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# THESIS SUMMARY

## The universality of salvation and renewal of the world after the Prophet Isaiah

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The Old Testament is by excellence the history of man's salvation. Its pages draw the historical trajectory of man's relation with God, relation in which the man finds his identity of God's creature, of a person called to immortality. In this movement of revaluation and actualization of the "face" in "similarity", the man has failed by sin. The primordial perception opposite of immortality was deformed, but not entirely misunderstood. The faith in immortality is kept, although at a lowered level of understanding it, this idea being supported and updated by the promise of a Redeemer, Messiah, which will straighten the sin condition in which was found humanity in a certainty of eternity living. That's why the faith in the after-life, very vague in the first books of the Old Testament, but present, catches a stronger contour through the prophets, being fully understood and lived in the teaching of Messiah, Jesus Christ, God's Son.

The purpose of treating this subject in a double thematic connotation – salvation universality and renewal of the world – is to emphasize the fact that the Old Testament prophecies addresses to the whole mankind: from the social-religious particularity of the Jews, the Isaiah prophecies articulates in a more general horizon and in the end aims "all the nations". God is not a circumscribed God to a single nation, but is the God of whole mankind as the only Creator, God and Savior. In Isaiah, it is argued the best the salvation's universality on the monotheism truth. Last but not least, the eschatological event of the world's renewal is best shaped at Isaiah: the Messianic peace isn't only a state of harmony from the social-political point of view, but a transfiguration of the creature's condition in a new existential state.

The Messianic peace is Messiah's work. Therefore, the definitive state of people will be marked firstly through great holiness. This aspiration formed the soul of Messianism and gave it the one and highest value. In the same time, the ones that will be saints, beneficiaries of the Messianic kingdom, will be truly happy, because the main joy will result from holiness, that it will have as a result the most intimate unity with God and that, in the time of exodus, it will be close to its people under visible forms (Is 4, 5-6) and will prepare in Sion a great celebration for all people (Is 35, 6) and will love his as the fiancée loves his fiancé (Is 65, 5). For the first time at Isaiah 27, 24, it is shown that God promises the ones that served him with faith in their life time that will rise in the day of His revelation (Is 26, 19). Isaiah's prophecy was the word inspired by the Lord, because it was exactly fulfilled. It is possible that the Savior had in mind the words of the preacher from chapters 2, 2-3. When He talks to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus explaining them the Scriptures from Moses and all prophets and when, revealing

Himself to His disciples, gives them the command to preach in His name to all nations, starting from Jerusalem (Luke 24, 27).

After all, this new state, this Messianic kingdom of peace, in which peace finds the existential meaning, is the particularity of the Isaiah Messianic prophecies, together with prophet Ebed-Yahweh. Isaiah announces that this kingdom will come, will have the center at Jerusalem, will be a kingdom of peace and twinning, even in the irrational world of the spiritual Kingdom of the Grace and universe; in it will be contained all nations and will last forever. The Father of this Kingdom will be of a divine origin, but by body will be from the bosom of the chosen nation, from David's nation, from the Holy Virgin, will be a wonderful child with the plenitude of the divine gifts, upon Him being all the seven Spirits of God. He creates a Kingdom of peace, perfects the practical and theoretical faith, is the Water spring of the Living, and is the Doctor by excellence of bodies and souls. He destroys death forever, is the stone from the tip of the building that the Church creates. He brings peace and understanding between rulers and humble. His work is prepared by John the Baptist, being his second phase of His redemption work, Messiah takes the image of God's servant. In this purpose he comes as a good and caring shepherd for His herd: preaches in silence, brings light to the world, frees from the sin jail, brings Himself as sacrifice, Suffers unrightfully, and brings the Great Sacrifice for all sinners. His Kingdom, contains all nations, has a new name, is the New Jerusalem, it is universal and eternal. It is a spiritual kingdom of the Grace. It will perfect itself at the second Coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ, when will be created new heavens and a new earth, in which will live the righteous.

In this connection, it can be shaped the line of Messianism at Isaiah:

1. Saint John the Baptist shows the Savior saying: «Behold the Lamb of God that rises the sin of the world» (I, 29); 2. The savior has shown that the Kingdom has come (Luke IV, 18-19 ; John IV, 25-26) and He has proved that is the expected One; 3. The apostles have preached that Christ brought the Salvation so much announced and eagerly awaited: all promises have realized in Him (II Cor. I, 20); 4. As the prophets said, the kingdom of God was embraced by everyone; 5. Its members are from all nations; 6. The belief in one God replaced rapidly the miraculous worshiping and stretched all over the earth; 7. The cult became more interior and pure, consisting especially, of the fulfillment of the holy will of God; 8. In the new kingdom of God, Jesus-Messiah, has a unique place. In Jesus, the Messiah of prophets has truly arrived»; 9. He was born of a Virgin, in Bethlehem, being thus from the lineage of David; 10. Has such a



divine nature, that David names Him the «Son of God», and Isaiah «Mighty God»; 11. He has learned the truth that no one else, has won all people, especially the sinners, through His kindness and holiness, has ended His life bringing Himself as Redemption Sacrifice for the sins of the world; 12. Millions of people recognized Him as the Savior of the world.

In conclusion, as primary objectives of our research, we mention:

1. Argumentation of salvation's universality at the Prophet Isaiah based on the Monotheism argument;

2. Correlation of salvation's universality with the eschatological event of "renewal", which aims after all the whole creature;

3. Demonstration of the fact that the redeeming and saving work of Ebed-Yahweh aims the whole humanity and that Ebed-Yahweh exceeds any claim of being framed as national and collective identity. Lord's servant is Jesus Christ the Messiah.

4. Demonstration of the fact that the "renewal of the world" isn't a simple event from the future, but has a profound existential meaning as a primordial condition where everything will be organized in peace.

