The Literary Unity of John 13,1-38

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This study questions the almost universal acceptance by Johannine scholars that the final evening Jesus spends with his disciples in the Fourth Gospel, running from 13,1–17,26, has at its center a “discourse” formed by 13,31–16,33. The solemn words of Jesus in 13,31-32 are regarded as the opening words of the first discourse (13,31–14,31), and 13,31-38 is regarded as some form of “introduction” to the discourse, or even a “prologue” that contains within those eight verses the seed of what will follow from 14,1–16,33. Universally accepted as the final form of a complex of discourses that had earlier historical and perhaps literary settings, the section of the report of Jesus’ presence to his disciples that can be justifiably regarded as “discourse” runs from 13,31–16,33.

I have devoted scholarly attention to John 13,1-38 many times since my first published book, The Johannine Son of Man, in 1976. Under the influence of the stylistic and structural reading of 13,1–17,26 of Yves Simoens, I have taken it for granted that I could pursue a legitimate narrative-critical interpretation of John 13,1-38, read as a literary unit. Across the decades I

1. This question has been expertly raised by J.-N. Aletti, Jn 13 – Les problèmes de composition et leur importance, in Bib 87 (2006) 263-272. Professor Aletti’s note is developed further in the essay that follows.

2. See the important work of F.F. Segovia, The Farewell of the Word: The Johannine Call to Abide, Minneapolis, MN, 1991, that surveys both the possible history of the composition of the discourse, and the meaning of its final shape. It is now widely recognized that the Johannine last discourse adopts the widespread literary form of a “farewell discourse”, found across contemporaneous biblical and non-biblical literature, and spectacularly in The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. For a summary of the discussion, see F.J. Moloney, Glory not Dishonor: Reading John 13–21, Minneapolis, MN, 1998, pp. 4-7. For a collection of Jewish texts, including The Testaments, see J.H. Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, New York, 1983, I, pp. 773-995.


have simply referred my readers to the little-noticed but important work of Simoens, indicating that my narrative interpretation was based upon a modified version of his detailed structural analysis. The unabated flood of scholarly publications on the Fourth Gospel – commentaries, monographs, journal articles, and book chapters – indicate that I have no right to take the literary unity of 13,1-38 for granted. The vast majority of contemporary Johannine scholars ignore or disregard my claims. They read 13,31-38 as either the beginning of the discourse material, part of the literary unit of 13,31–14,31, or as some form of “bridge” leading from the narrative of vv. 1-30 into the discourse of 14,1-31.

This study is an attempt to put my own case in some detail. It is primarily based on narrative-critical criteria (although not without an interest in the historical development of the text) for the literary unity of 13,1-38. Although the shadow of Yves Simoens still lurks behind what follows, this is the first time, after almost forty years, that I have stated in extenso my reasons for accepting that John 13,1-38 should be regarded as a literary unit, within the larger unit of 13,1–17,26.

In terms of literary form, the report of this final evening opens with a narrative that tells of Jesus’ washing the disciples’ feet (13,1-17) and the gift of the morsel (vv. 18-30). Admittedly, there is a good deal of “discourse” material within this narrative (see vv. 12-17,18-20), but on the whole there is plenty of action, dialogue, and interaction across 13,1-30, involving Jesus, Peter, the other disciples, the Beloved Disciple, and


7. For a brief description of my understanding of the literary structure of 13,1–17,26 as a whole, see MOLONEY, John (n. 5), pp. 477-479. Although dependent upon Simoens’ structure, my understanding of the Johannine Christology/theology at the heart of 13,1–17,26 is my own. See especially, MOLONEY, Love in the Gospel of John (n. 5), pp. 99-133.
Judas. The conclusion to the evening is provided by another literary form, the prayer of 17,1-26. This passage cannot be regarded as “discourse”. Jesus adopts the traditional position of a person at prayer (17,1), and speaks to his Father at all times (vv. 1.11.1.24. 25). Unlike 13,31–14,31 and 16,4-33 (see 14,5,8-9; 16,17,29-30), no other voice is heard. The disciples never interrupt Jesus’ prayer.

Scholars are aware of the variety of literary forms across 13,1–17,26, even though most continue to give this section of the Gospel the title: “the farewell discourse”. There are a number of critical issues that have already been taken for granted in the above, especially the decision that the second section of the discourse proper is formed by 15,1–16,3. None of this can be argued in detail here, as the purpose of this essay is to question the widely held consensus, taken for granted to this point, that the narrative of the footwashing and the gift of the morsel and their aftermaths is limited to 13,1-30, and that the discourse proper is formed by 13,31–16,33. Is it correct to claim that 13,31-38 is “discourse”, and that it is to be interpreted as an introduction, and even a “prologue”, to the discourse that follows, rather than as a conclusion to the narrative that has preceded it?

8. A closing prayer is also found regularly in the Testaments and other farewell discourse and testamentary material. See Moloney, Glory not Dishonor (n. 2), pp. 102-104. It is also important to note that no one interrupts Jesus’ discourse across 15,1–16,3. This fact, added to the very different themes that are dealt with in 15,1–16,3, is one of several indications that this section of Jesus’ history had a literary pre-history independent of 13,31–14,31 and 16,4-33. See the important study of F.F. Segovia, John 15:18–16:4a: A First Addition to the Original Farewell Discourse, in CBQ 45 (1983) 210-230.

9. It is almost universally accepted that the second and the third sections of the discourse are formed by 15,1–16,4a and 16,4b-33. Among more formal reasons, I make the break at the end of v. 3 in the light of the adversative ἀλλὰ that opens 16,4a, and the inclusion between ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν in v. 4a and v. 33a. See further, Moloney, Glory not Dishonor (n. 2), pp. 77-78; Simoens, La gloire d’aimer (n. 4), pp. 130-131.

The impact of this commentary tradition is found across the bulk of scholarly reflection on John 13,1–17,26\(^1\), and there are but few who argue for the unity of John 13,1-38\(^2\).


I. JOHN 13,1-38 IN THE MACRO-STRUCTURE OF 13,1–17,26

Jesus’ words in vv. 31-32 are dominated with the five-fold use of the verb δοξάζω. As we will have occasion to see below, chronologically and logically closely associated with the departure of Judas (v. 31a: ὅτε οὖν), Jesus announces the “now” of the glorification of the Son of Man (v. 31b: νῦν ἐδοξάσθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) and the glorification of God in him (v. 31c: καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐδοξάσθη ἐν αὐτῷ). A moment in the narrative has arrived when the glorification of the Son of Man, and the glorification of God that is so closely associated with Jesus’ being lifted up on a cross, will take place (see 3,14; 8,28; 12,32). This same theme has already been anticipated, in terms of the glorification of the Father and the Son in 11,4: “This illness is not unto death, it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it”. There is a logical and temporal process in this glorification. Intimately associated with the cross, the glory of God will be manifested, and God will glorify the Son – immediately (v. 32). For the majority of commentators, this looks forward to the development of the theme of the glorification of the Son and the Father across the discourse.


