

## **THE "PURITY" OF THE DISCIPLES IN JOHN 13:10-11 AND 15:2-3**

**Mavis M. Leung**

Evangel Seminary, Hong Kong

### **I. Introduction**

In his 2007 essay "The Holiness of Jesus and His Disciples in the Gospel of John," Richard Bauckham examined the theme of "holiness" in the Fourth Gospel and its implications for Johannine ecclesiology and Christology.<sup>1</sup> Bauckham's essay has not only shed light on this crucial but often-neglected theme in the Gospel, but also rightly emphasized its ecclesiological connection in Johannine thinking. However, there is an area related to the concept of "holiness" that Bauckham did not adequately address in his essay, namely the "purity" of the disciples in John 13:10-11 and 15:2-3. While the Fourth

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Bauckham, "The Holiness of Jesus and His Disciples in the Gospel of John," in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, ed. Kent E. Brower and Andy Johnson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 95-113.

Gospel consists of only several occurrences of purity and purification terminology,<sup>2</sup> Jesus affirms to his disciples (save Judas) that they are "clean/pure" at two key places in the Gospel narrative. This motif concerning the disciples' purity surfaces first in the footwashing episode in 13:1-32 (vv. 10-11) and subsequently in the vine-branches discourse in 15:1-17 (vv. 2-3). Many scholars note that the two cognate terms καθαρός (13:10-11; 15:3) and καθαίρω (15:2) connote the symbolic sense of spiritual purification, aside from the meaning of physical cleansing or agricultural pruning (cf. 15:2).<sup>3</sup> In the remainder of this paper, we will first briefly discuss the concept of the "purity" of Israel in Jewish thinking and elucidate our approach to this concept. Next we will examine the Johannine motif of the disciples' purity in John 13 and 15 against this Jewish background and within the Gospel's narrative contexts. It will emerge from this examination that John relates the disciples' purity, procured through Jesus' death and his revelatory word, to both their status and mission as the people of God. In the evangelist's belief, the spiritual purgation of the disciples not only entitles them to gain admittance to the covenant community but also calls for their commitment to this community's mission in the world.

## II. The Concept of "Purity" in Jewish Thinking

In our discussion about the concept of "purity," we will follow Jonathan Klawans and other scholars in distinguishing the notion of

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<sup>2</sup> In the Fourth Gospel, purity or purification terms include καθαρισμός (Jn 2:6; 3:25), καθαρός (Jn 13:10, 11; 15:3), and καθαίρω (Jn 15:2). Note also the use of μαιώνω in John 18:28.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 406; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1966; repr., 1982), 2:558.

moral purity from that of ritual purity.<sup>4</sup> Transgressions and misdeeds have the capacity of producing defilement that morally taints the sinner, the sanctuary, and the land in which the wrongdoing is perpetrated.<sup>5</sup> A person can attain ritual purity through ceremonial rites had s/he been polluted due to contact with corpses, certain diseases, childbirth, and other sources. A person cannot, however, obtain moral purity through ritual performances. Subsequent discussion of the Johannine "purity" motif will concentrate on the notion of moral purity, which pertains to the absence or amelioration of sin and cannot be procured through ritual performances. Though intertwined in Jewish thought, the notion of purity is distinct from the notion of holiness, which is an innate attribute of God and may in a derivative sense refer to someone or something set apart for God or his service. Since the notion of sanctity involves purity and the holy is incongruous with anything impure, one must be in a morally and ritually clean state in order to enter the presence of the holy God.<sup>6</sup>

This relation between purity and sanctity undergirds the rationale behind the OT purity laws with which the Israelites, Yahweh's

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<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). Klawans' purity/impurity taxonomy is adopted in Susan Haber, "Common Judaism, Common Synagogue? Purity, Holiness, and Sacred Space at the Turn of the Common Era," in *Common Judaism: Explorations in Second-Temple Judaism*, ed. Wayne O. McCready and Adele Reinhartz (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008), 63-77; Bradley Embry, "The *Psalms of Solomon* and the New Testament: Intertextuality and the Need for a Re-Evaluation," *JSP* 13 (2002): 93-136.

<sup>5</sup> See Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*, 21-42; Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Pollution, Purification and Purgation in Biblical Israel," in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: Essays in Honour of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Carol L. Meyers and Murphy O'Connor (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 399-414 (esp. 404).

<sup>6</sup> For the Jewish concepts of purity and holiness, see Jacob Milgrom, "The Dynamics of Purity in the Priestly System," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. Marcel Poorthuis and Joshua Schwartz (Leiden/Boston: E. J. Brill, 2000), 29-32; Baruch J. Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," in *Purity and Holiness*, ed. Poorthuis and Schwartz, 47-59; Jan Joosten, *People and Land in the Holiness Code: An Exegetical Study of the Ideational Framework of the Law in Leviticus 17-26* (Leiden/New York/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1996), 123-24.

covenant people, are admonished to comply. As declared in Exodus 19:6, Yahweh has chosen the Israelites from among the nations in order that they will become for him "a kingdom of priests" and "a holy nation." Thus the Israelites must avoid sin and impurities and safeguard purity, which is necessary for maintaining sanctity and preventing God's presence from leaving them.<sup>7</sup> In several prophetic writings, the renewal of God's covenant with his people hinges upon the divine cleansing of Israel and/or its land or temple from sin. The oracle of Ezekiel 36:24-32 (cf. Eze 36:33; 37:23, 26-28) presages the Spirit's rejuvenating work among the Israelites, their purification by "clean water," and the consequent reinstatement of Israel's relationship with Yahweh. As envisaged in Zechariah 14:20-21, the eschatological era will be marked by universal sanctity in Jerusalem where the distinction between holy and profane will become null.<sup>8</sup> This text does not employ the word "covenant," but the vision is set against the implicit covenant backdrop of the eschatological Tabernacles whose festal origin can be traced back to Israel's deliverance from Egypt to be the people of Yahweh. Moreover, this vision concerning Israel's eschatological holiness harks back to the vision of Zechariah 13:1-2, which anticipates the eschatological cleansing of the Jerusalemites and the removal of all impurities from the Jewish land. These prophetic texts are especially relevant to our study, because the Fourth Gospel probably seeks to summon the future hopes of Ezekiel 36:25-27 and Zechariah 14:21.<sup>9</sup> In all likelihood the evangelist is familiar with the

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<sup>7</sup> Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7-8, 26; 22:16, 32; Dt 7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:18-19; 28:9.

