

# The Fatherhood of God in the Old Testament

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## Abstract

*The article provides an overview of the theme of God as father in the Old Testament and, briefly, its continuity in the New Testament. The author examines all of the texts where God is mentioned as father in the Old Testament as he relates to the nation of Israel. The article offers an analysis of God as father in the contexts in which this concept appears. God's fatherly characteristics are exhibited through his self-revelation through Torah, writings and prophets, but also through his acts toward Israel and through his relationship with Israel. The theme of God's fatherhood continues and expands in the New Testament, and comes to the center of New Testament theology.*

Key words: *God's fatherhood, God, father, son, sonship, Israel, Old Testament*

## Introduction

The article deals with the Old Testament passages in which God is explicitly or metaphorically called the father of Israel (of Israelite people, not Israel (Jacob) as an individual). In some Old Testament passages, God is directly called the father of Israel and in others his qualities are compared to human paternal qualities in relation to Israel. This article does not deal with texts where God is called the father of Israelite kings (David and Solomon and the anointed one – Messiah) or of a group of individuals (father of the fatherless). In several passages, God speaks

to David and promises him offspring, saying “I will be his father and he will be my son” (2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chron 17:13). Biblical texts interpret this as referring to Solomon (1 Chron 22: 9-10; 1 Chron 28:6), but also to Christ (Heb 1:5). However, those passages are not the subject matter of this article. We can already assume certain characteristics of the fatherhood of God in the first chapters of the Old Testament, in the book of Genesis, in the story of creation. We can see it implied in the creation of humans after God’s image, in conceiving human families and fatherhood, and in relationships that God establishes with certain individuals. However, this article deals only with those biblical texts that contain the word “father”, referring to God, and that specifically in relation to Israel.

### **The Fatherhood of God in Exodus (4:22-23)**

The first passage where God presents himself as the father of Israel is Exodus 4:22-23. It happens after God calls Moses and commissions him to deliver the Israelite people. After a long dialogue at the burning bush, the Lord appears again to Moses in Midian and tells him to go to Egypt and do the wondrous signs in front of Pharaoh, knowing that he will reject Moses’ request to let his people go. God wants Moses to say to Pharaoh, “This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son, and I told you, ‘Let my son go, so he may worship me.’ But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son” (NIV).<sup>1</sup> So, God tells Moses ahead of time what will happen, revealing himself as a father and the Israelite people as his son. We can make a reasonable conclusion here as to why God considers himself the father of Israel. He called Abraham in order to make the nation of Israel out of his descendants. Then he led Jacob’s (Israel’s) family to Egypt with the intention to multiply them and make them into a nation. In that way, God exhibits fatherly characteristics by being a procreator and a caretaker of the Israelite people. The purpose of all God’s dealings with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was to make the nation of Israel, to form a people for himself. Furthermore, the expression “my firstborn son” draws certain associations in our minds, such as the birthright of the firstborn, implying that father God has an inheritance for his son, Israel. However, that will be discussed later in the article when dealing with Jeremiah 3:19-20 where the inheritance theme is explicitly mentioned. The portrayal of God’s fatherhood in the book of Exodus is in accordance with the main theme of Exodus: father God is delivering his son Israel out of Egypt, setting him free and setting him apart for his purposes.

1 Notice the differences in translation of verse 23.

## **The Fatherhood of God in Deuteronomy (1:31; 8:5; 14:1; 32:6)**

In Deuteronomy 1:31, Moses uses a metaphor in which he portrays God as the father of Israel. He says, "... and in the wilderness. There you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place." The context of this verse is the first speech of Moses where he retells the journey of Israel through the desert and reminds them how they rebelled against Yahweh when it was time to enter and conquer the promised land. Moses gives them two reasons why they should not have been afraid and should have trusted Yahweh and obeyed him based on their previous positive experience with him. The first reason is that Yahweh was going to fight for them just like he did in Egypt (v. 30), and the second reason is their experience of Yahweh as their caretaker (v. 31). God's care for them was so thorough that Moses compared it to a father carrying his son. One of God's fatherly characteristics is clearly exhibited here – he is a perfectly capable caretaker.