For an assessment of a number of different literary approaches to 13,1–17,26, see BROUWER, The Literary Development of John 13–17 (n. 4), pp. 95-115.


14. For a fuller development of the Johannine presentation of the cross as the time and the place where the glory of God is manifested, and the “means by which” (see 11,4: δι’ αὐτῆς) the Son is glorified, see MOLONEY, Love in the Gospel of John (n. 5), pp. 71-98, 150-160. See further, for this position, W. THÜSING, Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu im Johannesevangelium (NTA, 21/1-2), Münster, 2007; N. CHERICI-REVNEANU, Die Herrlichkeit des Verherrlichten: Das Verständnis der δόξα im Johannesevangelium (WUNT, II/231), Tübingen, 2007.
the Father when the disciples “ask” in the name of Jesus (14,13). A parallel glory will result from their “bearing fruit” (15,8). The action of the Paraclete, by taking what is his and declaring it to the disciples in the time of the absence of Jesus, will glorify Jesus (16,14)\(^\text{15}\). Development of the theme of the glorification of the Father and the Son (13,31b-32), closely associated with the departure of Judas that sets the passion of Jesus in motion (v. 31a), cannot be found across the discourse proper (14,1–16,33).

But this theme, presented with such vigour in 13,31-32, returns with equal vigour in 17,1-5. There are many verbal and theological links between 13,1-38 and 17,1-26. The “now” of 13,31 is caught up by Jesus as he opens his prayer: “Father, the hour has come (ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα)” (17,1; see also 13,1: “The hour has come” [Ἡλθεν αὐτοῦ ἡ ὥρα]). But, most importantly, Jesus asks that the Father glorify the Son, so that the Son may glorify the Father (17,2), and further develops the theme of the manifestation of the glory of God on the cross, and the glorification of the Son by means of the cross as he prays: “I glorified you on earth, having accomplished (τελειώσας) the work that you gave me to do; and now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made” (vv. 4-5). Surrounding this central theme of the glorification of the Father and the consequent glorification of the Son, one finds a series of other deliberately constructed verbal and theological links between the theme of “the hour” in 13,1,31-32 and 17,1,4-5. But there is more. Both 13,1-38 and 17,1-26 open with a reference to Jesus’ having brought to completion the task that has been given to him (13,1: “he loved them to the end” [εἰς τέλος ἠγάπησεν αὐτούς]; 17,4: “having accomplished the work” [τὸ ἔργον τελειώσας]). The literary and theological development of this theme will reach its high-point in Jesus’ final word from the cross: τετέλεσθαι (19,30). The promise of 4,34 is fulfilled: “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to accomplish his work (τελειώσας αὐτοῦ τὸ ἔργον)”. Johannine themes from 13,1-38, and especially from the beginning and end of that passage (vv. 1.31-32) return at the beginning of Jesus’ prayer in 17,1-5. As we have seen, they have been largely absent across 14,1–16,33\(^\text{16}\).

It is beyond the scope of this essay to indicate further links between John 13,1-38 and 17,26\(^\text{17}\). Both the narrative (13,1-38) and the prayer

\(^{15}\) On these passages, as well as the commentaries, see THÜSING, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung* (n. 14), pp. 107-123 (on the disciples’ “bearing fruit”), pp. 142-146 (on the task of the Paraclete), and CHIBICI-REVENEAU, *Die Herrlichkeit des Verherrlichten* (n. 14), pp. 219-251. Not without a relationship to 13,31-32, Chibici-Reveneanu nevertheless correctly regards 14,13; 15,8 and 16,15 as primarily ecclesiological.

\(^{16}\) This claim is only partially correct, as the love theme is strongly articulated in 15,12-17. On the function of this passage within the macro-structure of 13,1–17,26, see what follows immediately below.

\(^{17}\) What has been sketched in the previous paragraphs, and will be further (and more simply) stated in what follows, depends on SIMOENS, *La gloire d’aimer* (n. 4), pp. 55-73.
(17,1-26) open with reference to “the hour” (13,1; 17,1) and Jesus’ perfection of the task given him by the Father (13,1; 17,4-5). We have seen above that toward the end of 13,1-38 the theme of the glorification of the Father and the Son, in close association with the oncoming cross (see v. 31a), and the “now” (νῦν) of v. 31b, along with the “at once” of v. 32, emerges (vv. 31-32). The same theme has been located at the beginning of 17,1-26, in vv. 1-5: “So now (νῦν), Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world was made” (v. 5). A similar literary pattern of criss-crossing through 13,1–17,26 can be seen in the fact that the theme of “love” dominates 13,1-5, as that narrative opens. It returns in 17,24-26, as Jesus closes his prayer by asking that those who believe in Jesus be swept up into the love that unites the Father and the Son. But that is not all. The theme of love opened 13,31-38, and closed the narrative vv. 34-35. Although the theme of love is found only in the latter part of Jesus’ prayer in 17,1-26 (see vv. 23-24-26), matching its appearance in 13,1-5, the appearance of the theme of “glorification” from the 13,31-32 opens the prayer of 17,1-26 in vv. 1-5, and returns to close it in vv. 24-26.

This cannot be a literary accident. It is the result of John’s careful literary structuring of his account of Jesus’ final evening with his disciples (13,1–17,26) by “book-ending” it with the narrative of 13,1-38 and the prayer of 17,1-26. A further element in the structure of 13,1–17,26 shows the careful literary (and theological) construction of the final form of this final encounter between Jesus and his disciples. At the centre of the passage (15,12-17) the reader encounters Jesus’ double command to the disciples to love one another, as he has loved them (vv. 12.17). Because he has shown the greatest of all loves in his unconditional gift of himself in love (vv. 13-14), they are no longer his disciples, but his friends, because he has chosen them (vv. 15-16). The themes of love and glory not only criss-cross from the “book-ends” of 13,1-38 and 17,1-26, but they are caught up as they “cross” at the very centre of the passage, dominated by the love command (vv. 12.17), based in the love that Jesus has shown to his chosen “friends” (v. 15: φίλους). The themes of love and glory criss-cross from the extremities of 13,31-38 (vv. 1-5 [love], 31-32 [glory], 34-35 [love]) and 17,1-26 (vv. 1-5 [glory], 23-25 [love], 24-26 [glory]), and they meet in 15,12-17 (love for one another, as Jesus has loved them). It can perhaps be more clearly grasped from the following diagram.

