Theological Significations of Hebrew Terms Regarding Education

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Im Hebräischen, könnten die Verben, mit ihren verschiedenen konjugierten Formen, sehr viele Übersetzungen haben, so dass ihre thematische Kategorisierung sehr schwierig ist. In Bezug auf das Thema der Bildung und Erziehung, ist die Situation nicht einfacher. Selbst in den wissenschaftlichen Studien, philologischen und theologischen, in Bezug auf die genannten Feld trafen die Forscher des alten hebräischen Text Schwierigkeiten, um sie ein genaues Wortschatz für das Thema der alttestamentliche Erziehung zu organisieren. Dies wird verursacht, einerseits durch die Tatsache, dass die am häufigsten verwendete Hebräischen Verben bezüglich auf unser Thema in den modernen Sprachen andere Bedeutungen haben. Auf der anderen Seite finden bestimmte Verben eine pädagogische Handlung nur sekundär.

Schlüsselwörter: Alte Testament, *Hebräisch*, *Bildung und Erziehung*, *Kategorisierung.*

The terminological delimitations between the two directions of man's formation, namely education and instruction, are clear from a pedagogical point of view, as the educative process includes the instructive one and is life long. Education is defined as "taking out from nature stage", "a process by which the fundamental traits of the human being, the physic, the psychic, the moral, the aesthetic, the cognitive, the affective, the volitional, are formed, develop, and mature"[1]. It is "an ensemble of measures applied systematically in order to form and develop intellectual, moral or physical characteristics of children and teenagers or, by extension, of people, of society etc.; the result of this pedagogical activity: good upbringing, civilized conduct in society"[2].

As regards the modern meanings of the translations of Hebrew verbs, these are much more laic than their original which is more theological and which shows the close relationship between man and God. The revealed character of the words of God was, for the chosen people, especially the guarantee of the authenticity of the

[1] Art. „educaţia", in *Dicţionar de Pedagogie*, Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, Bucureşti, 1979, p. 141.

[2] Art. „educaţie", in *Dicţionarul Explicativ al Limbii Române*, 2nd edition, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, Bucureşti, 1998, p. 331.

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holy message, which imposed respect – its being kept and transmitted unchanged – and its being followed- the transposition of the Law into the practice of good deeds.

Thus, the discussion dwells upon the subject of accepting or not certain words, verbs or derivates from certain verbal roots. In this philological debate, in the study of the word family that delimitates terminologically the educative act there have remarked themselves William Wilson[3], Robert B. Girdlestone[4], and, in the last century, Roy B. Zuck[5]. Wilson and Girdlestone consider that there are twelve Hebrew verbs which refer to education, whilw Zuck mentions only nine in his study. These are[6]: לָמַד (*lamad*); יָדַע (*iadah*); בִּין (*bin*); יָסַר (*iasar*); יָרָה (*iarah*); שָׂכַל (*sakal*); אָלַף (*alaf*); שָׁנַן (*şanan*); זָהַר (*zahar*); to which Wilson and Girdlestone add the following: חָכַם (*chacam*); דָּבַר (*davar*); לִיץ (*liţ*)[7].

1. לָמַד (*lamad*)

One of the verbs that define the process of learning in the Old Testament, לָמַד expresses best both the idea of instruction and that of education. The root of this verb is also met with the same form, *lmd*, in Ugaritic or Aramaic, meaning 'to get used to', and in Syrian it is translated by 'to stick to', 'to remain faithful'[8].

From the biblical texts one draws the conclusion that the form Qal may be identified mainly in Deuteronomy, Psalms and the prophetic writings, the verb having a religious character. The fact that is very rarely mentioned in historical writings may be explained by an unorganized educative system, inferior to that of the old Sumer or Egypt. On the contrary, the frequent mentioning of the educative act in poetical writings and Deuteronomy proves that these writings stress heavily

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[3] William Wilson, *New Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies*, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1987, p. 246 şi 439.

[4] Robert Baker Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament: their bearing on Christian Faith and Practice*, Longmans, Green&Co., London, 1871, p. 356-358.

[5] Roy B. Zuck, *Hebrew Words for "Teach"*, in „Bibliotheca Sacra", vol. 121, 1964, p. 228-235.

[6] The translation of each verb will be analyzed separately.

[7] In the study of these Hebrew terms I have used the following dictionaries: Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, 17. Auflage, Berlin/Göttingen/Heidelberg, 1962; G. Johannes Botterweck (coord.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, translated by David E. Green, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, 1990; *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, Stuttgart, 1973; *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, München/Zürich, 1978-1979; Ludwig Koehler, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1953; Gerhard Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Alten Testament*, zweite Auflage, Württembergische Bibelanstalt, Stuttgart, 1958; S.J. Franciscus Zorell, *Lexicon Hebraicum et Aramaicum Veteris Testamenti*, Fasc 1, Sumptibus Pontificii Instituti Biblici, Roma, 1940; George W. Anderson, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart Berlin Köln, 1995; David Noel Freedman (edit.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Doubleday, New York; Marchand Ennery, *Dictionnaire de la Bible Hebraique*, Les Editions Colbo, Paris, f.a.; Görg Manfred, *Neues Bibel-Lexikon*, Bd. I, Benziger Verlag, Zurich, 1991.

[8] The Ugaritic text used it with the meaning „to learn", „to exercise" or „to instruct". Also, the corespondent of the Participle, translated by „apprentice" is met in a few instances which shows that apprenticeship constituted an important category in the old Ugarit. Harry Torczyner, *Die Bundeslade und die Anfange der Religion Israels,* Philo Verlag, 2. ed., Berlin, 1930, p. 34.

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on religious education. In these texts, the verb למד does not refer strictly to an impropriation of the knowledge necessary in daily life[9].

