

# **My Father and Your Father (Jn. 20:17): Johannine Christians as the New Israel and the Anti-Judaism Community**

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## **Abstract**

John 20:17 is often skipped by readers even by Johannine scholars. This article is a biblical study which focuses on the concept behind Jesus' saying "My Father and your Father" in John 20:17. By using "a two-level drama" as the approach to analyze the socio-historical context and the theological understanding of the Gospel of John, I discover that, behind Jesus' particular saying in this verse, there is a concept of Johannine Christians who see themselves as the new Israel who go against the Jewish community. The Johannine Christians made an ambivalent thought. On one hand, they build an anti-Judaism concept, but on the other hand, they keep using the Jewish tradition to depict themselves as children of God.

**Keywords:** Gospel of John, Father, Jesus, Johannine Christians, Jewish, children of God

## **Preface**

The discussion about an ecclesiological concept in the Gospel of John is not a new thing. Unsurprisingly, many biblical scholars focus their research to understand the concept of the church in the Fourth Gospel because this is a unique topic, for this gospel has many differences with Synoptic Gospels, especially about the Jewish-Christians

relationship. An influential biblical theologian in John's Gospel studies, namely James Louis Martyn did his very popular research about the concept of Johannine community as an expelled group, or I might say, a marginal community. Martyn constructed his argument through his discovery of a unique term in the Gospel of John, that is *aposunagogos* (John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2). Martyn argued, this term is a portrait of the situation that the Johannine community must face, which is a formal expulsion by the Jewish leaders based on the Jamnia council.<sup>1</sup> Many scholars have been influenced by Martyn, and some tried to critique his study, such as John S. Kloppenborg. However, I have to admit that Martyn's work is very important, especially in exploring the situation between the Jewish community and the Johannine Christians in this Fourth Gospel around the end of the first century and the early second century.

Another thing that is extremely significant from Martyn's work is his approach, namely "a two-level drama" which is followed by another influential New Testament scholar, Raymond E. Brown. For Martyn and Brown, as Tobias Hägerland mentioned in his study, John's Gospel is perceived "as consisting of two parallel and intertwined stories. On the surface the Gospel is a story about Jesus, but below the surface the story of a religious community

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<sup>1</sup> J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 3 Edition. (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 47; Martinus C. De Boer, "Expulsion from the Synagogue: J. L. Martyn's *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* Revisited," *New Testament Studies* 66, no. 3 (July 2020): 382; Finki Rianto Kantohe, "Orang-Orang Farisi Dan Narsisisme Beragama: Tinjauan Mengenai Potret Orang-Orang Farisi Dalam Yohanes 9," *Jurnal Abdiel: Khazanah Pemikiran Teologi, Pendidikan Agama Kristen dan Musik Gereja* 4, no. 2 (October 27, 2020): 184.

is being told, as a kind of *Acta apostolorum* in cipher.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, reading the Gospel of John as “a two-level drama” implies that behind all the stories of Jesus and all the figures in this Gospel, there is a story of a Johannine community.

This same approach leads me to see the ecclesiological concept of Johannine Christians in John 20:17 which highlights Jesus’ saying “My Father and your Father.” Because I’m using “a two-level drama” as my approach in this article, all the story of the Gospel of John even Jesus’ saying in John 20:17 will be seen as a story of Johannine Christians with all their struggles and understandings. I argue that Jesus’ saying in John 20:17 is a concept of Johannine Christians as a new Israel which embodies an anti-Judaism view. To explain this argument, first thing first, I will try to explore the historical background about the Jewish-Christians relationship in this Fourth Gospel, then John’s view on Israel as the people and children of God, followed by the portrait of God as Father, and lastly, the discussion about the text itself (20.17) in its context.

