

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

THE PSALMS, THE HYMNS, AND THE TEXTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THEIR USE IN HOLY MONDAY AND TUESDAY

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ABSTRACT. The worship of the Orthodox Eastern Church involves a multitude of references hints and images of the Old Testament, in all the sequences (liturgies) and hymns. Particularly in the Holy and Great Week, the texts of the Old Testament are used with particular emphasis. On Holy Monday and on Holy Tuesday there is use of the texts of the Old Testament. Holy and Great Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday remind us of the eschatological meaning of Pascha. In this paper we are going to analyze the real and deep influence of the Old Testament to these days of Holy Monday and Tuesday and why the Orthodox Church chose to use the Old Testament although the Jews refused Christ and led him to death. The goal is to show that Orthodox Greek Christians use these texts from the Old Testament because they have no hostile attitude against Jews.

Keywords: Old Testament, Holy Week, Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday, liturgy, psalms

Introduction

The use of the Old Testament in the Christian Church is something that cannot be doubted by anyone. The question is if Christians should know the history of the chosen people of Israel through the books of the Old Testament. Christians should know the bond between the Old and New Testament².

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² S. Kalantzakis, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, (Thessaloniki, 2006), in Greek, 35.

Christian Scholars believe that the entire Bible is Christ - centered. Christ is the central subject and focus of the Bible. This focus is obvious in the New Testament, but it is present in the Old Testament as well (Luke 24:25–27, 44–47; John 5:39–40, 45–47; 1 Peter 1:10–12)³.

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself ... And He said unto them, These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning Me (Luke 24:27, 44).

So the bond of these two Testaments is to tell one ongoing story of salvation.⁴ The New Testament authors saw Jesus, as the incarnate Logos and to be the fulfillment of that revelation. Through the books of the New Testament, God's plan of salvation unfolded with the Israelites, then was added to and redefined and fulfilled by Christ.⁵ "The New Testament authors, while valuing the Old Testament as revelation, saw Jesus to be the fulfillment of that revelation. For them God's plan of salvation unfolded with the Israelites, then was added to and redefined by Christ"⁶ The religion of the Old Testament is thought of as a shadow, a promise only, and a type of the promised things about the salvation of humankind through the incarnation, passions, death and resurrection of Christ The goal of this Testament is the preparation of people to accept Christ. He is Alpha and Omega for both Testaments, in the Old Testament as typos like prophecies, and in the New Testament as the fulfillment of the Old. Christ is the "inward organic unity" of these two Testaments⁷ and the Old Testament is the historical base of the New Testament and the latter is interpreted through the first. So these Testaments cannot be separated. Scholars, theologians, ecclesiastic writers who tried to separate them, they failed and they became the cause of the birth of heresies.⁸

The place of the Old Testament in the Church was defined by the Church from very early in the Christian centuries. The Church fought the Gnostics and the Marcionites vehemently and very intensively against their attempts to exclude the Old Testament from the Canon, and was victorious in this endeavour.⁹ In

³ The texts of bible are found in New King James version translation of Bible in English.

⁴ Kalantzakis, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 35.

⁵ J. Schorn, "What is the relationship between the Old and New Testaments? Though they sometimes seem dissimilar, the two parts of the Bible are all about fulfillment", *US Catholic* 59.2 (February 2014): 54.

⁶ J. Schorn, "What is the relationship", 54.

⁷ F. A. Gast, "The Relation of the Old Testament to the New", *The Hebrew Student*, 2.8 (April 1883): 234-239, here 234, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3156146>. (viewed on: 04-07-2019).

⁸ Gast, "The Relation of the Old Testament to the New", 234

⁹ Fr. R. Stergiou, "The Old Testament in the Orthodox Church", *Voice in the wilderness*, 5 (1997): 4-6, here. 4.

this point, we should clarify that not all the Gnostics wanted to reject the Old Testament¹⁰. Marcion of Pontus (c. 90–160) was the only heretical leader who can be said, without question, that he had rejected the Old Testament.¹¹

Christ didn't refuse the significance of the Old Testament. He was the defender of it, because He acted directly or indirectly in it. In the Old Testament prophets, patriarchs said prophecies about the incarnation of Logos. The New Testament is not only the fulfillment of prophecies about Christ, it is the complete and absolute revelation of the Logos as incarnate, total God and total man. But the questions that will be examined in this essay is a. how the Old Testament was accepted not only of the liturgy of Church, the Orthodox Church, b. why there are texts from the Old Testament during the Holy Week? Of course, it is undoubtedly that there are Old Testament's prophecies referred to the Holy Week. However, does this employ of the Hebrew texts reveal that Christians had a friendly or an Anti-Jewish attitude for Jews? Is there any use of the texts from the Old Testament during the Passion Week with culminate way in order the hostile feelings of Christians against Jews to be expressed? In the end, is it peculiar for Christians to have many texts from the Hebrew Bible in Holy Week, when all Jews — become known by Christians as "Christ-killers"?¹²

In this paper, we are going to analyze the attitude towards Jews in the text of Holy Monday and Holy Tuesday. On Holy Monday we commemorate Joseph the Patriarch, the beloved son of Jacob. A major figure of the Old Testament, Joseph's story is told in the final section of the Book of Genesis. Because of his exceptional qualities and remarkable life, our patristic and liturgical tradition portrays

¹⁰ "They maintain that Sophia herself has also spoken many things through [the prophets] regarding the first Anthropos (Man), and concerning the Christ who is above, thus admonishing and reminding men of the incorruptible light, the first Anthropos, and of the descent of Christ. The [other] powers being terrified by these things, and marveling at the novelty of those things which were announced by the prophets, [Sophia] brought it about by means of Ialdabaoth (who knew not what he did), that emissions of two men took place, the one from the barren Elizabeth, and the other from the Virgin Mary," Irenaeus of Lyon, *Against Heresies*, 1.30.11, trans. by Alexander Roberts and William Rambaut, *From Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1. Ed. by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103130.htm> [accessed 5 February 2021]. Gast, "The Relation of the Old Testament to the New," 235.

