

AUREL VLAICU" UNIVERSITY FROM ARAD
INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL SCHOOL
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DOCTORAL FIELD "THEOLOGY"

THESIS
SUMMARY

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR,

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CANDIDATE,

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THE DYNAMICS OF DIVINE SILENCE IN THE VETEROTESTAMENT SCRIPTURES,
A THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS WITH APPLICATION TO PENTECOSTAL SPIRITUALITY

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Introduction

1. General considerations

The simple utterance of the concept of "God's silence" arouses reactions that incite reflection and research. The reasons for supporting the previous statement are numerous. First, the association of God with silence creates an almost oxymoronic effect. The collective mind, placed just outside the theological or religious practicing realm, associates the being of the deity with communication. Regardless of the content of the spoken message or the manner in which it is delivered, God is recognized as one who communicates through speech. By giving way to a concept with which the collective as a whole is not accustomed, it seems that the paradigm of thought enunciated is apparently deconstructed.

As we shall see throughout our study, divine silence is a subordinate category to communication in general. The absence of sound does not allow its interpretation as a muteness on the part of God, but as a way chosen by Him to communicate and to communicate Himself. The variant of interpreting divine silence as an epiphenomenon of utterance is excluded. God's silence carries a very consistent linguistic meaning, comparable to the utterance itself. The ways of interpretation, the methods and the message conveyed by the divine silence are debated and detailed throughout this study.

Second, the reference to divine silence as opposed to speech is flawed. Silence is not the opposite of speech, as most individuals might superficially interpret. The antonymic oppositional relationship between silence and speech derives precisely from the previously stated argument. Eliminating the assumption of the subordination of silence to speech, by the fact that silence is itself a consistent linguistic sign, also makes placing silence on the same spectrum as speech an interpretive mistake. Silence itself is a spectral notion, carrying many nuances, depending on many factors. Some of these factors, which we will analyze in detail during this study, are the nature of the silence, the purpose of its establishment, the intensity (from a total embargo of divine communication, to a withdrawal of God into the background) or the effect had on the human subject.

If we were to represent speaking and silence on the same axis, the two notions would by no means be placed at opposite poles, precisely because the presence or absence of sound is not a consistent enough criterion according to which to interpret silence. The representation on the axis should be done according to an algorithm of alternating silence with outbursts, both of which are subordinate to the communication of God. The divine message is conveyed through speech and silence alike. Instances of divine silence and the message conveyed by it are analyzed in detail in the dedicated chapters of this study.

Last but not least, the divine silence brings up the question of God's self-revelation. The dispute between His transcendence and immanence is hotly contested. Whether it is done under the auspices of the theology of the Eastern Church, or around the concept of *Deus absconditus*, or from the deconstructivist perspective of postmodernism, through which many accusations are brought to God who is silent in the face of human suffering, the silence raises, again numerous and fiery debates.

The silence of God underwrites and even overlaps, to a great extent, with the concept of the hiddenness of God. *Deus absconditus* (lat. hidden God) refers to the Christian theological concept of the fundamental unknowability of God's essence. The early origins of the concept go back to the writings of Old Testament prophets. The book of Isaiah (Isaiah 45:15) expresses the concept very clearly. Medieval theologians debated the concept extensively in their writings. Thomas Aquinas, Nicolae de Cusa or Martin Luther being prominent exponents. In the following we will review some considerations on the concept of *Deus absconditus*.

The aspects treated in this review are relevant to the theme of divine silence, with which it overlaps in most of the situations, from several points of view. First, the silence and concealment of God are elements to which the collective mind is not accustomed. The reference to each of these concepts involuntarily evokes a reaction that accumulates feelings such as apprehension, but also curiosity, rejection, but also fascination. Second, the mentioned concepts generate crises that mark the entire human paradigm: a crisis of faith, reason and experience.

2. *Deus absconditus*

2.1. The Specter of God's Concealment: Between the Transcendent and the Immanent

3. When theologians discuss the concept of God's concealment, most often the relation is made with the attribute of His transcendence. God becomes incomprehensible, manifesting an inaccessibility in relation to the human being. The darkness of God becomes a metaphor for divine

attributes undeciphered by man, or to which access is limited. From this perspective, concealment is intrinsic to God. Man's knowledge or experience of divine attributes, available evidence of His existence or validation of His attributes is limited by the finitude of human being. This has partial accessibility to the very intrinsic attributes of God. Named by reference to concepts applicable to man, these attributes cannot be applied to God, since He cannot be contained by them. The spectral dimension of each attribute, which automatically implies a progression of intensity, precludes fitting God within these parameters. If man can be good, from very little good, passing through all the degrees of the spectrum to the best possible, it means that God cannot be qualified as good, because He cannot subscribe to the same scale of values common to human beings. If God is good in Himself, man cannot claim association with this quality, because retributing a lower degree of goodness would mean a hierarchization. Consecutive degrees of goodness always imply a "better" potential, which is unacceptable if we are talking about God.

