

BIBLIC PARABLES IN THE EPISTLES OF SAINT CLEMENT, PATRIARCH OF ROME, WRITTEN BY EPISCOPE ST. CLEMENT OF OHRID

Dobriła Milovska , page 43-50

ABSTRACT

The epistles of praise of St. Clement of Ohrid were written in accordance with the form of the Byzantine epistles of praise. Their dominant characteristics include emotionality, dynamism and musicality. They were written in accordance with the form used by the hymns and megalynarions which were read during the ceremonious religious services. The epistles of praise of St. Clement of Ohrid have the characteristics of a hymn. Their main characteristic is the prominence of religious stories. The epistles praise the heroes of the Church of Christ (such as the case in the Epistle of St. Clement, patriarch of Rome) and the other saints. The epistles of St. Clement of Ohrid give prominence to the stylistic and lingual adeptness of the author, which is full of emotion and beauty. St. Clement makes use of various epithets, comparisons, antitheses, dramatic situations, hymnologic forms. He most often uses comparisons to: the sun, the light, the dawn, the rays of light, the shining etc., which infuse the epistle with vivacity, light, optimism and hope.

In the first part, after the short poetic introduction, St. Clement makes use of the repetition of the same words to construct a rhythmic-intonational whole, as the most effective way of praising the saint.

In the final part, the saint floods the hero with praise with selected words from the Christian religion.

Key words: St. Clement, epistles of praise, Epistle of St. Clement of Rome



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The main literary genre which prevails in the literary works of St. Clement consists of various educational epistles and epistles of praise. In his Extensive biography of St. Clement, Theophylact regards the literary works of St. Clement as rich and diverse: his epistles which are dedicated to all of the holidays are simple and clear, they do not contain any profoundness or wisdom, on the contrary, they can be understood by even the simplest people. Here, the Christian teaching is interpreted by using examples of biblical persons, evangelical events and holidays. Some of the epistles are practical lessons that can be applied to various situations. As opposed to the educational epistles - the epistles of praise (**Grasheva, 1966:267-278**) of St. Clement of Ohrid were written in accordance with the example of the Byzantine epistles of praise. They were written in order to reach the educated masses and are similar to the Byzantine literature which was very familiar and which was mastered by the author. However, the epistles that refer to the living saints, such as the sermons of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, with whom the author had maintained a personal relationship, along with the intimate gratified relationships of the author with the persons which are subject of his works, are distinguishable by high stylistic adeptness, namely due to the fact that Ss. Clement was an author with high personal and acquired educational and artistic qualities. In his selection, St. Clement has chosen prophets and saints which have played an important role in the discovery and the formation of the Christian religion.

The epistles of praise of St. Clement usually consist of two parts. The first part consists of biblical places where the essence of the celebration is revealed, along with general information about the life of the saint or the essence of the holiday (**Stanchev 1985: 80**), whereas the second part contains the rhetoric praise. In the epistles of Ss. Clement he frequently uses repetition (**Saint Clement of Ohrid 2008: 35**) of the same words to construct a rhythmic-intonational whole, as a way to praise the saint. Here, the use of anaphors is especially characteristic which plays a unique role and the rhythmically organized parts. They characterize the saint and the relationship of the author with him.

ANGEL WITH A BRIGHT IMAGE

(EPISTLE OF SAINT CLEMENT, PATRIARCH OF ROME, WRITTEN BY EPISCOPE CLEMENT)

Saint Clement of Ohrid wrote an incredibly subtle Epistle of the roman patriarch Ss. Clement. The remains of the roman martyr were discovered during the Khazar mission (860-861). They were moved to Rome, in the church of Saint Clement. St. Clement held the priest in high regard. Therefore, it is not strange at all that he wrote an epistle of praise for him, along with other potential epistles which remain undiscovered, along with a Canon-service for the priest.

The epistle of St. Clement, patriarch of Rome is filled with biblical content. At the beginning of the epistle, the light is presented as a symbol of divinity, with various variations, and with few interconnected semantic groups: *The sky is celebrating with joy, it is decorated with bright stars, which send their unspoken praise to their creator...* (**Ugrinova-Skalovska 1996: 135**) The text is related to the words of apostle Paul: *You are the light of the world. The light turns on... and it gives light to everyone ... let your light shine before others.* (**Matthew 5: 14-16**)

In the Bible, the wisdom of God is mentioned on many occasions, whereas in the Gospel, the following words of Christ are written: *For I will give you words and wisdom.* (**Luke 5: 21-15**). Based on this, St. Clement praises the roman saint:

Wisdom gave birth to him and brought him up well, and after raising him, the Holy Spirit placed him as a wreath and beacon for the whole universe.

The saint compares the saint to a beacon, to a city, to the Sun and the light and he ends with the Epistles of the holy apostle Paul: *he was praised in in psalms and he taught himself from spiritual songs* (**Ephesus 15:9**)

The saints were called lights in the world of the holy apostle Paul, who writes: *You shine as lights in this world.* Adequately, further ahead in the text of the epistle, saint Clement added: *He shone as the sun in this world.*

(**Phillip 2:15**) The Bible words: *God is truth and all who bow before HIM must bow in the spirit and in truth.* (**John 4:24**) are also used in John.5.6 and John.16.13. To answer to question of Pilate with regards to the truth or namely-What is truth-Christ said: *I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* (**John 14:6**).

