

THESIS AND DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Theological Seminary, Adventist International Institute of
Advanced Studies

**"Hapax Legomena Conjunction Combinations in the Book of Hebrews:
A Linguistic and Exegetical Study"**

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Advisor: Eike Mueller, ThD

This study examines the linguistic function of the hapax legomena conjunction combinations (καθώςπερ καὶ [5:4], εἰ καὶ οὕτως [6:9], επειτα δὲ καὶ [7:2], καὶ ὧδε μὲν ... ἐκεῖ δὲ [7:8], οθεν καὶ [7:25], καὶ εἰ μὲν [11:15], τοιγαροῦν καὶ [12:1], γὰρ ὅτι καὶ [12:17], δὲ πού [2:6], ὁθεν οὐδὲ [9:18], ὅπου δὲ [10:18], δὲ ἔτι [12:27], γὰρ δὴπου [2:16], γὰρ που [4:4], εἰ μὴν [6:14], and ἐπεὶ μήποτε [9:17]) in the book of Hebrews. The necessity to examine these combinations is derived from the fact that (1) generally conjunctions are capable of expressing multiple senses and in cases of combinations of particles the possibilities of ambiguity are naturally increased as evidenced in some translations of some of the combinations. (2) Some of the conjunction combinations are classical combinations and being cognizant of the fact that classical combinations were relatively absent from κοινή, these grounds warrant an investigation of their inclusion in the book of Hebrews in terms of functionality.

A discourse analysis (DA) approach is employed to establish which lexical sense of the individual conjunctions formulating the combination collocates semantically to express the intent of the text. Also, the functionality of the combination at both the local and global structural levels is probed. DA is chosen because since conjunctions have a sequencing function of relating syntactic units, the manner in which they operate is set by levels of discourse higher than the sentence, that is, by the structure of the paragraph or section. Therefore, rhetorical structures of the paragraph in which the combinations are localized is analyzed to establish the logico-semantic relation carried by the combinations and their functionality in the discourse.

The results emanating from the study demonstrate that the conjunction combinations (1) are emphatic in force on the overall and hence signal prominence and markedness of the clause or paragraph in which they occur. (2) They express intensity or specificity of the asserted proposition, that is, increases the shape without increasing the size. (3) Globally, they are strategically employed in propositions that reinforce the global aim of the book of Hebrew, that is, the notion of not looking back but rather fixing eyes on Christ because he is superior and distinct. Finally, the conjunction combinations signal focality and hence serve a pragmatic function.

"An Exegetical Study of *Arar* in Genesis"

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The ארר (curse) formula occurs both in the active and passive forms in the book of Genesis with a higher frequency for the latter. The usage of the passive curse formula by God or humans has disparate significances. When used by God, the curse is considered a decree enacted by him. When used by humans, the curse is either an oracle pronounced by God's authorized emissary or a petition addressed to God and is utterly dependent on the divine for enactment. This understanding, however, is conflicting with the passive form of the verb which implies the absence of an acting agent.

This study investigates the occurrences of the ארר formula in the book of Genesis with the threefold objective of (a) clarifying the significance of the passive form when used by God or by humans, (b) understanding the effect of the speakers of the curse formula on its effectiveness, and (c) delineating a possible pattern in the usage of the formula. The study interacts with literature on the subject of curse while recognizing that a limited number deals directly with the objectives aforementioned.

The conclusions reached indicate that the usage of the passive form is a grammatical endeavor to focus on the result of an action and less on its agency. The passive form also conveys the idea that a curse formula is an expression of a change of state attained by an offender of direct divine command. The conclusions also point out that while God can both be the Actor and Herald of a curse, humans can only announce a curse. Further, the effectiveness of a curse is expressed through the punishment attached to it and is linked to the status of the speaker and the gravity of the offense perpetrated. Lastly, a pattern of formulation is delineated whereby the ארר formula exhibits three sections: the cause, the curse, and the punishment.

"The Meaning of *Katharisas Tō Loutrō Tou Hydatos En Rēmati*
in Ephesians 5:26: An Exegetical Study"

Researcher: Moses Yesubi Yoseph, MA, February 2016

Advisor: Eike Mueller, ThD

There are four ways in which the phrase "καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι" has been interpreted by several scholars. These are the following: (1) baptism imagery, (2) redemption imagery, (3) cleansing by the Word, and (4) cleansing through the Holy Spirit. Due to the different interpretations that exist for the phrase "καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι" in Eph 5:26, there were three objectives of this study. First, this study sought to understand the meaning of this phrase using historical-grammatical method of analysis. Second, an analysis of the broader context of the passage in the other significant passages, in the NT and the OT, was conducted to understand the broader context of washing. Third, some implications were drawn from the findings of the study.

