The Fatherhood of God in the Pauline Initial Salutations

Dievo kaip Tėvo įvaizdis Naujajame Testamente labiausiai pabrėžiamas Evangelijoje pagal Joną, tačiau jau ir anksstyviausioje Naujojo Testamento raštijoje, t. y. autentiškuose Pauliaus laiškuose bei vėlyvesniuose raštuose, kurie daugiau ar mažiau priskiriama jo tradicijai, Dievo tėvystės tema yra gana svarbi. Net 42 atvejais iš 63 terminas „tėvas” juose vartojamas teologine prasme. Atkreiptinas dėmesys, kad visų (išskyrus 1 Tes) Pauliaus tradicijai prikirtų laiškų įvadinėse sveikinimo formulėse šis terminas glaudžiai susijęs su terminu „Dievas” – „Dievas Tėvas“. Dievo įvardijimas „tėvu” pačioje laiško pradžioje rodo, kokią didelę reikšmę apaštalas teikė Dievo sampratai – Dievas visų pirma yra Tėvas, tad laiškų skaitytojai (klausytojai) privalo turėti tai omenyje.

Through the image of God as Father in the New Testament is mostly and regularly presented in the Gospel of John, this theme in the most ancient written Christian tradition, i.e. Paul’s authentic letters and subsequently entire Pauline corpus occupies an important role. From the total 63 occurrences of “father”, this term is employed in 42 cases (two thirds of the total amount) in connection with or stands for the notion of God. Noteworthy that this term is employed in a very close relationship to the term “God” – “God Father” in the initial salutation formula in the whole Pauline corpus (with an exception in 1 Thess). Such a pairing of two terms reveals the importance the apostle Paul attributed to God’s notion – God is primarily the Father and the addressees of the letters have to keep it in mind.

Preface

Although the initial salutations in the Pauline corpus do not vary much and have a quite similar wording, they are not totally uniform; this fact points to their rather formulaic character demonstrating at the same time a certain freedom with which they have been employed in different letters, especially the Pastoral. They should not be confused with other forms of greetings that also appear in the Pauline letters and represent a distinct literary form¹.

The object of the research – the image of God as Father as it is presented in the Pauline initial salutations.

The aim of the research – to present a thorough analysis of the initial salutations in Paul’s letters with a particular accent on the image/activity of the divine Father.

The task of the research – to analyze thoroughly the function of the term “father” in the Pauline initial salutations.

The method applied for the research – an exegetical/theological analysis of the initial salutation formula in the Pauline corpus.
1. Text criticism

In three initial salutations Gal 1:3, 2Thess 1:2, and Col 1:2 the important manuscripts are divided over several readings. The alternative reading to ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ίησοῦ Χριστοῦ in Gal 1:3 is ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ίησοῦ Χριστοῦ that has a very strong external support⁴. The scholars are not unanimous and some commentators opt for a less traditional reading⁴; the majority, however, accepts the usual phraseology ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν, that is well established in other genuine Pauline letters. They usually point to Metzger’s opinion that the stereotyped formula was altered by copyists because of the development of piety to Lord Jesus Christ⁵. The other uncertainty with ἡμῶν is in 2Thess 1:2; both in NA26 and NA27 this term is included in the text yet enclosed in brackets⁶; it is not clear whether this term had originally been incorporated into the text and was later omitted by copyists because of stylistic reasons (repetition in v. 1 – θεῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν) or was it later added to conform to the other initial salutations in Pauline letters⁷. Some support for the originality of ἡμῶν in 2Thess 1:2 may possibly be drawn from the fact that firstly, the formulaic expression ‘God our Father’ is favored by the author of the letter (1:1; 2:16) and secondly, the weight which in our case the codex Vaticanus imposes against the originality of ἡμῶν seems to be lessened because of its tendency with regard to the Thessalonian correspondence to omit minor textual features both in 1Thess (1:4 τοῖς; 1:5 ἐν; 1:8 ἐν τῇ; etc.) and 2Thess (2:1 and 3:6 ἡμῶν; 2:8 θεοῖς; etc.)⁸. In the letter to the Colossians the phrase καὶ κυρίου Ίησοῦ Χριστοῦ in Col 1:2 is abundantly attested to⁹; it is lacking, however, in some important and various other manuscripts¹⁰, therefore scholars unanimously opt for a lectio brevior and consider the additional phrase as an attempt of copyists to assimilate the text to ordinary Pauline usage¹¹. Why Paul/ the author of this epistle neglected the customary pattern is not clear because nothing in the text requires its omission; the prominent status of Jesus Christ in this letter is hardly compatible with the idea that the shortening of the formula may have occurred because of theological reasons¹². Yet, the idea that the author’s deliberate intention may have been to put more emphasis on God the Father cannot be ruled out. Aletti suggests that the reason for the omission of ‘Jesus Christ’ may have been the precedent mention of ἄδελφοις ἐν Χριστῷ; the shortened formula thus better highlights the origin (God the Father) of that relationship¹³. Dunn also points to the significance of God the Father but he does it in a slightly different way: the omission of Jesus Christ in v. 2 may point to the supremacy of God the Father who is said to be the Father of Jesus Christ and to whom the thanksgiving is offered in v. 3¹⁴.

