

THESIS AND DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Theological Seminary, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies

"The Role of Women in Johannine Literature: An Exegetical Study"

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The role of women in Johannine literature appears to be unique in a number of ways. Firstly, in the Gospel of John, there is a different presentation accorded to women in comparison to the Synoptics. John gives a lengthy and a wider discussion on Jesus' encounter with women, which ranges from a longer passage to a whole chapter. Another significant point here is that John's accounts on women are unparalleled in the synoptics. Other evidences that cannot be ignored are that in his presentation of women, John depicts them in direct dialogue with Jesus. Secondly, in the Epistle of 2 John, the use of "woman" is no longer literal but symbolic in which sense the author likens the woman to a church. Thirdly, the book of Revelation presents women in a symbolic perspective whereby they represent the church, both false and righteous, and crowns their role as pointing to the city of the New Jerusalem.

There were four focus issues that not only informed the statement of the problem, but gave the study a technical framing as well. What are the roles of women in Johannine writings? How does John present women in his writings? What is his purpose in the way he presents them? Lastly, is there a continuous connection in the role of women in the way John presents them? In light of these issues, the study purposed to ascertain the role of women in John's writings with a view of identifying their participation in relation to the main themes of the literature under study. As such, specific passages were selected for study as outlined in the paper proper.

The flow of the study was such that Chapter 1 covered the introductory aspects of the study while Chapter 2 surveyed roles of women in various periods of human history spanning from ancient Mesopotamia down to the Greco-Roman era. The outcome of Chapter 2 indicated that women

participated in social, economic, religious, and leadership roles within the patriarchal framework which prevailed both in Ancient Near East and Israel. As this was the case in Mesopotamia and ancient Israel, women's roles diminished tremendously during late Judaism. The opposite was true with the coming of Jesus in the 1st century AD. While Chapter 3 dealt with the main study of the selected passages in Johannine writings, Chapter 4 covered the theological context of the study. Chapter 5 was the summary and conclusion of the findings.

From Johannine literature, there is a lot of information with regard to the role of women. Women play a unique role in that they set a paradigm of committed and faithful followers of Jesus. This in turn makes them Jesus' followers, witnesses, messengers, and active participants in His ministry. It is inescapable to note here too that women set a counterpoint to men in regard to their participation in the ministry of Jesus. Men are either passive or are portrayed as doubtful in their roles. Therefore, women's role in Johannine writings is both significant and unique as it enjoys the support of the said literature.

"Herbert E. Douglass' Understanding of the Identity and Character of the Last Generation in the Light of Ellen G. White's Writings: A Comparative Study"

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Advisor: Kyung Ho Song, Ph.D.

This study seeks to find out the commonalities and differences between the last generation concept of Ellen G. White and that of Herbert E. Douglass. A section is devoted to trace the historical development of the last generation thought from its conception to the present among Adventism in order to give a background of the concept. Discussion of related doctrinal concepts is not exhaustive, but to show connection and their influence on understanding the last generation concept.

The methodology is descriptive-analysis. Descriptions of the views of pioneers including E. G. White are primarily based on available data from the 2008 version of the E. G. White published writings on CD, which contains most of the literary works of the early Adventist pioneers from the 19th century. All available sources from the Leslie Hardinge Library and the internet were utilized. Douglass' view is described and analysed

mainly based on available sources from his published works which include his articles in various journals and magazines of the Adventist denomination.

The plan of discussion in this study is organized in the following steps: Chapter 1 introduces the research which includes background of the study, the statement of the problem, purpose, significance, delimitations, methodology, and procedures. Chapter 2 traces the historical development of the last generation concept within Adventism. Chapter 3 delineates E. G. White's view of the last generation in relation to her theological overview and other related theological concepts. Chapter 4 presents Douglass' view of the last generation in relation to his theological overview and other theological concepts. Chapter 5 compares and analyses the 2 views. Chapter 6 provides the summary, conclusions, and recommendation for further studies.