The present PhD thesis, entitled *The universality of salvation and renewal of the world after the Prophet Isaiah*, proposes itself a revaluation of this recovery mode of the man from the sin condition and his adjusting in the horizon of the primordial relation with God. This action belongs to the Creator and develops progressively. From these considerations, the books of the Old Testament reveal a pedagogical action and continuously supported by God, fact tested through the His decisional incursion in the history of the chosen people's universe, incursion expressed through prophets.

As it can be observed, the general title of the PhD thesis proposes a double analysis, which, in the end, aims the theological synthesis of the Old Testament. It must be mentioned the fact that our research resumes at the Prophet Isaiah, as one that expressed the divine will of the Jewish people in the most difficult social-historical conditions. Isaiah, named also as the "Old Testament evangelist", played a providential role in the conservation of the religious verticality of the people chosen through his attitude, but, in an equal measure, was the one that presented and renewed with the most clear precision the promise of a Messiah's arrival, promise that concentrated the social and religious horizon of the Jews in their entire history.

Isaiah, in a paradigmatic manner in the basis of its inspiration by God upon the future events, was a reference in the conservation of the Jewish national identity, but which, in the same time, has articulated on the political-religious scene of the since then world a message entirely new for humanity: the salvation's universality. From the particular circumference of the Messianic promise somewhat reserved exclusively for the Jews, Isaiah recalibrates the salvation message on an universal plan: it is maybe for the first time when God talks through Isaiah to all mankind, in that the whole mankind, all nations, all people are object of redeeming by Messiah, Isaiah moving the accent from the particular or local identity to the universal one.

In another train of thoughts, the second component of the title aims an eschatological event: "renewal of the world". The reason of each prophecy of anticipating the future events not as simple facts of history, but as events with an existential impact and destination for the mankind. This renewal of the world announced by Isaiah at the end of the ages is in the end that transfiguration of the universe, of the entire created order, announced also in the *Apocalypse* in "new heavens and earth"; a new order of *being* of all that exists, of what *is alive*.

The Messianic cycle of the prophecies from the book of the prophet Isaiah opens with the announcements that the Messianic Kingdom will come and its center will be Jerusalem. Thus at Isaiah II, 2-4, we read: «In the days to come the mountain of Lord's House will be higher than any other mountain peaks and hills, and will come to it all nations (v. 3). People will flow to him and say: «Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, at the Lord's House, at the House of Jacob's God, so He can teach us His ways and walk in His paths. Because from Sion will come out the Law, and from Jerusalem, God's word: He will be the judge of the nations, He will decide between a large number of people: so that from their swords they will forge me plowshares, and from their spears, hooks: no other nation will ever remove its sword against another, and will not learn the war (v. 4). «The days to come» mean the future time when God will fulfill all that He has promised and refers to the Messianic age, «the mountain of Lord's House» is Sion, on which is built the temple of Jerusalem. This mountain will be seen from any point of the earth, because in it will happen events such big that the nations of the earth will come heady at the scene. It is about the «the Word of God = preaching the Gospel» (*Luke* XXIV, 47). So, people come without reserves and have the same purpose: to worship the house of Jacob, Temple of Jerusalem, because from here comes the Torah-Law, that teaches the man to do God's will, as all God's words as of a Father.

This Kingdom announced by the prophet, has as Judge God Himself. Here it is not about the Communal Judgement, but His will imposition through the approval of virtues and their promoting and the disapproval fallacies. He is the Judge of all nations because He is the Creator and their Father and will give a beneficial sentence for all. Will decide that the world should live in peace. Thus will bring his most precious good and so desired by any man. The Prophet therefore, sees established a new society in which, instead of the destructive wars, it will be achieved peace which guarantees the flourishing work creative of goods and bringer of happiness. Because the man was created to work the land and rule it. This desideratum will fulfill when all nations will be ruled by Christ, which is the peace in the middle of the human strife, says St. Cyril of Alexandria. After he announces this ideal kingdom of peace and justice, the Prophet shows that its creator is a wonderful person, very special, which has its origin in heaven, but which comes on earth and takes the image of a servant (Philippians II, 7).

This is the «Descendant of God» (Isaiah IV, 1) full of glory and greatness but which, coming to earth, will born from a Virgin, a specific Virgin «therefore the Virgin conceived and will give birth to a Son, and will call him Immanuel = God is with us» (Isaiah VII, 14). The Virgin of which Isaiah speaks is a certain virgin at a marriageable age that didn't have any connections with any man. The New Testament refers the Virgin as the Mother of God (Matthew I, 25).

Isaiah says that the Virgin has taken, has already in the womb and announces thus something special, for it is unnatural that a virgin would have a child and especially, a virgin that belongs to the future. It may be therefore about the ever conceiving. If the prophet would have said «would take and will give birth», he wouldn't announce anything special, because it would be very natural for a virgin to give birth after being pregnant.