¹¹ Gast, "The Relation of the Old Testament to the New", 235.

¹² Cf. Jeremy Cohen, *Christ Killers: The Jews and the Passion from the Bible to the Big Screen*, (Oxford - New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Murray A. Ray, "Christ In/and the Old Testament." *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 2, no. 1 (2008): 1-22. [Accessed February 6, 2021]. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26421443>. S.G. Wilson "The Jews and the Death of Jesus in Acts", in Peter Richardson, with David Granskou, eds. *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity. Vol. 1 Paul and the Gospels* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986), 155-164.

Joseph as “*typos Christou*”, i.e., as a prototype, prefigurement or image of Christ. On Holy Monday, in the parable of the barren fig tree, the theme is God’s long suffering with His chosen people, as with the fig tree in the vineyard. In the Old Testament, fruitful fig trees are symbolic of God’s faithful covenant blessings on his people as they dwell in fellowship with their God, obedient to Him and trusting Him. Unfruitful and withered fig trees symbolize just the opposite.

1. Holy Monday and the use of the texts of the Old Testament

The Easter is the “Feast of feasts”. Christians are invited to live in the sanctuary of Holy Week, not as spectators, but as participants in the commemoration and enactment of the divine Acts that changed thoroughly the world. Every day of the Holy Week is a step by step on the road of the resurrection of Christ, on the freedom of man from death and sin.

The morning prayers of the Holy Week are sung by anticipation on previous day. For example, the Morning Prayers of Great Monday¹³ are sung and read by anticipation on Palm Sunday evening. The same exists for the prayers of Great Tuesday. These are said on Great Monday evening, etc. Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday and Holy Wednesday have “within the liturgical development of the Holy Week a very definite purpose, the eschatological meaning of Pascha.”¹⁴

Holy Monday is the first of the seven days leading up to Easter in the Greek Orthodox Church. The Church has dedicated this day to the memory of Joseph Pangalos,¹⁵ the blessed and noble Joseph, the 11th son of Jacob (Genesis 37:12-36; 37:39-47). Joseph is seen as a prototype of Jesus one who endures great hardships yet perseveres, and goes on to save his people. It was referred above that Joseph is prototype of Christ; for this reason his story is used in the beginning of the Great Week, on Holy Monday. Joseph symbolizes Christ. He lived many centuries before Christ, but many parts of his life are pretensions of signs of the life of Christ. So he is one of the preconditions for Christ in the Old Testament.

¹³ “The service is MATINS [Morning Prayers] of Great Monday and is sung by anticipation on Palm Sunday evening”.

¹⁴ Al. Schmemmann, “Holy Week: A Liturgical Explanation for the Days of Holy Week,” 22/04/2019, <https://oca.org/saints/lives/2019/04/22/21-great-and-holy-monday> (viewed on: 05-05-2019).

¹⁵ “Pangalos” means the very beautiful, the noble.

Let's present with a brief way the similarities of Christ with Joseph whose was presented: i) Christ is the only beloved Son of God. Joseph is the beloved son of Jacob. ii) Christ's cloak symbolizes the divine nature, so it is bright. Joseph's cloak symbolizes his glory. ii) Christ was enraged by Pharisees and Scribes as Joseph was enraged by Potiphar. Potiphar and Pilate the Pontius knew that Joseph and Christ were innocent. Although both of them were innocent, they were condemned, Joseph into jail and Christ into death. Joseph refused to obey to Potiphar's wife's sexual harassment.¹⁶ On the other hand, Jesus refused to obey to any temptations of devil in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11. Mark 1:12-13. Luke 4:1-13). iii) Joseph was betrayed and was sold for pieces of silver by his own brothers (Genesis 37:25-28). Christ was betrayed and sold for pieces of silver too, by his discipline, Judas, and by people of his nation (Matthew, 26:15). iv) Joseph and Christ were stripped of their robes (Genesis 37: 23. Matthew 27:28-30). v) Both, they saved their brothers from death when they realized who Joseph and Christ was. When we say brothers of Christ we mean all the spiritual brothers, Christians. Joseph nourishes his brothers and brought them to the fertile land of Egypt (Genesis 45:4-7). Christ "feeds" his disciplines and people who followed Him with bread and spiritual speeches which revealed that He was the Messiah (Luke 21:25-28). Also, Christ nourished them with His flesh, the eternal bread and with His blood, the eternal water of Life vi) Joseph didn't remain humiliated all the time. From the humiliation of the prison was led to glory. Pharaoh raised him from the depths of the prison and made him lord. "Yes, I make you today lord in all Egypt" (Matthew 5: 3-16. John 6:48-51). This is the preface to the fact of the Resurrection of Christ. The death of Jesus brought the ultimate darkness; but death and darkness was invaded brilliantly by the light of resurrection.

