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## **The Economy of Salvation According to 2 Tim 1 : 9–10**

The title of this paper combines two terms: economy and salvation. Their correlation in contemporary speech may seem unusual, or even breaching the rules of different realities of human existence. Yet, the Greek term οἰκονομία, which currently means “economy” (careful, thrifty management of available resources or the definition of science concerning the production, trade and consumption of goods and services and the supply of money) is composed of two notions: οἶκος (“house”) and νόμος (“law,” “rule”). This lexeme is understood as: “keeping the house,” “management,” but also “making a plan,” “programme.”<sup>1</sup> In this sense it can form an expression “the economy of salvation,” since it refers to: “managing salvation,” “the plan of salvation” or “the programme of salvation.” The fragment of 2 Tim 1 : 9–10 is “a compendium” of knowledge about salvation. The words were addressed to Timothy, one of Paul’s closest associates, who, at his command, stayed in Ephesus in order to prevent heresy from infecting the church in Ephesus and establish Elders and Deacons there.

Timothy, being responsible for the Christians in Ephesus, had to face difficulties which made his work of the superior of the church extremely challenging. There were two reasons for this situation. The first one di-

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. οἰκονομία, [in:] R. Popowski, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu. Wydanie z pełną lokalizacją greckich haseł, kluczem polsko-greckim oraz indeksem form czasownikowych*, Warszawa 1995<sup>2</sup>, p. 422; *Słownik grecko-polski*, red. Z. Abramowiczówna, Warszawa 1962, vol. 3, p. 250.

rectly connected with Timothy himself. He was a relatively young (cf. 1 Tim 4:12) and sensitive man (cf. 1 Cor 16:10–11), who was assigned the position of the head of the local church. He also suffered from some health problems (cf. 1 Tim 5:23). The other problem lied in the community itself, since false teachers, who were a part of it, and through their “profane, idle talk” (cf. 1 Tim 4:1–11; 6:3–10; 2 Tim 2:16–19; 4:3) had a negative influence on the members of the community, as well as the position of Saint Paul and his beloved follower – Timothy.

These two factors were, among others, the reason why the Second Epistle to Timothy was created. In the Epistle the author tried to strengthen the young bishop of Ephesus. With this goal in mind he placed in the Epistle a liturgical couplet (cf. 2 Tim 1:9–10), touching on three issues: the fact that God saved us and called us to a holy life (cf. 9a); the salvation of man according to God’s own design and the grace bestowed on us in Christ before time began (cf. 9b) and bringing life and immortality to light through the Gospel (cf. 10).<sup>2</sup> The text is the summary of the Gospel,<sup>3</sup> although most probably not a complete one.<sup>4</sup> The analogy with Rom 16:25–27 and Eph 1:3–11 suggests that it is a liturgical or catechetical creed, which was incorporated in 2 Tim. However, there is no introductory formula (like e.g. in 2 Tim 2:11: πιστὸς ὁ λόγος – “this saying is trustworthy”), which would assure the reader as to the righteousness and veracity of this utterance. What is more, a strong connection between verse 9 and 10 with the words from 2 Tim 1:6–14 and the vocabulary similar to 2 Tm, might

<sup>2</sup> Cf. H. Langkammer, *Listy Pasterskie. Pierwszy list do Tymoteusza. Drugi list do Tymoteusza. List do Tytusa. Tłumaczenie, wstęp i komentarz*, Lublin 2006, p. 96 (Biblia Lubelska).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. L. Oberlinner, *Zweiter Timotheusbrief*, [in:] idem, *Der erste Timotheusbrief. Der zweite Timotheusbrief*, Freiburg im Breisgau-Basel-Wien 2002, p. 37 (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament. Ungekürzte Sonderausgabe): “Summariums des apostolischen Kerygmas”; P. H. Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction: The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles*, Sheffield 1989, p. 94 (Journal for the Study of the New Testament. Supplement Series, 34): “a capsule summary of the gospel of salvation.”

<sup>4</sup> Cf. G. D. Fee, *Comentario de las Epístolas a 1ª y 2ª de Timoteo y Tito*, traducción P. L. Gómez Flores, Viladecavalls (Barcelona) 2008, p. 266 (Estudios Bíblicos, 23).

indicate that the author of this description of God's works is the author of the Epistle himself.<sup>5</sup> There is no unanimous opinion on that matter, although in different writings the most common hypothesis is that the author of 2 Tim included this early – Christian creed in his letter as an interpretation of the Gospel presented in verse 8.

