

DEOLITO V. VISTAR, JR.

The
Cross-and-Resurrection

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

Mohr Siebeck

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Deolito V. Vistar, Jr.

The Cross-and-Resurrection

The Supreme Sign in John's Gospel

Mohr Siebeck

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*For my Good Shepherd
who laid down His life for me to give me life
(John 10:1–18; cf. Ps 23)*

Preface

This book constitutes a minor revision of my doctoral thesis entitled “The Supreme Σημεῖον of Jesus’ Death-and-Resurrection in the Fourth Gospel” submitted to the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand, and defended on 30 October 2017. In this work I argue that Jesus’ death-and-resurrection is the supreme σημεῖον in the Fourth Gospel (FG). By focusing on the present text of the Gospel, without regard to questions of tradition and redaction, I discuss and defend the above proposition in three steps. Firstly, an analysis of the seventeen occurrences of the word σημεῖον in FG demonstrates that the word’s meaning and referent cannot be confined to the miraculous activity of Jesus. A Johannine σημεῖον pertains broadly to any deed of Jesus viewed from the perspective of its function of revealing Jesus as the divine Messiah and Son of God. From this perspective, the crucifixion-and-resurrection, arguably the greatest complex deed of Jesus, may be regarded as the supreme σημεῖον.

Secondly, an analysis of five important Johannine themes – namely δόξα, ὑψωσις, ἔργον, ὄρα, and πίστις – lends strong support for the thesis. Individually and collectively these themes focus on Jesus’ death-and-resurrection as the goal and climax of the narrative, as the culmination and consummation of Jesus’ salvific mission, and as the supreme revelation (hence, σημεῖον) of Jesus’ true identity.

Thirdly, an analysis of five passages from the Gospel further reinforces the thesis that Jesus’ death-and-resurrection is the supreme σημεῖον. John 2:13–22 recounts the first demand for a σημεῖον in the Gospel (v. 18), to which Jesus replies by alluding to his death-and-resurrection (vv. 19, 21). John 6 recounts the second demand for a σημεῖον (vv. 30–31), to which Jesus’ response is essentially the same: by his sacrificial death (vv. 51c–58) and resurrection (alluded to in the ἀνάβασις of v. 62), Jesus, as the bread of life (vv. 35, 48, 51c), grants eternal life to those who believe in him (vv. 35, 50–58). Jesus’ consistent response to the two demands for a σημεῖον alludes to his death-and-resurrection, showing that that complex event is what will supremely reveal his divine identity and mission.

The third passage is John 11, where the σημεῖον of the raising of Lazarus not only alludes to Jesus’ death-and-resurrection, but also precipitates the Sanhedrin’s decision to put Jesus to death (vv. 47–53). In other words, this σημεῖον

precipitates the arrival of the supreme σημεῖον. The fourth passage is 19:16–37, the crucifixion account, where, although the word σημεῖον is not explicitly used, one gets a clear sense from the evangelist’s various emphases in the narrative that the crucifixion in fact validates, rather than contradicts or nullifies, Jesus’ claims to being the true Messiah. The evangelist, viewing the cross through post-Easter eyes, implicitly sees it as constituting, together with the resurrection, the supreme Christological σημεῖον.

The last passage is John 20, which recounts a catena of appearances of the risen Lord. These appearances, individually and collectively, establish for the witnesses and the readers the reality of Jesus’ resurrection. The fundamental point is that the one who was crucified is now alive again. Thus, the supreme σημεῖον is not the crucifixion alone, nor is it the resurrection alone. Apart from the resurrection, the crucifixion cannot be a positive σημεῖον for Jesus. By the same token, the resurrection presupposes the death of Jesus. Together, the crucifixion-and-resurrection constitutes the supreme σημεῖον of Jesus in FG.

Many individuals and organizations have contributed, in one way or another, to the process of writing this book – to them go my heartfelt thanks. I thank the triune God, the ultimate source of every good and perfect gift (cf. James 1:17), for making it possible for me to pursue a PhD. I am thankful for the sufficiency of His grace and provisions throughout the three years of my doctoral research.

Secondly, I acknowledge and thank the University of Otago both for the generous Doctoral Scholarship and for the environment and context conducive for productive study. I am thankful for the Humanities PhD Conference Funding which enabled me to participate and present a portion of my work in the Society of Biblical Literature (International Meeting) held in Seoul, South Korea on 3–7 July 2016. I also appreciate the kind assistance – in terms of locating and lending books and related resources – of the staff at the University of Otago’s Central Library, as well as the staff of Hewitson Library (Dunedin) of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Thirdly, I thank my primary supervisor, Prof. Paul R. Trebilco, for his able and expeditious supervision of my research. Having a keen eye for the big picture, Paul alerted me to areas of my work where coherence was lacking, and helped me greatly in clarifying my overall thesis as well as in seeing to it that the parts cohered with the overall argument. Paul was very prompt in reading my work and giving me feedback. I could not ask for a better *Doktorvater*. I also thank Dr. James E. Harding for co-supervising my thesis. Being an OT scholar, and having a keen eye for details, James was especially helpful not only where my work intersected with things related to the OT, but also in improving my argument and overall work. Without Paul’s and James’s help, I could have not finished and produced this book. But they are not to blame for whatever errors or weaknesses that remain, which are solely mine.

