

# *The Role of Moses in the Fourth Gospel*

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In the history of Jewish tradition one of the most influential figures is Moses. Among many other areas, Moses seems to be important specifically in the exodus, legislation and messianic tradition. The formation of these three is obviously brought together within the context of Egyptian slavery. Exodus deals with the deliverance from the Egyptian oppression and moving from the perimeter of curse to the land of many blessings. The process of legislation was connected to the journey in the wilderness, the giving of the law, leadership and obedience. Messianic tradition represents the entrance in the Promised Land and the hope for a Savior and King of Israel. In this sense, Moses is a figure of deliverance from the old and establishing the new order. Typologically he closely resembles the life and mission of Jesus. As many commentators would agree, Christ is the new Moses in the land.

If such resemblance is indeed true, it is reasonable to suggest that it would be found in texts describing the life of Christ. This research will focus on the role of Moses in the Fourth Gospel and will attempt to answer the following questions: If Moses is present in the Fourth Gospel, what are the perimeters and the significance of his presence? What are the typological similarities between the life of Christ and the life of Moses? What is the effect of Jewish tradition in Fourth Gospel? How is the role of Moses in the Fourth Gospel connected to the use of authority of the Law and the Torah? What is the role of Moses in establishing the story of Christ? How is the presence of Moses

important for the authority and the interpretation of the Fourth Gospel both in the Johannine community and now?

The process of answering the above questions will reflect on the purpose and use of the Law and Jewish tradition by John. It will further attempt to discover the Mosaic typology in the Fourth Gospel. Finally, a special focus will be given to the direct references to Moses and their importance in establishing the story, authority and interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.

### ***Johannine Judaism***

Commonly through the Fourth Gospel Judaism is treated as the starting point of Christianity.<sup>1</sup> The key statement here would be the only reference to salvation in the Fourth Gospel, which states that, "the salvation is from the Jews" (4:22).<sup>2</sup> Within the text, Jewish practices and customs are emphasized to such an extent that it would be fair to call it Jewish Gospel. Rich religious tradition is integrated with the story of Jesus. With possible exception of the Book of Revelation, the Fourth Gospel is the most Hebraic New Testament book.<sup>3</sup>

The Greek of the Fourth Gospel contains common words, but difficult structures, which are foreign to the New Testament Greek. The language is twisted because of Aramaic influence. There is an obvious agreement between the Fourth Gospel and the

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<sup>1</sup> Leon Morris, *Studies in the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 224. George R. Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Commentary: John*. Vol. 36 (Waco: Word Books, 1987), p. lviii.

<sup>2</sup> Beasley-Murray, p. lix.

<sup>3</sup> J. B. Lightfoot. *Biblical Essays* (London & New York: Macmillan, 1893), pp. 125-35.

Jewish Old Testament rather than the LXX.<sup>4</sup> The author wrote from a Jewish viewpoint, thinking and expressing himself as a Jew.<sup>5</sup> Such approach denotes a Jewish audience.

The author further shows extended knowledge on the geography of Palestine.<sup>6</sup> He is also perfected in the assessment of major Jewish customs as cleansing (ch. 2), the Sabbath, circumcision (ch. 7), the temple and worship (ch.4), Passover, etc.<sup>7</sup> A number of doctrinal positions as resurrection (ch. 11), healing (ch. 7), etc. are offered as well. The Law is often referred to as the law of the Jews (10:34; 15:2). In the context of the Fourth Gospel Scripture is authoritative and cannot be broken (10:35). The writings of the prophets are true and will come to pass (6:45)). The reason for the usage of the Old Testament is to prove that Jesus is not only the Son of God, but also the Christ.<sup>8</sup>

A number of Old Testament types are often applied to Christ through the Fourth Gospel. Among them are the brazen serpent (3:14) and the manna (discussed thoroughly later in this research) (6:32), the water from the rock (7:37) and the pillar of fire (8:32). Along with that, a number of fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies are mentioned as well. Among them are Abraham seeing His day, the cleansing of the temple from Zechariah (Zech. 9:9), Palm Sunday (Ps. 69:9), division of Christ's garment, Christ's thirst on the Cross, etc.<sup>9</sup>

Such intense usage of Jewish references denotes a specific intention. It seems that John addresses the needs in his audience on three levels: 1) salvation and Savoir, 2)

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<sup>4</sup> Beasley-Murray, p. lix.

