

OPINION

according to the procedure for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "doctor"
of PhD student **Nako Petkov Nakov**

in the doctoral program "Holy Scripture of the New Testament" from professional direction
2.4. Religion and Theology, Faculty of Theology, University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski"

The opinion was prepared by **Assoc. Prof. Galya Yordanova, PhD**, University of Shumen "Ep. Konstantin Preslavski", as a member of the scientific jury for the procedure.

1. Data about the dissertation student

Nako Petkov Nakov is a full-time doctoral student, assigned with the right to defense at the Department of Biblical Studies at the Faculty of Theology of the University of St. Kliment Ohridski". His dissertation is on "*Liturgical aspects in the book Revelation of St. John the Theologian (chapters 4 and 5)*"

From the presented autobiography, it is clear that the dissertation student has completed, first, *International Economic Relations* at UNSS, and then OKS - a "*master's*" in two programs at the Faculty of Theology at SU "St. Kl. Ohridski", which speaks of a marked interest in science and academic upgrading..

Dissertator Nako Nakov has completed corporate training in Belgium on the topic: "*Leaders build winners*", and the command of several foreign languages (English, Russian and French) implies the smooth use of scientific literature in the original, which supports his research activity.

In the period 1999-2000, he taught *Management Accounting* at the New Bulgarian University.

His scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation are three in number.

The submitted documents for the procedure meet the requirements of PPZRASRB and are well arranged and completed. They certify the necessary academic and practical qualities and achievements of the doctoral student Nako Nakov in the field of theological science in general.

2. General characteristics of the doctoral student's scientific works and achievements

The scientific works of doctoral student Nako Nakov are related to New Testament theology.

The peer-reviewed work consists of a preface, introduction, three chapters, conclusion, references. It has a volume of 200 pages. The used literature has an impressive volume of a total of 150 titles, of which 64 are in Cyrillic and 86 are in Latin.

The subject of the dissertation work is the heavenly worship and the presence of liturgical aspects in texts in chapters 4 and 5 of the book of Revelation, as well as modern interpretations of the book, and specialized studies of the visions described there from a liturgical point of view. The object of the proposed dissertation study is the text of the book of Revelation with an emphasis on chapters 4 and 5. The aim of the scientific exposition is to trace, interpret and present the liturgical and sacramental elements in the book of Revelation (ch. 4-5). The doctoral student dwells on sources used in the book of Revelation, related to Jewish and Christian liturgical practices contemporary to this book, as well as the books of the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic literature.

In my opinion, the set goals exactly correspond to the tasks. The most important of them are: to trace and establish the liturgical dimension of the visions described in the book of Revelation (ch. 4-5); to define and analyze the liturgical and sacramental elements in the text of ch. 4-5 of the book of Revelation and establish their relationship with the rest of the book. It is analyzed what were the visions of heaven (heavenly world) when the book of Revelation was written, especially what were the Jewish traditions about heaven as the place of God's seat in the heavenly temple. An attempt is made to establish to what extent Jewish synagogue practice in the 1st century influenced the worship of the ancient Church and the book of Revelation.

The **hypothesis** of the dissertation work is interesting, namely: that the heavenly worship in the book of Revelation and the worship in the ancient Church have common elements to the extent that they have a common root in the Jewish worship known from the Jerusalem temple and the synagogue.

In the introduction, the author justifies the choice and relevance of the research, the object, the subject, the goals and tasks; posits a hypothesis and reveals the research methodology. The development of the research subject in the patristic and modern scientific literature has been thoroughly and clearly traced.

The first chapter presents isagogical data about the book of Revelation. Questions of authorship, time and place of writing are affected; the place of the book of Revelation in the New Testament canon. The content of the book is presented and the main ideas and themes in it are presented. The doctoral student summarized the types of interpretations of the book of Revelation in a concise form: historical, eschatological, church-historical, spiritual, eclectic, etc. A comparison is made between the Jewish apocalyptic literature and the Revelation of St. Ap. John the Theologian.

The second chapter is entitled "*The Book of Revelation of St. John the Theologian and the Christian liturgy*" It examines the issues related to the ancient Christian worship and its roots in Judaism; the angelic service and the Church. The place of the Revelation in the history of worship is indicated, as well as the liturgical use of the book.

The third chapter of the dissertation deals with the Interpretation of the Book of Revelation (Ch. 4 - 5) based on the interpretations of the Church Fathers. The Greek text of the book was used, emphasizing the presence of liturgical aspects in the text and interpretations. Consistently and methodically, the dissertation examines and analyzes in detail the verses related to liturgical practice.

In the conclusion, conclusions are drawn regarding the place and significance of the book of Revelation in the context of liturgical theology. The book also provides a theological interpretation of an already existing worship service in the early Christian Church, and hence its influence on the further development of the Divine Liturgy. A good impression is made by the presentation of the book of Revelation in Christian art.

The publications are related to the topic of the dissertation and well illustrate its content.

The submitted abstract meets the requirements.

In relation to the scientific publications submitted for participation in the procedure, I summarize the following:

meet the minimum national requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the scientific field 2. Humanities and professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology (Holy Scripture of the New Testament);

there is no plagiarism that has been proven in accordance with the law.

3. Content analysis of the scientific and scientific-applied achievements of a doctoral student contained in the materials for participation in the procedure

I agree with the contributions that doctoral student Nako Nakov presents, namely:

First: for the first time in Bulgarian biblical studies, a systematized overview of the interpretive tradition related to the book of Revelation is made, as this covers the first exegetical commentaries on the work and reaches the present day.

Second: the proposed work complements in terms of insufficiently developed aspects of ancient Christian liturgical practices, synagogue worship and their relationship with the book of Revelation (ch. 4-5).

Third: the presented work provides opportunities for a future academic study on the entire text of the book Revelation in liturgical aspect.

4. Critical notes and recommendations

In *the Conclusion*, the photographic material is very small and concise, larger and distinct iconographic images could be placed.

As a recommendation, I may point out that the reflection of the book Revelation in Christian Art instead of the Conclusion could be referred as a paragraph to Chapter II and developed more fully, so that it could shed additional light on the matter.

My shared observations are in good faith and do not change my overall positive impression.

5. Personal impressions of the dissertation student

I do not know **Nako Nakov** personally, but only through his presented dissertation work and publications, and therefore I am only commenting on his research skills. To the already made assessment of the dissertation development, I add the very good language preparation of the dissertation student and the good style of the exposition, which makes the text readable and fascinating.

6. Conclusion for the doctoral studies

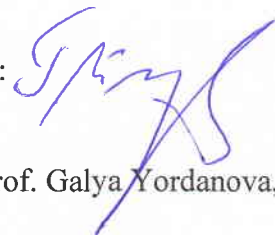
After reading the materials, scientific work and publications presented in the procedure, as well as after analyzing their significance and scientific applied contributions, I declare that the scientific achievements meet the requirements of the ZRASRB PhD student **Nako Petkov Nakov** has in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the field of New Testament theology and can independently conduct scientific research.

Conclusion

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results that have their contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and due to the above, I confidently give my positive assessment of the presented dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and propose to the honorable scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "doctor" to **Nako Petkov Nakov** in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional direction 2.4. Religion and Theology (Holy Scripture of the New Testament).

12.09.2024 r.

Prepared the opinion:



(Assoc. Prof. Galya Yordanova, PhD)