## 1. Context

The couplet 2 Tim 1:9–10 is a part of the pericope the main theme of which is perseverance in the service for the sake of the Gospel (cf. 2 Tim 1:6–2:13). The immediate context (cf. 2 Tim 1:6–14) is a call for the persistence in giving testimony to the Lord, the example of which are the works of Saint Paul himself. Verse 6, which initiates the pericope, mentions the key task Timothy has been given in the context of his own formation – stirring into flame the gift of God (ἀναζωπυρεῖν τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ). This gift is the grace resulting from the conferral of an ecclesiastical office (cf. also 1 Tim 4:14). It can also refer to the Holy Spirit. The interpretation of the formula τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ as a reference to the Holy Spirit is supported by verse 7 and Acts 8:17; 19:6.<sup>6</sup> The formula, apart from the office and the Holy Spirit, partly refers to the specific mission of Timothy, which was the continuation of Saint Paul's mission and preaching, that he took over after him. The entrusted gift should be guarded by Timothy with the help of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Tim 1:13–14). All these interpretations of the τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ formula emphasise the fact that the entrusted gift must be taken care of and its strength needs to be revived, which was expressed in verse 6 by the use

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Edinburgh 1999, p. 700 (The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. P. H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, Grand Rapids-Michigan-Cambridge 2006, p. 458 (The New International Commentary on the New Testament).

of an extremely dynamic verb ἀναζωπυρέω (“stir into flame”; “revive”) (*hapax legomenon* of the New Testament).<sup>7</sup>

Verse 8, logically connected to verse 7 by the conjunction γάρ (“for”) indicates the way in which Timothy needs to stir God’s gift into flame – that is by not being ashamed of his testimony to the Lord, nor of Saint Paul, a prisoner for his sake (v. 8a) and bearing his share of hardship for the Gospel with the strength that comes from God (v. 8b). The encouragement to accept the suffering (συγκακοπαθέω) may refer to future martyrdom,<sup>8</sup> or, what seems to be more likely, refer to the hardship connected with the faithful works for the sake of the Gospel.<sup>9</sup>

Verse 9 and 10 that this paper focuses on, are the articulation of the Gospel for the sake of which Timothy should accept the suffering. The formula εἰς ὃ (“for which”) (v. 11) – referring to τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (v. 10) – connects verse 11 and 12 to the thought included in verse 9 and 10. The two following verses (13–14), being the last two of the immediate context of 2 Tim 1:9–10, are the continuation of the comments included in verse 6 and 8. They synthetically present the requirements set for Timothy as Paul’s protege (v. 13) responsible for the entrusted deposit of faith (v. 14).

The analysis of the immediate context of 2 Tim 1:9–10 indicates the semantic and thematic integrity of this couplet with the whole pericope 2 Tim 1:6–14. Not only does it present its main theme (faithfulness and perseverance in the ministry of the gospel), but also provides the reader with a detailed explanation of what the Gospel, for the sake of which one should accept the suffering either in the form of martyrdom or in the form of constant, arduous effort to proclaim the news of the redemption from sin and the salvation of man, in fact is.

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<sup>7</sup> The dynamism of the verb ἀναζωπυρέω is well presented in LXX, in which it was used twice (see: Gen 45: 26–27; 1 Macc 13:7), always in the context of revival and stirring into flame (ἀνεζωπύρησεν τὸ πνεῦμα).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. G. Holtz, *Die Pastoralbriefe*, Berlin 1980<sup>3</sup>, p. 156 (Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament, 13).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. N. Casalini, *Parole alla Chiesa. La tradizione paolina nelle Lettere Pastoralis*, Milano 2009, p. 236 (Analecta. Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, 71).

## 2. Structure

Grammatically 2 Tim 1:9–10 is a part of a Greek sentence forming verses 8–11. In the theological sense, the couplet constitutes an independent thematic unit the structure of which can be clearly (although it is not as symmetrical as in 1 Tim 3:16 or 2 Tim 2:11–13) seen in 2 Tim 1:6–14. The structure of 2 Tim 1:9–10 has a logical sequence:<sup>10</sup>

I.

[θεοῦ] τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς  
καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἅγια,  
οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν  
ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν,

II.

τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν  
[A] ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ  
[B] πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων,  
φανερωθεῖσαν δὲ  
[B'] νῦν  
[A'] διὰ τῆς ἐπιφανείας  
τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ,

III.

καταργήσαντος μὲν τὸν θάνατον  
φωτίσαντος δὲ ζωὴν καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν  
διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου

As the schematic structure of the text shows, it was built on three sets of thematically connected participles: I. σώσαντος (“saved”) – καλέσαντος (“called”); II. δοθεῖσαν (“bestowed”) – φανερωθεῖσαν (“made” [manifest through]); III. καταργήσαντος (“destroyed”) – φωτίσαντος (“brought” [to light]). The first one, referring to θεοῦ (v. 8b) describes the initiative

<sup>10</sup> Cf. I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, op. cit., p. 701.

of the salvific works of God. It is the main theme of the whole couplet, which is specified in its two successive parts. The second set of participles is connected with χάριν (v. 9b). Part II, the expression of which was shown by chiasmic symmetry, describes two stages of the history of salvation: the first stage – πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων (lit. “before eternity”), in which God initiated the salvation of man (part I) and the second stage – νῦν (“now”), in which he accomplished the plan of salvation through the incarnation, passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The last two participles, referring to τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ (v. 10a), first describe the negative (καταργήσαντος – “destroyed”) and then the positive (φωτίσαντος – “brought” [to light]) aspects of the incarnation of Christ.

The thematic structure of 2 Tim 1:9–10 touches on the following issues: part I – God as man’s saviour; salvation as the result of God’s grace and not won by personal deeds; part II – the central position of Jesus Christ in the work of salvation and the aspect of time; part III – the presentation of the consequences of the work of salvation fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

The structure of 2 Tim 1:9–10 corresponds with Eph 2:8–9. Both texts share a common parenthesis and both emphasise God’s grace in the salvation of man.<sup>11</sup>

### 3. Detailed Analysis

v. 9a

[θεοῦ] τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἅγια

[God]. He saved us and called us to a holy life

This phrase is connected with verse 8, in which the author of the Letter encourages Timothy to continue bearing his share of hardship for the gospel. Emphasising that only δύναμις θεοῦ (“the strength that comes from God”) can make it possible for him to continue his work, the author

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. N. Brox, *Die Pastoralbriefe. 1 Timotheus. 2 Timotheus. Titus*, Regensburg 1989<sup>5</sup>, p. 230 (Regensburger Neues Testament).

indicates the continuity of God's presence in the work of salvation. In the same way as God undertook the work of creation and salvation of man, he supported the young bishop of Ephesus in his ministry of the gospel.

Verse 9a starts with the verb σώζω (“save,” “redeem,” “free”), which in 2 Tim initiates a number of references to the idea of “salvation” (cf. 2 Tim 1:10; 2:10; 3:15; 4:18). In *Corpus Paulinum*<sup>12</sup> it is connected with the redemption from sin and its consequences.<sup>13</sup> The application of the object pronoun ἡμᾶς (“us”), stresses the universal character of the message in verses 9 and 10. The work of salvation, fulfilled in the past, has consequences not only for Paul and Timothy, but for all people.

There is an exegetical difficulty connected with the second part of verse 9a: καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἅγια. The interpretation of the verb καλέω (“call,” “appoint,” “summon”) in the context of salvation makes it a *terminus technicus*. It describes the works of God, who, through the works of Jesus Christ, calls all men to holiness of life by graciously bestowing redemption from sin according to His eternal plan (cf. also Rom 8:28–30; 1 Tim 6:12).<sup>14</sup> At the same time, this verb clearly exposes the initiative of God in the act of salvation. The cognate noun κλήσις (“calling”) used with the adjective ἅγιος (“holy”) raises some doubts as to the proper interpretation of the phrase. This expression, deriving from the Semitic thought patterns, due to the use of the adjective ἅγιος might generally point to the source of the calling – it is “holy” since it comes from God.<sup>15</sup> However, the dative form suggests some means used by God in order to accomplish the salvation plan, and not the source of salvation itself. There

<sup>12</sup> In this paper the expression *Corpus Paulinum* is used with reference to all Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Epistles.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. W. Foerster, σώζω, σωτηρία, [in:] *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, begründet von G. Kittel, in Verbindung mit zahlreichen Fachgenossen herausgegeben von G. Friedrich, Stuttgart 1966, vol. 7, p. 992–996.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. W. D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Nashville 2000, p. 482 (Word Biblical Commentary, 46).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. G. W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles. A commentary on the Greek Text*, Grand Rapids-Michigan 1999<sup>2</sup>, p. 374 (The New International Greek Testament Commentary); G. D. Fee, *Comentario de las Epístolas a 1ª y 2ª de Timoteo y Tito*, op. cit., p. 267.