2. The initial salutations apart from the Pastorals

A dual-part structure occurs in all Pauline initial salutations except for the 1Thess 1:1, where both parts are coordinated by means of ἀπὸ, which by introducing the divine subjects, serves to elucidate the meaning of the contents of the greeting. Hence, the image of God the Father in the initial salutations depends both on the interpretation of the first part of the salutation (the contents) as well as the value the preposition ἀπὸ and the con-
junction καὶ are given in the second part (relational aspect). There is also another stylistic problem as there is no explicit verb employed in any of the initial salutations. Yet, instead of the indicative of the verb εἰμί, that is usually implied in such cases the optative seems to be more appropriate especially if one understands the formulaic salutation in terms of the apostle’s confident wish or blessing and not merely as a simple declaration. Besides, the optative mood expressing a wish in the NT is mostly attested to in the Pauline corpus. There are 38 examples of the optative expressing a wish in the NT and 29 of them are found in Paul.

The first part – χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη – being also the shortest initial salutation in 1 Thess 1:1, has exactly the same wording in all Pauline initial salutations (except the Pastorals) that differs considerably from the contemporary conventions of Greek letter writing. The verbal infinitive form χαῖρειν used typically in pagan and even Jewish letters, including those in LXX, is here substituted by the noun that is connected with εἰρήνη that most probably is the translation of חננה that was in turn commonly used as an introductory greeting in a conversation and in delivering a message; it also appears as a key term in the initial salutations, secondary greetings, and concluding formulas in the Aramaic epistemology carrying with it the idea of greeting, peace, and well-being. There are also several texts in the OT which, being letters according to their literary genre, contain בָּשָׂרו in the initial greetings (Ezra 4:17; 5:7; Dan 3:31; 6:26). Fitzmyer notices that short formulas in which בָּשָׂרו is used alone (as, for instance in Ezra 4:17; 5:7) are “stereotyped abridgements of longer greetings”. He distinguishes four longer בָּשָׂרו forms of the initial salutations and two more ‘benediction’ בָּשָׂרו forms (one is found only in a secondary greeting) in which בָּשָׂרו is also included. In the NT εἰρήνη denotes both a certain feeling/experience of peace/tranquility and a state of reconciliation with God; its most important and basic notion however is that of salvation of the whole person that should be understood in the ultimate eschatological sense. Although the combination χάρις καὶ ἔλεος is mentioned in Wis 3:9 and 4:15, in a context that emphasizes God’s concern for those who are faithful to him as regards χάρις, there is no reference to it either in the OT or in Jewish/Hellenistic letters to being employed in the epistolary opening/closing formulas, therefore, it should be regarded as an absolutely new element in the Pauline and NT epistolary tradition. Because of a certain sound-conformity between χαίρειν and χάρις and the latter’s use in the place in which there is traditionally supposed to be χαίρειν, many scholars think that Paul, though adhering to a Greek epistolary tradition, has deliberately substituted χαίρειν by χάρις in order to endow the customary Greek greeting with a Christian content. Others, still, point to a Jewish salutation formula in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch (78:2), in which ‘peace’ is in conjunction with ‘mercy’, and to its Pauline equivalent in Gal 6:16. It may be added that the κεκτημένος text of the blessing in Tob 7:11 also combines ἔλεος with εἰρήνη. The use of εἰρήνη...καὶ ἔλεος in the closing peace wish in Gal 6:16 is quite indicative, i.e. Paul was not ignorant of the Jewish use of such a combination. Accordingly, he may have changed it to the formula χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη in the opening peace wish in Gal 6:16 is quite indicative, i.e. Paul was not ignorant of the Jewish use of such a combination. Accordingly, he may have changed it to the formula χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη, so that it functioned at the beginning of his letters as a blessing conveying the divine gift or as an intercessory prayer. This seems to have been quite possible because the term ἔλεος was not Paul’s favorite one. While χάρις is undoubtedly the Pauline term, ἔλεος apart from