The hiding of God generates existential crises, such as the crisis of faith, reason or experiential. All these types of crises are treated during the course of the thesis.

The identity of the hidden god

The question of the identity of the god that is the subject of the concept of *deus Absconditus* is important. Schelemberg hesitates to associate the entity he refers to with a specific religion. The conclusion is that the reference is generic, impersonal, without content links with the Christian God. Schellenberg's argument is vulnerable because, in its construction, it rests on a single pillar, that of the inability of the human being to refuse a love of a god infinite in love.

Methodology

Tartaring the theme of divine silence is a major challenge. As I mentioned, the theme is used in different fields, such as philosophy, literature or other arts. For all these fields, silence has only an aesthetic function, as we will see throughout this thesis. Theology is the only one that valorizes silence in the sense of the inner transformation of man. Like God's speech, His silence has the ability to shape the inner man. The directions in which the divine silence is involved in the inner transformation are either constructive, by going through some stages of spiritual growth, or its sanctification, or an intimate revelation of God. in this context, we resorted to delimiting the

domains that interact with theology, recognizing their place and role, but also limiting them in our analysis.

The first stage of the study aimed to identify the narrative cores in which the silence of God makes its presence in the writings of the Old Testament. The sequences of silence are numerous, so a selection of them was needed, depending on the realization of a typology of divine silence.

The typologies in which the divine silence is framed, in the present work, were outlined taking into account several principles. Thus, according to the principle of the effect on the human subject, two of the basic chapters of the thesis were outlined. Silence has a constructive, desirable, beneficial effect on man, which is why we included these cores in the "Constructive Silences" chapter. When silence occurs as a consequence of sin, it has a coercive role. Although it apparently affects non-essential areas of human existence, God's silence is presented as an apogee of His wrath, which is why I have dedicated a chapter to these silences, entitled "Curse-type silences".

According to the principle of representativeness, it is observed that some sequences of silence, although they have a deep interpretation potential, appear in situations that are more difficult to identify. Whether they are hidden in linguistic and lexical details, or glimpsed behind other elements that obstruct their visibility, or whether they are indirect divine silences, as is the case with human silences instituted as a result of divine command, these silences are studied in the chapter "Silence of the grain and the crumb". The name is taken from Arghezi's lyric that manages to identify unsuspected meanings in tiny and hard-to-identify things.

As a method of approaching the mentioned nuclei, I used a diachronic approach, by exposing the phenomenon of divine silence from several perspectives. Treating from the historical point of view is one of the dimensions of the diachronic method, the divine silences can be placed face to face according to the historical moment of the people of Israel. All the kernels of curse-like silence manifested at the corporate level appear in the pre-exilic period, as they all point to God's wrath against the sin of the people which has reached its climax. At the same time, God's silence sets in gradually and with increasing intensity as the generations of Israel succeed one another. Evolutionarily, there is a renunciation of constructive silence as the people deepen into sin. God's utterance, as well as His constructive silence, recedes in direct proportion to the setting in of a curse-like silence.

The main material processed during the thesis consists of the nuclei of divine silence identified and selected for study, which is why a rigorous exegesis of the text is required. Exegesis includes all textual levels: phonemic, lexical-semantic, morpho-syntactic and even metatextual, through the analysis of external factors that influence the meaning of divine silence.

In the analysis of the biblical texts significant for the silence of God, I considered it appropriate to turn to other disciplines of study. The use of these disciplines, such as psychology, philosophy, linguistics, etc. it was done to support or clarify some theological points of view. The specificity of a theology thesis was preserved, the approach being from the perspective of the impact on the inner man and the transformation that occurred, through the sequence of silence. For example, in the case of Saul, psychological and even psychiatric interpretation methods were specifically used. The character's moral involution creates a model that lends itself to such a perspective. Saul is the alienated character, because of sin, and the silence of God, which is progressively and more seriously installed in his life, becomes oppressive.

