

**Towards an African Pentecostal Feminist Biblical Hermeneutic
of Liberation: Interpreting Acts 2:1-47 in the Context of
Botswana**

By

Rosinah Mmannana Gabaitse
208529129

Submitted in Fulfilment of the Academic
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the subject of

Biblical Studies

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

(Pietermaritzburg Campus)

October 2012

Supervisors

Professor Jonathan Draper and Professor Sarojini Nadar

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

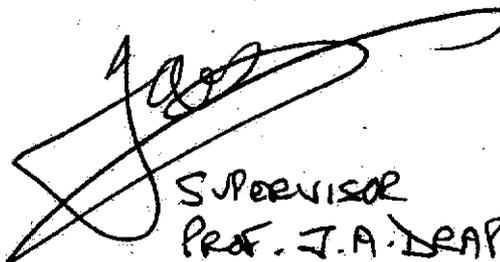
DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

I, Rosinah Mmannana Gabaltse declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced.
 - b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Signed




SUPERVISOR
Prof. J.A. DRAPER

Co-Supervisor



Prof. S. Nadar

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my great grandmother Bothepha Moatshe who prophetically called me a doctor from when I was still in primary school doing standard one. She and I were separated by two generations, yet we shared a deep friendship until she died in 2006 at a very old age. She raised, protected and loved me and my siblings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to God for God's love, mercy, peace and joy that I experienced during my doctoral studies.

Many people contributed immensely towards the completion of this thesis. I owe them a debt of gratitude.

My deepest gratitude goes to my husband and friend Gobonaone Gasekhuthe Gabaitse for his unwavering support, encouragement, conversations and companionship. Not only was he an exceptional father to our young sons Rami Ame and twin boys Thami Ao! and Lemi Awetse, he had to carry the burden of separation for four years.

My deepest appreciation goes to my sons for their unconditional love. For such a young age, they demonstrated a maturity and understanding that amazes me even today. Thank you for the hugs, drawings and the knocks on my door asking about the progress of the "thesis".

My sincere gratitude goes to my family especially my mother Onalenna Noko, who stood by me and voluntarily moved in with my family to help my husband raise our sons. For a woman who has never attended formal school, her encouragement to me to complete this thesis is profound. Special thanks to my sisters Dintle Kelebogang and Marata Kelebogang who took turns to care for my sons. I am grateful to my adopted parents Papadi and Hiskia Nguvauva and their children who supported and loved me, G.G. and our sons as their own. They have demonstrated Christ-like love to my family for years and that is humbling.

I thank my supervisors Professor Jonathan Alfred Draper and Professor Sarojini Nadar for their assistance and encouragement even when I doubted my ability to see this project through. Your patience has made it possible for me to complete this thesis.

Special gratitude goes to John Stott Ministries (JSM) and the University of Botswana for their financial support through the years of my study. Through JSM I met amazing people who were not only interested in my academic work, but were also interested in my overall wellbeing as well. These include Bill Houston, Tiffany Randall and Elaine Vaden who went beyond their call of duty to support me. Thanks is due in no small measure to the Cherry Creek Presbyterian Church in Denver, Colorado, for their support through JSM. It is from this congregation that I met special people, among them Al Johnson and his family and Doris and David Van Valkenburg who loved and supported me in ways that continue to humble me.

To my many friends from Botswana who took turns to visit and care for my children in my absence, to pick me up from the bus stops and airports, to call and email, thank you. This is for you; for us.

I am also grateful to Professor Musa Dube, Professor Ezra Chitando, Professor Fidelis Nkomazana and Dr Simangaliso Kumalo for your constant friendship, encouragement and mentoring. Musa especially reminded me time and time again that I can complete this thesis. Special thank you goes to Professor Isabel Phiri and her family for welcoming me into their home and life as well as the many conversations we had at your office and home.

A special gratitude also goes to my friends at Princeton University, especially Alex Lenzo, Lauren Lake and Shirley Thomas for their friendship over the years. Special gratitude goes to Professors Yolanda Pierce and Elsie McKee for graciously allowing me into their homes and hearts. I would also like to thank Professor Beverly Gaventa for her insights on Luke-Acts.

My sincere and deepest gratitude goes to the Pentecostal women who eagerly participated in this research project. Thank you for allowing me to learn from you.

Abbreviations

1. CEDA= Citizen Empowerment and Development Agency
2. LEA= Local Enterprise Agency
3. JBL=*Journal of Biblical Literature*
4. JSOT=*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
5. JPT=*Journal of Pentecostal Theology*
6. JTS=*Journal of Theological Studies*
7. NACA= National AIDS Coordinating Agency
8. NIDPCM= *New Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*
9. SADC =Southern African Development Community
10. United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
11. WAD= Women Affairs Division
12. WILSA=Women and Law in Southern Africa

ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by my own experience as a Motswana Pentecostal woman who inhabits patriarchal spaces of both the Setswana cultures and the Pentecostal church. It highlights the status of women in Botswana society and the Pentecostal church. The study seeks to construct a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic through a contextual reading of selected texts from Luke-Acts with Pentecostal women in Botswana. The Pentecostal movement is growing exponentially throughout the world, especially in Africa. Botswana is not an exception. Studies on Pentecostalism indicate that the overwhelming membership of the Pentecostal churches is female, yet the teaching and leadership are largely male dominated. Further, women are marginalised within the Pentecostal spaces through Pentecostal hermeneutics. This is ironic because the contemporary Pentecostal church traces its origins to the Pentecost narrative in Acts 2 and their theologies emerge from Luke-Acts. On the face of it, Acts 2 and Luke-Acts encourages egalitarian existence between men and women. This means that Pentecostal beliefs and doctrines are supposed to be inherently inclusive and yet accusations of gender exclusion are often levelled against Pentecostalism. Therefore, one of the other aims of this study is to explore how Pentecostal hermeneutics advances gender exclusion, and how that is contrary to the theologies that Acts 2:1-47 embody.

Using narrative and feminist hermeneutical principles, the study engages with Acts 1-2 in order to establish the importance of using this text to construct a liberating Pentecostal hermeneutic. Further, Acts 1-2 are situated within the larger context of Luke-Acts and women.

In order to gain insights from Pentecostal men and women about the status of women in the church and home, Pentecostal hermeneutics, and Luke-Acts, qualitative data collection methods were employed. These are focus groups, in depth interviews, participant observation and the Contextual Bible study (CBS). The data from the different research contexts is used throughout the chapters so that there is no specific chapter on data analysis. The data is filtered through feminist theoretical framework of analysis.

The research sample consists of 51 Pentecostal women and 3 pastors from two different churches located in Molepolole, Gaborone and Mogobane. The ages of the women range from 17-73. The literacy levels also differ; some have never attended formal schools while some had diplomas and degrees in different disciplines.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER PAGE	i
DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	vii
CHAPTER 1	1
BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION	1
1.0. Introduction	1
1.1. The Centrality of Acts 2 within the Pentecostal Movement	1
1.2. Experience of Marginalization within Pentecostal Churches	3
1.3. Oppressive Interpretative Practices within Pentecostal Churches	4
1.4. The Growth of Pentecostalism	7
1.5. Research Questions	8
1.6. Research Objectives	8
1.7. Hypothesis	8
1.8. Theoretical Framework	8
1.8.1. Feminist Hermeneutics at the Level of the Text	9
1.8.2. Feminist Hermeneutics: Level of Interpretation	11
1.8.2.1. Male Leadership and Biblical Interpretation	11

1.8.2.2. Patriarchal African Cultures and Churches	12
1.8.2.2.1. Pentecostalism is Liberational?	14
1.8.2.2.2. Ambivalent Attitudes Prevail	14
1.8.3. Feminist Hermeneutics: Level of Reconstruction	17
1.8.3.1. Resisting Readers	18
1.8.3.2. Interrogate both the Oppressive and Liberating Aspects of African Cultures	19
1.9. Research Methods	20
1.10. Structure of Dissertation and Chapter Outline	21
1.11. Chapter Summary	23
CHAPTER 2	24
RESEARCH PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY	24
2.0. Introduction	24
2.1. Empirical, Qualitative, Exploratory and Textual Research	24
2.1.1. Empirical Methods	24
2.1.2. Qualitative Research	25
2.1.3. Exploratory Research	26
2.2. The Research Design	26
2.2.1. The Process of gathering data	29
2.3. Ethical Considerations	32
2.4. Textual Approach	33
2.4.1. Narrative Approach: The Who, When, Where, What, Why and How of the Text	33
2.4.2. Reader Response Criticism; Readers, Filling Gaps and Ambiguities	34
2.5. A detailed Description of Methods of Data Collection	36

2.5.1. Focus Groups	36
2.5.2. Contextual Bible Study (CBS)	38
2.5.2.1. The Aims and Importance of CBS	38
2.5.2.2. The Reader's Context is Central	39
2.5.2.3. CBS Provides a Safe Space for Women	40
2.5.2.4. CBS as an Instrument of Data Collection	41
2.5.2.5. To Conscientize or Not?	41
2.5.2.6. The Role of the Facilitator	44
2.5.3. In-depth Open-ended Interviews	45
2.5.3.1. In-depth Open-ended Interviews with the Pastors	46
2.5.4. Participant Observation	46
2.6. The Role of the Researcher	47
2.6.1. Detached Observer	47
2.6.2. Empathetic Observer	48
2.6.3. Faithful Reporter	48
2.6.4. Mediator of Language	48
2.6.5. Reflective Partner	48
2.6.6. Dialogic Facilitator	49
2.6.7. Locating myself as a Researcher	49
2.6.8. Reflexivity	49
2.7. Judging the Success of the CBS and Focus Groups	52
2.8. Capturing Data	53
2.10. Summary	55

CHAPTER 3	56
THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN BOTSWANA	56
3.0. Introduction	56
3.1. Patriarchy in Botswana	57
3.1.1. Language and Leadership	58
3.1.2. Leadership within the Judiciary and the House of Chiefs	59
3.1.3. Marriage and Family Life	59
3.1.4. Marital Power Act and Male Dominance	60
3.1.5. Operation of a Dual Legal System: Customary Law and Civil Law	61
3.1.6. Maintenance of Male Power through <i>Bogadi</i>	64
3.1.6.1. <i>Bogadi</i> and Women’s Reproductive and Sexual Rights	66
3.1.6.2. <i>Bogadi</i> and Marital Rape	67
3.1.6.2.1 Implications for Men’s Control over Women’s Sexuality	67
3.1.6.2.2. Women and Abuse	68
3.1.6.2.3. Women and Inheritance Laws	69
3.2. Economic Situation of Women in Botswana	71
3.2.1. Men Dominate the Economic Structures	71
3.2.2. Female Headed Households below the Poverty Datum Line	72
3.3. Steps towards Positive Change	73
3.3.1. Botswana Commits to Eradicating Gender Discrimination	73
3.3.2. National Organizations Fighting for Gender Equality	73
3.3.3. Amendment of Oppressive Civil Laws	74
3.3.4. Education	74

3.3.5. Migration into the City	75
3.4. Radical Change is needed to Overcome Sexism	75
3.5. Summary	76
CHAPTER 4	77
PENTECOSTAL HERMENEUTICS: BIBLE, HOLY SPIRIT, COMMUNITY AND EXPERIENCE	77
4.0. Introduction	77
4.1. The Two Kinds of Pentecostal Hermeneutics	77
4.1.1. Unarticulated Pentecostal Hermeneutics	78
4.1.1.1. Characteristics of Unarticulated Pentecostal Hermeneutics	78
4.1.1.2. The Bible Understood at Face Value	78
4.1.2. Articulated Hermeneutics	79
4.1.2.1. Characteristics of Articulated Hermeneutics	79
4.1.2.2. The Journey towards Articulated Pentecostal Hermeneutics	80
4.1.2.3. Articulated Pentecostal Hermeneutic is Born	81
4.2. Christopher Thomas Tridactic Model: Scripture, Spirit And Community	82
4.2.1. Community Comes Together First	82
4.2.2. Appeal to the Holy Spirit	83
4.2.3. From Context to the Bible	83
4.3. The Authority of the Bible	84
4.3.1. The Bible as the Inerrant Word of God	84
4.3.1.1. Propositional and Pietistic Inerrancy	85
4.3.1.2. Inerrancy and Literal Readings of the Bible	86
4.3.1.2.1. Consequences of Literalist Interpretation of the Bible	87

4.3.2. The Bible as the Infallible Word of God	87
4.3.3. The Bible as the Inspired Word of God	88
4.3.3.1. Plenary Verbal Inspiration	88
4.3.3.2. Limitations of Plenary Verbal Inspiration	88
4.3.4. The Bible as the Immediate Word of God	89
4.3.4.1. Implications of the Bible as the Immediate Word of God	90
4.4. The Difference between Pentecostal Scholars' and Pentecostals believers' views on the Authority of the Bible	91
4.5. The Holy Spirit and Pentecostal Hermeneutics	92
4.5.1. Pentecostal Community and its existence defined by the Holy Spirit	92
4.5.2. The Holy Spirit Makes the Bible Authoritative and Transformative	94
4.5.3. The Holy Spirit as the Inspirer and Illuminator of the Bible, Then and Now	94
4.5.4. The Holy Spirit Gives the Bible New Meaning and Makes it Contextual	95
4.6. Community and Pentecostal Hermeneutics	96
4.6.1. The Pentecostal Community is Unique	96
4.6.2. Four Major Roles of a Pentecostal Community within Pentecostal Hermeneutics	98
4.6.3. Critique of the Role of Pentecostal Community within Pentecostal Hermeneutics	98
4.7. Experience and Pentecostal Hermeneutics	99
4.7.1. Critique of Experience	100
4.8. Summary	100
CHAPTER 5	102
PENTECOSTAL HERMENEUTICS AND THE MARGINALISATION OF WOMEN	102
5.0. Introduction	102
5.1. Literalist Reading of the Bible and the Marginalisation of Women	103

5.1.1. Selective Literalism	103
5.1.2. First Ladies and Jezebels	104
5.1.3. Literal Interpretations of the Bible and Headship of the Man	105
5.1.4. Literalist Readings are Dangerous	106
5.1.4.1. Literalist Readings and Violence against Women	107
5.1.4.2. Literalist Readings and Sex as “Act of Submission”	108
5.1.5. The Ambivalence of Literalist Readings	110
5.2. Proof Texting and the Marginalisation of Women	111
5.2.1. Proof Texting: A Double Edged Hermeneutical Strategy	112
5.2.1.1. Proof Texting and the Production of Stereotypes about Women	112
5.2.1.2. Proof Texting Determines Practice	113
5.3. Patriarchal Trinitarian Theology and the Subordination of Women	115
5.4. Christology and the Marginalization of Pentecostal Women	118
5.4.1. Emulating Christ’s Suffering	118
5.4.2. Emulating Christ’s Forgiveness	119
5.5. Summary	120
CHAPTER 6	122
LUKE-ACTS AND THE PRESENTATION OF WOMEN	122
6.0. Introduction	122
6.1. The Greco-Roman World of the Mediterranean Region during the First Century	122
6.1.1. The Political Situation of the Mediterranean Region during the First Century	122
6.1.2. Hierarchy and the Roman Empire	123
6.3. The Status of Roman Women	124

6.4. The Status of Jewish Women	126
6.4.1 Women's Roles and Inheritance	126
6.4.2. Women's Testimony	127
6.4.3. Women and Education	127
6.5. Patriarchal Jewish and Roman Contexts	128
6.6. Centrality of Gender to Luke-Acts	129
6.6.1. Luke Has More Stories about Women	129
6.6.2. Male-Female Parallelism	129
6.7. Scholarship on Luke and Women	130
6.8. Luke-Acts is Positive towards Women	130
6.8.1. Ben Witherington III	130
6.8.2. Reflections on Witherington's Position	131
6.9. Luke-Acts Silences and Subordinates Women	132
6.9.1. Jane Schaberg	132
6.9.2. Mary Rose D'Angelo	134
6.9.3. Reflections on Schaberg and D'Angelo's Positions	135
6.10. Luke-Acts is Ambivalent Towards Women	137
6.10.1. Turid Seim	137
6.10.2. Gail O'Day	139
6.10.3. Barbara Reid	142
6.10.4. Reflections on Seim, O'Day and Reid Positions	143

