable, as Moses and the wilderness manna miracle are explicitly evoked in John 6:32. After the feeding, Jesus contrasts the bread of Moses with himself and declares, "I am the bread of life." (6:35). de Jonge contends that the Bread of Life discourse following the feeding miracle in John 6 "makes clear that the prophet meant here is the Prophet like Moses" (M. de Jonge, "Jesus as Prophet and King in The Fourth Gospel," *ETL* 49, no. 1 [1973]: 167). A reference to Moses may also be implied in 6:41, in which the Jews murmur (γογγύζω) against Jesus like the Israelites murmured (γογγυσμός) against Moses (Exod. 16:7–12) "so that the murmuring in Scripture becomes a type of the Jews' murmuring against Jesus" (Hanson, "John's Use," 363; similarly, Köstenberger, "Exodus in John," 107). With explicit and implicit reference to Moses in the Bread of Life discourse, it is possible the feeding miracle may allude primarily to Moses' wilderness feeding miracle. That would mean "the prophet" whom the crowd identifies Jesus as is a reference to Deut. 18:15–19, a prophet like *Moses*. A critical distinction must be made, though. While John explicitly and implicitly shows Jesus to be the prophet like Moses (e.g., John 8:28; 12:33; 13:19; 14:29; 16:4; 18:9, 32), that fulfillment does not make Jesus a second Moses; it makes him the prophet *like* Moses. As Anderson notes, "Jesus is proclaimed by Philip to be the one of whom Moses and the prophets wrote (John 1:45), and Jesus himself declares: 'Moses wrote of me' (John 5:46)" (Anderson, "Eschatological Prophet," 9). In other words, John is not portraying Jesus as a Moses *redivivus* but as a prophet like Moses. This leaves ample room for a both/and approach in John for Jesus as a prophet like Moses whose signs are aligned closely with the Mosaic prophet Elisha.

[429] Wray-Beal, *1 & 2 Kings*, 328.

[430] For the same takeaway from the Markan feeding parallel, see Stettler, "Mehr als Elia," 179.

Because nearly all the intertextual indicators are present in this case, it is {A} highly probable an allusion in John 6:1–14 to 2 Kgs. 4:42–44 is intended.

Sign #5: Walking on the Water (John 6:16–21) // Floating Axe Head (2 Kgs. 6:1–7)

John's account of Jesus walking on water (6:16–21) may conflate imagery of Elisha *crossing* the Jordan (2 Kgs. 2:7–15) and the axe head *floating on the water* (2 Kgs. 6:1–7) with Jesus *crossing* the sea by *walking on the water* (John 6:16–21).[431] Moreover, the allusions may extend to parallels between Jesus' bread of life discourse (John 6:26–71) and the Aramean army's plot against Elisha (2 Kgs. 6:8–33). An audience already attuned to the strong Elisha echoes in Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 may more easily hear similar echoes in Jesus' water-walking miracle that follows, especially since it involves that which defies gravity and floats on the water, something very specific to Elisha's axe head miracle.[432] The proposed parallel below appears to be novel.[433]

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[431] Those who find allusions in John 6:16–21 to 2 Kgs. 2:7–15 include Klem, "Retelling," 57; Klem, "Elijah and Elisha"; Anderson, "Eschatological Prophet," 285; Schnelle, *Antidocetic Christology*, 103, 109.

[432] Bostock coins the terms "levitation miracles" to describe these two miracles (Bostock, "Jesus as the New Elisha," 40) Parallels are often drawn between Jesus' water-walking sign and Moses parting and crossing the Red Sea e.g., Anderson, "Eschatological Prophet," 9. Moses may well contribute to the background imagery, though closer alignment may be found in the Elisha narratives. The sequence of events in Moses' wilderness manna miracles (Exod. 16:1–36; Num. 11:1–9) is notably different than that of John 6:1–14. Although Jesus' feeding and water-walking miracles may be seen as reflecting the Red Sea crossing and provision of manna, the stories occur in the opposite order: feeding then water-walking in John 6:1–14; 6:15–25 and Red Sea crossing then manna miracle in Exod. 14:13–31; 16:1–36, whereas Elisha's feeding miracle precedes two water miracles (2 Kgs. 4:42–44; 5; 6:1–7) as in John (5:1–17; 6:16–21). Importantly, as Eric Eve argues, Jesus' water-walking miracle does not include "flight from enemies, parting the waves, crossing on dry land, or the drowning of hostile pursuers, all of which are features emphasized in contemporary accounts of the Red Sea events or miracles based upon it": Eve, *Jewish Context*, 383.

[433] Reim considers Jesus walking on the sea (John 6:16–21) the *only* sign *not* included in John's "signs source" that purportedly draws from Elijah-Elisha traditions (Reim, *Hintergrund*, 158n89). Put another way, Reim sees allusions to Elijah and/or Elisha behind every one of John's signs except this one. Brown finds no parallel in John's Gospel with Elisha's floating axe head (Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 92). Buchanan proposed that Jesus walking on the water parallels Elijah's and Elisha's parting of the Jordan and

Table 13. Jesus Walking on the Water and Elisha Miracles

2 Kgs. 2:9–12	2 Kgs. 6:1–7	2 Kgs. 6:8–33	John 6:16–25, 26–71
Elijah and Elisha go to the **Jordan** (2:6–7)	Sons of the prophets **go down** to the **Jordan** (6:4)		Jesus' disciples **go down** to the sea (6:16)
		The **king's** army seeks to take Elisha by force in the night while Elisha is on "**the mountain**" (6:14, 17)	Crowd seeks to take Jesus by force to make him **king**; storm comes in the night while Jesus is on "**the mountain**" (6:15)[434]
Elijah and Elisha part and <u>cross</u> the Jordan River (2:8, 14)	Elisha causes the axe head to float <u>on the water</u> (6:6).		Jesus <u>crosses</u> the sea by walking <u>on the water</u> (6:19)
A chariot of fire and horses appear (2:11–12)		Elisha says, "Do not be afraid" (Μὴ φοβοῦ); **A chariot of fire and horses** appear. (6:16–17)	Jesus appears and says, "Do not be afraid" (μὴ φοβεῖσθε) (6:20)
Elisha **receives** (λαμβάνω) Elijah's mantle (2:14)	Sons of the prophets **retrieve** (λαμβάνω) the axe head from the water (6:7)	Arameans seek to **take** (λαμβάνω) Elisha (6:13)	Disciples **receive** (λαμβάνω) Jesus into the boat (6:21)
		Mention of eating **loaves** (ἄρτους) provided to the crowd that **sought** Elisha (6:19, 22)	Mention of eating **loaves** (ἄρτον) provided to the crowd that **seeks** Jesus (6:23–24, 26).
			Jesus' Bread of Life Discourse Begins (6:26)

Elisha's axe head floatation miracle, but he does not suggest an extended parallel with the blinding of the Aramean army that I am proposing (Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 167–68).

[434] Jesus' divine perception (γνούς) that the people intend to forcefully make him king is what leads to him going to "the mountain" (John 6:1), like how Elisha's supernatural knowledge of the king's secrets is what prompts the king to forcefully seize Elisha (2 Kgs. 6:8–13).