Additionally, on Holy Monday there are many psalms of the Old Testament. Which is the use of all these psalms?

¹⁶ "Christians considered him an anti-type of Christ and in the Christian interpretation the story of Potiphar's wife is an allusion to the passion of Christ and the institution of a new law. This interpretation casts the wife of Potiphar as Synagoga (the old law), unsuccessfully trying to tempt Christ; the coat that Joseph leaves in her hands signifies either the body he sacrificed on the cross or the veil that hid the Holy of Holies in the temple, which torn as Christ dies and thus marked the end of the old law and the beginning of the new (as recounted in Mt 27:51)," D. Tuesday Adamo (Unisa), "The Nameless African Wife of Potiphar and her contribution to Ancient Israel," *Old Testament Essays*, 26.2 (2013): 221-246, esp. 237. Gertrude Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, trans. J. Seligman, (New York: Greenwich, 1971), 110. E. G. Heller, "Bible, Midrashim and Medieval Tales: The Artistic Journey of Potiphar's Wife," in *Women of the Hebrew Bible and their Afterlives*, vol. 1, ed. P. Hawkins and L.C. Stahlberg, (Sheffield, 2009), 18. Heller supports that in the New Testament there is a real anti-Judaism spirit neither Christ nor John speaks against Jews or condemn Jews all, but they were strict with Pharisees and Scribes who didn't put into practice the orders of Law.

First of all, it should be underlined that the psalms that are used in the matins of Holy Monday are nine, specifically they are the psalms: 19th, 20th, 23th, 37th, 62nd, 87th, 102nd, 142nd, 50th.¹⁷ The psalms 3rd, 37th, 62nd, 87th, 102nd and 142nd belong to Orthros.¹⁸ Which is the context of these psalms for being used in the prayers of the Holy Monday morning and of the other days of the Holy and Great Week?

There is no psalm from these nine psalms that they belong to the psalms for praising God (ainoi). All thought these psalms are used for prayers; they are employed for liturgical use, too. Their absence in the morning prayers of Great Monday has to do with the attitude of Christians in order not to speak about God's glory or the history of Israel. On the contrary, the psalms 3, 37, 62, 87, 142 are included in the category of mourning psalms. These psalms have to do with the sadness that we feel for all the facts of the Holy Week.¹⁹ And they are the majority among the nine psalms on Monday morning. By these psalms each Christian prays to God and he asks His help to him and His mercy. Moreover, He asks for himself courage and power to get rid of his disease, the danger of death, and any false categories against him. These kinds of psalms have to do with each Christian personally. They are an opportunity of a dialogue between the believer and God. The believer has realized his own mistakes, his own sins, and the difficult situation that he has to face up. He is in a terrible storm and the only one who can protect him, is God.²⁰

The psalms 20 and 102 belong to the category of thanksgiving psalms. By these, the believer sends his thanks to God for every gift that He has given to man. The believer expresses his gratitude to God for his salvation. Additionally, the psalm 20 is one of the messianic psalms and reveals that the only real King of Israel (old and new) is only Jesus Christ, the Messiah. So the 20th psalm with the 19th present their real meaning on the face of Christ, on His passions and on his glory after the resurrection.²¹ The hope of coming of Messiah and the freedom of man from death are become true with the incarnation of Logos and they are completed in the Holy Week. This is the last part of Christ's presence in earth which will be accomplished with His resurrection and His ascension to the Heaven.²²

¹⁷ The numbers of psalms follow the order of psalms in the translation of Septuagint.

¹⁸ In the Byzantine Rite of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Orthros in Greek means early dawn or daybreak. It is the last of the four church services, which also include vespers, compline, and midnight office.

¹⁹ Kalantzakis, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 560.

²⁰ Kalantzakis, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 560.

²¹ Kalantzakis, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 561.

²² Kalantzakis, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 561.

Generally, the psalms that are included in Orthros, speak of people's awakening from sleep, Morning Prayer, entry into the temple of God, the mercy and salvation that man expects from God. All these psalms in the Holy and Great Week, we can say that they are a culmination to Easter. As we wake up from the sleep and prepare ourselves to enter in the temple, by this way, during the Great week we should realize that our freedom from the Sin and from the Death has to do with our waking up and our acceptance of our sins and the attempt to struggle our passions in order to earn not only the objective chance of the salvation, but also the subjective one²³.

Finally, there is the psalm 50th, a very favourite psalm for most of Greek Orthodox Christians which is used in every Greek prayer, in every Greek liturgy. This psalm speaks for the real repentance of man. It declares that this repentance will be into practice as soon as possible. The believer will reject his sin and he will return to God as the prodigal son. As this lost son, the believer is satisfied to return home as a slave, but to his surprise and delight is restored back into the full privilege of being his father's son. He has been transformed from a state of destitution to complete restoration of his human nature as it was before man's exile from paradise.

In the morning prayers of Great and Holy Monday, besides, the story of noble Joseph and psalms there are some other verses from the book of Isaiah:

My soul yearns for you in the night;
in the morning my spirit longs for you.
When your judgments come upon the earth,
the people of the world learn righteousness.
But when grace is shown to the wicked,
they do not learn righteousness;
even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil
and do not regard the majesty of the Lord.
Lord, your hand is lifted high,
but they do not see it.
Let them see your zeal for your people and be put to shame;

(Isaiah 26: 9-11).