is no clear answer to this question. One of the ideas of interpretation is e.g. the proclamation of the Gospel as a way of accepting the calling of God and the commitment to follow Him (cf. 2 Thess 2:14)<sup>16</sup> or baptism through which one opens to God's salutary will.<sup>17</sup> The expression κλήσει ἁγία might refer to the aim of this calling "[God did not call us to impurity but] to holiness" (cf. 1 Thess 4:7) and "[called] to be holy" (cf. Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2).<sup>18</sup> The multitude of uses of both καλέω and κλήσις in the New Testament (cf. Rom 8:30; 1 Cor 1:9.26; 7:17.20; Gal 1:6; Phil 3:14; 1 Thess 4:7; 2 Thess 1:11) does not exclude either of these interpretations.

v. 9b

οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν

not according to our works but according to his own design and the grace

This verse, similarly to Titus 3:5 and Eph 2:8–9, touches on the issue of God's free will and his initiative in the salvation of man. The thought is first presented from a negative point of view – man could not initiate his salvation through his own works. The preposition κατὰ, used with the accusative case, expresses the reason (cause) for something or the basis of a particular action.<sup>19</sup> Its negative (οὐ) stresses the lack of any kind of possibility for man to initiate his own process of salvation in order to set himself free from evil. The fundament of the work of salvation were not any righteous deeds of men, but God's voluntary intervention in His mercy. The lexeme ἔργον, the semantics of which includes terms referring to taking action ("action," "deed," "work") may also contain a metaphorical aspect or indicate the moral value of a particular action.<sup>20</sup> In 2 Tim 1:9 it generally refers to human works, which could not influence God's

<sup>16</sup> Cf. P. H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, op. cit., p. 468.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. L. Oberlinner, *Zweiter Timotheusbrief*, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. G. D. Fee, *Comentario de las Epístolas a 1ª y 2ª de Timoteo y Tito*, op. cit., p. 267.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. κατὰ, [in:] R. Popowski, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu*, op. cit., p. 319.

<sup>20</sup> See: τὰ ἔργα πονηρά ("evil works") (Jn 3:19; 7:7; Col 1:21; 1 Jn 3:12); τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός ("works of darkness") (Rom 13:12; Eph 5:11); τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός ("the works



work of salvation. Recognising and obeying the Laws, even before they were codified, could not have any impact on God's will.<sup>21</sup> The purpose of the expression οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα is not the negation of the value of human deeds. The Holy Scripture stresses that faith is dead if it is not followed by righteous deeds (see: Jas 2:14–26; Mt 7:21; 2 Cor 11:9; Gal 6:10; Phil 4:10–19). That is why it cannot be separated from the necessity of doing the will of our Father in heaven, for which faith should be the constant motivating factor. However, the salvation of man was not the result of his righteous deeds, but of God's love and mercy for him (see Titus 3:3–7).<sup>22</sup>

The fact that God cannot be persuaded to originate the work of salvation is emphasised in the second part of this verse, 9b: ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριτι. It was God himself who was the initiator and originator of salvation. Saint John Chrysostom indicated that clearly in his Homily on Second Timothy:<sup>23</sup> “no one compelling, no one counselling Him, but of His own purpose, from the impulse of His own goodness, He saved us.” The two parts of this verse, and at the same time their contrasting character, are shown by the particle ἀλλά (“but”). Together with the preposition κατὰ that it is followed by, it introduces the reader

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of the flesh”) (Gal 5:19); τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου (“the works of the devil”) (1 Jn 3:8); ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων (“dead works”) (Heb 6:1; 9:14).

<sup>21</sup> This kind of interpretation is based on the expression τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε (“you would be doing the works of Abraham”) (Jn 8:39), which suggests that Abraham was familiar with the Law, although it had not been written down yet. For the interpretation of ἔργον as “works resulting from the Law” – cf. H. L. Strack, P. Billerbeck, *Das Evangelium nach Marcus, Lukas und Johannes und Die Apostelgeschichte erläutert aus Talmud und Midrasch*, München 1924, vol. 2, p. 524 (Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, 2).

