

EDITORIAL

The biblical Journal *Sacra Scripta* is especially honored to host in its pages, for the year 2021, a Festschrift dedicated to a well-known New Testament biblical scholar, Professor Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, from the Friedrich-Schiller University of Jena, Faculty of Theology.

Sacra Scripta Journal belongs to the Center for Biblical Studies, which functions as a Center for biblical research within the most prestigious University in Romania, namely the "Babeş-Bolyai" University, Cluj-Napoca.

"Babeş-Bolyai" University has among the personalities, who are part of its academic family, famous names from around the world. All these personalities belong to almost all fields of scientific research and have earned their place in the family of our university, either by awarding Doctor Honoris Causa titles or consecrations of honor volumes. Among all these names, additionally there are theologians and Church leaders, as well.

I will mention only a few personalities in this regard: Bartholomew I (Ecumenical Patriarch), Joseph Ratzinger (Vatican, former Pope Benedict XVI), Daniel (Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church), Ulrich Luz (Switzerland), Joannis Zizioulas (Greece), Wolfahrt Pannenberg (Germany), Cristoph Schönborn (Austria), Franz König (Austria), Sirat René-Samuel (France), John Breck (France) etc.

Among all these names is now added, through this Festschrift, Professor Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr.

His scientific activity stands out both in the academic area of teaching and biblical research, through countless publications (Books, Studies, Articles), as well in the theological-ecumenical international field. As an active member of the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas* (SNTS) and President of the "Eastern European Liaison Committee" (EELC), he constantly promoted and encouraged New Testament biblical research among young biblical scholars. He did so especially in Eastern European countries dominated for decades by the dictatorial communist regime, which did not allow the Church and Theology to become known in the world through academic exchanges or publications that should go beyond their borders.

In this sense, our colleague Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr followed the policy of promoting these international academic relations, whose pioneer was Professor Ulrich Luz. Thus, at the initiative of U. Luz and with the support of the EELC headed by Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, seconded by his close colleagues, Tobias Nicklas, Christos Karakolis, Carl R. Holladay, William R. G. Loader and others *supported the establishment of Biblical Libraries* in Sankt Petersburg, Sofia, Belgrade, or Biblical Research Centers, such as the one in Cluj-Napoca, which has, thanks to the direct support of Professor U. Luz, even a Biblical Library that currently owns over 4500 volumes. This is the first Biblical Library in Romania established after 1990 in a Biblical Research Center within a University.

This is the reason why this honoring volume was published in Cluj, summing up the two issues of the Sacra Scripta Journal for the year 2021.

I must say, however, that the initiative of writing this volume belongs to Tobias Nicklas and Christos Karakolis. Therefore, they started to gather articles from colleagues or former colleagues of Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr from the International Biblical Organizations "Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas" (SNTS) or "Eastern European Liaison Committee" (EELC). Thus, through their contributions, all the authors express their appreciation and gratitude for all the efforts Karl W. Niebuhr has undertaken in spreading the word of God as a theologian, priest, researcher, and ecumenist.

Through this Festschrift, the prestige of our Journal also increased and the name of our colleague Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr thus entered the gallery of the most prestigious personalities who crown the reputation of "Babeş-Bolyai" University.

On this occasion, we wish our colleague Professor Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr health for his future work as a young retired biblical scholar, concluding our wishes with the words of the third Epistle of John: *"Lieber Bruder, ich wünsche dir in jeder Hinsicht Wohlergehen und Gesundheit, so wie es deiner Seele wohlergeht"* (3 Jn. 1:2).

Stelian TOFANĂ

- Editor in Chief -
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