In Deuteronomy 8:5, in his second speech, Moses is again summarizing Israel's wilderness experience in order to encourage them to obedience to Yahweh. He motivates them to remember the wilderness events in order to fear Yahweh and keep all of his commands. Moses compares their wilderness experience to a man disciplining his son. He says, "Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you" (8:5 NIV). The Hebrew word for "to discipline" that appears twice in this verse is "yasar". In the NASB translation, this word is used 43 times and is translated in different contexts to "discipline", "chasten", "chastise", "instruct", "punish", "teach", "train", "warn", and so on ("Yasar", 2016). A Croatian translation, Biblija KS, uses an even broader fatherhood word – instead of "to discipline" it says "to bring up". We here find another fatherly characteristic of God – disciplining and bringing up. Disciplining usually involves instruction, reward and punishment – all with a purpose of properly raising a child, that is, building a certain character. That is exactly what God was doing with Israel during their wilderness journey – the nation received extensive instruction from God their father (the law), they received rewards from their father (manna, water, meat) and they received punishment from their father whenever they rebelled (delay of entrance into the land, forceful deaths of different numbers of Israelites in several situations, Moses and Aaron forbidden to enter the land). The theme of father God disciplining his sons reappears in Proverbs 3:12 with a joyous note of love and delight, "For whom Yahweh loves he also disciplines, as a father the son whom he loves" (Biblija KS) or "... as a father the son he delights in" (several English translations).

In Deuteronomy 13 and 14, during his second speech, Moses is speaking against idolatry and against practicing pagan rituals of mourning the dead. In this

context, he tells Israel, “You are the sons of the LORD your God...” (14:1 NAS), therefore do not do as pagans do. Moses further reminds them that they are a holy people, set apart for God, chosen by Jahweh to be his people and his treasured possession (14:2). So, again, Moses encourages Israel to obedience and gives them reasons for obedience. So far we have seen the word “son” in singular form in relation to Israel used directly or indirectly in a metaphor, and now we find a plural form of the noun – “sons”. Some English translations use the word “children” (NIV, ASV), as well as Šarić in Croatian. Others use “sons”, as well as Biblija KS in Croatian. According to Strong’s Concordance, that Hebrew word is “banim”, the plural form of “ben”, translated as “sons” (“Ben”, 2016). This verse implies that God considers not only the whole nation to be his son, but also each individual as his son or child. Thus, he is the father of the nation and to the nation, but also of each person and to each person in the nation.

In Deuteronomy 32, at the end of Moses’ third speech, in the song of Moses, we find another explicit statement about God being the father of Israel. After calling on the heavens and the earth as witnesses, Moses presents a sharp contrast between God and his people. He praises God and scorns Israel with several heavy statements and words. He says they are “not his children” (32:5a, NIV), while the Croatian translation in Biblija KS calls them “sons-freaks” (32:5a). He further calls them “warped”, “crooked”, “foolish”, and “unwise” (32:5b-6, NIV) in order to ask them, “Is he not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?” (32:6b, NIV). Here Moses emphasizes the creator characteristic of God as father. He made and formed the nation of Israel. Moses further develops this point in his song in the verses that follow. He describes how God chose his people and carefully cared for them (e.g. “He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye”, 32:10b NIV), and how they denied him (e.g. “They abandoned the God who made them and rejected the Rock their Savior”, 32:15b NIV). Several Old Testament prophets will repeat this emotional theme of God as father, creating Israel, caring for them, and being denied by them. Like Moses, they will call the people back to obedience to their father God.

### **The Fatherhood of God in Isaiah (43:6; 63:8,16; 64:8)**

An implied reference to God as father appears in Isaiah chapter 43 in the second part of the book, so-called Deutero-Isaiah (chapters 40-55). Questioning the authorship of Isaiah, son of Amos, scholars believe it was written by a prophet who lived in the sixth century BC and wrote near the end of the Babylonian captivity (Clifford 2016), and therefore his major theme is the destruction of Babylon and the return of Israeli exiles to their land. Chapter 43 describes the deliverance (the new exodus) of Israel and the destruction of Babylon. In the context of delive-

rance at the beginning of chapter 43, God clearly speaks of his love for Israel (e.g. verse 4, “Since you are precious and honoured in my sight, and because I love you”), while in verse 6 he calls them “my sons” and “my daughters”. In 43:6-7, Yahweh states, “I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back’. Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth - everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made” (NIV). It is the image of the father who loves his children, who created them for a purpose, who formed them and made them, and wants to gather them again from the foreign nations, to bring them back to himself.