Gal 6:16 is used only in Rom 9:23, 11:31, 15:9, once in Eph 2:4, and several times in the Pastorals: 1Tim 1:2, 2Tim 1:2, 16.18, Tit 3:5. According to Wanamaker the Pauline initial salutations represent a formulaic prayer for those to whom he addressed his letters. In LXX ἐλεος is mostly used for πρεσβύτερος that is not simply an expression for God’s gracious and faithful disposition towards Israel but rather denotes his active and continuous engagement in that relationship; it is more profound than πρεσβύτερος (favor/grace) which is a more situational term denoting usually a unilateral, free (without any obligation of responsibility on both parts) and not necessarily long lasting attitude or activity and which is usually translated by χάρις. These terms are not interchangeable: only once χάρις is used for πρεσβύτερος (Esth 2:9), and twice ἐλεος for πρεσβύτερος (Gen 19:19; Judg 6:17). The term χάρις seems to have little theological value in LXX. It is worth noting, however, that the verbal form πρεσβύτερος is used in benediction formulas both in the OT and Qumran. The most important example in the OT is Aaron’s blessing in Num 6:24–26: so that God should be gracious to the Israelites (v. 25 – πρεσβύτερος) and should give them peace (v. 26 – σάλα). Yet, while πρεσβύτερος is translated by εἰρήνη, πρεσβύτερος is rendered by ἐλέευο and not χάρις. Nevertheless, it cannot be discounted that πρεσβύτερος may have played some role in the Pauline use of χάρις. Whatever may have been the motivation(s) for Paul’s employing χάρις in the initial salutations the content of this term must basically be viewed from a theological perspective Paul used this term in his letters to describe a dynamic, wholly generous, and eschatological act of God that has resulted in the salvation event freely operated by him in Jesus Christ.

There is a number of blessings/peace wishes in the Pauline corpus in which χάρις and/or εἰρήνη are employed without being joined in one phrase as it is in the initial salutations. A bulk of these blessings appears at the very end of the letters: χάρις that is mentioned in all final blessings is explicitly said in 8 cases to be of [our] Lord Jesus [Christ]. The phrase θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης is usually found in the final wish of peace right before the concluding blessings. An exception is the peace wish in Phil 4:9 that is a bit far from the conclusion of the letter in its present form. Nevertheless, it is the only peace wish in the whole letter and may have served as the conclusion of one of the so-called ‘component’ letters (three original letters has been accepted by F. W. Beare, J. A. Fitzmyer, R. H. Fuller, H. Koester, E. Lohse, W. Marxsen, J. Murphy-O’Connor, W. Schmithals). This way χάρις and εἰρήνη seem to epitomize the essence of Paul’s gospel referring to its cause and its effect. In the initial salutation this is likely intended even syntactically as the emphasis is put on χάρις by directly adjoining to it ἵμαν and only then adding εἰρήνη. It is quite evident, therefore, that Paul did not intend to mean by χάρις ἵμαν καὶ εἰρήνη merely a simple greeting to express his wish for peace or well-being; however, the function of the initial salutation to communicate joy cannot be underestimated as well as an implicit claim for Paul’s authority in imparting ‘grace’ and ‘peace’ on his addressees. Certainly, Paul owes his authority to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ who are the real senders of grace and peace; the apostle’s authority has been strongly stressed by Berger who considering the NT letter as a certain apostolic-prophetic revealing discourse claimed that the epistolary prescript permits one to regard the apostle as God’s mouthpiece and mediator of the divine gifts.