Silence, like the spoken word, is a category affected by the incidence of postmodernism. Destructivism characteristic of the movement tried to use an element with spiritual potential, such as silence, to demonstrate the non-existence of God or, at least, a devaluing of the attributes of His beauty. In this sense, being a partisan of traditional values, validated by Scripture and the Spirit of God, during the thesis I tried to dismantle the deconstructivist arguments and offer some elements of Christian apologetics. The same approach was necessary when silence came under the scope of the interpretation of Eastern mysticism. Although the mysticism of the Church of the East valorizes divine silence, something emphasized throughout the thesis, it does so from a biblical perspective and following the likeness of man according to the Image of Christ. The same cannot be said about Eastern mysticism, which is why a categorical delimitation of its concept was necessary.

The applied side of the thesis is treated in a separate chapter that follows an analysis of the divine silence within the Romanian Pentecostal Church. The monument is unique from several points of view. First of all, the Pentecostal movement is recognized as promoting an ethos based on utterance and auditory exteriorization of meetings, which makes the intention of the proposed analysis challenging from the very beginning.

In order to create this chapter, I resorted to a series of face-to-face interviews. The interviews were guided by a set of questions, but the course was very much dictated by the answers given to the previous questions. 60 interviews were conducted and analyzed which ensured a

comfortable representative mass. The subjects were selected in such a way as to represent all categories of age, sex, background, academic training, level of involvement in church service. These interviews contributed significantly to some directions given in the thesis, elements that will be highlighted in the final conclusions part of the paper.

Thesis structure

The present thesis is structured in five chapters, each of them having an introduction and a conclusion. Thus, in the introductory discussion, in which I presented the concept of divine silence, its association with the concealment of God, as well as the implications that these concepts attract, I framed and justified the study theme, I presented the sources that are evaluated in the thesis, such as and work methodology. The justification of the study theme is based on the fact that silence does not mark the absence of sound, but is a content-rich category that conveys a message at least as consistent as speech. Beyond the rich and transformative content on the human subject, God's silence gives rise to many controversial opinions. To these views I have offered counterarguments based on the principles of the Bible and Christian apologetics.

The first chapter presents the silence of God in relation to the logos and nothingness. In relation to the spoken word, I have shown that silence is not an epiphenomenon of speech, but, alongside it, is subordinate to communication, having all the elements of the communication scheme. Also in this chapter I put the theological silence with the philosophical one face to face, showing the limitations of the latter and the potential, sometimes too little exploited, of the theological silence. Theological silence has an ontological impact, as opposed to a philosophical one. This is limited to an aesthetic function, at most. An important core of this chapter is the subchapter on silence in apophatic theology and the role of silence in the knowledge of God and union with Him, in Christ. Also from a categorical perspective, I presented the divine silence as an eclipse, a concept that appeared in the theology of Martin Buber and consecrated by the writings of Andre Neher. Silence as an eclipse highlights the predictability of it and its effects.

The purpose of this chapter was to conceptually delimit theological silence from other fields of research, as well as highlight the content potential it has. The signs of silence, although they sound more difficult to identify and delimit, offer to those skilled in its knowledge a content rich in meanings and a decisive transformative potential for the human being.

The second chapter deals with narrative cores from the typology of the constructive divine tabernacle. These silences bring significant input into the lives of those chosen by God to traverse these sequences. The characters chosen for study acquired, following the passage of the sequence of silence, an ennoblement with one of the attributes of God's character. Thus, Abraham perfects his faith in his God, becoming the father of all believers; Joseph comes to love like God, and Job comes to know God. God's silence towards Abraham, called to sacrifice Isaac, is an akedah-type silence, but it also subscribes to the typology of silence as an eclipse. The divine silences in Joseph and Job are monumental, because of their exhausting duration, they exceed the limits of an eclipse-type silence, because the waiting is so long that it leaves nothing to be glimpsed of the exactness and predictability of the eclipse. This typology of silence probably has the most significant value for the transformation of the inner man. As I have shown, in the application chapter of the thesis, believers, although they do not use the term of God's silence, live it, interpret it deeply and do it by referring to biblical characters such as Abraham, Joseph or Job.

The third chapter deals with the typology of curse-type silences. The name is justified by the effect of God's restrictive silence. Manifested at the level of the individual, the most conclusive situation of Saul, the king who does not fulfill the divine expectations. His moral decay is directly proportional to the intensity of God's silence placed before him. Saul's evolution is also done from the perspective of cognitive-behavioral theory taken from psychology. He follows the path of moral, social and spiritual alienation due to the wrong decisions he makes.