18. This is an indication of the dialogue of theological themes that are developed across 13,1–17,26, but it is only one of many. Although this study argues that the “bookends” of 13,1-38 and 17,1-26 are self-contained literary units, they look backward and forward across 13,1–17,26 as a unified literary unit in the final shape of the Fourth Gospel.

19. Adapted from the more complex diagrams found in Simoens, La gloire d’aimer (n. 4), pp. 78-79. These correspondences have also been uncovered by Vargas, ἀγαπάω, ἐπάγω, and δοξάζω (n. 6), especially on pp. 379-383. See her reference to Simoens on p. 376 n 25.
These unmistakable literary and theological features of John 13,1–17,26 generated the title of Yves Simoens’ important study: La gloire d’aimer. The revelation of the glory of God (11,4; 12,28; 13,31-32; 17,4) in the unconditional loving self-gift of Jesus in his being “lifted up” on the cross (3,14; 8,28; 11,4; 12,23; 13,34-35; 15,12-17), and the subsequent glorification of the Son in his return to the glory which he had before the world was made (11,4; 13,31-32; 17,4-5), touches the core of Johannine Theology. There is nothing haphazard about the literary and theological structure of John 13,1–17,26. But in order to capture the message contained within this literary and theological structure, 13,1-38 must be read as a literary unit, matching the literary unit of 17,1-26. The message of these “book-ends” is synthesized at the centre of the passage in 15,12-17. This is a significant

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20. This thesis has been argued at length in Moloney, Love in the Gospel of John (n. 5), but is missed in the fine essay of Aletti, Jn 13 – Les problèmes (n. 1). Aletti suggests that the above approach to the unity of 13,31-38 is methodologically limited. He adopts a more formal use of “rhetoric”, tracing the different “voices” in the passage (i.e., the narrator and Jesus). On that basis, he suggests a structure of vv. 1-5 (introduction) and a reverse parallel between vv. 6-20 and vv. 21-38. In the above proposal, Johannine Theology/Christology drives the text’s literary shape, rather than the opposite. See further, Simoens, La gloire d’aimer (n. 4), pp. 200-250.

21. For a more detailed study of the overall message and structure of 13,1–17,26, see Moloney, The Function of John 13–17 (n. 5), pp. 43-66. Others have proposed a variety of chiastic literary structures for 13,1–17,26. See, for example, P.F. Ellis, The Genius of John: A Composition-Critical Commentary on the Fourth Gospel, Collegeville, MN, 1984, pp. 209-245; Mlakuzhvil, The Christological Literary Structure of the Fourth Gospel (n. 6), pp. 221-228; Beutler, Synoptic Jesus Tradition (n. 11), pp. 165-175; Brouwer, The Literary Development of John 13–17 (n. 4), esp. pp. 117-120. For a survey of attempts to discover a chiasm in John 13–17, see ibid., pp. 154-165. Östenstat, Patterns of Redemption (n. 12), pp. 129-195, argues that 5,1–17,26 is a large chiasm, a second and “central panel” in a narrative made up of three “panels” (1,1-4,54; 5,1–17,26; 18,1–21,25). Each of these “panels” is made up of a series of chiasms (1,1–4,54 = 2 chiastic sequences;
structural indication that 13,31-38 should not be separated from its location as the conclusion to the narrative of the footwashing and the gift of the morsel.

II. The Internal Literary Structure of John 13,1-38

In 13,1-38, against the backdrop of Jesus’ washing the feet of his disciples, and his gift of the morsel, even to Judas, a message of the unconditional love that Jesus has for “his own” even in their failure (v. 1: εἰς τέλος), is shared with the reader/listener. But Jesus’ making love visible in his actions, and his request that his disciples do the same (vv. 15.34-35), is not limited to a focus upon the person of Jesus. He shows and tells them of his consummate love (v. 1: εἰς τέλος) so that they might see in him the revelation of God: that they “may believe that I am he” (v. 19: ὅτι πιστεύσετε ... ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι)22.

A feature of the Gospel of John is Jesus’ use of the introductory expression: “Amen, amen, I say to you”. Elsewhere, especially in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus introduces some statements with: “Amen, I say to you”. Only in the Fourth Gospel is the double “amen” (ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) found. It can thus be classed as a stylistic feature of the Johannine story of Jesus23. The expression is found four times in 13,1-38 (vv. 16.20.21.38) and plays an important role for the interpretation of the internal structure and argument of the passage. On the basis of the double “amen” 13,1-38 unfolds in three major stages:

1. Verses I-17: The footwashing and Jesus’ subsequent instructions to his disciples, ending with the use of the double “amen” in vv. 16-17.
2. Verses 18-20: At the centre of the episode, Jesus explains why he is telling his fragile disciples these things, ending with the use of the double “amen” in v. 20.
3. Verses 21-38: The gift of the morsel and Jesus’ subsequent instructions to his fragile disciples, begin (v. 21) and end (v. 38) with the use of the double “amen”.

Each of these major sections is further articulated in three identifiable moments.

5,1–17,26 = 15 chiastic sequences; 18,1–21,25 = 4 chiastic sequences). Thus, 13,1-39 (sic) is the eleventh in a series of fifteen chiastically shaped triptychs within the larger chiasm of 5,1–17,26.

22. For a recent exegetic study of 13,1-38, establishing and depending upon this internal literary structure, see Moloney, Eἰς τέλος as the Hermeneutical Key to John 13:1-38 (n. 5).
23. It appears 24 times in the Gospel of John. The single “amen” appears more than 30 times in Matthew, 13 times in Mark, and 7 times in Luke. See the excellent note in Bernard, St. John (n. 10), I, pp. 66-67.
1. The Footwashing and Its Aftermath (vv. 1-17)

The first section unfolds in three parts, identified by the events and the major players in those events:

1. Verses 1-5: The narrator announces that Jesus “knows” that the hour of his departure to the Father has come. What is about to be told will indicate the consummate perfection of Jesus’ love for his own (v. 1: εἰς τέλος ἠγάπησεν αὐτούς), even though these words are immediately followed by a reference to Judas’ betrayal of Jesus (v. 2). “Knowing” these things does not deter Jesus from moving into action. He prepares himself and washes the disciples’ feet (vv. 3-5). Love and knowledge flow into action.