A second quite standard element in the initial salutations is the phrase ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ (8x). It seems to be erroneous to consider the omis-
tion of it in 1Thess 1:1 as affecting the conception of the greeting χάρις ἓμιν καὶ εἰρήνη in this letter and to postulate a certain evolution in the meaning of the initial salutation in the later letters in which the dispensators of ‘grace’ and ‘peace’ are explicitly named. A fixed form of χάρις ἓμιν καὶ εἰρήνη in other initial salutations may hardly point to any change in its meaning. On the other hand, it is obvious that the qualifying phrase is a key to a better understanding of the full religious dimension of such an unusual salutation. By referring to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ Paul sought to elucidate in a precise way the source of those interrelated gifts putting emphasis not only on them but also on their givers. The dispensation of χάρις and εἰρήνη in the full-form initial salutation depends grammatically both on God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ indicated by means of avpo as the common source. The terms that stand in a sequence – ἰμὼν καὶ κυρίου – are not to be taken as mutually related and dependent on patro.j as if they were intended to explain God’s fatherhood by means of a double sonship: of ours and of the Lord Jesus Christ’s. See the initial salutations in the Pastorals whose wording eliminates such a possibility. Furthermore, Paul nowhere in his letters mixes the sonship of Jesus Christ with ours; the pattern ‘our God and/the Father’ is also attested to in other places without mentioning Jesus Christ’s sonship. In fact, there are two subjects, God and the Lord, who are connected by καὶ and share the same preposition ἀπό; this indicates not only their common function but also their equal authority in dispensing their gifts. Not a few commentators, however, have questioned this grammatical indication, as they proposed to interpret καὶ in terms of εἰδία, in accordance with a quite common Pauline idea about God’s acting in/through Christ. The conception of God as the ultimate source/goal and Jesus Christ as the means/agent is widely attested to in Paul’s argumentation within different letters and in diverse ways; it also occurs in his several extended epistolary prescripts: τοῦ δῶντος ἑαυτόν κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἰμὼν (Gal 1:4); δι’ οὗ ἔλαβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολήν (Rom 1:5). It may also be noted the formulation of the thanksgiving in 1Cor 1:4 that follows immediately the initial salutation (v. 3): Εὐχαριστῶ ἐπὶ τῇ χάριτί του θεοῦ τῇ δοθείση ἕμιν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. A somewhat middle position occupies Conzelmann’s interpretation that combines two elements: there is both a ‘theoretical’ subordination of Christ to God (apparently in a sense of εἰδία) and a ‘practical’ cooperation between them (καὶ) since looking from the perspective of salvation and faith the Father and Jesus Christ are in unity. Yet again, it may well be that Paul intentionally put on the same level God the Father and Jesus Christ right at the outset of the letters not only to emphasize their co-action towards the faithful but also to point at the exalted Lord’s position which Jesus has taken after his resurrection (as an extended superscription in Rom 1:4 seems to suggest it) and possibly to call attention to the novelty of God’s grace Christians have been offered to experience in comparison with the Jewish customary blessings: it is the grace and peace of both the Father and Jesus Christ. The functional aspect in pairing God with Jesus in the initial salutation has been strongly stressed by Luz and less categorically by Longenecker. According to Ebeling there is a certain chiastic correspondence intended by Paul between ‘grace (a) – peace (b) – from (c) – Father (b’) – Jesus (a)’ in which grace is attributed to Jesus and peace to the Father; such a relation is often attested to in Paul’s letters. This, according to him, does not mean that the issue here is
about two different realities; rather, the chiastic structure emphasizes the unity of the only one reality, though being differentiated in it\textsuperscript{50}. Attractive though is Ebeling’s supposition of Paul’s intentional chiasm, there is some doubt because those who wrote the epistle to the Colossians and 1 and 2 Timothy seem to have not understood it in that way: the initial salutation in Col has a shorter form and in 1 and 2 Timothy it is supplemented by ‘mercy’. Guthrie rightly observes that no distinction should be made between the grace and peace of Christ and that of God\textsuperscript{51}. Furthermore, the phrase καὶ κυρίον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ discloses the relational aspect of God’s fatherhood: the Father shares his authority with Jesus in dispensing his gifts to those who acknowledge the lordship of Christ\textsuperscript{52}. The pronouns in plural ἴματι and ἡμῶν should also be understood in the same Christian sense; moreover, the combination πατρός ἡμῶν, that was almost certainly influenced by Jesus (cf. Matt 6:9), shows the already established Christian self-understanding of being the children of God. And since πατρός ἡμῶν bears witness to the reality of a personal faith that was presumably shared both by the writer and the reader\textsuperscript{53} it also seems to be plausible to think about the functional aspect of this phrase in the greeting context, i.e. to encourage the unity in Christian communities despite every kind of difference, be it on national, cultural or social grounds, since they all belong to and may address the same God as Father.