<sup>5</sup> R. Allan Culpepper and C. Clifton Black, *Exploring the Gospel of John* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), p. 44. C. K. Barret, *The Gospel of John and Judaism*. Translated by D. M. Smith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> Beasley-Murray, p. lix.

<sup>7</sup> Culpepper, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, p. 41.

<sup>8</sup> Morris, p. 224-25

<sup>9</sup> Morris, p. 225.

stewardship (serving) and 3) program of religious life.<sup>10</sup> All three are well grounded in Jewish tradition. The first one is within the context of the promised Messiah and His New Order. The others are respectively in the context of the Passover and the Law. The purpose of John then seems to be establishing the authority of the Gospel among a Jewish audience with special emphases on the divine origin and Messianic role of Christ. In this context, the story of Jesus unfolds through a series of titles assigned by the author.

### ***Mosaic Typology***

In the Fourth Gospel Jesus is presented as Messiah, Prophet, Servant and King of Israel.<sup>11</sup> The transliterated term Μεσσίας is used only by John to represent not another Christ, *anointed one*, but the Messiah himself.<sup>12</sup> One constant image follows as shadow of the figure of Christ. This image is the image of Moses.

A number of similarities can be drawn from the Synoptics in order to prove parallelism between the lives and missions of Moses and Jesus. Such comparison may begin with their birth, as they both were hid from the king. It continues through their childhood, one in the palace and the other one in the temple and proceeds to a number of interesting similarities. The Fourth Gospel, however, in its own manner offers a different approach not found in the Synoptics. The four prominent ones are the prologue reference of Moses, the creation parallel, the signs and the “I am” sayings.

In the Prologue, Moses is introduced as the giver of the law (1:17). Since the reference of Moses appears in the very beginning of the Gospel and seems to be a major part of the Johannine purpose toward the audience.<sup>13</sup> While this verse will be further

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<sup>10</sup> Barret, p. 46.

<sup>11</sup> Lightfoot, p. 69.

<sup>12</sup> Barret, p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Stephen S. Smalley, *John – Evangelist & Interpreter* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press. 1998), p. 136.

discussed in the section on *Direct References to Moses*, it must be noted here that the Prologue starts with a repetition of the beginning phrase of the Torah, *In the beginning*. This is an obvious parallel with the creation story from Genesis, which continues in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel. In the first two chapters of John a seven days stretched is described in what seems to be a parallel to the creation story (1:25-2:11):

Day 1: Creation of <i>light</i> (Gen. 1:3-5)	Jesus is the <i>light</i> of the world (1:15-28)
Day 2: Creation of <i>heaven</i> (Gen. 1:6-8)	Jesus is confirmed by the <i>Heavens</i> (1:29-34)
Day 3: Creation of <i>dry land</i> (Gen. 1:9-13)	Jesus begins His <i>earthly</i> ministry (1:35-42)
Day 4: <i>Lights</i> are created (Gen. 1:14-19)	Jesus begins to call His <i>disciples</i> (1:43-51)

An interesting parallel between John and Jesus is offered in these first four references:

1:15-28	Jesus is the light of the world	Only John is present
1:29-34	Jesus is confirmed by the Heavens	John and Jesus are present
1:35-42	Jesus begins His earthly ministry	Jesus and John are present
1:43-51	Jesus begins to call His disciples	Only Jesus is present

While day five and six of the creation of plants and animals, seem to have no definite place in the Prologue, day seven is carefully taken into special consideration by the author. While in Genesis it is the Day of Rest (Gen. 2:2), in John it is a day of a wedding (2:1). Taking into consideration later Johannine Apocalyptic writings, a great deal can be said here of the connection between the marriage of the Lamb and the eternal rest of the saints (Rev. 19:7). For this present research, however, more attention is required for the first sign of Jesus at the wedding. Turning the water into wine parallels the Exodus story of turning the Egyptian rivers into blood. It is important to note that such reference appropriately follows the Creation story from ch.1 and parallels the

sequence of the Torah books. The first sign leads to a series of three signs (2:1-12; 4:46-54; 21:1-14), which resembles the story of Moses returning from the wilderness having received from God miraculous power (Ex. 4:1-9).<sup>14</sup>