The chapter presents several situations of silence instituted at the corporate level, respectively, at the level of the entire people of Israel. All the analyzed situations are framed in the pre-exilic period, in which God's people announce the establishment of God's silence, as a fulfillment of the curse stated in Deuteronomy 25-28. Although they correspond to the same historical period and have the same referent, the silences in the book of Jeremiah, Ezekiel or Amos are differentiated by subtle or categorical nuances. Thus, Jeremiah's silence is more of a divine silence assumed by the prophet, as proof of obedience and submission to God's will; the silence in the book of Ezekiel is more of a withdrawal of God in relation to the people and the Temple. In the book of Amos, silence is most vividly expressed, using the metaphor of hunger and thirst for the word of God. This silence is oppressive and undesirable, but it is a cry of God to the repentance of the people.

The fourth chapter analyzes divine silences that are characterized by the brevity of their occurrence in the biblical text. Most of the time, these silence sequences are hidden in semantic, phonemic or morpho-syntactic details. The importance of these silences lies, first of all, in revealing the beauty of God's character. The metaphor of Elijah's silence (lit. 'the sublime voice of silence') reveals a gentle, sublime God, who descends to His servant Elijah in a form compatible with his soul's needs. The oxymoronic expression in the psalms (*lo dumia*) emphasizes the depth of the pain of the Servant of God. The silence of separation from the Father is the most oppressive silence in the Universe, and by this, the expressive value of the divine silence is emphasized. The greatest proof of love is expressed through the burden of a trembling silence. Equally suggestive are the human silences instituted as an assumption of the divine silence. They reveal the noble character of man transformed by the Spirit of God.

The fifth chapter deals with an applied part of the thesis, namely the way in which God's silence is perceived within the Pentecostal Church in Romania. After an introduction to Pentecostal spirituality, the 60 face-to-face interviews are analyzed. Analysis of the concept of God's silence in the lives of believers has revealed many aspects of silence. One of them, embodied in the final conclusions of the thesis, is the fact that God's silence has a very effective pedagogical role. The association of divine silence is almost exclusively associated with suffering, but a purifying and revelatory suffering for the life of the believer.

The conclusions review the approach of each chapter, as well as the new elements captured in each of them. The final conclusions state the value of divine silence in relation to the human being, as well as how it contributes to its transformation. The stated thesis of the work "Divine silence carries a transformative message, like the logos" is demonstrated. The typologies of silence appear according to God's purpose for human life, a purpose always motivated by His love. God chooses to be silent with meaning, in relation to people, and His silence is the bearer of a transformative message. Likewise, the divine silence has a pedagogical function and as a facilitator of logos in rhema.

1. Final conclusions

Finally, the thesis draws the following conclusions regarding the divine silence in the Old Testament writings. The conclusions concern the uniqueness of the perspective on the theme of God's silence. The research conclusions are as follows:

1.1. Divine silence takes many forms, depending on God's purpose in relation to the human being.

The terminology that designates divine silence is varied. Often the term silence does not appear in the discussion, but the reference is made to the same concept of God choosing to be silent, in certain circumstances and in relation to certain people. The concept is also found in specialized literature as 'hiding God', 'hiding God's face', 'withdrawing God's presence'.

The concept of God's hiding, *Deus absconditus*, has sparked numerous debates about God's character. Most of these debates tend to accuse God of remaining passive in the face of human suffering. This accusation creates significant crises in the lives of some. Whether we are talking about the crisis of faith or reason or the experiential crisis, the accusatory approach has some essential flaws that deconstruct their own approach. The first shortcoming is related to the identity of the hiding god. Usually the reference is made to a generic non-identity deity on account of which many accusations are made related to non-involvement in human crises. Another shortcoming is the overturning of the natural paradigm of things, namely, trying to subject God to human norms and limitations, instead of trying to raise man to the level of God's understanding. The approach is typical of postmodernism, through the destructuring of fundamental concepts. Finally, it erroneously induces the idea that man is absolved of guilt or that suffering, identified as a sequence of divine silence, is due to an imbalance caused by man's attitude or deeds.

Our study starts from the premise of an immutable God, perfect in His attributes and who interacts with the human being motivated by absolute love. Applying these premises, we can harmoniously integrate all typologies of divine silence under consideration in this thesis.

