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BIBLICAL MOTIF OF TEARING OF A VESTURE
AS A SYMBOL OF DIVISION OF A COMMUNITY
IN THE LIGHT OF 1 KINGS 11:29–39 AND JOHN 19:23–24

Abstract. The presented article analyzes two texts, in which a motif of tearing of the garment which is used symbolically, occurs. In 1 Kings 11:29–39 the divided cloak of Jeroboam becomes a symbol for divided Davidic kingdom. It will be divided into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. According to theological interpretation the reason for this division is the sin of king. The Text of John 19:23–24 describes the scene of the division of Jesus's garment. The untorn tunic of Jesus symbolizes the unity of the Church. In the case of the scene presented in the Fourth Gospel, we have a double meaning of it. At first it indicates a variety, which exists in the Church, that reaches to the ends of the earth. Then it stresses the fact that the community of the Church, indeed variegated, is the one, undivided community. It is possible, because it origins "from above," it is not made by any human hand.

Summarised by Rev. Tomasz Siemieniec

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In many biblical texts we come across descriptions of events which have a profound symbolic meaning. There are e.g. 1 Kings 11:29–39 and John 19:23–24 among such descriptions. Both texts have a common theme – the motif of division of a vesture. In 1 Kings, the text is about the torn garment, whereas in the Fourth Gospel Jesus' untorn tunic has been mentioned. The context of both descriptions shows that one should attribute a symbolic significance to them. In the case of the former text this significance results from the interpretation given by Ahijah, the prophet of Shiloh. The latter text has a significance which doesn't suggest itself directly, but it becomes noticeable when we analyze the terminology which appears there.

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The aim of this study is to show the motif of tearing of a vesture as a symbol of division within the community. In the former instance, we tackle the division which came into being in the history during the reign of Rehoboam. In turn in the latter instance it's about the division which finally didn't succeed. During the course of our analyses we will try to answer the question why it didn't become so.

1. THE TORN CLOAK OF JEROBOAM AS A SYMBOL OF THE DIVISION OF ISRAEL (1 KINGS 11:29–39)

The first text in which the motif of torn vestures occurs is an account of the division of Davidic kingdom in 1 Kings 11:29–39. The Chapter 11 is a part of the larger unit which contains 1 Kings 11–14. In chapter 11, the divine plan concerning the division of the kingdom has been shown. In this plan, Ahijah, the prophet of Shiloh plays a significant role. He had a task to announce divine decrees. The choice of Jeroboam as Israel's king means the beginning of conflict between two kingdoms which had grown out of the division of the Davidic kingdom: Judah (the Southern Kingdom) and Israel (the Northern Kingdom). This confrontation has been shown in 1 Kings 12. The division in the political field resulted in the division in the religious sphere, which has been presented in 1 Kings 13. From 1 Kings 14 on we have a parallel history of both kingdoms. A narrative in chapter 14 presents this history during the time of reign of Jeroboam in Israel and Rehoboam in Judah.¹

Right in the chapter 11 we can discern two parts, which are connected with each other and indicate consecutive stages of the narrative. These are: 11:1–13 (a “theological” reason for division of the kingdom); 11:14–43 (an accomplishment of this announcement, which takes place by means of the historical events). Within the second part we can observe additionally smaller units which have been marked by individual protagonists of the discussed events.

These protagonists are: Hadad the Edomite (11:14–22), Rezon (11:23–25) and Jeroboam (11:26–39). The scene with the discussed motif occurs at the beginning of Jeroboam's story and embraces verses 11:29–31. Simon J. DeVries notices here an intervention of a deuteronomic historian. In his opinion the whole scene has signs of such intervention. In the description of

¹ Cf. James Richard LINVILLE, *Israel in the Book of Kings* (JSOT Supp 272; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 155.

the same scene we can distinguish the description of the symbolic act of tearing of the vesture (11:29b-30) and the interpretation of this act (v. 31).²

The symbolical act performed by the prophet Ahijah was preceded by the announcement of punishment addressed to Solomon (11:9–13). The punishment for king's unfaithfulness to the covenant obligations (which was expressed by idolatry) will be "rending" the kingdom out of his hand and handing it to "his servant." The Hebrew text of the Bible uses here the verb *qāra* ('tear, tear out, rend'), which will be used later in the description of the activity of Ahijah done by himself. Therefore, tearing the vesture will be related to rending the kingdom out of Solomon's hand. For David's sake an accomplishment of this punishment has been shifted to the time of reign of Solomon's son. For the same reason one tribe will remain in power of David's dynasty.³

