

**UNIVERSITATEA „BABEȘ-BOLYAI” CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTATEA DE TEOLOGIE ORTODOXĂ
ȘCOALA DOCTORALĂ „ISIDOR TODORAN”**

**PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN THE SAPIENTIAL
WRITINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

– PhD THESIS –

ABSTRACT

**COORDONATOR ȘTIINȚIFIC:
Pr. Prof. Univ. Dr. IOAN CHIRILĂ**

**DOCTORAND:
Pr. FICIOR CĂLIN FELICIAN**

**CLUJ-NAPOCA
2017**

CONTENT

CONTENT	2
ABBREVIATIONS	3
INTRODUCTION	4
PRELIMINARIES	13
1. Current state of research	13
1.1. Specialized literature in Romanian	13
1.2. Specialized literature in foreign languages	17
2. Terminological clarifications	22
3. Premises of the sapiential ethics	34
3.1. Medical ethic premises	39
3.2. Judicial ethic premises	48
3.3. Economic ethic premises	56
4. Professional categories in the sapiential books.....	61
1. Medical science.....	61
2. Justice – Equity	63
3. Economy	64
I. MARKS OF THE PROFESSIONAL ETHICS – EXEGETICAL APPROACH.....	67
1.1. Medicine in the sapiential books.....	67
1.1.1. Medical ethics	67
1.1.2. Illness as a form of divine pedagogy	69
1.1.3. The doctor’s profile and his role in the economy of healing	74
1.1.4. Drugs and their importance in the healing of the ill	79
1.1.5. Encouraging the patient – supporting the patient	85
1.1.6. Preventive indications and advice for the ill.....	88
1.1.7. Fulfilling the divine commandments in the prevention of illnesses	91
1.1.8. The role of prayer in healing.....	93
1.1.9. Hope and the prayer of the doctor – the healing wisdom	102
1.1.10. The healing action of the word - logotherapy	106
1.1.11. The sanogenetic effect of optimism	110
1.2. The judicial in the sapiential books	114
1.2.1. Justice in the sapiential books.....	114
1.2.2. Justice, fruit of perseverance in Wisdom.....	125
1.2.3. Justice as blessing and injustice as curse	126

1.2.4. The force and blessings of justice	129
1.2.5. Truth, the essence of the judicial act.....	131
1.2.6. The blessing of the Truth and the curse of the lie.....	134
1.2.7. The dignity of Judge – a glimmer of the divine justice	139
1.2.8. Preparation of the judges – an ethical component	142
1.2.9. Impartiality and corruption	145
1.2.10. The untruthful witness	149
1.2.11. The divine providence as ethic manifestation in the judicial act.....	151
1.3. Economy in the sapiential writings.....	153
1.3.1. Ethics in gaining wealth.....	153
1.3.2. Wealth – the gift of God	163
1.3.3. Incipient forms of banking ethics: loans - endorser.....	167
1.3.4. Planning of business	173
1.3.5. Correctness and competitiveness in business.....	179
1.3.6. Prudence in business	183
1.3.7. Negotiation of business.....	187
1.3.8. The role of chiefs in the economic activity.....	191
II. THE RELEVANCE OF THE SAPIENTIAL PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR THE CONTEMPORARY MAN	197
3.1. Medical wisdom and ethics.....	197
3.2. Ethics of the judicial act.....	216
3.3. Economic wisdom and ethics.....	227
CONCLUSIONS.....	235
BIBLIOGRAPHY	243

Key words: ethics, medicine, law, economy, exegesis, sapiential, ethic marks, Holy Fathers, paradigms

The sapiential literature of the Old Testament is acknowledged to have an impact on the moral, intellectual and spiritual formation of man. In the Holy Scripture wisdom is that moral and practical quality that guides and consolidates the character of the individual, in order to make decisions that are at the same time right and beneficial. The incursion in the literature of wisdom will introduce us into a series of aspects of the human life that are relevant for the life of each individual and also with respect to the relationships with other individuals. The sapiential literature is part of this divine will to save the fallen humankind, it is God's will to renew the covenants with the crown of the creation, to renew the sacred agreements and to restore the state of grace that was lost.