The meaning that was determined from the analysis of the passage was a cleansing imagery that points to Christ's salvation and redemption, as proclaimed by the word God. This was consistent with the syntactical and the grammatical analyses, the context of the passage, and the context of Ephesians. Paul was seen to be comparing the sacrificial love of Christ towards the church, in his death, with the love that husbands should have for their wives. This expression was preferred over the other interpretations.

The major contribution was also seen in the biblical context, where washing was used primarily as a metaphorical imagery of the cleansing that Christ gives to those who believe in the NT. Additionally, in the OT, washing in relation to moral impurity was related to repentance and cleansing imagery as well. Though it was clear that no ablution could cleanse one of his/her moral impurities, the washing that was effected by God upon believers was seen as having a cleansing effect on moral iniquities. Furthermore, some texts suggested a messianic hope in this cleansing, which was to be fulfilled in Jesus. There were also some theological implications that were seen as the result of the study. These were in relation to some themes in soteriology, especially in relation to baptism. Finally, some implications were seen in the roles of husband and wife.

"A Spiritual Gift Training Program for Churches in Thailand
Adventist Mission"

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Advisor: Bienvenido G. Mergal, PhD

Thailand Adventist Mission is facing an enormous challenge in mobilizing and nurturing church members into active ministry in reaching the people of Thailand. Although Thailand Adventist Mission is baptizing hundreds of people every year, it has failed to maximize the involvement of church members in mission due to the absence of spiritual gift-based program.

The purpose of this project is to develop a training program to help church members engage actively in the ministry and mission of the church according to their spiritual potentials. The project is biblically-grounded as it employs the basic concept of the ministry in terms of the role of the laity and the church in fulfilling God's mission on earth. It also considers the basic biblical concept and process of training for the purpose of equipping church members in discovering and employing their spiritual gifts for the ministry and mission of the church. This program is intended to revive the missionary spirit among members and to encourage them to perform the task of ministry in preparation for the soon coming of Jesus.

The Spiritual-Gift Based Lay Training Program starts with vision identification by conference leaders, pastors, church board, and church members. After the vision/mission awareness, a spiritual revival is conducted along with the training seminar on spiritual gifts discovery and affirmation. The program is concluded with a training on how to develop their gifts in the different areas of church ministry. The program considers recruitment, teaching strategies, curriculum, and evaluation that need to be addressed in order for the program to be effective and relevant.

"A Biblical-Theological Evaluation of the Roman Catholic
Teaching on Mary's Role as a Mediator"

Researcher: Simeon Mokaya Momanyi, MA, March 2016

Advisor: Kyung Ho Song, PhD

There is no woman who has been more venerated than Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the history of the Christian church. In some Christian churches, Mary is regarded as blessed and favored by virtue of being the mother of the Savior Jesus Christ. According to the Gospel narratives, Mary was a young virgin chosen by God to be the mother of the Savior. Trusting God,

she accepted with humility her parental responsibility like any other Jewish mother according to the custom of her time.

One of the Christian churches which has exceedingly venerated Mary is the Roman Catholic Church. However, it seems that the portrait of Mary in the Roman Catholic Church significantly diverges from the descriptions found in the Bible. According to the Roman Catholic theology, Mary is currently in heaven where she officiates as an intercessor and a mediatrix, working together with Christ. She is really an important figure for Roman Catholics in their Christian experiences. They ask for help from Mary who is believed to be able to dispense all graces from her Son, Jesus Christ. She is also believed to be an intercessor whose intercession is efficacious on behalf of those who ask her to pray for them.

This thesis attempts to make a biblical-theological evaluation on the Roman Catholic view of the role of Mary as a mediator, based on the biblical teachings on the doctrine of mediation and its theological foundation. The interest of this study is to find out the basis for the Roman Catholic teaching on the role of Mary as a mediator.

From the testimony of the Scriptures, mediation—in a strict sense—is an office that only Christ can occupy. He is the only one who can cover the gulf created by sin. He offered a perfect sacrifice that ended the priestly works of the OT. He is in heaven mediating for His people as the High Priest. The Roman Catholic Church agrees that there is one Mediator, Jesus Christ, but they add that the fact that Jesus is the Mediator does not stop others from being mediators, referring to Mary and the saints. This position seems to contradict the Scriptures and the theme of mediation.

"Evaluation of the Historical, Prophetical, and Historico-Prophetical Approaches to Revelation 2 and 3"

Researcher: Kambale Muhongya, PhD, March 2016

Advisor: Richard A. Sabuin, PhD

Scholars diverge widely in the interpretation of Revelation in general and Rev 2 and 3 in particular. Three approaches to Rev 2 and 3 stand out: the historical, the prophetical, and the historico-prophetical. The historical approach confines the seven churches of Rev 2 and 3 in the 1st century AD while the prophetical projects them in the eschatological day of the Lord after the second advent. The historico-prophetical fills the gap between the first two approaches by stretching out the seven churches in the history from the 1st century AD up to the second advent.