The child that will be born is different than the others, He is the Child which springs from the stump of Jesse, because from the line of David, this child, Immanuel is a wonder – child, because on Jesse's shoulders sits the responsibility of a Sovereign's duties from a kingdom of universal proportions. It is significant the past speaking: «born, given». In his enlightened mind by God, the prophet sees the realized event, the already born child. The child has five names: 1. Wonder, the Child that will be born will be very exceptional by birth, life, the way he ends, through his role and purpose. 2. Adviser, on the right path (Micah IV, 2); (John XIV, 6: «I am the Way, Truth and Life»). 3. Mighty God = El Gibor = Powerful God, in contrast to the gods,

which are powerless fictions, the Son has a divine nature. 4. Eternal Father. The notion of father implies the idea of kindness, love, mercy. These are imperishable virtues at Immanuel: always good, caring and full of mercy. The mark «eternal» refers to Immanuel and specifies both His origin and being. 5. Lord of Peace. Is the last given name, through this being shown the noble origin of Immanuel and that He will be the holder of a great dignity and His Kingdom will be universal. Therefore the verses 6 and 7 from chapter IX at Isaiah complete the chapter VII, 14, at the same prophet, highlighting the fact that the One that is coming, comes from God and is God, and they complete with chapter XI, 1-5, showing that, by body, Messiah descends from the line of David, but over Him will rest the Spirit of God, Spirit of wisdom and understanding, Spirit of counsel and strength, Spirit of knowledge and fear of God (Isaiah XI, 2). Thus is a supernatural man, adorned yet from birth with all the divine graces, Messiah is, for Isaiah, a being so wonderful that he «God is with us» and «Mighty God». On the throne of David He will reconcile all tribes, will strengthen forever the kingdom of Israel and will do so the holiness, justice and happiness will reign. His power of maintaining peace will be so great that the earth's nations, not only that they will no longer attack the Holy Land, but will gather around Messiah as around a flag (Isaiah XI, 12) and will live in peace and perfected understanding even the animal world (Isaiah VII- XI) .

Messiah will be the Light of the world, the people from the country of Zebulun and Naphtali, Galilee of the nations, will see a great light (Isaiah IX, 1-2); consult Matthew IV, 13-16). The darkness is the image of adversity and (Ecclesiastes V, 16) and also the lack of provision, of wisdom; the light against imagines galore, luck and happiness (Job, XXII, 28); Psalms XCVII, 11). The oppressed and strayed people has fallen in an immoral state, disastrous that it was lying in the darkness distant from God. Right when the darkness is more profound, behold the «Light - Christ», comes shining and bringing salvation. Many times the Savior assumes directly this entitling which culminates the expression: «I am the Light of the world» (John VIII, 12). Besides Saint Evangelist Matthew confirms the fulfilling of the prophecy of Isaiah at chapter IX, 2 in the person of Christ the Redeemer (Mathew IV, 14). Such Emperor with origin and godly qualities couldn't create an ideal Kingdom of peace, justice and love; thus a Kingdom of twinning. In the new Messianic Kingdom the prophet sees living together the wolf and lamb and the harry sleeping with the ox, the lion cub and calf fattened will be together and a

little child will lead them. (Isaiah, XI, 6). The cow and the she-bear will feed together their cubs will sleep together.

The lion will eat straws as the ox, the infant will play near the cobra's den and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain; for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah XI, 6-9; Isaiah LXV, 25). From the content of these verses we find out that in the Messianic kingdom the hostile relations between man – God, man – man and man – nature will reestablish in the spirit of peace that it will reach the paradisiacal state. The wolf is predacious, because it strangles its prey (Genesis 49, 27), lives in the wilderness, (Jeremiah V, 6) and is ready in any moment to shed blood and lose lives (Ezekiel XXII, 27); figuratively, the wolf is the type of the cruel man. The lamb is the image of gentleness, this meaning have both the goat and calf. The leopard is the type of cruelty, because it rips everyone that gets in his way (Jeremiah V, 6). It is a beast famous for its fierceness and certainty of its steps (Habakkuk I, 8). The lion is the type of force which nobody tries to test it (Nm XXV, 9) because risks to perish. The snake and especially the viper always have poison under their tongue (Psalms CXL, 4), are a danger of death for the man, because their bite cannot be healed (Jeremiah VIII, 17). Thus, the fear of death which inspires the living near the beasts will pass in the fairy tales, when the glassy eyes of the viper will be a fun object for the kids. The Holy Fathers interpret literally. Cyril: «The viper is the image of the evil one». After Jerome the meaning is spiritual: «Wolf was also Paul, which persecuted the Church». Theodore and Eusebius see in the ferocity of the animals the various categories of people, with their morals. It is argued that under the influence of this prophecy Virgil conceived that «aurea aetas». In that time, of the Messianic kingdom, there won't be any more evils, because the faith will be perfected theoretically and practically (Isaiah XI, 9) and His wish will fulfill on the whole earth. Theoretically by the perfected Revelation brought by the Son (Hebrews I, 1) and practically by the fulfillment of the evangelical commandments and blessing with the saving Grace of the Holy Spirit, Christ will call everyone to the «alive water». The Prophet says: «You will take out water with joy from the saving springs» (Isaiah XII, 3). The water springs are very rare in the Orient, that's why for a family a well is a true fortune. The wells were dug deep and for removing the water, there were made great efforts. In the future it wouldn't be so anymore. The removing of the water will be a reason of joy. The spring of water is the icon of happiness (Leviticus XIV, 50; 19, 20; Is. 48, 18). At Jeremiah II, 13 «Alive water»

is God. In the New Testament, the Savior calls Himself «Alive water» (John IV, 14) and that's why the Holy Fathers refer the text to the Saving Springs, (Cyril, Eusebius) to the doctrine of Gospel (Jerome) from which the ones that believe extract with joy (Theodore) and quench their soul (Saint Basil). Also, in chapter LV, 1 Prophet Isaiah announces us that this «Alive water» will be gained without money and will be for everyone. Of course it is about the «Alive water» of the Holy Evangelists, about the Grace of the Holy Spirit, which the Savior grants it freely for all people (Romans III, 24).