In the third part of the book of Isaiah, so-called Trito-Isaiah, in chapter 63, we find a sharp contrast between the nations that are destroyed by the great and powerful God and the nation of Israel that is blessed by the compassionate and kind God. In Isaiah 63:8, the Lord states, “Surely they are my people, children who will be true to me,” and the text continues, “and so he became their Savior” (NIV). Here God reveals his heart and remembers his oft-repeated promise – I will be their God, they will be my people, and I will dwell in the midst of them (Ex 6:7; Lev 26:12; Jer 31:1,33; Ez 11:20 etc.). God prophesies that they will be faithful children, and therefore he decides to save them from their enemies. This is another fatherly characteristic of God – he saves his children, like every good father would do for his children. In fact, one possible translation of Isaiah 63:8b is this, “He became their Savior in their distress” (NIV footnote) or “from all their oppressions” (Croatian translation, Biblija KS). Isaiah further says that they rebelled against him and provoked God’s enmity, but then they remembered the ancient days, the era of Moses, how God led them with mighty deeds, and they called on him again as their father. Isaiah 63:16 states, “But you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name” (NIV). Another fatherly characteristic is revealed – God as the redeemer. To redeem means to buy or to pay off or to buy back.<sup>2</sup> God buys back Israel, like every good father would sacrifice his means to buy back his child. Furthermore, the Croatian translation of Isaiah 63:15b-16a in Biblija KS says, “Do not withhold your compassion from us, because you are our father.” This points to another fatherly characteristic of God – compassion. This characteristic is reaffirmed in Psalm 103:13: “As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.” Many fatherly characteristics of God are listed in Isaiah 63 – compassion and kindness (v. 7), love and mercy (v. 9), lifting up and carrying (v. 9), grief (v. 10), providing rest and guidance (v. 14) and tenderness and compassion (v. 15).

2 “Redeem”, 2016, Dictionary.com LLC, <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/redeem?s=t>, accessed 30 September 2016.

Toward the end of the chapter, Israel directly calls on God as their father (v. 16) so that he would return to them (v. 17).

Isaiah 64 is very similar to the previous chapter described above. It employs some of the same themes – the power and might of God (vv. 1-3), the rebellion and sin of Israel (vv. 4-6), the punishment of Israel (v. 7), Israel confessing God as their father (v. 8) and Israel calling on God to be compassionate and return to them (vv. 9-12). Verse 8 states, “Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand” (NIV). The fatherly characteristic revealed in this verse is that God is the creator of his people, he made them and shaped them – the same fatherly image previously revealed in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

### **The Fatherhood of God in Jeremiah (3:4,14,19,22; 31:9,20)**

In Jeremiah chapter 3, two times the Lord is called father, and two times the nation is called sons or children (depending on the translation, the Hebrew word being “banim”, that is “sons”). The main theme of the chapter is the adultery of Israel and Judah. A number of times, they are called adulterers, accused of having committed adultery without shame (they accepted, sought and worshiped other gods), and thus defiled the land. Therefore the nation is calling to God, “My Father, my friend from my youth, will you always be angry? Will your wrath continue forever?” (vv. 4-5a, NIV), and the text continues, “This is how you talk, but you do all the evil you can” (v. 5b, NIV). Several fatherly characteristics of God are revealed here. One is his fatherly friendship, acknowledged by the nation. They recognize that from their beginnings as a nation, God had been their friend, like every good father is also a friend to his child. The second one is fatherly anger that arises in a parent when a child is deliberately doing wrong. In this particular case, God’s anger arose because of their relationship to other gods, which is compared to prostitution a number of times. The third characteristic is fatherly discipline – every good father wants to correct and train his child. That is why God allowed suffering to come to the nation as a result of its disobedience, but for the purpose of correction. The fourth one is his fatherly insight – he sees that their apparent repentance is not real because they continue to do evil. They say the right words and call on him, but they do not change their ways. God wants them to acknowledge their guilt and truly return to him (vv. 13-14).