<sup>22</sup> Titus 3:4: ὅτε δὲ ἡ χρηστότης καὶ ἡ φιλανθρωπία ἐπεφάνη τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ (“But when the kindness and generous love of God our saviour appeared”).

<sup>23</sup> John Chrysostom, *Homily II on Second Timothy*, [in:] idem, *Homilies on Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, Grand Rapids, Michigan 2005 (A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, 13).

to the fundamentals of salvation, which are πρόθεσις (“plan,” “decision”) and χάρις (“grace,” “favour,” “blessing”) of God.

In *Corpus Paulinum* there are numerous references to God’s πρόθεσις of salvation (see Rom 8:28; 9:11; Eph 1:11; 3:11). This decision is related to God’s ‘wish’ to become human again, created in the divine image (cf. Gen 1:26–27).<sup>24</sup> The initiative of returning to the original bond between God and man originated from God, what is clearly manifested by the use of the adjective ἴδιος (“[his] own”). God is completely independent in his decisions and the actions He takes. No human would be able to recreate this bond without the intervention of God. That is why having presented the source of the work of salvation (ιδίαν πρόθεσιν), the author immediately shows the attitude of God towards man, which is full of grace and favour. The term χάρις introduces the tactics of the process of salvation as well.

v. 9c

τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων  
bestowed on us in Christ Jesus before time began

This phrase is the beginning of the second part of the couplet. Jesus Christ is placed in its central position. It is Him that made God’s grace available to humans. In this verse, as well as in both Epistles to Timothy (see 1 Tim 1:14; 3:13; 2 Tim 1:1. 9. 13; 2:1. 10; 3:12. 15), the formula ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ points to Christ as the way or medium of salvation and love, and not the mystical connection with Him.<sup>25</sup> He is the mediator between God and men and expresses God’s commitment to men (cf. 1 Tim 2:5).

The grace of salvation was given to man πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων. This particular expression appears in the same form in Titus 1:2, and trans-

<sup>24</sup> Cf. C. Marcheselli-Casale, *Le Lettere Pastorali. Le due lettere a Timoteo e la lettera a Tito. Introduzione, versione, commento*, Bologna 2008<sup>2</sup>, p. 660 (Scritti delle origini cristiane, 15).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. J. A. Allan, *The ‘in Christ’ formula in the Pastoral Epistles*, “New Testament Studies” 10 (1963–1964), p. 116–117.

lated literally as “before eternity,” contains the idea of “beyond time.”<sup>26</sup> It shows that even before the creation of the world God had planned to bestow on man the fullness of eternal life. Apart from presenting the plan of salvation, the following verse emphasises the pre-existence of the Son of God.<sup>27</sup> Even before the incarnation and the historical existence of Jesus of Nazareth, the person of the Son existed as the second person of the Holy Trinity. The Son of God is also the creator of the plan of salvation, and not its passive executor in the person of Jesus Christ. The self – revelation of the Son of God in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, His passion and resurrection were the accomplishment of what He had planned ‘before eternity’ as Triune God.

v. 10a

φανερωθεῖσαν δὲ νῦν διὰ τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ  
but now made manifest through the appearance of our saviour Christ Jesus

The thought of the inspired author moves from “beyond time” to the earthly time (χρόνος), the time that can be measured and specified. The contrast between the times is emphasised by the expression δὲ νῦν (“whereas now”; “but now”). The fact that they contrast does not necessarily mean they are in opposition. The epiphany of the Son of God in time (cf. Gal 4:4) gave salutary meaning to historical time. It became the space in which the accomplishment of the eternal plan of salvation of man took place.

Verse 10a is syntactically connected with the term χάρις (v. 9b), what is especially stressed by the second pair of participles: δοθεῖσαν (“bestowed”) (v. 9c) – φανερωθεῖσαν (“made” [manifest through]) (v. 10a). The grace of salvation was bestowed on man even “before eternity,” and

<sup>26</sup> “Beyond time” – L. T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, New York-London-Toronto-Sydney-Auckland 2001, p. 348 (The Anchor Bible, 35A).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. J. Stepien, *Listy do Tesaloniczan i Pasterskie. Wstęp, przekład z oryginału, komentarz*, Poznań-Warszawa 1979, p. 412 (Pismo Święte Nowego Testamentu, 9); L. T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, op. cit., p. 348–349.