2. Verses 6-11: Peter objects to Jesus’ washing his feet, and Jesus dialogues with him (vv. 6-10b). This leads to Jesus’ first statement on Judas’ future betrayal (vv. 10c-11).

3. Verses 12-17: Jesus instructs the disciples on the significance of what he has done for them, and asks that they do the same, following his example (vv. 12-15). The double “amen” closes the section, asking that disciples be servants of their master, blessed in their knowledge and deeds (vv. 16-17). As the section opened, Jesus’ love and knowledge flowed into action in vv. 1-5. It closes with his words to disciples: “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them” (v. 17).

2. The Central Statement (vv. 18-20)

The centerpiece of 13,1-38 is found in vv. 18-20. Between vv. 1-17 and vv. 21-38 the rationale for both the footwashing and the gift of the morsel is spelled out. Despite its brevity, the passage is articulated by means of three distinct affirmations:

1. Verse 18: Jesus has chosen fragile disciples, one of whom will betray him.

2. Verse 19: Explains why he has done this: “that you may believe that I am he”.

3. Verse 20: Solemnly, introducing his words with the double “amen,” Jesus sends out these disciples, that both Jesus and the one who sent him may be received.

3. The Gift of the Morsel and its Aftermath (vv. 21-38)

Paralleling the structure of vv. 1-17, the closing section of 13,1-38 has three parts:

24. This passage (vv. 18-20) even forms the “material center” of 38 verses, with the center of the center in v. 19. See Zumstein, L’Évangile selon Jean (n. 10), II, pp. 31-33.
1. Verses 21-25: The narrator indicates Jesus’ emotional condition (ἐταράχθη τῷ πνεύματι), matching, but contrasting, the theme of love in vv. 1-5. Opening with a double “amen”, Jesus forecasts the future betrayal of Judas (see v. 2). The Beloved Disciple, at the request of Simon Peter, asks who this might be.

2. Verses 26-30: Jesus indicates that he will give the morsel to his betrayer. A brief dialogue follows the gift of the morsel to Simon Iscariot (as with Simon Peter in the corresponding vv. 6-11). No one at the table understood what was happening as Judas goes out into the darkness of the night.

3. Verses 31-38: As Judas departs, the passion begins. As in the corresponding vv. 12-17, Jesus instructs his disciples on the glorification of the Son of Man and the revelation of the glory of God that has “now” arrived. He issues a new commandment: that they love one another as he has loved them (see v. 15). Peter continues to misunderstand Jesus and his destiny, and Jesus, closing this section with a final double “amen”, foretells his threefold denial, before cock-crow.

On the basis of external criteria that indicate a uniquely Johannine feature, the use of the double “amen”, the parallel literary structures found in vv. 1-17 and 21-38, along with the significant statement concerning the purpose of Jesus’ actions at the supper with its central affirmation in v. 19, it appears more than possible that 13,31-38 does not only look forward to the “first discourse” of 14,1-31, or to the whole of 14,1–16,33, but is also a self-contained, and self-referential literary unit.

III. John 13,31-38: Looking Forward, Backward, or Both?

It is widely recognized that 13,1-30 is unified by the message of the Jesus’ symbolic actions of washing his disciples feet (vv. 6-11) and the gift of the morsel to even the darkest character in the Johannine story: Judas (vv. 26-30). But these symbolic actions are accompanied by words of

25. This does not mean to say that 13,1-38 is not “forward looking”. Indeed, as has long been recognized, this narrative articulates themes that are crucial for the understanding of the discourse proper in 14,1–16,33. See, among many, the precise indications of Aletti, *In 13 – Les problèmes* (n. 1), pp. 271-272, with reference to Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation* (n. 12), p. 78. Aletti, however, does not engage with Kennedy’s claim (*New Testament Interpretation*, pp. 78-80) that 13,31-38 looks back to 13,1-5, which I would extend to v. 11, to include the parallels between Simon Peter, along with the theme of “now” and “afterwards” in vv. 6-11 and vv. 36-38 (see below). But Aletti rightly affirms: “In 13 fixe effectivement la situation rhétorique de toute la section” (*In 13 – Les problèmes*, p. 272 n. 25). What is often not recognized, moreover, is the close literary and thematic links that exist between 13,1-38 and 17,1-26. On this, see Simoens, *La gloire d’aimer* (n. 4), pp. 55-80, and Moloney, *The Function of John 13–17* (n. 5).

Jesus that describe his loving self-gift love as an example from their Lord and Teacher that the disciples must follow (vv. 12-17; see v. 15)\(^\text{27}\), which will enigmatically glorify God “now”, and be the means by which Jesus will be glorified (vv. 31b-32). As with the footwashing, and paralleling the gift of the commandment (see v. 15), the gift of the morsel leads Jesus to command the disciples to love as Jesus has loved (34-35). Jesus’ “shout of triumph” in vv. 31b-32 is widely regarded as an indication from the author that a new stage has begun, and narrative is moving into discourse\(^\text{28}\).

This needs to be questioned, purely on the grounds of literary form. Jesus’ triumphant cry in vv. 31b-32 is motivated by v. 31a: “When, therefore, he had gone out (ὅτε οὖν ἐξῆλθεν),” an affirmation closely associated with the dramatic description and interpretation of the actions of Judas in v. 30: “So, after receiving the morsel, he immediately went out (ἐξῆλθεν); and it was night.” Not only does Judas remain an active character in vv. 31-38, but Simon Peter reappears in vv. 36-38.

Despite occasional appearances of disciples across 14,1–16,33 (Thomas [14,5], Philip [14,8-9], some disciples [16,17-19], the disciples [16,29-30]), it can be granted that the passage has the form of a “discourse.” The brief interventions of other characters are hardly “active.” By means of questions or observations, they serve to shape the Johannine themes developed by Jesus’ discourse. This cannot be claimed for the roles of Judas and Simon Peter in 13,31-38. They are crucial for the action that is taking place within the narrative, and point forward to actions later in the story. If the literary function of vv. 31-38 is to serve as some form of introduction or “prologue” to the discourse that follows, what is the reader/listener to make of these two characters, who never appear in 14,1–17,26, but are key players in the passion (and resurrection) narrative\(^\text{29}\)? There, they return to assume an important role (see 18,2-3 [Judas].10-11.15-18.25-27 [Simon Peter]). Judas necessarily disappears after the death of Jesus, but Simon Peter is a key player at the empty tomb (20,2-10). Once this “leap-frogging” effect of the characters of Judas and Simon Peter is seen, then the remaining disciple explicitly mentioned in 13,1-38 needs to be taken into account: the Beloved Disciple. He is the crucial intermediary between Jesus and Simon Peter, concerning the figure of the betrayer (13,23-24), but he also

\(^{27}\) It is hardly correct to say that the command to love is only given in vv. 34-35, after the departure of Judas (see ALETTI, In 13 – Les problèmes [n. 1], p. 271). Judas is present for the gift of the new example (v. 15), which matches the command to love in vv. 34-35. The question could be posed in another way: why is the command to love given before the prophecy of the denials of Peter?