Therefore, in 3:14, God says through the prophet, “Return, O backsliding children, saith Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion” (ASV). The same theme reappears in verse 22, “Return, ye backsliding children, I will heal your backslidings” (ASV). These verses reveal one of the main, often repeated, themes of the book of Jeremiah – the call to the nation to return to their God. Father God calls

his backsliding children to return to him. Other main themes are also mentioned here – God promises to gather them again (regathering of the nation) and God promises to heal their backsliding (cessation of idolatry). This may refer to Israel coming back from Babylon and giving up the idolatry, and it may refer to the messianic age to come, when God’s children will be gathered again under the new covenant (in which there will be no idolaters because God’s law will be written in their hearts – Jeremiah 31). The father heart of God longs for his children and he promises to be their healer, which is another important fatherly characteristic – every father wants his children to be healthy and will do everything in his power to bring healing to them. God is quite powerful and he has done amazing things to heal his children under both the old and the new covenants.

In 3:19-20, God says through the prophet, “How gladly would I treat you like my children and give you a pleasant land, the most beautiful inheritance of any nation. I thought you would call me ‘Father’ and not turn away from following me. But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, you, Israel, have been unfaithful to me” (NIV). Here we can clearly see the father heart of God – he would love to have a true father-child relationship with the nation. He would love to give them an inheritance. Another one of God’s fatherly characteristics, a very important and influential one in the history of Israel, is found here – the desire to give an inheritance to his children. God is rich, he owns the earth, he owns the land, and he wants his nation to live a blessed life in its own land. In fact, he had given them the land, but the northern kingdom of Israel lost their inheritance because of adultery-idolatry (v. 8a), and now the southern kingdom of Judah is about to lose its inheritance, not having learned the lesson from her sister Israel (v. 8b).

In Jeremiah 31, God is mentioned twice as a father. The chapter is full of great and positive prophecies for Israel. It starts with the grand promise of God, one of the main themes in the whole Bible, that he will be their God and they will be his people. The text continues with declarations of God’s love and mercy, and with declarations of joy and a regathering of the nation. The climax comes in verse 9 where God declares that he will do all of this “because I am Israel’s father, Ephraim is my firstborn son” (NIV). The text continues with prophecies of regathering, rewarding and rejoicing. Then, in verse 20, God declares, “Is not Ephraim my dear son, the child in whom I delight? Though I often speak against him, I still remember him. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I have great compassion for him” (NIV). In both verses 9 and 20, Ephraim is used as a synonym for the whole nation. Several fatherly characteristics of God are revealed here – he likes his son, he delights in him, he speaks of him (God admits that many times he has spoken *against* his son, but there were always concrete and serious reasons for this such as rebellion, unfaithfulness and disobedience of the nation), he remembers him, his heart longs for him, and he has great empathy for him. He has a genuine and

deep fatherly love for his son, and it must be because of that love that the chapter is full of hopeful prophecies. Out of that love, God prophesies and promises a good future for his nation, even the new covenant (31:31-34)!

### **The Fatherhood of God in Hosea (11:1-4)**

Hosea is most known for his prophetic marriage with a promiscuous woman and their prophetically named children which illustrate God's agony over the covenant breaking nation. Yet, in chapter 11, we find a different prophetic picture, that of God as the father and Israel as the son. It is a different picture, but illustrating the same theme – the agony of God who loved Israel, but they did not love him back. “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. But the more they were called, the more they went away from me. They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images. It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love. To them I was like one who lifts a little child to the cheek, and I bent down to feed them” (11:1-4 NIV). Considering God in this metaphor, we have a beautiful picture of a father loving and caring for his little child, but considering Israel, we have a distressing picture of a child not recognizing and not responding properly to love. We find beautiful images of God's fatherhood – he loved his son, he called him (delivered him from Egypt), he taught him to walk, he held his arms, he healed him, he led him with kindness and love, he caressed him and he fed him. This seems to be a summary sentence of the exodus and wilderness events. Yet we find repulsive images of Israel's sonship – not responding to their father calling them, running away from their father, worshipping other gods, not recognizing the goodness of their father. Therefore, in verses 5-6, Hosea prophesies the deserved consequences for Israel – they will return to slavery, oppression and defeat. This picture of God's fatherhood is the same as in Deuteronomy 1:31, yet more expanded. It is possible that Hosea expanded on the picture from Deuteronomy, just like other prophets used and expanded on the events and promises from Israel's history (e.g. the event of the exodus and the promise “I will be their God and they will be my people”). The portrayal of God's fatherhood in the book of Hosea is in accordance with the general atmosphere of the book, where God expresses his deep disappointment and grief because he gave himself as a husband to Israel and he gave himself as a father to Israel, but they rejected him in both cases.