Messiah – Christ will heal all the disease and helplessness of the nation «in that day the deaf will hear the words of the book and the eyes of the blind, saved from the darkness, will see » (Isaiah XXIX, 18). «The lame will jump like a deer and the tongue of the mute will sing of joy; because in the desert will gush waters and in the wilderness rivers» (Isaiah XXXV, 6). Because the Savior truly healed the blind, deaf, mute, crippled etc. we have many proof in the Holy Gospels: blind: Matthew IX, 27 ; XI, 5, XII, 22; XX, 30; XXI, 14; John IX, 6-7 etc., deaf: Matthew XI, 5; Mark VII, 32-33; mute: Matthew XII, 22; XV, 30; crippled: Matthew XXI, 14; John V, 8-9 etc. From all these it clearly results that the texts had a literary meaning and that the Savior fulfilled exactly the prophecy that we see from the answer He gives to the messengers of Saint John the Baptist, which wanted to know if Jesus is the « One», the Awaited one, and the Savior said: «Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blinds recover their sight, the cripple walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise and to the poor it is preached the» (Matthew 11,4-5). Thus there is no doubt that Christ is the awaited Messiah, whereas He Himself states this in a clear way using, as many times, the prophecies for Him.

Jesus the Messiah is the eternal conqueror of death: «The Lord destroys death forever, wipes the tears from all faces and removes from all earth the same of His people» (Isaiah XXV, 8). Truly, the Savior conquered death by His resurrection and by it has wiped the tears from the faces of those who believe in His resurrection, which is the surety of everyone's resurrection (Apocalypse XXI, 4). It is the answer that the Lord gives to the mockeries that the pagans addressed the Jews, telling them that their faith is madness and the hope of saving, a dream (Isaiah XXXVII, 23-24; Psalms LXIII, 10; LXVIII, 51) . «Behold I put as foundation in Sion a stone, a hardened stone, a precious stone, the stone from the head angle of the building, strong foundation, the one that will take as support won't hurry to run » (Isaiah XXVIII, 16). Therefore, the founder of the Messianic kingdom is part of it. (111 the building of the new edifice, He

Himself being the foundation on which will be risen His kingdom. This is Christ, the stone from the head of the angle, is the Head of His Church and the foundation on which the Apostles have built the doctrinal edifice and gracious spirit of the Christian Church which will contain all earth's people. «Then the emperor will rule with justice and His lords will lead in judgement. Each one will be as a shelter against the wind and as a place of escape against the storm, as some water charms in a dry place, as the shadow of a big rock in a land burned of thirst» (Isaiah III, 1-2). It seems that in verse 1 it is about the Holy Apostles as together-working with Christ in perfect harmony. The governors will be the protectors of the humble as the shelter for storms and will outpour their benevolence, as the shadow of a rock in the desert or as the water in a dry place. Here it can only be about Christ and Holy Apostles. The same will be the governors of people for their submitted. Those who will be morally blind and deaf, will hear and see clearly what is good and will do it, therefore Isaiah sees here the new man, reborn (John III, 15) and these will understand the great deeds of God (Acts II, 11). «The crazy» from chapter XXXII, 3 are bodily healthy people but careless towards the virtues and easy going in severe cases. They will become right from the moral point of view. The same, the heart, as center of the intellectual and moral activity will judge well, and the tongue, organ executing the orders of the heart, will talk right and clear, searching for honoring God and the common good. In that time it will be treasured not the aristocratic origin, but the noble deeds.

But before Messiah realizing all these His path and world must be prepared to welcome Him, because His mission is unique and special in its kind. Isaiah announces: «Prepare the path of God in the desert, smoothen his ways, any valley to be risen, any mountain and hill to be bowed, coasts to be turned into plains and stretches into dales. Then it will be discovered God's Glory and in that moment everybody will see» (Isaiah XL, 3-5). As in the desert, where nobody walks, the paths are plugged by winds with sand dunes and, to receive the Emperor's visit, they must be leveled, so the mankind, as the wilderness unpopulated by good deeds and truth, must create a smooth path for receiving the Savior. «The valley to rise», namely any inconsolable soul and lowered deep in sin, and the «mountain to bow», namely any haughtiness and «Behold I put as foundation in Sion a stone, a hardened stone, a precious stone, the stone from the head angle of the building, strong foundation, the one that will take as support won't hurry to run» (Isaiah XXVIII, 16). Therefore, the founder of the Messianic kingdom is part of it, He Himself being the foundation on which will be risen His kingdom. This is Christ, the stone from the head of the

angle, is the Head of His Church and the foundation on which the Apostles have built the doctrinal edifice and gracious spirit of the Christian Church which will contain all earth's people. Messiah in His ruling history, and the expression «which I support » shows that between God and Servant it exists a relation of obligation like the one between Father and Son. The words «it is well liked» assures the Servant of all His God's affection and support in His entire mission. In Matthew XII, 18 it is seen that Lord Christ Himself identifies with God is the Shepherd that sacrifices Himself for His herd, the weak he protects, and the ones in danger helps them urgently. He does not want to lose any believer and wants them to enjoy life, because He loves them equally. With this, Messiah goes to the final point of His mission, and having to achieve the ultimate sacrifice of Redemption, fulfills abundantly His ministry as the devoted Servant of God. «Here is my servant, whom I uphold, My Chosen One, in whom I delight. I have put my Spirit on Him, and He will bring justice to the nations» (Isaiah XLII, 1).