3. The initial salutations in the Pastorals

Though the initial salutations play the same role in all Pauline letters a different word order for Jesus’ name and title and a shift from ‘our Father’ to ‘our Lord/Savior’ in the Pastorals put more emphasis on the role of Jesus Christ: χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρός καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν (1Tim 1:2; 2Tim 1:2) and χάρις καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρός καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν (Tit 1:4). Roloff supposes that the use of ἡμῶν with Jesus Christ in the initial salutations in 1Tim and 2Tim may be explained by the fact that the liturgical language simply incorporated the already-known combination κύριος ἡμῶν with reference to Jesus (cf. 1Cor 1:7f.; 5:4; 9:1; Rom 4:24; 5:1). According to him it is hardly possible to see in this shift some conscious tendency to equate Jesus to God\textsuperscript{54}. From a functional point of view the reference to Jesus as κύριος ἡμῶν in conjunction with God the Father emphasizes the relational aspect of his lordship: he is not only ‘our’ Lord but rather he has become a Lord ‘for us’ as he gave himself for our sins to set us free according to the will of God the Father (cf. Gal 1:4)\textsuperscript{55}. A dual-part structure in the initial salutation is retained identical in all Pauline letters; consequently, it must be interpreted in the same way: it underlies the close co-action between God the Father and Jesus Christ, as they both are the source of the conveyed blessing. The omission of ἴματι in the initial salutations of all three letters should obviously be understood in light of their formal personal character, since differently from the rest of the Pauline corpus they are exclusively addressed to the individuals Timothy and Titus. Yet, the final blessings advocate an idea that these letters were expected to be heard by other believers too, as the use of personal pronouns in the plural suggests (cf. 1Tim 6:21; 2Tim 4:22; Tit 3:15). It may be, therefore, that a singular personal pronoun in the initial salutations was deliberately omitted to avoid a certain inadequacy to the clearly collective idea the initial salutations
in the Pauline letters convey. Thus, the salutation-blessing in the Pastorals is not to be conceived as being limited to Timothy and Titus, rather it was supposed to have been extended to all to whom those letters were read. Accordingly, the divine fatherhood that is mentioned only in the initial salutations in the Pastorals seems to retain its communal character despite the absence of ἤμων that is adjoined to Jesus’ titles. The contents of the greeting differ little from those in other Pauline letters. Whereas χάρις and εἰρήνη in a bipartite formulation seem to agree theologically as a cause and its effect, a third adjoined element ἐλεος (1Tim and 2Tim), that recalls Jewish blessings and greetings discloses the very motivation for the divine grace that is both the mercy of the Father as well as Jesus. There is some fluidity among subjects on whom depends the noun ἐλεος in the NT epistles. In the Pauline letters except 1–2Tim the subject is God (explicitly in Rom 9:23; 11:31; 15:9; Eph 2:4; Tit 3:5; most probably in Gal 6:16). In the rest of the NT epistles: subject is undefined (Heb 4:16; Jude 1:2); God (1Pt 1:3); our Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 1:24); God the Father as well as Jesus Christ (2Jn 1:3). In 1Tim and 2Tim ἐλεος is mentioned only in the initial salutations and twice in 2Tim 1:16.18. In the latter case it is the κυρίος who is said to grant mercy, the title widely employed to designate Jesus Christ in Paul’s letters; evidently, Jesus Christ is supposed to be the co-subject of ‘mercy’ in the initial salutations as well. God’s mercy is not to be reduced to a mere attitude; it should rather be seen as his active appropriate conduct towards the people. Its salvific aspect (including the verbal form ἔλεεω) is quite visible in Pauline letters; in our case the tripartite formulation χάρις ἐλεος εἰρήνη in conjunction with God the Father and Jesus Christ as our Lord both underlines their unity in action and also highlights the revelatory character of Jesus’ salvific work in presenting the Father’s mercy.