Even if it causes bewilderment or consternation, constructive silence reveals God's perfect motivations when he initiates a sequence of silence. Whether we are talking about Abraham who had a backup solution in mind, should the sacrifice be completed (he believed that God could bring Isaac back even from the dead), or whether it is Job whose struggle is monumental, both in duration and depth of introspection, in all cases silence has a constructive role that ends in an ennobling of the human character. Ennoblement is different for each individual, depending on the gap identified in their life and God's purpose for both the person concerned and future generations.

Regarding the typology of curse-type silences, the paradigm is also respected. Behind the establishment of the embargo of silence is a grieving God who resorts to this last attempt to return

to Him those concerned. In this case, God's silence is a climax to the intensity of the punishments set forth in Deuteronomy 25-28. Even the pre-exilic prophets who pronounce God's final judgment by instituting His silence hint at God's intent to grant forgiveness and restoration.

The typology of the silence of the grain and the chaff has a revealing effect on the beauty of God's character. hidden in various details, these silences seem to be reserved for the chosen ones to reveal features of God that most cannot see. Elijah, in the abyss of depression in which he was, receives a consolation through the sublime voice of the divine silence, a consolation that could not be expressed in words. David, by assuming divine silence, discovers the nobility of character of one who chooses not to obtain immediate justice, based on the fact that the reward comes from God.

God's silence facilitates the transformation of logos into rhema

God's silence alternates with speech, both having the role of transforming the believer's life in the Image of Christ. As seen in previous chapters, God's silence, identified in the form of a trial or a painful episode, facilitates the transformation of the word previously stored in the hearts of believers into rhema. The moments of silence of God, in relation to the believer, give him respite to internalize the requirements of God present in the Word and assimilate them. The formula is simple: The word tells us what to do, the silence tells us how to do it.

Facilitation is present, especially in the case of constructive silences. Human subjects have a baggage of knowledge regarding God's will and law. They are equipped in terms of the information they have. In their case, silence intervenes as a necessary respite to fully fulfill God's expectations of them. The example of Job is the most edifying, when, in the end, capitulating to the beauty of God, he admits that he only hears about Him, without really knowing Him. Joseph follows a similar route, but with much more dignity in the face of suffering. He had the promises of God, received by revelation, but was not equipped to come into possession of them. The stake was not that he would become the leader of his family, but the fulfillment of a plan that aimed at future generations for many centuries. God's prolonged silence equips Joseph with the garment of holiness, patience, and a God-like love.

At this point, we can conclude that the facilitating function of God's silence is deeply validated by the presence of God's Spirit. The relationship stated here between speech and silence

is the one stated by Paul between speech and the Spirit. The spoken word kills by the judgment it brings as a result of man's failure to fulfill it. The Logos itself is not sufficient to give life to the human being unless he receives a real inner transformation. The living of the word, its appropriation within the human being is possible through the facilitation of the divine silence. Man is temporarily deprived of the direct assistance of God through the word, to give it respite to be fulfilled.

In this sense, the apophatic theology of the Eastern Church most profoundly captures the relationship between word and utterance. Even if the mentioned writings emphasize the silence of man, this is an assumption of divine silence. The soul receives more difficult (or sometimes cannot receive) the mysteries of God, if it is surrounded by an area of sound. The silence of God descending in the form of a gentle whisper, as it is the case of Elijah, is ready to descend with the same gentleness in the soul prepared to receive it. The transformation of the word through silence is a mysterious work, like being born again. The previously spoken word needs a respite of divine silence to materialize, otherwise its fulfillment is only partial. Silence takes the word out of its limitations and gives it eternal weight.

The logo is the bearer of a transformative message

Beyond facilitating the transformation of word into rhema, the logos itself is the bearer of a transformative message for the believer's life. In moments of silence, God speaks a transformative message to the believer. The richness of this message is often more consistent than the message of an utterance from God. This conclusion coincides with one of the theses of the present study: divine silence is not an epiphenomenon of speech, but is a form of divine communication. Both the spoken word and silence are subordinate to the function of communication.

God is a relational Person, just as He created man. The relationship is primarily supported by communication. The most convenient form of communication is that which uses the spoken word. It is only restricted by very few factors. The limitation may arise from the individual's ability to handle ideas or biological causes, such as a lack of hearing.

The possibilities of naming the referent by word are infinite and available to most people. The words fix and specify the referent. The object of knowledge is framed within limits, stricter

or looser, by the word. However, the specification is limiting, as it circumscribes the object, withdraws the object from its area and subjects it to finitude.