In the absence of a thematic structure of the sapiential writings, we decided for the chosen themes in the present thesis, to localize each proverb in the sapiential books that is connected to the respective theme, and to comment it corroborating the verses for a clarification of the chosen subject. Each proverb offers a teaching with an actual-new perspective, full of wisdom, as well as the best manner to look with a fresh eye everything that surrounds us, including the interpersonal relationships, related to several scientific fields, such as medicine, economy and law. "The discursive manner of the didactical-poetical books is not that of an explicative theological treatise, in which theology is presented axiomatically, but that of a pedagogical-lyrical discourse in which the truth is expressed rather as a non-recurring apothem" (Ioan Chirila).

The corpus of the sapiential writings transmits to the present and future generations, a teaching that benefits of a millenary experience. This needs to be put into practice, with the promise to open new perspective in the problems that concern us. Achieving wisdom expressed in the short proverbs of the Old Testament is destined to the ones who believe in God or to those who discover God, for their guidance on the daily path of life. Because of the complex range of themes we approached, these teachings once acquired and put into practice, offer a broad and complex perspective to act and consequently to have appreciable results in any situation, with a great chance of absolute success.

This thesis does not want to be a scientific approach that exhausts the chosen subject, but a starting point in studying the ethics of the sapiential writings. Through this thesis we wish to offer common point, convergent points between the thinking impregnated by the sacred thrill of the Jewish people and the nowadays manner of approach of the chosen professions, offering a new and in the same time old nuance in the field of ethics. We will extract from the elevated thinking of the Jewish people, recorded by the Sapiential Books of the Holy Scripture the relevant verses that have an ethical theme and in the commentaries to the text we will emphasize the superiority and benefits of the theocentric ethics of the Jewish people.

The antithetical formulations of the chosen verses, where the good meets with the evil, justice meets injustice, life meets death, give us the right to consider the teaching of the sapiential writings and ethical work because of its active role of influencing life and the social relationships between men. The accent put on the moral values and the human condition, from the perspective of the divine revelation, mentioned in the Holy Scripture, makes ethics even more valuable.

Maybe the greatest weakness of history was the proposal of the humanist movement to present ethics, setting aside the religious wisdom of the Holy Scripture. Later on a supposition was reached that it is possible to separate theology from ethics. The study of ethics is based, in fact, on a theological structure. Without a doubt, ancient people tried to develop a secular ethics outside the religious presuppositions. But in the ancient world there was no other nation with such a dominant theological perspective except for the people of Israel. The modern attempts to separate man's ethical behavior from the duty towards God are inadequate.

The Holy Scripture is a thesaurus of revealed teachings. The richness of themes, meanings and manners of expressing require from the reader a diversified approach. The books of the Holy Scripture dedicated to the lyrical sapiential genre testify unanimously about the whole Scripture that it reveals "all wisdom", which guides man throughout his entire life towards the working of justice and good, and helps him detach from sin. This teaching, once acquired and put into practice offers immortality to the one who appropriate it: "to know your power is the root of immortality" (Wisdom 15:3). The thesaurus of meanings of the Holy Scripture may be discovered gradually related to the endeavor of the one interested to model his life in agreement with its exigencies. An analysis of the data offered by the sapiential writings of the Holy Scripture surprises in a pleasant manner whoever approaches them in faith through the dicta full

of essence and through the finesse of their elaboration. The ideas expressed within these writings uncover literary essences regarding ethical and moral dimensions which target various professional environments such as economy, law and medicine. The commentaries of the Holy fathers will help us restore links between the social problems and preoccupations presented in the Old Testament and the similar problems with which the world nowadays is confronted, offering new perspectives in order to create communicating bridges between theology and ethics.

In our effort to understand better the meanings of the Sapiential Writings of the Old Testament we need information about the social and political context of the Old Testament in which they occurred. These may constitute a new premise or “supporting points for the nowadays concept upon man” (Andrei Marga). The literature of wisdom includes a growing tradition of the binomial knowledge-moral, which was eventually incorporated in five main canonical and deuterocanonical books (Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Jesus Sirach and Book of Wisdom) and which influenced the formation of language and the content of other collections from the literature of the Holy Scripture. The sapiential literature influenced especially the formation and the content of the subsequent collections of proverbs spread in almost all the books of the Holy Scripture and it implicitly influenced ethical education by offering a significant part of the teachings that contributed to the incipient formation of the character and moral life in the Jewish and Christian communities.