now it was made visible, and therefore made concrete. The participles constitute the *continuum* of God's works, and the fact that they are used in their passive forms implies God's absolute initiative and execution. The verb φανερώ (‘‘make manifest through,’’ ‘‘reveal,’’ ‘‘show’’) analysed with reference to 1 Tim 3:16, shows the threefold salutary work of the Son of God: incarnation (ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί) (1 Tim 3:16a), resurrection (1 Tim 3:16a.b) and ascension (1 Tim 3:16c).<sup>28</sup> These three stages of the epiphany of the Son of God form the historical frame of time for the accomplishment of the grace bestowed (δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν) (v. 9c) on us.

The second part of verse 10a explains the way in which this grace became visible. It was made through the revelation of Jesus Christ on earth. The revelation (τῆς ἐπιφανείας) of the Saviour is stressed by the preposition διά, which is used in Greek literature in order to direct towards the acting or mediating factor.<sup>29</sup> In verse 10a the word ἐπιφανεῖα (‘‘appearance,’’ ‘‘manifestation’’) refers to the first appearance of the Son of God on earth – His incarnation and all His works till the day of His ascension. It is the only place in the New Testament in which lexeme ἐπιφανεῖα is used in this way, as in all five other cases (see 2 Thess 2:8; 1 Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 4:1.8; Titus 2:13) it always applies to the second coming of Jesus on the Final Day. The first epiphany, made by Jesus Christ in the present (νῦν) became the essence of the Gospel proclaimed in order to prepare humanity for the future encounter with the Lord.

The one who revealed Himself – Christ Jesus – received the title ὁ σωτήρ ἡμῶν (‘‘our Saviour’’). The word σωτήρ in extra-biblical literature was used to describe a rescuer who freed others from danger, or generally about someone, who offered a helping hand. The term could also refer to a doctor, who brought health to the sick. It expressed the mutual dependence of the saved one on the one who provided him with help. In the New Testament it was used solely with the meaning of ‘‘saviour,’’ ‘‘rescuer,’’ ‘‘liberator’’ and refers to God only (8 times to God generally and 16 times

<sup>28</sup> Cf. C. Marcheselli-Casale, *Le Lettere Pastorali*, op. cit., p. 661.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. R. Popowski, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu*, op. cit., p. 125.

to Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Lord, the Son of God).<sup>30</sup> In verse 10a the title is used with reference to Christ, which results in a slow transition of the subject of the couplet – from God to Jesus Christ. The initiative of salvation originated in God the Saviour and is accomplished through Christ, who is a mediator between God and men (cf. 1 Tim 2:5). God remains invisible. In Christ – “our Saviour” – the grace and love of God for men<sup>31</sup> is manifested (φανερωθεῖσαν). The epiphany (τῆς ἐπιφανείας) of Christ fulfils the work of salvation initiated even “before eternity.”

v. 10b

καταργήσαντος μὲν τὸν θάνατον φωτίσαντος δὲ ζῶην καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου

[Christ Jesus], who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

The grace of God is not only visible but also effective<sup>32</sup> in Jesus Christ. It has two opposite results, presented by the third pair of participles: a negative one – destruction (καταργήσαντος) [of death] and a positive one – bringing [life and immortality] to light (φωτίσαντος). The contrast was strengthened by the use of particles μὲν – δέ (“indeed” – “while”), which stressed the opposition or the separation of particular elements of the sentence<sup>33</sup> in Ancient Greek and in *koinē*.

The verb used in the first part of verse 10b – καταργέω – literally translated means “to act against something,” in order to nullify, weaken

<sup>30</sup> Cf. W. Foerster, σωτήρ, [in:] *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 7, op. cit., p. 1004–1024; σωτήρ, [in:] R. Popowski, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu*, op. cit., p. 591–592.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. J. Gnilka, *Teologia Nowego Testamentu*, przekł. W. Szymona, Kraków 2002, p. 457.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles. I & II Timothy. Titus*, London 1978<sup>4</sup>, p. 163 (Black's New Testament Commentaries).