\(^{29}\) It is possible that there is a reference to Judas as “the son of perdition” in 17,12. This, however, is debated. See the discussion, and a suggestion that the reference is not to Judas in MOLONEY, Glory not Dishonor (n. 2), p. 115. The identification of 16,29-33 as a reference to the betrayal of Judas, chiastically matching 13,36-38 by BROUWER, The Literary Development of John 13–17 (n. 4), is unconvincing (see above, note 6).
disappears across 14,1–17,26, only to return, playing a leading role, in the passion and resurrection narratives (18,15-16; 19,25-27; 20,2-10). Perhaps the role of these major Johannine characters within 13,1-38, and beyond, is another indication of the literary and theological unity of the passage.

1. Judas (13,2.10-11.18.21-31a)

Without exception, all the characters in 13,1-38 demonstrate an inability to recognize what God was doing in and through Jesus. This is especially true of the character of Judas. The reader/listener has already been warned about the character of Judas in 6,71 and 12,4-6. He is a betrayer and a thief. In 13,2 the satanic agenda is indicated: “The devil had already made up his mind that Judas Iscariot, Simon’s Son, would betray him.” Jesus’ steady return to the theme of the betrayal, and his awareness that it is to be a startling part of his revelation of the love of God “to the end” (v. 1: εἰς τέλος), looms darkly over the narrative (vv. 10-11.18.21) until Jesus sends Judas out into the night, to do quickly what he is going to do (vv. 27.30).

But it is not all darkness. The close grammatical, chronological and logical link (created by the use of δότε οὖν) between the departure of Judas (ἐξῆλθεν) in v. 31a and Jesus’ words of exclamation (νῦν ἐδοξάσθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) in v. 31b are part of John’s overall Theology of the cross. While the cross is traditionally seen as the lowest moment in

30. Assuming that “the other disciple” of 18,15-16 is the Beloved Disciple. Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple continue to play crucial roles in John 21,1-25 (see vv. 1-3.7.11.15-20 [Simon Peter], vv. 7.20-24 [the Beloved Disciple]). I will restrict my analysis to what I regard as the “original story”, convinced that the ongoing roles of these two characters form part of what I have described as the essential “continuity in discontinuity” of John 21. See F.J. Moloney, John 21 and the Johannine Story, in T. Thatcher – S.D. Moore (eds.), Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature (SBL Resources for Biblical Study, 55), Atlanta, GA, 2008, 237-251.

31. The claim that John 13,1-38 is about what God is doing in and through Jesus depends upon the interpretation of vv. 18-20, and the use of εἴγος εἴμι in that context (v. 19). See especially Moloney, Love in the Gospel of John (n. 5), pp. 107-109.


33. For this translation of v. 2, see É. Delebecque, Évangile de Jean: Texte traduit et annoté (Cahiers de la Revue Biblique, 23), Paris, 1987, p. 183. See also Barrett, St John (n. 10), p. 439. In terms of the narrative logic of the passage, Judas does not become part of the Satanic agenda until v. 27: “Then after the morsel, Satan entered into him”.

34. It is regularly pointed out that John’s copious use of the particle οὖν (about 300 times) has almost rendered it meaningless. See, most recently, Zumstein, L’Évangile selon Jean (n. 10), I, p. 33. However, associated with the temporal expression δότε it unavoidably recuperates some of its meaning: “when therefore”. The fact that the expression is followed by two verbs in the same tense (ἐξῆλθεν… ἐδοξάσθη: aorist indicative [active and passive])
Jesus’ ministry (e.g. Phil 2,5-11; Mark 15,33-37), the Johannine view is that it is his moment of exaltation (see 3,14; 8,28; 12,32), the hour in which God is glorified and through which the Son will be glorified (see 11,4; 12,23,27-28)\(^3\). As the coming of the Greeks led to Jesus’ indication that the hour for the glorification of the Son of Man had come (12,20-24), the departure of Judas (13,30-31a) leads to his proclamation that “now” is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him … “at once” (vv. 31b-32)\(^3\). The glorification of both Jesus and the Father will be set in motion later in the narrative, as Judas fulfills Jesus’ command to him, to do what he is going to do quickly (v. 27; see 18,1-5). The Johannine enigma of a disciple’s betrayal that leads to Jesus’ being “lifted up” on a cross as a manifestation of God’s love (see vv. 1,18-20) suggests that vv. 31b-32 do not begin a new major section of the narrative. By means of their logical and chronological association with Judas’ departure into the night (vv. 30-31a), Jesus’ “shout of triumph” continues the literary and theological unity of vv. 1-38. They are an integral part of a larger carefully constructed narrative unit (13,1-38) that introduces the discourse of 14,1–16,33, and which will conclude with the prayer of 17,1-26.

2. Simon Peter (vv. 6-10,24,36-38)

The reader/listener has been sympathetically introduced to Simon Peter. Although somewhat indirectly, he is the first to be given a mission by Jesus, as he is named Cephas (which means rock) in 1,41-42\(^3\). His next shows that the two actions are simultaneous: because one happens, the other follows logically. The temporal link is further enhanced by the use of \(\nu\nu\nu\) between the two verbs.\(^3\) For a full-scale development of this claim, see MOLONEY, *Love in the Gospel of John* (n. 5), pp. 71-98, 135-160.