Conclusion

The material on the image of God the Father in the initial salutations may be summarized in a twofold way.

Firstly, theologically speaking, the divine Father is the source of mercy, grace, and peace, i.e. of the historic-eschatological event of salvation; he is active in every its phase (mercy, grace) and efficacious in its consequences (peace). He is the very source of blessings for Christian communities as he freely and continuously empowers (grace) them with a true joy, peace, and salvation that proceed from the Christ-event. Evidently, the grace coming from God as his constant and active benevolence towards believers and producing salvation and peace was not understood by Paul in general terms; rather it was supposed to touch upon every part of human life changing attitudes and breaking barriers in a religious-cultural field (for instance, Jewish and Hellenistic Christians) as well as in the social sphere.

Secondly, relationally, with reference to Jesus Christ, God the Father shares his authority with him as far as Jesus plays the equal role in granting mercy, grace, and peace; with reference to Christians, he is their Father as far as he is the origin of their salvation and the source of every grace for their Christian life. Noteworthy that the divine fatherhood is presented in a close association with Jesus Christ; the relationship between God the
Father and Christians is portrayed from a tripartite ‘Father-Jesus-believers’ perspective. Thus it is may be right to suggest that, since our being the children of God is founded on the sonship of Jesus, it is namely because of this fact that Paul employed ‘our Father’ right at the beginning of his letters in the initial salutations in which the Lord Jesus Christ is also referred to.

REFERENCES

2 Κ, Α, Ψ, 33, etc.
3 p⁴⁶, B, D, F, G, H, etc.
6 ήμων is attested to by Κ, Α, F, G, I, etc; it is omitted by B, D, P, 33, etc.
9 Κ, Α, C, F, G, I, etc.
10 B, D, K, L, Ψ, 33, etc.
16 For instance, the optative is used in LXX in a greeting in Dan 4:1; 6:26 (LXX) and in a blessing in Num 6:24–26. There are also three initial salutations with the optative in 1Pt 1:2; 2Pt 1:2; Jude 2. See also the argumentation of Wiles G. P. Paul’s Intercessory Prayers. SNTSMS 24. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1974. P. 36–38.
17 This is the option of Schrage W. Der erste Brief an die Korinther. EKK VII, Teilbd. 1. Zürich: Benziger Verlag / Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag. 1991. P. 106. Ebeling admits that the optative fits better in our case, yet he questions whether the future indicative could not have been intended instead of the optative, since the salutation is oriented towards its final fulfillment that has already


20 Cf. 1Macc 10:18; 25; 10:19; 11:16.22; 27:34; Esth 8:12; also 3Ezra 6:8; 8:9. The closest example to Pauline use on philological grounds is the initial salutation in 2Macc 1:1 where χαίρειν is associated with εἶρήνην ἀγαθήν.

21 Cf. *Jdg* 6:23; 2Sam 18:28; 2Kgs 4:26. In all these cases εὐχαριστοῦ is rendered in LXX by εἰρήνη.


29 On the other hand, the separate use of χαίρει in the final benediction in Gal 6 (v. 18) that follows immediately the wish of peace εἰρήνη…καί ἑλέος (v. 16) and the combination of ἑλέος along with χαίρει in the initial salutations in 1 and 2 Timothy make this explanation not completely convincing.

For a brief discussion of possible sources for the use of χάρις by Paul in the initial salutations see Ebeling G. La verità dell’evangelo. P. 38–40.


Cf. 1Thess 5:28; Gal 6:18; Phil 4:23; Phlm 25; 1Cor 16:13; Rom 16:20; 2Thess 3:18.