### **Jewish and Christians in the Gospel of John**

In this section, I will explore the relationship and conflict between Jewish community and Johannine Christians based on Martyn’s work. In his work, Martyn noticed that *aposunagogos* is a unique term which appears only in the Gospel of John (9:22; 12:42; 16:2). Martyn argued that *aposunagogos* is a formal expulsion based on Jamnia council which resulted *Birkat HaMimin* for those who believed in Jesus and those not keeping a monotheism

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<sup>2</sup> Tobias Hägerland, “John’s Gospel: A Two-Level Drama?,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 25, no. 3 (March 2003): 312.

belief around the end of the first century and early second century.<sup>3</sup> In today's world, several scholars give their critique to Martyn's work about the starting date of *Birkat HaMimin* and its relation to the expulsion of Christians from the synagogue. For instance, Edward W. Klink III, who agreed with Daniel Boyarin, claimed that *Birkat HaMimin* was only found in the late second century sources. Therefore, for Klink and Boyarin, the expulsion occurred within Jewish community, not with Christians.<sup>4</sup> This was clearly not aligned with Martyn's view.

Another scholar who critiques Martyn's work is Kloppenborg.<sup>5</sup> He does not agree with Martyn about the origin conflict between Jewish community and Johannine Christians. For Kloppenborg, the expulsion is not because of the belief in Jesus, instead, it is due to the deviant behavior against the Jewish traditions, either failure to comply with the larger group's practices concerning Sabbath observance, or other practices.<sup>6</sup> Despite their critics, Klink, Boyarin and Kloppenborg cannot deny that this gospel explicitly talks about the expulsion of the Johannine Christians and their conflict with the Jewish

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<sup>3</sup> Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 21–22; 47; Finki Rianto Kantohe and Samuel Benjamin Hakh, "Yesus Sang Mediator Yang Merengkuh Umat Termarginalisasi: Sebuah Analisis Sosio-Historis Terhadap Yohanes 9," *GEMA TEOLOGIKA: Jurnal Teologi Kontekstual dan Filsafat Keilahian* 5, no. 2 (October 27, 2020): 213.

<sup>4</sup> Edward W Klink III, "The Overrealized Expulsion in the Gospel of John," in *Aspects of Historicity in the Fourth Gospel*, ed. Paul N Anderson, Felix Just, and Tom Thatcher, vol. 2, John, Jesus, and History (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 176–179.

<sup>5</sup> He made a larger discovery in his work "Disaffiliation in Associations and the ἀποουαγωγός of John." Not only he found that the term aposunagogos first appeared in the Gospel of John just like Martyn did, he asserted that this term never appeared in any other Greco-Roman manuscript. See John S. Kloppenborg, "Disaffiliation in Associations and the Αποουαγωγός of John," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 67, no. 1 (June 6, 2011): 5–8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 8–9.

community. Hence, in exploring Jewish-Christians relationship, we cannot avoid the tension of these two groups, which was stated louder than Synoptic Gospels.

In the Gospel of John, the word *hoi Ioudaioi* (the plural form in Greek for Jewish) appears uniquely. Stanley E. Porter who cited R Bieringer, D. Pollefeyt, Vandecasteele-Vanneuville, said that “*hoi ioudaioi* appears seventy times, refers to (1) a non-Johannine Jewish Christians, (2) the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, (3) Torah-observing Jews in Jerusalem, (4) residents of Judea or Judeans, and (5) the Jews heirs of particular Jews who openly opposed Jesus.”<sup>7</sup> Based on all these references, we find that Jewish community has negative connotations. This is a pejoration of Jewish as an opponent of Jesus; hence the opponent of Johannine Christians too.

In addition, this negative connotation of Jewish community worsens with the word *kosmos* (world) which also appears in the Gospel of John. *Kosmos* means a group of people alienated from God who created it, which in this context refers to Jewish community.<sup>8</sup> This depicts that the tension between Jewish community and Johannine Christians is more serious in this Fourth Gospel than Synoptic Gospels. For a comparison, Craig A. Evans said, “In Matthew, the debate is taking place in the context of the synagogue. In John, the believers in Jesus have been thrust out of the synagogue.”<sup>9</sup> This brings us back to Martyn’s work about *aposunagogos*. I have to emphasize

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<sup>7</sup> Stanley E. Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus: In Pursuit of the Johannine Voice* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), 150–151.

<sup>8</sup> Craig R. Koester, *The Word of Life: A Theology of John’s Gospel*, 50784th edition. (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2008), 81.

<sup>9</sup> Craig A. Evans, *From Jesus to the Church: The First Christian Generation* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), 156.

that the conflict between Jewish and Johannine Christians which has caused the latter being expelled by Jewish leaders is therefore impossible to be avoided. This is why only in the Gospel of John has Jewish community been identified with a judgement and pejoration, namely “the son of devil” (8:44) which never appeared in Synoptic Gospels.

