

BIBLICAL DISSERTATIONS

**NARRATED LIFE AND LIVED STORY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.
NEW ENGLISH PROTESTANT PERSPECTIVES ON OLD TESTAMENT
THEOLOGY (AFTER 1970)**

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Dissertation defended at the Protestant Theological Institute of Cluj-Napoca (Romania) on July 3, 2005.

Keywords: Old Testament theology, Deut 6,4-9, *šəma*⁶, biblical narrative, story, life, retelling, Covenant

The purpose of this dissertation is to analyze the hermeneutical aspects which are part of the discipline of Old Testament theology. In Romania, Old Testament theology, as a separate discipline, is at the beginning of its evolution. The need for having two separate disciplines in Romanian biblical theology, namely, Old and New Testament theology, is based on the accumulation of a large amount of information in the area of Old Testament and New Testament studies, and also because in the Romanian context, especially after the revolution in 1989, there is a need to make a clear distinction between the content of doctrines which were supported by the church and between biblical studies.

For a proper development of the discipline of Old Testament theology one needs a well-defined hermeneutical method. In my dissertation I tried to offer to the Romanian biblical theologians some information concerning the diversity of the hermeneutical methods which were proposed in Anglo-Saxon Old Testament theologies after 1970. I have chosen the year 1970 as a starting-point for my research, because this is a pivotal moment in the development of Old Testament theology. In this year Brevard Childs published his famous *Biblical Theology in Crisis*¹. After 1970, Anglo-Saxon biblical scholarship came to the forefront. Anglo-Saxon theology can serve as an inspirational model for Romanian biblical theology as well, and especially, for Old Testament theology.

The specific objectives reached in the different chapters of this dissertation are summarised in what follows:

Chapter 1 presents a history of biblical theology in Romania the 20th century. The most important works were written by Atanasie Negoită², Grigorie Marcu³, Hans

¹ B. CHILDS, *Biblical Theology in Crisis*, Philadelphia, 1970.

² A. NEGOIȚĂ, *Metoda Misionară a Profeților Vechiului Testament*, București, 1936, and also *Teologia biblică a Vechiului Testament*, București, 1992.

³ The work of G. MARCU, *Introducere în Teologia Biblică*, was published in „Anuarul”

some instructions concerning the keeping and transmitting of the precepts of the covenant from generation to generation. Those elements suggest that the main objective of the Jewish community had to be the love for God and the appropriation of the instructions concerning the keeping and transmission of the content of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel. The instructions of the šəma^c can be taken as a model for the presentation of the Old Testament message. In the šəma^c Yahweh is the One who commands that this content of the covenant relationship is to be retold from one generation to the other. The šəma^c informs us about the need to „retell” the content of the covenant. Based on this reasoning the dissertation presented her asserts that the Christians, in their position as a people of covenant with Yahweh, have to use the practice of „retelling” as the method for presenting the Old Testament theology.



**THE ANGEL OF THE LORD (מלאך יהוה) IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
THE CHARACTER OF BIBLICAL MONOTHEISM CONCEIVED
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE REVELATION OF GOD**

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Dissertation accepted 13.6. 2005 by the Orthodox Theological Faculty of the University of Beograd (Serbia), to be published in the series *Biblical Library Glafira* of the Theological Faculty Beograd.

Keywords: Angel of the Lord, immanent God, theophany, Covenant, Christ, Logos, pre-image, Messiah, monarchic monotheism

This study explores the presence of the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament and its importance for later thought: both apostolic and patristic. The question is thematised within the context of biblical monotheism, where particular stress is laid on the phenomenon of theophany – the revelation (appearance) of God – in the Old Testament. The question of the Angel of the Lord relates to biblical monotheism. That is why one of the sections of the study presents the God of the Old Testament on the basis of his appearance and communication of his name – יהוה. This means that the biblical God – Yahweh – is viewed through the act of appearance and establishment of the covenant with Israel, i.e. he is viewed as a God who is present. In the act of appearance a special place is taken by the Angel of Lord of whom, on the grounds of Old Testament texts, we can say that he really does represent Yahweh and, simultaneously, that he – already in the Old Testament – indicates a certain „plurality” of the Being of God.

Several aspects are of particular importance. First, the phenomenon of the Old Testament Angel is conceived from the perspective of *Religionsgeschichte*, which makes it clear that besides essential differences between Israel and its neighbors there exist certain similarities in the domains of language formulations, worlds of religious signs, as well as certain mental paradigms which existed in the consciousness of

ancient peoples. These mental paradigms were exceptionally stable and, at the same time, flexible in terms of reception of new contents. Second, the image of the Angel of the Lord is viewed from the perspective of the epoch of biblical tradition and its development, both within the Old Testament and in theological currents in Second Temple Judaism. Thereby it is possible to demonstrate the clear continuity of the biblical understanding of the Great Angel which, in Second Temple Judaism, acquires even more perceivable contours of the “second” God. Third, patristic exegesis is presented as a continuation of biblical tradition. The Church Fathers, like preceding biblical theologians, perceived the Angel as a “second” God and, moreover, interpreted the Angel in a Christological mode.

Hence the results of the exploration: the Angel of the Lord represents a pre-incarnational revelation (appearance) of the Logos and, at the same time, he represents the Old Testament pre-image of Christ. However, this does not exhaust all the connections between the Angel and Christ. The Angel is an “economic” (*oikonomia*) preparation for the advent of Christ. Amongst other things, this may be observed in the development of the ideas of monarchic monotheism and transcendent messianism, which are backed up by the reality of the Angel of the Lord. All these elements constituted a very important presupposition for the germination of Christian doctrine on Christ – the Son of God – as the second God, that is, as second Divine Hypostasis. The importance of the Old Testament understanding of the Angel, late Judaic angelology notwithstanding, is evaluated in Christological perspective throughout the whole study.



**MISSION AND COMMUNICATION IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY.
CHRISTIAN TRAVELLING AS AN INSTRUMENT OF UNITY OF THE
CHURCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AND APOSTOLIC FATHERS**

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Dissertation accepted 7. 5. 2008 by the Orthodox Theological Faculty of the University of Beograd (Serbia), to be published in the series *Biblical Library Glafira* of the Theological Faculty Beograd.

Keywords: mission, communication, unity of the Church, early Christianity

The starting and basic questions posed in this work which are expected to be answered in the sources are: 1) What historical processes enabled the Church of Christ, after the death of the major agents of its unity, namely the apostles, to avoid disintegration into many, geographically distant and isolated communities, independent from each other, and enabled all Christians in every place throughout the known world to see themselves as belonging to the *one* Church? 2) Did the Christian mission, which from the very beginning was the unifying factor, remain so throughout the post-apostolic period as well? 3) Are there any recognizable communication