From the same Mosaic context comes the series of “I am” sayings. In Jewish history and tradition, the name YHWH was first revealed to Moses (Ex. 3:14). In John the “I am God” reveals Himself to the world. Among the extended list of “I am” sayings seven are prominent: 1) I am the bread and the life (6:35), 2) I am the light of the world (8:12), 3) I am the door of the sheep (10:7), 4) I am the good shepherd, (10:11-14), 5) I am the resurrection and the life (11:25), 6) I am the way, the truth and the life (14:6), and I am the true vine (15:1). References to the above are found in the Torah and are suggested Mosaic influence as follows:

I am the bread of life (6:35)	Manna in the dessert (Ex. 16:15-35)
I am the light of the world (8:12)	Creation of light (Gen. 1:3-5)
I am the door of the sheep (10:7)	Moses as shepherd of sheep (Ex. 3:1)
I am the good shepherd (10:11-14)	Moses as the shepherd of Israel (Ex. 32:34)
I am the resurrection and the life (11:25)	God is Israel’s life (Dt. 30:20)
I am the way, the truth and the life (14:6)	Israel’s way in the wilderness (Dt. 1:31-33)
I am the true vine (15:1)	Reference to Jesus’ tribe (Gen. 49: 8-11)

***Direct Mosaic References***

Among other suggested Mosaic references in the Fourth Gospel, thirteen contain the name of Moses. They are presented in twelve verses found between John 1 and John 9. The direct references can be grouped in four pairs 1) the message (1:17) and the

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<sup>14</sup> Marie-Emmille Boismard, *Moses or Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), p. 127-28.

Messenger (1: 45), 2) deliverance (3:14) and faith (5:45- 46), 3) bread (6:32) and healing (7:19, 22-23) and 4) righteousness (8:5) and discipleship (9:28, 29).

**John 1:17** As it was earlier mentioned, the appearance of Moses in the first chapter of the Fourth Gospel seems to be a characteristic of the Johannine community and purpose.<sup>15</sup> Accepting the proposal that the Prologue was perhaps a hymn, commonly used for the purpose of worship in the Johannine community, the reference of Moses becomes even more important. The idea of “truth in Jesus Christ” will be used again in 14:6.<sup>16</sup> The reference contains a contrast between Moses and Jesus, which will be used by John as a main approach in the rest of the direct references. The contrast is threefold:

Law	Grace and Truth
given	came
by Moses	through Christ

The parallel is created by the genitive  $\delta\iota\alpha$ ; translated both “by” and “through.” Moses is the messenger of the word of God, but Christ the Logos of God. Moses, as viewed by the Rabbis, is the “first Redeemer, “Christ is the “last Redeemer.”<sup>17</sup> The idea is that the law was mediated by a person i.e. Moses. Grace, however, comes personally through Christ.<sup>18</sup> In such context, while the law is mediated by a person sent by God, grace received personally from God i.e. grace is a personal experience.

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<sup>15</sup> Smalley, p. 136.

<sup>16</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), p. 111.

<sup>17</sup> Beasley-Murray, p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Randolph Tasker, *The Gospel according to St. John*. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), p. 49. F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), p. 44.

**John 1:45** The story is clearly based on Jewish Messianic theology, in a parallel in which Jesus is the Messianic King.<sup>19</sup> This is perhaps the most discussed text among the direct references of Moses in the Fourth Gospel. It is placed in the pericope of Philip and Nathaniel finding Jesus. Philip's role is the one of a witness to Nathaniel. "Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote" is a formula, which embraces the whole existing Scripture.<sup>20</sup> Not only the prophets, but also the law predicts the coming of the Messiah.<sup>21</sup> Regardless of if the prophecy referred to is Gen. 49:10 or Dt. 18:18 or both, it seems that the main idea represented here is that Moses is the way to find Jesus. The name of Moses is used by Nathaniel, but in his words, Jesus is not just another Moses, not even the "prophet like Moses." He is the promised Messiah.<sup>22</sup>