<sup>8</sup> See Steven M. Bryan, *Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgment and Restoration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 153-54; David L. Peterson, *Zechariah 9-14 and Malachi* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 159-60.

<sup>9</sup> In Jn 3:5, the idea of "birth of water and Spirit" probably draws on Eze 36:25-27. For this allusion, see Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.: Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), 1:551; D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Leicester, England: Apollos; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 195. In 2:16, the depiction of Jesus expelling the

Jewish restoration hope regarding the eschatological purification of Israel, which the prophets aver will lead to Yahweh's renewed presence and covenant with his people.

The fact that "purity was a major preoccupation"<sup>10</sup> in first-century CE Judaism further reinforces the likelihood that the Fourth Gospel is concerned with the constitution of a community pure and holy to God. Such Jewish preoccupation is perceptible in various Second Temple Jewish writings including *Jubilees*,<sup>11</sup> the *Psalms of Solomon*,<sup>12</sup> and certain Qumran scrolls<sup>13</sup> — all of which underline the matters of

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merchants from the temple probably evokes Zec 14:21. For this allusion, see Andrew T. Lincoln, *The Gospel according to Saint John* (London: Continuum; New York: Hendrickson, 2005), 138; C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953; repr. 2005), 300.

<sup>10</sup> James D. G. Dunn, "Jesus and Purity: An Ongoing Debate," *NTS* 48 (2002): 449-67 (450).

<sup>11</sup> For the concepts of purity and holiness in *Jubilees*, see Cana Werman, "The Concept of Holiness and the Requirements of Purity in Second Temple and Tannaic Literature," in *Purity and Holiness*, ed. Poorthuis and Schwartz, 163-79 (169-73). In *Jubilees*, the term "covenant" occurs 27 times and Israel's covenant with God is fundamental to the writing's religious conception. See Jacques van Ruiten, "The Concept of Noah in Jubilees 6.1-38," in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C. R. de Roo (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 167-90.

<sup>12</sup> In the *Psalms of Solomon*, the Abrahamic covenant is mentioned in 9:9-10 (cf. 18:3) and the Sinaitic covenant is mentioned in 10:4. The Davidic covenant holds a crucial place in the seventeenth psalm, in which the royal Messiah acts as God's vehicle in "purifying/consecrating" the city, the people, and possibly the temple of Israel (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17:22, 26, 30, 32, 43, 46; cf. 18:5). For the Messiah's cleansing function, see Embry, "The *Psalms of Solomon* and the NT," 109-10; Herbert E. Ryle and Montague R. James, *ΨΑΛΜΟΙ ΣΟΛΟΜΩΝΤΟΣ. Psalms of the Pharisees, Commonly Called the Psalms of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), liii, cf. liv.

<sup>13</sup> For the concepts of purity and holiness at Qumran, see Dwight Swanson, "Holiness in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Priorities of Faith," in Brower and Johnson, *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, 19-39; Florentino G. Martínez and Julio T. Barrera, *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Writings, Beliefs and Practices*, trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden/New York/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995), 139-57. For the concept of covenant at Qumran, see Craig A. Evans, "Covenant in the Qumran Literature," in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Porter and de Roo, 55-80. See also Reed's essay in the same book about the covenant implications of Qumran's food laws, which he emphasizes are related to purity issues. Stephen A. Reed, "The Role of Food as Related to Covenant in Qumran Literature," in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, 129-64.

purity or holiness and associate them with Israel's covenant with God. According to Steven Bryan, the intertextual references in Exodus 23:22 LXX; 2 Maccabees 2:17-18; Jubilees 16:18; 33:19-20 to the key OT covenant text Exodus 19:6 reveal that in first-century CE Judaism "the practice of purity was bound up with hopes for Israel's restoration."<sup>14</sup> Archaeological finds of numerous stone vessels and ritual baths (*miqwa'ot*) in the Jewish habitats lend support to the importance of purity during the Second Temple era.<sup>15</sup> In view of the concern about the purity/holiness of Israel in the biblical and extra-biblical Jewish traditions, it is worth considering that the Johannine "purity" motif is conducive to portraying the disciples as legitimate members of the (new) covenant community.

### **III. The Narrative Setting of the "Purity" Motif**

This section charts the narrative contexts of the motif of the disciples' purity in the footwashing and the vine-branches accounts and particularly highlights the themes in them that are relevant to our investigation.

#### **1. The Setting of John 13:10-11**

The first occurrence of the motif of the disciples' purity is in the footwashing episode (Jn 13:1-30; vv. 10-11), which resides in the context of Jesus' final meal with his disciples during the Passover (v. 1). This annual feast commemorates Yahweh's deliverance of the

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<sup>14</sup> Bryan, *Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgment and Restoration*, 148-56 (153).

<sup>15</sup> Boaz Zissu and David Amit, "Common Judaism, Common Purity, and the Second Temple Period Judean *Miqwa'ot* (Ritual Immersion Baths)," in *Common Judaism*, ed. McCready and Reinhartz, 47-62.

ancient Israelites from Egypt and so has a clear association with the establishment of Israel as Yahweh's chosen people. The opening verses 1-3 accentuate Jesus' foreknowledge of the arrival of his "hour," which in the Fourth Gospel carries "proleptische Deutungen des Todes Jesu" and anticipates his return to the Father through crucifixion (cf. Jn 2:4; 4:21, 23; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1).<sup>16</sup> Verse 2 speaks of Jesus' imminent betrayal by Judas, a perfidious deed orchestrated by Satan. These multiple allusions to the cross at the outset of the footwashing passage implicitly link the theme of the disciples' purity with the death of Jesus.