The evaluation of the three abovementioned approaches was based on four criteria. The first criterion established that the seven churches present

some apocalyptic and prophetic features that qualify them as apocalyptic-prophetic messages. Since they are part of a big letter, Revelation, their epistolary nature is evident. The historical approach emphasizes the epistolary character of the seven churches but overlooks their apocalyptic-prophetic nature. By contrast, the prophetic approach emphasizes the apocalyptic-prophetic nature of the seven churches but overlooks their epistolary character. Only the historico-prophetic approach recognizes both the apocalyptic-prophetic and the epistolary natures of the seven churches and meets criterion 1.

The second criterion demonstrated connectedness between the seven churches and the rest of Revelation. It revealed that (1) Rev 3:21 constitutes an interlock between the seven churches and the two throne scenes in Rev 4:1–8:1 and Rev 19:1–21:4; (2) in the chiasmic structure, the seven churches (church militant) correspond to the church triumphant of Rev 21 and 22; and (3) in the marriage covenant structure, the bride betrothed in Rev 1–3 (seven churches) is the same that prepares herself in Rev 4–18 for her wedding with the Lamb that happens in Rev 19 followed by a honeymoon in Rev 20 and eternal settlement in Rev 21–22. The historical and the prophetic approaches that confine the seven churches respectively in the 1st century AD and in the time of the end fail to perceive such a progression that only the historico-prophetic approach notices and so meets criterion 2.

The third criterion discussed Rev 1:1; Rev 1:19; and Rev 4:1b. It demonstrated a double application of the seven messages made clear in the study of the time marker *μετὰ ταῦτα* (after these things) in connection with *γίνομαι* (to take place) in the discourse of the One called the Alpha and the Omega that climaxes with *γέγοναν* (they have taken place) in Rev 21:6. Both the historical and the prophetic approaches fail to perceive this principle of double application. Only the historico-prophetic approach points it out and so meets criterion 3.

The fourth and last criterion discussed the time elements in the use of *μέλλω* (to be about to), *ἐν τάχει* (quickly), *ἐγγύς* (near); the tenses used in the seven churches; and the meaning of *ἔρχομαι* (I am coming). The use of these time elements does not mean that the event will happen right away. In Revelation, the timing between the first and second advents is telescoped. Both the historical and prophetic approaches that confine the seven churches in a short span of time, either in the 1st century AD or in the end time, fail to perceive the telescope principle in Revelation. Only the historico-prophetic approach meets criterion 4. It is the only approach that meets all the four criteria and so appropriate for Rev 2 and 3.

"A Contextual Study in the Book of Daniel of the Aramaic Words *Pelah*, *Segid*, *Nepal*, *Šbh*, *Hadar*, *Mā'n*, and *Šelā'* related with Worship and Its Theological Implications"

Researcher: Elisha Kwabena Marfo, MA, May, 2016

Advisor: Carlos Elias Mora, ThD

The objective of this study was to determine the theological significance and implications expressed in the Aramaic terms פלח, פלג, נפל, שבח, קנר, הכיל, and נלך related to worship in the context of Daniel. Although worship in the OT has been a theological theme, it has received less attention from scholarly discourse as a theme in the book of Daniel. The thesis, through the utilization of a contextual study, has drawn out the theological significance and implications of worship in Daniel.

The study points out that the idea of serving gods is juxtaposed with paying homage to the image. פלג and פלח convey the same conceptual meaning of paying homage to an image to be the same as rendering worship due to a deity. To God's people, this worship is due to the God of Israel. The three Hebrew men, Daniel, and the saints of the Most High are described as God's people who are attached to God in their faithful worship to Him. Thus in Daniel, these terms are used in a similar context, denoting a similar and unifying concept of worship. Since the audience of the Aramaic section of the book of Daniel seem to be the heathen and the ANE people, the worship expressions and terms are used in a unique way to introduce the people to the God of heaven. This is evident in the three most frequently used terms נפל, פלג, and פלח, which emphasize falling down, paying homage, and worshipping. Also, the terms נפל, פלג, and פלח are mostly used in collocation with each other to emphasize worship.

The study observes that worship has theological significance which it brings to light and that worship of God is perpetual, which should take preeminence on the earthly kingdom for it to reach its full actualization in the eternal kingdom of God. Therefore, worship is a theological theme in Daniel which should not be relegated in discovering theological values.