The form Piel of the verb למד is met most often in the Hebrew text, both in Perfect and Imperfect. This is translated, according to the case, by 'to teach', 'to instruct', supposing consequently:

a. an author of the instruction

- God (וְלִמַּד וְאֵינָם שֹׁמְעִים „I taught them, but who is to listen?") Jer. 32:33; (מִנְּעוּרָי אֱלֹהִים לִמַּדְתַּנִי „God, you have been teaching me since my youth") Ps. 71:17.

b. A receiver:

- „their sons" (אֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם) Deut. 4:10, 11:18-19, Ps. 132:12, „the sons of Israel" (אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל) Deut. 31:19.22, „the sons of Judah" (בְּנֵי־יְהוּדָה) II Sam. 1:18, II Cr. 17:9.
- The women (נָשִׁים) Jer. 9:19, „your daughters" (בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם) Jer. 9:19.
- His friend or brother (אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ וְאִישׁ אֶת־אָחִיו) Jer. 31:34
- the people (לְמַד־דַּעַת אֶת־הָעָם) Koh. 12:9

c. and, of course, a direct subject, as:

- the commandments, the laws, and the customs: הַחֻקִּים הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים in Deut. 4:1.5.14; כָּל־הַמִּצְוָה וְהַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים in Deut. 5:31, 6:1; חֻקֶּיךָ in Ps. 119:12.26.64.124.135.171; מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ in Ps. 119:108; חֹק וּמִשְׁפָּט in Ezra 7:10
- the law, Torah (תּוֹרָה) Ps. 94:12
- „My words" (אֶת־דְּבָרָי) Deut 4:10, 11:18-19
- The ways of God (אֹרְחוֹתֶיךָ) Ps. 25:4, Ps. 51:15
- skill, knowledge (דָּעַת) Ps. 94:10; Koh. 12:9, the good, the judgment and the knowledge (טוּב טַעַם וָדַעַת) Ps. 119:66
- „know thy God!" (דְּעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה) Jer. 31:34
- Fear of God (יִרְאַת יְהוָה) Ps. 34:12
- (in) God's truth (בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ) Ps. 25:5

Preceded by the preposition לְ, the verb modifies the vocalization of the first consonant in patach (לַ), which indicates the destination of learning (Deut. 20:18, Jer. 12:16, Ps. 143:10, Jud. 3:2). In other cases, the verb למד requests the presence of certain prepositions together with the determined noun which thus indicates the content of what is being transmitted (as: לְ in Is. 48:17, בְּ in Is. 40:14) or the receiver of the instruction (God הַלְאֵל, in Job 21:22).

Word derived from למד:

- לִמּוּד (pl. לְמוּדִים) – disciple, apprentice, pupil

Met in the texts from Is. 50:4, Is. 54:13 „apprentices of God" (לִמּוּדֵי יְהוָה), Is. 8:16 – among my apprentices (Judah's) (בְּלִמָּדָי), the noun לִמּוּד was translated into Greek by the verb *μανθάνω*, in active aorist infinitive (*μαθεῖν*), referring to an adult person (even if the text from Is. 8:18 calls them יֶלֶד). In the texts from Jer. 13:23 „used to doing evil" (לִמְּדֵי הָרֵעַ) and Jer. 2:24, לִמּוּד refers to someone instructed, used

[9] In fact, when the „pupil" is mentioned, we should not think of a teenagers who attends school but rather of an apprentice of the prophet. See II Kings 2:3; Is. 8:50; 50:4. *Cf.* George W. Anderson, *op. cit.*, Band IV, p. 577.

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to, exercised in a certain thing.. Deutero-Isaiah mentions in Is. 50:4 a person who has been taught by God and who, in his turn, can teach others: „the Lord gave me an apprentice's tongue (לִמּוּדִים[10]), so that I know how to speak to the desperate. Each morning he wakes my ear so that I listen like an apprentice (כַּלִּמּוּדִים)". About the same person, deutero-Isaiah speaks again in v. 10, identifying it with *Ebed-Jahwe*, the Servant of God. In the messianic times all the sons of Israel will be לִמּוּדֵי יְהוָה „apprentices of God" (Is. 54:13).

- Of a new origin, the noun תַּלְמִיד appears in the Hebrew Scripture only once, in I Cr. 25:8, being obvious from the context that תַּלְמִיד has the meaning of pupil:

וַיַּפִּילוּ גּוֹרָלוֹת מִשְׁמֶרֶת לְעֻמַּת כַּקָּטֹן כַּגָּדוֹל מֵבִין עִם־תַּלְמִיד׃

- As a derivation from the verb למד there is the noun מַלְמָד or מַלְמָד, which may be found in the Hebrew Scripture only in Jud. 3:31 and Hosea 10:11. The significance of this term, wooden device which used to hold the oxen, yoke (or, maybe, a stick for mastering the animals) keeps the coercive character of the verbal family למד and may have an instructive meaning
- The verb למד defines all kinds of learning/teaching and instruction, being the word most often used for describing this type of activity. Being used in the first biblical writings, למד delimitates the educative process conceptually, especially education within the family. The term often refers to Yahweh, as being the Teacher par excellence, Prophet of Torah, the giver of all cultic and ethical laws. He is the source of any instruction regarding vital problems, he is the ideal Teacher of the chosen people.

The Greek language uses two verbs for the act of education: *διδάσκω*, 'to teach', and *μανθάνω*, 'to learn'. However, Hebrew uses the same verbal root for both meanings. Both teaching and learning find their true contents in "the fear of God" (Deut. 4:10; 14:23; 17:19; 31:12.13).