Findings suggest that the last generation concept has been expressed variedly among Adventists since the conception of Adventism. Both Ellen G. White and Douglass's views of the last generation were informed by their other related theological concepts. Their views are significantly correlated as well as different. The same great controversy motif and God's law or His character as the heart of the cosmic conflict permeate almost all of their other doctrinal concepts. The questions raised by Satan in the controversy also shaped their understanding of the identity, character and role of the last generation in the final conflict. Their views are similar and at the same time uniquely different. In most cases, their views are very similar but there are also significant differences were also observed. Although the heart of the cosmic conflict is the same, due to their differences in understanding of some doctrinal truths and overall theological outlook, they are significantly different in interpreting the character and role of the last generation in the final cosmic conflict. There are different emphases on the identity of the last generation. The character of the last generation is more or less identical although motivation and emphases somewhat vary. The extent of the role of the last generation in the last cosmic conflict is significantly different. Whereas E. G. White considers it as supplementary and confirmatory, Douglass, on the other hand, sees it as complementary and integral part of the solution.

"The Inherited Deity of Christ: A Critical Analysis of the Christology Suggested by Adrian Ebens"

Researcher: Paul Bhaggien, Ph.D., February 2014

Advisor: Kyung Ho Song, Ph.D.

This study endeavors to systematically analyze the Christology suggested by Adrian Ebens. As such, it seeks to find out whether or not Ebens' Christology of the inherited deity of Christ, built around the concept of the literal sonship of Christ is theologically credible. In an effort to achieve this objective, this work first delves into a historical survey of divergent views on the deity of Christ prevalent within Christendom from the early periods of church history leading up to the present. After this the key determinants that have come to shape Ebens' Christology were delineated, systematized, and evaluated. Finally, the research focused on the task of theologically analyzing the key tenets of his Christology and thereupon drew conclusions from the findings of this study.

Chapters 1 and 2 set the stage for the study. The first chapter presented the problem that there is an incompatible difference between the Christology suggested by Adrian Ebens and that which is held by mainstream Seventh-day Adventist Church. As such, the study aimed at theologically analyzing the key determinants and tenets of Ebens' Christology. This quest commenced by painting the historical backdrop for the study in the second chapter through a presentation of anti-Trinitarian christological trends within the Christian Church through the centuries.

Chapter 3 delineated and defined the key determinants and tenets of Ebens' Christology. The study identified and classified these determinants under three subcategories: hermeneutical determinant, historical determinant, and theological and philosophical determinants. Some determining principles under the theological and philosophical category include Ebens' concepts of the absolute transcendence of God, distinctiveness of divine personalities, the great controversy, priority of relationships and Trinitarian delusions. The chapter also delineated and defined the key tenets of his Christology such as his concepts of the sonship identity of Christ, the origin and pre-existence of Christ, the inherited deity of Christ, the subordinate deity of Christ, and the venerability of Christ.

Chapters 4 and 5 analyzed the key determinants and tenets of Ebens' Christology respectively. The findings that emerged out of such an analysis and presented in Chapter 6 of this study suggest that Ebens' Christology, based on a literal understanding of the sonship of Christ seems to be

nothing more than an improved Arian position. Although his Christology seems to have the merit of salvaging Christ from a creaturely status, it does not go beyond assigning Christ a secondary status to that of the Father. And because such a position cannot be theologically sustained, it was concluded that Ebens' Christology of the inherited deity of Christ is largely suspect and therefore, untenable.

"An Analysis of Deuteronomy 6:4-5: Monotheism in Polytheistic Hindu Context"

Researcher: Nirobindu Das, Ph.D., February 2014

Advisor: Mathilde Frey, Ph.D.

This study seeks to explicate exegetically and theologically the meaning of the *Shema* in Deut 6:4-5 and its function within the monotheistic religion of Israel. It further seeks to demonstrate the relevance of the *Shema* within a polytheistic context with the intent of creating a dialogue that would eventually lead to a transformative encounter in favour of biblical monotheism.