2 Kgs. 2:9–12	2 Kgs. 6:1–7	2 Kgs. 6:8–33	John 6:16–25, 26–71
		Elisha does not kill those who see him (6:22–23)	Jesus will not cast out those who see Him (6:36–37)
		Literal eating of a son (6:28–29)	Spiritual eating of the Son (6:51–58)
		Food is referenced as a flood from heaven (7:1–2)	Jesus speaks of food from heaven (6:50–51, 58)
Elijah says Elisha's request is a "**hard thing**" (σκληρύνω) (2:10)			The disciples describe Jesus' teaching as a "**difficult**" (σκληρός) statement (6:60)
Elijah says, "**If** <u>you see</u> (ἐὰν ἴδῃς) me <u>taken up</u> (ἀναλαμβάνω)" to heaven, then Elisha will be given his **spirit** (2:9–10)			Jesus asks, "What **if** <u>you see</u> (ἐὰν θεωρῆτε) the Son of Man <u>ascending</u> (ἀναβαίνω) to where He was before [heaven]? It is the **Spirit** who gives life" (6:62)
		Elisha predicts the death of the officer who does not believe (7:1–2, 17–20)	Jesus speaks of those who do not believe (Judas) (6:64, 70–71)
After **walking** (πορευομένων) together, Elijah departs, and Elisha sees **him no longer** (καὶ οὐκ εἶδεν αὐτὸν ἔτι) (2:11–12)		The crowd who sought Elisha **departs** (ἀπέρχομαι) to their **lord** (κύριος) and does **not** return **anymore** (οὐ[κ] ... ἔτι) (6:23)	The crowd of disciples who sought Jesus withdraws (ἀπέρχομαι) from the Lord (κύριος) **no longer walk** with **him** (οὐκέτι μετ' αὐτοῦ περιεπάτουν) (6:66–68)

By proposing this complex allusion, I am not suggesting that John expected his audience to recall these three specific Elisha narratives in this particular order in neat parallel columns. I suggest, rather, that the similar actions and shared language paint a recognizable image of Elisha in John's background. As seen in earlier chapters (e.g.,

Tables 2, 6, and 8), it was common for authors of John's era to blend imagery from multiple texts. While the parallels between Jesus walking on water and Elisha's floating axe head may be unconvincing on their own, the extended correspondences in the surrounding episodes (2 Kgs. 6:7–33; John 6:26–71) and 2 Kgs. 2:7–15 strengthen the case, especially through similar language, actions, text length, themes, and omissions.[435]

Of particular interest is John 6 and 2 Kgs. 6's unique progression: a gravity-defying water miracle, then a crowd seeking a prophet, then a prophecy about a high-ranking unbeliever's death,[436] and then a conversation about cannibalism![437] This sequence is unsurprisingly unparalleled in the Bible, making coincidence a "hard thing" to accept, as would be considering accidental the densely clustered and resonant shared language between the end of the Bread of Life discourse and 2 Kgs. 2:7–15.

But what would be the point of such an allusion in Jesus' seascape sign? In both stories, fear is overcome through the recognition of God's presence. Elisha tells his

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[435] Compared to the parallel Synoptic accounts, John's aligns closer to Elisha's narratives. Details lacking from Mark's account include the disciples thinking Jesus was a ghost (Mark 6:49–50), the disciples straining at the oars and Jesus intending to pass by them (Mark 6:48), and Jesus speaking to them immediately, saying, "*Take courage*; it is I, do not be afraid." (Mark 6:50). Matt. 14:22–34 includes Peter walking on the water, Jesus rebuking the disciples' lack of faith, and the storm suddenly stopping when they get into the boat. If John were attempting to align his account with the Elisha narratives of 2 Kgs. 2:7–15; 6:1–7:2 instead of, say, Moses, these are the types of details one would expect to be omitted (*cf.* Stettler, "Mehr als Elia," 178–79.). See the qualifications indicator #8—Omissions.

[436] In both cases, the prominent unbelieving person (Judas; the officer) dies a horrible death (trampled; hanged) as predicted (2 Kgs. 7:2, 17–20; John 6:64, 70–71; *cf.* Matt. 27:3–10; Acts 1:18–19). Though Judas' death is not detailed in John, his betrayal is (John 13:2, 21–30; 18:2–5). Cruel irony is at play here. In Elisha's case, the king's right-hand man, Naaman, an Aramean outsider and leper believes Elisha's word and lives, but the Israelite with the same job description does not and dies (2 Kgs. 5:18; 7:2). In Jesus' case, his trusted disciple, Judas, does not believe and dies a devil's death (John 6:70–71), while societal outcasts from the street and Samaria do believe and receive eternal life (John 4; 5; 9).

[437] For John, of course, the eating of the Son is spiritual; for Elisha it is literal. The hearers of this are repulsed at the respective prophet. (John 6:51–58; 2 Kgs. 6:28–29). See Aphrahat, *Demonstration XXI: of Persecution* §15, who compares Elisha's famine in Samaria and the eating of the flesh of the Son to demonstrate Jesus' similarity to and superiority over the prophet Elisha. As previously noted, Elisha's text alludes to a separate cannibalism text itself (see Table 8), whose precedent may bolster this proposal.

disciple, "Do not be afraid," and opens his eyes to the spiritual reality of God's presence, whereas Jesus also says, "Do not be afraid," but adds, "It is I" (Ἐγώ εἰμι), reminding his disciples that he, the great I Am,[438] is with them. Elisha opens his servant's eyes to behold the glory of God; Jesus opens his disciples' eyes to behold *himself*—the glory of God incarnate who treads upon the waves![439] Once they "see" God's presence that has been there the whole time, their fear disappears. Elisha's actions at the Jordan confirm his status as a prophet;[440] Jesus' actions on the water confirm his status as God. This aligns with John's emphasis on Christ's divinity and his tendency to spiritualize events,[441] further reinforcing John's message.

Seeing an allusion to only one of Elisha's episodes is {C} possible, but a kaleidoscopic allusion to several context-appropriate Elisha is {B} probable.[442]

Sign #6: Opening of Blinded Eyes (John 9) // (2 Kgs. 5–6)

Elisha and Jesus are the only characters in the Bible to open blinded eyes (John 9:7; 2 Kgs. 6:20).[443] If John intended to allude to Elisha in Jesus' signs, as is argued, it

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[438] The "I Am" manifests his presence to Moses out of a fiery bush (Exod. 3:2–4), similar to the fiery chariot of heaven in both Elisha episodes comparison above (2 Kgs. 2:11; 6:16).

[439] See Pss. 29:3; 77:19; 107:4–5, 25–30 for likely Scriptural echoes, noted by Brown, *John I-XII*, 255.

[440] Udo, Schnelle, 109, cited in Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 541.

[441] A spiritualizing element is already present with Elisha in the "opening" of his attendant's eyes (2 Kgs. 6:20), which sets a precedent for the portrayal of Jesus' as the spiritual bread of life (John 6:35, 50–51, 58) over against literal bread and water that the prophet Elisha provides and lepers desire (2 Kgs. 6:23; 7:3–4).

[442] The weakest indicator is reception history. While interpreters both ancient and modern routinely connect Elisha's water miracles to Jesus, the kind of conflated allusion to Elisha I am proposing is lacking.

[443] This does not include unblinding by angelic or divine agency. Several instances of opening eyes spiritually are mentioned but not in a literal sense e.g., Gen. 3:5–7; 21:19; Num. 22:31. In the Apocrypha, Tobit's blinded eyes are opened by an angel (Tob. 11:11–13). Bruce notes the healing in Tobit as similar to Jesus' but does not consider a parallel to Elisha (Bruce, *Gospel and Epistles*, 218). The miraculous blinding

would make sense for him to include a healing of blindness. However, Elisha's blindness

miracle (2 Kgs. 6:8–21) is unlike any of Jesus' blindness healings found in the

Synoptics.[444] When the Aramean army surrounds Elisha, he asks the Lord to "open" his

servant's eyes to see the fiery angelic host around them.[445] Elisha strikes the army with

blindness, cunningly leads them to Samaria, and invokes the Lord to reopen their eyes.

John's repertoire of Jesus' miracles likely did not include anything like the blinding and

unblinding an entire army, but John did have an account of Jesus healing a man born

blind, which he places right after the Jews attempt to kill Jesus (John 8:59).