2. יָדַע (*iadah*)

The verb ידע is used very often in the Old Testament and has a Semitic origin[11]. The *Septuagint* uses 22 verbs, 3 nouns, and 8 adjectives for the verbal forms of יָדַע[12]. This is explained by the multitude of meanings that the verb has in Qal and Niphal[13].

[10] Here also, by the end of the verse, we find the absolute plural form of the noun. The translation *Redivierte Lutherbibel* (LUT – 1985): „Gott der HERR hat mir eine Zunge gegeben, wie sie Jünger haben" is intermediary to the literary meaning „the tongue of the confessors" and „apprentice tongue", as we find in the synod edition: „apprentice tongue" („a tongue as the apprentices have").

[11] All the Semitic languages use the root *yd* as a composition element for proper names. *Cf.* G.J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, p. 449-456.

[12] *Cf.* George W. Anderson, *op. cit*., Band III, p. 484.

[13] In Qal, יָדַע it may be translated by: to know, to learn in order to know, to understand, to observe, to find and discern, to distinguish, to recognize, to know by experience, to admit, to confess, to take into consideration, to reflect on/about, to know how, to have initiative/be ingenious, to have knowledge, to be wise.. In Niphal, as a reflexive of Qal, it means: to be made known, to be/become known, to be discovered/revealed, to be understood, to be instructed.

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Out of the 947 occurrences of the verb ידע in the masoretic text, 814 cases are in Qal. The basic translation of the verb is 'to observe', 'to be attentive to', 'to understand', 'to realize that' (Lev. 5:3, Jer. 50:24, Job 9:5, Rut 3:4, Gen. 3:7, Ex. 2:4, I Sam. 22:3, Ester 2:11). Another meaning of the verb is 'to know', 'to learn', as consequence of an experience (Lev. 5:1, 2 Sam 24:2, Jer. 38:24, Nehem. 13:10, Is. 47:8, Koh. 8:5, Job 5:24, Is. 9:8, Job 21:19, Osea 9:7) or of meditation, of thinking (Jud. 13:21, Deut. 8:5, Gen 15:8). In many texts, knowledge refers to God: Israel has to know the Lord (among others, Ex 6:7, Ezek. 6:7). The biblical request „know that …" is often met, mainly in the texts in which the people's attention is brought to Yahweh's uniqueness.(I Sam. 12:17, 24:12, I Kings 20:7, II Kings 5:7, Jer. 2:19, 44:28, 5:1, I Sam 23:22). In the texts from Ps. 50:11, Hosea 5:3, Ps. 69:6 there is the affirmation that God „knows".

In many Hebrew texts, ידע has an exclusively theological character. Between God and man there is an inter-knowledge. Yahweh states this clearly in the texts from Gen. 18:19, II Sam. 7:20, Jer. 1:5, Hosea 13:5, Amos 3:2, Naum 1:7, Ps. 144:3, 37:18, or it is man's ontological wish in I Sam. 2:12, Jer. 2:8, 4:22, Hosea 2:22, 5:4, Job 18:21, Ps. 79:6, Ex. 5:2, 33:13, Ps. 36:11, 87:4, 9:11.

One of the meanings of ידע presupposes organized instruction: 'to know (how to make something)', 'to be learned in', 'to be skilled in' (Prov. 30:18, referring to שָׂפָה, in Ps. 81:6, to סֵפֶר, in Is. 29:11, to בִּינָה, in Is. 29:24, to חָכְמָה, in Prov. 1:2), so, the verb has a noun as a direct object from the field of the intellectual. The verb ידע is used with the meaning of 'to discern' between what is good and what is bad (Gen. 3:5.22, 2:17, Deut. 1:39, Is. 7:15, II Sam. 19: 36, Iona 4:11, II Cr. 12:8). Also, ידע does not refer only to the one who "knows", "has the knowledge", but more, with a contemplative character, to the wise one (יוֹדְעִים in Job 34:2 and Koh. 9:11) or, on the contrary, to the unwise one (Is. 1.3, 44:9, 45:20, 56:10, Ps. 73:22, 82:5, Job 13:2).

In Nifal, the verb ידע is translated by: 'to make oneself known' (Ex. 6:3, 2:25, Ezek. 20:5.9, 35:11, 36:32, 38:23, Ps. 9:17, 48:4, Habak. 3:2 – God makes Himself known to Israel), 'to be discovered' (I Sam. 22:6), to become something or someone known etc. God knows Moses after his name and face to face (Ex.. 33:17, Deut. 34:10).

- The feminine noun דֵּעַ, derived from the verbal root ידע, means 'knowledge' and it is the correspondent of the nouns *γνῶσις*, in Greek, and *scientia*, in Latin. God is absolute in knowledge (Job 36:4), because He is a God of knowledge (יְהוָה כִּי אֵל דֵּעוֹת) (I Sam. 2:3). Isaiah sees prophetically that the earth will be full of the knowledge about God (Is. 11:9). The prophet transmits the knowledge (Is. 28:9) and an ideal judge judges through it (Jer. 3:15).
- The feminine noun דַּעַת is used 93 times in the Old Testament. דַּעַת, 'the knowledge' got through a multitude of possibilities is frequently mentioned in sapiential writings, especially in Proverbs (41 times), Job (10 times), Ecclesiast (9 times). The term also appears in Ugaritic and Akkadian as well as Qumranian writings. But it not appears only in wisdom writings; as דַּעַת is the general term for