The description of the same symbolical act starts with the mentioning of that one day Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem and met the prophet Ahijah. Perfunctory reading of this text can suggest that there was the prophet who was dressed in a new garment. This opinion is not shared by Mordechai Cogan, who notices that it would be grotesque when the prophet would act violently towards his own garment. Therefore, Cogan unambiguously states that in this case it is about Jeroboam's clothing.⁴ This question has been precisely examined by S. Min Chun who affirmed Cogan's proposal.⁵ He argues invoking the following arguments: a narrative analysis of 11:29 and a thorough examination of syntactic relationship of the verb *tāpaś* („grasp, catch”). Min Chun notes that if the pronoun *hū*’ („he”) in the closing part of the verse 29, i.e. in the clause which literally should be translated “and he was clad in a new garment” had been related to Ahijah, it would have been

² Cf. Simon J. DEVRIES, *1 Kings* (WBC 12; Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2003), 147. The problem of the redaction of 1 Kings 11:29–39 briefly presents: Tomasz TUŁODZIECKI, *Jeroboam – reformator religii Izraela* (RiSB 14; Warszawa: Vocatio, 2004), 26–29, 73–84.

³ Cf. LINVILLE, *Israel in the Book of Kings*, 158.

⁴ Mordechai COGAN, *1 Kings. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 10; New York: Yale University Press, 2001), 339: “Jeroboam was wearing the cloak. The wording of the succeeding clause, ‘took hold of, grabbed’ (*wayyitpoś*), solves the ambiguousness of this clause [...], because this action is inappropriate on one's own garment; rather, the action was performed on a garment worn by a second party (cf. Gen 39:12). Thus, Ahijah seized Jeroboam's cloak.”

⁵ S. Min Chun notes that a similar proposal was already made in 19th century by Heinrich Ewald—in his book: *The History of Israel*, vol. 3: *The Rise and Splendor of the Hebrew Monarchy* (London: Longman, Greens and Co. 1878², 304-305)—but his hypothesis has been rejected by most of scholars. Cf. S. MIN CHUN, “Whose Cloak did Ahijah Seize and Tear? A Note on 1 Kgs 11,29-30,” *Vetus Testamentum* 56 (2006): 269.

unnecessary to repeat his name in the beginning of the verse 30. On the other hand, if the pronoun referred to Jeroboam, the mentioning of Ahijah would be necessary, because in the verse 29, Jeroboam would be the main protagonist whereas from v. 30 it is Ahijah who grips the garment and tears it apart.⁶

Concerning the verb *tāpaś*, this scholar notes that it occurs 49 times in OT (in conjugation *qal*), wherefrom 10 times in connection with the pronoun *b^e*. In such cases this verb expresses an idea of action with some vigour, i.e. it denotes e.g. violent holding of something. Then the pronoun *b^e* may indicate a thing which belongs to someone, who is an object of an act of catching (so e.g. is in Gen 39:12, where Potiphar's wife grabbed the garment of Joseph's, literally translating: "she caught him by his garment"). When we consider this, it would be difficult to imagine that Ahijah violently caught "himself by his own garment." On the other hand, it seems reasonable to conclude, that the object of a violent act of the prophet was exactly Jeroboam himself.⁷ Thus, a symbolical act of the prophet begins with his catching of Jeroboam who went out of Jerusalem in his new garment. In the verses 11:29–30 we can observe a twofold use of the adjective "new" (*hādāšāh*). It points out an important role of it in the whole narrative. Maybe it symbolizes the new, undivided Israel, which had existed as one state for a short time (since the time when David was acknowledged by the northern tribes—cf. 2 Sam 5:1–5). This symbolism, associated that new garment with the Kingdom of Israel ruled by David's son – Solomon can be confirmed by the word-play that is between the Hebrew term denotes cloak (Hebr. *šalmāh*) and the name of Solomon (Hebr. *š'lomô*).⁸ Just this new cloak torn by Ahijah (*wajjiqrā'ehā*)⁹ into twelve pieces, wherefrom ten pieces is given by Ahijah to Jeroboam as the sign that ten tribes of Israel will be given to him. Ahijah's action expressed by the verb *qāra'* indicates another word-play which is related with Hebrew root *qr'*, that expresses an idea of tearing. Apart from the expression *wajjiqrā'ehā*, which points out the rip of the garment, the noun *q^erā'im* appears in the analyzed text, too. It denotes a piece of the torn robe (twice: in v. 30 and 31). From the same root—*qr'* another term—the participle *qorē'* has been derived (which appears in God's statement quoted by the prophet: *hinn^eni qorē'*—"I am tearing the kingdom from Solomon's hand"—v. 31).