6.11. “Defending” Luke-Acts’ Ambivalence	145
6.11.1. Ambivalence due to Constrains of the Empire and the Patriarchal Surrounding Cultures	145
6.11.2. Luke has a Vision about Women	146
6.11.3. A Woman is Called μαθήτρια	146
6.11.4. I Will Pour Out My Spirit upon All Flesh	147
6.12. Summary	148
CHAPTER 7	149
FEMINIST AND NARRATIVE EXEGESIS OF ACTS 2:1-47	149
7.0. Introduction	149
7.1. The Application of the Narrative Approach	149
7.2. The Application of the Hermeneutic of Suspicion	150
7.3. Acts 1: The Immediate Context of Acts 2	151
7.4. Acts 2: Fulfilment of Prophecy	157
7.5. Summary	169
CHAPTER 8	170
PENTECOST AS A CRITIQUE OF PATRIARCHY	170
8.0. Introduction	170
8.1. The Application of Reader Response Approach	170
8.2. The Importance of Luke-Acts within Pentecostal Churches	171
8.3. The Centrality of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts	172
8.3.1. The Holy Spirit and Salvation History	172
8.3.2. The Holy Spirit and the Jewish-Gentile Tension	173
8.3.3. The Holy Spirit and Structures of Oppression	174
8.4. "What does this mean?" - Understanding Pentecost	175

8.4.1. Pentecost: A Never Ending Story	175
8.4.2. Pentecost Levels Inequality	176
8.4.3. Pentecost: Transforming Spaces of Oppression into Spaces of Liberation	178
8.4.4. Pentecost Critiques Luke-Acts: “All Prophecies shall be fulfilled.”	179
8.5. Summary	181
CHAPTER 9	182
PRINCIPLES OF A PENTECOSTAL FEMINIST HERMENEUTIC	182
9.0. Introduction	182
9.1. Introducing the Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic	183
9.2. The Principles of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic	184
9.2.1. The First Principle : the Spirit-led Bible Interpretation is Life Giving and Life Affirming	184
9.2.2. The Second Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Acts 2:1-47 should be a Standard that Determines Acceptable Interpretation within Pentecostal Circles	185
9.2.3. The Third Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Redeem the Spirit from a Masculine Voice	187
9.2.4. The Fourth Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: the Spirit Subverts Culture, the Bible and Pentecostal Community	189
9.2.5. The Fifth Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Consistency	190
9.2.5.1. The Selective Application of Narrative versus Didactic Texts	191
9.2.5.2 The application of the Authority of the Bible	192
9.2.5.2.1. Bible as Inerrant	192
9.2.5.2.2. Bible as the Inspired Word of God	193
9.2.5.2.3. Bible as Infallible	195
9.2.5.2.4. Bible as Immediate Word of God	195

9.2.6. The Sixth Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Interpretation Must Happen within a Community of Men and Women as Equals	196
9.2.7. The Seventh Hermeneutical Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutics: Focus on Spiritual Matters as well as the Social, Economic and Life Contexts of Women	197
9.2.7.1. Social Problems Need Prayer and a Social Solution	197
9.2.7.2. Focus on Experiences of Oppression	198
9.2.7.3. Salvation is Holistic	199
9.2.8. The Eighth Principle: Interpretation must be a Meeting Place of the Intellect and the Holy Spirit	200
9.3. Summary	202
CHAPTER 10	203
CONCLUSION	203
10.0 Thesis Conclusion	203
10.1. Recommendations for further research	207
BIBLIOGRAPHY	209
APPENDICES	220

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

1.0. Introduction

My interest in the Pentecostal church stems from my own experience as a Pentecostal. I became a member of the Pentecostal church in Botswana¹ when I was thirteen years old. Now I am in my thirties and still a member of the Pentecostal community, and I intend to make the Pentecostal community my home even in the years to come. In as much as I love the Pentecostal church, it has also been a source of pain and struggle for me as a woman. Over the years, I have observed that the Pentecostal church in Botswana is extremely patriarchal. I have seen, heard, known and experienced patriarchal exclusion in my Pentecostal community because I am a woman. For example, while my husband is instructed by the pastors to be the “head of the household” and to remember that he is in charge of our finances and the direction our family takes, I, on the one hand, am told that I am the “weaker sex” and therefore must submit to my husband and all other men in my life. This has increasingly stolen my joy in the sense that while by Pentecostal standards I am regarded as born again, saved, filled with the Holy Spirit, “Bible believing” and with a testimony, I am also told that I am a “weaker vessel” child of God because I am a woman. I have all that is required in Pentecostal theology to be treated as an equal member with male believers but the fact that I am a woman is the source of my being treated differently (see chapter 4 and 5). I also find irony in that the interpretation of the Bible, which is constantly called the “word of God,” is used to subordinate me and to keep me subservient to men. This is ironic because of the emphasis on the Holy Spirit and especially the inclusive and egalitarian space defined in Acts 2:17-18.

1.1. The Centrality of Acts 2 within the Pentecostal Movement

17 “In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,

¹ Botswana is a country in Southern Africa with a population of less than two million. The people of Botswana are called Batswana; the official native language spoken by all ethnic groups is called Setswana. The country attained independence in 1966 from Britain. It is a democratic multi-party state with elections held every 5 years. However there has only been one party, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), which has ruled the country since independence. The country has different ethnic groups, eight are classified as principal.

and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
18 Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy (NRSV).

The above verses from Luke-Acts² on the origin of Pentecost on the face of it provide a convincing reason for the inclusion and equality of women in the Christian church in general, and in the Pentecostal churches in particular.³ However, the Pentecostal movement in Africa⁴

² There is an overwhelming unity and consensus among Biblical scholars that the gospel of Luke and Acts are one book in two volumes written by the same author because of the similarity in style, thought, theology and language. Of particular interest to this study is the thematic structure of both books, especially about the work of the Holy Spirit which comes to a climax in the Pentecost narrative. See G. Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 89; C.H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and Genre of Luke Acts* (SBLMS 20; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1974), xii; F.S. Spencer, *The Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 23; R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985), 4. While it is safe to say the majority of scholars agree on the unity of Luke-Acts, there are some who do not on the basis of linguistic differences between the two. See for example A.C. Clark, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes on Selected Passages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 394-408. On the question of authorship, most scholars of Luke agree that Luke-Acts was written by Luke. See, R.C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986); E. Franklin, *Luke: Interpreter of Paul, Critic Of Matthew* (JSNTSup 92; Sheffield: JSOT, 1994); J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX* (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 36-62; H. Conzelmann and A. Lindemann, *Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the Principles and Methods of New Testament Exegesis* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1988), 234. Some scholars have suggested that the author of Luke-Acts was a woman, for example, J. Via, "Women in the Gospel of Luke," in *Women in the World's Religions: Past and Present*, ed. Ursula King (New York: Paragon House, 1987), 38-55, n.37-40; L. Swindler, *Biblical Affirmations of Women* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979). This conclusion has not found much support because of the masculine participle *παρηκολουθηκοτι* which the author uses to refer to himself. In the absence of any other information, this study will work on the assumption that Luke-Acts was composed by Luke, the sometime companion of Paul. However, this research does not seek to defend the authorship of Luke-Acts.

³ Scholars of Pentecostalism such as W. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 1 and A. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13-14, classify Pentecostal churches under three broad groupings: classical, neo-classical and charismatic movements. While I do not necessarily disagree with these distinctions, they are not helpful in the present Botswana contexts because all Pentecostals are charismatic and there is not much that separates what used to be the classical Pentecostal churches from the neo-Pentecostals or the charismatic movements, the lines between what used to be called classical Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals. These groups tend to have the same theologies especially the theology of the Holy Spirit; they have the same rituals and the same order and style of worship. In this study, Pentecostal refers to classical, neo classical and charismatic movements so as to capture their similarities. However, I do not include African Independent Churches (AIC's) in the same bracket of Pentecostalism as classical and neo-Pentecostal ministries, as some scholars like Anderson do. The reason is that their belief systems and practices are not the same nor do they seem to represent the same responses towards modernity. Including AICs as Pentecostal means co-opting them unilaterally from the side of the Pentecostals, when they do not see themselves as belonging in the same camp and while the classical and neo-Pentecostals do not accept them. In addition, AICs do not perceive themselves as Pentecostal in the same way that classical and neo-Pentecostals and charismatics perceive themselves.

⁴ Without taking away the fact that Africa is huge and heterogeneous, I am using Africa here to denote a geopolitical reality. Africans in their diverse spaces share common experiences, for example colonialism.

and Botswana is a site of tensions and paradoxes. On the surface, worship and practice appears democratic, yet research shows that through the use of the Bible women are expected to be submissive to men, and are unable to hold leadership positions.⁵ Further research also indicates that Acts 1 and 2 are a manifesto for Pentecostals as they claim that most of their theologies emerge from these verses. Yet, as this thesis will show, not all theologies that these texts embody are embraced within Pentecostal circles. Wynand de Kock argues that “Acts 1 and 2 are classical passages for Pentecostals. They are important because they provide a model for Pentecostal life and experience.”⁶ Furthermore, Asamoah-Gyadu has asserted that Pentecostals “center their Christianity on the experience of God the Holy Spirit, seeing this experience as the heartbeat of their faith.”⁷ Luke-Acts is important to Pentecostals because the Pentecostal identity revolves around the work of the Spirit. Wonsuk Ma has also asserted that Pentecostals perceive the Book of Acts as the basis for the majority of their beliefs and doctrines.⁸ The stories of Pentecost in Acts 1 and 2, opens an egalitarian space for all people, men and women, young people and even slaves. Therefore it becomes all the more difficult to understand why the Pentecostal hermeneutic elevates the male over the female if these texts are classical for Pentecostals. Pentecostals in Africa and abroad claim for example, that “the leadership within a family is vested in the husband and father (Eph. 5:22-6:4).”⁹ It is ironic that the one church which claims to follow the experience of Pentecost does not live up to its name in terms of the gender injustice which it propagates. This thesis explores this further in chapter 4 and 5.

1.2. Experience of Marginalization within Pentecostal Churches

It is not just me who has experienced such marginalization but I have witnessed too how women who experienced the call to be pastors were sent to Bible schools but, unlike their male colleagues, they were not given churches to pastor, but were made Sunday school

Further, African women are marginalized by patriarchal African cultures even though the marginalization takes different shapes and expressions.

⁵ M. Masenya, *How Worthy is the Woman of Worth: Rereading Proverbs 31:10-31 in African-South Africa* (New York: Peter Lang Publishers, 2004), 2, 8.

⁶ Wynand J. de Kock, “Pentecostal Power for a Pentecostal Task: Empowerment through Engagement in South African Context,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 16 (2000), 104.

⁷ K. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 7.

⁸ Wonsuk Ma, “Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal Tradition: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,” in *The Globalisation of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made To Travel*, eds. M. Dempster, B. Klaus, D. Petersen (Oxford: Regnum, 1999), 62-64.

⁹ V.S. Poythress, “The Church as Family: Why Male Leadership in the Family Requires Male Leadership in the Church,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, eds. J. Piper and W. Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1991), 241.

teachers for a very long time. I have witnessed how women struggled to be allowed into ministry and how even today a wife of a pastor who is herself a trained pastor is subjugated due to her gender.¹⁰ This marginalization that I, together with many other Pentecostal women experience, I would argue, is due to a considerable extent to the non liberatory ways in which the Bible is interpreted.

1.3. Oppressive Interpretative Practices within Pentecostal Churches

It must be noted that most African scholars, especially male scholars of Pentecostalism, tend to pay attention to the emancipatory role of the Holy Spirit while little or no attention is paid to the oppressive interpretative practices with regard to the Bible.¹¹ In Africa, feminist scholars¹² of Pentecostalism such as Madipoane Masenya cited above, Sarojini Nadar and Rekopantswe Mate have begun to pay attention to the oppressive nature of biblical texts towards women. For example, Nadar argues that some women have stayed in abusive marriages because God hates divorce and the “Bible says so”.¹³ Mate, writing within a Zimbabwean context, argues that the Pentecostal movement advances teachings about childbirth, home keeping and marriage by using the Bible. These teachings perpetuate and maintain patriarchal ideologies such as female submission. By encouraging women, especially married women, to be submissive to their husbands, Mate suggests that patriarchal

¹⁰ A well-known Pentecostal woman in Botswana, Toro Etsile (not her real name), has a Masters in Theology and is an ordained pastor in one of the prominent Pentecostal churches in Botswana. Her husband is also a pastor in the same church. She is not allocated a church to pastor on her own, but she works under her husband as a “co-pastor”. This is problematic in light of the teachings of the church which call women into subordination; her being a co-pastor is one way in which she is put in her “position” as a Motswana woman. See a similar report, although in a different context than Botswana, in S. Nadar, “Journeying in Faith: The Stories of Two Ordained Indian Women in the Anglican and Full Gospel Churches in South Africa,” in *Herstories: Hidden Histories of Women of Faith in Africa*, eds. I. Phiri, B. Govinden and S. Nadar (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2002), 144 -158.

¹¹ K. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); H. Cox, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Cassell, 1996).

¹² African scholars engaged in feminist work in different disciplines have pointed out the emerging and radical new forms of feminisms which embody the social, political and cultural experiences of African women. They have appropriated the term feminist to reflect the thrust of their work and their context. Masenya Madipoane uses *Bosadi* hermeneutic, a hermeneutic which takes seriously issues confronting women within her African South African context (Masenya, *How Worthy*, 119; “An African Methodology for South African Biblical Sciences: Revisiting the *Bosadi* (Womanhood) Approach,” *Old Testament Essays* 18 (3), (2005), 741-751). Sarojini Nadar uses the term *Womanist* because of her context as a South African Indian woman where issues of “colour and class” are significant to who she is. See S. Nadar, “A South African Indian Womanist Reading of the Character of Ruth,” in *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and The Bible*, ed. M. Dube (Atlanta: SBL, 2001), 159. I use the term *feminist* in this thesis, bearing in mind that feminist work is context specific and it takes different expressions. This work embodies the experiences of Pentecostal women in Botswana. In spite of how we name our work, the goal of feminism, to fight for the liberation of all people, remains.

¹³ S. Nadar, “‘The Bible Says!’ Feminism, Hermeneutics and Neo-Pentecostal Challenges,” *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 134 (July 2009), 153.

prerogatives are not threatened but reinforced.¹⁴ Thus patriarchy, which marginalises women, is made acceptable because it is ‘Christianised’ through the Bible. In other words, patriarchy is maintained through hermeneutics. She concludes that the Pentecostal church uses religious ideology to exert stricter controls on women.¹⁵ This thesis builds on their work by emphasizing that Pentecost and Luke-Acts narratives could be liberatory if they are taken seriously in regards to gender issues within Pentecostal hermeneutics.

The feminist scholars discussed above rightly point out that there is a link between the marginalization of women and biblical interpretation in the Pentecostal church. Given this link, which I will pursue strongly in chapter 5, and given the claim of the Pentecostal movement to model their theology on the original Pentecostal experience as recorded in Luke-Acts, my research question in this dissertation is, “Can the text of Luke-Acts in general and Acts chapter 2:1-47 in particular provide a basis for developing principles to construct a Pentecostal hermeneutic that is liberating for women?” Therefore the aim of this study is to construct a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic through a contextual reading of selected texts from Luke-Acts with Pentecostal women from Botswana. These are the women who inhabit the Pentecostal space and experience marginalization firsthand, but whose voices have not been heard. The strength of my study lies in the actual involvement with Pentecostal women in my community where men have authority over the interpretation of texts. Although women are not denied ordained ministry in Pentecostal churches in Botswana, in one of the churches under study, there is no woman who is an ordained pastor. In the second church, few women pastors are given a congregation of their own, and the rest are subordinated to a man. This means that women’s interpretive strategies are not known. Therefore, not only do I give women a voice in this study, I also explore how the present Pentecostal hermeneutics, which has a predominantly male voice and a tendency to promote gender inequality, excludes women and advances their marginalization.