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knowledge, it can also have a technical character (as in Ex. 31:3; Ex. 35:31; I Kings 7:14), and not only sapiential. דַּעַת indicates discernment (Ps. 119:66), skill or, in negative form, someone's ignorance (Deut 4:42 בִּבְלִי־דַּעַת; Deut. 19:4; Joshua 20:3.5; Prov 19:2 לֹא־דַעַת). The term also has a strong theological character. God is the possessor דַּעַת (Job 10:7; Ps. 139:6; Prov. 3:20), from Whom nothing can be hidden (Ps. 139:1-18). The fact that דַּעַת often appears in parallel with חָכְמָה 'wisdom', בִּינָה 'understanding', מוּסָר 'instruction', and תּוֹרָה 'learning', shows that נתאצד ש דלשׁ הת סרתנ דעת. God has taught man דַּעַת knowledge (הַמְלַמֵּד אָדָם דָּעַת, Ps. 94:10, parallel with Ps. 119:66, Prov. 2:6). דַּעַת is synonymous with מַדָּע 'knowledge' (Dan. 1:4), as opposed to אִוֶּלֶת, 'madness' (Prov. 12:23; 13:16; 14:18; 15:2). A wise man is receptive to דַּעַת (Prov. 1:4; 2:6; 5:2; Eccl. 1:18).

The tree in Eden is called עֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וָרָע, "the tree of knowing good and evil" (Gen. 2:9).

The phrase דַּעַת אֱלֹהִים, "knowing God" is an absolutely special one, consecrated by Hosea's writing in 4:1.6, 6:6, and found again in Prov. 2:5. דַּעַת אֱלֹהִים, in parallel with יִרְאַת יְהוָה (Is. 11:2, 58:2, 22:16), it is the sign of the true faith: knowing and confessing about God, together with the sign of subjecting creation to the Creator, show the faithfulness of the chosen people towards Yahweh and divine providence of saving the whole humanity from sin Where there is lie, destruction, adultery, murder, there is no knowledge about God (Hosea 4:6, Is. 5.13). In the messianic times, all peoples will be drawn to the knowledge about God (Is. 2:2-4, Micah 4:1-2) and the knowledge of the glory of God (לָדַעַת אֶת־כְּבוֹד יְהוָה) will spread all over the world like the water that covers the bottom of the sea (Is. 11:9, Habakkuk 2:14).

3. בִּין (*bin*)

The consonant root *bn* is met in almost all Semitic languages: Ugaritic, Assyrian, Syrian, Akkadian, in all cases with the meaning of 'to differentiate' (a distinct thing from another), 'to clarify', 'to decide'[14].

In Perfect Qal, the verb בִּין is often translated by 'to understand', 'to pay attention'. From among the numerous examples of the verb in Qal, we mention: Ps. 50:22, 92:7, Prov. 2:5-9, 19:25, 20:24, 23:1, 28:5, 29:7, Job 23:5, 42:3, Jer. 9:11, Hosea 14:10, Dan. 10:1 – where the verb is accompanied by a direct object in the accusative. The passive form of the verb, as we find it in Nifal, may be translated by 'to be skilled' (Is. 10:13). The singular נָבוֹן or plural נְבוֹנִים participles are very often encountered (Prov. 16.21, Gen. 41:33.39, Prov. 10:13, Deut. 1:13, 4:6, I Kings 3.12, Is. 5:21, 29:14, Jer. 4:22, 49:7, Hosea 14:10, Prov. 1.5, 14:6.33, 15:14, 17:28, 18:15, 19:25, Koh. 9:11).

In Hifil, the verb is much often met, with the meanings 'to be capable of discerning', 'to be intelligent', these having especially theological valences, as:

- to discern between good and evil (I Kings 3:9)

[14] The roota *bn* had the meaning of „to understand" in Ugarit and we encounter it three times in parallel with the verbal roots *yd* („to know") and *sm* („to hear"). *Cf.* G. Johannes Botterweck (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 99.

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- God „knows" (Job 28:23, I Cr. 28:9)
- God made Daniel skilled in all visions and dreams (Dan. 1:17)
- God "pays attention" to man's deeds (Ps. 33:15).

The following belong to the word family of the verbal root בין:

- The noun בִּינָה is used with a multitude of meanings, always as aan object of knowledge. בִּינָה 'skill' (Deut. 4:6, Is. 11:2, 29:14, Dan. 8:15, I Chr. 22:12) is very often encountered in sapiential writings: Prov. 2:3, 3:5, 7:4, 8:14, 9:10, 23:4-23, Job 20.3, 28:12.20.28, 39:17.26 etc.). In Job 28:28 חָכְמָה and בִּינָה are almost perfect synonims. Both are personified in Prov. 2:3, 7:4, 8:14 and Eccl. 24:9.23. Together with יָדַע, בִּינָה there appears in Is. 29:24, Prov. 4:1, Job 38:4, II Cr. 2:11.12. בִּינָה is met alongside with the verb קָנָה „to get" in Prov. 4:5.7, 16:16. Prov. 30:2 refers to בִּינַת אָדָם 'man's skill', and Prov. 9:6 uses the phrase דֶּרֶךְ בִּינָה 'the way of skilfulness'. Isaiah 27:11 calls the Egyptians לֹא עַם־בִּינוֹת 'people without skill'. Angel Gabriel teaches Daniel in order to offer him knowledge (לְהַשְׂכִּילְךָ בִּינָה) (Dan. 9:22). The skill is a condition of obeisance and fulfilment of God's words, as Job shows: "If you have skill, listen to this, take my words into account!" (Job 34, 16).

The noun תְּבוּנָה is translated in almost all the variants by 'understanding'. It is only the *Revised Standard Version* that translates it by 'intelligence'. It is used in many texts, as בִּינָה, with which it is synonymous. תְּבוּנָה Is personified by a woman who raises her voice (Prov. 8:1), context in which understanding is viewed as parallel with wisdom and both as teacher. In Prov. 2:3, בִּינָה and תְּבוּנָה They are viewed as synonymous.