**John 3:14** The imagery of the text contains a typological application of the story of Num. 21:8f.<sup>23</sup> "Lifted on high" (υψωθηεναι) in the Fourth Gospel is a reference of the cross of Christ (8:28; 13:32). There is a contrast between the looking on the serpent from the Old Testament and the believing in Jesus from the New Testament.<sup>24</sup> The serpent raised in the wilderness is paralleled with the death on the cross.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the serpent, in Scripture is a sign of personal evil (Rev. 7:9f; 2 Cor. 9:3; Gen. 3:1ff). While in

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<sup>19</sup> C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: University Press, 1963), p. 311.

<sup>20</sup> Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*. Vol. 1 (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company Inc., 1987), p. 315.

<sup>21</sup> Carson, p. 159.

<sup>22</sup> Smalley, p. 271. G. H. C. Macgregor, *The Moffatt Commentary: John* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n/a), p. 40.

<sup>23</sup> Schnackenburg, p. 395. Macgregor, p. 79.

<sup>24</sup> Macgregor, p. 79.

<sup>25</sup> B. F. Wescott, *The Gospel According to St. John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), p 64



the Old Testament the evil was lifted on a tree, in the New Testament Jesus was made sin on our behalf (1 Cor. 5:21).<sup>26</sup> The result from both, however, is deliverance.

**John 5:46** Μωυσησ εις ον υμεις ηλπικατε literary means “Moses in whom you have set your trust.” The Jews understood that Moses would intercede for them at the judgment just as he did at their apostasy with the golden calf (Ex. 32:3-32).<sup>27</sup> Jesus, however, brought a new meaning to the faith in Moses, where it is very close to faith in Christ.<sup>28</sup> It simply meant faith in Him. In general the accusation will not be that they failed to obey the law, but that they did not accept the Messiah.<sup>29</sup> “Wrote of me” is a reference to Gen. 3:15 and Dt5. 18:15.<sup>30</sup>

**John 6:32** Another contrast presented in the context of new scriptural interpretation is given. A figurative language, which starts in v. 27, is used to compare the manna (bread of the strong) and Jesus (the bread of life).<sup>31</sup> Similarly to the water of ch. 4 the food described in ch. 6 endures for eternal life. The manna came from God not from Moses.<sup>32</sup> This contrast is quite similar to the one in 1:45. Again, while the manna was only a medium of God’s provisional plan, Jesus is the bread of God Himself.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, God gives the real bread now, again not through Moses as a mediator, but as in grace in 1:17 personally through Jesus.

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<sup>26</sup> τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ (1Cor. 15:21).

<sup>27</sup> Beasley-Murray, p. 79.

<sup>28</sup> Bruce, p. 138-39.

<sup>29</sup> William Countryman, *The Mystical Way of the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 44. Carson, pp. 265-66.

<sup>30</sup> Wescott, p. 92. Carson, p. 266. Boismard, pp. 27-28.

<sup>31</sup> Alan Culpepper, *Critical Readings of John 6* (New York: Brill, 1997), p. 174.

<sup>32</sup> Culpepper, *Critical Readings*, p. 164. Carson, p. 286. Beasley-Murray, p. 91.

<sup>33</sup> Beasley-Murray, p. 91. Bruce, p. 99

**John 7:19, 22-23** This is the largest direct reference to Moses in the Fourth Gospel. The reference of Moses has been used by some to prove that 7:15-24 originally followed 5:47.<sup>34</sup> Two types of references to the law are mentioned: the law as a whole and the specific laws of circumcision (vv. 22, 23), Sabbath (vv. 22, 23), and killing (v. 19).<sup>35</sup>

A textual observation would reveal that the tone changes from “on *the* Sabbath you circumcise a man“(v. 22) to “If a man receives circumcision on *the* Sabbath” (v. 23).<sup>36</sup> It must be noted that the reference to law of circumcision on the Sabbath is foreign for the rest of the Synoptics. Perhaps John has borrowed from a contemporary rabbinic tradition.<sup>37</sup> Thus, John seems to deal with circumcision from a Jewish perspective, thus approving its use even on the Sabbath. This shows that the Johannine community was not yet concerned about circumcision in the way the Early Church was later concerned.