The Sapiential Literature of the Old Testament is until today an exhaustless spring of living water, through the profoundness of the teachings and of the message transmitted over the ages. The force of the message is based on God as revealer of His will for the “crown of creation” – man. The teaching of wisdom revealed by God through chosen people succeeded along the years to transform mentalities, men, people, influencing them positively towards the accomplishment of good. The wisdom presented in the Holy Scripture is not an autonomous structure that belongs exclusively to man, but it is a grace for those who enter and remain in communion with God, according to the saying that: “Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly” (Proverbs 3:34). Wisdom is an attribute of God, but man is called to partake to the effusion of wisdom, as a work of the Holy Spirit, by remaining into a steady relationship with the Spring of wisdom.

The text of the Holy Scripture offers us a multitude of examples, teachings referring to the moral or immoral behavior of men from the history of the old Israel. At the same time we

find here emphasized aspects that belong to truth, correctness, justice, as well as biblical faces which are role models. We mention the fact that the concept of ethics in the sapiential writings is in relationship of synergy with the concept of justice.

The sapiential writings of the Old Testament are enchanting through their elegant style of conveying the divine message, which shows that the authors of these writings were chosen people, gifted with the spiritual power of understanding the divine message as well as the divine wisdom.

The Sapiential Writings, deeply impregnated within the divine forum, may be considered a textbook of ethics, an ethics with an exclusively religious character. Theocentricism stood at the basis of the existence and daily manifestations of the Jewish people, and the purpose for the teaching and applying of wisdom was that of bringing the individual in harmony with the “order” established by God. The actions performed according to the teachings of wisdom of the Holy Scripture lead man in close proximity to God. For the one who achieves wisdom it is natural that his deeds are moral, in agreement with the divine laws.

The wisdom of God, conceived from an intellectual point of view, is considered to include the understanding of the laws of universe, impossible for man to reach it, and the human wisdom is considered to be an ethical feature. Starting from the statement that ethics is the science developed based on the concepts of good and evil, we thought that it is important to offer a special attention to Saint Anthony the Great, who considers that “the one who cannot differentiate good from evil is not allowed to judge those who are good or evil. Because good is the person who knows God, but he is not good, he doesn’t know and he will never know this. For the path of the conscience of God is goodness”. Moreover, Saint Anthony the Great pays a special attention to the fact of being a rational person, wanting to emphasize that true rationality does not exist unless it is in communion with God, the one who put his reason into all his creation. “People think they are rational, but they do this wrongly, for they are not rational. Some of them learned the words and the books of the ancient scholars. But rational are only those who have a rational soul, who are able to distinguish good from evil, who keep away from the evil things that hurt their souls and whose only concern is towards the good things that are useful to the soul; and they do this in complete thankfulness to God. Only this type of people can be called rational.

The title of the thesis “Professional Ethics in the Sapiential Writings of the Old Testament” was chosen in order to develop a research regarding the interaction of the biblical text with the social segment, out of the wish to combine the theological and managerial studies of the undersigned. The purpose of this research is to emphasize these ethical aspects of the Old Testament, most of them condensed within the sapiential writings of the Old Testament.

The wish to research the sapiential literature is based on emphasizing the texts referring to rules of conduct, duties towards our neighbor, advice and aphorisms. We identified several directions at a social level referring to medicine, pharmacy, economy, justice and education. The papers and articles of this field, corroborated with the biblical verses that refer to the chosen fields (medicine, economy, justice, education) open new horizons, contributing to a better understanding of the necessity of biblical wisdom into the life of the contemporary man. To this respect, this thesis tries to clarify the sense of the concept of ethics from a social and theological point of view. Through this presentation we wish to disclose the Christian concept of moral and to emphasize the fact that at the basis of moral both Christian and Jewish, stand legislative principles that we meet within the entire culture of the Near East. Each book of the sapiential writings of the Old Testament has within it imperative norms characteristic to ethics, laws, rules of conduct, duties towards our neighbor, rules concerning honor, writings related to achieving wisdom and the fruits of wisdom, advice, aphorisms.

This thesis is conceived according to a structure that easily allows the acclimatization with the approached themes, starting with the title “Professional Ethics in the Sapiential Writings of the Old Testament”, which indicates us that the chosen field is the literature of revealed wisdom of the Old Testament. The word “ethics” from the title of the thesis leads us to think to what defines ethics that is a responsible manner of relating to the other human beings. Regarding the type of relations, through the specification “professional ethics”, we enter the field of three sciences: Medical Ethics, Judicial Ethics, Economic Ethics. The responsibility of the ethical behavior of man is inseparable from the duty towards God, taking into account the fact that we approach the revealed literature of the Old Testament.