<sup>33</sup> See: F. Blass, A. Debrunner, F. Rehkopf, *Grammatica del greco del Nuovo Testamento*, ed. italiana a cura di G. Pisi, Brescia 1997<sup>2</sup>, § 447, 2 (Introduzione allo studio della Bibbia. Supplementi, 2).

or even destroy it.<sup>34</sup> In the New Testament it is mostly used with eschatological issues, when it refers to the victory of Christ over death: ἔσχατος ἐχθρὸς καταργεῖται ὁ θάνατος (“the last enemy to be destroyed is death”) (1 Cor 15:26).<sup>35</sup> In 1 Cor death is still effective and mercilessly takes its toll. Its end was to come with eternity. For the addressees of 2 Tim and all its contemporary readers death was, and still is, the reminder that the time of full salvation is yet to come. However, the aorist of the participle καταργήσαντος in 2 Tim 2:10b indicates that Christ’s victory over death was already accomplished in the past through his resurrection, which proved death to be unavailing and its efforts futile. This event was also the announcement of the reality that was to come through the Parousia of the Son of God. However, all Christians may live the life with Christ, which will lead them to freedom and eternity (see Rom 6:6–7; 14:8–9; 2 Cor 4:9; 1 Thess 5:10).

The use of the article ὁ before θάνατος (2 Tim 2:10b; 1 Cor 15:26) allows for a personal interpretation of death as a real enemy of Christ. This kind of explanation leads to satan as the one who had the power of death (cf. Heb 2:14; Jn 8:44).<sup>36</sup> The fact that death was deprived of any kind of power over Christ, deprived the devil himself of the power over life, as he was defeated by the Paschal work of Christ. When united with Jesus Christ, man is also a victor over death, which is realised by the sacramental life of the Church.<sup>37</sup>

In the second part of verse 10b the author uses the verb φωτίζω, which is translated as “bring to light,” “light,” “fill with light.”<sup>38</sup> In *Corpus*

<sup>34</sup> Cf. L. T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, op. cit., p. 349.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 13:8, 10; 2 Thess 2:8; Heb 2:14. The verb καταργέω is used 27 times in the New Testament. For the analysis of its multidimensional use see: G. Delling, καταργέω, [in:] *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 1, p. 453–455.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. C. Spicq, *Saint Paul. Les Épîtres Pastorales*, Paris 1969<sup>4</sup>, vol. 2, p. 716 (Études Bibliques).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. P. Iovino, *Lettere a Timoteo. Lettera a Tito. Nuova versione, introduzione e commento*, Milano 2005, p. 187 (I Libri Biblici. Nuovo Testamento, 15).

<sup>38</sup> Cf. φωτίζω, [in:] R. Popowski, *Wielki słownik grecko-polski Nowego Testamentu*, op. cit., p. 648.

*Paulinum* the meaning of this verb closest to 2 Tim 10b can be found in Cor 4:5 and Eph 3:9. In each of these texts it refers to the contrast between light and darkness, the aim of which is presenting sin as darkness and God as light. The participle φωτίσαντος points to the source of light, which is Jesus Christ (v. 10a) – “the light of the world” (Jn 8:12). The inspired author mentions two areas lit by Christ: ζωή (“life”) and ἀφθαρσία (“immortality”). Put together they become attributes of God, characterising His immortality and at the same time referring to eternal life of the saved.<sup>39</sup> The Son of God, by becoming human, accepting the suffering and death and later defeating death, brings light to human life, which allows man to gain eternal life with God. However, God lets man decide whether he wants to use the Gift of Light or stay in the darkness of the sin (cf. Rom 2:5–8; 2 Cor 4:3–4).

The last words of the couplet – διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (“through the gospel”) – can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, εὐαγγέλιον means the good news of the salvation of man, on the other – “the power of God” that makes the salvation possible (see Rom 1:16). The term combines the theoretical aspect (understanding what life and immortality are) as well as the practical one (the possibility of participating in eternal life).<sup>40</sup> Through the gospel one can understand life once again and fully participate in it.

The words finishing verse 10 (διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) can also refer to verse 8, in which Timothy is encouraged to accept (bear) the hardship for the sake of the gospel: συγκακοπάθησον τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ. It is not the encouragement to suffer for the sake of the suffering itself. The expression “bear the hardship for the gospel” indicates suffering for the cause, which in 2 Tim 1:8 is the proclamation of the gospel. Being a prisoner for God’s sake, Paul accepted his hardship for the cause and he tried to persuade Timothy to adopt a similar attitude. As it has been mentioned, the hardship for the gospel can refer to martyrdom, or, what seems to be more likely, the difficulties connected with the proclamation of the gospel. The end of verse 10 would serve as a reference to the earlier encourage-