He must illuminate the blind, namely those who are distant from God, to free all from the bonds of sin and to remove from the darkness of Hell all who are captive. Hence, all He did until now was the preparation work for the ultimate sacrifice which will bring to God for His people, for all humanity. In chapter V it is shown the regret of God that at his great masterpiece the people do not heed, moreover, they mock God's Servant: «I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting» (Isaiah L, 6). We see here the passion moment of God's anointed, we see the ingratitude of the people which instead of the received benefactions, answers with hate and mockery. Unknown of His people's members that want Him happy and strong, the Servant of God will be killed after he will atone their sins by His death, He will be recognized and will have a great influence even upon the kings (chapter LIII). In chapter LIII, prophet Isaiah paints with a particular precision the portrait of the last days of the earthly activity of Messiah and shows the way and point of His work. In volume II and III the prophet Messiah, as a weak child, as a sprig of dry land, didn't have beauty, nor shining, was despised by the people, man of pain and used to sufferance, unheeded and yet He bore our sufferings» (v. 4), says the prophet, «and our sufferings he took upon Him and we believed that He was punished, smitten by God and humble (v. 5). But He was struck by our sins, crushed for our outlaws, the punishment that gave us peace, fell upon Him and through His wounds we are healed». Then he says: «When He was tormented and oppressed, He didn't open His mouth at all, as a lamb that you bring to the



slaughterhouse and a sheep before those who cut her hair, He didn't open His (v. 9); His Grave was placed between the evil ones, although He didn't commit any crime and was not found any deceit in His mouth (v. 12). He has given Himself to death and was put in the number of those outlaws, because He bore the sins of many and prayed for the guilty ones (v. 10), but after He will give His life as sacrifice for the sin He will see a seed of descendants, will live many days and the work of God will develop in His hands». Behold that all the work of the Messiah ended through His Sacrifice of Redemption has as a merit reward to see many descendants and these are all that will believe in Him after His resurrection. The descendants will know God through His Pure Servant and will follow his path. The new family that will create Messiah will be formed from all nations of the (Isaiah LV, 5; cited at John IV, 21 and V, 23; Matthew XXI, 13; Mark 11, 17; Luke XIX, 46 and Isaiah LVI, 8 and LVII, 19). All these texts are clarified and confirmed through: John X, 16; Ephesians I, 10; II, 14-16. The Head of the New kingdom is Christ (Isaiah XXVIII, 16; cited at Matthew XXI, 42; Acts IV, 11 Romans IX, 33; Ephesians II, 20 and I Peter II, 8).

We believe that the New Name is the Christian Church and the inheritors, all those born from water and Spirit (Christians) (quoted from Acts). In the New Jerusalem the light will shine more than the sun and moon; Christ will be the heavenly Light that will shine to the world. Cyril thinks at the spiritual light lit in the hearts of the believers by the universal Savior. After creating this new Messianic kingdom, the Savior will come to reward everyone according to his deeds (Isaiah LXII, 11, quoted at Matthew XXI, 11 and XXV, 31-46), and God will create new heavens and earth, in which there will not be any more crying and will restore peace (Isaiah LXV, 17-25).

One of the essential conditions for our approach of God's altar is the reconciliation, accompanied by the soul's renewal. This essential condition was revealed to us by Christ the Redeemer Himself, receiver of our sacrifice, saying: "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there you suddenly remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar and first go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5, 23-24).

The man, Adam the first one, knew – according to the Scripture – the initial harmony of the created cosmos by God through word. He saw with his eyes and admired what, before him, God "saw that it is good", because God has submitted to him all creatures, to lead it to perfection

(Genesis 1, 28-30). The knowledge guided towards perfection and the taking into possession of what was entrusted to him were sufficient for the man for that in him to reunite all creatures, only with the condition of its own effort towards the personal perfection, as God entrusted him the leadership of creatures. Here, at the entwining of the sixth day with the seventh, cling the shoulders of the man the markings of the future shining, as promise, towards the future similarity. Here, when it starts God's "resting" day – because He created everything, from the macro-cosmos to micro-cosmos, and has forged the man and ended the creation as act – starts the responsibility day of the man, but not without the help of the divine providence. The old Man, Adam, however, loses his good equipoise received through creation and slips, clearly aware, on the path of disobedience. The disobedience brings in the creation the enmity, "thorns and thistles" (Genesis 3, 15 and 18), obliteration of the initial "good".

Parallel with the continuous deterioration of the status quo of creation through the reversal of its natural way of use by the man, the image from man's being also deteriorates. The wandering mind, the diversion of will towards crime or homicide, blunting the feelings until the disappearance of the paternal, maternal and filial conscience – all lead to, implicitly, to the triggering of an inner struggle between the will of doing good and the tenacity of doing bad, of that fight that Saint Apostle Paul masterly describes in chapter VIII of the Epistle to the Romans: "The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God, it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so" (Romans 8, 6-7). The consequence of this sinful state, in which the man becomes to himself an enemy, extends to the whole creature: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time" (Romans 8, 22). The man cannot free himself alone from the ontological grip in which he got stuck through the sin: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do" (Romans 7, 15). The judgement, reasoning and power of things' penetration – all weakened through sin – get into a such big state of decline that the man mistakes the Creator with the creature and worships it: "...have turned God's truth into a lie and worshiped the creature, instead of the Creator" (Romans 1, 25). The reversal in man's mind, of the ontological order, produces a reversal of man's works in the created nature, as an estrange of him from the initial point from which he started towards perfection, towards an intentional denial, thought and repeated of the good said by God in his creature. This situation affects what Father Prof. D. Stăniloae names free and active

“malleability” of the man in relation with the world, because the malleability becomes subjugated to the sin and although remains active, without being in the use of the creation, becomes its enemy.

In the primordial state, the man is a limited and actively contingent being, or malleable for itself. God has created the world totally contingent for Himself, and in relation with the man, as malleable passive for the man, so he can exercise his free and active malleability in relation with it, putting into it multiple passive alternative virtualities, for that the man to exercise a role partly creator even on its own”. As he wanders more and more into sin like in a labyrinth, through the succession of generations, it appears a considerable state of rigidity towards himself, towards the peers, towards the creation and God. From here it results, finally, the conflict inside, between “the law of mind and law of flesh”, the conflict with creation and God is reflected especially in the relation between the man and his peers. The latter ones, because of their alienation from the sin, does not recognize their common nature, violates their existential states, it compels them to stand in a hostile position both towards him and the created being, in one word, the conflictual state generated by the sin is a destructive state, amplified and tensioned extremely. Therefore, the salvation appears, in the last instance, as anagenesis (ἀναγέννησις), reborn, from water and Spirit (John 3, 5).