The pleading from the introduction of the thesis emphasizes the superiority of the teachings of wisdom of the Holy Scripture, as ethical revealed teachings that surpass the simple rational horizontality of man.

Preliminaries, as a first chapter, present the manner in which the thesis was received by the specialized literature, terminological delimitations regarding ethics and moral, proposes holiness as centrality of the ethical obligation (Lev 19:2), and Torah is considered a source of ethics, of the transcendental ethical responsibility respectively. The premises of the sapiential ethics propose the imitation of God, as a perfect ethical perspective, a responsabilization of the conscience of those who are involved in professional relations with other persons in the medical, judicial and economical fields.

The exegetical approach in the 2nd chapter is relevant to support firmly the framing of the present thesis into the field of ethics, taking into account the requirements governed by the sapiential literature, as a manner of relating to the other human beings irrespective of their status (as sons of God and crown of the creation).

Chapter III presents the relevance of professional sapiential ethics for the contemporary man and the necessity of reassessing the status of the Holy Scripture as an absolute authority, having an ethical formative role that cannot be denied.

In the last chapter (conclusions) we reiterate briefly the substantial contribution that the sapiential literature offers in the placing, reconsideration of the divine ethics, revealed in the Holy Scripture, as ethics that respinsibilizes man both horizontally and vertically towards perfection.

The purpose of this thesis is to develop a research on sapiential literature of various ancient people and emphasizing the status that the theocentric moral – which has God in the centre – had upon the progress of each people. Professor Nicolae Chițescu supports the theory according to which the religious morality has a determinant contribution in the harmonious development of the human society: “Whoever follows the ways of the people’s lives is obliged to see that the moral and social progress of a people is in close relationship with the conception of life and the world, that is developed through religion or science, or through both, completing each other”.

The proposed theme tries a restoration, a return to the teaching of wisdom of the Holy Scriptures that would provide a moral and social progress in the desacralized society of today. In this thesis we wish to present the typical correspondence between the writings of the Old Testament, those of the ancient philosophers and those of the Holy Fathers, we want to emphasize the influence of the writing of the Old Testament upon the other writings that we

mentioned above and to present the relationship between them; we also want to emphasize the superiority of the Jewish sapiential literature of the Old Testament (as revealed literature) comparatively to other teachings of wisdom, as well as the superiority coming from the influence that the divine authority has; nevertheless we want to offer biblical marks for the ethics of the social relationships nowadays, as well as to rediscover the actuality of the teachings of wisdom presented in the Holy Scripture. In order to accomplish these targets we chose a thematic exegetical approach as well as a compared historical-analytical approach, wanting to emphasize the superiority of the sapiential teachings of the Holy Scripture.

I want to thank God for the help He offered me to put together this thesis of Old Testament under the direct guidance of Rev. Prof. PhD. Ioan Chirilă, to whom I am thankful for accepting me and supervising the entire evolution of the scientific approach and the final result which is this thesis. I express my entire gratitude for the help he gave me during all these years of research.

This thesis wishes to be a standing point in the research of the sapiential books, which can provide a moral revealed basis to the nowadays desacralized ethics. The arguments of the biblical texts presented within the thesis offered us a basis strong enough to understand the benefits that come from ethical decisions, accepting a transcendent moral authority.

The sapiential books of the Holy Scriptures come to meet the human being when it comes to choosing good, an universal ethical value, standing against a choice dictated only by the sinful reason of the dust, of the man without God. The incapacity of the human reason to perceive good is emphasized even more when it does not accept the revealed truth of the Holy Scriptures. The persistency in not accepting revelation and the lack of knowledge regarding the limits of the human reason will lead to a distorted perception of good. In this case man is responsible for the imbalance that affects the entire creation.

The Holy Scripture protects good in a genuine state through its writings, meaning the good destined to man by God, as a priceless ethical value. The Holy Scripture focuses on forming the integrity of man, coming from the real source of ethics which is God. The experience of living under the protecting shield of God, accumulated along the centuries in the Holy Scriptures, as a collective experience, tried during this long period of time, may contribute to the coherence and establishment of the social relations.