This view about the Jewish seems aligned to what Cyril from Alexandria said, that is, Cain is the Father of Jewish, and devil is the Father of Cain.<sup>10</sup> I am not going to talk about Cyril, but this alignment between the Gospel of John and Cyril’s saying gives us a sign of anti-Judaism. This anti-Judaism is a response of Johannine Christians to the conflict with Jewish community. Seeing through this lens of anti-Judaism, I argue that the saying of Jesus “My Father and your Father” in John 20:17 depicts not only about the relationship between the disciples or church with God, but also the portrait of Johannine Christians putting themselves as an opponent against Jewish community. Yet, I will talk about it more detail at the next three sections.

Although the Jewish-Christians conflict is indisputable, the dependency of the Johannine Christians to Jewish traditions is undeniable. For example, in the prologue of the Gospel of John, the word *Logos* which refers to Jesus (1:1-2) is not an original concept of Johannine Christians, but a Jewish concept which was taken from the book of Genesis chapter one.<sup>11</sup> Also, the portrait of Jesus as *Logos*

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<sup>10</sup> St Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra on the Pentateuch: Genesis*, trans. Nicholas P. Lunn (Washington, D.C: Catholic Univ of Amer Pr, 2019), 70–72.

<sup>11</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 27.

is a concept of wisdom in the Old Testament<sup>12</sup> which is a Jewish scripture. In addition, the Gospel of John tells us that Jesus followed and attended many of Jewish traditions, such as Hanukkah (10:22-23). This shows us that even Jesus, the Centre of the Johannine Christians' faith, has a very close relationship to Jewish traditions, and He is a Jew. So many evidences clearly show us how the Fourth Gospel has an underlying Jewish concept. What I want to say here is, this gospel has a uniquely ambivalent independency and dependency to Jewish concept. For Johannine Christians, they might depend on the Jewish messiahship and theology, but at the same time, they are different from and even against the Jewish. In the light of this view, we have to read John 20:17 based on this ambivalent perspective of Johannine Christians towards the Jewish. Before I dive into the text of John 20:17 itself, let me explore the view on Israel as the people and children of God and the concept of Father in the Fourth Gospel.

### **Israel as the People and Children of God**

I will elaborate this part briefly. In the Old Testament, Israel is identified as the people of God. This identity of Israel makes her very different with other nations in the Old Testament. The most basic thing for Israel to see their identity as people whom God has chosen is God's promise and blessing to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3.<sup>13</sup> When we look at the Fourth Gospel, we will find that this is what Jewish community see about themselves. For example, in

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<sup>12</sup> Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, Softcover ed. Edition., vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 335.

<sup>13</sup> Eckhard J Schnabel, "Israel, the People of God, and the Nations," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 45, no. 1 (March 2002): 35.

John 8:39, Jewish people said to Jesus that they are Abraham's children.

In the prologue of the Gospel of John (1:11), Israel is identified as "His own." This means, despite this gospel was written in conflict with Jewish community, the author of this Gospel keeps seeing Israel as God's own, the people of God. This proves that the portrait of Israel from the Old Testament still survived even in the situation when Jewish community and Johannine Christians were not in a good term. The concept of Israel as the people and children of God is very important because this view on Israel provides a theological foundation of Jesus' messiahship which is based on Jewish scripture, such as Philip's confession about Jesus in John 1:45 which refers to Moses' saying in Deuteronomy 18:15-18. Based on this view on Israel, Craig S. Keener rightly said that "Philip's confession, however, is more explicit in its appeal to the authority of Scripture—witness to Christ is the most common function of Moses in the Fourth Gospel."<sup>14</sup> In other words, this view explains to us why this Gospel keeps using many sources from the Old Testament prophets to build Jesus messiahship while fighting against Jewish community.

Not only as the people of God, the Israel is also portrayed as the children of God. When we read the Gospel of John, the Father-and-Son relationship is a vivid view that refers to God and Jesus, whereas in the Old Testament, Israel is depicted as children of God (Jer. 3:19; 31:9; Hos. 11:1; Mal. 2:10). No wonder, Jewish people identified themselves as God's children and perceived God as their Father in this Gospel (8:41). This view is a foundation for

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<sup>14</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2:483.