The main section of this passage, 13:4-30, is divided into two parts. The first part (Jn 13:4-11) recounts the act of Jesus' washing the disciples' feet (vv. 4-5) and his dialogue with Peter (vv. 6-10), followed by the evangelist's post-Easter commentary on this dialogue (v. 11). The second part (Jn 13:12-30) reports Jesus' explication of his washing in exemplary terms (vv. 12-17) and Jesus' prediction of Judas' treason (vv. 18-30). From a literary viewpoint, the importance of the footwashing scene (Jn 13:1-30) within the Gospel narrative is underlined by its strategic location at this narrative's turning point and by its encapsulation of 14 occurrences of the historical present, which collaborate to bring the events of this scene to the fore.<sup>17</sup> Notably, the cluster of eight historical present within verses 4-11 points to the footwashing episode's emphasis on the washing and the conversation between Jesus and Peter. The former is an act of cleansing and the latter refers to the disciples' cleanliness.

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<sup>16</sup> See Jörg Frey, "Die 'theologia crucifixi' des Johannesevangeliums," in *Kreuzestheologie im Neuen Testament*, ed. Andreas Dettwiler and Jean Zumstein (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 2002), 169-238 (197).

<sup>17</sup> Mavis M. Leung, "The Narrative Function and Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present in the Fourth Gospel," *JETS* 51 (2008): 703-20 (esp. 714-16).

In John 13:1, the description of Jesus' disciples as "his own" (τοὺς ἰδίους) probably bears an implicit ecclesiastical overtone. This description recalls the early occurrences of τὰ ἴδια (neuter) and οἱ ἴδιοι (masculine) in John 1:11 in the Gospel's prologue, which speaks of the incarnated Logos coming to "his own (hometown)" but being repudiated by "his own (people)." As asserted in John 1:12, all who receive the Logos and believe in his name are granted admission to God's family and become his "children" (cf. Jn 3:3, 5; 11:52; 1Jn 3:1, 2, 10; 5:2). In OT traditions, Israel is chosen among the nations by Yahweh to be his "treasured possession" (תְּרֻמָּה; cf. Dt 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Ex 19:5; Ps 135:4). The Israelites' privileged status as God's "own" entitles them to enjoy divine sonship as the deity's "children" (e.g., Ex 4:22; Dt 1:31; 8:5; 14:1; 32:5; Jer 31:9 [38:9 LXX]; Hos 11:1). Seen in this biblical light, the contrasting statements in John 1:11-12 may give an initial hint of the evangelist's attempt at reinterpreting membership of God's community. This attempt is also noticeable in the shepherd discourse in John 10:1-21, where the phrase τὰ ἴδια describes the sheep that belong to the shepherd (vv. 3, 4, 12).<sup>18</sup> In the OT and Second Temple Judaism, "sheep" or "flock" is a stock image for expressing Israel's relationship with God, the principal Shepherd of his people.<sup>19</sup> Reading the expression "his own" in John 13:1 in connection with this expression's similar formulations in John 1:11-12 and 10:3-4 (cf. 10:12) yields the logical conclusion that the disciples are God's children and sheep. Thus this expression in the footwashing scene carries on the Johannine theme about the identity of God's people. In the evangelist's treatment, these images (i.e., God's possession, children, and sheep) which denote Israel

<sup>18</sup> Rekha M. Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006), 93.

<sup>19</sup> E.g., Nu 27:17; Ps 74:1 (73:1 LXX); 77:20 (77:21 MT; 76:21 LXX); Jer 23:1; Eze 34:1-31; Mic 2:12; 5:3; Isa 40:11; Zec 9:16; 10:3. *Pss. Sol.* 17:40; CD-B XIX, 7-14.



in the Jewish traditions undergo modification to stand for the multiracial community centered upon Jesus.<sup>20</sup>

Aside from the phrase "his own," the statement οὐκ ἔχεις μέρος μετ' ἐμοῦ ("you has no part with me") in John 13:8 merits notice. This statement is especially germane to our investigation, because it lies in close proximity to the purity motif in John 13:10-11. In the Septuagint, μερίς (a cognate word of μέρος) is the customary rendering of the Hebrew noun קָלִי, which often occurs in conjunction with חֶלֶק to denote the Israelites' territorial allotment in the Promised Land.<sup>21</sup> Widely recognized, "the promise of the eternal possession of the Land" occupies a vital place in both the patriarchal covenant and the prophets' restoration hopes.<sup>22</sup> In the book of Deuteronomy, the noun קָלִי surfaces 8 times (Dt 10:9; 12:12; 14:27, 29; 18:1, 8 [2x]; 32:9) and in each case in the LXX it is translated as μερίς, with the exception of this term's second occurrence in Deut 18:8 (μερίζω in the LXX). Five times in Deuteronomy 10:9; 12:12; 14:27, 29; 18:1, the Levites are described as having no "share" (קָלִי/ μερίς) in the land that God has assured to give to the Israelites. Similar ideas are present in Numbers 18:20; Joshua 14:4; 18:7, all of which refer to Aaron or the Levites inheriting no "share" (קָלִי/ μερίς) in the land.<sup>23</sup> In Joshua

<sup>20</sup> For the universality of John's ecclesiological vision, see Jörg Frey, "Heiden-Greichen-Gooteskinder: Zu Gestalt und Funktion der Rede von den im 4. Evangelium," in *Die Heiden: Juden, Christen und das Problem des Fremden*, ed. R. Feldmeier and U. Heckel (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1994), 249-64.

<sup>21</sup> See Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:565-66. The terms קָלִי and חֶלֶק are juxtaposed in Gen 31:14; Nu 18:20; Dt 10:9; 12:12; 14:27, 29; 18:1-2; 32:9; Jos 18:7; 19:9. These two terms are also connected in 2Sa 20:1; 1 Ki 12:16; 2Ch 10:16; Job 20:29; 27:13; 31:2; Jer 10:16; 51:19 (these references are not directly related to the theme of land).

