

ABSTRACT

In the **Introduction** (pgs.7-8) the following aims of the work are formulated:

- to inform about the process of the change inside Judaism, especially the changing interpretation of woman and female element in the essential document of Judaism – Tanach,
- to refer to involving this change into the wider process of the female element transformation in the universal Conscience and consequently in the science (feminist theology, Bible Studies) and real everyday life of contemporary people,
- and to contribute to that change at the same time.

Part I. Methodology (pgs. 9-28) briefly deals with the feministic methodology, i.e. approach of feminist scientists, biblists, historians, literary theorists to the text of the Hebrew Bible (Tanach), their conclusions, premises and criticism. Rabbinical methodology is not dealt here, because this has been done in the diploma work. We are dealing with the definition of the term *patriarchy* as it will be often used in this thesis. The chapter **The Jewish Feminism** (pgs. 20-24) characterizes different attitude seeking the change of Judaism, its doctrine and religious law, based on the example of two important Jewish feminist scientists, Judith Plaskow and Blu Greenberg. **The Part I** ends with formulating our own *research views* (Ann Belford Ulanov's term) and giving several technical notes. **Part II. The Biblical Characters And Stories Interpretation** (pgs. 29-268) is the main part of the work. In twenty-one chapters we successively acquaint with the female Biblical characters and follow their fate interpretation in the traditional rabbinical comments (midrash *Bereshit Rabba*, rabbi Shlomo Yizhak – i.e. 11th/12th century France, a medieval midrash compilation *Ceena u-reena* from rabbi Yizhak Ashkenazy, a modern comments compilation published by the Brooklyn orthodox Jews in the *Mesorah Publications* publishing house) and in the modern feministic comments coming from authors of different religious and spiritual background (Judaism, Christianity, Goddess spirituality, over-denominational academic approach). This comparison aims to catch the change which appears, when women as interpreters enter the process of interpreting the standard-making religious texts which reflex the patriarchal social reality (which the religions of Judaism and Christianity did not enable them for two thousand years). The topics of the chapters are the following Biblical characters and books: Adam and Lilith, Adam and Eve, Matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Lea, Dina, Tamar – Judah's daughter-in-law, Moses' women: midwives, mother, sister and Egyptian princess, Cipora, Miriam, Kozbi, Selofchad's daughters, Rachab, Deborah and Jael, Jiftah's daughter, Chana, David's wives: Abigail, Michal and Bathsheva, Tamar – David's daughter, Ruth, Esther, Song of Songs, Proverbs, the Prophets. **Part III Female Divinity in the Bible and Today** (pgs. 269-293) describes strengthening movement of the female Goddess rebirth, as it displays (not only) in the feminist theology and the Bible Studies, esp. under the influence of archaeology, ethnology, mythology and other scientific branches. More and more biblists point out the biblical reports about worshipping the Ashera goddess as a companion of the god JHWH, about worshipping the Queen of Heaven or Ashtoret, reports about women's equal involving in religious life. There are historical theories, religious, cultural and social changes which notice the emphasis movement from female to male divinity and its impact on everyday life and social position of women. Many feminist critics warn about the fact, that women's life experience (menstruation, pregnancy, delivery, nursing, specific enjoyment of sexuality) make her a being strongly rooted in her corporality. And if this corporality is devaluated and regarded as negative, it breaks the female spiritual conscience and decreases the self-evaluation, self-perception and self-understanding of women. Nowadays, the female principle of Divinity is being reborn, the women's wounds caused by patriarchy are being healed and the attitude to male and female values is changing. In Judaism, this effort results in highlighting the kabbalistic conception of Shekhina, female part of God, and incorporating this conception into current liturgy and newly-emerging rituals.