John's story also shares similarities with Naaman's healing, as both the blind man

in John 9 and Naaman are told to "Go, wash" in a specific body of water and are healed

at a distance.[446] Incorporating elements from the Naaman story into John 9 allows for

another unique parallel—Elisha and Jesus heal *and inflict* the same ailment.[447] Just as

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of eyes is never done by a human up to the time of Paul (Acts 13:11)—only through angelic or divine agency e.g., Gen. 19:11; Deut. 28:28; Isa. 29:18; 35:5; 42:7, 16; 61:1 LXX; Zeph. 1:17; Zech. 11:17; 12:4; 2 Macc. 10:30; Wis. 19:17; Bar. 1:12; Acts 9:9 (Klem, "Retelling," 59n201). The prophecy in Isa. 42:16 comes close to describing what Elisha does in 2 Kgs. 6. Acts 13:11 may recall 2 Kgs. 6:18–19 (*cf.* Josephus, *Ant.* 9.56–57). Elisha's opening of eyes also occurs in the raising of the Shunammite's son (4:35) (Klem, "Retelling," 60). Thus, the opening of eyes acts as a recurring motif in the Elisha cycle.

[444] Viz. Matt. 9:27–31; 12:22; 20:30–34; Mark 8:22–25; 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43.

[445] I.e. his servant could see just fine but was blind to the spiritual reality in front of his face (2 Kgs. 6:17)

[446] John 9:6 uses the imperative forms of ὑπάγω and νίπτω for "Go" and "wash," while 2 Kgs. 5:10 uses their synonyms πορεύομαι and λούω (see Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 8–9). Though they are not verbatim matches, the semantic pairing is still rare. The only other instance where verbs for "go" and "wash" are paired closely is in a very different context where David tells Uriah, "*Go* down to your house, and *wash* your feet" (2 Sam. 11:8; *cf.* Isa. 1:16; Lev. 14:8–9; Exod. 19:10). Λούω, used only five times in the NT, is a much less common NT word for "wash" than in the LXX (44 occurrences). John does use it once in 13:10. Νίπτω is used 17 times in the NT, 13 of which occur in John (viz. 9:7[x2]; 9:11[x2]; 9:15[x2]; 13:6, 8[x2], 10, 12, 14[x2]) and 24 times in the LXX.

[447] It is important to notice that while John *could* have included a healing of leprosy which would align with Moses and Elisha, he does not. He chooses instead to include a healing of blindness that aligns *uniquely* with Elisha. See pages 82–83 for discussion of Elisha's leprosy healing likely recalls Moses'. Note also that Moses never inflicts a physical impediment. He only ever heals what *God* inflicts, namely leprosy and snake bites (Num. 12:10–15, 21:4–9). The unnamed prophet's infliction and healing of Jeroboam is similar, but it too ends with a healing, not an infliction (1 Kgs. 13:1–6).

Gehazi inherits Naaman's leprosy, so the Pharisees will spiritually inherit the blindness of the healed man. Elisha's servant has his "blind" eyes opened, but the Pharisees become "blind" through unbelief. What I propose is that John highlights elements from both Elisha stories (Naaman's leprosy and the Arameans' blindness) in John 9.[448]

Table 14. Healing the Man Born Blind and 2 Kings 5–6[449]

2 Kings 5	2 Kgs. 6	John 9
	Elisha reveals where the axe head and Arameans are **hidden** (κρύπτω) (6:5, 9)[450]	Jesus **hides** himself (κρύπτω) (8:59)
Naaman is outraged at Elisha's words (5:11–12)	The Aramean king is outraged at Elisha's words and wants to kill him (6:13)	The Jews are outraged at Jesus's words and want to kill Jesus (8:59)[451]
Elisha **sends** a message to Naaman: "<u>Go</u>, <u>wash</u>" in the Jordan River (5:10)		Jesus sends the blind man: "<u>Go</u>, <u>wash</u> in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, **Sent**" (9:7)
Healing takes place away from the prophet's presence by washing in a specific body of water. (5:14)		Healing takes place away from the prophet's presence

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[448] Buchanan suggests a single parallel between the Arameans' blindness and the man born blind (Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 167–168). Klem suggests a similar combination to mine (Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 542–43; Klem, "Retelling," 57–60.). Brodie suggests the healing of Naaman is the primary "substance" of John's allusion (Brodie, "Jesus as the New Elisha," 40–41).

[449] Many points of my outline's structure and wording follow Brodie, "Jesus as the New Elisha," 39–42.

[450] 2 Kgs. 6:5 LXX has the variant "it is hidden" in place of the MT's שָׁאוּל "it was borrowed." The LXX reading (κεκρυμμένον) may be a corruption of κεχρημένον "it was borrowed" (Montgomery, *Books of Kings*, 382). The lemma (χράομαι or χράω) is not used with the sense borrowing in the NT or LXX but is used this way in the Jewish and pagan texts (e.g., Artap. 3.34; Theophrastus, *Char.* 30.20). See *LSJ*, s.v. "χράω (B)"; *cf. LEH* s.v. "χράω." The verb "hide" (κρύπτω) appears again in John 12:36, and 19:38.

[451] Prior to John 9, the Jews try to seize and kill Jesus, but no one is able to lay a hand on him (7:1, 30, 32, 44). Later in John, the chief priests and Pharisees counsel together (ἐβουλεύσατο) to kill Jesus and later Lazarus (John 11:53; 12:10), just as the Aramean king "took counsel" (ἐβουλεύσατο) with his servants (2 Kgs. 6:8) and seek to kill Elisha (2 Kgs. 6:13). John 11:53 and 12:10 are the only instances of the lexeme ἐβουλεύσατο in the NT; the lemma also occurs in 2 Cor. 1:17; Luke 14:31; Acts 27:39.

2 Kings 5	2 Kgs. 6	John 9
		by washing in a specific body of water. (9:7)[452]
Dispute about the location of the proper river to wash (5:12–13)	Disputes about the identity and location of Elisha (6:11–13)	Disputes about the location and identity of Jesus (9:12–21)[453]
Naaman returns to Elisha (5:15)	Arameans **are brought** to Elisha (6:19)[454]	The formerly blind man **is brought** to the Pharisees (9:13)
Naaman recognizes the Lord as the one true God and Elisha as a true **prophet** (5:15; *cf*. 8b)	Formerly blind Arameans recognize Elisha as the **prophet** (6:20; *cf*. 12)	Recognition of Jesus as a **prophet** (9:17b)
Naaman returns healed, eager **to worship** the Lord (5:18).		Blind man returns healed and **worships** Jesus (9:38).
Gehazi is outraged about Elisha's actions (5:20)		Pharisees are outraged about Jesus' actions (9:24)

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[452] Lincoln, *Gospel According to Saint John*, 212–13.

[453] Klem, "Retelling," 58–59.

[454] Here Elisha cunningly leads into enemy territory the Arameans who seek to seize and kill him (*cf*. Deut. 27:18!). Spiritually speaking, Jesus' accusers say he "leads the people astray" (John 7:12). These are the same people who seek to seize and kill him (John 7:9, 19–20, 25, 30). Despite this, no one can lay hands on these two prophets (John 7:40, 44; 2 Kgs. 6:12–13). Elisha and Jesus invite the people to eat and drink water, despite the crowds' hostile intentions (John 7:37–38; 2 Kgs. 6:22–23).
     Rabbinic sources also have something to say about the Elisha narrative's theme of leading the masses astray. In rabbinic texts, references to Jesus by name are rare, and Jesus is never compared to Elisha. However, in the rare and famous Talmudic texts that do reference "Jesus the Nazarene" (viz. b. *Ber*. 17a–b; b. *Sanh*. 43a.18–26; 107b; b. *Sotah* 47a; *cf*. b. *Shabbat* 104b and b. *Sanh*. 67a), the majority pair Jesus's actions with *Gehazi's* actions as one who led people astray, did magic after the manner of Balaam, and came from Egypt (b. *Sanh*. 107b; b. *Sotah* 47a; b. *Ber*. 17a–b). In an extended parallel, Jesus offends his master, Yehoshua ben Peraḥya and is not given room for repentance; he deceives the people with magic and leads them astray (*cf*. John 7:12; Deut. 13:1–5, 18:20–22). In b. *Ber*. 17b, Jesus takes Balaam's place in the list of four who are disinherited from the world to come, alongside Doeg, Ahithophel, and Gehazi. Thus, while the early church fathers routinely see in Elisha a type of Christ, the rabbis see in Jesus a type of Gehazi. See further Peter Schäfer, *Jesus in the Talmud* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 30–32; Stephen Gero, "The Stern Master and His Wayward Disciple: A 'Jesus' Story in the Talmud and in Christian Hagiography," *JSJ* 25, no. 2 (1994): 287–311. That these texts reflect historical Jewish opinion around the time of Jesus may be supported by early sources such as Origen, *Cels.* 2.58 and Justin, *Dial.* 86, which describe the Jewish view of Jesus as a practitioner of magic through the power of the devil.