Within the African academic context, the few women scholars in Biblical Studies come predominantly from the mainline Catholic and Protestant traditions. Writing within these traditions, they have provided valuable insights into women’s issues, alternative ways of reading the Bible and they have also provided insights through their writings on what church ought to be and how biblical interpretation within those traditions can be empowering

¹⁴ R. Mate, “Wombs as God’s Laboratories: Pentecostal Discourses on Femininity in Zimbabwe,” *Africa, Journal of the International African Institute* 72, no. 4 (2002), 566.

¹⁵ Mate, “Wombs as God’s Laboratories,” 566.

towards women. However, insights about how Pentecostal hermeneutics marginalizes women have not received much attention thus far, except for a few.¹⁶ It is this gap that this study seeks to address. African feminist biblical scholars, while aiming to read the Bible in more liberating ways, have not fully engaged with the realities and ways in which Pentecostals, and Pentecostal women especially, read the Bible and how the Pentecostal hermeneutic can both be empowering and oppressive. For example, Pentecostals approach the Bible from a hermeneutics of trust versus the hermeneutic of suspicion that feminist scholars embody. To most Pentecostals, the Bible is the liberating word of God and the patriarchal world that produced the Bible and the history of the Bible does not matter, whereas feminists approach the Bible suspiciously, recognizing the patriarchal worldview and bias of the biblical authors. The Pentecostal's approach to the Bible has implications for gender inequality and the oppression of Pentecostal women.

Further, while the Holy Spirit has always been central as a liberatory element within mainline and Protestant feminist biblical scholarship theologically, it has not been grounded hermeneutically. Protestant feminist scholars observe that the Hebrew word for Spirit *ruach* is feminine in gender (though neuter in Greek) and since the Spirit is regarded as an equal partner in the Trinity, this has enabled them to argue that the Spirit represents the creative, nurturing aspect of God, thus acting as a counterpoint to a male "father" and a male "son". Although feminist biblical scholars recognize the liberatory role that the Holy Spirit plays theologically in their quest for a theology of liberation, the role the Holy Spirit plays hermeneutically is not central in the hermeneutics of feminist scholars.¹⁷ Pentecostals on the one hand not only have a dependence on the Holy Spirit and trace this dependence back to the original Pentecostal experience as recorded in Luke-Acts, they place the role of the Holy Spirit at the centre of their hermeneutics; the Holy Spirit is fore-grounded hermeneutically (see chapter 4). This is my point of divergence with most feminist scholars; not only do I foreground the Holy Spirit theologically; I do so hermeneutically as well. Further, I also foreground the experiential aspect of the Holy Spirit. The liberating power of the Holy Spirit is not just on issues of theology but the Holy Spirit is also experienced by men and women as a power that liberates. This goes to say that once the Holy Spirit is placed at the centre of

¹⁶ See for example, S. Nadar, "On Being the Pentecostal Church: Pentecostal Women's Voices and Visions," in *On Being Church: African Women's Voices and Visions*, eds. I. Phiri and S. Nadar (Geneva: WCC, 2007), 60-78; S. Nadar, "'The Bible Says!' Feminism, Hermeneutics and Neo-Pentecostal Challenges," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 134 (July 2009), 131-146; Masenya, *How Worthy*; D. Olubanke, *The Ministry of Women in Lucan Narratives: A Model for Aladura Churches in Nigeria* (Ibadan: AASR, 2005).

¹⁷ See for example S. Rackoczy, *In Her Name: Women Doing Theology* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004).

hermeneutics within Pentecostal hermeneutic, the hermeneutic must necessarily be liberatory because the Holy Spirit is inherently liberatory. However, in spite of this, the liberatory role of the Holy Spirit is not necessarily emphasised and recognised, especially when it comes to elevating the status of women. This is the reality of Pentecostal frames of reading that do need to be engaged. Mary McClintock Fulkerson argues in her book *Changing the Subject: Women's Discourses and Feminist Theology* that feminist hermeneutics does not account for Pentecostal women's interpretation and performance of Scripture.¹⁸

1.4. The Growth of Pentecostalism

While feminist hermeneutics and mainstream biblical studies seem to pay little attention to the central role of the Holy Spirit in the process of interpretation within Pentecostalism, the Pentecostal movement is growing in leaps and bounds. This has wide-ranging implications for women; women join the movement in large numbers and Pentecostalism can influence women's positions in the society. Pentecostal studies indicate that Pentecostalism is the fastest growing Christian movement in the world today and this exponential growth is evident in Africa and Latin America. Pentecostal scholars point out that Pentecostalism is proliferating and reshaping the nature of Christianity globally.¹⁹ The massive growth of Pentecostalism in Africa and in Botswana makes it imperative to investigate Pentecostal frames of reading and the status of women within the movement. This is one of my objectives in this thesis: to construct a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic, a hermeneutic that recognises that as much as the Bible or Scripture is central to Pentecostals, it is also used to advance and sustain their marginalisation. This is in its own way self-contradictory because once the Holy Spirit is at the centre of Pentecostalism and especially their hermeneutic, then there should be no place for the marginalisation of women because every passage in the Bible should be interpreted in the light of the liberatory aspect of the Holy Spirit. As such, studies in different African contexts have to engage with the ways in which Pentecostal hermeneutics, which is characterized by an inherent belief in infallibility of scripture, can be life-denying to women.

¹⁸ M. McClintock Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject: Women's Discourse and Feminist Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), vii.

¹⁹ R. Akoko, "Ask and You shall be Given": *Pentecostalism and the Economic Crisis in Cameroon* (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2007), 2-3; M.L. Tan-Chow, *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty-First Century: Engaging with Multi-Faith Singapore* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007); A. Anderson, "Pentecostalism in India and China in the Early Twentieth Century and Inter-Religious Relation," in *Global Pentecostalism: Encounters with Other Religions*, ed. D. Westerlund (London: I.B. Taurus, 2009), 118; P. Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

1.5. Research Questions

My key sub-questions are:

1. What is the status of women in general in the Botswana context?
2. How is women's marginalization related to biblical interpretation in the Pentecostal church?
3. What are the principles of traditional Pentecostal hermeneutics of laypeople and scholars within the Pentecostal tradition?
4. What is the significance of the original Pentecostal experience, as recorded in Luke-Acts to the development of Pentecostal theology globally and the Botswana context in particular?
5. How can the text of Luke-Acts be exegeted using the insight of Pentecostal women in Botswana and feminist scholars in order to develop a liberating hermeneutic that is affirming of women?

1.6. Research Objectives

Therefore my objectives in this dissertation are:

1. To describe the cultural and social status of women in Botswana today.
2. To establish whether women's marginalization is due largely to biblical interpretation in the Pentecostal church.
3. To demonstrate the significance of the original Pentecostal experience as recorded in Luke-Acts for contemporary Pentecostals in Botswana.
4. To describe the principles of Pentecostal hermeneutics, as developed by laypeople and scholars within the Pentecostal tradition.
5. To exegete Acts 2:1-47 using the insights provided by Lukan scholars and Pentecostal women, in order to justify why these text can be instrumental in affirming women and men within the Pentecostal church. Further, exegeting these texts will be instrumental in developing principles for a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic that is liberating for women.

1.7. Hypothesis

My hypothesis is that existing Pentecostal hermeneutics have contributed to the marginalization of women, and that a more liberating Pentecostal hermeneutic, based on feminist principles is needed, in order to affirm women.

1.8. Theoretical Framework

This section highlights the main features of the approach I will use in the writing of my thesis. The application of this framework will unfold in the chapters which follow. In order to demonstrate the validity of my hypothesis, I will be guided by a broad feminist hermeneutical approach. Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, has asserted that the Bible must be read in “both a deconstructive and reconstructive mode”.²⁰ I would suggest that feminist biblical hermeneutics have three tasks to fulfill. The first is to expose the patriarchy and androcentricism at the level of the biblical text. The second task is to highlight the ways in which this patriarchy is taken up and is enacted through interpretation. The third task is to critically engage with the ways in which these patriarchal texts and interpretations can be subverted and be used for liberating purposes. In other words, the task of feminist biblical hermeneutics at this level is to develop new strategies for reading that will empower women. Below I shall discuss each of these tasks in turn.

1.8.1. Feminist Hermeneutics at the Level of the Text

According to Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, a feminist hermeneutical approach is a “theoretical exploration of the exegetical and socio-cultural presuppositions of biblical interpretation in the interest of women....”²¹ It is with the latter part of Schüssler-Fiorenza’s statement that my predominant focus lies – that is “in the interest of women”. Feminist hermeneutics is a conscious way of reading the Bible that exposes and resists the patriarchal presentation of women in the text. It is suspicious of male bias, exclusion and silencing of women in biblical narratives. Critical feminist hermeneutics also highlights how the Bible with its androcentric character “constructs gender and feminine representation”.²²

At the level of the text, feminist hermeneutics begin with a “hermeneutics of suspicion”. A hermeneutic of suspicion identifies the Bible first and foremost as a male-centred book²³ and seeks to expose the patriarchal male bias embedded in biblical texts, for the Bible was written by males, it is about males and was produced in patriarchal cultures. According to some

²⁰ E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *Sharing Her Word: Feminist Biblical Interpretation in Context* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), 76.

²¹ E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 20.

²² Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said*, 34.

²³ Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said*, 53.

scholars “androcentrism pervades the Bible”²⁴ and women are viewed through the male gaze. Further they hold that “all biblical texts are articulated in grammatically masculine language – a language which is embedded in a patriarchal culture, religion, and society...”²⁵ Most biblical texts have a patriarchal function and therefore the hermeneutic of suspicion seeks to interrogate texts in order to unmask the patriarchal function but also to unmask racism, anti-Semitism, colonialism, militarism and other forms of injustices and exploitations which Schüssler-Fiorenza calls kyriarchy.²⁶ Mary Ann Tolbert also writes that “the Bible is often misogynistic and anti-Semitic, thoroughly androcentric and patriarchal... and it continues to exercise power over women, and other oppressed groups like homosexuals, a form of textual harassment...”²⁷

Feminist biblical interpretation also exposes patriarchal and androcentric readings that tend to “read out” the key role of women and minority groups in biblical narratives. Using a hermeneutics of suspicion and remembrance, feminist scholars retrieve the central roles played by women within early Christianity. Feminist biblical interpretation exposes male biases in traditional biblical interpretation and reconstructs the suppressed memory of women characters in the Bible. This is a major development as it has enabled contemporary women to realize that women in early Christianity were major actors in the history of their faith and to acknowledge that women played a bigger role in the Bible than reception history may have led us to believe.²⁸

Besides exposing patriarchy in the text, African women and women of the Two-Thirds world have also been interested in the cultural, racial, class and imperial nature of biblical texts. For example, Musa Dube argues that patriarchy and imperialism as forms of domination and exploitation within biblical texts have to be exposed for “canonical texts are not just patriarchal but also imperial”.²⁹

²⁴ G.W. Stroup, “Between Echo and Narcissus: The Role of the Bible in Feminist Theology,” *Interpretation* 42, no. 1 (1988), 24.

²⁵ Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said*, 53.

²⁶ E. Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Will to Choose and to Reject: Continuing Our Critical Work,” ed. Letty Russell, *Feminist Interpretation of The Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1995), 130.

²⁷ M.A. Tolbert, “Protestant Feminists and the Bible: On the Horns of a Dilemma,” in *The Pleasure of Her Text: Feminist Readings of Biblical and Historical Texts* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 12.

²⁸ M. Oeming, *Contemporary Biblical Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (England: Ashgate, 2006), 106.

²⁹ M.W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretations of the Bible* (St Louis: Chalice, 2000), 95, 108.

1.8.2. Feminist Hermeneutics: Level of Interpretation

The second level of feminist biblical hermeneutics, that is, the level of interpretation, or the ways in which the text has been taken up and used in tangible and concrete ways to oppress women, has not been as much of a focus in Western feminist interpretation as it has been for Two-Thirds World women. While feminist biblical scholars in the West are interested in the ways in which interpretation of the bible has been used against women, they have not always overtly engaged with grassroots women about the ways in which such interpretations affect them. Two-Thirds World women, particularly African women, take the ways in which the Bible is used to oppress them not just as a starting point of their hermeneutical endeavor but as an integral part of it. Two factors have led to the growth of African women biblical hermeneutics: male leadership and biblical interpretation; and patriarchal African cultures and churches.

1.8.2.1. Male Leadership and Biblical Interpretation

In Africa, political, legal and economic systems have favoured men and disadvantaged women. These factors have led to men dominating within the church and society although women are the majority. Additionally, it is men who have held teaching positions in seminaries, universities, Bible colleges and other institutions that contribute to knowledge of the Bible in Africa, so that “women have remained dependent on male exegesis and theology”.³⁰ There is no doubt that the Bible in Africa is a very important book, yet for a long time the interpretation of the Bible has been dominated by male scholars and church leaders. This meant that it was read from androcentric standpoints to justify the oppression of women, “using outdated exegetical methods that enthrone an uncritical use of biblical texts against women”,³¹ and this has contributed to the low social status of women by denying them leadership positions on the basis of selective readings of scriptures which seem to endorse patriarchy as God’s will.³² The fact that it is men who interpret the Bible for women means that they are able to advance gender inequality as willed by God, thus continuing the marginalization and subordination of women. In addition, if it is men who are in control of Biblical exegesis and interpretation, it means women’s experiences are taken for granted and

³⁰ M.A. Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa* (Ghana: Regnum, 2002), 98.

³¹ Masenya, *How Worthy*, 2.

³² Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, 93.

their voices are silenced. Brigalia Bam charges that there are many communities where “[t]he Bible continues to be used and abused in order to exclude and oppress women”.³³

Male dominance has meant that it is men who get access to education; it is men who have acted as religious leaders and interpreters of sacred texts in most religions across the world, and women’s voices are silenced or excluded completely. Powerful males have absolutised their positions ahead of those of women and less powerful men.³⁴ Academic disciplines including biblical studies have traditionally been dominated by men because patriarchy has privileged men to have access to power in various aspects of life. Men and women have been socialised to see patriarchy as “the natural order of things”. In theology and biblical studies, male perspectives have been dominant particularly since religion is the primary driving force for gender construction, especially in African contexts. Consequently, male scholars in the church, home and academy have controlled the study and interpretation of the Bible.

1.8.2.2. Patriarchal African Cultures and Churches

Most African societies and traditions are patriarchal, men are privileged to have access to power in various aspects of life and male is the norm.³⁵ Women are placed in subordinate position and are regarded as secondary members of society. Culture then becomes a tool for oppression and domination for women.³⁶ The meeting of African cultures with the patriarchal tendencies within Christianity and colonial imperialistic policies has further oppressed and marginalised women.

Furthermore, the church in Africa is also extremely patriarchal.³⁷ “[W]e see the visible manifestation of patriarchal structures and hierarchies...in the church or in African cultures wherever we encounter the subordination of women’s services or a refusal to listen to

³³ B. Bam, “Women and the Church in (South) Africa: Women are the Church in South Africa,” in *On Being Church: African Women’s Voices and Visions*, eds. Isabel A. Phiri and Sarojini Nadar (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005), 13.

³⁴ E. Schüssler Fiorenza, “Method in Women’s Studies in Religion: A Critical Feminist Hermeneutic,” in *Methodology in Religious Studies: The Interface with Women’s Studies*, ed. Arvind Sharma (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 207-241. See also Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, 98.

³⁵ D. Ramodibe, “Women and Men Building Together the Church in Africa,” in *With Passion and Compassion: Third World Women Doing Theology*, eds. V.M.M. Fabella, and M.A. Oduyoye (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996), 14.

³⁶ M.A. Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women’s Theology* (Orbis: Maryknoll, 2001), 12, 28; Women’s NGO Coalition and SARDC WIDSAA, *Beyond Inequalities, Women in Botswana*, (Gaborone and Harare: Southern African Research Documentation Centre, 2005), 40; Masenya, *How Worthy*, 2.

³⁶ Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women’s Theology*, 12, 28.