²³ Salvation is described as the mystery of God that is now revealed. "Our objective salvation is realized only in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whereas our personal or subjective salvation, which in the language of the New Testament is called righteousness, holiness, or salvation (in the narrow sense), is realized as a continuance of this objective salvation, with our personal energy or activity acting in co-operation with Divine Energy or Grace," V. E. Klimenko, "The Orthodox Teaching on Personal Salvation", Part 1, 9/12/2013, <http://saintandrewgoc.org/home/2013/12/19/the-orthodox-teaching-on-personal-salvation.html>. [Accessed on 23/4/2019].

Which is the role of this passage from the book of Isaiah? In this passage “the night” (Isaiah 26: 9) means the era before Christ’s incarnation. Everything was in darkness until the incarnation of Logos who brought the real light of the Sun of Justice.²⁴ The law was employed as pedagogues only for Israelites, but Jesus Christ was the teacher of justice for the whole universe.²⁵ It is important in the beginning of the Holy Week, to be underlined that before the truth of the human being, man is silent. The Truth that is Christ is a truth of being on a divine level. So, only if people believe in Christ, they could live in the justice that Christ brought with His incarnation, and fulfilled with His passion, His death on the cross and His resurrection.²⁶

In the Canon by Kosmas the Monk (Ode 1, Tone 2, Eirmos) it is said: “The impassable, raging sea, was made dry by his divine command, and the people of Israel he guided, to go through it on foot; Let us sing unto the Lord, for gloriously is He glorified.” These words come from Exodus 14:15-16. There, Moses was ordered by God to order Israelites to march through the Red Sea like marching on dry land. Metaphorically, we, the believers of Christ we order to believe in Him to come through His death to the land of freedom, to the ability of the objective salvation, to the Kingdom of God.

In the Ode 8 (Eirmos)²⁷, there is a reference to the story of the three Youths in fire or the Song of the three Holy Youths (Daniel 3:22-28). Also, the reading of the story of the furnace, including the song Prayer of the Three Holy Young Men, is prescribed for the vesper Divine Liturgy and is celebrated by the Church on Holy Saturday. The Orthodox Church uses the story of the Three Holy Young Men, as a prefigurement of the descendant of Christ to Hades. For this reason, it is used in the beginning of the Holy Week, on the Matins of Holy Monday and on Great Saturday morning prayers by anticipation in the evening prayers of this day. By this way, we can understand the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter is the culmination of Holy Week. As the three Holy Youth were saved from the fire, so was Christ saved from Hades after three days in it, and He destructed the kingdom of death, totally.

²⁴ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentaries in Isaiam Prophetam*, PG 70, 573CD.

²⁵ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentaries in Isaiam Prophetam*, PG 70, 573D.

²⁶ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentaries in Isaiam Prophetam*, PG 70, 573D.

²⁷ “The incessant fire, fed with endless fuel, retreated in fear, before the pure body and pure soul of the holy Children. And as the undying flame dwindled in strength, they sung an everlasting hymn: O all ye works praise ye the Lord, and exalt him above all forever”, “Ode 8. (Eirmos), in the matins prayers of Holy Monday”, *The Holy Week*, Apostoliki Diakonia, (Athens, 2005), 90.

At the Praises (Lauds) Tone 1²⁸, there is an indirect reference to the psalm 150 except this phrase of the specific psalm: “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens: praise Him in the heights.” (Psalm 150:6). The same psalm is directly presented in the following Stichera:

Verse 1: Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Verse 2: Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. Verse 3: Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Verse 4: Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.²⁹

This last of the psalms is a doxology of doxologies. The psalm 150, with its expansive summons to praise, ends the depths of human sorrow because of the captivity of death. All are employed in praise of the God who created heaven and earth, the God who saved Israel through his “mighty deeds” (verse 2), the God who, as we proclaim in this Easter season, defeated sin and death once and for all in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Professor Kathryn M. Schifferdecker argues:

“Trumpets and harps! Tambourines and cymbals! Dancing feet and lifted voice! All are employed in praise of the God who created heaven and earth, the God who saved Israel through his «mighty deeds» (verse 2), the God who, as we proclaim in this Easter season, defeated sin and death once and for all in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ³⁰

On the Matins of Holy Monday we hear the passage gospel of Matthew with the Fig Tree (Matthew 21:18-43). The question, that is raised, is why on the beginning of the Holy and Great Week there is the gospel with the Fig Tree. Which is the meaning?

²⁸ *The Holy Week*, 94. The translation became by Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church in New Jersey <http://www.saint-katherines.org/assets/files/ChurchServices/PalmSundayEvening.pdf> [Accessed on 1 May 2019]

²⁹ *The Holy Week*, 96.

³⁰ K. M. Schifferdecker, “Commentary on Psalm 150”, 11/4/2010, https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=562 [Accessed on 6 June 2019].

First of all it should be underlined that there are many passages in the Old Testament,³¹ especially in the writings of the prophets, where the vine and the fig tree are mentioned together. Fig trees are very common trees in the countries round the Mediterranean Sea. It can grow and produce heavily a crop by the second year, if not the first, without any human intervention at all, usually producing. In the Old Testament, the people, who obey to the rules of God, they dwell in fellowship with their God, were symbolized with fruitful fig trees. Unfruitful and withered fig trees symbolize just the opposite.