2 Kings 5	2 Kgs. 6	John 9
Leprosy inflicted onto Gehazi (5:27)[455]	Blindness inflicted on the Arameans (6:20)	"Blindness" inflicted onto the Pharisees (9:39–41)
Elisha makes the leprous clean and the clean leprous (5:14, 27)	Elisha makes the blind to see and the seeing blind (6:17–20)	Jesus makes the blind to see and seeing blind (9:39, 41)

Though not all the corresponding details listed may be intentional, the distinctive

elements in John 9 and 2 Kgs. 5 and 6 point toward a conflated allusion on John's part.

The strongest indicators include similar language, actions,[456] and theme, as well as the

similar sequence between John 9 and 2 Kgs 5. Within the history of interpretation, the

connection between Naaman's healing and John 9 is widely acknowledged.[457] Moreover,

because it is likely that John has already alluded to Naaman multiple times, the likelihood

he is doing so again in John 9 is strengthened.[458]

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[455] 2 Kgs. 5:24 LXX says of Gehazi and his servants after receiving the gifts from Naaman, "And they came into the *darkness* (σκοτεινόν)" in place of "When he came to the hill" (MT). Thus, the Naaman story contains themes of both leprosy/uncleanness and light/darkness, the second of which accords with Jesus' statement before healing the blind man that Jesus is the light of the world (John 9:5), and this Johannine theme occurs frequently e.g., John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35–36 (Klem, "Retelling," 59).

[456] No other healings through washings occur in Scripture. This fact alone is enough to warrant an intertextual investigation. The distinctive language like "Go, wash" and sequence confirm the suspicion.

[457] E.g., Brown, *John I-XII*, 372; Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 168; Brodie, "Jesus as the New Elisha"; Bruce, *Gospel and Epistles*, 214; Borchert, *John 12-21*, 315; Lincoln, *Gospel According to Saint John*, 281; Osborne, "John," 145; Kruse, *John*, 221; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 155; Keener, *Gospel of John*, 781; Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 133; Klem, "Retelling," 58–60; Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 542–43. In early Christian contexts, the verbal correspondences of Elisha's and Jesus' commands to "Go, wash," are noted in John Chrysostom, *Hom. Jo.* LVI. See also Ephrem, *The Nisibine Hymns* XLII:5. Naaman's tale is also a popular patristics symbol of Christian baptism (e.g., Origin, *Comm. Jo.* John 6:7–28; Ephrem *Feast of Epiphany*, Hymn 5:1–2, 12). Seeing baptismal imagery in Naaman's story likely predated the completion of the biblical canon, as suggested by the intertextual echoes of Naaman in Acts 8:28–39, where Philip baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch (see Karin Schöpflin, "Naaman: seine Heilung und Bekehrung im Alten und Neuen Testament," *BN* 141 [2009]: 35–56).

[458] See indicator #6–Pattern of Dependency. Previous allusions to Naaman are suggested for signs 2 and 3, as well as Jesus' talk with Nicodemus. Since the healing in John 5 (sign 2) is structurally linked to John 9, an extended OT allusion to Naaman in John 5 would make a similar allusion in John 9 more plausible.

There are other noticeable prophetic traits in John 9. Putting on-the-spit mud on a blind man's eyes would normally be counterproductive,[459] just like pouring water on an altar intended for fire (1 Kgs. 18:32–35), adding salt to make water sweet (2 Kgs. 2:20–22), and adding flour to a poisoned stew (2 Kgs. 4:38–41). These miracle precursors would make a remedy even more difficult, which may be the point. Either way, it is a very Elisha-like thing to do,[460] as is "anointing" the man's eyes (John 9:6, 11), a priestly activity like Elisha's anointing of others.[461] Similarly, Jesus *touches* the blind man, a distinctive healing mode used by Elijah and Elisha when resurrecting children (1 Kgs.

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[459] Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 191.

[460] Elijah, not Elisha, has the altar doused with water before praying down fire on it (1 Kings 18), but when Elisha employs a "miracle precursor" routine like throwing meal into a poisoned stew (2 Kgs. 4:38–41) or salt into contaminated water (2 Kgs. 2:19–22), he does so to save and heal, not incinerate and decapitate.

[461] That Jesus "anoints" (ἐπιχρίω) the blind man's eyes is a curious inclusion. Much more common words could have been used to describe the action of applying fresh mud to someone's eyes (*cf.* ἐπιτίθημι in John 9:15). By using "anoint," John may be using a wordplay to refer to Jesus' priestly activity. John repeatedly uses wordplays e.g., John 1:5 (see R. Alan Culpepper, "Humor and Wit" ABD 3:333). Jesus, as the Messiah ("anointed one"), anoints others (John 1:41), just as Elisha, the anointed prophet, anoints others (1 Kgs. 19:16–19; 2 Kgs. 8:7–13; 9:3–6; see Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 156).
 Elisha's anointing is not explicit but assumed (*cf.* 1 Kgs. 19:16, 19); his anointing of others is either done by proxy as with Jehu (2 Kgs. 9:3–6) or figuratively as with Hazael (2 Kgs. 8:7–13). Elisha is not said to have been anointed with oil, but "Elisha seems quite certain that he has been 'invested' into service by the mantle in a manner that loses none of the weight and burden of an 'anointing'" (Dharamraj, "Prophet Like Moses?," 168). For the eschatological expectation of a miracle-working anointed prophet at Qumran, see Michael Becker, "4Q521 und die Gesalbten," *RevQ* 18, no. 1 (April 1997): 73–96.
 Any inferences that *Elijah* was anointed in Poirier, "Jesus as an Elijianic Figure in Luke 4," 353–359, are more cautiously handled by Noble, "Cultic Prophecy," 52. Many DSS texts that allude to an eschatological prophet have routinely been interpreted as *Elijianic*, but they do not mention Elijah by name and may just as easily be *Elishianic*. Anderson points to 1QS IV and 4Q521 as associating Elijah with opening blinded eyes and raising the dead, and thus resonating with John's presentation of Jesus (Anderson, "Eschatological Prophet," 5–6). Yet, Elijah is nowhere mentioned in either text, and Elijah never opened blinded eyes or was ever described as anointed (contra Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg Jr., and Edward M. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* [New York: HarperOne, 2005], 531). Elisha, however, was anointed and did open blinded eyes. 4Q382 Frag. 31, if it does refer to Elijah, speaks of him as an eschatological "mighty man" and may speak of him as a prophet, but it does not speak of him in Messianic terms. After surveying the literature, Flowers concludes, "The historical Elijah is never—not in the Bible, in any Second Temple writing, or early rabbinic literature—described as anointed or referred to as a/the 'Messiah'" (Flowers, "Bystanders," 452).

17:21; 2 Kgs. 4:34–35).[462] Specifying that Siloam means "sent" highlights a key description of prophets (their "sentness") and perhaps Elisha's sending of Naaman to the Jordan in particular.[463] The identification of Jesus as a prophet (προφήτης) (9:17), coupled with these prophetic actions, portray him in John 9, not as a Hellenistic magic man but as an OT prophet-healer.