<sup>22</sup> Betsy Halpern-Amaru, *Rewriting the Bible: Land and Covenant in Post-Biblical Jewish Literature* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1994), 8. Halpern-Amaru emphasizes that "[n]ever ... is the patriarchal covenant presented without some reference to the promise of the Land" (9).

<sup>23</sup> The Levites are given 48 cities to dwell in, but these are not counted as their family properties (cf. Nu 35:1-8; Jos 14:4).

15:13; 18:5, 6; 19:47 LXX; 24:32 LXX,<sup>24</sup> the usage of  $\mu\epsilon\rho\iota\varsigma$  likewise pertains to the Israelites' (not the Levites') divided portions in the Promised Land. The ways in which the evangelist makes use of this theme regarding the "land-share" of God's people will be scrutinized in relation to the purity motif in the ensuing section.

Closely following the footwashing scene, the portrayal of Jesus giving the new command of mutual love to the disciples in John 13:34-35 (cf. Jn 15:12) is reminiscent of the biblical description of Moses giving the Ten Commandments and the law to the Israelites in the context of covenant making on the plains of Horeb and Moab.<sup>25</sup> Several interpreters note that the Johannine "new command" can be compared to the Lukan "new covenant" (Lk 22:20), which summons the promise of Jeremiah 31:31-34.<sup>26</sup> As is often remarked, this command's novelty does not lie in its communal focus but rather in its Christological standard and temporal location in the new era inaugurated by Jesus.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, the newness of the Johannine love command does not cancel out its biblical link with the mandate of Leviticus 19:18 in the Holiness Code in Leviticus 17 — 26. This mandate instructs God's people to exercise neighborly love toward one another and in doing so manifest the divine holiness (cf. Lev 19:2). If the depiction of Jesus giving the new command to the disciples is at least partly modeled on Moses giving the Decalogue to the Israelites, the similarities between the laws in Leviticus 19 (esp. vv. 3-18) and the Ten Commandments increase the probability

<sup>24</sup> In the MT, the noun  $\mu\epsilon\rho\iota\varsigma$  does not occur in Jos 19:48 (19:47 LXX) and 24:32.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Ex 20:1-17; 24:7-8; 34:10-28; Dt 4:13; 5:1-21; 29:1 (28:69 MT). See Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship*, 96; Kostenberger, *John*, 396-97.

<sup>26</sup> Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 484; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:557, 612-14.

<sup>27</sup> Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John*, trans. David Smith and G. A. Kon, 3 vols. (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 3:54.

that the Johannine love command alludes to Leviticus 19:18.<sup>28</sup> This being the case, the three instances of καθάρος in John 13:10-11 take on heightened importance with respect to the notions of covenant and holiness, as this adjective (35x) and its concomitant word ἀκάθαρτος (96x) proliferate in Leviticus LXX and in relation to the mission of God's people to become holy.

## 2. The Setting of John 15:2-3

The second reference to the "purity" of the disciples surfaces in Jesus' symbolic discourse concerning the vine and its branches in John 15:1-17 (vv. 2-3). At the outset of this discourse Jesus refers to himself as "the true vine" of the Father (v. 1; cf. v. 5), who is the vinedresser. As revealed in verse 5, the branches of the vine represent the disciples, who must incessantly remain in Jesus (i.e., "the true vine") in order to become fruitful. In John 15:13, the cross motif is adeptly brought into play in the proverbial saying about one's "laying down" (τίθημι) one's life for one's friends. This Greek verb has occurred in John 13:4 (cf. 10:11, 15, 17, 18) in the footwashing scene in regard to Jesus "laying down" his garments in preparation for the footwashing, a parabolic act that is proleptic of Jesus' death. The re-emergence of this word (Jn 15:13) pertaining to the cross not only recollects this act of cleansing but also creates a linkage between the footwashing and the vine-branches accounts. Notably, both accounts explicitly affirm that the disciples are clean.

At the onset of the vine-branches discourse, Jesus' self-reference as "the true vine" conjures up the rich biblical traditions regarding

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<sup>28</sup> The similarities between Leviticus 19 and the Decalogue is noted in Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, *Leviticus* (Nottingham: Apollos; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007), 345-47; Mark F. Rooker, *Leviticus* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 250-52 (see p. 252 for a list of the thematic parallels).

Israel as God's vine or vineyard (e.g., Ps 80:8 [79:9 LXX]; Jer 2:21; 6:9; 12:10-13; Eze 15:1-8; 17:5-10; 19:10-14; Isa 5:1-7; 27:2-6; Hos 10:1-2).<sup>29</sup> The adjective ἀληθινός implicitly sets up a contrast between Jesus and Israel by suggesting that only Jesus is the Father's legitimate vine.<sup>30</sup> By contrast to the Johannine vine portrayal, most of the above-mentioned OT vine-and-vineyard references (Isa 27 excluded) are lodged in the context of the prophetic arraignment of Israel's apostasy and unfruitfulness. In particular, the vine imagery of Ezekiel 17:5-10 concerns the prophetic impeachment of God's people despising his oath and breaking the "covenant" with him (vv. 18-19). In Psalm 80 (79 LXX), Israel is described as the vine that Yahweh has brought out of Egypt and planted in the land (vv. 8-9 [vv. 9-10 MT; 79:9-10 LXX]). This description associates the vine symbol with the Exodus, the foundational event in Jewish history that underpins Israel's self-perception as God's chosen people. It is likely that "vine" had become a national emblem of Israel by the end of the first century CE, in view of the image of a golden vine used to adorn the temple (cf. Ant. 15.395) and the vine-pertinent symbols on the coins minted during the two Jewish revolts (66-70 CE, 132-135 CE).<sup>31</sup> All these suggest that akin to the phrase "his own" at the opening of the footwashing passage, the symbolic designation of Jesus as "the true vine" at the outset of the vine-branches discourse has the ecclesial implication that the disciples (in Jesus) take on Israel's role as the people of God. Yet the vine image's use is unique in its appropriation of a biblical token

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<sup>29</sup> For the OT background of the Johannine vine symbol, see Alan R. Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus' Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 342-45; Kristen Nielsen, "Old Testament Imagery in John," in *New Readings in John: Literary and Theological Perspectives*, ed. Johannes Nissen and Sigfred Pedersen (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 66-82 (72-76).