I acknowledge and thank the brothers and sisters in Christ at Grace Bible Church (GBC) in Dunedin, with whom I worshiped for a year. GBC helped my family a lot, specially in terms of prayer and moral support, when my first child, Angela, was born in 2015. I would like to thank Dr. Stuart Johnson, a teaching-pastor at GBC and associate principal at Grace Theological College (Dunedin), for reading and commenting on a portion of my work. I also acknowledge and thank the brothers and sisters in Christ at the Reformed Church of Dunedin, where I worshiped during the last two years of my studies. I benefited spiritually from the occasional men's group, headed by the minister, Rev. Erik Stolte, as well as from the homegroup headed by John van Dyk. I thank Dr. Friedlieb Lorenz for reading a part of my work, and for his helpful comments and suggestions.

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Last but not least, I thank my wife and best friend, Guan Wang, for her love and support. Without her prayers and encouragement, this work would not have been completed. To her and our two children – Angela and Nathan – I lovingly dedicate this book.

This book follows *The SBL Handbook of Style* (2nd ed.) on abbreviations, notes, and bibliography. Unless noted otherwise, English translations of biblical texts are from the NRSV.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Deolito V. Vistar, Jr.
Picton, New Zealand
June 2018

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List of Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ABG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte
ABR	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ACNT	Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament
Acts Pet.	Acts of Peter
Aeschin.	Aeschines, <i>On the Embassy</i>
AGSU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums
A.J.	Josephus, <i>Antiquitates judaicae</i>
ANF	<i>Ante-Nicene Fathers</i> . Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 1885–1887. 10 vols. Repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
Antipho	Antiphon, <i>On the Murder of Herodes</i>
Apol.	Xenophon, <i>Apologia Socratis</i>
Ar. Nu.	Aristophanes, <i>Clouds</i>
ASV	American Standard Version
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
AThR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
Autol.	Theophilus, <i>Ad Autolyicum</i>
Bar.	Baruch
BBET	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000 (Danker-Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich).
BDF	Blass, Friedrich, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and</i>

	<i>Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
Bek.	Bekorot
Ber.	Berakot
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BH	Biblische Handbibliothek
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>B.J.</i>	Josephus, <i>Bellum judaicum</i>
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</i>
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BPC	Biblical Performance Criticism
<i>BRev</i>	<i>Bible Review</i>
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BU	Biblische Untersuchungen
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>Cal.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Gaius Caligula</i>
<i>C.Ap.</i>	Josephus, <i>Contra Apionem</i>
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
ConBNT	Coniectanea Neotestamentica: New Testament Series
Clem.	Clement
COQG	Christian Origins and the Question of God
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CTL	Cambridge Textbooks on Linguistics
<i>CTQ</i>	<i>Concordia Theological Quarterly</i>
<i>CTR</i>	<i>Criswell Theological Review</i>
<i>DBSup</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de la Bible Supplément</i> . Edited by Lous Pirot and André Robert. Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1928–
<i>Dial.</i>	Justin, <i>Dialogue with Trypho</i>
<i>Did</i>	<i>Didaskalia</i>
Dio	Cassius Dio, <i>Historiae Romanae</i>

<i>DNT</i>	<i>Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Daniel G. Reid. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
<i>DNTB</i>	<i>Dictionary of New Testament Background</i> . Edited by Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
<i>Dom.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Domitian</i>
<i>DRev</i>	<i>Downside Review</i>
<i>EBC</i>	<i>Expositor's Bible Commentary</i> . Edited by Frank E. Gaebeline. 12 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976–1992.
<i>ECC</i>	Eerdmans Critical Commentary
<i>Eccles. Rab.</i>	Ecclesiastes Rabbah
<i>ECL</i>	Early Christianity and Its Literature
<i>EDNT</i>	<i>Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider. ET. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990–1993.
<i>EJud</i>	<i>The Encyclopedia of Judaism</i> . Edited by Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck, and William Scott Green. 2nd ed. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
<i>En.</i>	Enoch
<i>Ep. Apos.</i>	Epistle to the Apostles
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
<i>FRLANT</i>	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>Gal.</i>	<i>Galenus</i>
<i>GELS</i>	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Takamitsu Muraoka. Leuven: Peeters, 2009.
<i>GNB</i>	Good News Bible
<i>GS</i>	Geistliche Schriftlesung
<i>Ḥag.</i>	Ḥagigah
<i>HBS</i>	Herders biblische Studien
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
<i>Hdt.</i>	Herodotus, <i>The Histories</i>
<i>Hermeneia</i>	Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible
<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>
<i>HKNT</i>	Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HNT</i>	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTCNT</i>	Herder's Theological Commentary on the New Testament
<i>HThKNT</i>	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HvTSt</i>	<i>Hervormde Theologiese Studies</i>

ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . Edited by George A. Buttrick. 4 vols. New York: Abingdon, 1962.
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>ITQ</i>	<i>Irish Theological Quarterly</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JBLMS	Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
<i>JBTh</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JGRChJ</i>	<i>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
Jub.	Jubilees
<i>Judaism</i>	<i>Judaism</i>
Ketub.	Ketubbot
L&N	Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains</i> . 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989.
LB	Living Bible
LBS	Linguistic Biblical Studies
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
<i>Leg.</i>	Philo, <i>Legum allegoriae</i>
Let. Aris.	Letter of Aristeas
LNTS	The Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones, and R. McKenzie. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
LXX	Septuagint
Menah	Menahot
MHT	Moulton, J. H., W. F. Howard, and N. Turner. <i>A Grammar of New Testament Greek</i> . 4 vols. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1908–1976.
MT	Masoretic Text
NA ²⁸	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , 28th ed.
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament

<i>NIDB</i>	<i>New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006–2009.
NIV	New International Version
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NKJV	New King James Version
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
<i>NPNF</i>	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTL	New Testament Library
NTR	New Testament Readings
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
Num. Rab.	Numbers Rabbah
<i>NZStH</i>	<i>Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie</i>
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuch-Kommentar
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Oxford Theological Monographs
<i>OTP</i>	<i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985.
<i>Pacifica</i>	<i>Pacifica</i>
PBM	Paternoster Biblical Monographs
PCNT	Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament
Pesiq. Rab Kah.	Pesiqta de Rab Kahana
Pl. Phaedr.	Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i>
PNTC	Pelican New Testament Commentaries
<i>PRSt</i>	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
Pss. Sol.	Psalms of Solomon
RBS	Resources for Biblical Study
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
Rh.	Rhetores Graeci
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Religious Studies Review</i>
RSTH	Regensburger Studien zur Theologie
RSV	Revised Standard Version
Ruth Rab.	Ruth Rabbah
<i>SacSc</i>	<i>Sacra Scripta</i>
Sanh.	Sanhedrin
SANT	Studia Aarhusiana Neotestamentica
SANT	Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament

SB	<i>Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten</i> . Edited by Friedrich Preisigke et al. Vols 1–21. Harrassowitz, 1915–2002.
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBL SBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
SBLSS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>Scorp.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Scorpiace</i>
Šeqal.	Šeqalim
Sib. Or.	Sibylline Oracles
<i>Sign. acut.</i>	Areteus, <i>De causis et signis acutorum morborum</i>
SIJD	Schriften des Institutum judaicum delitzschianum
Sir	Sirach/Ecclesiasticus
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
<i>Smyrn.</i>	Ignatius, <i>To the Smyrnaeans</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
Sotaḥ	Sotaḥ
SP	Sacra Pagina
<i>Spec. Laws</i>	Philo, <i>On the Special Laws</i>
SPNT	Studies on Personalities of the New Testament
SR	<i>Studies in Religion</i>
SSEJC	Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity
ST	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
Str-B	Strack, Hermann Leberecht and Paul Billerbeck. <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash</i> . 6 vols. Munich: Beck, 1922–1961.
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
Th.	Thucydides, <i>The Peloponnesian War</i>
<i>Theol</i>	<i>Theology</i>
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
T. Levi	Testament of Levi
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
UBS ⁵	<i>The Greek New Testament</i> , United Bible Societies, 5th ed.
UTR	Utrechtse Theologische Reeks
VE	<i>Vox Evangelica</i>
Vulg.	Vulgate
WBC	Word Biblical Commentaries

Wis	Wisdom of Solomon
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>Worship</i>	<i>Worship</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZEB	<i>Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible</i> . Rev. ed. Moisés Silva. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
ZTK	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

Chapter 1

Introduction

A. Statement of the Problem

As is well known, σημεῖον is among the most important and characteristic terms in the Fourth Gospel (hereafter FG). This is indicated not only by the frequency of its occurrences,¹ but also by the fact that it is the word by which the Fourth Evangelist (hereafter FE) describes Jesus' deeds. FE uses it twice to describe Jesus' public ministry as a whole (12:37; 20:30–31). He also uses it in the formulation of the Gospel's purpose statement (20:30–31).²

But what does the Johannine σημεῖον mean? What does it refer to? What is it exactly and what is it not? In this regard I believe that there exists a problem – a need for clarity and precision – in the current state of Johannine scholarship. This question, which is definitional and conceptual, constitutes the foundational stage of the problem that this book seeks to address. By raising this question, I am not suggesting that there has been scant scholarly attention paid to σημεῖον in FG. On the contrary, as will be shown in the next chapter, there has been a tremendous amount of research into the subject in the last seven decades or so. However, in my view many of the existing conclusions, for instance, on what the σημεῖα pertain to, are not entirely satisfactory and may not reflect FG's overall teaching. It is part of the task of this work to demonstrate how it is that many of the existing views do not cohere with the whole data of the Gospel.