Yet, if John is alluding to the OT prophetic tradition generally and Elisha specifically, the differences between the texts are important. Jesus seeks out the blind man himself, whereas Elisha has Naaman come to him. Likewise, the blind man, unlike Naaman, obeys with faith and without debate.[464] Interestingly, the blind man does not initiate the healing at all. Instead, "Jesus takes the initiative."[465] Naaman requires seven dips in the river, but the blind man needs to only wash once.[466] When he returns to Elisha healed, Naaman desires to worship Yahweh, not Elisha, but when the formerly blind man returns healed, the distinction between God and the man of God collapses: Jesus the prophet is worshiped as κύριος (John 9:17, 33, 36–38).[467] Though Jesus' sign in John 9 is

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[462] In the Qumran Temple Scroll (11Q19 12–14), blindness was seen as ritually impure as leprosy (11Q19 17–18), and the blind were prohibited from the temple precincts (Hector Avalos, "Blindness," *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000], 193). Healing through physical contact is unique to Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus in Scripture.

[463] The explanation of Siloam's meaning is unnecessary unless the sending aspect of the healing were important for John's message. An Elishianic allusion may be intended to bring out the "sending" aspect of the miracle (Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 8; Keener, *Gospel of John*, 781; Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 133), since the theme of sending features so prominently in 2 Kings 5.

[464] Kruse, *John*, 221; Bernard, *Gospel according to St. John*, 329; Chrysostom, *Homilies on John*, LVI.

[465] Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 258.

[466] Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 133. *Cf.* 2 Kgs. 5:14; John 9:7.

[467] Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 9; Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 543. Manning notes that "the Pharisees ironically adjure the blind man to 'give glory to God' (9:24), which is of course what the blind man is doing" (Manning, "I Am Not Elijah," 9).

reminiscent of Elisha in many respects, as the blind man himself testifies, healing a man blind from birth is utterly unprecedented (John 9:32).[468] It puts Jesus in a class all his own.

An allusion to Elisha's miracles in John 9 is graded to be {A} highly probable.

Sign #7: Resurrection Miracles John 11;20 // 2 Kings 4:1–37; 13:11

Jesus' seven signs in John crescendo with the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:1–44). In this episode, Jesus declares himself to be the resurrection and the life (John 11:25),[469] foreshadowing Jesus' own resurrection in John 20 and the life he offers to all who believe. The Elisha cycle similarly includes two resurrections: one of the Shunammite's son (2 Kgs. 4:4–37) and one at Elisha's own empty tomb (2 Kgs. 13:21). Because of its utter uniqueness, this parallel may be the most significant in this entire study, for no other Bible character brings life to others after his own death.[470] Several indicators in Jesus' resurrection miracles point to intentional echoes that summon the intertextual ghost of Elisha.[471]

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[468] Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 133–134. According to Augustine, Jesus performed miracles like the prophets to establish a ministry his countrymen were familiar with and then go beyond them in doing what no one has ever done (Augustine, *Ep*. 137.4.13). Among these utterly unique wonders of Jesus is healing a man *born* blind (Augustine, John 15:24–25, §2). Likewise, by healing a man *born* blind, Jesus supersedes Hellenistic accounts of healing blindness e.g., Tacitus, *Hist*. 4.81; Suetonius*, Vesp*. 7.2; Pliny, *Nat*. 28.7.36–9; Dio Cassius, *Rom. Hist*. 65.8.

[469] "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?'" (John 11:25–26)

[470] Caine, "Elisha as Antecedent," 32.

[471] See esp. Klem, "Retelling," 60–62; Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 543–44.

We start first with Elisha's resurrection of the Shunammite's son and Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus.[472] This seventh sign is bookended with a description of Mary as the one who "anointed" (ἀλείφω) him with costly ointment (John 11:2; 12:3). In the LXX, the verb ἀλείφω occurs only once in 1–2 Kings (=3–4 Kgdms.)—in the episode of the widow's miraculous supply of oil, which immediately precedes Elisha's resurrection of the Shunammite's son (2 Kgs. 4:2).[473] The widow says she has nothing "except olive oil, which I use to anoint (ἀλείφω)." The widow woman finds herself being harassed by a self-serving moneylender, looking to collect (2 Kgs. 4:2), just as Mary is being harassed by Judas, a self-serving thief and keeper of the money box (John 12:4–6).[474] Both stories discuss the selling of the oil or ointment (2 Kgs. 4:7; John 12:5), and both women "fill up" (πληρόω) the "house" (οἶκος), one with the ointment's fragrance and one with vessels for the oil (2 Kgs. 4:2–5; John 12:3). By bookending Lazarus' resurrection with Mary's anointing of Jesus—a story that resonates with the widow in 2 Kgs. 4:1–7—the

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[472] Bostock's proposal that Elisha's posthumous resurrection in 2 Kgs. 13:21 aligns with Jesus' seventh sign, the resurrection of Lazarus (see Table 7), is accurate insofar as both miracles involve miraculous resurrections from tombs, but the shared language, actions, and sequence are nearly nonexistent. More promising is the suggestion that the first resurrection miracle of Jesus and Elisha mirror each other, as does the second, but there is not much intertextual cross-pollination otherwise.

[473] This word is also an LXX variant reading. It concerns the widow's response in 2 Kgs. 4:2: "Nothing belongs to your servant—nothing except olive oil, *which I use to anoint*" (ὃ ἀλείψομαι), whereas the MT has, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil" (2 Kgs. 4:2). In the NT, the verb ἀλείφω occurs nine times, two of which are in John—both referring to Mary (11:2; 12:3). In the LXX it occurs 20 times and only once in 1–2 Kgs. (=3–4 Kgdms.), namely here in 2 Kgs. 4:2. Thus, its rarity in 1–2 Kings and John and its variant form in the LXX against the MT make this shared word stand out.

[474] Early church father John Cassian (*De Instit. Ceonob.* 7.14) contrasts Elisha's treacherous disciple, Gehazi, with Jesus' treacherous disciple, Judas (so also, Basil, *Letter* 42.2). Aphrahat compares Jesus and Elisha in this regard: while Elisha cursed his one disciple, Jesus cursed one disciple but still had eleven left (*Demonstration VI: of Monks* §13). The argument's persuasiveness may be lacking, but it evinces another early instance of Elisha and Jesus being compared.

biblically-informed reader may wonder if the story in the middle of the bookends also

resembles a story from Elisha.

Table 15. Jesus' and Elisha's Resurrection Miracles

2 Kings 4:4–37	John 11:1–44
The Shunammite woman is accustomed to hosting Elisha in a special room in her house when he passes through (4:8–10)	Mary, Martha, and Lazarus are accustomed to hosting Jesus at their house when he passes through (11:7–8, 20, 31)[475]
Shunammite's son "**falls asleep**" on his mother's knees and **dies** (4:20)[476]	Lazarus "**has fallen asleep**," and Jesus goes to awaken him out of "**sleep**." Jesus clarifies: Lazarus is not literally **asleep**; he has **died** (11:11–14)
The Shunammite quickly comes to Elisha and falls **at his feet** (4: 22–24, 27)	Martha and Mary quickly come to Jesus; Mary falls **at his feet** (11:20, 29, 32)
The Shunammite reproaches Elisha, whom she addresses as **lord** (κύριος), but her actions display confidence in his abilities to raise the dead (4:28, 30)	Mary and Martha reproach Jesus, whom they address as **lord** (κύριος), yet display confidence in his abilities to raise the dead (11:21–27, 32)[477]
Elisha **comes** to the Shunammite's house (4:32)	Jesus **comes** to the Lazarus' tomb (11:38)
Elisha bends over the boy seven times until the boy "**opens up his eyes**" (4:34)	Reference to Jesus' miracle in which he "**opened the eyes**" of the blind man (11:37)
Elisha prays (4:33)	Jesus prays (11:41–42)

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[475] The proposed parallel is inferential. The text does not explicitly state that Mary, Martha, and Lazarus hosted Jesus as the Shunammite did for Elisha. However, the context suggests Jesus is well-acquainted with these siblings, especially Lazarus, who is identified as "one whom Jesus loves" (John 11:3) (Yarbrough, *John*, 116). Additionally, Jesus dines at their house afterward, implying familiarity and hospitality.