The questions referring the law (v. 19), killing (v. 19), and healing on Sabbath (v. 23) are rhetoric and in Greek anticipates “an enthusiastic mental affirmative,” which makes them statements.<sup>38</sup> In this sense, Moses did give the law and the Jews indeed did not obey it by looking to kill Jesus because of His healing act. Thus, Jesus, who earlier pointed to Moses as His opponents’ accuser, now claims that the religion of his accusers is not really Mosaic at all.<sup>39</sup> A reference to the commandment “Do not kill” is appropriate since the next passage containing a direct quote of Moses will deal with the woman caught in adultery and her accusers (8:5).

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<sup>34</sup> Macgregor, pp. 187, 201. Carson, p. 313.

<sup>35</sup> Bruce, p. 108.

<sup>36</sup> Morris, p. 298.

<sup>37</sup> Morris, p. 157.

<sup>38</sup> Carson, p. 313.

<sup>39</sup> Countryman, 54.

**John 8:5** This reference is placed in the much discussed and quite controversial later addition of John 8. The reference to Moses denotes a question: was the woman married or single?<sup>40</sup> According to Dt. 22:23f stoning was for betrothed virgins. However, stoning was probably implied to all cases (Dt. 22:22; Lev. 20:10).<sup>41</sup>

In the context of such a radical judgment, much attention deserves the way Jesus treated the woman. On one hand, the woman was caught, and brought to Jesus only as a tool of testing him. In the words of her accusers, such “creatures” had to be stoned.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand Jesus dealt first with her accusers, and then with the sin in her life. The contrast is endless: accusers and defender, sin and righteousness, judgment and mercy, and death and life. The bottom line is Christ and the law or again Christ and Moses.

**John 9:28, 29** This is another healing passage. It is a story of a “sinner” giving sight to a sick man on a Sabbath as sign for the sinners. It is placed in the definite chiasmic structure of John 9:

- A. Jesus and the blind man (vv. 1-7)
- B. The blind man and his neighbors (vv. 8-12)
- C. The blind man and the Pharisees (vv. 13-17)
- D. The Pharisees and the parents (vv. 18-23)
- C’. The blind man and the Pharisees (vv. 13-17)
- B’. The blind man and his neighbors (vv. 35-38)
- A’. Jesus and the blind man (vv. 39-41)<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Carson, p. 335.

<sup>41</sup> Macgregor, p. 212.

<sup>42</sup> As translated by the New Moffatt Translation.

<sup>43</sup> Paul D. Duke, *The Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1973), p. 118.

A change similar to 7:23 is observed where the phrase “his disciple” is contrasted with “disciples of Moses.”<sup>44</sup> Discipleship is presented in the context of the healed man speaking of Jesus and thus denotes witnessing. Perhaps such sequence implies that it was proper that in the Johannine Community signs of healing followed witnessing.

The claim of the knowledge comes from v. 24. The opponents compare tradition with their knowledge of Jesus in order to reduce his authority and ministry.<sup>45</sup> The question concerning the origin of Jesus actually asks if he is from heaven or not.<sup>46</sup> The answer comes in from the healed man, εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ (v. 33).

### *The Witnessing Community*

A number of important conclusions can be drawn from this survey. For example, much can be said about the Johannine community. It is obvious from the overview offered above that one common characteristic remains constant through the list of direct references to Moses. This characteristic is the contrast between Moses, the Giver of the Law, and Jesus the Messiah. The occurrence of such contrast provides an argument, which means that the purpose of the Fourth Gospel was persuasion. Judging from the context and the Jewishness of the Fourth Gospel, we can conclude that its purpose was witnessing to the Jews both within and outside the Johannine community. Within such an persistent process persuasion, the use of Moses was unavoidable.

If this is true, it can be further concluded that the observed direct references to Moses are not simply series of arguments and persuasions, but rather a style of witnessing.<sup>47</sup> He is the man of God who delivers the message from God to the people of

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<sup>44</sup> Morris, p. 298. Duke, p. 118.

<sup>45</sup> Duke, p. 68.

<sup>46</sup> Macgregor, p. 229.

<sup>47</sup> Schnackenburg, p. 277.