As opposed to de ידע, which refers to an understanding that comes from the outside, got through experience, בִּין has an interior character, it is man's judgment. Thus, Prov. 17:24 indicates that a skilled man could find wisdom with his eyes, in front of him, he could, through his years, understand, but he does not do this (Prov. 29:19), he could taste skilfulness (Job 6:30). God gives skill to those who know it (Dan. 2:21), consequently, understanding, knowledge are first of all divine gifts and do not come from empirical experience. Naturally, knowledge comes from prayer (Ps. 119:34) and, as it is given by God, it can also be taken from us by Him (Is. 29:14). The place of בִּינָה is in the heart[15]; by this we understand God's works (Ps. 28:5), fear of God (Prov. 2:2.5), justice, judgment, all the paths that lead to good (Prov. 2:9). Man has the duty of keeping God's teachings (Prov. 2:1). The above mentioned texts show, starting from particular situations, that man can get knowledge only by relating himself to God, the Only One Who has real knowledge. Man's responsibility is to use the knowledge that he has received for his salvation and that of the creation, and not for destruction.

[15] The idea is present in the New testament as well, with referrence to the Holy Virgin: Luke 2:19 („Mary was keeping all these words in her heart.") and verse 51 („And His mother was keeping all thsese words in her heart."). Romans 2:14 saya that „The Law is written into their (heathen's) hearts". Metaphorically, Saint Peter shows that the reveald word will rise in our hearts like the morning star (2 Peter 1:19).

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4. יָסַר (*iasar*)

The verbal root *ysr* appears also in other Semitic languages, the meaning being almost the same: 'to discipline', 'to scold', 'to instruct'. The verb יסר is translated in the Septuagint by *παιδεύω*, the most appropriate Greek term for 'to educate'. From among the Old Testament texts that use the verb יסר it is clear that this one refers to the discipline that leads to education.

Jewish education is theocentric because, from the above, it has the fundaments in the Covenant established by Yahweh with His chosen people and, starting from man, the divine Law transmitted through Moses and men chosen by God is at the center of man's life, not only in its religious-sacrificial and cultic aspects, but also cultural, social, and administrative. Keeping the Covenant fresh in the mind, heart, and, seen, on the Jew's body is the necessary proof of the faithfulness, responsibility, involvement, and communion of the subjects of a personal relationship God-man, similar to the father-son one, more common to us.

God's Covenant with man is the one that gives meaning to instruction through discipline because it first lays out the norms of life that please God, then warns about the punishments that come as a consequence to man's disobedience and only in the end it leads, in the case of the sinful man, towards proper coercion. The process of instruction through discipline may be painful and, of course, not wanted, but the result – the wisdom and the knowledge about God – leads to a fundamental change in man. In the act of our obeisance, faith, and love of God, we will discover His love, mercy, and justice.

The sapiential texts underline the fact that God is the One who initiates man's instruction out of love for him because "God chastises whom He loves, like a father the son whom he loves" (Prov. 3:12).

- The Hebrew word מוּסַר is the most appropriate for 'education', as it was translated in LXX by the lexical forms of the noun *παιδεία*[16]. *Παιδεία* appears 36 times in Ecclesiast and 5 times in Solomon's Wisdom whereas the Hebrew מוּסַר appears more in Proverbs (30 times), Jeremiah (8 times), and Job (5 times) and is often associated with חָכְמָה 'wisdom' (Prov. 1:2, 7; 23, 23; 8, 33; 13, 1; 15, 33; 19, 20). However, מוּסַר has rather the meaning of discipline, punishment, instruction by coercion.

מוּסָר does not refer to an ethical conduct, but to a theological one, to an authentic life. Consequently, מוּסַר יְהוָה places God and man in a relationship of paternity and filiatie. In order for this relationship to function, God requests two other things from man: יִרְאַת יְהוָה 'fear of God', which is the beginning of knowledge (Prov. 1:7), and תּוֹרָה 'the Law', 'the teaching', which is מְקוֹר חַיִּים 'spring of life', it is knowledge itself (Prov. 13:14).

[16] *ἀπαιδεύτων* in Prov. 5, 23, *ἀπαιδεύτων* in Prov. 13, 24 şi 23, 13, *παιδευτὴς* in Hosea 5, 2. An important exception is Prov. 8,33 - in Codex Alexandrinus מוּסָר it is translated by *σοφιαν* and identified with the Hebrew *hokmah*. (see the footnote for Prov. 8, 33 in *Septuagint*, edit Alfred Rahlfs, Vol. II, Stuttgart, 1935).

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5. יָרָה (*iarah*)

The basic meaning of the verb is 'to organize', 'to put in order', 'to lead' and implies a strong control exercised by the subject. In Qal, the verb ירה also refers to 'to aim', 'to draw the bow' or, in participle Hifil, to an archer (as I Cr. 10:3, I Kings 22:35, II Cr. 35:23), and in some texts this meaning is related to God (Ps. 64:8). The causative form of Perfect or Imperfect Hifil is translated by 'to teach', 'to educate'. יָרָה is a word of action and power and has no passive meaning. תּוֹרָה is 'the teaching', 'the instruction', 'the Law'. תּוֹרָה is encountered 221 times in the Hebrew Scripture. Torah, given by God through Moses (Deut. 17:18; 28:61; 29:20; 30:10; 31:9, 24; Joshua 1:7-8; 8:31; 23:6; I Kings 2:3; II Kings 14:6; 22:8; 23:25; II Cr. 23:18; 30:16; Ezra 3:2; 7:6; Nehemiah 8:1-2) to His chosen people, must be taught in order to be heard and fulfilled, as the text Deut. 31:9-13 says.