⁶ Cf. MIN CHUN, "Whose Cloak," 271.

⁷ Ibidem, 271–72.

⁸ Cf. DEVRIES, *1 Kings* p. 151; R.L. COHN, "Literary Technique in the Jeroboam Narrative," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 98 (1985), No. 1: 27.

⁹ Por. COHN, "Literary Technique," 27.

Therefore, the similarities mentioned above show that a symbolic action described in the verse 30 has been explained in the verse 31. The very composition of these two verses which shows a concentric pattern points out what individual components mean. We can observe in this pattern a kind of parallelism based on occurrence of the same (or similar) terms.

- A. Ahijah took off the new cloak (*śalmāh*) he was wearing
- B. and tore it (*wajjiqrā‘ehā*—a verbal form derived from the root *qr‘*)
- C. into twelve strips (*q^erāīm*—a noun)
 - C’. saying to Jeroboam: ‘Take ten strips (*q^erāīm*—a noun) for yourself,
 - B’. for Yahweh, God of Israel, says this, “I am going to tear the kingdom” (a participle *qorē^a*—in the function of the verb, lit.: “Behold! I am tearing...”)
- A’. from Solomon's (*Š^elomô*) hand and I will give ten tribes to you.

This schedule indicates unambiguously a symbolic of the cloak. It denotes undivided Kingdom of Solomon.¹⁰ In consequence, the tearing apart of this cloak points out a division of this kingdom. Linville notices that in the explanatory word of the prophet two ideas have been contained. The former one is an idea of the tearing the Kingdom out of hand of Davidic dynasty, the latter one—the idea of internal division of this kingdom. The former idea reflects the announcement of tearing the Kingdom out of hand of David, which was foresaid in 1 Sam 15:27–28. The latter idea refers to the internal division of this kingdom, that will come to fruition as a result of Jeroboam’s schism (which will be caused by building two sanctuaries by Jeroboam – in opposition to the sanctuary in Jerusalem). We can ask why the division is made into 12 pieces, not into 2? Maybe it is about emphasizing a kind of some independence in existence of individual tribes. Thus the importance of the announced schism will be underlined, as the number of twelve links to the family of Jacob. Jeroboam’s schism will split this family.¹¹ Another proposal refers to the twelve pieces of the torn cloak as twelve districts of which was composed Israel in the time of Solomon, but it seems less convincing.¹²

In the whole narrative the role of God is worth underlying. The division takes place on His own initiative. It is apparent in the account, when the

¹⁰ Cf. Helga WEIPPERT, “Die Ätiologie des Nordreiches und seines Königshauses (I Reg 11, 29-40),” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 95 (1983), No. 3: 349.

¹¹ Cf. LINVILLE, *Israel in the Book of Kings*, 158: “Not only will the kingdom be ‘torn’ from David, but it will be ‘torn apart’.”

¹² Cf. Mark LEUCHTER, “Jeroboam the Ephratite,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125 (2006): 53.

main dynamism which initiates trend of events is His word, whereas the human activity makes only the background for accomplishment of divine decisions (cf. two slight mentions about “human background” of happened events in 11:26 and 28). On the one hand, this divine acting will be referred to the supporting of Jeroboam in his building of kingdom (which is understood as a divine reaction to the sin of Solomon), on the other hand, to the divine care over Solomon’s rule over one tribe,¹³ which will be understood as a sign of faithfulness of God to the promises given to David. The sin of Solomon was a great one, but—as notices the author of 1 Kings—not so great to cancel divine promises. It is noteworthy that Jeroboam alone is called to faithfulness to God. It will let him become quasi a new David (cf. 11:28–39), which will be assisted by the divine blessing.¹⁴ It must be stressed too what has launched a destructive force striking the Kingdom of Solomon is the sin of the king. If he had not committed this sin, the division wouldn’t have come to fruition.