God Himself says: "I saw your fathers as the first-fruits on the fig tree in its first season" (Hosea 9:10). Jeremiah uses the loss of the fig harvest as a way to emphasize what enemies would do and in another passage, he uses a lack of a fig harvest as a way to describe spiritual poverty (Jeremie 24:1-3). So the tree of Fig was used to express the obedient or the disobedient Israel.³² Which is the meaning of the use of the tree of fig in the New Testament?

³¹ Deut. 8:8: "A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey"; I Kings 4:25: "And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon"; Jerem. 8:13: "I will surely consume them, saith the Lord: there shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and the things that I have given them shall pass away from them"; Hosea 2:12: "And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them"; I Kings 4:25: "And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon"; Joel 2:22: "Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength"; Zechariah 3:10: "In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree". In the Old Testament, there is an expanded use of the word fig in order to the relation of God and the Israelites to be presented through mainly the prophetic texts. In the text of Jeremiah 8:13, there is a description of a story completely similar to the narration with the fig which exists in Mark and Matthew. Moreover in Jeremiah 24:5-24, 8 the use of a fig helps the contradiction among the descendants of Judas and the descendants of Seleucia. In Jeremiah 29:17 (Massoretic text) the prophet describes the divine punishment to pseudo- prophets and to astrologers as the picture of bad figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. Also, there are many other parts of prophets and books of the Old Testament, in which the fig is used to show the divine interference into people's history (Zachariah. 3:10; Haggai. 2:19; Habbacum. 3:17-18; Nah. 3:12; Micah. 4:4 & 7:1; Amos. 4:9- Hos. 9:10; Parables 27:18).

³² The fig is used in order to speak the relations among God and Israel. In Jeremiah's book 8:13, 24:5-8, 29:17, there are good figs and bad figs. The good figs are people who put into practice the orders of God and the evil figs which represent the pseudo prophets. In Joel 1:6-7, there is the catastrophe of the figs. This symbolizes Israel's condemnation by God. This view was adopted by Christ as it is obvious in Matt. 7:16-17 and in Lk 6:44.

Some scholars support that the fig tree cursing is the historical Israel³³. Some others support that the fig is not just about historical Israel,³⁴ it's about the New Israel, the Church. The latter exists in Origen who based on Jeremiah 6:13-15, interpreted the fig tree with Jerusalem and blamed the destruction of the holy city on the execution of Jesus,³⁵ because Christ was preaching three years in Jerusalem and he revealed who was in the Synagogue, but the people of Israel didn't accept Him.³⁶

Athanasius of Alexandria expresses another idea for the cursed fig. Athanasius underlines that Christ didn't send the curse to the root of the fig tree but its fruits: "He brought the shadow to nought causing it to wither; but preserving the root, so that we might be grafted upon it".³⁷ George Dragas explains that:

"Actually, by the «root», Athanasius means the «Israel of God», who is to be seen not in the Israelite nation as such but in the faithful patriarchs and saints of ancient Israel, for it is to the first of them, Abraham, the father of the faith, that he turns."³⁸

Also, Athanasius says that the figure of the cursed tree has to do not only with Jews who rejected Christ³⁹, but also with the wicked heretics and ignorant schematics that abandoned Christ and put themselves in

³³ Terry L. Puett, *The Prophecy Puzzle: Putting the Pieces Together* (AuthorHouse, 2004), 45

³⁴ Matt. 21:18-22. Mark 11:12-21. This view has its roots in the works of Origen of Alexandria, *In Jeremiah*, 18, Section 5.78-80, 13, 432A-C; John Chrysostom, *In Mattheum*, 67, PG 58, 633D-634A; Idem, *In Johanneum*, 24, PG 59, 602B; Theophylact of Ohrid, *In Mattheum*, PG 123, 373B: "The fig tree means the synagogue of the Jews, which has only leaves, that is, the visible letter of the law, but not the fruit of the spirit. But also every man who gives himself over to the sweetness of the present life is likened to a fig tree, who has no spiritual fruit to give to Jesus who is hungry for such fruit, but only leaves, that is, temporal appearances which fall and are gone. This man then hears himself cursed. For Christ says, Go, he accursed, into the fire. But he is also dried up; for as he roasts in the flame, his tongue is parched and withered like that of the rich man in the parable, who in his life had ignored Lazarus".

³⁵ Origen of Alexandria, *In Jeremiah*, 18, Sec. 5.78-80, E. Klostermann, *Origenes Werke*, vol. 3 *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 6 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1901) 85-194, esp. 175.

³⁶ Klostermann, *Origenes Werke*, 175.

³⁷ Athanasius of Alexandria, *Epistula Festalis* VI, 5 [http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0295-0373_Athanasius_Epistula_festalis_xxxix_\[Schaff\]_EN.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0295-0373_Athanasius_Epistula_festalis_xxxix_[Schaff]_EN.pdf), p. 1066- 1073, esp. [Accessed on 5 May 2019]: "Verily, when He came and found no fruit in them, He cursed them through the fig-tree, saying, 'Let there be henceforth no fruit from thee;' and the fig-tree was dead and fruitless so that even the disciples wondered when it withered away".

³⁸ G. D. Dragas, *Saint Athanasius of Alexandria: Original Research and New Perspectives*, (Rollinsford, 2005), 111.