<sup>30</sup> In Jn 1:9, the Logos is described as "the true light." In Jn 6:32, Jesus refers to himself as "the true bread from heaven." The adjective ἀληθινός also occurs in Jn 4:32 and 8:16.

<sup>31</sup> Martin Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 315. Cf. the use of the vine symbol in reference to Israel in 4 Ezra 5:23 and Lev. Rab. 36:2. In 2 Baruch 39-40, the Messiah is depicted as a thriving vine.

of Israel to Jesus instead of the disciples, thus evincing clearly that the formation of this people is grounded in the person and work of Jesus.

Several characteristics of the relationship between Jesus and the disciples as portrayed in the vine-branches pericope in John 15 are redolent of the Yahweh-Israel relationship in the OT. For the present purpose a glimpse of three such characteristics is sufficient. First, the disciples must "abide in" (μένω ἐν) Jesus.<sup>32</sup> Just as the branches of a vine have to "abide in" it in order to sustain their lives and produce fruits, the disciples must "abide in" Jesus (vv. 4, 5, 6, 7) and his love (v. 9) and let his words "abide in" them in order to bear fruit and glorify God (vv. 4, 8, 16). The expression μένω ἐν, which occurs 9 times in John 15:1-17 concerning the Jesus-disciples relationship,<sup>33</sup> resembles the formulations μένειν ἐν and εἶναι ἐν that are applied to the restored Yahweh-Israel covenant relationship as envisioned in Jeremiah 38 LXX (31 MT/Eng.) and Ezekiel 36 LXX.<sup>34</sup> This expression may also resonate with the biblical directive given to Israel to "cleave to" (קָרַב) Yahweh within the setting of covenant-institution or -renewal (cf. Dt 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:20; Jos 22:5; 23:8).<sup>35</sup> Second, the theme of the disciples' "election" (ἐκλέγομαι) by Jesus in John 15:16 may correspond to the idea of Israel's "election"

<sup>32</sup> For the motif of "abide in" in the Fourth Gospel, see Fernando F. Segovia, *The Farewell of the Word: The Johannine Call to Abide* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 140-53.

<sup>33</sup> The expression μένω ἐν occurs 10 times in Jn 15:1-17—nine times this expression describes the mutual indwelling of Jesus and the disciples (vv. 4 [3x], 5, 6, 7 [2x], 9, 10a) and once it refers to the relationship between Jesus and the Father (v. 10b). The term μένω in John 15:16 is not accompanied by קָרַב and does not directly pertain to the Jesus-disciples relationship.

<sup>34</sup> Edward Malatesta, *Interiority and Covenant: A Study of εἶναι ἐν and μένειν ἐν in the First Letter of Saint John* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 42-77.

<sup>35</sup> For this possible resonance, see T. Francis Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel* (London: SCM, 1963), 76. In some OT passages (e.g. Dt 11:22; 13:3-4; 30:20; Jos 22:5), the themes of cleaving to Yahweh, loving him, and obeying his laws are interlaced. All of these three themes are present in the vine-branches discourse.

by Yahweh.<sup>36</sup> Similar to the Israelites' election which wholly stems from God's love for them (Dt 7:7-8), the disciples' election is not based on merits but utterly on Jesus' love for them (Jn 15:13). Third, the twin commands of love and obedience given to the disciples can be compared to the basic obligations of Israel as the chosen people of God.<sup>37</sup> In the vine-branches discourse, the disciples are exhorted to abide in Jesus' love (Jn 15:9) and to love one another (Jn 15:12, 17; cf. 13:34-35). The disciples must demonstrate their love for Jesus by obeying his directives (Jn 15:9-17; cf. 14:15, 21, 23), just as Jesus loves the Father and does what he commands (cf. 8:55; 14:31). In a number of OT covenant texts, Israel is admonished to "love" Yahweh their God (e.g., Dt 6:5; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 19:9; Ex 20:6; Jos 22:5; 23:11) and the love mandate is frequently juxtaposed with the command of obeying the divine decrees (e.g., Dt 5:10; 7:9; 11:1, 13; 19:9; Jos 22:5).<sup>38</sup> While the Johannine verb τηρέω for "keeping" Jesus' commands (Jn 15:10) is missing from Deuteronomy LXX, the verb φυλάσσω in it (55x) apropos Israel "keeping" God's commands is functionally akin to this Johannine term.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. Jn 6:70; 13:18; 15:19; Mk 13:30; Lk 6:13; Ac 1:2. In the LXX and especially in Deuteronomy, the cognate verb ἐκλέγω often occurs to describe Yahweh "choosing" Israel among the nations to be his people (e.g., Dt 4:37; 7:6-8; 10:14-15; 14:2; 21:5 [concerning the priests]). See Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship*, 118; Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land*, 266-70.

<sup>37</sup> Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship*, 116-18; John W. Pryor, *John: Evangelist of the Covenant People* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992), 161-63.

<sup>38</sup> Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land*, 257-60; Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel*, 75.

<sup>39</sup> Pryor, *John*, 161-62.