2. THE UNTORN TUNIC OF JESUS AS A SYMBOL OF UNITY OF THE CHURCH (JOHN 19:23–24)

The other text which is to be examined is Johannine account of the division of the Jesus’ garment during his passion (John 19:23–24). As far as symbolism in the text analyzed above is quite obvious, inasmuch the meaning of the Johannine text will be apparent when we will make a detailed literary analysis which takes into account a peculiar terminology of the Fourth Gospel.

References to the division of Jesus’ garment were made by all evangelists (Mark 15:24b; Matt 27:35b; Luke 23:34b; John 19:23–24). In Mark, Matthew and Luke the references are very brief. They have only statement that Jesus’ garments have been divided by means of casting lots. In all synoptic Gospels his clothing (Gr. *ta himatia*) have not specifically described. The Fourth Gospel makes it in a different way. John distinguishes the clothing (Gr. *ta himatia*) and undergarment—tunic (Gr. *ho hitōn*). Moreover, this evangelist mentions a discussion which took place among soldiers. John quotes also the

¹³ It is an open question why only one tribe is mentioned in 11:32, which will remain in the hand of David. Maybe the author had in his mind only the tribe of Judah, because from the historical point of view the tribe of Benjamin had become assimilated into the tribe of Judah. Only later the Septuagint making an unification of the text will be mention two tribes.

¹⁴ Cf. COHN, “Literary Technique,” 27.

Greek text of Ps 22,19 (LXX) referring these words to the division of clothing. Raymond Brown analyzing the vocabulary which occurs in descriptions of this scene by various Evangelists makes an interesting observation that three Synoptics who do not indicate any relationship with Ps 22 making description of this scene, use the vocabulary derived from the Greek version of this Psalm. Instead John, which makes a direct reference to Ps 22, describing this scene uses completely different terminology. Such change in terminology was most likely intentional and it aimed to enhance the theological significance of the whole scene.¹⁵

There is an agreement among scholars concerning a rich theological significance of this scene. However the details of this theology are being discussed. The opinions of scholars are going in two directions. The representatives of the former view understand the tunic “woven from neck to hem” as a symbol of Jesus’ priesthood. This symbolism bases on the text of Josephus Flavius, who in *Antiquitates Judaicae* III,7,4 described the garment of the High Priest woven as one piece of cloth. Therefore, Jesus’ garment, which has been made in the same way, would denote his priestly dignity. However, de la Potterie observes that such interpretation is not proper because it has not an exegetical basement. Thereby the latter exegetical view must be taken seriously into consideration. According to this view, the untorn Jesus’ tunic should be understood as a symbol of unity of the Church.

In the Greek text of John 19:23–24 one should notice some expressions, which have in John an important theological significance. At first, it have been underlined that Jesus’ tunic was a one-piece one, woven from neck to hem. In order to express it the author used the expression *ēn de ho chitōn arafos, ek tōn anōthen hyphantos di’holou*. The adverb *anōthen* occurs in John a few times, always in theologically important texts. E.g. John uses it when he says about necessity to born anew (lit. “to born above” — John 3:3.7.31) in discussion with Nicodemus. The same is in the case of discussion with Pilate, when Jesus says about power given from above (John 19:11).¹⁶

¹⁵ Cf. Raymond E. BROWN, *The Death of Messiah. From Gethsemane to the Grave*, vol. 2 (The Anchor Bible Reference Library; New York–London–Toronto: Doubleday, 1998), 953–54.

¹⁶ Cf. Alan CULPEPPER, “The Theology of the Johannine passion narrative: John 19,16b-30,” *Neotestamentica* 31 (1997), No. 1: 27. He notes: “Commentators have noted the *double entendre* here: Pilate’s authority was given to him by the Roman emperor, but in a further sense he can send Jesus to his death only because it is given to him by God to do so. The further twist here is that Jesus and the Father are one (10,30), and Jesus lays down his life in John (10,18). Pilate could not have sentenced Jesus to die had not Jesus in his obedience to the Father already resolved to lay down his life for ‘his own’.”