The second part of the problem, which is the main focus of this book, is definitionally and logically connected to the first. It has to do with the question of the relationship between Jesus' death-and-resurrection³ and σημεῖον. Is the cross-and-resurrection, which arguably is the greatest deed of Jesus and which in FG is conceived as a theological unity, a σημεῖον? While some may think

¹ The occurrences and usage of σημεῖον will be discussed in ch. 3 below. The verb σημαίνειν will be discussed in ch. 4 (pp. 66–69).

² As is also well known, FE nowhere uses the word δόναμις, the preferred term of the Synoptic Gospels for the miraculous deeds of Jesus.

³ In this book I use the hyphenated expression “death-and-resurrection” (alternatively “crucifixion-and-resurrection” or “cross-and-resurrection”) to convey the view that in FG Jesus' death-and-resurrection constitute a theologically unified, though temporally distinguishable, event. This is important for my argument (see pp. 228–230).

that this question is unrelated to the first, I am convinced that it needs to be asked and answered when one is trying to clarify what σημεῖον pertains to, and what it includes and excludes. Once again, this is not to imply that there are no existing views on this question in current Johannine scholarship. In fact the answer that I hope to defend here will not be entirely *de novo*, but will build on some of the more coherent views already available. But again some of the main views on the connection between σημεῖον and Jesus' death-and-resurrection do not seem to me to be entirely satisfactory, and the need for greater precision remains.

In sum, this book focuses on a two-part problem related to the Johannine σημεῖον. The first part has to do with the referent of σημεῖον and the second part deals with the precise connection between σημεῖον and Jesus' death-and-resurrection.

B. Statement of the Thesis

I seek to articulate and defend a twofold thesis. First, in regard to meaning and referent, I submit that the Johannine σημεῖον pertains to a deed of Jesus – miraculous or otherwise – which FE has recorded in his Gospel in order that the reader may believe in Jesus (20:30–31). I deviate from the common view that understands the σημεῖα as limited to the seven or eight miracles that FE has recounted at length. Second, I submit that Jesus' crucifixion-and-resurrection, as one complex event, is the supreme σημεῖον in FG. That is, it supremely reveals Jesus' identity and mission as the divine Son of God and Savior of the world.

C. Scope and Limits of the Study

Firstly, this is not a study of the miraculous accounts (i.e., the eight miracles recounted in John 2–11, 21), although two of those miracles will be included here (i.e., the multiplication of the loaves in John 6 and the raising of Lazarus in John 11). Part of a long-standing assumption in Johannine scholarship is the belief that the σημεῖα equate with the seven or eight miracles which FE has recounted, so that a study of the Johannine σημεῖα might immediately be thought of by many as an investigation into those miracles. Of course, the σημεῖα may be investigated by precisely that procedure, for the σημεῖα no doubt also include those miracles. However, that is not the procedure employed here. Moreover, I am not a proponent of the view that restricts and confines the σημεῖα to only those seven or eight miracles. Rather, this study is an investigation into the Johannine notion of σημεῖον – what it is and what it includes.

As has been mentioned, I seek to ascertain the term's meaning and referent. Thus, an important part of this investigation is the survey of all the seventeen occurrences of *σημεῖον*, as well as the threefold use of the verb *σημαίνειν*.

Secondly, this is not a study of the literary and conceptual backgrounds of the *σημεῖα*, although I occasionally mention in passing the probable links of the *σημεῖα* to some traditions in the OT, such as, for example, the Egyptian plagues in Exodus. Rather, this is a study of *σημεῖον* on the basis of the text of FG as it now stands. There will be no attempt at source- and redaction-critical inquiry.

Thirdly, this is not an investigation into FG's theology of Jesus' death-and-resurrection. Accordingly, I am not going to address such questions as whether or not FG has a "theology of the cross,"⁴ nor will I take account of the various ways whereby the FE has understood the importance of Jesus' death-and-resurrection.⁵

D. Presuppositions and Methodology

In this book I operate from the assumption that FG is a coherent piece of work whose overall message can be successfully discerned by close attention to its language, details, and structure. As to its authorship and provenance, it is not necessary for this work to speculate on the details and espouse a particular view. For instance, when I use the appellation "the Fourth Evangelist" (FE), I do so without presupposing a particular identity.