## IV. The "Purity" of the Disciples in John 13:10-11 and 15:2-3

### 1. The "Purity" Motif in John 13:10-11

In the footwashing episode, the adjective καθαρός ("clean/pure") occurs three times in verses 10-11 with respect to the purity of the disciples. The first time this term appears is in the statement of John 13:10a, which is part of Jesus' reply to Peter who has misapprehended his saying in John 13:8-9. This statement compares a "bath" (λούω) with a "(partial) washing" (νίπτω) and avers that one who has taken a bath needs only to wash the feet, as s/he is "wholly clean" (καθαρός ὅλος).<sup>40</sup> The adjective καθαρός ("clean/pure") makes its second appearance again in the mouth of Jesus in John 13:10b. The employment of second person plural forms adroitly broadens the addressee from Peter to the disciples, whom Jesus pronounces "clean." The ἀλλά-clause in John 13:10b, however, qualifies the referent of this pronouncement by revealing that not all the disciples belong to the purified community of Jesus. The word καθαρός ("clean/pure") occurs for the third time in John 13:11 in the footwashing pericope. This occurrence falls in the evangelist's post-Easter commentary on Jesus' speech in verse 10b. The commentary underscores Jesus' foreknowledge of the identity of the would-be traitor (cf. Jn 13:2) and further attributes the idea of uncleanness to him. Thus the Johannine aside in John 13:11 points forward to Judas' departure from the supper room in John 13:30 and his parting from the band of Jesus' disciples — now a "purified" community devoid of the "impure" member.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The speech of Jesus alludes to the ancient custom that one who has taken a bath would still have had to wash the feet after travelling on a grubby road. The verb λούω occurs only in 13:10 in the Fourth Gospel. The verb νίπτω surfaces a total of 13 times in John 9 and 13 and is consistently used to describe a partial washing of the body (9:7 [2x], 11 [2x], 15; 13:5, 6, 8 [2x], 10, 12, 14 [2x]).

<sup>41</sup> Köstenberger, *John*, 398 (referring to the comment of B. F. Westcott).

Two issues regarding the purity theme in 13:10-11 are relevant to this study. The first concerns whether or not the footwashing has a purifying efficacy. Assuming the longer reading of John 13:10 (i.e., "except the feet" included),<sup>42</sup> the two verbs λούω and νίπτω in this verse portray a complete and a partial washing of the body respectively. The exegetical difficulty arises in Jesus' declaration that full cleanliness results from a complete bath rather than from a footwashing. This declaration seemingly implies that the footwashing is inconsequential and unnecessary for acquisition of purity. If so, this declaration is at variance with the prior statement of John 13:8-9, which attaches a weighty significance to the footwashing.

Several interpreters attempt to resolve this exegetical difficulty by reading Jesus' elucidation of his footwashing in John 13:12-17 back to the portrayal of this act in John 13:3-11, and conclude that the footwashing's import is nothing more than a moral lesson about humble service.<sup>43</sup> Yet this attempt is less than satisfactory, because it goes against the assertion of John 13:8 regarding the footwashing's soteriological effect. Some other scholars consider the "bath" to be signifying the Christian sacrament of baptism, which

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<sup>42</sup> The phrase εἰ μὴ τοὺς πόδας ("except the feet") is missing from  $\aleph$ , the Old Latin manuscripts *aur* and *c*, *vg<sup>st</sup>*, and the text of Origen (as ascertained from his commentary). Although the shorter reading has earned some scholars' support (e.g., Moloney, Brown, and Bultmann), the longer reading is adopted in this study because of its stronger external evidence (B C\* L W  $\Psi$  f<sup>13</sup> 892 it *vg<sup>cl</sup>* *sy<sup>h</sup>* Or<sup>txt</sup>). Scholars who adopt the longer reading include Keener, Carson, and Thomas. See Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:909 n. 126; Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 378-79; Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 464-66; Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, 2:567-68; Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, trans. George R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), 469-70 n. 2. For a discussion of the textual variants of 13:10, see John C. Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991; repr., 1993), 19-25.

<sup>43</sup> E.g., Marie-Joseph Lagrange, *Évangile selon Saint Jean* (Paris: Gabalda, 1936), 348-59; J. H. Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), 2:454-69.



bears the emblematical gist of spiritual cleansing.<sup>44</sup> In this view, the necessity of "washing" the feet after a complete bath is due to post-baptismal sins. While a sacramental reading is viable, its attractiveness is subverted by the dearth of unequivocal examples of the use of "water" to symbolize Christian baptism elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel (cf. Jn 7:38; 19:34). Furthermore the construal of footwashing as prefiguring Jesus' death can adequately explain Jesus' utterance in John 13:10, without making recourse to the baptismal rite. It is very likely that this utterance is meant to be a general statement to give insight to Peter,<sup>45</sup> who has objected to Jesus washing his feet (Jn 13:6-8a) and failed to grasp the thrust of this washing (Jn 13:8b-9). In John 13:10, the one who has taken a bath is wholly clean on account of Jesus' death, to which the footwashing ultimately points. Thus at the metaphorical level "one who has taken a bath" in John 13:10 is tantamount to "one who has the feet washed by Jesus" in John 13:8; both in a proleptic sense stand for one who has been purged from sin (which produces moral impurity) through Jesus' crucifixion. In John 13:10, a person's need of washing the feet after taking a bath probably stems from his or her post-conversion sins, which require ongoing forgiveness. To put the point succinctly, the purification of the disciples is one result of Jesus' death, which is symbolized by his humble service of footwashing. This link between footwashing and purification suggests that the disciples' cleanliness (Jn 13:10-11) has something to do with their procuring a μέρος with Jesus (Jn 13:8). This brings the discussion to the purity-μέρος connection.

The second issue relating to the present investigation is the purity-μέρος connection in John 13:8-11. We noted earlier that in the

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<sup>44</sup> E.g., Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, 375; Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community*, 100-106.

<sup>45</sup> Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3:21.