Johannine Christians' self-identification as God's children. We are going to talk this more in the next section.

### **God as Father in the Gospel of John**

Father is the most frequent term which refers to God in the Gospel of John. Even the eyewitnesses of this Fourth Gospel identified Jesus as the Son and the God as the Father of Jesus (1:14). Marianne Meye Thompson in her work said that the word "Father" occurs 120 times, and it is the most common designation of God, while the word God (*theos*) occurs 108 times.<sup>15</sup> This fact shows us that the Father is a unique identity of God in the Gospel of John. In many places in this Gospel, the Father refers to the Father of Jesus. In other words, the term "Father" depicts the relationship between God and Jesus in the imagery of Father and Son. According to Thompson, the fatherhood of God is an imagery of the unity of God and Jesus.<sup>16</sup> This is similar to what Paul N. Anderson said that, in John 5:17, Jesus used the term "Father" to show their unity, when Jesus works, the Father also works. And this shows that God as Jesus' Father has given all His authority to His Son, Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup>

According to the ancient household, "sons participate in the collective honor of the father and the only born son is the sole inheritor of his father's house and social

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<sup>15</sup> Marianne Meye Thompson, "The Gospel of John and Early Trinitarian Thought: The Unity of God in John, Irenaeus and Tertullian," *Journal of Early Christian History* 4, no. 2 (January 2014): 156.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>17</sup> Paul N. Anderson, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel: An Introduction to John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 28.

position.”<sup>18</sup> In this light, the portrait of God as Father, not only depicts a unity, but also the origin of Jesus, that is, He is from His Father, He came to the world not by His own will, but God’s (see John 3:16). And His authority lies on God’s authority.

From an ecclesiological concept, this fatherhood of God plays two roles. On one hand, it is perceived as “a binder” for Johannine Christians with God and Jesus, while on the other hand, “a separator” from Jewish community which is identified as the world (*kosmos*). William Loader explained that the term “Father and Son” used to describe the relationship between God and Jesus is the relationship which is characterized by love. This love also describes the relationship between God and Jesus and the community of faith (believers) in the Gospel of John.<sup>19</sup> Hence we can say that the fatherhood of God is “a binder” for Jesus and God, and the Johannine community of faith.

In contrast, the fatherhood of God makes a distinction, even separation, with Jewish community. In John 13:1; 16:28; 17:11, the Father is contrasted with *kosmos* (the world),<sup>20</sup> an alienated group which is Jewish community. Hence, God as Father is against Jewish community. We can see this dualism vividly in Jesus’ response when Jewish claimed that God is their Father. Jesus rebuked them by saying that, instead, devil is their father (8:41-44). In all the Gospel of John, Father is never related to Jewish community. Albeit Jewish community has been

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<sup>18</sup> Jesper Tang Nielsen, “The Narrative Structures of Glory and Glorification in the Fourth Gospel,” *New Testament Studies* 56, no. 3 (July 2010): 356.

<sup>19</sup> William R. G. Loader, *Jesus in John’s Gospel: Structure and Issues in Johannine Christology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2017), 316.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2015), 121.

mentioned as God's own in the prologue of this gospel (1:11), they are never considered as God's children. In contrast, those who accepted and believed in Jesus are identified as God's children (1:12).<sup>21</sup> This makes sense because of the anti-Judaism ideology of the Johannine Christians in their conflict with the Jewish community. In the next section, I am going to discuss more detail about an ecclesiological concept related to the portrait of God as the Father based on John 20:17.

### **My Father and Your Father (Jn. 20:17): A New Israel and Anti-Judaism**

In this section, we will, first of all, see the structure of the Fourth Gospel to find the context of Jesus' saying "My Father and Your Father." The Gospel of John is divided into four outlines. They are, prologue (1:1-18), the book of signs (1:19-12:50), the book of glory (13:1-20:31), and the epilogue (21:1-25).<sup>22</sup> Based on these outlines, John 20:17 is clearly part of the book of glory. Scholars said that this part (13:1-20:31) is the book of glory because this is the story of glorifying and the going back of Jesus to His Father.<sup>23</sup>

To be more specific, John 20:17 is in the part of Jesus' resurrection and appearances narrative. And apparently, this verse tells us about Jesus' first appearance. In this verse, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene which makes

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<sup>21</sup> I'm not saying that the believers are not Jewish, but in this Gospel, the term Jewish is never referred to those who believed in Jesus. The Jewish, in the Gospel of John, certainly do not represent all Jewish as a universal term.