Escaping from the grip of the sin is still possible only towards Christ, because only through Him you can reach the Father: “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to My Father except through Me” (John 14, 6). The same has confessed also Saint Apostle Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved” (Acts 4, 12). The name of Christ the Redeemer, His Person, is the point of convergence of humanity in present, future and eschatological perspective.

The Holy Fathers have shown in their writings that in Christ the world above – spiritual – reconciles with the one below or human. Thus, having always in mind the image of reconciliation through and in Christ, Saint Maximus the Confessor states that God unifies firstly through the man “the intelligible and sensitive ones through the perfect equality with the angels, in knowledge. Therefore makes the whole creation only one creation, undivided for him from the knowledge and ignorance point of view. Because He has acquired a knowing science (γνωστική) of the reasons from things, free of any shortages precisely with embodying the angels, through

which, coming the endlessly bountiful outpouring of the true wisdom, as a result He gives Himself to those worthy in clean image the incomprehensible and twisted knowledge about God”. Then, also Saint Maximus shows that God’s Son, embodying Himself, comes in the world to save the man lost through sin, Him “unifying through Himself the natural parts thorn of the universal nature in its totality and the general reasons manifested into parts, through which is achieved the unification of the divided ones, fulfills the great advice of God the Father, gathering (summarizing) in Himself, the ones from the heaven and the ones from the earth, because in Him were created”.

The reconciliation between divine and human is achieved during the earthly life of the Savior through incarnation as foundation of the salvation. It culminates in the moment of Resurrection, when the human reaches, together with the divine, the glory state of the incarnated Son of God, of reconciliation with God the Father through the Son: “The whole life of the Savior, starting with the Birth and ending with the Resurrection registers in the Economy of the human nation’s salvation but between the earthly life moments of the incarnated Son of God, especially the sacrifice from the Cross and Resurrection, it is connected to the completion of the salvation. The salvation means the freeing of man from the burden of the sin and gifting him with the grace of life and spiritual growth. This is realized in the sacrifice from Golgotha and the resurrection of the Lord”.

In Jesus Christ, therefore, while we gather towards God the Father as a loving Parent of the entire mankind, we settle one with the others through a dynamic reunion: “The dynamic reunion of all in Christ, through the power of the Spirit that shines and works in the humanity of the resurrected and risen Christ, in all, is the final stage of salvation. Between Christ’s and ours resurrection stretches the range of Christ’s work of gathering us all in Him in perfect image and our efforts in that direction, supported and stimulated by His work in His Spirit, through the Church”. The reconciliation engages ontological the entire restored humanity in Christ, on an always ascending path, in a continuous excelsior, passing from death as payment of the sin (Romans 6, 23), to its life flourishing in holiness (Romans 6, 22), to “eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6, 23).

Entering in the intimacy of communion with Christ or communion with Body and Blood of Christ is possible only after each one of us settled with our peer as bearer of Christ’s image, namely when we destroyed the enmity from our bodies. Because Christ – says Saint Apostle Paul

– abolished “the enmity from His body, the laws of the commandments and its teachings, as, in Himself, the two to build in a single new man and to create peace” (Ephesians 2, 15). And the peace creates itself in a unit of conscience and deed in the human plan only after Christ, taking upon Him the ancestral sin and destroying it in the human nature assumed at incarnation, He has broken down the middle wall which was dividing the divine of the human and the human of what is divine (Ephesians 2, 14). The reconciliation becomes, thus, a together-building personal to be “place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2, 22). It is a rebuild of the neighbor in us and of us in the neighbors, so that the place is one in all and in the same place all gather, because God lives in His Spirit and where there is God’s Spirit, we are together with God, being places of His Spirit. Further, also after the saying of the Apostle, we are no longer strangers and sojourners, but we are together citizens with the saints and settlers of God.

In His conversation with Nicodemus, Christ the Savior brought into relief the importance of the fundamental change of the human being desirous of the communion with God. Therefore, Nicodemus – educated man and at a considerable age – as if embarrassed about hearing Christ’s words about the “birth from the heavens” (John 2, 3), as a precondition for entering in God’s kingdom, he anxiously asked: “How can someone be born when they are old? Can he really enter the second time in his mother’s womb and born again?” (John 3, 4). But Christ the Savior gave him an answer that the Church can give to the contemporary world, repeating it word by word: “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit” (John 3, 4).

The birth “from water and Spirit”, through Baptize, is equivalent with the human entering in a different ontological plan, in which the foundation is put by Christ. It is a crucifixion with Christ, so that Christ could renew all within our being through Cross and Resurrection. His life becomes our life because in us is the faith in Him: “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2, 20). Through Baptize and through all the other Holy Sacraments, receiving the grace of the Holy Spirit, we become more and more new humans, Christs by grace, sons of God by grace, as Christ is the Son of the Father, incarnated Son in the world for that us could clothe with Him and to become free from the grip of the sin, as Saint Apostle Paul shows us: “For, we are all sons of God through faith in Jesus

Christ. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Galatians 3, 27).