[476] 2 Kgs. 4:20 contains another variant from the MT, which has no reference to sleeping: "he sat (ישב) on her lap until noon" (MT) // "He *fell asleep* (κοιμάω) on her knees until noon" (LES; contra NETS). *Cf.* Jesus similar association of death with sleep in Mark 5:39.

[477] Commentators tend to see more regret than reproach or rebuke here (e.g., Beasley-Murray, *John*, 190; Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 411–12), but with Merrill Tenney I take the sisters responses as "both a repressed reproach and a persistent faith" (Merrill C. Tenney, "John," in *John – Acts*, EBC [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981], 118; Kruse, *John*, 247; Lincoln, *Gospel According to Saint John*, 323), since blame is a natural part of the grieving process and because it seems they knew Jesus *could* have been there but chose not to be (*cf.* John 11:3–6) (Karen H. Jobes, *John* [Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2021], 189).

2 Kings 4:4–37	John 11:1–44
Elisha "cries out" for the boy to be brought out (4:36); son **leaves** the room (4:37)	Jesus "cries out" for Lazarus to come out. Lazarus **leaves** the tomb (11:43–44)
Shunammite responds to Elisha in an act of reverence **at his feet** (τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ) (4:37)[478]	Mary responds to Jesus in an act of worship **at his feet** (τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ) (12:3)

In addition to the shared language and sequence,[479] a comparison of the stories reveals *contrasts* that portray Jesus as the greater prophet. First, Jesus displays supernatural knowledge of Lazarus' death, while Elisha declares his ignorance about the boy's death (2 Kgs. 4:27)![480] Jesus raises Lazarus whose already-decomposing body had been dead and buried four days, and the miracle takes place in front of witnesses; Elisha raises the boy who died the same day and behind closed doors.[481] Elisha cannot heal from

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[478] The parallel above may make it sound like the son leaves the room and then the Shunammite woman falls at Elisha's feet. These actions happen in the same verse (2 Kgs. 4:37), but the chronological sequence is the falling at Elisha's feet and then both the mother and son exit the room. 2 Kgs. 4:37 is abbreviated and does not make clear on its own who exactly is being worshipped—Elisha or the Lord. The Shunammite woman probably bowed before Elisha in reverence (not worship) in the same way the sons of the prophets did after his first miracle at the Jordan (2 Kgs. 2:15) or like Bathsheba did before David (1 Kgs. 1:16) (Roger L. Omanson and John Ellington, *A Handbook on 1–2 Kings* [New York: United Bible Societies, 2008], 789). However, there is every reason to suspect that Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet transcended reverence and was an act of worship.

[479] Despite many differences, especially regarding ancillary characters, the narrative progression and themes make coincidence unlikely: both prophets are informed of a death by a grieving female family member who falls at their feet and addresses them as "lord." The prophets travel with the woman to the place where the dead person is "sleeping," cry out, raise them to life, and again are reverenced or worshipped at their feet. See Buchanan, "Samaritan Origin," 170; *cf*. Brown, who finds the parallel "very dubious," (Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 91–92). Neither Buchanan nor Brown consider the import of Mary falling *twice* at Jesus' feet in the same narrative progression as the Shunammite woman.

     The only other Bible narrative resembling Jesus' raising of Lazarus is Elijah's raising of the widow's son (1 Kgs. 17). It is telling, however, that Elijah's miracle lacks the shared language present in Elisha's and Jesus' stories, such as the "sleep" of death, falling "at his feet," the opening of the eyes, being addressed as "lord," and the woman's post-resurrection act of reverence at his feet. A detail that *would* have aligned Elijah's story with Jesus' is the Lord hearing Elijah's prayer (1 Kgs. 17:22) just as Jesus is assured the Father hears his (John 11:42), but this detail of hearing is *absent* in the LXX (Klem, "Retelling," 61).

[480] Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 109. As noted before, Elisha is known for his clairvoyance (2 Kgs. 5:26; 6:8–12) and predictive prophesy (2 Kgs. 3:17–19; 7:2). But here, not so much.

[481] Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 134; Klem, "Retelling," 62; Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 107n41.

a distance with his staff in Gehazi hand. Instead, Elisha does all sorts of "mysterious actions"[482] to resurrect the boy, along with praying to the Lord. Jesus does raise Lazarus at a distance by speaking three words (John 11:41–43). He simply thanks the Father for the miracle but does not ask for it.[483] In all these aspects, Jesus is similar to but greater than Elisha, as is noted frequently by early church fathers.[484]

Elisha's final resurrection miracle is much less dramatic and much more mysterious than his first. The entire episode is abbreviated in a single verse (2 Kgs. 13:21). The key points include the corpse of an unnamed man being thrown into Elisha's open tomb,[485] and upon touching the bones of Elisha, the dead man stands to his feet and reanimates. All these key points—the burial, the bones, and the aspect of touching the body—are present in Jesus' own resurrection narrative in John. The shared language and the ability to make sense of the differences may point to a purposeful allusion.

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[482] Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 188; Cho, *Jesus as Prophet*, 107n41. These include lying on the boy, putting his mouth, eyes, and hands against the boy's mouth, eyes, and hands, and stretching (גהר) himself on him. The boy's body begins to warm. Then Elisha goes out of the room, paces back and forth in the house, goes back to the room, and stretches himself again on the boy. After all this, the boy sneezes seven times and opens his eyes (2 Kgs. 4:34–35).

[483] Stettler, "Mehr als Elia," 176; Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 134; Klem, "Retelling," 62.

[484] Augustine, *Serm.* (*NPNF*) 86.6; *Contra duas epist. Pelag.* 4.5.11; *Reply to Faustus, the Manichean* 7.35; Cyprian, *Ep.* (ANF) 58.3; Victorinus, *Const. Apost.* 5.7; Aphrahat, *Demonstration VIII: of the Resurrection* §11; Ephrem the Syrian, *The Nisibine Hymns* XLII:10–12.

[485] The word "tomb" (קֶבֶר) here is generic, so the type of tomb must be contextually determined. Knowledge of ancient Israelite burying customs may suggest "a natural cave or a chamber hewn out of soft rock" (*NIDOTTE*, s.v. "קבר"), which would explain the easy access to the grave (Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 232). The LXX has τάφος, which too is generic but is used in Matt. 27:61, 64, 66; 28:1 to refer to the sepulcher in which Jesus' body was placed. (*cf*. Matt. 23:27, 29). τάφος is never used in John, and outside of Matthew, it only occurs in Rom. 3:13. When John refers to tombs or graves, he uses μνημεῖον (16 times in John). μνημεῖον is rare in the LXX, occurring Gen.[8]; Exod.[1]; Isa.[2]; Ezek.[1]; Apocrypha[3]. It is therefore unsurprising that John uses μνημεῖον, even if he were, in part, intentionally alluding to Elisha.

John is the only Gospel to include a fulfilled prophecy concerning Jesus' bones (ὀστέον) (John 19:36),[486] and it occurs during Jesus' burial narrative (19:31–42). After Jesus' tomb is empty and Jesus appears to Mary, she clings (ἅπτω) to his post-resurrection body (John 20:17). In John, the verb ἅπτω occurs only here, and it matches the touching (ἅπτω) of Elisha's bones (ὀστέον) at his open tomb (2 Kgs. 13:21).[487] Following Jesus' empty tomb scene with Mary, Jesus invites Thomas to touch his body (John 20:27). Thomas' spiritual awakening comes after he is invited to touch Jesus' resurrected body, resulting in his belief, act of worship, and by implication, receipt of eternal life.[488] The invitation by Jesus to touch his body is exclusive to John.[489] This interaction results in Thomas' declaration of faith ("My Lord and my God!") and furthers John's emphasis that belief in the resurrected Jesus is the gateway to eternal life.[490] The entire Gospel ends on this note, stating the purpose for which it was written. "but these

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[486] *Cf*. Luke 24:39, the only other mention of Jesus' bones in the Gospels: "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones (ὀστέον) as you see that I have."