Regardless of the field in which it is used, whether that of the arts, philosophy or theology, the word limits. The human spoken word has coverage within the limits of understanding of each of the emitters. The word cannot express more than the comprehension capacity of each individual. The meanings of reality are perceived by each of us, within the limits of our understanding. The human word has no access to the infinite which is inexpressible by human words. The words themselves contain a trap, that of limiting reality to everyone's everyday life.

The limitation of the word also resides in the fact that it can be canceled by another word through negation. Words give birth to ideas that can be canceled by the words themselves. The perception of the word as full, and of silence as a form of emptiness, is only apparent. In the chapters dedicated to typologies of divine silence we saw that silence is richer and more expressive than speech. The sound envelope of the words facilitates the understanding of the meanings, but also limits it.

The juxtaposition of silence with the spoken word does not aim at a depreciation of the word, but at bringing to light the meaning capacity of silence. Each of the two has its place and role. Each deserves due attention, although both are likely to convey form without substance.

Eastern Church theology emphasizes the importance of human silence as a condition of intimate knowledge of God, but human silence, in this case, is an assumption of divine silence. Synchronization is necessary, because God is prepared to communicate mysteries by meeting the human being in an area of silence. Detachment from sound, too often turned into noise, is mandatory to understanding divine silence. Unlike words which, as we have seen, are limiting, silence opens up unlimited possibilities of interpretation. Of course the process of deciphering the meanings of the silence must be led by the Spirit of God and be in accord with the Scriptures. Any inconsistency between these factors leads to the cancellation of the interpretation.

As we have seen in the present study, divine silence and human silence are full of meaning. God decides, in the right of some of His elect, to reveal Himself to them through silence. The depth of divine beauty is revealed through God's silence. Knowing God through His silence meets two restrictions. First it is God's choice of which beings to speak to through silence, then it is man's ability to properly interpret the divine silence.

Divine silence has a pedagogical function

Like the mystagogue in the initiatory path of the hero of popular literature, the divine silence performs a pedagogical function. This is observed both in the cores analyzed within the studied typologies. Job acquires a deep knowledge of God, following the sequence of silence to which he is subjected. For all the stubbornness he shows, beyond all the frustration expressed without management, beyond the unparalleled pain he experiences, Job is guided in a process of learning through discovery. The scheme I know - I want to know - I found out is completed to the end, in the case of Job, as he himself testifies, at the end of the journey. To paraphrase it can be said: I knew little about God, I asked myself countless questions to understand Him, and now I know what He is really like.

In the same way, Joseph, at the end of the sequence of silence, acquires the wisdom that he himself enunciates: "It was true that you wanted to harm me, but God changed evil into good." This discovery was not given to Joseph instantly, but he needed a thorough process in which he learned to distinguish the will of God from the evil that was happening to him.

And within the cursing silences, the pedagogical function is highlighted very well. The principle is stated by God Himself: "If you did not want to serve in peace, you will learn to serve Me in slavery." Depriving them of the utterance they did not know how to appreciate is for the purpose of teaching them the value it had. Losing something leads to truly appreciating it.

The pedagogical function is often expressed in the interviews held for the application part of the work. Most say (undirected or induced!) that during the silence of God, in a certain difficult situation, they learned patience, or humility, or the value of forgiveness, things they previously knew but did not live. Most respondents appreciate the transformative effect of the divine silence and especially what they learned during this episode. This function is not only informative, but has effects in later stages of the life of faith. Through His silence, the respondents got to know Him better, to better understand His way of working in relation to people, they became aware of the real needs of their inner selves. The most difficult to overcome vices of the soul, the so-called sins of the spirit, such as anger, pride, fear, unbelief, etc. they found resolution or mitigation in sequences of God's silence. When asked how they would react, if they had to go through the same experience again, most start their answer with "I would know how to...". Even if it is subordinated to a certain extent to the facilitating function of logos in rhema, or often intersects with it, we believe that the pedagogical function is well outlined within the divine silence.

Setting out with the intention of analyzing the dynamics of God's silence in relation to His Word, I discovered the depth of His silence and the potential it has to offer for the life of the believer. Based on the main thesis of this work, the fact that God's silence does not only mark the absence of sound, but is full of meaning, I discovered, during this work, the unsuspected depths and riches of God's silence. In my inner man, as one who loves silence and solitude, I discovered in my way of being a reflection of the wonderful way in which God chooses to speak through silence. Glory to Him!

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