The change that produces in us through the fellowship with Christ in the Crucifixion, Death and Resurrection is a change of renewal, in a new Body which is the Church and having a new head – Christ. It produces continuously in the world, so that the Church itself to be always new and whole on earth and in heaven, as Saint Symeon the New Theologian says: “Therefore the body of Christ and His bride and the heavens world and the holy place of God are the Church, and the members of His body are all the saints. If it is so, but not all have come to existence, it is obvious that neither Christ’s body, nor the heavens world, namely God’s Church did not fulfill entirely. Today there are a lot in the world that do not believe, or from those who believe in Christ there are sinners and prodigals which must change through repentance, many disobedient that must become obedient, many who have yet to be born and to please God until the latter trump. Therefore they must be born and brought to existence all the previously known and to fulfill the world above the world of the Church of the firstborn, Jerusalem between the heavenly ones” (Hebrews 12, 22-29).

The renewal is seen by Niketas Stethatos, from inside the Church, as a conjugation of the fatherly spirit with the filiation spirit, as an endless continuity, of a spiritual succession, without which it is not possible the “heavenly birth”, renewal in Christ. Here’s how he justifies this tasteful truth: “And if it is not born from heaven, it cannot enter its kingdom” (John 3, 5). This birth comes from listening to the spiritual fathers. Because if we do not give priority in us to the seed of the word through the teachings of the fathers and not become sons of God through them, we cannot be born from heaven. So were born the twelve ones from the one Christ, and the seventy ones have been born from the twelve ones and became sons of God and Father, after Lord’s word: “You are the sons of My Father from heaven” (Matthew 5, 45). That’s why also Paul says, to us: “Though you have many teachers, but not many parents. I have begotten you, be my next” (I Corinthians, 4, 15).

Indeed, the Church is the renewal of man in Christ, through the heaven birth of each one and through the fellowship to Christ’s life with our peers. In it, our old nature renews, rejuvenates, tenders, resizes, rises and grows up. About these aspects of transforming the human nature in Church widely talk the five “visions” from the Shepherd of Hermas. Thus, the Church

appears at first as an old woman, dressed with a shining coat, then with a younger face but with the body and hair of an old lady, then, young, very beautiful and joyful, but still with a gray hair, and then – in the fourth vision – as an adorned virgin and all dressed in white, under the image of an angel. These images of the Church – the first one representing the Church before the creation of the world or how it was said by some theologians, “Church in God’s plan”, and the latter one being our perfection image in an equal state with the angels or angelical – are, in fact aspects of the image which we received through creation and implementation resemblance to God, passing through all stages of the salvation’s history. But here it is not about a single isolated individual, but about the image of the entire humankind recapitulated in Christ, as Saint Irenaeus tells us: “has recapitulated and made secretly and unspeakable a body with Himself (in Himself) the entire human nature”.

Macarius of Egypt compares our renewal in Christ with a new birth, from Christ. He states that our Lord Jesus Christ, preoccupied of our salvation, undertook anything that was necessary (...), from the beginning, through protoparents, patriarchs, through law and prophets. And in the end, He Himself coming to us, and despising the shame of the cross, endured death. And He did His utmost, to be born from Himself, from His own nature, the sons of the Spirit, condescending that he should be born from heaven, from His deity (...). As the fathers from here would fill with sadness and sorrow if he will not be born, so the Lord, loving the mankind as His own image, wanted them (the people) to be born from the own seed of His deity. And if some, therefore, do not want to come to such a birth, and to be born from the womb of the divine Spirit, a lot of pain grips onto Christ, suffering and enduring to save them. Christ – says Macarius – paints after Him the heavenly man; from His Spirit, from the hypostasis of His uninterpretable light it shapes the heavenly figure (...) and gives to it the handsome and good Groom. But if someone does not look just at Christ, neglecting all, then neither Christ will not paint his image from His own light.

Thus, the renewed world through Christ must be a world of light images, in which we see Christ as the embodied and glorified Son of God, but preoccupied by the salvation of each man for which He sacrificed on the Cross. Therefore it becomes explicit the statement of Saint Apostle Paul, that we are from the line of God (Acts 17, 29), resuming in discussion, in the Areopagus, what Cleante said about the kinship of humanity with Divinity. Extended at the actual dimension of the world, the likeness with Christ through His receiving in us has an

extraordinary meaning from the religious point of view. Each peer is seen from the soteriological perspective. The same Cross, the same Sacrifice and the same Resurrection are seen in every peer recapitulated into Christ through the working Holy Spirit in Church and world. Nobody can be anymore, ontologically speaking, outside Christ, because Christ contained all of them virtually in Himself, through the human nature assumed and deified. Thus, the world is, ontologically, always new, because also the humanity of Christ does not get old ever. The Body and Blood of Christ, the Eucharist, which we receive, is always new and renews us also, body and blood, whenever we receive it. As a result, also our body and blood are not exclusive and individualist human possession anymore; on the contrary, through receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, we become Body and Blood of Christ towards ourselves and our neighbor in which is found the image of God, light image of Christ. Because therefore renewing with Him our inside, we renew both towards ourselves, through Him, and towards our neighbor of which He is concerned through the divine love towards all people. The Christ from us loves, for that, the Christ, from the other, because Christ, as God, is love, and loves the created image of new from us, as a human image likable to God the Father, in the act of salvation, of the human deification in us.

The multitude of the human images renewed in Christ however constitute the Church: and the Church is the body of the renewed world and having as Leader Christ Himself. The world is a continuously becoming Church, and the Church is a continuously renewing world. That's why N. Berdiaeff mentions that the Church is the Christianized cosmos, namely renewed in Christ. "The Church – he says – is not a reality existing in parallel with others, is not just a component of what is historical and universal; it is not a divided objective reality. The Church is everything, it constitutes the plenitude of existence, of worlds and humanity's life, but in a state of Christianization. It possess a cosmic nature, and the forgetting of this nature is a sign of decline of its consciousness. The conception about the Church as a therapeutic institution, in which the spirits will receive treatment, will be a lamentable conception. Those who see in Church just some settlement, denies it its cosmic nature. In Church the grass grows and the flowers unravel. The Church is the Christianized cosmos". The life of the Church in space and time is a passing from the Cross to the Grave and then, to Resurrection for its each member, because becoming members of Christ's Body, at the time when we come to the world – thus in space and time – we must receive (referring to the Eucharist) from the Cross, Grave and



Resurrection as Christ – The Leader of the Church. And the state of resurrection is the eternal state of the renewed world in Christ.