[487] In Matthew, the only other Gospel parallel to include the touching of Jesus post-resurrection, uses κρατέω, not ἅπτω, for the "clasping" of Jesus' feet (Matt. 28:9).

[488] Further shared language or wordplays may be seen. In the episode immediately before his burial (2 Kgs. 13:14–21), Elisha guides the hands of the king onto a bow and "arrow" (βέλη) ("arrow" is mentioned 4 times). The use and direction of "hands" is repeated here. In Jesus' interaction with Thomas, Jesus tells Thomas to reach with his finger, to see Jesus' hands, and for Thomas to take his hand to "thrust" (βάλε) it into Jesus' side ("thrust" is mentioned three times). The words βέλη and βάλε represent a repeated visual and phonetic similarity, one that does not occur in Luke's parallel passage (Luke 24:39). The title "father" (πατήρ) is used of Elisha only in this passage, just as Jesus' "Father" (πατήρ) is referenced repeatedly in John 20:17, 21. Mary weeps (κλαίω) over Jesus (John 20:11, 13,15), as King Joash weeps (κλαίω) over Elisha (2 Kgs. 13:14).

[489] In Luke 24:40, Jesus *shows* the disciples his hands and feet but does not invite them to touch him.

[490] E.g., "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (John 5:24; also, 5:21); "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but *raise it up on the last day*. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and *I Myself will raise him up on the last day*." (John 6:30–40); "After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; *because I live, you will live also*." (John 14:19)

have been written *so that you may believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and *that believing you may have life* in His name" (John 20:31). Elisha gave life after his death—an incredibly thing to be sure—but Jesus came to give life *abundantly* and life that is *eternal* (John 3:16; 10:10, 28). The most important contrast here is that Elisha stays dead, but Jesus does not. Therefore, as an early church father put it, the power of Jesus' greater resurrection "dwells in the bones of this second Elisha."[491]

Accordingly, allusions to Elisha's two resurrections in John, when taken on the whole, are graded as {B} probable.

Other Allusions

After Jesus resurrects Lazarus in John 11, he performs no more signs except at his empty tomb. Allusions to Elisha also fade after John 11, though afterwards shared motifs and at least one more possible narrative analogy appear.

At the Last Supper, Jesus girds Himself with a towel and "pours water" on His disciples' feet (John 13:5). This parallels Elisha, who is the only other figure in Scripture described as pouring water on another (2 Kgs. 3:11). The key difference is that Jesus, the master, voluntarily serves his disciples, while Elisha dutifully serves his master.[492]

Another instance of shared language in the Last Supper episode is when Jesus prophesies that Judas is his betrayer. Jesus's spirit becomes troubled, and he tells his

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[491] Ephrem the Syrian, *Nisibine Hymns* XLII:8; also, 10–12. For other comparisons in the patristics between Elisha's and Jesus's second resurrection, see Cyril of Jerusalem, *Hier., Cat. Lect.* 4.12; Victorinus, *Const. Apost.* 6.30; Aphrahat, *Demonstration VI: of Monks* §13; *Demonstration VIII: of the Resurrection* §11; *Demonstration XXI: of Persecution* §15; The NT pseudepigraphal text called 3 Corinthians (170–195 AD) from the larger *Acts of Paul* corpus argues along similar lines (3 Cor. 32).

[492] Hommel, "Jüngerschaft und Freundschaft," 86; Bernard, *Gospel according to St. John*, 2:460.

disciples that one of them will betray him (John 13:21). The disciples question Jesus'

statement; they cannot believe it could be Judas (13:22–25, 29–30). When Judas takes

(λαμβάνω) the morsel and dips (βάπτω) it with Jesus his lord (κύριος), it is clear that he

the betrayer (13:25, 26, 30). Satan enters into (εἰσῆλθεν) Judas, and his betrayal will

ultimately lead to Jesus' death (13:27; 18). In like manner, when Elisha meets Hazael,

Elisha is troubled and begins to weep (2 Kgs. 8:11). Hazael asks why Elisha is weeping.

After Elisha prophesies the atrocities Hazael will commit, Hazael rebuffs him, asking

how a mere slave like himself could do such things (2 Kgs. 8:13, paraphrase).

Nevertheless, Hazael enters into (εἰσῆλθεν) the presence of his king, takes (λαμβάνω) a

bedspread, and dips (βάπτω) it into water to smother his master's (κύριος) face (2 Kgs.

8:15). Hazael is clearly the betrayer he denied being.[493]

In fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy about Judas' betrayal (John 18), a full narrative

analogy may be seen in connection to 2 Kgs. 6.[494]

Table 16. The Arrest of Jesus in John 18 with 2 Kings 6

2 Kgs. 6:8–19	John 18:1–13
Elisha knows his enemies' movements (6:12)	Jesus knows his enemies' movements (18:4)
Betrayal by revealing "**the place**" the king and his men were (6:10, 11)	Judas **betrays** "**the place**" of Jesus and his disciples (18:2, 5)

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[493] These two narratives resemble the story of Joseph's brothers who also "dip" their brother's tunic into blood in an act of secret betrayal (Gen. 37:31). Though βάπτω is not used here the LXX for the act of dipping, the Hebrew verbs (טבל) between Gen. 37:31 and 2 Kgs. 8:15 are the same. Of course, the simple act of "dipping" something in liquid is itself not indicative of a biblical literary motif, but perhaps the combination of dipping and a betrayal leading to presumed death may form what might be called a "dip of betrayal" motif.

[494] This suggestion is rare. Suggestions can be found in Klem, "Elijah and Elisha," 545; Klem, "Retelling," 69; Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 89n16, 92.

2 Kgs. 6:8–19	John 18:1–13
Aramean military come by night to capture Elisha (6:14)	Roman military come by night to capture Jesus (18:3)
Elisha says he will lead his enemies to "whom **they seek**" (6:19)	Jesus asks his enemies "whom **they seek**" (18:4, 7, 8)
Elisha prays and his enemies are struck with blindness (6:18)	Jesus speaks and his enemies fall to the ground (18:6)[495]
Elisha requests for his enemies, "let them depart to their master" (6:22 LES)	Jesus requests for his disciples, "let these go their way" (18:8)
Elisha tells the king of Israel not to use his <u>sword</u> (6:22)[496]	Jesus tells Peter not to use his <u>sword</u> (18:10–11)
Elisha leads the army away to the king (6:19)	The army leads Jesus away to their ruler (18:13).

In this case, the similar language, sequence, text length, and themes are the strongest indicators of an allusion. If so, then an intended takeaway might be that while Jesus acts similarly to Elisha in showing enemy love, Jesus displays self-sacrifice while Elisha displays self-preservation. Elisha is willing to feed his enemies, but Jesus, as the Good Shepherd, is willing to lay down his life for the sheep.

The shared actions and language correspond at many points in John's betrayal scenes, yet the silence from the history of interpretation in this regard downgrades the allusions from {B} probable to {C} possible.

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[495] Brown, "Jesus and Elisha," 92.

[496] Recall that Hazael is the betrayer about whom Elisha prophesies will kill their "select men" (ἐκλεκτός) with the *sword* (2 Kgs. 8:12).

Chapter 6

Evaluating the Findings

This study has argued that the Elisha cycle (2 Kgs. 2–8; 13) serves as an intentional interpretive framework in the Fourth Gospel, particularly in Jesus' seven signs (John 1–11). This overarching allusion, called a "type-narrative," requires specific detection criteria, different from those for micro-allusions like quotations. This study has demonstrated how macro-allusions work by showing how Elisha exhibits Mosaic characteristics while literarily mirroring Elijah. A similar analysis was applied in detail to John 1–11 and suggests that Jesus exhibits Mosaic traits but aligns more closely with Elisha's miracles than with those of any other prophet, including Moses and Elijah. It is not suggested that Elisha is the hidden key to John's Gospel, but rather an important, inconspicuous, interpretive layer.