\(^3\) The majority of commentators, especially those who see vv. 31-32 as the beginning of a major new section of the Gospel, make little or no comment upon v. 31a. See, for example, the meticulous commentaries of SCHNACKENBURG, *St John* (n. 10), III, pp. 49-52, and BROWN, *John* (n. 10), II, pp. 606-611. Neither Schnackenburg nor Brown devotes one word to v. 31a in their discussion of vv. 31-32. The same must also be said for the very recent detailed study of vv. 31-32 in HOGETERP, *Poetic Language in the Farewell Discourse* (n. 11), pp. 353-358. The temporal and logical link between Judas’ departure and the glorification, generated by the use of \(\omicron\omicron\omicron\varepsilon\;\omicron\omicron\varepsilon\) in v. 31a, is entirely ignored. See above, note 34. ZUMSTEIN, *L’Évangile selon Jean* (n. 10), II, p. 50, comments that the departure of Judas generates a believing community to which Jesus can reveal his message of post-Easter faith. He makes no logical or temporal link between the exit of Judas (v. 31a: \(\omicron\omicron\omicron\varepsilon\;\omicron\omicron\varepsilon\)) and the glorification of the Son of Man (v. 31b: \(\nu\nu\nu\varepsilon\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\)). For a rare exception, see ELLIS, *The Genius of John* (n. 21), p. 216: “Judas’ departure into the night to betray Jesus elicits the declaration that the hour has now indeed come”. ØSTENSTAD, *Patterns of Redemption* (n. 12), pp. 171-174, 325-326, also catches this by giving vv. 18-21 (Jesus’ words on Judas’ betrayal) its chiastic counterpart in vv. 31-32 (Judas’ betrayal leads to glory).

\(^3\) In the light of 21,15-19 all post-Easter Johannine readers/listeners are aware that this is not only a name, but a mission. See the discussion in KEENER, *John* (n. 12), I, pp. 475-479.
appearance is marked by a thoroughly Johannine confession of faith. He confesses that Jesus has the words of eternal life because he is the Holy One of God (6,67-69).38 His inability to understand Jesus’ message on the need to have his feet washed in order to have part with Jesus in 13,6-9, comes as something of a surprise. It is reinforced by Simon Peter’s need to ask the Beloved Disciple about the identity of the betrayer in v. 24, and his inability, along with all others present at the table, to understand what Jesus had said and done with the gift of the morsel indicated in v. 28: “Now no one (οὐδείς) at the table knew why he said this to him”. The οὐδείς is all-inclusive; it points to Simon Peter, the Beloved Disciple, and everyone else present. Not one of them understood. The good impression created by the characterization of Simon Peter in 1,41-42 and 6,67-69 is beginning to falter, and only the post-Easter Johannine reader/listener can accept Jesus’ foretelling that Simon Peter will deny him three times before the cock crows (13,36-38). As with Judas, what Jesus has said will happen does take place, in the strategically told report of the denials in 18,15-17.25-27, framing Jesus’ witness at the Jewish hearing that he will no longer speak to them. They are to “ask those who have heard me”.39

The encounters with Simon Peter in 13,6-10.36-38 contain another important element that reaches beyond the confines of the Gospel’s narrative for resolution. At the footwashing, Jesus informs Simon Peter that he cannot understand “now” (Ṫρτ) but there will come a time “after these things” (μετὰ ταῦτα) when he will understand (v. 7). Around the figure of Simon Peter there is a tension in the narrative, a literary prolepsis that seeks resolution. This is repeated in Jesus’ foretelling of Simon Peter’s denials. He tells Simon Peter that he cannot follow “now” (νῦν), but he shall follow “afterward” (ὑστερον [v. 36]).

This tension between what is happening “now” and what will happen “afterward” in v. 36 is regularly singled out as a motive for the literary and theological link between vv. 31-38 and 14,33–16,33. The discourse is dominated by the theme of the “present” need for Jesus’ departure (see, for example, 14,1-4.18-20.28-29; 16,5-6.16.27-28), and the “future” challenges and blessings that they will receive “afterwards” (14,6-7.12-14.15-17.18-21.25-27; 15,1-11.18–16,3.7-11.11-15)40.

38. On this passage, see Moloney, John (n. 5), pp. 229-230, 232.
39. John 18,12-27 should be read as a sandwich construction, at the center of which (vv. 18-24) Jesus’ command to ask those who have heard him points to Simon Peter in vv. 15-17 and 25-27: one who has heard him, but who denies him. See Moloney, John (n. 5), pp. 486-492.
40. As well as the passages indicated in parentheses in the text, it is most eloquently communicated in the use of “before” and “after” (with “the hour” of the woman in childbirth as the driving image) found in 16,19-24. See especially Simoens, La gloire d’aimer (n. 4), pp. 163-167. Most recently, see the fine development of this theme, linking 13,31-38 with 14,1-31, by Back, Gott als Vater der Jünger (n. 11), pp. 25-41.
This is a valid insight, and the time-scheme of “now-afterwards” found in vv. 31-38 certainly plays into the use of the same theme across 14,1–16,33. However, it is not limited to Peter’s appearance in 13,31-38; it is also associated with Simon Peter in his opening encounter with Jesus in vv. 6-11. These two encounters (vv. 6-11 and vv. 36-38), linked not only with the appearance and re-appearance of Simon Peter, but also with the time-scheme of “now” and “after”, are further indication of the literary unity of 13,1-38. It could be claimed that vv. 6-11 and 36-38 serve as a literary “clamp” that holds vv. 1-38 together. The narrative of the footwashing and the gift of the morsel, with its associated dialogues and discourses, is framed by the two Simon Peter scenes. The theme of “now” and “afterwards” is present in both of them.

But reasons for reading 13,1-38 as a literary unity are further enhanced by the presence of the same theme of “now” and “afterwards”, not only at the beginning (vv. 6-11) and at the end (v. 36). It is also found at the center of the passage in v. 19: “I tell you this now (ἀπ’ ἄρτι), before it takes place (πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι), so that when it does take place (ὅταν γένηται), you may believe that I am he”. These words of Jesus, again strongly focused upon the time-scheme of “now” and “after” that continues into 14,1–16,33, are directed to all the disciples, including Simon Peter.

There is no doubt that one of the major themes across 14,1–16,33 is the tension that the disciples must face between their situation “now” and what will eventually take place “after”. It is also true that this theme is found in 13,36-38. But it is not found only in the final verses of 13,1-38. The Johannine account of the footwashing and the morsel is unified by the presence of the theme of “now” and “afterwards” as it opens in vv. 6-11, at its centre in v. 19, and as it closes in vv. 36-38. As such, not only does the encounter between Jesus and Simon Peter in vv. 31-38 look forward to 14,1–16,33, but also looks back to the earlier encounter between Jesus and Simon Peter in 13,6-11 and the central statement of vv. 18-20, directed to all the disciples. As this is the case, the whole of 13,1-38 (and not just vv. 31-38, serving as an “introduction” or “prologue”) looks forward to the development of the theme of “now” and “afterward” in 14,1–16,33.