Chapters 1 and 2 survey the relevant literature that was written on the *Shema*. Interpretations of the *Shema* hold to the absolute unity within the divine and God's exclusive claim to loyalty and obedience from His adherents. It also includes the relevant literature on Hindu polytheism.

Chapter 3 exegetes Deut 6:4-5 taking a closer look at key elements within the pericope primarily on the meaning of שמע, "to hear"; אחד, "one"; אהב, "to love"; יהוה אלהינו, "the Lord our God"; and יהוה אחד, "the Lord is one." The appeal to love God is made through an awareness of God's uniqueness and the relationship He seeks with humanity. Love and obedience occur only within the construct of a trusting relationship between God and those who commit to Him. In this sense, the *Shema* does not merely speak of God's oneness but of the response that God's oneness generates from His devotees—unity and obedience.

Chapter 4 looks at biblical monotheism from the Mosaic period to the New Testament and also extending up to the modern and postmodern era. Chapter 5 surveys Hindu polytheism as it pertains to India. The distinctive features of Hindu polytheism are assessed so as to elucidate similarities and differences with biblical monotheism. The chapter provides principles derived from biblical monotheism to better aid in building con-

textual bridges resulting in the enculturation of monotheistic values within the polytheistic Hindu context.

The last chapter of this study summarizes and concludes with the findings of the *Shema* and synthesizes the findings of the meeting points of Hinduism with biblical understanding of the common points.

“An Investigation and Analysis of the Leadership of Lan Zhou Seventh-day Adventist Church from 1980-2010”

Researcher: Xiao Yan Zhang, D.Min., February 2014

Advisor: Young Soo Chung, D.Min.

There are about 400,000 Seventh-day Adventist Church members among 1.35 billion Chinese in mainland China. The Adventist membership in China is roughly only 0.03% of the Chinese population. Spreading the Adventist message in China is a great challenge for the Chinese church leaders and members at the present time.

Lan Zhou Seventh-day Adventist (LZSDA) Church is one of the largest Adventist Churches in mainland China in terms of membership. Since its founding days, LZSDA Church has formed leadership for its ministry to win souls and enrich the spiritual lives of its church members. The main purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the leadership in LZSDA Church from 1980-2010.

This project covered 3 types of church leadership introduced and developed gradually from the year 1980-2010: namely, the parenting leadership, the shepherd's council leadership, and the church board committee leadership. The study investigated and analyzed the role, goal, preparation, and influence of these church leadership styles in order to find the strengths and weaknesses of each church leadership style and suggests ways of making the current church leadership more effective.

To accomplish this, the leadership issue was addressed, biblical and theological bases were laid, the context of LZSDA Church was introduced, and an interview with a sample population of LZSDA Church participants was done. Those interviewed gave their perception on the effectiveness of the church leadership. Their responses, together with the observations and evaluation of the research study, were analyzed based on biblical principles. A list of suggestions is given to make current church leadership more effective.

The project narrative has demonstrated that the 3 leadership styles under study have affected positively the lives of the newcomers, church members, and church leaders. All who passed through any of these leadership styles had not failed to see changes in themselves and in those with whom they labored. The changes were manifested in a changed life or character of church members and leaders like having a meaningful prayer life, acquiring the habit of daily Bible reading, and witnessing baptism of the non-believers are more under the parenting and shepherd's council leadership styles. The changes were manifested in increased ministerial or management abilities and competence are more under the church board committee leadership. This study has also shown that from the perspectives of the role, goal, preparation, and influence of the church leadership, parenting leadership, and shepherd's council leadership are more equipped spiritually to lead LZSDA Church with more dominating influence on it and the church members than church board committee leadership.

"The Priestly Blessing: An Exegetical and Intertextual Study on Numbers 6:22-27"

Researcher: Rodolfo Segorbe Nach, Ph.D., March 2014

Advisor: Mathilde Frey, Ph.D.

Scholars have interpreted Num 6:22-27 twofold: (a) blessing is the manifestation of material benefits, and (b) blessing occurs within a personal and spiritual relationship with God, which however should result in material benefits. However, the question about blessing in terms of a divine-human relationship without material benefits bestowed upon humans has not been addressed.