Biblical Studies

In evaluating probable allusions to Elisha in John's Gospel, each sign was graded. All seven signs were judged to be at least {C} possible. Signs 2, 4, and 6 were rated {A} highly probable. This study proposes the idea that John's conflated allusions to Elisha, such as the healing of the nobleman's son (John 4:46–54), which alludes to both the resurrection of the Shunammite's son (2 Kgs. 4:18–37) and the healing of Naaman's leprosy (2 Kgs. 5:1–14), play a significant but overlooked role. When scholars do posit a Johannine allusion to Elisha, it tends to be an allusion that is a point-for-point narrative analogy like Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 with Elisha's feeding miracle (John 6:1–14; 2

Kgs. 4:42–44), i.e., a single text alluding to a single text.[497] What this study has shown is that contemporary with John's Gospel there was a common practice of macro-level conflation in which an author would paint the background of his narrative with noticeable colors from multiple texts. Biblical studies have explored the use of conflated quotations at the micro-level,[498] but exploring NT macro-level conflations at the episodic or narrative level is essentially uncharted territory.

By not explicitly naming Elisha, John also adheres to standard literary practices of his day, as seen not only in pagan texts like Virgil's *Aeneid* and intertestamental Jewish texts but also in the Elisha cycle itself, for the names Moses and Joshua do not explicitly appear anywhere in the Elijah and Elisha narratives.

This study has emphasized the Jewishness of John's Gospel. As clearly as Virgil pledges his allegiance to the Greco-Roman canon from his opening lines, John does the same but to the Hebrew Scriptures. If echoes of Greco-Roman myth lay behind John's Jesus, the biblical echoes drown out the sound to the point where one wonders if whispers of Homer or Euripides are there at all, even as a Christian polemic against them.

This study has also shown that the Johannine miracles which have no counterpart in the Synoptics (e.g., John 2–4 and the raising of Lazarus in John 11) tend to be material that corresponds closely with Elisha. Even when John shares episodes with the Synoptics, his omission and inclusion of details often result in a closer similarity to Elisha's

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[497] The other primary allusion to Elisha is the healing of the man born blind (John 9:1–7) with the healing of Naaman (2 Kgs. 5); however, this study has argued that John 9:1–7 conflates both the Shunammite son's resurrection (2 Kgs. 4:18–37) and Gehazi's healing.

[498] An instance of this can be seen with Virgil's opening lines of the *Aeneid*, which conflate the opening lines of both Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (see pages 14–15). A famous biblical example is Mark 1:2–3, which conflates Isa. 40:3, Mal. 3:1, and perhaps Exod. 23:20 (see Blomberg, *Matthew*, 409). John routinely conflates Scripture quotations, as shown in Goodwin, "How Did John Treat His Sources?," 67–68.

narratives. The reason for John's distinctive selection and arrangement of material that differs from the Synoptics may simply be a purposeful alignment with the Elisha cycle. This suggestion, though radically out-of-step with current scholarship, is plausible if the evidence in this study is solid.

Biblical Theology

Peeling back the Elisha allusions in John does not reveal secret hidden knowledge but a deeper emphasis on John's message. Each comparison between Jesus and Elisha shows enough similarity to suggest a connection with Israel's heroes and enough contrast to highlight Jesus' superiority. Jesus does not just multiply bread like Elisha; he *is* the bread of life. He does not just perform water and resurrection miracles; he *is* the living water and the resurrection (11:25–26). While Elisha is called the "man of God" more than anyone else, this title pales next to Jesus' title, the "Son of God." While a book like Hebrews *declares* that Jesus is better, the Gospel of John *demonstrates* it in story form.

From John's prologue, readers are told that Jesus is far greater than any prophet. Jesus is superior in quality and quantity to the prophets before him.[499] As *the* prophet, "Jesus is greater than any or all of them but not comprehensible apart from them."[500] It takes the characters in the story a long time to move beyond seeing Jesus as prophet (1:45, 4:19, 7:40, 9:17) to Thomas's declaration, "My Lord and my God!" (20:28). It is this declaration that John desires for all his readers (20:29).[501]

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[499] Dubovský, "From Miracle-Makers," 24–42, 39.

[500] D. Moody Smith, "Johannine Studies since Bultmann," *W&W* 21, no. 4 (2001): 350.

[501] Karakolis, "Is Jesus a Prophet," 129, 138.

Recommendations for Further Study

The nature of this thesis demanded a focus on specific aspects of John's Gospel, leaving many promising avenues of research unexplored.

First, studies on the history of interpretation concerning Elisha are underdeveloped and would benefit from a comprehensive survey of biblical, intertestamental, early Jewish, patristic, and rabbinic perspectives.[502]

Another area for future study is the possible role of intertextuality in the formation of the NT canon. For example, would John's Gospel have been canonized without its OT allusions anchoring Jesus to Israel's Scriptures? This question, exploring how intertextuality influenced canonization, remains largely unexplored.

Finally, from an evangelical perspective, this study's narrow focus on the literary aspect of John's allusions to Elisha calls for a counterpoint exploration of the role of divine inspiration in the process. I have sought to show how John repeatedly alludes to Elisha and that these allusions contribute to the theology of the book. What I have not focused on is God's role in John's literary process or how conscious John was of these allusions. The Spirit's guiding hand—directing John's writing and all of history leading up to it—cannot be captured in tables, parallel columns, or lexical studies. Christian theology affirms the dual nature of inspiration—God's authorial superintendence alongside human creativity and personality. I have emphasized the human creative side, but the theologian's task is incomplete until he examines the other side of the coin.

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[502] Reception history treatments on Elijah abound and eclipse those on Elisha.

Appendix A — Indicators

	Indicator	Description	Justification
1	Accessibility	A text must be in existence and accessible for an author to reference it. Accessibility is the non-negotiable criterion.	Without authorial access to the source material, an allusion cannot be intentional.
2	Awareness	Awareness of the pre-text by the author, reader, narrator, and characters.	The case for an intentional allusion is strengthened if the author and audience are aware of the pre-text.
3	Initial Link	The establishment of a link early and clearly within the text.	An early activation trigger invites readers to compare texts, signaling an intertextual avenue worth exploring.
3.1	Geographic Links	Shared geography between texts can signal an intentional connection.	Distinctive locations or descriptions can strengthen the case for a deliberate allusion.
4	Similar Attributes		
4.1	Shared Language	Shared language between texts is a strong indicator of intentional intertextuality.	Verbatim or semantic matches provide concrete evidence of literary resemblance.
4.2	Shared Action	Shared actions or narrative movements between texts.	Specific actions recall specific stories, and a sequence of actions can indicate intentional parallels.
4.3	Similar Text Length	The length of the comparative texts.	Longer texts have a higher chance of analogous actions, while shorter texts make similarities more significant.
4.4	Shared Sequence	Analogous details in a shared order.	Shared sequential order is difficult to achieve without intentionality.

4.5	Shared Theme	Shared themes between texts.	Thematic similarity supports the likelihood of intentional intertextuality, while dissonant themes can counter it.
5	Uniqueness	Unique elements shared between texts.	Unique similarities provide a stronger indication of intentional intertextuality.
6	Pattern of Dependence	Frequent references to other works by the author.	A pattern of dependence on other texts supports the argument for intentional allusion.
7	Intelligibility of the Differences	Key deviations between parallel episodes.	Differences can highlight one character's superiority or unique aspects of the new text.
8	Omissions	Intentional omissions of certain details.	Omissions can indicate a deliberate alignment with a specific intertextual connection.
9	Narrative Coherence	Coherence and satisfaction in the narrative.	The overall narrative must be cohesive and satisfy the reader's expectations based on the allusion.
10	Reception History	Reception history helps validate and enhance allusions.	Unique contributions should be scrutinized if they lack historical support.
	Probability Judgments	Evaluating the likelihood of similarities between texts being intentional.	The more unique matches, the greater the chance of intentionality.

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