Thus the expression *ek tōn anōthen* apart from merely technical meaning which indicates the manner in which Jesus' tunic was made, points out some spiritual reality: the origin of what it means "from above" i.e. from God. But what does it denote? To answer this question, scholars call back the text 1 Kings 11:29–39 analyzed above and argue that both texts are to be juxtaposed. Like in 1 Kings the coat of Jeroboam symbolized the undivided kingdom ruled by the Davidic dynasty, so in John 19 it is about the community in which Jesus is a leader. This community is the Church.¹⁷

It has been confirmed by the use of the verb *schidzō* in order to express the act of tearing (*mē schisōmen auton*—"let's not tear it"). This verb as well as the noun *schisma* derived from it occur over a dozen times in the Old Testament (in its Greek version). In general they denote a tearing, splitting or division of something (e.g. wood: Gen 22:3; 1 Sam 6:14; Eccl 10:9), division of the sea (Exod 14:21), splitting of the mount or rock (Zech 14:4; Isa 48:21), division among the group of people (1 Macc 6:45). Sometimes it means a tearing of vesture (e.g. Isa 36:22; 37:1). However, in the Fourth Gospel these terms obtain a more theological features. The noun *schisma* occurs three times, always with regard to division among community which has been caused by Jesus' teaching activity (John 7:43; 9:16; 10:19).¹⁸ In turn the verb *schidzō*, apart from the text being analyzed, appear in 21:11 in story of marvelous catching of fish, where was mentioned that the net had not broken.¹⁹ The use of these terms in the Fourth Gospel in theological meaning let us conclude that in the examined text we deal with the same situation.²⁰

Such symbolism of Jesus's untorn tunic is in accordance with the theological thought of the Fourth Gospel, where the idea of the unity is one of the most important themes. Jesus alone says about himself that the aim of His mission is making one fold which will belong to the one shepherd (10:16). His exaltation intended drawing all people to Him (12:32) In John 11:52 the Evangelist giving a theological interpretation of Jesus' death writes that Jesus was to die to gather "into one" the scattered children of

¹⁷ Cf. Ignace DE LA POTTERIE, *Męka Jezusa Chrystusa* (Kraków: WAM, 2006), 120; BROWN, *The Death of Messiah*, 957.

¹⁸ More on this subject see: Tomasz SIEMIENIEC, "Division (schisma) as a Reaction to Self-Manifestation of Jesus' Person in the Light of John 7:3," *Studia Oecumenica* 13 (2013), 139–47.

¹⁹ In opinion of many scholars the unbroken net in this text symbolizes the community of the Church. Cf. Rudolf SCHNACKENBURG, *Das Johannesevangelium 13–1* (HThKNT Sonderausgabe IV/3; Freiburg–Basel–Wien: Herder, 2001), 426–27.

²⁰ Cf. DE LA POTTERIE, *Męka Jezusa Chrystusa*, 119–120.

God. Finally, the idea of the unity is one of the main themes of the great intercessory prayer of Jesus (17:11.21.22.23).²¹

At the end, *one* question remains to answer. How to relate two matters: on the one hand, the fact that Jesus' clothing have been divided (what the soldiers have done), and the fact of the untorn tunic on the other hand. There is a kind of disagreement here. How is it to be explained? Maybe a key to understanding it is in the verb *diameridzō* ("divide") and in the noun *meros* ("part"). This verb occurs here in a quotation derived from Ps 22:19 (in LXX – Ps 21:19) which says about division of the clothing. In the Septuagint the verb *diameridzō* often refers to the division among a certain community. E.g. in Gen 10:25 it denotes the division among the mankind, in Gen 49:7 the dispersion of the Tribes of Simeon and Levi, in Deut 32:8 a partition of various nations. In Isa 34:17 and Ezek 47:21 a measurement of the land. Thus the text John 19:23–24 can stress two dimensions of the community gathered by Jesus. On the one hand, this community is a non-divided one like his tunic was untorn. On the other hand, this community is not homogenous like the people of Israel were not homogeneous, because it consisted of twelve tribes which had a great autonomy.

3. A PATRISTIC EXEGESIS

The symbolical meaning of the untorn tunic of Jesus has been noticed by some Fathers of the Church. Among well-known texts in which this topic was brought up is *De Unitate Ecclesiae* by Cyprian of Carthage, who interpreted John 19:30 in the context 1 Kings 19:29-39 referring both texts to the idea of unity of the church: "This sacrament of unity, this bond of concord inseparably connected is shown, when in the Gospel the tunic of the Lord Jesus Christ is not at all divided and is not torn, but by those who cast lots for the garment of Christ, who rather might have put on Christ garment is received, and an undamaged and undivided tunic is possessed [...] He bore the unity that came down from the upper part, that is, that came down from heaven and the Father, which could not all be torn by him who received and possessed it, but he obtained it whole once for all and a firmness inseparably solid. The one who tears and divides the Church of Christ cannot possess the garment of Christ. Then on the other hand when at the death of Solomon his kingdom and people were torn asunder, Ahias the prophet met King Jero-