Methodologically this study is concerned with the meaning and referent of *σημεῖον*, not from the perspective of (and by inquiring into) putative sources and redaction, but from that of (and by inquiring into) the Gospel text as we now have it. As to Jesus' death-and-resurrection, my concern is narrow and defined. When I argue that Jesus' cross-and-resurrection is the supreme *σημεῖον*, I am obviously focusing upon its revelational aspects – I am looking at the crucifixion-and-resurrection from the point of view of *σημεῖον*. But I am not suggesting that this is all that the crucifixion-and-resurrection means and achieves in FG.

⁴ On which see, e.g., Jörg Frey, "Die *theologia crucifixi* des Johannesevangeliums," in *Kreuzestheologie im Neuen Testament*, ed. A. Dettwiler and J. Zumstein, WUNT 151 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 169–238; John Morgan-Wynne, *The Cross in the Johannine Writings* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 1–211, esp. 132–91.

⁵ On which see, e.g., Udo Schnelle, "The Cross and Resurrection in the Gospel of John," in *The Resurrection of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, ed. C. R. Koester and R. Bieringer, WUNT 222 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 127–51.

E. Procedure and Shape of the Argument

Apart from the customary chapters (ch. 1: Introduction; ch 2: Review of Literature; and ch. 10: Conclusion), the bulk of this book as well as the shape and flow of its argument will consist of the following three parts.

First, the foundation of the work is laid in ch. 3 by an analysis of the seventeen occurrences and usage of *σημεῖον*. What is the overall meaning and referent of this term? Does this overall meaning allow or disallow the inclusion of Jesus' death-and-resurrection in the category of *σημεῖον*? If the answer is affirmative, the most important implication is that Jesus' death-and-resurrection is not just a *σημεῖον*, but the greatest *σημεῖον*. Also in ch. 3 the purpose for the *σημεῖα* will be briefly considered.

Second, ch. 4 will explore and analyze five Johannine themes – namely *δόξα*, *ὑψωσις*, *ἔργον*, *ᾠρα*, and *πίστις* – that further support the thesis that the crucifixion-and-resurrection is the supreme Johannine *σημεῖον*. These thematic studies build and expand on the foundation laid in ch. 3.

The third and final step will occupy the bulk of the thesis (chs. 5–9). Here I am focusing on the exegesis of specific passages that bear on the positive connection between *σημεῖον* and Jesus' death-and-resurrection. Chapter 5 will deal with the account of the temple “cleansing” (2:13–22). Chapter 6 will analyze the feeding miracle and Bread of Life discourse in John 6. Chapter 7 will focus upon the raising of Lazarus in John 11. Chapter 8 will deal with the account of Jesus' crucifixion in 19:16–37. Then chapter 9 will focus upon Jesus' resurrection and the catena of post-resurrection appearances in John 20. The choice of these passages is not random but is guided by important textual and narrative considerations.

For instance, the temple “cleansing” and the feeding miracle are bound together by the two incidents of the demand for a *σημεῖον* (see 2:18 and 6:30–31). The temple “cleansing” is significant in its own right because it is Jesus' first appearance in Jerusalem and in the temple during his public ministry. In other words, it is his first encounter with Judaism. The feeding miracle is also significant in its own right because it represents the climax of Jesus' Galilean ministry in FG. With regards to the raising of Lazarus, its primary importance lies in the fact that it directly precipitates the Sanhedrin's decision to put Jesus to death. In other words it is a transitional and pivotal event, ushering in the Jesus' *ᾠρα*, which has been the target of the Johannine narrative.

The remaining two chapters (8 and 9) concentrate on FG's accounts of the crucifixion-and-resurrection. Chapter 8 focuses upon John 19:16–37 because this is the immediate account of the crucifixion. Because my focus is narrowly upon the crucifixion itself, it is not necessary to include the entire Passion account (John 18–19). The same rationale applies to the focus in ch. 9 upon John

20. The catena of post-resurrection appearances in John 20 suffices for the purposes of this book, and John 21, which recounts another post-resurrection appearance, need not be included.

Overall, the work builds a cumulative case for the view that Jesus' crucifixion-and-resurrection not only belongs in the category of Johannine σημεῖα, but also that it is the supreme σημεῖον.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

A. Introduction

Much has been written and said concerning the Johannine σημεῖον. The secondary literature is profuse,¹ and it is often not easy to sort out the various