The Law was given to the people who had a Covenant with God (Gen. 3:7, 9:6, 26:5) and the latter one implies the former (Ps. 78:10). God Himself is described as a teacher (Ex. 4.15; Ps. 25:8.12; 27:11; 86:11; 119:33; Job 6:24; 34:32; Is. 2:3; 30:20 etc.), subject to which we will dedicate a separate chapter. The priests took over this responsibility and taught God's Law to the people (Deut. 17:8-11; 33:10, Jer. 2:8), but, in time, they forgot God (Hosea 4:6) and the value of His words (Ezek. 22:26, Zephaniah. 3:4). The prophets were then sent to give warning regarding the return to the revealed word and its fulfilment (Is. 2:3, Jer. 31:33).

Torah is first of all a law code (Deut. 30:10, 31:9, Joshua 24:26), according to which each juridical situation will be judged (Deut. 17:8-13), precepts of moral life and daily activity (Joshua 1:7-9). The young man who has knowledge תּוֹרָה will have a long blessed life (Prov. 3:1), because God has put in תּוֹרָה all that is necessary for man for his own salvation and good life. The word of God (דְּבַר־יְהוָה) is His law (תּוֹרַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ) (Is. 1:10). The fulfilment of the words of Torah brings joy to man and lengthens his days (Deut. 6:1-2), brings blessing (Deut. 29:8), and he who will reject it, will be cursed (Deut. 29:19-20).

Teaching is associated with the anointment with the Holy Ghost. Bezaleel şi Aholiab were inspired while learning the technique of building the Holy Tabernacle and the objects in it.(Ex. 35:34).

6. שָׂכַל (*sakal*)

In modern translations, the verb שָׂכַל has been translated by a multitude of verbs, most of them referring to an act of knowledge or learning. In some texts, שָׂכַל is synonymous with בִּין, but, if בִּין means 'to distinguish between', שָׂכַל refers to an intelligent knowledge with the same aim. This type of learning is not by far a superficial one, it is centered on wisdom, on the act of becoming wise. Men have to understand that all the creation belongs to God (Is. 41:20). The Jew family heads gathered before Ezra to know (שֵׂחְנְשֵׂ֥ו וּלְהַשְׂכִּֽיל Hifil) the words of the Law (Nehemiah 8:13).

Another possible translation of the verb is 'to have understanding, skill'. The one who praises himself should praise the fact that he has skill and that he knows God, says prophet Jeremiah in 9:23. God will give people shepherds who will lead

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with skill and knowledge (דֵּעָה וְהַשְׂכֵּיל) (Jer. 3.15). Solomon's proverbs were written with the aim of obtaining the instruction that "makes you smart" (LUT) or that "of wisdom" (KJV) (Prov. 1:3).

David received precise instructions from God regarding the building of the Temple: „All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." (I Chr. 28:19).

The verb שָׂכַל indicates prudence as well (Amos 5:13, Ps. 14:2, Prov. 19:14, Is. 52:13, referring to Ebbed Yahweh) or success (I Sam. 18:14-15, referring to David, or Is. 52:13, Jer. 23:5, referring to Messiah)

The noun שֵׂכֶל 'judgment', 'skill', 'mind', 'wisdom' is met in the texts from I Sam. 25:3, I Chr. 22:12, II Chr. 2:11, II Chr. 30:22, Ezra 8:18, Nehem. 8:8, Ps. 111:10, Prov. 13:15; 16:22; 19:11.

7. אָלַף (*alaf*)

The verb אלף appears very seldom in the Hebrew Scripture, only four times, out of which three in Job. It means 'to learn' or 'to teach', and Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter consider that the basic meanings of this verb were of 'association', 'familiarity'[17]. In Job. 15:5, the one who teaches is a personification of a negative, immoral conduct: sin or misdeed teaches man's mouth.

In the texts from Job 33:33 and 35:11, Elihu and other persons for whom this is the sender of their message, transmit a positive message. The latter text uses the construct Participle when referring to God מַלְפֵּנוּ: "The One Who teaches us". The intensive and intentional form of Pilel show the involvement of society in another type of teaching, based on one's own experience and on a wished for acquisition.

8. שָׁנַן (*şanan*)

This verb is used especially in Qal, Piel and Hitpoel, but we are interested only in Piel, in which it has an intensive meaning: to educate early, perseveringly, and repeatedly. Its general meaning is 'to sharpen' something, especially swords and arrows (Deut. 32:41; Is. 5:28; Ps. 45:6; 120:4; Prov. 25:18). Two times it is used in order to show the sharpening of the tongue by the godless for attacking the righteous.

In Piel, the verb is met only once, in Deut. 6:7, in the well known text about the duty of educating children. In this text, the meaning of the verb is 'to stimulate', 'to sharpen', 'to instill'[18]. The Jerusalem Bible translates by 'to repeat'. God instructs man through the formal education at home and also by the informal education, through the daily life. The theological meaning of this verb in Piel is that God's message goes deeply in the soul and mind of the one who listens to Him, sharpens his senses, and makes him shine and ready to cut off all sin from his soul.

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[17] Warren Baker, Eugene Carpenter, *The Complete Word Study of the Old Testament*, AMG Publishers, Chattanooga, 2003, p. 65.

[18] Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset and David Brown (edit.), *A Commentary Critical, And Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*, vol. I, „Old Testament", Queen's Printer, Glasgow, 1863, p. 117.