## **The Fatherhood of God in Malachi (1:6; 2:10; 3:17)**

In the beginning of the book of Malachi, we find the same theme as in Hosea 11 – God has loved his people, but they have not acknowledged his love (v. 2). In verse 6, God says through the prophet, “A son honors his father and a slave his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?” (NIV). God stresses the fact that a true son or a good son regards his father with great respect, and then with a rhetorical question, he communicates that Israel does not show the honor that he deserves as their father. In fact, honor, respect and reverence for God are among the main themes of the book. Another possible interpretation of the verb “to honor” is “to worship”, which means that Israel is not worshipping their father God as they should. This becomes obvious in the following text where God speaks against the priests and the blemished sacrifices they offer to him. Actually, the whole book talks about Israel breaking covenant with God by their wrongdoing. Considering verse 6 alone, we see them breaking two commandments of the Decalogue, the one that requires them to worship the Lord their God only and the one that requires them to honor their father and mother (God being their father in this case). In fact, Malachi urges them to remember the Law of Moses (4:4).

In 2:10, the prophet states, “Do we not all have one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our ancestors by being unfaithful to one another?” (NIV). The first two questions seem to be rhetorical. They confirm the fact that God is their father because he created them. This truth has been stated throughout the Old Testament, and is now restated by the last of the twelve Minor Prophets, the last book in the Prophets section of the Hebrew Bible, and the last book of the Old Testament in the Christian Bible. The third question is expanded in the following text, describing Israel’s marital unfaithfulness. They have broken covenant by divorcing the women of their youth and/or by marrying women who worship other gods, which is detestable to their God. This section could possibly be interpreted as wife Israel being unfaithful to her husband God which would resonate with other prophets who often use the same image.

If Malachi wrote in the post-exilic period in Jerusalem, it means that after Israel had been restored to the land and to worship in the temple, their devotion to God began to decline again (Redditt 2016). Therefore, they had to be strongly reminded by this prophet that they have a father God and that they have to respect him, honor his covenant, and obey his commandments. Yet, in chapter 3, several verses speak about the people being disillusioned with their faith, even saying “It is futile to serve God” (3:14a). They probably expected things to be better for them when they returned from exile to Jerusalem. After all, their coming back to the land was a powerful move of God and a fulfilment of prophecies, but now the

evildoers prosper and those who follow the Lord do not see themselves blessed (3:14-15). As an answer to this problem, Malachi speaks about the messenger that will come and the great day of his coming (3:1-2). He promises that the just will get their reward and the unjust their punishment. He confirms that day in 3:17, conveying God's promise: "On the day when I act they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him" (NIV). Speaking through the prophet, God compares himself to a father who treasures his son and exhibits the fatherly characteristics of compassion and mercy. Therefore, the last image of God as father in the Old Testament ends with words of hope and encouragement for all of us.