¹ Apart from commentaries, the following specialized studies are in existence (this list is inexhaustive): Donatien Mollat, "Le semeion johannique," in *Sacra Pagina: Miscellanea Biblica Congressus Internationalis Catholici de Re Biblica*, 2 vols., ed. J. Coppens, A. Descamps, and É. Massaux, BETL 12–3 (Paris-Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1959), 2:209–18; Sydney Temple, "The Two Signs in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 81 (1962): 169–74; F.-M. Braun, "Quatre 'signes' johanniques de l'unité chrétienne," *NTS* 9 (1963): 147–55; Peter Riga, "Signs of Glory: The Use of Sēmeion in St. John's Gospel," *Int* 17 (1963): 402–24; Donald Guthrie, "The Importance of Signs in the Fourth Gospel," *VE* 5 (1967): 72–83; Frankie Earl Rainey, "Σημεῖον in the Gospel of John: A Clue to the Interpretation of the Gospel" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1968); Robert T. Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs: A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source Underlying the Fourth Gospel*, SNTSMS 11 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); idem, "Source and Redaction in the Fourth Gospel's Portrayal of Jesus' Signs," *JBL* 89 (1970): 151–66; Morris A. Inch, "The Apologetic Use of 'Sign' in the Fourth Gospel," *EvQ* 42 (1970): 35–43; Karl Rengstorff, "σημεῖον," *TDNT* 7:200–61; Willem Nicol, *The Sēmeia in the Fourth Gospel: Tradition and Redaction*, NovTSup 32 (Leiden: Brill, 1972); Merrill C. Tenney, "Topics from the Gospel of John: Part II: The Meaning of Signs," *BSac* 132 (1975): 145–60; W. D. Davies, "The Johannine 'Signs' of Jesus," in *A Companion to John: Readings in Johannine Theology (John's Gospel and Epistles)*, ed. M. J. Taylor (New York: Alba House, 1977), 91–115; Marinus de Jonge, "Signs and Works in the Fourth Gospel," in *Miscellanea Neotestamentica*, vol. 2; ed. T. Baarda, A. F. Klijn, and W. C. Unnik; NovTSup 48 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 107–25; Marc Girard, "La composition structurelle des sept 'signes' dans le quatrième évangile," *SR* 9 (1980): 315–24; Douglas K. Clark, "Signs in Wisdom and John," *CBQ* 45 (1983): 201–09; Mark Kiley, "The Exegesis of God: Jesus' Signs in John 1–11," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1988 Seminar Papers*, ed. D. J. Lull (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 555–69; Marianne M. Thompson, "Signs and Faith in the Fourth Gospel," *BBR* 1 (1991): 89–108; Gilbert Van Belle, *The Signs Source in the Fourth Gospel: Historical Survey and Critical Evaluation of the Semeia Hypothesis*, BETL 116 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994); idem, "The Meaning of SHMEIA in Jn 20,30–31," *ETL* 74 (1998): 300–325; Loren L. Johns and Douglas B. Miller, "The Signs as Witnesses in the Fourth Gospel: Reexamining the Evidence," *CBQ* 56 (1994): 519–35; Christian Welck, *Erzählte Zeichen: Die Wundergeschichten des Johannesevangeliums literarisch untersucht: Mit einem*

views. One way to classify the research and discussion is by way of methodology and orientation. Many (e.g., Rudolf Bultmann and Robert Fortna) have approached the subject with overriding diachronic interests, focusing on questions of sources and redaction. Other, more recent, scholars have tackled the subject synchronically, with an overriding focus on the literary and rhetorical meaning of the σημεῖα.

Another way of classifying the scholarly discussion, which will be the focus of this review, is based on the question of the definition and referent of the Johannine σημεῖον. What precisely is the Johannine σημεῖον, and what is it not?

Ausblick auf Joh 21, WUNT 2/69 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994); Andreas J. Köstenberger, "The Seventh Johannine Sign: A Study in John's Christology," *BBR* 5 (1995): 87–103; Y.-M. Blanchard, "Signe: IV: Théologie des signes dans l'évangile selon saint Jean," *DBSup* 12.71 (1996): 1303–330; H.-C. Kammler, "Die 'Zeichen' des Auferstandenen: Überlegungen zur Exegese von Joh 20,30–31," in *Johannesstudien: Untersuchungen zur Theologie des vierten Evangeliums*, ed. O. Hofius and H.-C. Kammler; WUNT 2/88 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 191–211; T. Söding, "Die Schrift als Medium des Glaubens: Zur hermeneutischen Bedeutung von Joh 20,30f.," in *Schrift und Tradition: FS J. Ernst*, ed. K. Backhaus and F. G. Untergaßmair (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1996), 343–71; B. H. Riedl, *Zeichen und Herrlichkeit: Die christologische Relevanz der Semeiaquelle in den Kanawundern Joh 2,1–11 und Joh 4,46–54*, RSTh 51 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997); Michael Labahn, *Jesus als Lebensspender: Untersuchungen zu einer Geschichte der johanneischen Tradition anhand ihrer Wundergeschichten*, BZNW 98 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998); W. H. Salier, *The Rhetorical Impact of the Semeia in the Gospel of John*, WUNT 186 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); John Painter, "The Signs of the Messiah and the Quest for Eternal Life," in *What We Have Heard from the Beginning*, ed. T. Thatcher (Waco, TX: Word, 2007), 233–56; R. Alan Culpepper, "Cognition in John: The Johannine Signs as Recognition Scenes," *PRSt* 35 (2008): 251–60; Craig R. Koester, "Jesus' Resurrection, the Signs, and the Dynamics of Faith in the Gospel of John," in *The Resurrection of Jesus in the Gospel of John*, ed. C. R. Koester and R. Bieringer, WUNT 222 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 47–74; Gitte Buch-Hansen, "*It is the Spirit that Gives Life*": *A Stoic Understanding of Pneuma in John's Gospel*, BZNW 173 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2010), 275–345; Christos Karakolis, "Semeia Conveying Ethics in the Gospel of John," in *Rethinking the Ethics of John*, ed. J. G. van der Watt and R. Zimmermann; WUNT 291 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 192–212; Eric Eve, "Signs and *Synchriseis* in John and the Wisdom of Solomon," in *The New Testament and the Church: Essays in Honour of John Muddiman*, ed. J. Barton and P. Groves; LNTS 532 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 24–36; Jörg Frey, "From the *Semeia* Narratives to the Gospel as a Significant Narrative: On Genre-Bending in the Johannine Miracle Stories," in *The Gospel of John as Genre Mosaic*, ed. K. B. Larsen, SANT 3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 209–32; Uta Poplutz, "Die johanneischen σημεῖα und ihre Funktion im Plot des vierten Evangelium," in *Erzählung und Briefe im johanneischen Kreis*, ed. U. Poplutz and J. Frey; WUNT 2/420 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 1–23; Udo Schnelle, "The Signs in the Gospel of John," in *John, Jesus, and History: Volume 3: Glimpses of Jesus through the Johannine Lens*, ed. P. N. Anderson, F. Just, and T. Thatcher (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 231–42; Hans Förster, "Der Begriff σημεῖον im Johannesevangelium," *NovT* 58 (2016): 47–70.