In Chapters 2 and 3, this dissertation offers a detailed exegetical and intertextual study of the Hebrew text of Num 6:22-27 and considers the verb "to bless" in relation to each of the verbal expressions of the poetic section of the passage (vv. 24-26). The study shows that the verb בָּרַךְ, "to bless" is a verb of speech meaning "to speak well of or speak good to" someone or something; it entails a testimony of appreciation indicating a positive divine-human relationship even in the absence of material manifestations and benefits. Blessing in Num 6:22-27 is a speech-act process combining benediction and benefaction. The verb "to bless" not only

overshadows the entire pericope with its tripartite structure but it also relates to the other verbal expressions of the poetic section (vv. 24-26) in terms of amplification and intensification based on synonymous, semantic, and syntactic parallelism.

The intertextual study in this dissertation (see Chapter 3) shows that the Priestly Blessing is intricately related to the Sinaitic Covenant and to the sanctuary services, rites, festivals, and animal sacrificial system given to Israel to teach them God's plan of salvation. Each expression of the formula of blessing links with sanctuary language and speaks of its services expressing the concept of salvation.

Chapter 4 discusses the theological implications of the Priestly Blessing. The first implication is about God who dwells among His people and is at the center of Israel's physical and spiritual life. God is revealed to be the God who is faithful to His covenant, who dwells in the midst of His people through His presence in the sanctuary: He blesses, protects, forgives, reconciles and restores broken relationships, gives peace, and saves by His gracious and compassionate love. In conclusion, blessing in Num 6:22-27 is about God's saving acts of graciousness towards His people.

"Dimensions and Effectiveness of Leadership Empowerment as Perceived by Pastors of Central Luzon Conference of Seventh-day Adventist: Toward Developing a Model Program for Leadership Empowerment of Pastors"

Researcher: Eliezer L. Barrientos, D.Min., March 2014

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There are several dimensions involved in the empowerment of pastors. Thus this study was made primarily to explore those dimensions and measure their importance to pastors in relation to their leadership effectiveness as well as to measure the effectiveness of Central Luzon Conference (CLC) as an organization in implementing the dimensions. The instrument used in this study was self-constructed and their substances were taken from various literatures, observations, and interviews with selected pastors at CLC. The respondents in this study were 108, representing 81% of the total population of CLC pastors as of the time of the gathering of the data.

The study showed that CLC pastors generally perceived the dimensions of empowerment as “very highly important” to enhance their leadership potentials. Nevertheless, the general perceptions of the pastors with regard to the effectiveness of its implementations were generally less very highly effective. This result implies that there were disparities between the levels of importance to the actual effectiveness. With these results a program model called *Integrated Leadership Development Program for Pastors* or *ILDPP* was designed to minimize those discrepancies or if possible to eliminate them.

This program needs to be institutionalized and must be supported with policies. Therefore a course of action of the CLC Executive Committee to implement the program is important. Finally, it is recommended that *ILDPP* must be placed under the supervision of the Human Resource Department of CLC. In this case the role of the human resource director in full cooperation with the ministerial secretary is essential in the implementation of the program.

“Theological Implications on the Use of Wisdom Expressions in the Book of Daniel in the Light of Old Testament Wisdom Literature”

Researcher: Edward Eddie Moyo, Ph.D., May 2014

Advisor: Carlos Mora, Ph.D.

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, it seeks to augment the understanding of apocalypse through the investigation of the wisdom terms in the book of Daniel. Second, the study is an attempt to evaluate the theological implications of the wisdom terms in Daniel in the context of the Old Testament Wisdom literature (OTWL). The method preferred for this study is to utilize the text-centered approach. All the passages with wisdom terms in the book of Daniel are analyzed.