The truth as the only acceptable category was used in the Prayer to God, where with regards to His Followers, the following is written: *Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth* (**John 17:17**)

However, according to the words of St. Clement of Ohrid, St. Clement of Rome relied on the words of the bible and he fulfilled the words of God. The Bible seeks speaking of truth, but also, love of *truth and peace* (**Zechariah 8:16**)

The truth and righteousness were the highest categories in Christianity. As a result, St. Clement of Rome was described as a truthful man, who spoke only justice and judgement (**Psalms 36:30**)

Apart from the words of apostle Peter- apostle Paul is also mentioned in the epistle, whose words are cited in order to describe the saint as: holy, benevolent (**Philip. 3:20**). In the following episode, there is a description of the martyrdom of St. Clement of Rome. Citing the holy apostle Paul, and his words on the Holy Trinity where *all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* are concealed, St. Clement wrote about St. Clement of Rome, stating that he is an unexpected treasure of the wisdom of God. In the Bible it is literally written that *the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field* (**Matthew 13:44**). Through the words of the Bible, St. Clement has described the separation of the saint from the world: *the blessed Clement has left all of his treasures and fame on earth, and not just the treasures, but also his relatives, friends, father, mother and brothers and even his life.* (**Luke 14:26**).

By citing the biblical text from the psalms of the finding of the holy remains of St. Clement of Rome in the Black Sea, St. Clement of Ohrid wrote:

In the council of the saints God is celebrated; God, You are mighty, and Your truth is around You. You guide the might of the sea and its mighty waves, and You tame them. (**Psal.88:7-9**)

God protects the bones of the holy righteous ones, and adequately David wrote in his psalms that God protects all of their bones (**Psal.33:20**).

St. Clement has not forgotten the miracle works of St. Clement of Rome bestowed on him by Moses (**2 Mos.:17**)

In order to mark the of the epistle, the preacher makes use of the epistles and the Gospel and the following words as a theologian, biblicist and an educated liturgical scholar:

Our time is nearing its end, and in one moment we shall all be resurrected and shall stand before Him and we shall answer about our complete life-about our actions, thoughts and words. Here, no father can come to the aid of his own son, no mother can come to the aid of his own daughter, no brother can come to the aid of his own brother and no servant can come to the aid of his master..., everyone is responsible only for his own actions **(1 Kor.7:29)**

The epistle ends with a call to salvation and a lesson on the love of Christ and the Holy Trinity for humanity.

What is particularly characteristic about this epistle is the use of functional Christian symbols in the text itself. For example. The thunder – lightning symbolizes the wrath and anger of God, *as a heavenly fire or as a sign of God himself* (Petkanova **2000:38**). More precisely, the thunder symbolizes “speed, loudness, similarity- resemblance to God” (Petkanova **2000:38**).

Here is how St. Clement of Ohrid confirmed the fact that St. Clement of Rome was chosen by God with the use of this symbol, his godlike image “...struck the whole world like lightning, illuminating it with its light.” **(Clement of Ohrid 1996:136)**. Often, St. Clement also uses the symbol of the vine, which symbolizes the “source of life and sweetness, but in a figurative spiritual sense and spiritual fruitfulness” **(Petkanova 2000:117)**: “Rejoice, sweet vine that has spread through the whole world and that has given pious teachings to the world **(Clement of Ohrid 1996:136)**. St. Clement also uses the symbol of the flower in this epistle as a sign of Christ, which originates from the “interpretation of separate images in the Bible” **(Petkanova 200:120)**: “The sky is celebrating with joy, it is decorated with bright stars, which send their unspoken praise to their creator. The Church of Christ also represents the light with its own pleasant-smelling flowers –prophets and apostles, martyrs and archierei, and other reverend figures decorated with praiseworthy words. With these pleasant-smelling flowers the whole universe is crowned with joyfulness...” **(Clement of Ohrid 1996: 135)**. In this context, the semantics can be extended to include the meaning of the silent curse for the belief in Christ.

The epistle of St. Clement of Rome was not very popular in the old Macedonian, Bulgarian, Russian and Serbian literature, and the large influence of the other works on Clement of Rome is stated as one of the reasons for this, in particular the biographical texts. The oldest transcription of the Epistle dates back from the XIV century, with the exception of three South Slavic transcriptions (XIV and XVII century), and all of the other found transcripts are written in Russian handwriting. The literature can be found in 28 transcriptions, 3 of which are south Slavic, whereas the remaining are Russian.

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Philip.2,15; sp .Luke 12,35.

John 4,24.

John 14,6;sp. John 1,14 и 17

John 17,17.

Zechariah.8,16 и 19

Psalms.36,30.

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Luke 14,26; sp. Matthew 10,37

Psalm.88,7-9

Psalm.33,20

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