³⁷ Ramodibe, “Women and Men Building,” 14.

women's voices."³⁸ African women scholars have criticised the church for being oppressive towards women, where women are 'treated as minors', 'looked down upon', 'seen as inferior'³⁹ as 'unfinished handiwork of God' and as 'children'.⁴⁰ The reality is that women are the majority in churches but their gifts are not fully utilised, their experiences and their voices remain silent and they continue to be excluded from major leadership roles and decision making.⁴¹ This is most evident in the Pentecostal churches. Boundaries of exclusion exist along gender lines within the Pentecostal movement worldwide, in Africa, Asia, and in the West.⁴² The growth of the Pentecostal movement has particular implications for women in Africa and indeed globally because there is a "critical mass of women in the Pentecostal movements".⁴³ Although the overwhelming membership of Pentecostal churches globally is female, its leadership and teaching remain male dominated. Field results from Botswana have confirmed this fact, and will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Many African Pentecostal churches have been portrayed as patriarchal and resistant to gender transformation, their theology propagating gender injustice by reinforcing the idea of male supremacy.⁴⁴ The leadership model employed by Pentecostal churches has also been described as "very authoritarian and hierarchical", promoting male authority and hierarchical relationships.⁴⁵ Harvey Cox argues that Pentecostal frames of reading still insist that "the men must be the "head of the woman" at home, and also in the church".⁴⁶ Harvey Cox observes that the teaching and leadership of the Pentecostal movements remain male-dominated and women are excluded from positions of power. He writes:

But Pentecostalism has not always adhered to this egalitarian momentum,
both men and women have tried to undercut the Spirit's gender

³⁸ Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, 97.

³⁹ Ramodibe, "Women and Men Building," 16.

⁴⁰ R. Edet and B. Ekeya, "Church Women of Africa: A Theological Community," in Fabella and Oduyoye, *With Passion and Compassion*, 4.

⁴¹ Ramodibe, "Women and Men Building," 16.

⁴² M. Masenya, *How Worthy*, 1-5; Nadar, "'The Bible Says!'", Tan-Chow, *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty-First Century*, 136-138; J.A. Powers, "Recovering a Woman's Head with Prophetic Authority: A Pentecostal Reading of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16," *JPT* 10, no. 1 (2001), 27; Johns, *Pentecostal Formation*, 66; Jone Salomonsen, "The Dark Side of Pentecostal Enthusiasm: Abraham and Sara's Sacrifice in Knutby, Sweden," in *Spirits of Globalisation: The Growth of Pentecostalism and Experiential Spiritualities in a Global Age*, ed. S.J. Stalsett (London: SCM Press, 2006), 128.

⁴³ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, xii, 147.

⁴⁴ Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, 137; T. Maluleke and S. Nadar, "Breaking the Covenant of Violence against Women," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 114 (November 2002), 11.

⁴⁵ Salomonsen, "The Dark Side of Pentecostal Enthusiasm," 128; E. Alexander, "Introduction," in *Philip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, eds. E. Alexander and A. Yong (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications), 2.

⁴⁶ Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, 134.

impartiality...especially where Pentecostals insist on enforcing the dictum from 1 Corinthians 14: 34, which says that women should be silent in church.⁴⁷

Walter Hollenweger has remarked that the Pentecostal movement is accused of having “pushed to the background” the ministry of women.⁴⁸ Powers argues that Pentecostals have been “aborting the ministries of prophetically called women”.⁴⁹ Similarly, Cheryl Johns opines that not only is the Pentecostal church aborting the ministries of women, it continues to promote “biblical roles of men and women that restrict the ministry of women”.⁵⁰ Nadar and Masenya writing within the South African contexts also point out that Pentecostal frames of reading can be life denying to women.⁵¹ What is discernible from these scholars is that the marginalisation of women is a reality within the Pentecostal movement. While this is the case, Pentecostal pastors and members, especially in Botswana, hardly engage formally with how their frames of reading elevate the male over the female and the implications of this to the status of women. My thesis uses and expands the work of these scholars but goes further to argue that the marginalisation of women within the Pentecostal churches contradicts Acts 2, their central text.

Speaking within the Nigerian context, Ogbu Kalu argues that in Pentecostal churches, opposition to female leadership is voiced and at times even resented. Accordingly, “men tend to use the Bible to justify women’s exclusion or relegation to the periphery”.⁵² This thesis will largely confirm this argument by demonstrating that through Pentecostal frames of reading the Bible, women are made invisible and marginalized. This thesis will demonstrate that the marginalization of African women is structurally supported by biblical interpretation within Pentecostal traditions.

1.8.2.2.1. Pentecostalism is Liberational?

Notwithstanding the above, several scholars have pointed out the liberational potential of Pentecostal movements. Estrela Alexander argues that Pentecostalism promises greater

⁴⁷ Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, 125.

⁴⁸ Hollenweger, “Crucial Issues for Pentecostals,” in *Pentecostals After a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, eds. A. Anderson and W. Hollenweger (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 185. This is a telling phrase even though Hollenweger is making a point about a different issue and not necessarily arguing for the empowerment of women.

⁴⁹ J. Powers, “Pentecostalism 101: Your Daughters Shall Prophesy,” 149.

⁵⁰ C. Johns, “Spirited Vestments or Why the Anointing Is Not Enough,” in *Philip’s Daughters*, 174.

⁵¹ Nadar, “‘The Bible Says!’,” 133; Masenya, “The Sword that Heals,” 48-49.

⁵² Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 150.

freedom than other branches of Christianity. Women today are attracted to Pentecostalism because of its inherent promise of freedom to be fully involved in ministry.⁵³ Writing within the African Kenyan context, Philomena Mwaura agrees with Alexander in positively celebrating the liberational potential of Pentecostal movements. Mwaura hails Pentecostal movements as being gender friendly and thus opening up more spaces for women than other church denominations. She demonstrates that women in Pentecostal churches in Kenya not only enjoy greater freedom, but even critique some of Paul's prohibitions against women and situate these prohibitions within their own contexts.⁵⁴ She contrasts the women in the AIC's and Pentecostal movements and argues that Pentecostal churches are "not bound by any traditional or ecclesiastical restrictions".⁵⁵ Similarly, Ogbu Kala holds that Pentecostals provide a greater space for women versus that provided by the AIC's. He argues that AICs still limit women's roles "by sourcing their gender ideology from traditional society".⁵⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu also argues that:

The charismatic ministries do not impose any Levitical or traditional taboos on women. They regard these as being inconsistent with New Testament teachings particularly with the missionary experiences that followed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts.⁵⁷

Adelaide Boadi from Nigeria also celebrates and commends the ability of Pentecostalism to overturn gender inequality among men and women. She suggests that within the Pentecostal churches in Nigeria, husbands and wives "relate to each other on the basis of equality". However, in the same paragraph where she celebrates this equality she writes, that "men are admonished to love their wives and to treat them as they would themselves, and wives are encouraged to submit to their husbands".⁵⁸ What Boadi is pointing at, even though she is not conscious of it herself, is that the rhetoric of female submission is rampant, and because of that, little claim can be made that the Pentecostal biblical interpretation affords both men and

⁵³ Alexander, "Introduction," 2-3.

⁵⁴ Mwaura, P. "Gendered Appropriation of Mass Media in Kenyan Christianities: A Comparison of Two Women Led African Instituted Churches in Kenya," in *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*, eds. O.U. Kalu and A. Low (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 279.

⁵⁵ Mwaura, "Gendered Appropriation of Mass Media in Kenyan Christianities," 279.

⁵⁶ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 149.

⁵⁷ K. Asamoah-Gyadu, "'Fireballs in our Midst': West Africa Burgeoning Charismatic Churches and the Pastoral Role of Women," *Mission Studies* 15-16, no. 296 (1998), 21, cited in Mwaura, "Gendered Appropriation of Mass Media in Kenyan Christianities," 279.

⁵⁸ Adelaide M.A. Boadi, "Engaging Patriarchy: Pentecostal Gender Ideology and Practices in Nigeria," in *Religion, History, and Politics in Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Ogbu U. Kalu*, eds. Chima J. Korieh and Ugo G. Nwokeji (New York: University Press of America, 2005), 182.

women equality, and little claim can be made that Pentecostal churches are not as patriarchal as AICs. The Pentecostal movements that she describes and the one that I am studying in Botswana are not doing much to destabilise patriarchy and to challenge the marginalisation of women. Rather, as I will show, they maintain it by using the Bible to persuade women to be submissive to their husbands and to men in general. The language of female submission that characterises the Pentecostal hermeneutic is itself synonymous with oppression and exclusion of women. While it is true that in Pentecostal churches women experience some freedom, we must be cautious not to overly celebrate this as yet as long as literalist interpretations, proof texting and ideas of the Trinity and Christology are still used to hurt women in Pentecostal churches in Botswana and elsewhere (chapter 5).

1.8.2.2.2. Ambivalent Attitudes Prevail

However, while celebrating the greater space that Pentecostal churches offer women, Mwaura and Kalu point out that ambivalent attitudes concerning women still exist among Pentecostals. While women are allowed to exercise some form of authority and leadership, in choirs and Sunday school teaching, they are often “stigmatised and demonized”.⁵⁹ McClintock Fulkerson, coming from a different context from Kalu and Mwaura, argues the same point. Her argument is that Pentecostalism is a space which subjugates women “even as it offers them a unique permission to speak”. Estralda Alexander captures this ambivalence further when she argues that “in regards to women, Pentecostalism is a culture of both exclusion and embrace”.⁶⁰ While women can preach and teach under the infilling of the Holy Spirit, female domesticity and subordination are reinforced and maintained as Biblical and godly. As a result, when it comes to female subordination and male dominance, there exists within the Pentecostal movement serious hermeneutical tensions, ambiguities and paradoxes. There is language and talk about equality between men and women, but that language is not put into practice. Hence, McClintock-Fulkerson can rightly argue that even if the Holy Spirit offers a

[r]adical leveling of the hierarchies of the world...Submission to the man...appears to be a doctrinally held conviction, one not susceptible to direct refutation.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Mwaura, “Gendered Appropriation of Mass Media in Kenyan Christianities,” 279.

⁶⁰ Johns, “Spirited Vestments,” 170.

⁶¹ McClintock-Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject*, 259.

These ambivalent attitudes are mainly a result of how the Bible is interpreted among Pentecostals, especially in Botswana. While women can be allowed to teach under the influence of the Holy Spirit, there is a sense in which they are made invisible because they have to be under men's authority.⁶² What this means is that the Bible is used in Pentecostal circles to make women invisible, even when they are supposed to be present in particular roles through the Holy Spirit. Further, while the Pentecostal hermeneutic focuses on the Holy Spirit as a power that both women and men should embrace, when it comes to ecclesiology and polity they are more patriarchal, thus continuing to make women invisible. Women's freedom is curtailed because biblical interpretation is used to establish hierarchies that ironically Pentecostals used to denounce.⁶³

It is the minimisation of women in African cultures, churches and religion, especially Christianity that provides the background for the emergence of African feminist biblical interpretations of the Bible. African biblical women scholars contest these kinds of biblical androcentric interpretations and expose them as unjust, and some have begun to develop new ways of reading that expose the ideological use of culture and biblical texts that support patriarchy.⁶⁴ My thesis builds on these works as it attempts to construct a hermeneutic that takes seriously the experiences of Pentecostal women in Botswana.

1.8.3. Feminist Hermeneutics: Level of Reconstruction

Oduyoye and Masenya describe the Bible as a "two edged sword", as many other African scholars have argued.⁶⁵ By this they mean that the Bible can be both oppressive and liberative - it is ambivalent. Feminist hermeneutics has often sought to show the patriarchally oppressive nature of the Bible much more than the liberatory aspects. However, while "the Bible has been used to legitimize racism, and classism, as well as to condone colonialism and cultural imperialism",⁶⁶ the same Bible can be used by men and women to seek liberation from slavery, labour exploitations, colonialism, racism and other forms of injustices,

⁶² One pastor argued that he is a 'liberated man' because he allows women to preach in his church. However he is overt about going over the message to "strengthen" it as a male leader of the church. In my view this is one way of making women invisible even when they are performing important roles. INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

⁶³ Alexander, "Introduction," 3.

⁶⁴ See the work of Circle members especially M. Dube, *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible* (Atlanta: SBL, 2001).

⁶⁵ Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*; Masenya ngwan'a Mphahlele, "The Sword that Heals!," 50-51.

⁶⁶ K. Pui-Lan, "Racism and Ethnocentrism in Feminist Biblical Interpretation," in *Searching the Scriptures: Feminist Introduction* Vol 1, ed. E. Schüssler Fiorenza (New York: Crossroads, 1993), 101.

precisely because it is a significant book for faith. It was used by slaves to reject slavery. It was also used by Black people in America and Africa to reject white supremacy. As someone from the Pentecostal tradition, it is not enough to leave the Bible in the hands of those who seek to use it for oppression. I would argue that it can and should be used by Pentecostal women to reject their oppression that is based on an uncritical and sexist reading of the Bible. One of my main concerns is how the Bible can be appropriated for liberation within Pentecostal frames of reading. I would argue that what is needed are principles for reconstructing a hermeneutic that is liberating as opposed to oppressive; a hermeneutic that takes seriously Pentecostal theology and practices. Finding new and liberating ways of reading and interpreting the Bible is one of the central aims of feminist biblical hermeneutics. In order to develop these liberating ways of reading, at least two things are needed.

1.8.3.1. Resisting Readers

The first is to take the posture of a “resisting reader”.⁶⁷ Resisting readers are those who refuse to proclaim the agenda of men as they support the domination of women using the Bible and refuse to continue to entrench patriarchy in their interpretation of the Bible. Feminist biblical hermeneutics highlights the power that men have traditionally held in the domain of writing and scholarship and “insists that all texts are products of an androcentric patriarchal culture and history”.⁶⁸ They argue that the Bible as a product of patriarchal society is “proclaimed in patriarchal churches”, “written in androcentric language”,⁶⁹ serve male agendas and interests, and that “androcentrism pervades the Bible”.⁷⁰ This happens to such an extent that women have been excluded from Biblical stories and their roles in the history and growth of the church have been downplayed. There is the need then to reread the Bible from a feminist liberating perspective and this involves exposing patriarchal agendas and constructions as well as reconstructing the story to include women in order to give them voice. It is upon this

⁶⁷ The term “resisting readers” was introduced by Judith Fetterly in 1978 in her book *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978). Scholars like Musa Dube use this term in their work to describe readers of the Bible who are constantly resisting patriarchy and imperialism in their reading of Biblical texts. See M. Dube, “Talitha Cum! A Postcolonial Feminist & HIV/AIDS Reading of Mark 5:21-43,” in *Grant Me Justice! HIV/AIDS & Gender Readings of the Bible*, eds. Musa W. Dube and Musimbi Kanyoro (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004), 124. I also use this term in this thesis to refer to Pentecostal women who articulated some form of resistance to the oppressive nature of the Setswana culture and Pentecostal hermeneutics. The Pentecostal women did not call the Bible oppressive because to them it is liberatory. However, they maintained that the way some texts are interpreted is oppressive.

⁶⁸ E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), xli.

⁶⁹ E. Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Will to Choose and to Reject: Continuing Our Critical Work,” ed. Letty Russell, *Feminist Interpretation of The Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1995), 130.

⁷⁰ G.W. Stroup, “Between Echo and Narcissus: The Role of the Bible in Feminist Theology,” in *Interpretation* 42, no. 1 (1988), 24, 19-32.

feminist principle that this thesis is based. The existing Pentecostal hermeneutic does not resist patriarchy; rather it entrenches it through a selective reading of texts that advances male supremacy and excludes women's experiences. Through this process, patriarchy becomes normative, as it becomes intertwined with the normativity of the Bible within Pentecostal hermeneutics. In order to resist this normativity of patriarchy, one has to become a resisting reader.