³⁹ Athanasius of Alexandria, *Quaestiones in scripturam sacram*, PG 28, 716C.

the same position with Jews.⁴⁰ In another text, Athanasius says that the sin is the fig and when Christ cursed the fig, he cursed the sin.⁴¹ This idea exists in John's Chrysostom writings.⁴²

Moreover, Cyril of Alexandria⁴³ and Euthymius Zigabenus⁴⁴ analyze the withered fig as the Old Israel who refused Christ. It symbolizes the old Israel who rejected Christ and they didn't recognize Him as the Messiah. Moreover, the people of Israel condemned Christ in death with crucifixion.⁴⁵ They refer to the synagogue of Israel with not only its existence in the years of Christ, but from its beginning in the times of Moses and later. Also, Cyril thinks the fig as the representation of sin, of voluptuous, sensual desires.⁴⁶ Epiphany of Cyprus⁴⁷ parallels the withered fig with Judas, who lived near Christ but he didn't accept the preaching of Christ. He didn't accept any spiritual fruits of Lord and instead of that he betrayed Him.⁴⁸

Maximus the Confessor explains that the fig tree symbolizes the hypocrisy of Scribes, Pharisees and their pride is like an unfruitful fig tree, rich only in leaves without nourishing people. So did Pharisees, they did no real practice righteousness for people's divinization.⁴⁹ On the other hand, Maximus employs the use of narration of the fig in order to express the inability of the whole human generation to understand the reality of salvation and thereby this imparts pedagogical dimensions. According to the symbolism of the fig there is the symbol of the spiritual shadow of the law in which humanity lived, but now human beings are in front of the revelation of God Himself because of Logos' incarnation.⁵⁰ Also, Philip F. Esler⁵¹ and Donald B. Strobe⁵² have the opinion that the fig symbolizes any Christian Community, Church which has no fruits

⁴⁰ G. D. Dragas, *Saint Athanasius of Alexandria*, p. 110.

⁴¹ Athanasius of Alexandria, *Quaestiones in scripturam sacram*, PG 28, 716D.

⁴² John Chrysostom, *In parabolam de ficu*, PG 59, 589A.

⁴³ Cyril of Alexandria, *In Lucam*, PG 761D-764D.

⁴⁴ Euthymius Zigabenus, *In Mattheum*, PG 129, 557B-D, 559AB, 613A; Idem, *In Markum*, PG 129, 829CD, 832A.

⁴⁵ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentarii in Lucam*, PG 72, 764B; Ibidem, PG 72, 764C.

⁴⁶ Cyril of Alexandria, *Collectio dictorum veteris testamenti*, PG 77, 1168C- 1184A,

⁴⁷ Epiphanius of Cyprus, *Tractatus de numerorum mysteriis*, PG 43, 512CD.

⁴⁸ Epiphanius of Cyprus, *Tractatus de numerorum mysteriis*, PG 43, 512CD.

⁴⁹ Maximus the Confessor, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 20, PG 90, 309C-312B.

⁵⁰ Maximus the Confessor, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 20, PG 90, 309C-312B.

⁵¹ P. F. Esler, "The Incident of the Withered Fig Tree in Mark 11: A New Source and Redactional Explanation", *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 28 (1/2005): 49.

⁵² D. B. Strobe, "Not the Seasons for Figs," *Collected Words*, in *Dynamic Preaching*, ed. D. B. Strobe, (2005), 37-46.

of belief and deeds. M. Eugene Boring and Fred B. Craddock,⁵³ J. R. Donahue and D. J. Harriton⁵⁴ agree with the opinion that the fig refers to Christian Church, too.

Here, we should refer the interpretation of Andrew of Caesarea of Cappadocia, who explains the fig with eschatological way. The fig, the cursed one, will be people without good deeds, who will be condemned when Christ the Judge will come in glory.⁵⁵

Jesus' cursing of the unfruitful fig tree presents Christians who will not put into practice the orders, the teaching of incarnate Word.⁵⁶ John Chrysostom argues that the story of Christ with the cursed fig, shows that Christ could destroy totally people of Israel who were responsible for His crucifixion, instead of that, He forgave them.⁵⁷ People of Israel had the prophecies as the leaves which were in the fig, but they refuse to accept the coming of the Messiah and the fulfillment of prophecies, so they became barren fig without fruits.

To sum up we can support that the story of the withered fig is used in the beginning of the matins of Holy Monday in order to show that everyone who will not follow the teaching of Christ and fail to exercise his faith in Jesus. These people who will be fruitless in practicing their faith, in virtues, they will have no life, because they will have rejected the life in the unity with Christ.⁵⁸ By this view, the fig can symbolize the hypocrites who have leaves, so they seem to have virtues, to be fruitful in Christian Life, and this is something false and not real. So, Jesus shows that people who will become spiritually barren, they will be cursed. They will know the right words to say, but their hearts will be far from God. This is the symbolism of the cursed fig tree. This tree becomes the symbol of judgment that will befall those who do not bring forth the fruits of repentance.⁵⁹

⁵³ M. E. Boring, F. B. Craddock, *The People's New Testament Commentary* (Louisville- Kentucky 2009), 153, 154, 266.

⁵⁴ J. R. Donahue, SJ. and D. J. Harriton, *The Gospel of Mark*, (Minnesota: Collegeville, 2002), 331: "the fig tree... symbolize the Jewish crowds, the Jewish religious leaders, the Temple, the sacrificial worship enacted in the Temple, Israel as God's people, Judaism as a religious system, or even the Markan Community".