<sup>22</sup> D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd edition. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Academic, 2005), 225.

<sup>23</sup> Scott M. Lewis, "Injil Menurut Yohanes," in *Tafsir Perjanjian Baru*, ed. Daniel Durken (D.I. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Penerbit Kanisius, 2018), 560.

this aligned to the Synoptic Gospels. All of them tell us that Mary Magdalene is the first witness of Jesus' resurrection. Many New Testament historians categorized Mary Magdalene's witness of Jesus' resurrection as a historical event because of the multiple attestations from two independent sources i.e. the Gospel of John and the Synoptic Gospels.<sup>24</sup> In additional, a dissimilarity with the tradition in the first century on how people perceive witnessing where testimony of women was of no significant<sup>25</sup>, hence affirming this as a historical event. If this story were fake, or the early Christians made it up, why would they use Mary, who is a woman, to be the first witness of Jesus' resurrection? But I will not talk more about the historical aspect of this event because that is not the purpose of this paper. In this article, the important question is, who is Mary Magdalene in the Gospel of John and Johannine community?

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<sup>24</sup> For New Testament scholars, Synoptic Gospels which are Matthew, Mark, and Luke are not independent because Matthew and Luke depend on Mark and Q. But John is highly different and independent.

<sup>25</sup> In ancient world, especially in Greco-Roman world, testimonies given by women couldn't be counted. In Jewish eyes, they were unacceptable; hence their report of the empty tomb is of small account. That two men should verify the evidence was important, since they could fulfill the Jewish requirement of valid testimony according to Deut 19:15. See George Raymond Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 36, John*, ed. David Allen Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker, and Bruce Manning Metzger, Word biblical commentary [General ed.: David A. Hubbard; Glenn W. Barker. Old Testament ed.: John D. W. Watts. New Testament ed.: Ralph P. Martin]; Vol. 36 (Waco, Tex: Word Books, Publ, 1987), 372. -- There are three kinds of methods that historians used to categorize which event of the story is historical. First, the multiple attestations from independence sources; second, the dissimilarity with a theological understanding which makes the event possible to be a conspiracy. Third, contextual credibility. Even an unbeliever New Testament historian such as Bart D. Ehrman agrees with these methods. He used these methods in his book. See Bart D. Ehrman, *How Jesus Became God: The Exaltation of a Jewish Preacher from Galilee*, 1st Edition. (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2014).

Concerning John 20:16, Koester explained Mary's encounter with Jesus very well. He said that, this is a reflection of Jesus' comments about the good shepherd, "who calls his own sheep by name" and leads them out and they recognize his voice (10:3-4, 16, 17). And this is what happened to Mary. Jesus called her by her name and she recognized Him by His voice.<sup>26</sup> In the light of a two-level drama reading, we can see that Mary is a representation of Johannine Christians, the flock of God. In the illumination of anti-Judaism, this text tells us more about the difference between the Jewish community and Johannine Christians. Jewish community is not seen as the flock of God, but Johannine Christians are. In His glory after resurrected, Jesus united Himself with the community as a Shepherd and sheep, separating Himself and His sheep from those who are not of God's flock.

After forbidding Mary to touch Him, Jesus gives a very special command to Mary, "Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Francis Martyn and William M. Wright IV explained that John 20:17 shows how Jesus' death and His resurrection have radically changed the relationship between human beings and God. So, the disciples became God's children.<sup>27</sup> When Jesus used the phrase, "My God and your God", that is a universal calling for God. But when He used the phrase "My Father and your Father," this depicts a very close personal relationship with God. The relationship of Jesus as the Son of God and God as His Father, now by His death and resurrection, has been reflected to the Johannine

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<sup>26</sup> Koester, *The Word of Life*, 126.