The significance of the inclusion of wisdom terms in the book of Daniel levels the ground upon which the message of apocalypse could easily be accessible to the Gentile world. As a way of contribution, the wisdom terms show that biblical apocalypse is a form of revelation from God. Wisdom terms here demonstrate that understanding of biblical apocalypse is caused by God. No one understands prophecies through their own wisdom. More importantly, the future is all about the Messiah, and the wisdom terms whose ultimate fulfillment is with Him play a vital role

in identifying the true Messiah and His character. In this regard, the wisdom terms in Daniel give a complete picture of the Messiah in both His roles as priest and king.

This study has also established that the book of Daniel as well makes a significant contribution to the OTWL. One of its main contributions is that while the OTWL focuses on the present while basing on the past, only the book of Daniel focuses on the future while including the past and present. As a whole, the wisdom terms complement the OTWL by including an eschatological thrust of wisdom whose focus is on understanding the prophecies.

One of the major contributions of this dissertation is that the wisdom terms in their contexts in Daniel demonstrate that prophecy is not a presentation of obscure figures and dates, but rather an impact on the individual lives of both believers and non-believers. While sin entered this earth through humanity's quest for wisdom, God in Daniel uses the desire for wisdom as a means of taking humanity back to Himself. Thus, the book of Daniel depicts the hopelessness of acquiring wisdom from sources other than the God of heaven.

"A Linguistic and Exegetical investigation of *tote* in the New Testament"

Researcher: Ndombo Guy Josia, M.A., June 2014

Advisor: Alfredo G. Agustin Jr., Ph.D.

The understanding of discourse markers, more than before, is nowadays considered as an important part of language studies. Discourse markers play important roles in the communication system as they coordinate the meaning of utterances. Understood from that perspective, the particle *τότε* takes a special significance in the study of some NT texts. Nevertheless, this Greek adverb has not been subject to a comprehensive study in the whole NT and its understanding has been limited to facts found in very few researches. It is therefore an attempt of this research to offer a comprehensive categorization of *τότε* in the NT.

In the process of achieving the goal of a successful analysis of *τότε* in the NT, a semantic study, comprising a diachronic and synchronic study, is offered in order to give a general understanding of this particle. From the synchronic study, general categories of *τότε* and their functions are

highlighted, setting the parameters for a subsequent pragmatic analysis of the various occurrences of $\tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$ in the NT. It globally appears that $\tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$ in the NT serves both as an adverb and as a conjunction. The adverbial usage exhibits temporal indexicality, anaphora, and (con)sequence. Conjunctive $\tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$ is both sentence initial and clause initial. Narrative $\tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$ is a peculiarity of some books and tends to be sentence initial.

“The Trisagion in Isaiah 6:3: An Exegetical and Theological Analysis”

Researcher: Benjamin McKenzie, M.A., June 2014

Advisor: Mathilde Frey, Ph.D..

Many studies have explored the theme of holiness, particularly in relation to God. While there are many passages in the Bible that contribute to the theology of God’s holiness, the *trisagion* in Isa 6:3 is a unique text. This thrice-repeated holy has resulted in diverse interpretations. A clearer understanding of this trisagion is the motivation for this study. This thesis investigates the historical context of Isa 6 and explores the literary features that appear in the passage to develop a better understanding of this trisagion.

Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the study and the methodology implemented. Chapter 2 reviews literature that is related to the trisagion, God’s holiness, and Isa 6. Chapter 3 investigates the authorship of the book of Isaiah, its historical setting, and its themes. Chapter 4 analyzes the literary structure of Isa 6, explores intertextuality and key words in the passage, examines triadic use within the passage, and explores the significance of the trisagion. Chapter 5 considers the theological implications of the study. Chapter 6 presents the overall results and provides recommendations for further study.

God’s holiness is unique. It transcends time, space, and man. The holiness of God is revealed through His salvific acts and is emphasized in contrast to man’s sinfulness. This superlative holiness is demonstrated in the thrice-repeated holy of the seraphim in Isa 6:3. God is not only holy, but has the ability to make others holy. This is a key concept of God’s holiness because He requires His people to be holy. This will be fulfilled through the acceptance of His holy seed and will be witnessed as His glory fills the earth.