

## **Abstract:**

REITINGEROVÁ, G., The Question of the Firstlings and Firstborns in the Old Testament – What Does Belong to God, Prague 2020. Diploma thesis

Charles University, Hussite Theological Faculty. Department of Biblical and Jewish Studies. Head of the thesis: ThDr. Eva Vymětalová Hrabáková, ThD.

This work concentrate on the question of the firstlings and firstborns in the Old Testament and its prehension in times of the Old Testament. The aim of this thesis was to describe and understand the praxis of sacrifice of firstfruits from the crop and corn, also of cattle and animals and the praxis of consecration of the firstborn sons of Israel to God in times of the Old Testament. For working on the topic, the work uses the method of reflection and synthesis of the topic from primary and secondary literature, exegesis of selected texts of Tanach, taking into account the broader social context of the Old Testament period.

It has three main parts: The first part of this work deals with the question of sacrifice of the firstling of the crop to God during the main ceremonies of Israelites in times of the Old Testament, analyses the question of sacrifice of the firstling of cattle to God and handle also with the narrative from the Old Testament, sacrifice of the firstling from the herd of Abel and try to understand the sacrifice of the Easter lamb and also exodus of firstborns of Israelites during their exodus ruled by God from Egypt, and exegetically analyzes the regulation of God from Ex 13,11-16, about the handling with the Firstlings and Firstborns. The second part works on the question of the firstborn, rights and obligations of the firstborn sons in the times of the Old Testament, focuses on the tribute of the tribe of Levites as the firstborn sons of Israel and on the Israel as a whole, which is the firstborn of the God, focuses on human sacrifice in times of the Old Testament, and analysis of the father's blessing to the firstborn son from Gn 27,26-30.

In the whole Old Testament's times praxis of firstlings and firstborn sons is, first of all, important fact that old Izraelites – through their compliance of God's commandments concerning firstlings and firstborn sons – showed their relationship with God. It is clear from their activities that they realized very well their fully dependency on the Lord. They knew that the Lord is their guarantee of good life in the promised land, that he is the master and the giver of life and of everything what is needed for fulfillment of life. Through their scarifying activities they shown their respect and gratitude to their creator and savior and in this way they lived in harmony with God's will.

This both sided relationship of the Lord and his chosen nation, sealed through the covenant concluded after the Exodus in the desert in Egypt can be understand – as described the final -third part of this thesis – as the root of Tanach. On the one hand there is affectionate God as a farther, on the other hand his chosen, often faulting son – nation of Izrael in need of farther's help. There is very personal relationship when the Lord peregrinates among his people and constantly accompany his people on the way through space and time. This is relationship to the whole community of believers and to every single person from this community. This relationship is expressed by the personal relationship of each believer to the Lord - internal relationship, externally then by above mentioned cult praxis of giving of firstlings and consecration of firstborn sons to God, from which believer receives mercy, generosity and protection of life.

This diploma thesis comes to the conclusion that from this context of exclusive relationship/covenant between the Lord and chosen nation which was concluded after Exodus, can be understand the Old Testament time's praxis of sacrifice of firstlings from crop and cattle and consecration of firstborn sons to the Lord. It is necessary to see this praxis like the part of the above mentioned dialogue of relationship – the Lord is giving, people are taking – people are giving, the Lord is taking. Based on this dialogue relationship between people of Izrael and the Lord it would be possible to analyze also other aspects of manners of the people living in Old Testament times in Tanach.