²¹ Cf. CULPEPPER, "The Theology," 27.

boam in the field and tore his garment into twelve pieces [...] When the twelve tribes of Israel were torn asunder, the prophet Ahias rent his garment. But because the people of Christ cannot be torn asunder, His tunic woven and united throughout was not divided by those who possessed it. Undivided, joined, connected, it shows the coherent concord of us who have put on Christ. By the sacrament and sign of His garment, He has declared the unity of the Church.”²² Similarly the symbolic of the tunic is explained by St. Augustine who in his interpretation paid attention to the motif of division of Jesus’ over-clothes: “The four-parted clothing of the Lord Jesus Christ represented his four-parted Church, spread throughout the world [...] But that tunic for which lots were cast signifies the unity of all the parts which are held together by the bond of love.”²³ It is obvious that St. Augustine sees in this scene two dimensions of this act. On the one hand, the Church consists of various parts, what is pointed out by the divided over-cloak, and on the other hand, it is a unity — what the untorn tunic symbolizes.

4. CONCLUSION

Both biblical scenes show us two sides of the same reality. The scene in which the divided cloak of Jeroboam has been shown, point out the division of Israel, which would take place after Solomon’s death. In the case of the scene derived from the Fourth Gospel we deal with its double message. At first it indicates a variety, which exists in the Church, that reaches to the ends of the earth. Then it focuses on the fact that the community of the Church, indeed variegated, is the one, undivided community. It is possible, because it originates „from above”, it is not made by any human hand.

Referring to the question raised at the beginning about the reason why the former community (the Kingdom of Israel) split up, and the latter one (the Church of Jesus) remained non-divided, we have to link to 1 Kings where the theological reasons for division of the State of David and Solomon has been given. These reasons have been unambiguously described as a sin of the ruler (both David and Solomon). Just this sin became a primary cause of

²² Cf. St. CYPRIAN, *The Unity of the Church*, 7, in: SAINT CYPRIAN, *Treatises* trans. and ed. R.J. Deferrari (The Fathers of the Church. A New Translation 36; New York: Catholic University of America Press, 1958), 101.

²³ Cf. St. AUGUSTINE, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, 118, in: St. AUGUSTINE. *Tractates on the Gospel of John 112-124*, trans. and ed. J.W. Rettig (The Fathers of the Church. A New Translation 78; Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 41–42.

the aroused division. In the case of the Church we deal with a contrary situation. Christ, who “did nothing wrong” leads it. Therefore, he doesn’t launch a destructive action, which results in division. The community over which is God cannot disintegrate, because God is not subject to sin. The kingdom of David and Solomon was able to split up, because it was the only earthly kingdom. The community of Jesus doesn’t split up, because its origin is not earthly but a heavenly one – it origins “from above” (Gr. *anōthen*). This unity of Jesus’s community doesn’t mean that it is homogenous. It comprises all people (who believe in Christ) at any time and at any place.

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BIBLIJNY MOTYW ROZDARCIA SZATY JAKO SYMBOL PODZIAŁU WSPÓLNOTY
W ŚWIETLE 1 KRL 11,29-39 I J 19,23-24

Streszczenie

Prezentowany artykuł analizuje dwa teksty, w których pojawia się motyw rozdarcia szaty użyty jako symbol. W tekście 1 Krl 11,29-39 podzielony płaszcz Jeroboama staje się symbolem rozbitego królestwa Dawidowego. Powstaną z niego dwa królestwa: Izrael i Juda. Według teologicznej interpretacji przyczyną tego podziału jest grzech króla. Tekst J 19,23-24 opisuje scenę podziału szat Jezusa. Niepodzielona tunika Jezusa symbolizuje jedność Kościoła. W przypadku sceny ukazanej w Czwartej Ewangelii mamy do czynienia z jej podwójnym przesłaniem. Najpierw wskazuje ona na różnorodność, jaka istnieje w Kościele, który sięga po krańce ziemi. Następnie podkreśla fakt, że wspólnota Kościoła, mimo że zróżnicowana, jest jedną, niepodzielną wspólnotą, a to dlatego, że pochodzi ona „z góry”, nie jest uczyniona ręką ludzką.

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Słowa kluczowe: jedność, 1 Księga Królewska, tunika Jezusa, Ewangelia według św. Jana, symbolika biblijna.