At times, one's answer to this question is largely influenced by his or her methodology. For instance, as will be evident below, the σημεῖα-Quelle hypothesis tends to support the view that σημεῖον equates to miracle. Hence in the following review, methodology will be inevitably mentioned.

For heuristic purposes I am going to group the various scholarly views on what is and is not a σημεῖον into two: (1) narrower views and (2) broader views.² These are not intended to be neat groupings. In the narrower views belong two subgroups: (a) non-source-critical views and (b) source-critical views. In the broader views belong three subgroups: (a) the view that includes the crucifixion in the seven or eight σημεῖα, (b) the view that includes the resurrection in the σημεῖα, and finally (c) the view that understands the σημεῖα as referring broadly and inclusively to the deeds of the incarnate Christ. There are two further discussions that fall under the broader views: (a) the notion of the narrated σημεῖα, and (b) the crucifixion-and-resurrection as the supreme σημεῖον.

B. Narrower Views of the Johannine Σημεῖα

A dominant view of the Johannine σημεῖον is that it refers to a miraculous deed of Jesus, so that a non-miraculous deed, no matter how important and/or significant (e.g., the “cleansing” of the temple, or even Jesus’ crucifixion), is not and cannot be a σημεῖον. The majority of the proponents of this view hold that the σημεῖα are found only in the first half of the Gospel, chs. 1–12, which is usually described as “the Book of Signs.” But some other proponents diverge from this and include the miracle in John 21. Proponents also diverge methodologically: some are very much concerned with diachronic, source-critical questions, while others simply focus on the final form of the text.³ In what follows I am going to categorize the narrow views by way of their methodologies: (1) the non-source-critical views and (2) the source-critical views.

I. *The Σημεῖα as Miracles: Non-Source-Critical Perspectives*

What used to be, and perhaps still is, the dominant view as to what the Johannine σημεῖα mean and refer to is the view that claims that the Johannine σημεῖα are the seven miracles recounted at length in the first half of the Gospel. Many

² Adelbert Denaux uses the categories of “minimalist interpretation” and “maximalist interpretation.” But he does not discuss the further distinctions and differences in each of these categories (“The Twofold Purpose of the Fourth Gospel: A Reading of the Conclusion to John’s Gospel (20,30–31),” in *Studies in the Gospel of John and Its Christology*, ed. J. Verheyden, et al., BETL 265 [Leuven: Peeters, 2014], 525–26).

³ It will become clear that most scholars who approach the σημεῖα synchronically tend to have broader views of what the σημεῖα refer to.

of the proponents of this view come to this conclusion by way of traditional exegesis, without regard to questions of sources and redaction.⁴ The so-called seven σημεῖα are as follows:

1. The miracle of turning water to wine (2:1–12)
2. The healing of the nobleman’s son (4:47–54)
3. The healing of a cripple at the pool of Bethesda (5:1–16)
4. The feeding of the five thousand (6:1–15)
5. Jesus’ walking on the water (6:16–21)
6. The healing of a man blind from birth at Siloam (9:1–17)
7. The raising of Lazarus from the dead (11:1–44)

One may query why the miraculous catch of fish in John 21 is not included in this list. In response, Leon Morris explains:

The miraculous catch of fish in chapter 21 would certainly qualify, except for the fact that this lies outside the public ministry of Jesus. Further, whether or not chapter 21 is from the same hand as the rest of the Gospel, it is agreed that it forms something in the nature of an appendix. If we concentrate on the public ministry of Jesus as this Gospel records it, there are seven signs.⁵

However, contrary to what Morris suggests, the status of John 21 is far from settled, and there are scholars who argue that John 21 is an inherent part of the Gospel, written by the same hand that produced the rest of the Gospel.⁶ Should these scholars then count the miraculous catch of fish as the eighth σημεῖον? Still no, according to Morris, for John 21 lies outside the scope of Jesus’ “public ministry,” by which Morris means the ministry of Jesus prior to the cross.⁷

⁴ E.g., Tenney, “The Meaning of the Signs,” 147–54; Davies, “The Johannine ‘Signs’ of Jesus,” 93; Leon Morris, *Jesus is the Christ: Studies in the Theology of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 22–3; idem, *The Gospel According to John*, rev. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 163, 609; Mark W. G. Stibbe, “A Tomb with a View: John 11.1–44 in Narrative-Critical Perspective,” *NTS* 40 (1994), 38–40; Schnelle, “The Signs in the Gospel of John,” 232–34.

⁵ Morris, *Jesus is the Christ*, 22.

⁶ See, e.g., D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 665–68; Howard M. Jackson, “Ancient Self-Referential Conventions and Their Implications for the Authorship and Integrity of the Gospel of John,” *JTS* 50 (1999), 1–34; Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John’s Gospel: Issues & Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 272–73; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 2:1219–222; Hartwig Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, HNT 6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 777–79.

⁷ “Public ministry,” if used to refer to Jesus’ ministry *prior* to the cross, particularly to John 1–12, may be a misleading term. For, are not the events of the passion and the post-resurrection appearances also part of Jesus’ public ministry? Is not the crucifixion itself the most public act of Jesus’ ministry (see, e.g., 19:17–37)? Of course, with the post-resurrection appearances, their audiences were considerably smaller – the disciples only – but still, that is enough to constitute the appearances public. In other words, we may understand Morris’s

In fact, some other scholars, who are also of the view that the Johannine σημεῖα refer only to the miraculous deeds of Jesus, insist that there are eight of these σημεῖα: the miraculous catch of fish in John 21 included.⁸

II. The Johannine Σημεῖα as Miracles: Source-Critical Perspectives

Some other scholars, who are also of the view that the Johannine σημεῖα refer exclusively to Jesus' miraculous deeds, adopt a source-critical methodology. Although the source-critical approach to FG has become at present a minority approach,⁹ it is still worth mentioning here.¹⁰ I am going to limit the following discussion to Rudolf Bultmann's Σημεῖα-Quelle hypothesis and to Robert T. Fortna's "Gospel of Signs."

1. Rudolf Bultmann's Σημεῖα-Quelle Hypothesis

Rudolf Bultmann is well known for, among other things, his complex source-critical views of FG.¹¹ He believed that FG in its present form is not the original

view of the σημεῖα as confined to the miraculous deeds of Jesus performed prior to the cross. But this view is contradicted by 20:30–31, where σημεῖα in its immediate context pertains to the appearances of the risen Lord and where, as will be argued below, the expression ποιεῖν σημεῖα most likely pertains generally and inclusively to the deeds of Christ during his earthly ministry, whether miraculous or not, both before and after the cross, and even including the cross.

⁸ See, e.g., B. F. Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1908), 1:cliii; Donald Guthrie, "Importance of Signs," 72–83; Robert Kysar, *John: The Maverick Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 14, 95–7; R. Alan Culpepper, "Cognition," 253; Kasper B. Larsen, *Recognizing the Stranger: Recognition Scenes in the Gospel of John*, BibInt 93 (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2008), 112–13; Anthony M. Moore, *Signs of Salvation: The Theme of Creation in John's Gospel* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2013), 132.

⁹ Some recent source-critics of FG include Folker Siegert, *Das Evangelium des Johannes in seiner ursprünglichen Gestalt: Wiederherstellung und Kommentar*, SIJD 7 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007); Michael Theobald, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes: Kapitel 1–12*, RNT 4/1 (Regensburg: Pustet, 2009), 32–42; Urban von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 3 vols., ECC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

¹⁰ Of course, not all who adopt a source-critical approach to the Johannine σημεῖα (and to the Gospel in general) end up espousing that the σημεῖα refer only to Jesus' miraculous deeds. One can be source-critical in methodology yet espouse a broader, more inclusive, conception of the σημεῖα. More will be said below.

¹¹ Bultmann provided no systematic formulation of these views, and they are scattered across the pages of his magisterial commentary *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray, R. W. N. Hoare, and J. K. Riches (Philadelphia: Westminster), 1971. For a critical examination and discussion of Bultmann's literary theory see D. Moody Smith, *The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel: Bultmann's Literary Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965). For a comprehensive historical survey and critical evaluation

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