### **Continuity of the Fatherhood of God in the New Testament**

It is important to note that the theme of the fatherhood of God in relation to his people carries over to and expands in the New Testament. There is both continuity and progression of this revelation in the New Testament. While the fatherhood of God seems to be a minor doctrine in the Old Testament, it becomes a major one in the New Testament, promoted by the Son of God himself. Jesus Christ, the Son of God and God the Son, is the perfect revelation of God the father – of his character, his power and his plans for humanity (Heb 1:1-5). In the Gospels, Jesus primarily and consistently relates to God as his father, and their relationship is particularly highlighted in John. In John alone, Jesus "calls God 'the Father' or 'my Father' 107 times and refers to himself as 'the Son of God' or simply 'the son' in context with 'the Father' around 30 times" ("Sonship in the Gospel of John" 2016). Jesus teaches his disciples, the new people of God, to relate to God as their father in heaven (Mt 6:9, etc.). By faith in Jesus Christ, people become children of God (Gal 3:26). God gives them his Spirit, the Spirit of adoption to sonship, because of whom they are sons of God, because of whom they call God 'Abba'<sup>3</sup>, and who testifies that they are children of God (Rom 8:14-16). There is continuity and progression of both the concept of God as a father and the concept of his people as his children. In fact, relating to God as a father (Lk 11:2), being his children (Gal 3:26) and acting like his children (Eph 5:1,8) seem to have come to the forefront of New Testament theology and have become foundational teachings in the Christian church today (fatherhood of God, sonship of believers, new identity in Christ, new position in Christ). In Galatians 4:1-7 and Romans 8:14-17, the text speaks about Christians as the children of God and about their inhe-

3 Aramaic term for father, also used as a term of endearment (Mk 14:36; Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). See "Abba", HELPS Word-studies, <http://biblehub.com/greek/5.htm>.

ritance as sons which continues the Old Testament theme of Israel being God's son and receiving their inheritance. As in the Old Testament, the fatherhood of God is not universal, but applies only to those who are saved, called and joined to his people. Of course, in the New Testament, Christ is the mediator of all those blessings. The Old Testament longing of God the father to be in an intimate father-son relationship with his people, whom he blesses and who love him and obey him, is fulfilled in the New Testament, through the work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, creating a new people with a new spirit, relating to God as their Abba. Therefore, the love and closeness evident in the fatherhood of God in the Old Testament is present, but also taken to a new level in the NT.

## **Conclusion**

If the center of Old Testament theology is the tripartite promise, "I will be their God, they will be my people, and I will dwell in the midst of them" (Kaiser 1978, 32), the concept of the fatherhood of God is suitable to that promise. The fatherhood of God is not one of the major doctrines of the Old Testament, yet it is a very important one, revealing the nature of God and providing a foundation for continuity and expansion in the New Testament. God sees himself and proclaims himself as the father of Israel. Moreover, his acts toward Israel clearly exhibit his fatherhood. Through Moses and the prophets, he describes the particulars of his fatherhood to them. He is the father of the nation and of every individual in the nation, he is their creator and caretaker, he formed them and shaped them, he disciplines them, brings them up, loves them, he created them for a purpose, he has an inheritance for them, he saves them, he redeems them, he provides rest and guidance, he is compassionate and kind, loving and merciful, tender and caring, he longs for his children, he heals his children, he likes them and delights in them, and he treasures his son (that is, his people). God's prophets often remind Israel of God being their creator and father in order to provoke them to come back to him. However, although Israel saw themselves as God's son, they often did not behave as sons and the prophets frequently confirmed this fact. Therefore, God's fatherly heart was deeply grieved and even agonized, as was repeatedly expressed by the prophets. Yet God's fatherhood does not cease – it is his eternal nature. Because of God's genuine fatherly love, there is the promise of the new covenant, of new people with new hearts, of the new father-son relationship. God will be their father and they will be his child(ren).

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## Božje očinstvo u Starom zavjetu

Sažetak

Članak pruža pregled teme Boga kao oca u Starom zavjetu i, ukratko, kontinuitet iste teme u Novome zavjetu. Autor obrađuje sve tekstove gdje se Bog spominje kao otac u Starome zavjetu u odnosu prema izraelskom narodu. Članak pruža analizu Boga kao oca u kontekstima u kojima se taj koncept pojavljuje. Božje očinske karakteristike iskazuju se kroz njegovu samoobjavu u Tori, spisima i prorocima, ali i kroz njegova djela prema Izraelu i kroz odnos s Izraelom. Tema Božjeg očinstva nastavlja se i proširuje u Novome zavjetu te dolazi u središte no-vozavjetne teologije.

Ključne riječi: Božje očinstvo, Bog, otac, sin, sinovstvo, Izrael, Stari zavjet