

THESIS AND DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Theological Seminary, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies

“The Background, Meaning, and Intent of the Expression “Hand the Man over to Satan” in 1 Cor 5:5”

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Scholars give different competing views regarding the background, meaning, and intent of the expression “hand the man over to Satan” in 1 Cor 5:5. Against this background, this study attempts to investigate, through a historical-grammatical method of exegesis, the meaning of the aforementioned expression, possible backgrounds against which it can be better understood, and its intent expressed in the phrase, “for the destruction of σάρξ (flesh)” and the clause “in order that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord.”

The background study shows that there are several possible backgrounds that can potentially shed light on 1 Cor 5:5, particularly the enigmatic expression “hand the man over to Satan.” Possible backgrounds include the following: (1) parallels in Job 1:12 and 2:6, (2) the handing over of Israelites to their enemies as punishment for breach of the covenant in Lev 26, (3) the person of Satan in extant Jewish literature prior to Paul, and (4) the Deuteronomic excommunication formula.

On the other hand, the exegetical analysis of 1 Cor 5 reveals that the expression “hand the man over to Satan” simply means removal of the offender out of the fellowship of the church; it is analogous with the call for removal in vv. 2, 7, 13. However, the expression itself may further imply that the offender will suffer physically at the hands of Satan. This is indicated by the parallels in Job 1:12 and 2:6, the breach of the covenant in Lev 26, and Paul’s use of the term παιδεύω “to learn” in 1 Tim 1:20—a passage where the handing over of an offender also occurs.

The anticipated result of handing the offender over to Satan is “the destruction of σάρξ.” Σάρξ here has an ethical sense, and hence the phrase means that the offender will change his sinful lifestyle, particularly his immoral act; it does not envision the death of the offender whether immediate or not. On the other hand, the ultimate purpose of the handing over is the salvation of the offender on the day of the Lord—that is, his redemption.

"The Meaning of '[In/By/As] My Name יהוה I was not Known to Them' in Exodus 6:3"

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This study seeks to explain, through the use of the historical-grammatical method of exegesis, the meaning of Exod 6:3, particularly the clause "[in/by/as] my name יהוה I was not known to them." Scholars have been divided about the interpretation of this passage and have proposed the following views: (1) the patriarchs did not know the name יהוה, (2) the patriarchs knew the name יהוה partially, (3) the interrogative view, and (4) the emphatic particle view. The literature review shows that no in-depth and extensive exegetical study has been undertaken thus far.

Careful exegetical investigation of Exod 6:3 suggests the following:

(1) The grammatical and syntactical study divides Exod 6:3 into two clauses: (a) an affirmative clause (Exod 6:3a), and (b) a negative clause (Exod 6:3b). This suggests that the actors of the verbs "seeing" and "knowing" in both clauses are the patriarchs, not God.

(2) The lexical and contextual study establishes the meaning of אֱלֹהֵי שָׂדֵי as "God taker-back." This is the God who promises to give the land of Canaan to the patriarchs who are to be his own people by taking this land back from its unfaithful inhabitants. The lexical and contextual study also suggests the meaning of יהוה as "He-abides," the God who abides with the patriarchs, and who promises to be with Moses and the Israelites, to fulfill the promise that was given earlier to the patriarchs. Thus, the first clause (Exod 6:3a) is a promissory stage, while the second clause (Exod 6:3b) is an active stage, represented by the two divine appellative names: אֱלֹהֵי שָׂדֵי (God taker-back) and יהוה (He-abides).

(3) The study of various phases of meanings of ידע in the Pentateuch and other selected passages in the OT suggests the meaning of the verb ידע in Exod 6:3b as knowing by experience, including also hearing or seeing.

(4) The wider and immediate contexts of Exod 6:3, particularly in the narrative of the patriarchs, show that the patriarchs already knew (by experience that includes hearing and seeing) the name יהוה prior to Exod 6:3.

(5) The comparative study of knowing יהוה in the period of the patriarchs and knowing יהוה in the period of Moses and the Israelites demonstrates that the patriarchs and Moses and the Israelites knew (by experience that includes hearing or seeing) the name יהוה. However, the comparative study reveals that the patriarchal knowing (by experience that includes hearing or seeing) of יהוה (He-abides) is "less," when compared with Moses' and the Israelites' closer, nearer, or more intimate knowing of יהוה.

(6) The thesis concludes suggesting that the clause “[in/by/as] my name יהוה I was not known to them” in Exod 6:3b is a hyperbole, implying that the patriarchal knowledge of יהוה was “less,” compared with Moses’ and the Israelites’ more closer, nearer, or intimate knowledge of יהוה. The clause in Exod 6:3b is a hyperbolic expression in the sense that the “lesser” knowledge of יהוה by the patriarchs is characterized by the Hebrew לֹא נִדְעָתִי “not known.”

“Biblical Compassion as a Critical Component of Mission for the SDA Church in Nigeria”

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Compassion is a critical component of mission as evident in the character of the God of mission as well as in the nature of Christ—the premier missionary on earth. An important element of the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) worldwide is the proclamation of the news of the soon return of Jesus Christ.

In the light of a Seventh-day Adventist mission theology, which is built upon the biblical message of Rev 14, including all nations, tribes, and tongues, the missiological philosophy of unity in diversity needs to be highlighted. However, both the above mission theology and philosophy of the world SDA Church is only an ideal and does not seem to be a real practice in Nigeria, due to significant ethnic tension created by Nigeria’s colonial authorities and extended by successive military regimes. The methodology of this dissertation is analytical-descriptive and also includes prescriptive literary research. This approach is used in order to construct a workable mission theology based on the biblical principle of compassion.

The obvious consequence of the ethnic rift in the SDA Church in Nigeria is the imbalance in the locating of church institutions in some parts of the country at the neglect of other parts, especially in Ibo land where the church flourishes in membership and funds. Among the findings of this research is the existence of three brands of Adventism along major ethnic lines in Nigeria, including Islamic flavored Adventism, African Traditional Adventism and Western Adventism. The study recommends the application of biblical compassion following the model of God, Christ, the disciples and that of modern day missionaries as a lasting bridge of peace and reconciliation among the three dominant ethnic groups of Nigeria—Hausas, Yorubas, and Ibos.