⁵⁵ Andrew of Caesarea of Cappadocia, *In Joannis theologi Apocypsin*, 18, PG 106, 273.

⁵⁶ W. J. Cotter, "For It Was Not the Season for Figs", *The Catholic Bible Quarterly* 48 (1986): 62-66, here 66.

⁵⁷ John Chrysostom, *In Matthaem*, PG 58, 633D.

⁵⁸ W. Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 2, (London, 1975), 255.

⁵⁹ K. Ware (ed.), *Mary Mother*, The Lenten Triodion (South Canaan, PA 1978), 60.

2. Holy Tuesday and the use of the texts of the Old Testament

Matins of Holy Tuesday are sung on Great and Holy Monday evening. There is the repetition of the nine⁶⁰ psalms of Holy Monday Matins which are sung on Palm Sunday. Of course, there is a repetition in the verses of Isaiah that are sung in the Matins of Holy Monday and of Odes which reveal the influence of the Old Testament in these songs.

In the Eighth Ode - irmos, we have a reference again to the three Holy Youth and to the prayer of Azariah:

“When the three holy young men did not yield to the decree of the tyrant, they were thrown into the furnace, but they were singing hymns to God: ‘Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord’.”⁶¹

The prayer of the Azariah (Daniel 3:34-35) is one of the few pre-Christian texts that in its context, there is the subject of the death of righteous human beings for the benefit of the “atonement for the sins of people”⁶². This can be said that represents the basic teaching of Christology that exists in the New Testament, there is the base of Christian Church, in its dogmatic theology, and it is analyzed in the teaching of Holy Church Fathers. Azariah as Christ cannot personally be blamed for the sins of Israel, but he nonetheless takes personal responsibility for them before God. Because of his own contrition and solidarity, “he can make this confession on behalf of the people.”⁶³ Professor Mattis comments “‘The worship of Israel in the period of three Holy Youth, had become corrupted, and exile from the temple made it incomplete.’ There had been no sacrifice since leaving Jerusalem. ‘Yet Azariah offers himself totally to God as an act of pure worship’. This is a messianic, Christological view. Azariah is putting himself in the place of all Israel and offering himself as a total, complete sacrifice, prefiguring Jesus Christ.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ 20th, 21st, the six psalms of Orthros: 3rd, 37th, 62nd, 87th, 102nd and 142nd, and of course the 50th psalm

⁶¹ *The Holy Week*, 128.

⁶² Th. Hieke, “Atonement in the Prayer of Azariah (Dan. 3:40)”, in *Deuterocanonical Additions of the Old Testament Books*, vol. 5, ed. G. G. Xeravits and J. Zsengeller (Budapest, 2010), 43-59, here 43.

⁶³ Th. Matthis, *The Rest of the Bible: A Guide to the Old Testament of the Early Church*, (Kentucky, 2011), 122-125.

⁶⁴ Matthis, *The Rest of the Bible*, 124.

There is a repetition of the psalm 150 that underlines the way how should we praise God, as it refers in the matins of Holy and Great Monday, too.

Also we are going to present some hymns and hirmoi in the service of Holy Tuesday evening which are the matins of the Holy Wednesday. In this service, we have the presence of more hostile attitude against Jews. Although there are many references of the texts of the Old Testament, there is an appearance of hatred against Jews, who are thought responsible for the crucifixion of Christ. Actually there is not the majority of Jews but a part of Jewish population who were influenced by some of Pharisees and of Scribes, who condemned Christ in crucifixion.⁶⁵ They were the Pharisees and Scribes that Jesus exposed the religious hypocrisy of them and He opposed them for dictating laws for the people to follow but not practicing what they preached.

In the troparion of the service in the evening of Holy Tuesday, it is said:

“In vain the council of the transgressors of the law gathers together, to pronounce maliciously the sentence of condemnation upon thee, O Christ our deliverer, to whom we sing: Thou art our God, and thou alone art holy”.⁶⁶

In this troparion the council of Pharisees is said “transgressors”, because they were transgressors at heart. From the very beginning of his ministry the Pharisees showed themselves bitter and persistent enemies of our Lord. They could not bear his doctrines, and they sought by every means to destroy his influence among the people. So the transgressors can have double meaning, the Pharisees and the Scribes that didn’t follow the law, or they were illegal because they didn’t have the right to condemn in death Christ, the Messiah, the incarnate Son of God:

⁶⁵ “While some Pharisees became the loudest enemies of Jesus, the Gospel of John speaks about Nicodemus, a Pharisee who came to Jesus to hear his teachings and later helped Joseph of Arimatheas with the burial of Jesus. Historically Pharisees had many holy men in their midst, as well as many who succumbed to the temptations of the time. One of the most famous Pharisees was St. Paul, whose conversion set him on a path to become a pillar of Christianity and a strong force in spreading it throughout the region,” Ph. Kosloski, “Who were the Pharisees and why did Jesus oppose them?”, 3/4/2018, <https://aleteia.org/2018/03/04/who-were-the-pharisees-and-why-were-they-so-bad/> [viewed on 7 June 2019].

⁶⁶ *The Holy Week*, 150.