1.8.3.2. Interrogate both the Oppressive and Liberating Aspects of African Cultures

The second thing that is needed in order to reconstruct liberating ways of reading is to draw on those aspects of the Bible and African culture than can be liberating. Musimbi Kanyoro and Oduyoye have been helpful in this regard in putting forward the theory of feminist cultural hermeneutics. Although her work is not strictly in biblical studies, Musimbi Kanyoro, a linguist by training, has provided useful ideas on how African women should interpret the Bible through her feminist cultural hermeneutics.⁷¹ Feminist cultural hermeneutics takes seriously the need to “illustrate the consequences of reading the Bible with cultural lenses....”⁷² It is a theory that analyses how culture has an impact on the way people perceive reality in a particular time and location.⁷³ Kanyoro points out that “the culture of the reader has more influence on the way the Biblical text is understood and used in communities than the historical culture of the text”.⁷⁴ Cultures play an important role in how African women receive and understand Biblical texts and their impact should not be downplayed. Kanyoro argues that African Christian women belong fully to the African cultures and fully to Christianity and that is their reality.⁷⁵ African women are often the custodians of most of the African cultural practices, some of which are oppressive to them.⁷⁶ She holds that

Culture has silenced many women in Africa and made us unable to experience the liberating promises of God. Favourable aspects of our cultures, which enhance the wellbeing of women have been suppressed and

⁷¹ M. Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Perspective* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 64. Kanyoro also proposes an ‘Engendering Cultural Hermeneutics’, which has the same characteristics as feminist cultural hermeneutics, in M. Kanyoro, “Engendered Communal Theology: African Women’s Contribution to Theology in the 21st Century,” in *Talitha Cum! Theologies of African Women*, eds. N. Njoroge and M. Dube (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), 169.

⁷² Kanyoro, “Engendered Communal Theology,” 168.

⁷³ Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 9.

⁷⁴ Kanyoro, “Engendered Communal Theology,” 165.

⁷⁵ Kanyoro, “Engendered Communal Theology,” 159.

⁷⁶ Kanyoro, “Engendered Communal Theology,” 159-160.

those that diminish women continue to be practiced in various degrees of our societies, often making women objects of cultural preservation.⁷⁷

For Kanyoro, it is very important that African feminist scholars grapple with how African women are doubly oppressed and marginalised by the patriarchy in their local cultures and the patriarchy in biblical texts.⁷⁸ The Bible plays an important role in African Christianity and occupies a central place in the lives of church women in Africa. She calls theologians in Africa to scrutinise and be critical of African as well as Biblical cultures in their quest to liberate women from patriarchy. Efforts must be made to study the impact that cultures and the Biblical texts can have in justifying oppressive behaviours towards women.⁷⁹ African cultures and Biblical cultures must be challenged especially in the face of death dealing realities that Africa faces such as poverty, high HIV infection and war. While Africans are affected by these, women and children suffer more. The cultures must be exposed for committing injustices towards women and should only be reclaimed in as far as they are able to “promote justice and support life and the dignity of women”.⁸⁰ Feminist cultural hermeneutics has gained ground in African biblical studies as African women scholars have endeavoured to interpret the Bible against the backdrop of patriarchy and gender oppression in their particular cultures.

1.9. Research Methods

The research methods will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2. Here I wish to broadly sketch the various methods that I will employ. This research is a qualitative, literature-based and empirical study. It is also a literary study because of its textual analysis of Luke-Acts. Therefore, a narrative methodology in regards to exegeting the text and the theories of reader response are employed. Qualitative approaches are more suited for the purposes of my study, because I do not intend to draw conclusions based on numbers or statistics, but on the in-depth qualitative responses from the participants in my study, as well as the literature that I will review.

⁷⁷ M. Kanyoro, “Feminist Theology and African Culture,” in *Violence Against Women*, eds. G. Wamue and M. Getui (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1996), 5.

⁷⁸ Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics*, 64, 104.

⁷⁹ M. Kanyoro, “Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Contribution,” in *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible*, ed. M. Dube (Atlanta: SBL, 2001), 103.

⁸⁰ Kanyoro, “Engendered Communal Theology,” 167.

There is a vast amount of literature on Pentecostalism, feminist hermeneutics and Luke-Acts currently available, and these will be invaluable for my study. I will critically engage with these works, build on the existing research and also attempt to fill the gaps in the areas of research that have been neglected or overlooked.

Empirical methods are important to my research for a number of reasons. The most important is that the ultimate aim of my study is to develop a Pentecostal hermeneutic that is liberating for women. In order to do that it is important for me to engage with Pentecostals and with women. By engaging with the participants, I will be able to gauge their insights and wisdom on their methods of interpretation. These will be used as a basis for the construction of a Pentecostal hermeneutic of liberation for women.

1.10. Structure of Dissertation and Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The first chapter introduces the study. It details the rationale for the study, and outlines the research question and objectives. Thereafter, the theoretical framework and research methods are introduced.

Chapter 2 – Research Methods

This chapter introduces in more detail the research methods employed in this study. It outlines the location of the study, the methods of data collection (paying particular attention to the method of Contextual Bible Study as a method of data collection). Justification for engaging narrative and reader response criticism in regards to texts is also provided in this chapter. Furthermore, the research sample and limitations are set out in this chapter.

Chapter 3- Status of Women in Botswana

This chapter describes the position and status of women in Botswana by demonstrating how the cultural, social, political, legal and economic systems favour men and disadvantage women. This is an important chapter as it will demonstrate how the Tswana attitudes about women are reinscribed within the Pentecostal church and Pentecostal frames of reading.

Chapter 4 –Principles of Pentecostal Hermeneutics

This chapter aims to critically reflect on the principles which drive Pentecostal hermeneutics. It will focus on the following principles in particular, namely – proof-texting, infallibility of

Scripture, reliance on the Holy Spirit, the belief in the divine inspiration of Scripture, and the dualistic understanding of the world as material and spiritual.

Chapter 5- The Link between Pentecostal Hermeneutic and the Marginalization of Women

Having discussed what constitutes Pentecostal hermeneutics, the aim of this chapter is to describe the links between women's marginalization and biblical interpretation in the Pentecostal tradition. This chapter will draw from a literature review and from the information gathered during fieldwork, and this information will be filtered through a feminist theoretical framework of analysis.

Chapter 6 –Luke-Acts and Women

This chapter is a detailed literature review of the scholarly socio-historical work done on Luke-Acts and women. This chapter demonstrates that scholarship on Luke-Acts is divided, with some arguing that Luke was silencing women, while others assert that Luke was affirming women and still others suggesting that Luke was ambivalent towards women.

Chapter 7 – Feminist Narrative Exegesis of Acts 2:1-47

Having established in Chapter 6 the scholarly readings of Luke-Acts which show Luke to be patriarchal, this chapter is a close reading of Acts 2:1-47 on Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit. This is a central text within Pentecostal churches and it will look at the significance of the Pentecost event as recorded in Luke-Acts for Pentecostals, in order to establish the importance of using the text for this study. It will further demonstrate how this event can be a way to read "Luke against Luke". This chapter will draw on a literature review of the ways in which Pentecostal theology, beliefs and practices are informed by this central biblical narrative

Chapter 8- The Centrality of Pentecost

This chapter locates the significance of the Pentecost event within themes of gender equality. It presents my own reading and understanding of what Pentecost could mean to the Pentecostal church whose theologies derive from Acts 2.

Chapter 9 – Principles of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic

This chapter will draw conclusions and proposals on the principles that are needed to construct a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic. In this chapter I draw on the insights from Pentecostals in Botswana on Luke-Acts.

1.11. Chapter Summary

This chapter was an introduction to my thesis which aims at constructing a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutics. It introduced the rationale for undertaking this thesis, the aims and objectives and the research questions. Further, it introduced the theoretical framework that I employ in this thesis as well as provided a chapter breakdown. The next chapter is a detailed discussion of the research methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

2.0. Introduction

In postmodern and feminist research methodology the research process is as important as the research product itself; the research design and methodology must be described thoroughly and in detail.⁸¹ The objectives of this chapter are to introduce in more detail the design and the research methods employed in this study, paying particular attention to the method of Contextual Bible Study (CBS) as a method of data collection. The chapter gives a rationale for using empirical and qualitative research methods and it also describes my role in the research process. This is important in feminist research because researchers should account for their role in the research process thus accounting for their bias, subjectivities and power dynamics. This is called reflexivity. Not only does this process involve accounting for my role, it also involves accounting for the role of the participants as well and the implications of their roles to the quality of the data collected.

2.1. Empirical, Qualitative, Exploratory and Textual Research

This is an empirical and textual study, using an exploratory hermeneutical framework.

2.1.1. Empirical Methods

Empirical methods are important to my research for a number of reasons. The most important is that the ultimate aim of my study is to develop a Pentecostal hermeneutic that is liberating for African women. In order to do that it is important for me to engage with Batswana Pentecostals especially women. By engaging with the participants, I was able to gauge their insights on their implicit methods of interpretation, which is present even if unarticulated. These are used as a basis for the construction of a Pentecostal hermeneutic of liberation for women which this study seeks to propose. Empirical research involves “hands-on” data collection and yields data that is qualitative in nature. Qualitative thematic data analysis will be used to process the raw data. Bernard and Ryan define data analysis “as the search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain why those patterns are there in the first

⁸¹ Obioma N. Nego, “Feminism: Theorizing, Practicing and Pruning Africa’s Ways,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29, no. 2 (2003), 357-385.

place”.⁸² Similarly, Hennink describes data analysis as involving the synthesizing of data in a systematic manner to provide information that effectively responds to the research questions.⁸³ There is a consensus that qualitative data analysis is ordering data systematically according to themes and establishing relationships between elements.⁸⁴ Data analysis in this study is guided by a feminist hermeneutical approach which aims at, first, exposing the patriarchy and androcentricism at the level of the biblical text, second, highlighting the ways in which this patriarchy is taken up and is enacted through interpretation, and third, critically engaging with the ways in which these patriarchal texts and interpretations can be used for liberating purposes. In this study, there is no particular chapter that deals with data analysis only; the data is analyzed throughout the chapters that follow in order to answer the sub-questions for this study. The data is omnipresent throughout; it is woven into the fabric of the thesis as it is linked and integrated in all the chapters that follow. The purpose for the data collected was to write the whole thesis from chapter 1 through to the end. Therefore, data is not the subject of a separate chapter but informs the whole discussion. The actual words of the respondents extracted from the data are in italics and they are interspersed throughout the chapters. Hennink points out that using data extracts using the participants own words is a “philosophical commitment”, that empowers and gives voice to the participants.⁸⁵ In terms of feminist concerns, the use of the respondents’ actual words, especially the Pentecostal women’s actual words, is empowering as it gives them voice.

2.1.2. Qualitative Research

The field data collection methods employed in this study were all qualitative in nature. Qualitative methods are varied and those used in this study included in-depth open-ended interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. The CBS that I used in this study can also be included as a qualitative data method because it generates data using words and concepts versus numbers as in quantitative researches.

Catherine Seaman describes qualitative research as research in which the researcher “plans to observe, discover, describe, compare and analyze the characteristic attributes, themes and

⁸² Bernard Russell and Gery Ryan, *Analyzing Qualitative Data: Systematic Approaches* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2010), 365. 109.

⁸³ Hennink, *International Focus Group Research*, 204.

⁸⁴ Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 207.

⁸⁵ Hennink, *International Focus Group Research*, 240.

underlying dimensions of a particular unit.”⁸⁶ Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossman argue that research that “seeks cultural description and ethnography...elicits multiple constructed realities...elicits tacit knowledge and subjective understandings and interpretations...delves in depth into complexities and processes,”⁸⁷ must be conducted using qualitative methods. Further, Marshall and Rossman point out that research focusing on first, the individual lived experience, second, on society and culture and third, on language and experience must be undertaken using qualitative methods.⁸⁸ Different aspects of this study focus on the above three aspects. Its success therefore depends on a deep understanding of women’s experience of church, culture and Pentecostal Biblical interpretation. The key research question and the sub-questions of this study require analysis and interpretation of different themes. Therefore, qualitative research methods are best suited for this study because these questions were key in revealing the complex multiple constructed realities of Batswana Pentecostal women. Those complexities could only be uncovered through the use of qualitative data methods.

2.1.3. Exploratory Research

According to Earl Babbie, exploratory research is undertaken “to satisfy the researcher’s curiosity and desire for better understanding,” of a persistent phenomenon.⁸⁹ Similarly, Norman Blaikie points out that exploratory research is conducted in an attempt to understand a phenomenon and to “get a better idea of what is going on.”⁹⁰ Blaikie further states that exploratory research “seeks to account for patterns in observed social phenomena, attitudes, behaviour, social relationships, social processes and social structures. This study seeks to establish how Pentecostals interpret the Bible and Luke-Acts in particular, in order to attempt to explain patterns of how women are marginalised within the Pentecostal church. For this purpose, exploratory research is appropriate for this study as the study already has theoretical assumptions.

2.2. The Research Design

After asking for permission from the pastors; gatekeepers of the churches and after explaining what the study was about, I made an announcement for women to volunteer to

⁸⁶ C. Seaman, *Research Methods: Principles, Practice and Theory for Nursing* (Norwalk: Appleton and Lange, 1987), 168.

⁸⁷ C. Marshall and G. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research* (London: Sage, 2011), 91.

⁸⁸ Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 92.

⁸⁹ E. Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2010), 92.

⁹⁰ N. Blackie, *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation* (Malden: Polity Press, 2010), 70.

participate in the study. Even though the women volunteered to participate in the study I made it clear that they had to be Motswana by birth, or be a male pastor of either one of the churches under study. Further, both the women and men must have been members of the Pentecostal church for at least five years. The participants had to be conversant with Pentecostal theologies and Pentecostal biblical interpretation, and understand clearly what a Pentecostal believer and Pentecostal community is. In Mogobane I explained the study during Sunday church service. The women were introduced to the study from the pulpit and invited to voluntarily participate. After church, groups of both younger and older women volunteered and made a commitment to meet with me during the course of the week. Thereafter I met with the groups separately on different days. Permission to be a participant observer was sought from the pastors in the churches and the women themselves.

The ages of the women who participated in this study ranged from 17-73. The women were divided into age groups, of 17-30's, 40-50 and 50-73. The creation of three distinct age groups is important because of the nature of authority relationships between younger and older women in Botswana society and the ways in which these dynamics can hamper open engagement between age groups. Further, given the changing social context in Botswana over the last 30 years, older members who grew up in different times have different experiences of being women in church and society. Initially I thought I would divide the groups into two, for women 20-30's and 35-73, then I realised early on that the younger women (in their 30's) in the second age group were withdrawn because of the age difference between the women. In the Botswana context, younger people must not talk back to elders. Ordinarily, the CBS and focus groups demand some form of "talking back" between the participants and this was going to be hampered and the quality of the data was going to be compromised.

In Molepolole Church B, I had 7 younger women in the 20-35 age range, 5 within the 40-50 age range and 6 in the 50-73 age range, giving me a total of 19 women. All these women participated in the CBS and the focus groups. I had 9 in-depth interviews from this group, 2 from the 20-35 age group, 1 from the 40-50 age group and 6 from the 50-73 age group. In the 20-35 age group, 3 had junior secondary certificates, 3 had senior secondary certificates and 1 had a diploma in teaching. In the 40-50 group, 4 had primary school certificates and only one had a junior secondary certificate. Within the 50-73 group, only one had gone up to standard three and the rest had never been to school. Out of these six, 4 could read because their children taught them how, because they said they wanted to read the Bible for themselves.

In Gaborone Church A, I had 7 women in the 20-35 group, and 7 in the 40-50 group with the oldest in this group being slightly above 50. There were no older women available in this church who could have formed group three. All the 14 women participated in the focus groups and CBS. I had 8 in-depth interviews from this group, 5 from the 20-35s and 3 from among the 40-50s. All the women in the 20-35 group had senior secondary school certificates and 3 are in tertiary schools pursuing either a degree or diploma. In the 40-50 group, 4 had senior secondary school certificates and had through the years done short courses, and 2 had a diploma and 1 had a degree. The women here could all read and could speak both English and Setswana.

In Mogobane Church A, I only had two groups as well; 9 younger women from 17-35 and 9 older women with ages ranging from 50-73. 7 participated in the interviews, 4 from ages 17-35 and 3 from ages 50-73. In the 17-35 group, 4 were still in junior secondary school, 4 had completed senior secondary school and 1 was in tertiary. Among the older women, 3 had never been to school and did not know how to read and write, 2 had junior secondary certificates, 2 had senior secondary certificates and 1 had a diploma.