Simon Peter’s characterization in the Fourth Gospel is complex, and not resolved within the confines of the “original” narrative (i.e. 1,1–20,31)41. Absent at the cross, he rejoins the Beloved Disciple in the run to the tomb and the subsequent events that occur there in 20,2-10. After the indication that the Beloved Disciple “saw and believed” in v. 9, the narrator informs the reader/listener that neither disciple as yet knew the Scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead, and dismisses them from the scene. They return

to their homes, never to be heard of again (v. 10). As the post-Easter Johannine community looked back upon the already deceased Simon Peter as their pastor (see 21,18-19), and the already deceased Beloved Disciple as their authentic witness to the story of Jesus (see 21,23), there has never been an edition of the Gospel of John that did not contain 21,15-20 (Peter as shepherd and pastor) and 21,21-24 (the Beloved Disciple as author and witness). John 1,1–20,31 required a solution to the enigma of Simon Peter. It is found in 21,1-25.

3. The Beloved Disciple (vv. 22-24,28)

The intimate role of the Beloved Disciple recounted in 13,22-24 is the first appearance of this important character in the story, unless one accepts that he is the anonymous disciple in 1,35-40. By singling out this disciple as “whom Jesus loved” (v. 23: ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ιησοῦς) the author makes it clear that he is a privileged character. This is intensified by the description of the location of the Beloved disciple, “lying close to the breast of Jesus” (v. 23: ἀνακείμενος … ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ιησοῦ). Repeated with slightly different words in v. 25 (ἐπὶ τὸ στῆθος τοῦ Ιησοῦ), this description reminds the reader of the parallel description of Jesus Christ’s relationship with the Father in 1,18: “in the bosom of the Father” (εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς). At this stage of the narrative, nothing more is said about the Beloved Disciple, except to indicate that he did as Simon Peter requested, asking Jesus, “Lord, who is it?” (v. 25). From there the focus turns to the encounter between Jesus and Judas (vv. 26-30), except for the significant indication in v. 28 that “no one (οὐδεὶς) at the table” knew why Jesus had instructed Judas to do what he was going to do quickly. The use of the Greek expression οὐδεὶς allows no exceptions. Despite his privileges

42. For a more detailed recent study of this passage, see F.J. Moloney, “For as yet They Did not Know the Scripture” (John 20:9): A Study in Narrative Time, in ITQ 79 (2014) 97-110.

43. The identity of the unnamed disciple in 1,35-40 is not clear. For some, e.g. J.H. Charlesworth, The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?, Valley Forge, PA, 1995, he is to be identified with the Beloved Disciple. For others (see, among many, Lincoln, Saint John [n. 10], p. 118), this is not the case. For a good survey of the discussion, see F. Neirynck, The Anonymous Disciple in John 1, in ETL 66 (1990) 5-37. This issue does not need to be resolved here. It may well reflect an early stage of the Johannine tradition when an original witness was rendered anonymous. The tradition of “the other disciple” and the “disciple whom Jesus loved” may have developed from these origins.

loved by Jesus and in a place of intimacy at the table – the Beloved Disciple joins the other disciples in their ignorance of the significance of the events they are witnessing. 

The reader/listener must reach further into the story to learn more about the Beloved Disciple. His importance is successively unfolded by his ability to gain entrance to the court of the High Priest in 18,15-16, his presence with the Mother of Jesus (and the other women) at the cross in 19,25-27, and his journey to the empty tomb, his seeing of the folded cloths, his entering (after Simon Peter) and his seeing and believing, even though he does not see the risen Jesus, in 20,2-9. As we have already seen, he is dismissed from the story in v. 10, but the post-Easter Johannine Church looks back upon him as their authentic witness to the story of Jesus (21,20-24), who is the only one able to recognize the man calling to them from the shore as “the Lord” (v. 7).

As with the characterization of Judas and Simon Peter, the reader/listener must experience more of the story to discover the full significance of the Beloved Disciple. But nothing of this appears in 13,1–17,26. John 13,1-38 is unified by the consistent failure of all the characters interacting with Jesus and addressed by Jesus, in the episodes of the footwashing and the gift of the morsel. Although there are degrees of frailty, with Judas (the betrayer) and Simon Peter (the denier) at the top of the list, all the characters in 13,1-38 are confused (v. 22) and fail to understand (v. 28). Later in the story, these failures will be resolved, one way or the other. But the active presence of Judas (vv. 30-31a) and Simon Peter (vv. 36-38) in vv. 31-38 brings the Johannine presentation of the disciples at the supper to closure. Thus, narratively, vv. 31-38 look back to vv. 1-30 for their

45. A complete study of the characters in John 13 would include the other disciples, as well as Judas, Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple. John deliberately characterizes them as confused (v. 22) and unable to understand (v. 28). The absolute nature of the expressions used in vv. 22 and 28 indicate that Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple are to be included in this confusion and lack of understanding. See Moloney, Ἐις τέλος as the Hermeneutical Key to John 13:1-38 (n. 5), pp. 36-41.

46. Doubt is sometimes expressed about the identification of “the other disciple” of 18,15-16 with the Beloved Disciple. See, for example, Barrett, St John (n. 10), p. 525. But the editorial edition of “the one whom Jesus loved” to an original “the other disciple” in 20,2 should remove all such doubt.

47. This is rightly seen as crucial by Kennedy, New Testament Interpretation (n. 12), pp. 78-80. See p. 78: “In the evangelist’s account, the exigence is supplied by the confusion and the distress of the disciples and Jesus’ concern that they should come to understand his mission. ... The rhetorical problem, from the point of view of Jesus, is the distress of the disciples and the limited nature of their understanding of his mission. From the point of view of the evangelist the rhetorical problem is how to present the scene in such a way that both its pathos and its glory will emerge”. The statement of Jesus’ mission in vv. 18-20, flanked by the themes of love (vv. 1, 34-35) and glory (vv. 31b-32), shows the rhetoric identified by Kennedy at work.
literary home. The resolution of the ongoing crises among Jesus’ disciples is to be found elsewhere in the story, in 18,1-20,31, and eventually in 21,1-25 – but not in 14,1–17,26.

IV. CONCLUSION

It is well-established that major Johannine themes are developed across 13,1–17,26. Traces of the following major themes are found across the narrative of 13,1-38, the discourse of 14,1–16,33 and the prayer of 17,1-26: love, glory, a tension between the time “now” and a time “afterwards”, departure, the need of Jesus’ departure for the eventual benefit of the disciples, instruction on the need for faith, love and obedience to the commandments of Jesus for the life of the community in the in-between-time, the ultimate victory of Jesus over apparent failure, the revelation of the glory of God and the glorification of the Son, the gift of the Paraclete, and the final union between believers, the need for an “abiding” intimacy between the believers and Jesus, rejection and persecution of those who believe in Jesus, and the ultimate destiny of the believers, swept up into the oneness of love that has always existed between the Father and the Son. Over many years commentators and scholarly writing have made this clear, traced its historical relevance for the original Johannine community, and its ongoing relevance across two thousand years of Christian history. The above argument in defence of the literary unity of 13,1-38 casts no doubt upon the achievements of many generations of fine scholars who point to the interplay of Johannine themes across 13,1–17,26.