LXX the cognate word (μερίς) of the term μέρος ("share"; v. 8) often occurs in reference to Israel' land-inheritance. Notably, the Johannine use of μέρος in the footwashing passage does not pertain to a land but rather to a participation in Jesus' destiny. Such use is analogous to the Hebrew phrase לְקַח חֵלֶק (עם), which in a number of OT texts means "to have a share with a person in something " (e.g., 2Sa 20:1; Isa 57:6; Ps 49:18).<sup>46</sup> Of special importance are the references in Numbers 18:20 and Joshua 18:7 to the Levites obtaining no "share" (קְלִיב/מֵרִיצ) in the land but having God as their inheritance and "share" (קְלִיב/מֵרִיצ; but הַלְּחֵם in Jos 18:7b MT):<sup>47</sup>

"Yahweh said to Aaron, 'You will not inherit [קְלִיב/κληρονομέω] in their land, nor will you have any share [קְלִיב/μῆρίς] among them. I am your share [קְלִיב/μῆρίς] and your inheritance [הַלְּחֵם/κληρονομία] among the Israelites.'" (Nu 18:20)

"The Levites have no share [קְלִיב/μῆρίς] among you, because the priesthood of Yahweh is their inheritance/share [הַלְּחֵם/μῆρίς]." (Jos 18:7)

The idea that one may have a "share" with God is also present in Joshua 22:25 and 27, though it is expressed in the negative formulation "You have no share [קְלִיב/μῆρίς] in the Lord" in the rejoinders of the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh to the emissaries sent by the other nine and a half tribes. Unlike the Levites, the eastern tribes have family properties in the land on the other side of River Jordan. In line with the OT concept vis-à-vis the Levites' covenant heritage, what the disciples will gain as a result of their

<sup>46</sup> Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 468 n. 6. In the LXX, the word μερίς occurs in 2Sa 20:1; Isa 57:6; Ps 49:18.

<sup>47</sup> In Dt 10:9 and 18:1-2, Yahweh is the "inheritance" (הַלְּחֵם/κληρονομία) of the Levites.

relationship with Jesus is not a property in the terrain of Palestine but a μέρος ("share") with him. Yet in divergence from this OT concept, the Johannine μέρος ("share") is not the privilege of only a limited group of the community but rather of the whole community. In the evangelist's belief, one can acquire one's heritage only through Jesus' death, which effects spiritual cleansing and makes one (morally) pure accordingly. Given that the impure is barred from entering the realm of sanctity, this cleansing is necessary for one to have a "share" with Jesus, "the Holy One of God" (Jn 6:69).

What is the μέρος ("share") that the disciples will partake with Jesus? In view of Jesus' promise of preparing a "place" for the disciples in the Father's house (Jn 14:3; cf. 12:26; 17:24), this "share" most likely involves the participation in Jesus' eschatological presence (cf. Lk 15:12; Mt 24:51; Rev 20:6).<sup>48</sup> In addition, it probably has a present aspect regarding the disciples' participation in Jesus' mission in post-Easter times. This consideration of μέρος ("share") accords well with the overarching purpose of Jesus' farewell speeches, which seek to prepare the disciples for carrying on Jesus' work in the hostile world upon his return to the Father. It is also espoused by the use of μέρος/μερίς in regard to one's solidarity with another person in several contemporaneous Greek texts (e.g., Epistle to Polycarp; Mart. Pol. 14:2).<sup>49</sup> Thus the Johannine purity motif in John 13:10-11 pertains not only to the disciples' right of entry into God's community but also

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<sup>48</sup> George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 234, 249-50; Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3:19.

<sup>49</sup> In *Epistle to Polycarp*, Ignatius declares that he desires to have a "share" (μέρος) with other faithful Christians and together they will "labor with one another," "struggle together," "run together," "suffer together," "rest together," and "rise up together." In *Mart. Pol.* 14:2, Polycarp gives thanks to God for granting him the privilege of having a "share" (μέρος) with other martyrs, who have given up their lives for Chris's sake. This usage refers specifically to the believers partaking in suffering together. See Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community*, 93.

to their taking up of this community's mission in the world. The latter notion is more conspicuous in the purity motif's usage in the vine-branches discourse, to which the next section turns.

## 2. The "Purity" Motif in John 15:2-3

Jesus' symbolic discourse concerning the vine-branches in John 15:1-17 contains two purity terms. The first is the verb καθαίρω in verse 2b within the context of an agricultural metaphor; the second is the adjective καθαρός in verse 3 within the context of a direct statement about the disciples' status. Located at the beginning part of the vine-branches passage, this dual affirmation of the purity of the disciples in John 15:2-3 gives underlying substance to the subsequent articulation of the disciples' relationship with Jesus.

Scholarship concurs that the verb καθαίρω in the present setting carries a double entendre with respect to the "pruning" of the fruitful branches as well as the "cleansing" of the disciples, who are symbolized by the branches (v. 5).<sup>50</sup> In the NT, the word καθαίρω is a *hapax legomenon* and surfaces only once in John 15:2 (cf. καθαρίζω in 1Jn 1:7-9). Since καθαίρω is not the most usual wording in viticulture,<sup>51</sup> the Johannine employment of this verb probably seeks to bring into play the notion of purification, which is overtly mentioned, in verse 3. Two opposite portrayals are presented in John 15:2a and 15:2b respectively: (1) the Father "removes" the unproductive branches but (2) he "prunes/cleanses" the productive branches in order that they may bear more fruit. The idea about the Father's cleansing

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<sup>50</sup> See, e.g., Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 594-95; C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 2d ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), 473-74.

<sup>51</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:996.

activity among the disciples does not contradict the prior assertion in John 13 that their purification is achieved through Jesus' death, as he is "one" with the Father (Jn 10:30). In light of the biblical description of Israel as God's (unfruitful) vine/vineyard, the Johannine depiction of the disciples as the true vine's fruitful branches suggests that they take on the mission of Israel as God's people to bring forth "fruit" for his glory.

The thematic connection between "purity" and "fruitfulness" in John 15:2 deserves attention. Of the ten occurrences of the term καρπός ("fruit") in the Fourth Gospel (Jn 4:36; 12:24; 15:2 [3x], 4, 5, 8, 16 [2x]), eight are in the vine-branches passage and three of them cluster within the single verse 15:2. As the ἵνα-clause indicates, the purpose or result of the Father's pruning or purifying work is that the branches (i.e., the disciples) will "bear more fruit." The linkage between fruitfulness and discipleship strengthens in Jesus' subsequent speeches to the disciples in John 15:5, 8, and 16. In verse 5, Jesus tells the disciples that they will "bear much fruit" if they abide in him. In verse 8, the disciples will bring glory to the Father by "bearing much fruit." In verse 16, the disciples are exhorted to go and "bear fruit" that endures.<sup>52</sup> It must be remembered that all these statements about fruitfulness and discipleship presuppose the *purity/purification* of the disciples as asserted in John 15:2-3, where the divine purgation will lead to abundant fruits in the lives of the disciples (v. 2). Moreover, the sundry expressions of "bearing (much) fruit" in the vine-branches discourse echo the aphorism in Jesus' speech vis-à-vis a seed dying in order to "bear much fruit" in John 12:24. Following the announcement in John 12:23 as to the "hour" of the glorification of the Son of Man, this aphorism figuratively speaks of Jesus' death which will bring forth

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<sup>52</sup> See Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples according to the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 133.