I had 51 Pentecostal women who attended both the focus groups and the CBS. Out of the 51, 24 attended the one to one interviews. Further, 3 pastors were one to one interviewed simultaneously while the focus groups, Bible studies and one to one interviews with women were taking place. The size of the respondents in this fieldwork (51 women and 3 pastors), was enough to make inferences and tentative deductions about the Pentecostal hermeneutics and churches in Botswana. While the research sample resulted in rich and representative data I cannot conclude that this data would apply to all Pentecostal churches in Botswana, but that they are essentially valid for the churches studied.

This research was conducted in Botswana from March 2011 to February 2012 amongst groups of women from two Pentecostal churches. I have given the churches in which I conducted the research the pseudonyms Church A and Church B because one of the pastors of these churches asked me to.⁹¹ Three pastors from these churches were also interviewed. Church A has only two branches in the whole country, one in Gaborone, an urban environment and one

⁹¹ I am using a pseudonym for the churches under study because one of the pastors of these churches asked me to. Botswana is a very small country with strong kinship ties. One of the concerns that two of the pastors raised about my conducting the research within their congregation was that they could not control what I write and how I would use the data. This, they felt, could have an impact on the growth of the church. I had to respect their requests. Keeping the churches anonymous does not affect the data I collected and my analysis.

in Mogobane a small village in rural setting.⁹² Church B has branches all over the country, but I only conducted the research in Molepolole one of the eight big villages in Botswana. Even though Mogobane and Molepolole are both classified as villages, Molepolole is bigger, has more primary, junior and senior secondary schools, several clinics, one hospital and several privately owned medical facilities. Mogobane has far fewer primary schools, one junior school, no high school, one clinic and no hospital. When the children from this village finish junior school they have to go to other big villages and towns to attend high school. The choice of urban and rural settings afforded me a chance to see how Pentecostal women in different settings engage with Biblical texts and negotiate their living space both in the church and within their society. I thought that since the lived realities of women in these areas are different, women living in the city would subscribe less to patriarchy while the ones living in the villages would subscribe more to patriarchy. It turns out that while the women in the city have some levels of financial freedom as compared to women in the villages, there were still women who believed that patriarchy is the norm because of the existence of the customary law, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

2.2.1. The Process of gathering data

The very first meeting with women was in the form of a focus group which lasted between 3-3.5 hours. It aimed at building and establishing rapport within the participants, at introducing CBS and the study in detail. It was during this focus group that women signed the consent forms and those who did not know how to read and write gave their verbal consent in front of the other women.

I conducted 5 focus group sessions all in all. The first focus group had a detailed set of questions on culture, the Pentecostal church and women in general (appendix 3). The four remaining focus groups followed the CBS so that momentum between the two processes was maintained and the women had a chance to interact in informal (i.e. over tea) as well as formal discussions, thus facilitating their group dynamics. Having the four focus groups *after* the CBS also enabled greater probing of the socio cultural issues which emerged in the women's readings of Biblical texts and allowed for more explicit links to be made between

⁹²Locations/places in Botswana are classified as urban, peri urban, rural and peri rural depending on their structural and functional characteristics. A place acquires urban and peri urban status when 75% of the population is engaged in non-agricultural activities. Urban settings have good socio-economic facilities such as tarred roads, traffic lights, government and privately owned primary schools, hospitals, water connections to name but a few. The facilities are hardly present in big villages except the basics such as good schools and hospitals, whereas the roads are not tarred except the main road going through the village. In small villages like Mogobane, there might be a small clinic, no hospital and a primary school and no high school.

the Bible readings and the socio-cultural issues which affect those readings. These four focus groups were brief as they lasted an hour and sometimes less.

The CBS's lasted up to two hours and were conducted over a period of days. The first CBS was on Luke 4:1-19 followed by Acts 2:1-47, then one on Acts 6:1-7 and the last one on Acts 21:1-14. This means, I conducted four Bible studies with different groups of women in different locations, each of them over a number of days. The CBS's were aimed at producing answers that were relevant to answering the main research question, which is "Can the text of Luke-Acts provide a basis for developing principles to construct a Pentecostal hermeneutic that is liberating for women?" Further, they were aimed at establishing a link between Pentecostal hermeneutics and the marginalisation of women.

The text for the day was read twice in English and Setswana and slowly by one of the group members for everybody to understand it. Copies were also made for the sake of uniformity, even though the women preferred to read their own KJV bibles because that is the version that is preferred within the Pentecostal circles and although this was never a subject for discussion, one woman commented that it is "very close to the language that Jesus spoke." The respondents then answered a series of questions which I designed beforehand (appendix 4). The questions elicited other questions which I and the women used to probe each other, further creating more opportunities for engagement.

The Biblical texts themselves were varied and had "mixed messages"; some of these texts have egalitarian and transformative potential (Luke 4:1-19, Acts 2:1-47); some could be perceived as ambivalent towards women (Acts 21:1-14); while some clearly marginalize women (Acts 6:1-7). The primary text that I focus on and exegete in this study is Acts 2:1-47. The other texts were meant to help me understand how women read Luke-Acts in general. Second, the texts were meant to help me find out if they could pick up the ambiguities within the texts so as to establish the hermeneutical strategies that they use. This was contributing to my knowledge of the characteristics of a Pentecostal hermeneutics, which I describe in chapter 4. The CBS's and the focus groups were conducted inside the church. I had suggested to the women that we hold our meetings outside the church confines but the women decided that they were comfortable with using the church halls for meetings as a group.

For this research, face-to-face interviews were a necessity because I was able to fully engage with the Pentecostal women on a one-to-one basis by asking questions and probing for further clarification on how they interpret Luke-Acts. The one to one interviews enriched the data I collected as I was able to determine if the respondents were uncomfortable through, for example, non-verbal gestures which may signify discomfort, unease and sadness. Being able to understand these gestures enabled me to either probe further or end the interview. Further, the creation of in-depth interviews was meant to facilitate and encourage the articulation of socio-cultural issues and interpretations of Luke-Acts in depth. They provided a safe space for women to articulate their suppressed, hidden impulses and voices precisely because people tend to respond differently when given individual space. Before going to the field to collect data, I was under the impression that the CBS would provide a much safer space for women than interviews. I was proved wrong as both spaces were equally safe in that there were women who were very expressive in the CBS but withdrawn during interviews. Then there were women who were withdrawn during the CBS but opened up during interviews.

Three categories of women had in-depth interviews with me. The first category of women were those that I felt were suppressing their voices. The living contexts (patriarchy at home society and church) of women may not allow them to express themselves in churches and also in front of other women. One woman said that she found engaging in discussion in public very difficult because she has been rebuked so many times by the men and women around her for being “loud”.

The second category of women were those who were vocal in three ways. The first group were those who were uncritical of the subordination of women both within the Setswana culture and the Pentecostal church. These women called on culture and the Bible to support male supremacy. Then there were women who renounced female subordination within the culture and church, the subversive ones. The last group of women were those who contradicted themselves throughout the conversations because they were saying things that they thought other women wanted to hear.

The third category of women were those who were vocal and expressive during the CBS and were taking a lot of time speaking. Because I had to accommodate other women, I limited their speaking time. Within these categories, some expressed interest in having one-to-one in-depth interviews with me and I invited some. The in-depth interviews were conducted in

locations chosen by the participants themselves; some were held at the church, some at their homes and some at my place.

2.3. Ethical Considerations

Feminist research requires that respondents should be treated as subjects not objects.⁹³ One of the ways a researcher treats the respondents as subjects is to be as honest and clear about the research process itself. The objectives, the consent form, confidentiality, the voluntary nature of the research, withdrawal from the research with no penalty, anonymity and their role in the research process must be clearly explained to them. This study is guided by the principles of feminist research so I took time to explain these to the participants.

The participants were then asked to sign the consent form. All the participants who could read and write signed consent forms which were written in both Setswana and English (appendix 1a, 1b and appendix 2 for pastors). Those who could not read and write did not sign the consent forms but they gave their agreement verbally in front of other women as witnesses. The three male pastors who participated in this study signed the consent forms as well. All the participants in this study are kept anonymous; they are given pseudonyms so as to protect their identity.

Permission was requested from the respondents to tape record our conversations in all the research contexts (CBS, focus groups, in-depth). I explained that tape recording the conversations was beneficial to me as I would have captured all our conversations and that it will make my work easier. The only conversation not tape recorded is the first focus group and the CBS in Gaborone among women in the group 40-50 because they expressed their discomfort with the process. In order to respect them as subjects, the research assistant and I took notes instead. However, they gave us permission to tape record the other focus groups and CBSs because they said that they felt safe. At the end of each process, I summarised the conversations; it was not an easy task to do in the CBS and focus group because of the multiplicity of voices.

⁹³ David Hall and Irene Hall, *Practical Social Research: Project Work in Community* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 52.

2.4. Textual Approach

In engaging with the text, I have adopted an eclectic approach to my exegesis. Narrative criticism has played a dominant role in interpretation of the text offered by Pentecostals. For that reason, at key points a narrative reading will be adopted. However, in some ways a narrative reading may re-enforce patriarchal values, at least in the way it is used. For instance, a close reading of Luke at the narrative level might at one level show his sympathy and understanding of the role of women, but at another level seems to re-inscribe the patriarchal values of Greco-Roman society, in other words when women come to the texts with a “hermeneutic of trust” in the text, they may internalize patriarchal values or have them confirmed, as we shall see. For this reason other critical methodologies like reader response will be used as appropriate to my purposes. I will further adopt a hermeneutic of suspicion as recommended by Schüssler Fiorenza with regard to Luke in order to deconstruct the patriarchal values unconsciously or consciously inscribed in the text (we will never know which given the “death of the author” advocated by narrative criticism).

Reader response criticism is important in regards to my own interpretation and filling in gaps and negotiating ambiguities in Luke-Acts. Reader response is also relevant to this study as it allows the Pentecostal women in this study to have an interpretive voice as well.

2.4.1. Narrative Approach: The Who, When, Where, What, Why and How of the Text

Narrative criticism is a text-centred approach whose goal is to determine how narratives function in the present when read by real readers. It allows readers to make sense of narratives in their final form by asking “how and what does the story mean” without the burden of determining the historicity of the particular narrative. To answer the question “what and how does the story mean?” Elizabeth Struthers Malbon offers the five narrative elements of narrative criticism. These are the ‘who’ (the characters); ‘when’ and ‘where’ (the settings); ‘what’ and ‘why’ (the plot) and the ‘how’ (rhetoric).⁹⁴ These are the elements that make up a story. They should be answered when applying narrative criticism to biblical texts in order for them to communicate meaning to the reader. Through an analysis of the characters, the settings, the plot and the rhetoric, the potential for texts to be transformational is explored. The opposite is true; through narrative criticism readers might be able to unpack the oppressive ideologies and agendas of texts.

⁹⁴ E.S. Malbon, “Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?,” in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, eds. J.C. Anderson and S. Moore (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 28-35.

Here I briefly discuss the importance of the narrative elements. The characters are important because they determine the direction of story and they are used by the implied author to communicate a particular point of view. Characters determine the direction of the narrative. The settings of the story, both temporal settings (when the story takes place) and spatial settings (where the story takes place), are important because they may have some symbolic meaning, for example, what does it mean that the setting of Acts 2 is during Pentecost at 9 in the morning? Why is Jerusalem important? Is there something the readers must learn about the upper room? The plot reveals the sequence and frequency of the stories being told and by doing so it shows which stories are important to the implied readers. Lastly, the rhetoric is a point of persuasion, or a point of view that the narrator wants the reader to share. The point of view can be manifested through the ideology of the text.

All these elements are intrinsically crafted together in the text so that the storyline unfolds in a way that has an effect on the reader. For the purposes of this thesis, it is especially important to determine the characters in Acts 2, in order to determine the rhetoric of the narrative in regards to the role that men and women played in the ministry of Jesus and the early church. Sometimes the narrator does not name all the characters in Acts 1 and 2. By engaging the narrative elements of characterisation, we can reconstruct their identities even if they are minor characters. This is important for this thesis because women have been textually silenced throughout the history of interpretation and church theologies.

2.4.2. Reader Response Criticism; Readers, Filling Gaps and Ambiguities

While narrative criticism focuses on the text, the accent of reader response criticism is on how readers make sense of narratives in the present and how they create meaning based on their social location and according to what makes sense to them. Although the theory of reader response is broad and has nuances, one can safely indicate that there are two main claims that the proponents of reader response agree on.⁹⁵ First, reader response foregrounds the social location of the reader.⁹⁶ Readers of narratives are influenced by their social location and cultures and ideologies to produce a particular kind of interpretation of such narratives.

⁹⁵ Contrast for example the works of I. Wolfgang, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1980) and F. Stanley, *Is there Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980).

⁹⁶ The readers that are implied in this study are readers of the 21st century. Tremper Longman makes a distinction between three types of readers: the original reader, the later reader and the implied reader. *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Academic Books, 1987), 67, cited in E.V. Dowling, *Taking Away the Pound: Women, Theology and the Parable of the Pounds in the Gospel of Luke* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 9.

Second, reader response criticism acknowledges that all narratives are always incomplete; authors leave gaps and ambiguities that readers are compelled to fill, explain and negotiate. Robert Fowler holds that not only do texts have holes and blanks; they have places where something is missing.⁹⁷ These gaps create tensions and ambiguities which the reader is necessarily required to negotiate. Further, readers must make sense of narratives by filling these gaps in order to make sense of the narratives at a particular time. This involves levels of creativity.⁹⁸ Similarly, Anthony Thiselton maintains that readers have a role in completing textual meaning; otherwise meaning only remains potential rather than actual. This means that the act of reading biblical texts is an “eventful, active and creative process”.⁹⁹

Beyond just filling the gaps in the biblical narratives, reader response allows for multiple possibilities for giving words and phrases, symbols and events multiple meanings. This, for me, is the strength of reader response criticism; the acknowledgment that biblical narratives offer opportunities for multiple interpretations and possibilities for reading texts for liberation. After interpreting Mark through reader response theory, Fowler argues that the strength of this theory lies in the opportunities for multiple responses that are available to the reader. This is so because biblical stories are not closed, the interpretation of events described in narratives did not end when the writing of the Bible stopped. It is this openness of biblical narratives that makes biblical interpretation the meeting place of socially conditioned readers and texts.¹⁰⁰ In the context of this study, reader response allows me, for example, to argue throughout the thesis that the Pentecost event is an “ever unfolding”; it is a space of liberation for men and women and it is a critique of both Luke-Acts and the contemporary Pentecostal church.

Although the reader is given the liberty to read texts creatively, not all biblical interpretations by readers have life-giving interests and agendas. In as much as the role of the reader is central, interpretation must be guided by principles that respect life.

⁹⁷ R. Fowler, “Reader Response Criticism: Figuring Mark’s Readers,” in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, eds. J.C. Anderson and S. Moore (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 61.

⁹⁸ All readers of the Bible engage in this process of reader response, consciously or unconsciously. In this thesis I engage reader response criticism consciously and actively.

⁹⁹ A. Thiselton, *Thiselton on Hermeneutics: The Collected Works and New Essays of Anthony Thiselton* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), 489.

¹⁰⁰ F. Segovia, “Cultural Studies and Contemporary Biblical Criticism: Ideological Criticism as Mode of Discourse,” in *Reading From this Place: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspectives*, eds. F. Segovia and M.A. Tolbert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 8.

Using both narrative and reader response criticism is relevant and crucial to my work, as both text and reader are equally privileged. Further my work uses an eclectic array of methodologies in order to allow Lukan texts to deconstruct themselves. My work demonstrates the interconnectedness of the texts, reader and social locations.