48. The current literary and theological shape of 13,1–17,26 is the result of a long process that worked with what may have originally been four (or five?) different sources: a narrative (represented by 13,1-38), an original final discourse (represented by 14,1-31, creatively rewritten at a later stage as 16,4-33), an independent discourse (represented by 15,1–16,3, although vv. 1-11 on the need to “abide” and its use of the image of the vine may have also been originally independent), a final prayer (represented by 17,1-26). Whatever the sources, it has been thoroughly johannized, and reflects a unified theological and Christological point of view that shares the Theology and Christology of the rest of the Johannine Gospel. For a classical statement of this, see Dodd, Interpretation (n. 10), pp. 390-399. Beutler, Synoptic Jesus Tradition (n. 11), pp. 167-173, traces possible Synoptic-like themes and sayings across his five-fold concentric reading (see above, note 11). It is here that the proposal of Zumstein, L’Évangile selon Jean (n. 10), I, pp. 30-32, is most helpful. John knew Mark and Luke, but there is no literary dependence as, for example, between Mark and Matthew. John used them creatively in a process of réédition: “L’évangeliste a fait preuve de liberté et il a reconfiguré tout le matériel dont il disposait pour l’intégrer dans sa propre mise en récit et dans sa conception théologique” (p. 32).
The contemporary world of Johannine scholarship reaps the benefit of two hundred years of careful attention to the Gospel that has generated a number of possible approaches to the interpretation of 13,1–17,26. Only some of them have been employed in this essay. Although strongly influenced by Yves Simoens’ *La gloire d’aimer* in assessing the structure of the farewell discourse as a whole, and especially 13,1–38, this study has also had recourse to more narrative criteria: the dramatic effect of a three-fold structure, with 13,18–20 informing the reader why Jesus loves, chooses and sends out those who betray, deny, are confused, and who do not understand: “that you may believe that I am he” (v. 19). The presence or absence of theological themes from vv. 31-38 in the following discourse of 14,1–16,33 have also come into play in the above study: the characterization of Judas, Simon Peter, and the Beloved Disciple, and the narrative interplay between “now” and “afterwards” that calls for resolution at a later stage of the narration.

Among many who have identified the historical, literary and theological issues raised by 13,1–17,26, the now classic commentary of Raymond E. Brown deserves special mention. As part of his introduction to what he entitles “the last discourse”, he provides an extremely helpful chart showing the literary and theological contacts that run across John 13,1–17,26. What must be noticed, however, in Brown’s more historical-critical approach to the underlying theological unity of 13,1–17,26 is his discovery of copious links between 14,1-33 and 16,4-33, and the almost non-existent links between 13,31-38 and these passages. He locates a vaguely possible parallel between 13,36 and 16,5, and suggests another contact between 13,38 and 16,5 which does not stand up under scrutiny. Despite his own exegetical decision that 13,31 opens the first discourse of 13,31–14,31, he finds no links between 13,31-38 and 14,1-33, and no viable parallels between 13,31-38 and 16,4-33. However, he locates five clear parallels between 13,31-38, 15,12-17, and 17,1-26.

The weight of the evidence, from a structural, thematic, narrative, and traditional historical-critical interpretation of John 13,1-38 indicates that vv. 31-38 are not to be separated from vv. 1-30 to form an introduction to the discourse proper (either to 14,1-33 or to the whole discourse of 14,1–16,33). They are an integral part of the narrative that deals with the footwashing and the gift of the morsel, serving as a narrative introduction to...

49. The strength of the study of ALETTI, *In 13 – Les problèmes* (n. 1), is to show that more than one method should be used to produce more convincing conclusions.
50. BROWN, *John* (n. 10), II, pp. 581-604, published in 1970, remains the clearest and most useful introduction to the historical, literary and theological questions that are raised by John 13,1–17,26. 
51. Ibid., pp. 589-593.
52. Ibid., pp. 589,591.
53. See ibid., pp. 608-609. 
54. Ibid., p. 593.
14.1–17.26. As has been suggested above, it is also possible that themes from the narrative of 13.1-38 are recapitulated at the center of the discourse in 15.12–17, and return in the prayer of 17.1–26.

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ABSTRACT. — The so-called final discourse of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is regarded by the majority of scholars as opening with Jesus’ solemn statements on glory and glorification in 13.31-32. Closer investigation questions this. John 13,31-38 is not discourse, but a narrative peopled with characters. Looking at the macro-structure of 13,1–17,26, there are close links between 13,1-5 and 17,1-4 (ἡ ὥρα, τὸ τέλος), and parallels between 13,1-5 and 17,24-26 (ἡ ἀγάπη) and between 13,31-38 and 17,1-4 (δοξάω). But the theme of love also links 13,1-5 with 13,31-38, as the theme of glory links 17,1-4 with 17,24-26. At the centre of this macro-structure (15,12-17) the command to love is again dominant (vv. 12-13, 17). Turning to the micro-structure of 13,31-38, on the basis of the Johannine use of the double “amen”, a good case can be made for a tripartite structure of 13,1-17.18-20, and 21-38, with close parallels between vv. 1-17 and 21-38. The action and the characters in 13,31-38 look back to vv. 1-21 (Judas, Peter, gift of example/gift of new commandment, later understanding, failure and misunderstanding). While there is much in the narrative of 13,1-38 that prepares for the discourse of 14,1–16,33, these characters and themes do not appear there. This also suggests the literary unity of 13,1-38.

55. It has long been recognized that John regularly uses a narrative to introduce a lengthy discourse (see 3,1-21; 5,1-47; 6,1-59; 9,1–10,21). Among many, see E. Lohse, Miracles in the Fourth Gospel, in M.D. Hooker – C. Hickling (eds.), What About the New Testament? Essays in Honour of Christopher Evans, London, 1975, 54–75. This should be kept in mind when assessing the literary and theological role of 13,1-38.

56. As we have seen, this is one of the claims of Simoens, La gloire d’aimer (n. 4). See also Vargas, Ἀγαπάω, ἵππαγω, and δοξάζω (n. 6), especially pp. 379–383. The rearrangement theories of Bernard and Bultmann, indicated above in n. 10, show these scholars’ awareness of the literary and theological link between 13,1-38 and 17,1-26.