“The terrible council of the transgressors of the law, with their souls fighting against God, conspires to kill as a criminal the Righteous Christ, to who we sing: Thou art our God, and thou alone art holy”⁶⁷.

Again, there is a reference to the three Youth in the fiery furnace,

“When the command of the tyrant prevailed, the furnace was heated sevenfold at one time. But the young men trampled the decree of the king were not even burned, but cried aloud: ‘O all works of the Lord, praise the Lord and exalt him to all ages’.”⁶⁸

To sum up, there is not a rejection of the Old Testament in the Holy Week and mainly in the days of the Holy and Great Monday and Tuesday, there is a denunciation of Pharisees, the council of Sanhedrin⁶⁹, and Judas who organized an ambush with the intent to place Jesus under arrest.

Conclusions

Old Testament Prophecies are fulfilled during the Passion Week. For this reason, the presence of the texts of the Old Testaments in the services of the Holy and Great Week is not something that comes opposite to the meaning of the Holy Week and of course they don't express a general anti-Judaism attitude against the Jewish population. On Holy Monday, we cannot observe any anti - Jewish view in the texts of this day in the Orthodox Church. The first accusation of Jews for Christ's death exists in the second Sessional Hymn:

“O Savior, the priests and the scribes jealously gathered together with hostility a lawless council against thee, stirring up Judas to betray thee. And with shameless persistence he went out and spoke against thee to the law-transgressing. What do you give me, if I will betray him to your hands?”⁷⁰

⁶⁷ *The Holy Week*, 150.

⁶⁸ Dan. 3:52. *The Holy Week*, 154.

⁶⁹ The Great Sanhedrin was comprised not only of Sadducees but also of Pharisees, but it was abolished with the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 66-70 A.D.

⁷⁰ *The Holy Week*, 110.

On these two days of the Holy Week, there is a reference of some texts of the Old Testament, as psalms, which are used in the Matins of each day before the Holy Liturgy but there are some other references of the Old Testament as the story of noble Joseph. On Holy and Great Monday we commemorate the blessed Joseph, because Joseph is regarded as an image of Christ from former times. The story of Joseph reveals and prefigures the mystery of God's providence, promise and redemption. Joseph was the innocent, chaste and righteous man. His whole life bears witness to the power of God's love and promise⁷¹. The lesson to be learned from Joseph's life, as it bears upon the ultimate redemption wrought by the death and resurrection of Christ, is summed up in the words he addressed to his brothers who had previously betrayed him,

“Fear not ... As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones. Thus he reassured them and comforted them.”⁷²

The commemoration of the noble, blessed and saintly Joseph reminds us that in the great events of the Old Testament, the Church recognizes and accepts the facts of the New Testament. The first service of the Holy Week it remembers Joseph in Egypt, an Old Testament foreshadowing of Christ's unjust suffering and the triumph of righteousness, as we said before. Also, there is the story of cursed fig, which symbolizes people without repentance, without having real virtues. This is something important about the new world that Christ brings with His passions, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. Justin Miller supports that

“Christ curses the fig tree because it had no figs and by day's end it withered. It is symbolic of God's Son coming to Israel to find it fruitless in its worship and leaving it cursed in its rejection of the Messiah.”⁷³

⁷¹ “Holy Week”, <http://orthochristian.com/52793.html> (accessed 5 June 2019)

⁷² Gen. 50:19-21.

⁷³ J. Miller, *A journey through Holy week: From the Gospel of Matthew*, (Oregon: Eugene, 2019), 7. D. V. Vistar, *The Significance of the Temple Incident in the Narratives of the Four Gospels*, (Oregon: Eugene, 2015), 52.

On the Holy Tuesday, there is the repetition of the same nine psalms that exist in the matins of Holy Monday and there are some texts which express the hostile attitude of the Jewish council against Christ. Here, the hymns don't express a hostile attitude against all the Jews who heard the teaching of Christ.

Generally, the scholar of the common worship of the Orthodox Eastern Church is impressed by the multitude of the Old Testament references, hints and images in all the sequences and hymns of the Orthodox services including the services of the Holy Week. The unity of the two Testaments is emphasized far beyond. Biblical phrases and ideas are overwhelming in the orthodox services.

Many hymns are nothing more than paraphrases of Old Testament hymns, like Moses' ode to cross the Red Sea. In the great feasts, numerous cuts from the Old Testament are chosen and read to emphasize that Christian perfection is but an accomplishment of incarnate Word of God, Christ, who was prefigured and premeditated, or even pronounced, foretold in the period of the Old Testament. Particularly in the services of Holy Week, this Old Testament preparation is used with emphasis.

The services of the Holy Week present a wonderful knitting of the Hebrew Psalms with the Christian Tropares, Prophecies and other Old Testament passages with the Gospels and Apostles' reading of the New Testament. A major characteristic of these liturgical texts of Holy Monday and Tuesday

“as they interpret biblical texts is the use of the typological sense. This means that rather than fill the liturgical verses with dogmatic statements and doctrinal phrases, the chanted hymns are filled with images—often mystically poetic, dramatic, and beautiful—where comparison of types expresses an inner meaning.”⁷⁴

This is the role of the use of the Old Testament in the Holy Week.

⁷⁴ V. M. Kimball, “The Bible and Ancient Liturgy: Good Friday Texts in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition”, Teaching the bible, https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/TB9_Liturgy_VK.pdf, [Accessed on 21 May 2019].

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