

Abstract

In this thesis, the author formulates the thesis that the Old Testament presupposes self-defense of the individual and the group. This assumption is tested against the paradigmatic approach of Christopher Wright. The Old Testament is not a dogmatic handbook, so the fundamentalist attempt to abstract general principles that are forever valid must be avoided. Rather, each of the stories must be approached from a narrative perspective as an original.

In the story of Abram, we are made aware of the uniqueness of the situation of the kidnapping of one's neighbor. Defending and saving the life of a relative would not have been possible without the courage and faith of the confessional figure, and it is questionable whether he can be a model of behavior for us. In the story of Moses, we realize the consequence of the merciful action of a confessional figure who puts his life on the line to save a fellow tribesman. He pays a high price. But in the story of the whole, this moment is defining for the next action of the one who pulls out of death and slavery. In the paradigmatic story of the nighttime burglar, we formulate the principles of protecting the household and its inhabitants from the burglar. This story is an example of individual self-defense where it is possible to protect oneself. Other examples, Esther and Nehemiah, in contrast, illustrate the collective self-defense of a nation.

One must be aware of one's own starting points and the glasses I use when reading. The author provides the reader with a summary and evaluation of the basic ethical theories in self-defense – pacifism, just war, selectivism, ethical hierarchism, and finally situational wisdom ethics. It applies these approaches paradigmatically to the Old Testament stories and tests whether they are general principles or paradigms of the Old Testament stories. The author attempts an ethical-theological perspective from several different aspects - narrative, dogmatic, cultural - and formulates questions for further research.