Wisdom is the science of accumulating experience in the knowledge of God from the divine commandments and from the laws put into the creation. The accumulation of knowledge in the Holy Scripture along the centuries constituted the basis of the nowadays science. The wisdom described in the sapiential writings of the Old Testament is the spiritual and intellectual revealed knowledge, resulted from the life experience of man and God. The accumulation of this experience by the former generations was put to the service of man for a beneficial use of the time granted by God to each individual on this earth, knowing the fact that time is and can be considered to be a limited resource.

Not protecting righteousness and the righteous man, which brings prosperity within society from Proverbs 11:8 is a warning signal for the nowadays society and the state of decline which characterizes it.

The retrospective looks into the Biblical history constituted real sources – models already experimented, transmitted from one generation to another, in which one may observe the paternal care, the divine providence expressed through chosen people which aims to protecting the descendants of the inherent mistakes of youthfulness (the lack of wisdom). Can we state that in the Sapiential Writings of the Holy Scripture there are ethical principles? Yes, because the Sapiential Writings of the Holy Scripture contain laws, principles, arguments, meaning fundamentals which constitute ethics, through which God governs the entire universe.

In the preliminaries of the thesis I stated that wisdom has a sacred meaning through which man has the possibility to participate to the replacement of the genuine beauty of the creation, meaning to participate to man's likeness with God. The wisdom of the Holy Scripture, as an inspired teaching stands under the permanent care of the Holy Spirit. The ethical methods configured in the sapiential writings with multiple practical incidences in social have as a result the support of man in the historical sequence given by God. The sure path proposed in the sapiential writings is justice, manifested through: honesty, diligence (Proverbs 10:4; 26:14), self-control (Proverbs 14:17; 15:1), the sense of responsibility (Proverbs 10:26; 27:23-27), aspects which aim to form the human character and integrity according to the divine pattern.

In the names that man gave to God we discover ethical projections, imperative models. The request presented in the verse “Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy” (Leviticus 19:2) is the revealed model for the perfection of man.

There is a complementarity between wisdom and ethics, they both target righteousness and good, but the dimension of the ethics of sapiential books is perfected by the three-hypostasis equation, where the ethical imperative comes from a transcendent authority, God. By fulfilling the divine commandments, man surpasses the field of horizontality, thus climbing vertically step by step towards achieving holiness which is the apogee of ethics.

The revealed teaching of the sapiential books as part of the Holy Scripture urges us: “If you desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee” (Sirach 1:26), and the commandments have as request the purity of man, the life lived in kindness and the request for the instauration of kindness on earth and within each man, based on an act of faith brought to God, that we generically named ethics for perfection. The divine commandments empower each human being regarding the relationship that it must maintain with the Creator and the other created beings, as well as with the entire universe. Wisdom potentiates man’s powers in order for him to accomplish his duties according to: “She is with all flesh according to his gift, and he hath given her to them that love him” (Sirach 1:10).

The entire medical ethics of the sapiential writings is focused around the commandment of loving God, and implicitly our neighbor, a request that confirms man as son of God, a proof of the true service.

The chapter “Medical ethics” brings an important contribution to the rediscovery of the medical aspects regarding the emotional implications and their external manifestation, through the antitheses of the proverbs, which reveal ethical aspects referring to the possibility of transmitting motivational positive or negative states of mind to another person through speech. The preventive advice appeal to equilibrium and moderation (Sirach 31:26), regarding food, alcohol, the time used for relaxation as well as the spiritual and physical purity. A special accent is put on the emotional sanity, because of the negative physical and mental effect. “For sorrow hath killed many, and there is no profit therein” (Sirach 3:23); “For of heaviness cometh death” (Sirach 38:18). Physical and spiritual degradation of man has as starting point the lack of a spiritual relationship with the Creator of this world.

The information regarding the preparation and administration of substances with therapeutic qualities in order to restore and maintain health reveals to us the ethical complementarity – wisdom through the verse: “he that is wise will not abhor them” (Sirach 38:4) because God “hath created medicines out of the earth” (Sirach 38:4).