"fruit." All these parallel formulations regarding fruitfulness suggest that the disciples, purified as they are, will walk in the footsteps of Jesus and carry on his "fruitbearing" mission upon his crucifixion. The disciples have already been sent by Jesus to "gather fruit" (Jn 4:36; cf. 4:38), which probably stands for new converts in the setting of John 4, and the disciples will continue to participate in this work after Jesus' departure from the world. The idea of the (purified) disciples partaking in something with Jesus after his death recalls the assertion of 13:8 that they will have a μέρος ("share") in Jesus as an outcome of the cleansing through the footwashing, i.e., Jesus' death.

The connection of the "purity" motif with "mission" is in keeping with the theme of the holiness of the disciples in Jesus' final prayer in John 17, where this theme's dual occurrences in verse 17 and verse 19 encircle the critical statements in verse 18 of the holy Father (cf. v. 11) "sending" Jesus into the world and Jesus "sending" the disciples into the world (cf. vv. 21, 23).<sup>53</sup> These twin references to the disciples' holiness, formulated in terms of ἀγιάζω ἐν (τῇ) ἀληθείᾳ ("sanctified by [the] truth"), at the opening of John 17:17 and at the closing of John 17:19 form an inclusio in framing the important sending motif. The corollary is that the identity of the disciples as God's holy people is inseparable from their mission as the sent ones.<sup>54</sup> As Bauckham emphasizes, "just as the Father has consecrated Jesus for his mission in the world, so the Father will consecrate the disciples for their mission in the world."<sup>55</sup> The prepositional phrase ἐν (τῇ) ἀληθείᾳ in John 17:17 and 17:19 reveals that the means by which the disciples attain holiness is (the) truth, which is God's "word" (λόγος) according to

<sup>53</sup> Bauckham, "The Holiness of Jesus and His Disciples in the Gospel of John," 109.

<sup>54</sup> Bauckham, "The Holiness of Jesus and His Disciples in the Gospel of John," 108-13.

<sup>55</sup> Bauckham, "The Holiness of Jesus and His Disciples in the Gospel of John," 111. In 17:19, the idea of Jesus "consecrating" (ἀγιάζω) himself for the disciples' sake refers to his mission of coming into the world in order to die on the cross (cf. 10:36). See pp. 108-10.

John 17:17b and in fact is Jesus himself according to John 14:6. Most probably this statement apropos the disciples' holiness (Jn 17:17, 19) harks back to the earlier assertion in John 17:8 regarding the disciples' reception of Jesus' revelatory words from the Father, the disciples' knowledge of the truth, and their faith in Jesus as the Sent One. The idea of the disciples being sanctified by means of Jesus' revelation about the Father is reminiscent of the reference in John 15:3 to the disciples' purification on account of Jesus "word" (λόγος), which is tantamount to his teaching with regard to truth (cf. Jn 8:31-34; 14:23). In light of this, the purity motif's linkage with Jesus' word in John 15:3 points forward to the notion in John 17:17-19 of the disciples' consecration by means of God's truth, which is made known in the words of Jesus and in himself. In both cases, the theme of the purity or holiness of the disciples is intrinsically tied to the mission of the disciples as God's people in the world.

## V. Conclusion

We have examined the motif of the disciples' purity in the footwashing account in John 13 and in the vine-branches account in John 15. We argued that this motif serves the ecclesial purpose of enhancing the Johannine depiction of Jesus' followers as the people of God. In the footwashing pericope, the "cleansing" of the disciples results from the footwashing which points to Jesus' sacrificial death. This cleansing leads to the disciples' admittance to the people of God and their attaining a "share" in Jesus as the covenant heritage. The Johannine articulation of this heritage, which lacks the element of land, is especially redolent of the biblical description of the Levites having no "share" in the Promised Land but gaining Yahweh as their "share." In Johannine conceptualization the "purified" disciples as God's people will participate in both the future and the present destinies of Jesus — eschatological life and post-Easter involvement

in Jesus' work in the world. In the vine-branches pericope, the motif of the disciples' purity is intimately connected with the theme of fruitfulness. Within this pericope's setting which evokes the biblical description of Israel as God's vine/vineyard, the "purity" motif relates to the disciples' continuation of Jesus' mission in the world upon his death. These references to the purity of the disciples in John 13 and 15 anticipate and undergird the theme of the holiness of the disciples in John 17. From the Johannine perspective, both the purity and the holiness of the disciples stem from Jesus' death and his revelation concerning the Father. In both cases, the purpose or outcome of the purification/consecration pertains not only to the disciples' status as members of God's people but also to their mission as his people in the world.



## ABSTRACT

The Fourth Gospel contains only several occurrences of "purity" or "purification" terminology, but twice Jesus speaks of his disciples (save Judas) as "clean/pure" (Jn 13:10-11; 15:2-3). This paper will examine the significance and function of the motif of the "purity" of the disciples in these two passages in the footwashing and the vine-branches pericopae. As will be seen, the "purity" motif in the Fourth Gospel serves an ecclesial function to affirm the status and mission of the disciples as God's people in the world.

## 撮 要

在約翰福音中，「潔淨」的用詞寥寥可數，但有兩次耶穌論及祂的門徒「潔淨」了。這類詞語出現於約翰福音十三章10和11節（記敘耶穌給門徒洗腳）和十五章2和3節（記敘葡萄樹與枝子的比喻）。這篇文章探討約翰福音潔淨觀，尤其是「潔淨」與門徒的身分及使命之關連。