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9. זָהַר (*zahar*)

The verb זהר appears 21 times in the Old Testament, each time in Nifal or Hifil. Although the meaning 'to learn' seems to be at the root of the signification of this verb, זהר, it is very rarely met with this meaning. In the text from Exodus 18:13-20, Jetro, Moses' father-in-law, urges him to teach (וְהִזְהַרְתָּה hifil) the commandments (הַחֻקִּים) and the laws (הַתּוֹרֹת) to the people and guide it on the way it should follow and towards the things it should do (v. 20).

10. חָכַם (*chacam*)

The verb appears 26 times and in the most passages in Qal, meaning 'to be wise'. In Piel it is translated by 'to make oneself wise' or 'to learn'. From among all the words that name the intelligence, this verb and its derivates are the most often used, in more than 300 situations, 3/5 of these being identified in Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiast.

We have already shown that בִּין, בִּינָה and תְּבוּנָה Are synonymous, correspondent to the derivates from חָכַם, which is obvious from their being met together in Job and Proverbs. The difference between the two nouns, חָכְמָה and בִּינָה, is clear in 4:7: skill (בִּינָה) is at the base of getting wisdom (חָכְמָה), and the latter is more valuable.

- חָכְמָה refers to wisdom as prudence, special abilities, sensibility, the experience of God's work in one's life and of one's life in the ways of God. The specificity of Hebrew wisdom consists of relating to a personal God, of revealing and discovering his holiness and justice as attributes that can be shared with the creation, so it is a wisdom that can be acquired only by experience, not speculatively as the Greek wisdom, for instance. In the Hebrew Scripture, wisdom is a gift from God and remains a virtue only in relation to Him. Wisdom is revealed and the writings are sacred because God has revealed to Israel and His revelation has an authoritative and imperative character.

Wisdom must be a characteristic of each man, irrespective of his social status[19], whether he is a priest (Ex. 28:3), metal processor (Ex. 31:3.6), an administrator or a mere clerk (Deut. 34:9, II Sam. 14.20) or a strategist (Is. 10:13). The spirit of wisdom shall rest upon Messiah as a leader of His chosen people. (רוּחַ חָכְמָה) (Is. 11:2).

In many texts, God is the subject of wisdom: He has found the earth by wisdom (יְהוָה בְּחָכְמָה יָסַד־אָרֶץ Prov. 3.19) and made the world (Jer. 10:12). Only God has the real wisdom (Job 28:20.23) because it is one of the attributes of His nature (Job 12:13). כִּי־יְהוָה יִתֵּן חָכְמָה מִפִּיו דַּעַת וּתְבוּנָה׃ Prov. 2:6 says. Only God can unveil the mysteries of wisdom to man. (Job 11:6).

By a poetic form of exception, divine wisdom is personified. חָכְמָה was God's first creation, before all the others (Prov. 8:22), it built a house and entertained a great feast and invited everyone (Prov. 9:1-6), it teaches (תָּרֹנָּה „shouts"!) in public places (Prov. 1:20; Prov. 8:1). Wisdom makes statements that usually belong to

[19] The highest Hebrew ideal is the wise man who has much knowledge in the study of the Torah, *talmid haham*, while an *am-haareţ* was viewed as an ignorant and always regarded with despise (*Avot* 2:6).

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divinity: "Mine is the power" (v. 14), or that through it kings rule (v. 15-16). The one who receives it, becomes no only wise (Prov. 1:2), even if he was an ignorant before, but also rich, prosperous (Prov. 8:1-21).

The Hebrew feminine חָכְמָה, considered to have been added to Yahweh's monotheist image in the postexilic period , often referred to as "Frau Weisheit" in German critic literature, plays the most important role in feminist exegesis in which it is presented as feminine part of God, intermediary between God and people[20]. חָכְמָה is presented as one of God's hypostasis, without being regarded as an independent god (as in other Eastern cultures)[21]. Wisdom does not have value in itself, but only if it is related to Yahweh. This is clearly stated in Prov. 1:7: "Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom" and also *Avot* 3:11: "He whose fear of sin is greater that his wisdom, will remain wise; he whose wisdom is greater than the fear of sin, will lose his wisdom".

In the New Testament and in patristic literature, the wisdom of the Old Testament, as it is presented in Prov. 8 and 9 was viewed as a prefiguration of Christ. St. Paul affirms: *Χριστὸν Θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ Θεοῦ σοφίαν* „Christ, God's power and God's wisdom" (1 Cor. 1:24). St. Athanasius the Great, commenting on Parables 9:1: "Wisdom has built a hous for itself", in parallel with John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh", says that the first refers to Incarnation: "this house is our body by the assuming of which He was made man"[22].

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[20] S. Schroer, *Die Weisheit hat ihr Haus gebaut. Studien zur Gestalt der Sophia in den biblischen Schriften*, Mainz, 1996, p. 53; I. Fischer, *Gotteslehrerinnen. Weise Frauen und Frau Weisheit im Alten Testament*, Stuttgart, 2006, p. 187. From the same type of literature, we mention G. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt in Proverbien 1-9. Traditionsgeschichtliche und theologische Studien*, in „Forschungen zum Alten Testament" (FAT), 16, Tübingen, 1996; C.V. Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, Sheffield, 1985; S. Gorges-Braunwarth, *„Frauenbilder – Weisheitsbilder – Gottesbilder" in Spr 1-9. Die personifizierte Weisheit im Gottesbild der nachexilischen Zeit*, Münster, 2002.