<sup>39</sup> Cf. P. H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, op. cit., p. 472.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. J. Stępień, *Listy do Tesaloniczan i Pasterskie*, op. cit., p. 413.

ment to perseverance in bearing hardship for the gospel and verse 9 and 10 would present arguments why accepting the hardship was worth the effort – it brought the understanding of the fact that proclaiming the truths of the gospel is a means of salvation for men.<sup>41</sup>

## 4. Conclusion

The analysis of 2 Tim 1:9–10 allows us to see the salvation of man as a process initiated beyond time and realised in time. Its originator and initiator is God. Man could not influence the initiation or the course of the process, he could, however, and still can, accept or reject its results.

The economy of salvation according to 2 Tim 1:9–10 indicates the importance and dignity of man for whom, even before he was created, God had planned the grace of mutual and eternal co-existence. Revealing the grace through the life and works of Jesus Christ set man free from the consequences of his own sin, so that he could enjoy his closeness to God, which will be fully accomplished in the eternity of man with God. The proclamation of the gospel is the way of achieving this goal.

The message in 2 Tim 1:9–10 was supposed to strengthen young Timothy in his concern and care for the Christian community in Ephesus and encourage him to perseverance in the hardship of proclaiming the gospel, even if dying as a martyr was the consequence. The message of 2 Tim 1:6–2:13, with the special meaning of verse 9 and 10, was clear for Timothy – stay adamant, stir your gift into flame, participate in the hardship in order to become one of those who defeated death through Christ.<sup>42</sup> The economy of salvation, although it is entirely a work of God, needs man in order to serve its purpose.

*Katowice*

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. P. H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, op. cit., p. 473.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. G. D. Fee, *Comentario de las Epístolas a 1ª y 2ª de Timoteo y Tito*, op. cit., p. 268.



## Summary

### The Economy of Salvation According to 2 Tm 1:9–10

The article on *The Economy of Salvation According to 2 Tm 1, 9–10* is the analysis of the hymnic – liturgical couplet that touches on three thematic aspects concerning salvation: the redemption of man made by God (v. 9a); perennial decision of Jesus Christ to redeem man (v. 9b) and the consequences of redemption – new, lasting life (v. 10). 2 Tm 1:9–10 describes salvation as God's grace for man, who would not have been able to initiate or fulfil this act in any other way. However, man had and still has the opportunity to decide whether he wants to accept or reject its consequences. The study of 2 Tm 1:9–10 also points out the semantic and thematic integrity of this couplet with the whole pericope of 2 Tm 1:6–14. It does not disturb the main thought of the pericope (faithfulness and perseverance in the ministry of the gospel) and serves as its full explanation, showing the Gospel for which it is worth to accept suffering, martyrdom or the daily, systematic and hard work connected with proclaiming the Good News of salvation of man made by Jesus Christ.

## Keywords

Jesus Christ, Timothy, salvation, grace

## Streszczenie

### Ekonomia zbawienia według 2 Tm 1, 9–10

Artykuł podejmuje analizę hymniczno-liturgicznego dwuwiersza, który porusza trzy aspekty tematyczne: odkupienie człowieka przez Boga (w. 9a); odwieczne postanowienie zbawienia człowieka przez Jezusa Chrystusa (w. 9b) oraz skutki odkupienia – nowe, nieprzemijające życie (w. 10). 2 Tm 1, 9–10 eksponuje zbawienie jako łaskę Boga wobec człowieka, który w żaden sposób nie mógł sam zainicjować lub zrealizować tego dzieła. Człowiek jednakże mógł i wciąż może przyjąć lub odrzucić jego skutki. Studium 2 Tm 1, 9–10 wskazuje również na semantyczną i tematyczną integralność tego dwuwiersza z całą perykopą 2 Tm 1, 6–14. Nie tylko nie przerywa on głównej myśli całej wypowiedzi (wierność i wytrwałość w służbie Ewangelii), ale stanowi jej szczegółowe wyjaśnienie, wskazując, czym jest Ewangelia, dla której warto przyjąć cierpienie wiążące się z nie-

dalekim męczeństwem lub też z codzienną, systematyczną i uciążliwą pracą związaną z przepowiadaniem Dobrej Nowiny o zbawieniu człowieka dokonany przez Boga w osobie Jezusa Chrystusa.

## Słowa kluczowe

Jezus Chrystus, Tymoteusz, zbawienie, łaska