2.5. A detailed Description of Methods of Data Collection

In the following section I discuss in detail the data collection methods used in this study. The use of several methods is called triangulation and it best allowed for capturing the nuanced and complex ways in which Pentecostal women read and interpret Luke-Acts, and negotiate and understand their identities as Pentecostal and Batswana women in patriarchal contexts. Earl Babbie and Mouton point us to the importance of triangulation: first, the inadequacies associated with one research method are compensated for by another; second, the researcher is able to obtain a variety of information on the same issues, and; third, she is able to achieve a higher degree of validity and reliability.¹⁰¹ Similarly, David Hall and Irene Hall argue that triangulation validates qualitative research and increases validity. Further, using several methods also helps minimise the problems which inevitably arise from the inherent biases in the methods themselves.¹⁰² The advantage of using several methods for this study is that a variety of information was obtained from different research contexts (i.e. focus group discussions, response to text and in-depth interviews) on the same issue, thus achieving a higher degree of reliability. The narratives of the Pentecostal women were full of tensions and contradictions. While they would, for example, argue in the CBS that the Holy Spirit was male, in the in-depth interviews they would change and say that the Holy Spirit does not have a gender. I was able to compare the data from the different research contexts and determine the validity of their narratives.

2.5.1. Focus Groups

Bagele Chillisa and Julia Preece describe focus group as “a discussion based interview in which multiple research participants simultaneously produce data on a specified issue”. Further, they argue that it “allows a researcher to understand, determine the range of responses and gain insight into how people perceive a situation”.¹⁰³ Monique Hennink notes

¹⁰¹ E. Babbie and J. Mouton, *The Practice of Social Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 275-276.

¹⁰² Hall and Hall, *Practical Social Research*, 210.

¹⁰³ B. Chilisa and J. Preece, *Research Methods for Adult Education in Africa* (Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education, 2005), 151.

that focus groups give participants “greater control of the issues raised in the dialogue, as they are essentially discussing the issues between themselves”. From this observation, a claim can be made that focus groups allow respondents to build on each other’s contributions, they encourage a spectrum of responses, thus producing rich data in a short space of time.¹⁰⁴ That being said, focus groups do have limitations that the researcher has to be aware of. First, some members of the group might dominate the discussions and inhibit others from participating. Second, some participants might agree with each other, “perhaps due to social pressure to conform or discomfort in the group”. Third, the group setting may afford less confidentiality.¹⁰⁵ To minimize the impact of these, the researcher should carefully and in a non-threatening way determine the direction of the discussion and selectively choose topics that do not require divulging sensitive and personal information, failing which the focus groups may yield redundant data.¹⁰⁶ In my experience it was helpful to have guidelines as to what is expected of the group members. Issues of time management and respecting each other were discussed from the beginning.

Focus groups are an ideal method for undertaking research in Botswana because they are culturally relevant to the context due to their similarity to the common communication approach in Botswana where people meet to discuss and resolve conflicts in community (in Botswana tradition issues are handled through the community meeting of 6-10 people which is known as *lekgotla*).¹⁰⁷ The choice for beginning with the focus group was that it was a familiar territory to Pentecostal women, it replicated the Pentecostal women’s natural social interaction as Hennink hopes focus group do.¹⁰⁸ The focus group gave them a sense of owning the discussion in a forum that they are comfortable with.¹⁰⁹ In this study, focus groups aimed at exploring issues raised within the CBS with relation to the reading of texts from Luke-Acts and the self-understanding of Pentecostal women in relation to the texts where this required further probing and clarification. The focus group also aimed at pursuing wider socio-cultural matters related to the ways in which biblical texts are read and the context within which the women read and live. The focus groups helped to clarify general

¹⁰⁴ M. Hennink, *International Focus Group Research: A Handbook for the Health and Social Sciences* (Cambridge: University Press, 2007), 6.

¹⁰⁵ Hennink, *International Focus Group Research*, 9.

¹⁰⁶ Hennink, *International Focus Group Research*, 5-6.

¹⁰⁷ I am aware of the patriarchal dimension of this cultural practice; men meet on their own and women meet on their own. For the purposes of this research this works well as the Pentecostal women are used to this establishment.

¹⁰⁸ Hennink, *International Focus Group Research*, 6.

¹⁰⁹ More so because the other method of CBS that I chose for this study and the way it is conducted was new to them.

views about the status and perceptions of women in the Pentecostal church and Botswana. The focus groups also helped in exploring how Setswana culture, Pentecostal theologies and hermeneutics intersect in the lives of women to inform the gender identities and roles. It emerged that the Setswana culture and Pentecostal churches mutually reinforce each other; cultural understandings about women and men are reinscribed within Pentecostal frames of reading. The focus groups were therefore able to answer one of the key questions of my study which is “What is the status of women in Botswana context?”

2.5.2. Contextual Bible Study (CBS)

2.5.2.1. The Aims and Importance of CBS

CBS developed by Gerald West in collaboration with the Ujamaa Centre¹¹⁰ aims to “use the Bible as a resource for personal and social transformation.”¹¹¹ This is achieved through the meeting of “socially engaged Biblical scholars” and “ordinary readers”¹¹² from marginalised communities, who read selected Biblical texts together, and in dialogue, produce new interpretations of those texts which lead to the empowerment of marginalized communities.¹¹³ According to West, the CBS encourages and fosters readings which enable ‘ordinary readers’ to articulate the concerns and struggles which arise from their own contexts and experiences, for example issues of poverty, oppression and stigma. The CBS has four commitments which are relevant for my study and these are:

¹¹⁰ The Ujamaa Centre for Community Development and Research is a project of the UKZN School of Religion and Theology founded during the days of political violence and apartheid in South Africa to facilitate Bible Studies and engagement between scholars of the Bible and “ordinary” people in order to read the Bible together for liberation purposes. It was originally known as the Institute for the Study of Bible but after merging with the Worker Ministry Project it was called Ujamaa. The Ujamaa Centre “is an organisation that locates itself in the interface between biblical studies in academic institutions and ordinary African “readers” (whether literate or not) of the Bible in local communities of faith”. The centre undertakes to conduct Bible studies in communities to “highlight the ways in which structures and systems may have become corrupt”. See G. West, and Ujamaa centre staff “Doing Contextual Bible Study: A Resource Manual”. Draft (Pietermaritzburg: Ujamaa Centre, 2007), 5. Some of Ujamaa’s commitments include reading the Bible in context and ensuring that the socio-political and economic dynamics of the reader are taken into consideration during the interpretation processes.

¹¹¹ West, *Contextual Bible Study*, 24.

¹¹² The use of the term “ordinary”, the “poor” to refer to people who read the Bible pre-critically is a contentious issue. See S. Nadar, “Power, Ideology and Interpretation/s: Womanist and Literary Perspectives on the Book of Esther as Resources for Gender-Social Transformation,” (PhD thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg, 2003), 189-194 for different arguments concerning the validity of using or not using the term. I will not use the term poor here, therefore I will not engage and substantiate the use of the term, but I am aware of the debates surrounding the use of the term. The strength of CBS is its ability to be flexible and adaptable to diverse contexts, so that I do not necessarily have to use all the terminologies that are employed in the model used by the Ujamaa centre. Therefore, in this study I refer to the Pentecostal women and three men that I engage with as respondents or participants rather than as the poor. In social science research they are called respondents or participants. I use CBS to generate data in the same way that I use the focus groups and in-depth interviews.

¹¹³ G. West, “Contextual Bible Study: Creating Sacred Spaces for Social Transformation,” *Grace & Truth* 2 (1999), 57.

1. A commitment to read the Bible from the perspective of the South African context, particularly from the perspective of the poor and oppressed.¹¹⁴
2. A commitment to read the Bible in community with others, particularly with those from contexts different from our own.
3. A commitment to read the Bible critically.
4. A commitment to individual and social transformation through contextual Bible study.¹¹⁵

2.5.2.2. The Reader's Context is Central

CBS takes the role of the reader of the Bible and her context seriously as a subject of interpretation. West points out that the CBS “embraces and advocates context...commitment to, rather than cognizance of context is the real concern.”¹¹⁶ As such, the CBS complements the theoretical framework on which this study is based. One of the central convictions of feminist research is that knowledge has always been constructed from a male point of view. Reading, listening to and taking the interpretation of Pentecostal women seriously itself breaks male hegemony in the construction of knowledge. In this study, Pentecostal women are given an opportunity to construct knowledge as their insights are used in the writing of this thesis.

African feminist scholars have argued that African women's experiences are a starting point for doing hermeneutics and their experiences have been neglected both in the church and the academy, yet feminist research and methodology emphasises “the validity of personal experience”.¹¹⁷ Feminist biblical hermeneutics further holds that human experience is the starting and ending point of the circle of biblical interpretation.¹¹⁸ As such, the CBS is relevant for this study as it engages Pentecostal women in the interpretation of the Bible.

¹¹⁴ Even though this research is not conducted in South Africa, CBS is still relevant to my study. It has been used in different contexts globally among the marginalised people and among people who want to read the Bible differently. It is used particularly in diverse communities in Latin America. It is usually adapted to suit the needs and agenda of particular groups of people in their contexts. See A. Irizarry-Fernandez, “See-Judge-Act: A Different Approach to Bible Study,” in *Engaging The Bible: Critical Readings From Contemporary Women*, eds. Choi Hee An and K.P. Darr (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 47-80.

¹¹⁵ G. West, *Contextual Bible Study* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1993), 13.

¹¹⁶ G. West, “Contextual Bible Studies in South Africa: A Resource for Reclaiming and Regaining Land, Dignity and Identity,” in *Toward an Agenda for Contextual Theology: Essays in Honour of Albert Nolan*, eds. M. Speckman and Larry Kaufmann (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), 169, 169-184.

¹¹⁷ Martyn Hammersley, *The Politics of Social Research* (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 47.

¹¹⁸ R.R. Ruether, “Feminist Interpretation: A Method of Correlation,” in *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. L. Russell (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 111.

According to Barbara Du Bois, one of the central agendas of feminist scholarship is to “create theory grounded in the actual experiences and language of women”.¹¹⁹ I am able to achieve this objective by engaging with Pentecostal women in reading texts from Luke-Acts through the CBS. Further, CBS is appropriate for this study because of the centrality of Scripture in Pentecostal circles and the textual nature of the questions that I asked. Biblical texts always have multiple discourses which could only be articulated during the CBS.

2.5.2.3. CBS Provides a Safe Space for Women

Scholars who have used CBS in their work have hailed it as a safe space for women and the marginalized to articulate their theologies of resistance.¹²⁰ After conducting CBS among Indian Pentecostal women, Nadar concluded that, “Bible studies empower rather than oppress women”. Similarly, West also concludes that,

...embodied theologies find their way into the safe Contextual Bible Study site in fragments and in disguised form, waiting for a resonance with and the recognition of others in a group.¹²¹

After using James Scott’s model of hidden transcripts to describe reading the Bible with women, Beverley Haddad concludes her thesis by arguing that safe spaces were created offstage as they were able to share their experiences of marginalization and disempowerment.¹²² After conducting CBS with Batswana Pentecostal women, I am also satisfied that the CBS created a safe space for *some* women as they spoke freely, whether in affirming the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic or in subverting it. My experience in some ways differs from especially West’s and Haddad’s in that there were women who affirmed and seemed to be unaware that the Pentecostal hermeneutics and its focus on the supremacy of the male is oppressive. Therefore while they felt safe to affirm the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic, they did not offer any subversive theology at all. Further, there were some few women who articulated clearly that they did not find the CBS as well the focus groups safe because they lived in contexts where they were not allowed to express themselves freely in

¹¹⁹ B. Du Bois, “Passionate Scholarship: Notes on Values, Knowing and Method in Feminist Social Science,” in *Theories of Women’s Studies*, eds. G. Bowles and R.D. Klein (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1993), 107.

¹²⁰ Nadar, “Power, Ideology and Interpretation/s,” 210; G. West, “The Not So Silent Citizen: Hearing Embodied Theology in the Context of HIV and AIDS in South Africa,” in *Heterotopic Citizen: New Research on Religious Work for the Disadvantaged*, ed. Trygve Wyller (Germany: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2009), 33.

¹²¹ West, “The Not So Silent Citizen,” 38.

¹²² B.G. Haddad, “African Women’s Theologies of Survival: Intersecting Faith, Feminisms and Development,” (PhD thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg, 2000).

public. Rather, they found the in-depth interviews much safer than the CBS because they did not have a large audience.

2.5.2.4. CBS as an Instrument of Data Collection

The work of Ujamaa is primarily concerned with the liberation of marginalised people and is thus explicitly political and whilst this is an aspect of my own study, there are differences between the use of CBS as a tool for liberation and CBS as a research tool. I was clear when I introduced myself among the Pentecostals that I was doing research and that I needed data that I could use to write this thesis. Therefore, while the Ujamaa model prioritises “issues of vital concern to the group” as identified by the group itself,¹²³ in the context of this study, ‘the issue’, of the understandings of Pentecostal biblical hermeneutics, gender construction and the marginalisation of women in Pentecostal and wider social life in Botswana, and the related biblical texts is one which I, as the researcher have identified and this is the first point at which my own use of the CBS departs from the Ujamaa model and agrees with Nadar’s.¹²⁴ I was overt about my interest in conducting the CBS, and the questions were structured in a way that draws attention to my interest in the themes above. It is possible that if I was not intentional about what was asked during CBS, the questions about gender may not have come up. These are Pentecostal women whose identities have been constructed through socio-cultural factors and through Pentecostal scripture readings and interpretations which promote male patriarchal hegemony. It was important to construct the questions in such a way that I could gather as much data as possible to in order to meet the objectives of this study.

2.5.2.5. To Conscientize or Not?

Nadar departs from the work of Ujamaa in that she argues that “my aim unlike the aim outlined in the Contextual Bible Study approach, is overtly framed by a conscientization paradigm”. Because her goal was to conscientize, she aimed at developing not just a “theoretical hermeneutic, but an activist one too”.¹²⁵ On the other hand, the aims of the CBS as defined by Ujamaa is not to conscientize but to offer interpretive resources which may be useful to the community group.¹²⁶ While Ujamaa’s aims are to offer interpretative resources and Nadar’s aims are explicitly framed by the conscientization paradigm, mine were not intentionally and explicitly framed by the conscientization paradigm. This study itself is

¹²³ West, “Doing Contextual Bible Study,” 5.

¹²⁴ Nadar, “Power, Ideology and Interpretation/s,” 186-188.

¹²⁵ Nadar, “Power, Ideology and Interpretation/s,” 188, 13, 14.

¹²⁶ West, “Contextual Bible Studies in South Africa,” 169-184.

driven by liberation of women through developing a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic; however, the aim of doing CBS with women was to gather data that I could use to write this thesis. However, if conscientization means "...a learning process in which groups become skilled at recognizing forms and experiences of social, political, cultural, religious and economic oppression and dehumanization"¹²⁷ then some form of conscientization took place in my encounter with Pentecostal women. I could not however adequately judge the depth of conscientization during the duration of collecting data. I could see though that if women are given a space to read the Bible together with the aim of conscientizing them on gender oppression, transformation could actually take place. When a space is opened up for Pentecostal women to share their stories under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they can see and begin to engage with issues of gender equality. During fieldwork there were unexpected moments where some women resisted the oppression of women in clear terms. It is these unexpected resistances to patriarchal oppression that make me believe that if they are conscientized then the liberatory impetus can come from the women themselves.

There were instances where I had to 'conscientize' the women to be suspicious of any interpretation of the Bible that marginalizes and belittles. Some were giving interpretations which were reflective of male patriarchal hegemony. For example I had to offer some sort of "advice" during the following conversation:

Woman: *If I were to use metaphors to describe men, I will say they are giants, and we [women] are ants and grasshoppers just like the Israelites were as compared to the Canaanites.*

Me: What does that mean that you are ants?

Woman: *It means that men are better than us, we are nothing as compared to them.*

Me: No you are something because you are a child of God and made in the image of God...who skillfully and wonderfully made you. Refuse any interpretation of the Bible that tells you that!

¹²⁷ E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *Wisdom Ways: Introducing Feminist Biblical Interpretation* (New York: Maryknoll, 2001), 94, cited in Nadar, "Power, Ideology and Interpretation/s," 206.