[21] The theme of wisdom in the writings of the Old Testament has caught the attention of many researchers. Out of the generous literature regarding the theme, we mention a few representative studies: G. von Rad, *Weisheit in Israel*, 2. Aufl., Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1982; H. Donner, *Die religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprünge von Prov. Sal. 8*, in „Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde" (ZÄS), 82 (1957), p. 8-18; W.L. Knox, *The Divine Wisdom*, in „Journal of Theological Studies" (JTS), 38 (1937), p. 230-237; B. Lang, *Frau Weisheit: Deutung einer biblischen Gestalt*, Düsseldorf, 1975; R. N. Whybray, *Wisdom in Proverbs*, in „Studies in Biblical Theology" (SBT), 45, 1965 and reedited in 1967; R.B.Y. Scott, *Solomon and the Beginnings of Wisdom in Israel*, in „*Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East. Festschrift H. H. Rowley*", in „Studia in Veteris Testamenti" (SVT), 3 (1955), p. 262-279; H. D. Preuss, *Das Gottesbild der alteren Weisheit Israels*, *Studies in the Religion of Ancient Israel*, in „Studia in Veteris Testamenti" (SVT), 23 (1972), p. 117-145. In Romania, the theme has been recently approached by Lect. dr. Alexandru Mihăilă in two studies: „«Iahve şi soţia Lui»?", in Ziarul „Lumina", February 11 2010, p. 16 and „Înţelepciunea personificată. Despre Pilde 8, 22", in Ziarul „Lumina", October 22, 2009, p. 16.

[22] St Athanasius notes the immediate context of the term „He made me", too: „God made me as a beginning of the ways to His works", explaining: „So, He has not created me in neither to be nor because I have a beginning and a making as creature" (chap. XLIV, p. 281). And after taht: „So here the Word did not speak through Solomon indicating the nature of His godliness, nor His eternal and true Birth from the Father, but the humanity and the stewardship of His Incarnation for us". „But the

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11. דָּבַר (*davar*)

The verb דָּבַר 'to speak', 'to declare' is met almost exclusively in participle Qal, Piel, Pual and Hitpael. There is no other old language in which the verb 'to speak' and the noun 'word' has as much importance as it does in Hebrew. These two words appear more than 2500 times in the Old Testament covering thus the area of communication excellently, which has led to their translation, in the classical or modern languages, by a multitude of words. The closest synonym of the verb דָּבַר is אָמַר 'to say', 'to speak'[23]. In more than 400 situations, the verb has God as a subject (for example. דִּבֶּר יְהוָה, in Num. 12.2). The phrase דְּבַר־יְהוָה "the word of God" appears 242 times and almost always (in 225 situations) refers to a prophetic utterance[24].

With an eminently theological character, Ps. 119 presents attributes of "the word of God": this is from the skies (v. 89), it is the truth (v. 160), it is like "a butter lamp for my feet and a light on my path" (v. 105). God's words are normative for man and that is why, in order to lend authority to someone's words or in order to show that the prophet is an "authentic messenger invested with divine authority"[25], there is a stress on: כִּדְבַר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לוֹ („after the word that God has told me") or a synonymous phrase which uses the verb אָמַר, כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה „thus speaks the Lord"(as in Is. 56:1). Thus, the words of God are said "through" Jeremiah's mouth (II Chr. 36:22) and, according to Isaiah, they are fruitful (Is. 55:11). In a few texts we can identify a personified form of the word of God: he is sent like a messenger (Ps. 107:20, 147:15), against Jacob (Is. 9:7).

More than any other verb, דָּבַר shows us who the author of the words is, the initiator of their being send, and their beneficiaries. In the New Testament, Christ is called "the Word" by John the Evangelist "the Word" Who "was in the beginning and the Word was with God and the Word was God". The Word Who reveals Himself in the Old Testament in the Trinitarian hypostasis of the Creator, uncovers Himself along the entire history of our salvation as a "meaning" of existence and in the New Testament, in the godly incarnated Word. Father Dumitru Stăniloae underlines the presence of the Son of God's Word in the work of grace for salvation: „In the Old Testament, as people worthy of grace appear, after being prepared through the Law, the work of This One irradiates more intensely in them from the divine Word. This is especially the case of the prophets. The Word Who communicates Himself to them is fuller of the Holy Spirit or of an intrinsic

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word «created Met» does not indicate the nature or birth, but that the One about Whom it is written was made Something else" (chap. XLV, p. 281). Cf. Lect. dr. Alexandru Mihăilă, „Înţelepciunea personificată …", p. 16.

[23] About this synonymy and others referring to the verb דָּבַר, see Robert Baker Girdlestone, *op. cit.*, p. 326, 329.

[24] Art. דָּבַר, in Gerhard J. Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren (coord.), *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament* (TWAT), 1. Band, Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1973, p. 439.

[25] Pr. Petre Semen, *Aşteptând mântuirea*, Editura Mitropoliei Moldovei şi Bucovinei, Iaşi, 2000, p. 162.

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spirituality. By this, people are prepared for the wholesome dwelling of the Son's Spirit in human nature at the moment of His incarnation as man"[26].

12. לִיץ (*liṣ*)

The basic meaning of the verb לִיץ is 'to despise', 'to mock', and the noun לָצוֹן means 'mockery' (Prov. 1:22). By extension, Hifil participle הַמֵּלִיץ means 'interpreter', 'translator' (in Ex. 42:23, Josef is speaking to his brothers through a הַמֵּלִיץ). The same participle is translated by 'teachers' in Is. 43:27, Cornilescu edition, probably influenced by the English variants like King James Bible (1611), The Geneva Bible (1599), The Webster Bible (1833) and others. In II Chr. 32:31, they are diplomats of Babylon, consequently, educated persons.

In the context of man's instruction by God (Job, chap. 33), through dreams or visions (v. 14-16), while protecting him from grave, sword, and pain (v. 17-19), the man approaching the grave can be saved by an angel wh will be sent מֵלִיץ as a 'mediator' for his soul (v. 23). We may interpret that his role מֵלִיץ, of the 'teacher', 'the mediator', is to lead man towards God, to save him even from death.

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