

BIBLE IN THE CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX TRADITION



Festschrift *in* Honor  
of Professor Paul  
Nadim Tarazi

VOLUME 1

*Studies in the Old Testament*



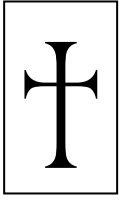
*Edited by*  
Nicolae Roddy

The *Festschrift in Honor of Professor Paul Nadim Tarazi* includes a collection of articles discussing the latest scholarly findings in the field of the Old Testament studies. Scholars from around the world conducting research in the Old Testament text, theology, canon, interpretation, and criticism have contributed their recent findings in the fields of their research and teaching to this volume.



**Nicolae Roddy** is Associate Professor of Theology at Creighton University. For the past sixteen years, Dr. Roddy has served as co-director and area supervisor for the Bethsaida Excavations Project, a significant archaeological site located at the foot of the Golan Heights near the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. He also co-directs the Virtual World Project, a web-based virtual reality resource dedicated to Syro-Palestinian archaeology. In addition, Dr. Roddy is Faculty Associate for the Goren-Goldstein Center for Judaic Studies at the Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest, Romania. He is the author of *The Romanian Version of the Testament of Abraham: Text, Translation, and Cultural Context* (2001) as well as numerous book chapters and journal articles in biblical studies and archaeology.

Festschrift *in* Honor of  
Professor Paul Nadim Tarazi



# BIBLE IN THE CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX TRADITION

Vahan S. Hovhannessian  
*General Editor*

Vol. 3



PETER LANG

New York • Washington, D.C./Baltimore • Bern  
Frankfurt • Berlin • Brussels • Vienna • Oxford

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# Contents

Foreword .....	vii
Preface .....	ix
Acknowledgments .....	xi
V. Rev. Fr. Paul Nadim Tarazi: Brief Biography and Bibliography.....	xiii
Abbreviations .....	xix
Wisdom is the Preservation of Life, <i>Michael C. Legaspi</i> .....	1
Beyond Anti-History: Genesis 1 as <i>Mašal</i> , <i>Philippe Guillaume</i> .....	25
Hearing Psalm 51: Masoretic Hebrew vs. LXX Greek, <i>Rev. Fr. L. Theophan Whitfield</i> .....	37
Le Psaume 136, Une Eucharistie Pour le Pain, <i>André Wénin</i> .....	59
Searching for Divine Wisdom: Proverbs 8:22–31 in Its Interpretive Context, <i>Alexandru Mihăilă</i> .....	73
I'm Not There: Self-Negation as Authentication in the Prophetic Tradition, <i>Nicolae Roddy</i> .....	91
Rereading Isaiah 40–55 as “Project Launcher” for the Books of the Law and the Prophets, <i>Iskandar Abou-Chaar</i> .....	101
The Function of Hyperbole in Ezekiel 1, <i>Rev. Fr. Fouad Saba</i> .....	129
Narrator, Audience, and the Sign-Acts of Ezekiel 3–5, <i>Richard Benton</i> .....	135
Notes.....	141
Index.....	165





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## Foreword

This three-volume compendium of scholarly papers bears witness to an unforgettable weekend dedicated to an incredible teacher, scholar, mentor, and friend—as well as father, brother, uncle, etc.—whose impact on Orthodox biblical studies cannot be overstated. On October 23, 2010, scholars and well-wishers from all over the globe gathered together in Little Falls, New Jersey, to celebrate the forty-year milestone in the career of the Very Rev. Fr. Paul Nadim Tarazi. Graciously hosted by the Very Rev. Fr. Elias Bitar and the faithful parishioners of St. George Antiochian Church, under the auspices of His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America, the Festschrift reflect the diversity-in-unity of the Orthodox world—as well as the scope of Fr. Paul’s influence—as papers and presentations from his students and colleagues flowed from several regions of the U.S. and Canada, and also Belgium, Finland, France, Greece, Lebanon, Palestine, Romania, Serbia, and the United Kingdom.

The papers contained in the present volume, the first of three, address topics pertaining to the Old Testament. Papers are arranged with an eye toward the canon, with broader studies serving as introductions to more specific topics. Michael Legaspi’s discourse on Wisdom sets the tone for studies dealing specifically with Genesis (rightly so!), the Psalms, and Proverbs; while my own general paper on the prophetic tradition introduces works that focus on specific prophetic books or passages. It is hoped that the reader not only will appreciate the logic of this arrangement, but also catch a glimpse of the unified, inter-textual cohesiveness that characterizes the Old Testament canon, a significant aspect of the Bible, as Fr. Paul and his students continue to demonstrate.

Non-academic readers unfamiliar with the concept of the Festschrift need not shy away from the papers contained herein. A “Festschrift,” originally a German term meaning something along the lines of a “celebratory writing,” is customarily both an academic conference and a social event convened in honor of an eminent scholar, usually organized by his or her former graduate students who have gone on to become colleagues in the field. So while the papers in this volume are indeed scholarly, many of them accord personal tribute to

the man who inspired them and, in this case, all bear the mark of Fr. Paul's career mission: illuminating Scripture for the purpose of "equipping the saints for the for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:12). The educated lay reader will thus find in this volume friendly conversation partners bound together in love for the God of divinely-inspired Scripture (2 Tim 3:16) and for the man who ignited that love within our hearts.