<sup>27</sup> Francis Martin and William M Wright IV, *The Gospel of John*, Catholic commentary on sacred scripture (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2015), 337.

Christians.<sup>28</sup> This reminds us of the prologue of this Fourth Gospel (1:11-12) when the author of the gospel tried to introduce Jesus as the *Logos* and the Light who has incarnated. In John 1:11-12, Jewish community who were identified as God's own are against the Johannine Christians. Jewish community refuse Jesus hence they do not become the children of God, but, Johannine Christians accept Jesus thus they become God's children. Therefore, John 20:17 is a fulfillment of what the author of this gospel said in 1:11-12.

Even though, the saying of Jesus "My Father and your Father" brings a radical change to the relationship between God and Johannine community, we have to realize that this concept is based on Jewish concept in Jewish scripture (The Old Testament). Before I continue, I have to underline, that I do not mean that the relationship between Jesus as the Son and God as the Father is similar to the relationship between God and His disciples who are the representation of Johannine Christians. Jesus is called *huios* while disciples are called children, *tekna*. And also, according to Thompson, because Jesus said "My Father and your Father" not "our Father", it distinguishes the relationship of Jesus and God with the relationship of God with the disciples. This means the relationship of disciples and God is granted by the Son.<sup>29</sup> However, the concept of God as the Father and the Christian community as His children came from the Old Testament which portrays God as the Father of Israel (Jer. 3:19; 31: 9; Hos. 11:1; Mal. 2:10).<sup>30</sup> In this light, albeit the Johannine Christians has an anti-Judaism view, they cannot simply

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<sup>29</sup> Marianne Meye Thompson, *John: A Commentary* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 417-418.

<sup>30</sup> Thompson, "The Gospel of John and Early Trinitarian Thought," 156.

release their dependency on Jewish tradition or theology. Yet, even in the view of their identity, Johannine Christians keep using the Jewish tradition; emphasizing them as the children of God and God as their Father.

If that is the case, how can the Johannine Christians see themselves as the opposition of Jewish, while at the same time applying the Jewish tradition? In this last question, I argue that Johannine Christians are not against the Jewish tradition or the Old Testament, but they keep using it while reforming its concept. They see that they are the new Israel, who are identified as the children of God. Based on Jesus' death and resurrection which bring life to the human being, hence those who have accepted Jesus Christ, they come into a new relationship and covenant with God the Father, in Christ Jesus. This a very creative thought. On one hand, they are against Jewish community by identifying Jewish community as the children of devil. On the other hand, they keep using the Jewish concept and bringing it further to build their new identity as the children of God based on the Jewish Scripture as the new Israel and change the old Israel who rejected to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

## **Conclusion**

In our Scripture, The Old Testament and The New Testament, Israel is the first community which is identified as the people or even the children of God. This is the fact that even this anti-Judaism Gospel cannot deny it. Based on the influence of the Jewish tradition from the Old Testament, the author of this gospel uses it as a foothold for his theological and even ecclesiological understanding. At the same time, because of the conflict and the expulsion

of Johannine Christians by the Jewish leaders, they—both the author and also the Johannine Christians—build an anti-Judaism concept of their identity against the Jewish community.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, Johannine Christians saw themselves in a new relationship with God such as the relationship of God and Israel in the Old Testament, that is, the Father and the children. This relationship is only possible in God's Son, Jesus Christ. Johannine Christians also rejected Jewish community as the children of God, and used Jesus' saying to depict that Jewish community is the children of devil. Jesus' saying "My Father and your Father" implies that Johannine Christians have come into a new relationship with God as the Father and that they are the children and the new Israel. Not only that, Jesus' saying is also used by Johannine Christians to separate them from Jewish community as their concept of anti-Judaism.

In relation to today's churches, we have to be careful about the anti-Judaism. It is not originally Jesus' teaching. The anti-Judaism is a product of theological response against the act of expulsion of the Johannine Christians by the Jewish community. Therefore, instead of going against Jewish community today, Christians ought to respect them because our identity is rooted in their tradition.

In closing, I have to admit that this article is far from perfection. Hence, I keep myself open for any criticism. Yet, I hope this paper can be a contribution for the New Testament studies, especially in the field of Johannine studies and to the churches worldwide.



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