Doctors, pharmacists, family and all those who care for the ill are responsible for cooperation and communication with the ill, to care and intervene in the case of the physical or mental sufferance, and all these have as ethical urge the sacredness of the body. The complementary therapies, encouraging the ill through words that give hope, the confession of sins and prayer have the role of potentiating the physical strengths for healing. Acknowledging the effectiveness of these therapies requires from an ethical point of view, their use for treating illnesses or for calming sufferance. Even though in the experiment of dr. Larry Dossey only prayer and its effects was tested, through the revealed testimony of the sapiential writings on the benefits of prayer, I think it is pertinent to consider that the other forms of therapy described, also having a revealed character, are also very useful for the improvement of health. The refusal to put them into practice by the ones who are granted with the care of health, may be considered an act which lack ethics completely.

The chapter dedicated to the Judicial ethics, a replacement of man based on the values ;proposed by the Holy Scripture in the sapiential books, through the assumption in the daily practice of the teachings of divine wisdom, could restore the balance that society nowadays has lost almost completely. Although in the expression of the ethical requirements it is used the imperative “must”, today the will to accomplish justice in a society divided from a cultural, moral and religious point of view, or even in a desacralized society, raises many problems. Also, corruption disturbs the judicial act. We thus observe a justice which has no power to condemn the various abuses as a consequence of the political or personal interests, a practice which is more and more common. The revealed message of the Holy Scripture is a saving, renewing message, that directs the path of the contemporary man on the only safe and correct path. Ignoring the solutions presented within the sapiential writings, solutions already experimented, effectual even nowadays, may be considered to be an attitude of disrespect towards the genuine ethics.

The real ethical attitude that deserves to be assumed by the contemporary man, a searcher of happiness most often in the materiality of the perishable immanent, deserves to be changed with the efforts on the path of holiness, directed towards the eternal transcendent. Surely, one must not ignore the fact that man wishes his own personal good and justice. Saint Maximus the Confessor considers that happiness cannot be achieved without spiritual effort. To this respect he states that “victory is the end of the divine efforts of the soul in the field of acts that is the

uncontaminated good. And wisdom is the end of the secret visions of the soul in the order of conscience (of gnosis). This is the simple truth, towards which mind directs the one who freed himself from the sensitive and rational illusions which subjected to themselves the vital part of the soul. The meeting between victory and wisdom, or kindness and truth reveals a single glory within those in whom it produces, radiating the light of likeness”.

The ethical concept of justice in the Jewish society and in Christianity is perceived as a mixture between immanent and transcendent, in all the actions. Man was created by God to move towards a vertical position. The vertical position offers him a horizontal visual field, in order to find a target, towards which he should direct himself, a target which has a purpose. To this respect, a suggestive image – a man that has in front of him a free visual field, anywhere he looks he observes in the same time the earth and sky uniting, forming a single image, even though in fact they are two separate realities. It is the image of inseparability of the immanent and transcendent in the actions regarding justice.

Starting from this image, we enter into the area of economic ethics, founded on justice, correctness, truth and respect, values that are universally accepted. It is important for us to understand that any target that focuses on a purpose in future does not have a long lasting sustainability, if we separate the two realities, the two visual elements, the earth and sky respectively, meaning the world and God. Acknowledging the dignity of leader of a people, institution, city, is certified by the quality of being just, a virtue which comes from God. Justice requires respect and appreciation of every human being. On the same line we find that work, when appreciated and payed correctly, generates loyalty, creativity and progress. “By justice a king gives a country stability, but those who are greedy for bribes tear it down” (Proverbs 29:4). Man was given the commandment to work in order to obtain what is necessary for his existence and also to grow in virtue. Not all the works develop virtue. Only fair work is considered a virtue, a human ethical value. The virtuous man is implicitly ethical. “By justice a king gives a country stability, but those who are greedy for bribes tear it down” (Proverbs 29:4).

In the sapiential writings, work is associated with wealth and laziness with poverty. The contrast work, diligence – laziness are ethical themes debated intensely. In the chosen verses there are different ethical nuances of aspects referring to work and laziness, proper time to work and the improper time of laziness. Regarding wealth, this should be considered a gift from God for which we must praise Him (Sol 3:9-10). The ethical justificatory aspect of wealth is

achieving it through justice and correctness: “Honest scales and balances belong to the Lord; all the weights in the bag are of his making” (Proverbs 16:11). On the same direction we find the ethical aspects and the techniques used in the negotiation of business, and when ethics lacks it is obvious by the will to deceive in order to obtain a smaller price or to sell for an overprice. In order to avoid the situations that can endanger the economic activity, the sapiential writings propose previously a consultation with the people who are capable of offering an idea, an advice – advisers, counselors. Their role is also to help planning time, human resources and the available materials and thus, any project, any fight on an economic field has a high percentage of success. The attitude which lacks ethics is condemned in proverbs by an antithesis between the wise who assumes these teachings and the unwise who refuses and thus loses.