The Christian teaching regarding the three directions of the human behavior: towards himself, towards God and towards his neighbor, is always also a teaching of peace. Cultic peace, which must be established towards God by bringing sacrifice, is insufficiently realized if it only has a horizontal or vertical dimension. More, the vertical dimension of the spiritual peace – the peace between the man and God – is only possible after achieving peace, reconciliation with the neighbor. It also exists peace without reconciliation, but that peace is unilateral, lived only by one of the sides, leaving the other side in a state of conflict, of enemy tension upon us. And the Holy Gospel prevents us clearly upon such situation, which places us in conflict, further, with our neighbor that does not know the peace from our soul. The reconciliation, for that, has its purpose of making an evident and full peace, as a premises of communication with God through sacrifice or prayer.

The reconciliation is the foundation of renewal. The man settled with himself, with the neighbor and God, is a new man, a man of peace, a creator of peace. In Christianity, he is another Christ, by grace, because he is recreated or reborn through the birth of salvation, through the birth of peace. And as the creator of peace, will be called son of God, as Christ, the Lord of peace: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5, 9). But the reconciliation is a holy act, a rebirth in Christ, either being about the birth out of new, from water and Spirit, at Baptize, or about maintaining this state of post baptismal during the entire life of the believer through acts of peace, as the acts of Christ.

The Holy Fathers and church writers in the old time, but also the new theologians from our time, have amply emphasized the relation between reconciliation and renewal, leaving us to understand the subjective salvation, thus of each one of us and of all and that can only be realized through reconciliation and renewal in Church, namely in the One Body of Christ, and of all angles as servants of Christ for our salvation. Therefore, it can be stated that the work of Church in the world cannot be considered fulfilled until the reconciliation and renewal will not be established in the entire world created on earth and cosmos. And as the world is indeed in need of reconciliation and renewal, now more than ever, it is natural to see the Christian Churches engaged in creating peace, in that convergence of which the world lacks each year more acute. Only so the Churches, settling, can bring the well-received sacrifice at Christ’s altar.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa, in his work entitled *The beauty of the Christian perfection*, stresses that “Christ is peace, that divine peace that not even the most wisdom spirit can suspect. The Christians must live that peace and never rise the hate that killed Christ. It is not proper – he says – that through anger and evil reminding of what was caused to us, to revive the destroyed hate (killed in text) by the Savior. Killing in us the hate, we can practice peace in our life that sincere peace, ideal from which the Lord made the Christian nobility crest. “For that the peace to rule in the world, it is proper that before appeasing our enemies outside, we must settle with the ones from inside our bodies and souls”.

The central objective of this paper is the careful analysis of Isaiah’s prophecies, using an adequate research methodology of it. Therefore, I present here the methods, techniques and used processes in the framework of this scientific step. Using as a reference point the scientific and systematic biblical approach, I will use the methods specific to the research of this kind:

a) The *exegetic-hermeneutic method* through which are interpreted biblically and dogmatic the revealed text of Isaiah’s work. The interpretation of the Old Testament passages is realized based on the works of the Holy Fathers, of Romanian theologians, but also on the works of the modern and contemporary theologians belonging to the Western space, in the horizon of which has entered the interest for the Book of Isaiah.

b) *The historical method*: through which was tried the contextualization of the events presented in the activity of Isaiah, events of first importance for the history of mankind, with relevance for the time since then, but with a strong echo for contemporaneity. The purpose of using this method in my work is observing the characteristics of the social-political context in which Isaiah activated. Thus, it can be shaped a historically complex frame of Jewish though and life, of humanity after all.

c) *The systematic method*, through which I aimed to emphasize the theology of prophecies from Isaiah.

As exegetical working instruments I used the following editions of the Holy Scripture: *The Bible or Holy Scripture*, printed under the guidance and with the care of His Beatitude Father Teoctist, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, with the approval of the Holy Synod, Publisher “Institutul Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodox Române”, Bucharest, 1989; *New Testament*, revised version, drafted and commented by Bartolomeu Anania, Bucharest, 1995; B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C.M. Martini & B.M. Metzger (Eds.), *The Greek*

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Last but not least, we mention the fact that the interpretation of some biblical old paragraphs implies a linguistic analysis of the key terms (*baptize, church, Christian*), which determined us to appeal lexicons, dictionaries and special encyclopedias: *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*, Barclay M. Newman, Jr., Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft United Bible Societies, Hendrickson Publishers, 2010; *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Frederick William Danker (Ed.), 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, University of Chicago Press, 2001; *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Ed.), Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 2005; *Dicționar Biblic*, J. D. Douglas (Ed.), translation by Liviu Pop, John Tipei, Societatea Misionară Română Editura „Cartea Creștină”, Oradea, 1995; *Dicționar Biblic*, Vol. I, translated from French by Constantin Moisa, Editura Stephanus, București, 1995; *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, David Noel Freedman (Ed.), William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Cambridge, 2000; Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Volume 6, Translator and Editor: Geoffrey W. Bromiley, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 2003; *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, Revised Edition*, Paul J. Achtemeier (Ed.), HarperSanFrancisco, New York, 1996; J. Lust, E. Eynikel & K. Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003; J. M. Harden, *Dictionary of the Vulgate New Testament*, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1921; *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol. 1, Colin Brown (Ed.), Regency, Grand Rapids, 1975

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