Cf. 1Thess 5:23; Gal 6:16; Phil 4:9; 2Cor 13:11; Rom 15:33; (see also 16:20); 2Thess 3:16 (κύριος τῆς εἰρήνης); Eph 6:23.


Cf. Guthrie D. Galatians. P. 59; so also Best Thessalonians. P. 248.


As regards the salvation of Paul (1Tim 1:13:16; also cf. 1Cor 7:25), of others (Rom 11:32; Eph 2:4f.; Tit 3:5).


LITERATURE AND SOURCES

Šiame straipsnyje analizuojami Pauliaus laiškų įvadiniai sveikinimai gali būti suprantami kaip tam tikros formuluotės, kurios iš dalies atspindi tie judaizmo tradicijos, tie kultūroje paplitusį pasveikinimo būdą. Be abejo, Pauliaus laiškyne šie įvadiniai sveikinimai nėra minėtoje tradicijoje (kultūroje) egzistavusių pasveikinimo būdų kopijos, matyti akivaizdus tie formos, tie turinio naujumas. Beje, ir pačių Pauliaus sveikinimo formuluotėse esama kai kurių gramatikos ir turinio niuansų. Visuose Pauliaus laiškų įvadinuose sveikinimuose matoma dviejų dalių struktūra, koordinuojama prielinksnio 
(nu), kuris pristato pagrindinius sveikinimo subjektus, dar geriau išryškinančius sveikinimo turinį. Tai, kad sveikinimai yra „nuo Dievo [mūsų] Tėvo ir Viešpaties Jėzaus Kristaus“, rodo Pauliaus norą drauge pabrėžti ir linkimų dovanų svarbą, ir siekį akcentuoti jų suteikėjus. Tad Dievo tėvystės samprata įvadinuose sveikinimuose priklauso ne tik nuo terminų (malonė), (ramybė) ir (gailestingumas 1 Tim ir 2 Tim) interpretacijos pirmojoje formulatedalyje (turinys), bet ir nuo to, kaip suprantama prielinksnio (nuo) ir jungtuko (ir) reikšmė antrojoje sveikinimo dalyje (santykis). Terminas (malonė) įvadinuose sveikinimuose suprastinas kaip dinamiškas ir eschatologinis Dievo Tėvo veikimas, pasireiškiantis išganymo įvykyje per Jėzaus Kristaus asmenį, o terminas (ramybė) nusako ramybės ir susitaikinimo su Dievu būseną, nurodo į galutinį ir integralų žmogaus išganymą, tad jie gali būti įvairių, kad vienas kito priežastis ir pasekmės. Terminas (1 Tim ir 2 Tim), primenantis žydų palaiminimus ir sveikinimus, suprastinas kaip Dievo Tėvo ir Jėzaus Kristaus veikimo motyvacija. Žiūrint iš teologinės perspektyvos, Dievas Tėvas yra gailestingumo, malonės ir ramybės, t. y. istorinio eschatologinio išganymo įvykio, šaltinis. Jo veikimas aktyvus (malonė) ir veiksmingas (ramybė). Suprantama, kad Paulius suvokė Dievo teikiamą malonę ir jos produkuojamą išganymą bei ramybę ne vien tikt galutinė ar abstrakcija prasme, bet ir kaip paliečiančius kiekvieną žmogaus gyvenimo sferą, keičiant nuostatas tiek religinėje ir kultūrinių, tiek socialinėje srityse. Žvelgiant iš santykių perspektyvos, Die-
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vas Tėvas dalijasi savo autoritetu su Jėzumi Kristumi ta prasme, kad jie abu vaidina tą patį vaidmenį suteikiant malonę, ramybę ir gailiškumą. Pastebėtina, kad Dievo tėvystė įvadiniose sveikinimuose glaudžiai susieta su Jėzaus asmeniu ir Dievo santykis su krikščionių bendruomenėmis jau nuo pat pradžių suvokiamas kaip Tėvas – Jėzus – tikintieji.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Dievas Tėvas, Jėzus Kristus, įvadinis sveikinimas, malonė, ramybė, gailiškumus, santykis.

KEY WORDS: God the Father, Jesus Christ, initial salutation, grace, peace, mercy, relation.

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