In the sapiential writings we will find a balanced mixture between following the revealed teaching and the use of reason which gives man the power to penetrate into the existing rationality of things. The perfection of man’s personality is in close relationship with a high level of assuming the revealed ethical-biblical system of values. The chances to achieve a happy life grow proportionally with the virtuous efforts of man.

Man, who observes these values and assimilates them and struggles to respect the teachings of the Holy Scripture is called wise – or better said the supporter of the eternal ethical standards. Thus we may say that the history of ethics in all its fields has its basis in the One who established the laws, principles, arguments through which the entire universe is governed. The ethic of the sapiential writings is a theocentric ethics which comprises the entire teaching in the commandment of loving God and the neighbor as yourself, a teaching that could be the solution to defeat injustice. The sapiential writings influenced and continue to influence human existence. They contain principles with a high potential of accomplishing justice, in the relational commitment characteristic to the human being. Taking into account that they have a revealed character, a theocentric fundament, I think that through them the entire world would benefit of an ethics, having as imperative not justice, but love as a model of the divine love that surpasses every existing ethical principle.

The re-foundation of the professional ethics in every field, on the ethical fundament of love, would destroy the uncertainties regarding justice. The sapiential writings through their spiritual and in the same time rational profoundness may constitute a source of reevaluation of the actual ethics. Through these universal writings the man aware of his purpose, communicates

these teachings, impresses the divine ethics onto his nature, in the present and future in this existential immanent continuing with the endless future of the transcendent. The sapiential writings are meant to confirm with arguments the ethical imperative of the formation or conformation of man according to the revealed principles of the Holy Scripture. “The interpretation of the Holy Scripture is made from the perspective of the rediscovery/regaining eternity, hence it cannot be a simple or complex cultural linguistic historical morphology, [...] or of any other type. Eternity is not the area of morphisms, but of the spiritual incorruptible and unbreakable realities. If we stay, for example, in the simple fact of the philological or historical identification we did nothing more than to find and speak about something that dies”. Wisdom is a knowledge of the Spirit. It does not darken human science but potencies it.

Through the teaching of the sapiential writings it is intended the promotion of good to the interest of the entire people and the formation of people with stable principles to the virtue of good. The progress of a people depends greatly on the assumed morality. The ethics of the sapiential writings proposes a rich and diverse palette of solutions impregnated by morality that must become an ethical imperative in order to attain a level of civilization dominated by the virtue of good and justice, a conformation to the divine requests. If the main idea followed by the wise Solomon and by those who worked out the corpus of the sapiential writings was to educate the people of Israel in the light of the revealed teachings of the Holy Scripture, today the address to all those who want to install a kingdom of good even from this earth. The sapiential books – Job, The Book of King Solomon, Book of Jesus Son of Sirach (Ecclesiast) – are books that were composed during the exile and post-exile periods. The ethical standards from the content of these writings are in indissoluble relationship with all the revealed writings of the Old and New Testament. The ethical standards expressed in various literary forms must be understood as ideals or rules for which people fought with perseverance, in order to apply them to personal life to be agreeable to God. But not all of these are accepted by Christianity and a relevant example is the law of talion.

The ontological character of the sapiential writings is obvious from the wish expressed by God in the book Leviticus: “Be holy” (Lev 19:2), an imperative request but not a restrictive one. Man has the liberty of choice but the renewal of man in order to become a true being is proportional with the progress by virtue of obedience and fulfilling the commandments in the daily practice. To this respect, Ioan Gh. Savin states that “deification and ethics are not two

separate phenomena". A pertinent conclusion in agreement with this statement, the request of the deification of man, seen implicitly as ethical imperative, it exists from the moment man was created.

The ethics of the sapiential writings does not want to change the direction of the actual professional ethics, but to complete and perfect them. Assuming the commandment of love offers moral consistency of the ethical implication in relationship with other people and with God. Since God is the Creator of universe, it results that his divine rule should be regarded as universal. Hence the laws of God were relevant both for Israel and for the other people. The requests addressed to the chosen people (Lev 20:22-24) are valuable for all those who accept to be part of the people of God.