*Nicolae Roddy*

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## Preface

The Holy Bible, biblical text, exegesis and understanding the biblical message in its original context, without the influence of medieval and later doctrinal and theological precipitations, truly outline the scholarly career of the Very Reverend Dr. Paul Nadim Tarazi, a leading Orthodox theologian in the field of biblical study. The professor of Old Testament at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Professor Tarazi has also lectured extensively in universities and seminaries around the world. He is the author of numerous books and articles in the field of biblical theology and exegesis. Professor Tarazi is the founder of the "Orthodox Center for the Advancement of Biblical Studies" (OCABS) and its online Journal (JOCABS). He is also the founding pillar of the unit "Bible in the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Traditions" of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL).

His forty years of teaching career around the world and his theological research in the field of biblical studies has produced generations of biblical scholars with a unique and critical approach to biblical exegesis and interpretation. It was, therefore, only befitting that leading international scholars who have been students or colleagues of Professor Tarazi come together in *Festschrift* to celebrate the 40th anniversary of his teaching career by offering a critical appreciation of his contribution to biblical studies, and by exploring the continuing scholarly discussion of issues related to the Biblical text, exegesis and theology.

A daylong celebration took place on Saturday October 23, 2010, under the auspices of His Eminence Archbishop Philip, Metropolitan of the Antiochian Orthodox Church of North America. The *Festschrift* convened at the conference hall of St. George Antiochian Church in Little Falls, New Jersey, was scheduled 9am-4pm, with the participation of over 30 international scholars.

This book is the first of three volumes covering the proceedings of the *Festschrift*. It includes the papers exploring the latest scholarly debate in the fields of Old Testament Studies. Volume two will include the articles dealing with the New Testament, and volume three will publish the papers discussing biblical theology in general.

Heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Nicolae Roddy, Ph.D., Associate Professor of the Hebrew Bible/Older Testament, Theology Department, Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, for editing the articles of this volume. Special thanks and appreciation to Reverend Fr. Marc Boulos, Pastor of St. Elizabeth Orthodox Mission, in Eagan, Minnesota, for the layout and finalization of this volume.

Finally, congratulations to Professor Tarazi—a man “approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15). May the Lord grant him many years of fruitful service and witnessing in the vineyard of the Lord.

*Bishop Vahan S. Hovhannessian, Ph.D.*  
*Series Editor*

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Nouhad and Farida Tarazi

Kamal Tarazi

Paola Tarazi

Reem Tarazi and Family



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## V. Rev. Fr. Paul Nadim Tarazi: Brief Biography and Bibliography

Fr. Paul Tarazi has been teaching scripture for well over forty years. His teaching ministry includes full-time professorship at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, as well as adjunct positions at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, MA, and the St. John of Damascus Institute of Theology in Balamand, Lebanon. His courses cover the full range of scriptural studies in Old and New Testaments, Biblical Hebrew and Greek, Academic Arabic, and Homiletics. He has been a guest lecturer at numerous universities and institutions in the United States and Canada, as well as Australia, Chile, Estonia, Finland, Israel, Palestine, Romania, and Serbia, and has represented the Antiochian Orthodox Church at various ecumenical gatherings.

A prolific writer, Fr. Paul has authored (as of this writing) seventeen books, including detailed commentaries on Galatians and 1 Thessalonians, a seven-volume Introduction to the Old and New Testaments, and six commentaries published in *The Chrysostom Bible: A Commentary Series for Teaching and Preaching*. His book, *Land and Covenant*, commissioned by His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP, is a comprehensive scriptural analysis of the issues pertaining to what is popularly known as the Holy Land and to God's promise regarding it. Many readers of this book consider it to be a thorough introduction to the totality of Scripture in both Old and New Testaments. Fr. Paul has also contributed numerous articles in books and academic journals. Ever in highest demand as a speaker, both nationally and internationally, Fr. Paul is known for his dynamic style and his ability to engage an audience's interest while explaining complex matters of scriptural interpretation.

Fr. Paul has served as theological and editorial consultant for the General Assembly of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. He currently serves as editor-in-chief of JOCABS, a journal of the Orthodox Center for the Advancement of Biblical Studies (OCABS). A group of Fr. Paul's former theological students founded OCABS in 1999 to promote the awareness of the centrality of the Gospel in the Christian life, to provide

resources for those who teach and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the parish level, to conduct seminars in the area of advanced biblical studies, and to develop a foundation to provide material support for those pursuing advanced degrees and special research and publishing projects. Fr. Paul's work with OCABS includes audio commentaries on all the books of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Fr Paul serves on the steering committee of the "Bible in the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Traditions" unit of the Society of Biblical Literature, which was established in 2007 by an international group of scholars, all of which are his former students.

Born in Jaffa, Palestine, Paul Nadim Tarazi moved to Cairo, Egypt and then to Beirut, Lebanon, where he studied at the Christian Brothers French School prior to attending the Jesuit University School of Medicine, in Beirut. He then pursued theological studies at the Orthodox Theological Institute in Bucharest, Romania where he received his Th.D. degree in New Testament. Ordained to the holy priesthood in 1976, Fr. Paul has shepherded parishes in Connecticut and New York and is currently assistant priest at the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in Danbury, Connecticut.

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