God (1:45; 5:45-47; 9:29). His voice is the final authority in Scripture. Only when such authority is firmly established, he is described as a witness of Jesus. (7:19, 22). Then both Jesus and Moses are proved to be right and the traditional interpretation wrong.

Such proposal is strongly based on the evangelistic nature of the Fourth Gospel and confirms the role of Moses as a witness of Christ. As it was earlier pointed out, Moses is the way to find Jesus. In the list of direct references, Moses is also the way to find grace (1:17), salvation (3:14), faith (5:45, 46), provision (6:32), healing and vision (7:19-23) and mercy and forgiveness (8:2). All of them lead to the final direct reference, which denotes becoming a disciple (9:28, 29).

In this context, the process of witnessing in the Fourth Gospel originates in the authority of Moses only to establish the authority of Christ and His teachings. Thus, the process witnessing becomes not only the way to relate the Gospel to the unbelievers, but also a way of approving the influence and authority of the Church.

***“Throw it on the ground” or the destiny and legacy of self denial (Epilogue)***

Such an authoritative conclusion will be appealing to many in this post-modern world. Perhaps, one last question must be asked. How does the church reach such a level in witnessing that would indeed establish its authority? Before an answer can be given to the above question, one final parallel must be drawn between Moses and Christ.

Between the time Moses became a killer and had to flee from Pharaoh and the time he faced God in the burning bush in the desert, his personality had changed extremely. From a man raised in the palace and taught in the wisdom of Egypt, he became a shepherd taking care of his father-in-law’s flock in the wilderness. At one time he had had everything he could desire from the world. Then in one day he lost it all. The

desert did not belong to him, the flock was not his own and even the place where he lived was owned by his father-in-law. In essence, after everything that had happened to him for the past eighty years all he had left now was a shepherd's staff.

Then the experience of God's presence came in his life, but instead of immediate improvement, things went worse. At the fiery bush Moses did not have his shoes on and was not able to see any more, but had to cover his face before the glory of God. Among other things, now he did not have his ways and vision of life. His security of lifestyle and career could not enter in the presence of the Almighty. And then God asked him one last thing: to throw his staff on the ground. This was all Moses had.

When Jesus came to the world it was for one purpose, to give his life on our behalf. Like Moses he had nothing of material value. No place of birth, no house, no animals, no place to dine. He was the King without a kingdom, the fisherman without a boat, the friend without a friend, and the dead without a grave. One thing, however, did remain in Christ's eternal position. It was an old rugged cross on a hill East of Jerusalem called Calvary. And there Christ indeed gave it all.

The role of Moses then is no different than the role of any other witness in the Fourth Gospel. Like Andrew, he must proclaim, "I have found the Messiah;" like Phillip, he must say, "I have found the one for whom Moses has written in the law;" like the Mother of Jesus, he will advise, "Whatever He tells you, do it;" like Nicodemus, he will declare, "We know you are a teacher who comes from God;" like the Samaritan woman, he will call, "Come and see a man who told me everything I've done;" like the blind man in Jerusalem, he will answer, "The one who healed me said, take up your bed and walk;"

and as John the Witness, he will humbly announce, “Now He must increase and I must decrease.”

In the materialisms of our present world, self-sacrifice and giving ourselves for others, is the answer for the success of the Church and fruitful witnessing. Our role should not be based in corporative programs, human development and neo-ecclesiastical discipleship, but rather in the same humble spirit of the witnesses of the Forth Gospel. The role of the Church is to be the Moses and the way that points to Jesus.

Surely, the Church can choose to do things its own way, securing out the future in the assurance that everything will go according to previously set plans and personal ambitions. But then the Church will be no different than the opponents of Christ in Fourth Gospel, who engaged in their own way of interpretation and practices of the Scripture had missed the meaning of the Word, Christ the Messiah. If the Church misses to recognize the Messiah, it will exclude the manifestation of His signs and the meaning of His mission. In other words, the Church will loose its Christian identity and will become only a self-structured organization of no power. This is the exact problem today. The solution is simple. In order to remain in the perimeter of its original identity and purpose, the Church must rediscover, reclaim and re-experience its original mission to witness of the Christ.

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