Even though my goal was not overtly to conscientize, I recognize that I am not a detached researcher either (I will explain this in the section on the role of the researcher as a participant observer). I am part of this broader Pentecostal community of women and I could not pretend that this kind of reading was not disheartening. As part of this community, I was aware that the Bible has been interpreted in life-denying ways, and women found themselves doing the same. I, as both the researcher and an insider at that point, found it necessary to point out that there are alternatives to understanding and reading a particular text. (This confirms that it is one thing to write a proposal and outline the whole research process, but what happens in the field when one actually interacts with the respondents is totally different, the script that one comes with may not work!). Further it also confirms that a researcher like me can take on “multiple sub roles which differ according to the sub-setting and the particular individuals with whom they interact”.¹²⁸

I was mindful, though, that I was using the CBS as a research tool. Nevertheless, using the CBS as a research tool rather than as a tool for transformation meant that I had to negotiate how much ‘detachment’ or involvement I had to exercise without influencing the women’s narratives. If I did too much conscientization, I risked not getting the honest interpretation of Luke-Acts, a risk that was already there, as scholars have pointed out that in focus group discussions some respondents will conform. I heeded Marshall and Rossman’s warning that researchers lose an opportunity for great data when they “offer their opinion, or show off how much they know”.¹²⁹ While a bit of conscientization could be perceived as influencing data, I argue that in most of the conversations I had with the women, I was able to hold my frustrations and biases (in that I had my own ideas about what interpretation of texts should be like) in tension and worked with them, by continuously and painfully listening to the interpretation offered by the women, probing them when I felt they were advancing their marginalization through interpretation of texts. I tried to have a balance between my roles as an insider-outsider. Sometimes after a bit of probing, some women within the group ended up producing another way of looking at the issue discussed. I was elated when after careful probing marginal voices began to speak. For example, the quoted extract above continues like this:

¹²⁸ R. Sapsford and Victor Jupp, *Data Collection and Analysis* (London: Sage, 1996), 77.

¹²⁹ Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 118.

Woman 2: Actually that is what the Bible in Psalms says, I am not sure where it says that I am wonderfully and skillfully made, the text that we read from Acts 2 says that God will give me his Spirit; can God give an ant his Spirit? No, I am a Child of God, loved by God just like God loves the men!

As a critical scholar, a willing suspension of the outcome of any research hypothesis makes me in one respect an outsider to my own community. To that extent this research falls within what is traditionally called an etic research. However, to the extent that I am unashamedly a Pentecostal and unashamedly a Motswana woman shaped by the Setswana culture, this research constitutes emic research. I find myself at the interface between two worlds and inevitably conflicted in the conduct of the fieldwork. However, this role as a bridge between two worlds and two cultures also gives me a unique perspective on the text. There have been others who have pioneered this methodology in their own way. Here I can mention particularly Madipoane Masenya ngwan'a Mphahlele and Musa Wenkosi Dube and express my indebtedness to them in my research.

2.5.2.6. The Role of the Facilitator

West and Nadar differ further on two points. The first one is on the role of the facilitator in the CBS. Nadar argues that the facilitator should have several characteristics:

one is that the facilitator should be trained with tools of critical scholarship; two that the facilitator should be committed to liberation in the community; and three that the facilitator should be an organic member of the community.¹³⁰

West on the other hand believes that anyone can be a facilitator as long as they are “enablers not dominators”.¹³¹ In the interest of this particular study, I adopted Nadar’s position of the insider-facilitator trained with the tools of critical scholarship. I am interested in the liberation of Pentecostal women in my community, and even though this particular study was not primarily intended to conscientize, that interest was there, as demonstrated above. Further, I had to be the facilitator because the questions concerning the role of male hegemony would not have arisen at all without my prompting. Further I had to determine the direction of CBS in order to meet a set of objectives that could only be met if a particular set of questions were

¹³⁰ Nadar, “Power, Ideology and Interpretation/s,” 195.

¹³¹ G. West, *Contextual Bible Study* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1993), 24.

tactfully and strategically asked. The second difference between West and Nadar is on the interests of the facilitator. Nadar is overt about her intentions and interests when conducting CBS, overtly acknowledging her role as an interventionist within her own Indian community; whereas West, who as a white male academic works outside his own community, is more *laissez faire* and allows participants to come up with ways in which the CBS can transform them.¹³² Like Nadar, I conducted CBS within my own Pentecostal community where I know *some* of the struggles of these women and how the Bible has been read to them.¹³³

2.5.3. In-depth Open-ended Interviews

An interview is a data collection method that involves the interviewer asking questions with the respondent answering those questions. The feminist scholar, Ann Oakley perceives an interview as “a specialized pattern of verbal interaction, initiated for a special purpose and focused on some specific content areas...”¹³⁴ Central to in-depth interviews is the collection of meaningful relevant data where the researcher engages the participants who then provide the data.

The interview guide differed from one woman to the other following their responses in either the CBS or the focus group discussions. The questions asked were unstructured and the women actually determined the kind of questions asked by the way they responded, so each interview has a unique transcript. Here, I am supported by David Hall and Irene Hall who assert that in unstructured interviews “informants are allowed greater scope to develop their contribution”.¹³⁵ The function of the interviewer, according to Seaman, is to create an atmosphere of trust and to encourage the respondent to talk by using simple phrases like “tell me more” or “that is interesting”.¹³⁶ For all the interviews, I started by saying, “you have

¹³² West himself believes that the liberatory impetus derives from the grass roots spontaneously when ordinary people are given the space and opportunity to conduct a “close reading of the text”.

¹³³ Even though I am a Motswana woman and Pentecostal, I can never absolutely claim to understand the struggles that other Batswana Pentecostal women go through. Even though I am confronted with patriarchy both in the church and wider society, I have more space and a stronger voice to speak than most women. For example, while I am still finding ways to engage with the elders, both men and women in my community regarding the customary law and how it marginalises women, I have a voice in my church. For example, sometimes my pastor engages with me after giving a sermon. He asks me questions about whether his “Greek” was correct and we engage in the content of his sermon. It is in these conversations that I gently discuss issues like why Paul instructed women to keep quiet in the church. The fact that I am pursuing a PhD in Biblical studies gives me a stronger voice than some women. At the time of writing this thesis there is only one woman in Botswana, Professor Musa Dube, who has a PhD in Biblical studies.

¹³⁴ A. Oakley, “Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms,” in *Doing Feminist Research*, ed. H. Roberts (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 33.

¹³⁵ Hall and Hall, *Practical Social Research*, 160.

¹³⁶ Seaman, *Research Methods*, 291.

very interesting ideas and I am interested in hearing them in detail". For each woman, I had at least three questions emanating from their responses from the CBS and the focus groups and these were the questions that I used to initiate conversation. The questions were all guided by the objectives of this study, and the conversations with women ranged from the how the Spirit works in Pentecostal traditions, how the Bible defines womanhood and how they understand texts from Luke-Acts.

2.5.3.1. In-depth Open-ended Interviews with the Pastors

Pastors are the main articulators of Pentecostal hermeneutics because they have a greater platform. They preach not only on the pulpit, but they preach at wedding and funerals. Pentecostal pastors have enormous authority in the society and church because of their ecclesiastical position. It was important to understand how they use the Bible to understand the roles of men and women. I conducted 2-3 hour interviews with three Pentecostal pastors; one pastor from Church A and two pastors from Church B. The interviews with the pastors were either held at their homes or in their church office and all of them are audio recorded.

The interview guide for all the pastors were the same (appendix 2). However, the probing questions were different as they depended on the way each pastor responded to the questions from the interview guide. The interviews were also meant to determine, among other things, the role of the Pentecost narratives in Luke-Acts in shaping Pentecostal theologies today. It further provided answers to the two key sub questions for this study, which are:

1. How is women's marginalization related to biblical interpretation in the Pentecostal church?
2. What is the significance of the original Pentecostal experience, as recorded in Luke-Acts to the development of Pentecostal theology?

2.5.4. Participant Observation

This study also involved participant observation in the churches under study. Participant observation is a process in which the researcher's presence in a social situation is maintained for the purpose of investigation.¹³⁷ It allows the researcher to be able to observe and compare what people do with what people say they do. Russell Bernard and Gery Ryan points out that

¹³⁷ Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 140.

participant observation put the researcher where the action is, as she or he observes behaviour in its natural context.¹³⁸

I captured any relevant observations by making notes in a fieldwork journal. Participant observation took place in church services as well as less formal community meetings like church-run Bible studies, youth meetings, and cell group meetings, weddings and funerals, in order to maximise my understanding of the different environments within the church in which women are socialised and how that socialisation is done through reading and interpreting the Bible. Interpretation of texts goes beyond a conceptual level; it is acted out and performed in society. For example, on 12 October 2011 I attended the *bogadi* negotiations (to be explained in detail in chapter 3) of a daughter of a Pentecostal member. I observed that first, all the Pentecostal women who attended this ceremony had their heads covered and had shawls on their shoulders; second, they sat on the floor while men sat on the chairs; third none of them spoke, including the mother of the bride, and fourth, the women prepared and served the food while the men did not. Not only were women living out the interpretation of texts that subjugate them, they were also observing the Tswana customs that guide the *bogadi* negotiations demonstrating how the dual patriarchies in the two traditions define the status of a woman in Botswana.

2.6. The Role of the Researcher

I find the six positions of a researcher outlined by Norman Blaikie helpful as I am able to locate myself within some of these positions.¹³⁹ Blaikie outlines these as follows; detached observer, empathetic observer, faithful reporter, mediator of languages, reflective partner and dialogic facilitator.

2.6.1. Detached Observer

Detached observer is a traditional scientific researcher who is an uninvolved spectator during the process of data collection. This researcher detaches herself from the research participants in order to produce reliable ‘objective’ data. This position has been challenged by postmodern researchers as presumptuous and unrealistic, because no one can adopt total objectivity from any research. The fact that a researcher picks a particular topic entails some sort of connectedness and subjectivity to the research already.

¹³⁸ Russell Bernard and Gery Ryan, *Analyzing Qualitative Data: Systematic Approaches* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2010), 41.

¹³⁹ Blackie, *Designing Social Research*, 50-52.

2.6.2. Empathetic Observer

Those who have not been satisfied with the *detached observer* position have opted for a level of empathy towards the researched participants. The *empathetic observer* “insists that it is necessary for researcher to be able to place themselves in the social actors’ position”. The holders of this position argue that the researcher can only be able to understand the actions of the respondents if they grasp the subjective meaning that the respondents use. To some degree this makes sense because it acknowledges that it is difficult to do research without understanding something about the world of the participants.

2.6.3. Faithful Reporter

The *faithful reporter* aims at “allowing the research participants to ‘speak for themselves’” as the researcher just reports their point of view. This approach requires the researcher to immerse herself into the participants’ way of life so that she can understand how the respondents make sense of their world. The task of the researcher is to faithfully and accurately produce a report that she shares with the participants so that they can see and hear themselves in the report, then engage the researcher about the report if there is need to do that. This model ensures that researchers are accountable to the participants by sharing their research with them before making the data available to the world.

2.6.4. Mediator of Language

The fourth position is that of *mediator of language*. The researcher assumes the role of the one who mediates between the “every day, lay language and social scientific research or technical language”. She actively constructs a research account “based on the accounts provided by the participants. This process of construction is not neutral” as the researchers assumptions and interests impact on the “nature of the account produced” hence it is impossible to achieve detached objectivity.

2.6.5. Reflective Partner

The fifth position is that of the reflective partner or conscious partiality. Here the researcher is interested in the “emancipation of the participants” from the oppression they are experiencing. According to this model, research is dialogic not monologic, because both the researcher and the participants’ conscientize one another and allow themselves to be changed by the research process. Both identify oppression and take necessary steps towards emancipation.

2.6.6. Dialogic Facilitator

The sixth position is called *dialogic facilitator* where the researcher is not an ‘expert’, but is seen as “another actor in the social context being investigated”. This position seeks to reduce the “authorial influence on the products of the research by allowing a variety of voices to be expressed”. Here, emphasis is on equal dialogue between the researcher and the participants.

2.6.7. Locating myself as a Researcher

I disassociate myself from the role of a *detached observer* because it is impossible to be detached from the research process, as I have already demonstrated above. I do concede my role as an etic researcher with respect to the critical framework and methodologies adopted from the academy. I cannot escape the aspects of alienation and otherness which are an essential aspect of critical thinking which underpins research. However, I also acknowledge and affirm my status as an emic researcher in terms of my Pentecostal and Motswana identity. I locate myself somewhere between the *mediator of languages*, *reflective partner* and *dialogic partner*. There is no one research position that could adequately describe a researcher who is an intellectual organic member of a community; a complementary mix of two or more of these positions captures my positions adequately.¹⁴⁰

This is important in that at one level I am engaging with critical scholars on the one hand and Pentecostal scholars on the other hand. On the hand the fieldwork challenges my perception as a Motswana woman academic because it raised questions about my own identity, reading while keeping me honest to my own community of faith and my own culture with its positive and negative aspects. So engaging with scholars becomes simultaneously an engagement with my dialogue partners among Pentecostal women who “keep me honest”! I become an intermediary between the academy and the grass roots at this point.¹⁴¹

2.6.8. Reflexivity

Reflexivity means the self-awareness that researchers develop throughout the study about how they influence research data. Hall and Hall point out that reflexivity requires the researcher to ask questions about how their gender, race and age influenced the data, because they argue that data is created through an “interaction between a researcher and the

¹⁴⁰ Organic intellectual is a concept introduced by Antonio Gramsci. With this concept, Gramsci referred to the intellectuals who consciously work within and for their own class and people. See *Letters From Prison by Antonio Gramsci*, translated from Italian by L. Lawner (London: Quartet Books, 1973), 44.

¹⁴¹ See West, *Academy of the Poor* and Gramski *Letters From Prison* on their notion of thier notion of the grass roots intellectual.

informant, so that research itself is a creative process which you will be part of as you design and negotiate your research, frame your research instrument and carry out your fieldwork”.¹⁴² These scholars hold that research is not just described, it is experienced as emotions are involved, problems do occur and it is not always orderly. Reflexivity is extremely important in feminist research.

In the discussion above I have already begun to be reflexive about my encounter with the participants. This is an embodied research in that I am a Pentecostal Motswana woman. I am also a biblical scholar and researcher; therefore I am an “insider-outsider”. However, I tried as much as possible to balance the tensions entrenched in both roles. One of the ways of accounting for my role as insider-outsider is to interrogate the power dynamics that were at play during my data collection. Even though I am a Motswana woman and Pentecostal, confronted with patriarchy, I can never absolutely claim to understand the struggles that other Batswana Pentecostal women go through, especially those who are financially dependent on the men in their lives. I have financial independence and I am educated and that in itself means I am able to negotiate my independence from the men in my life, which other women may not be able to do.¹⁴³ Even though I am confronted with patriarchy both in the church and wider society, I have more space and a stronger voice to speak than most women. However, it does not mean that I experience less marginalization, because I am still governed by the customary law I will discuss in chapter 3. The customary law governs the life of all women, educated or not. It is a fact that women in Botswana are subordinate to men, and that men and women do not have the same level of authority. When women sit on the floor, cover their heads, wear skirts and dresses during funerals or at marriage negotiations and when they serve men during these, I do too. Therefore, I can claim that what united us, being Pentecostal Batswana women, was far more important than being young and educated. Further, my home is in the village itself, in Molepolole, so the women see me as their daughter who is part of them and participates in community events just like them.

¹⁴² Hall and Hall, *Practical Social Research*, 42-43.

¹⁴³ Education does not guarantee special treatment for women in my community; a woman is a woman and even when she is educated she observes and goes through most practices that other women go through, unless she wants to be ostracised by her community. As I will discuss in the next chapter, studies from Botswana show that educated women observe the living customary law just like other women. They suffer abuse just like other women because of the payment of *bogadi* among other things. However, education affords women financial independence and in some ways gives her an opportunity to have more say in how, for example, children are raised. Other women, especially those living in the villages, are dictated by the elders and men in their lives on even how to raise their children. This will become clearer in the next chapter.

Concerns about subjectivity and bias are real. They may be hindrances, especially for people doing research among their own people. While that might be true, I gained more from doing research among the Pentecostal community because the women trusted me. Over and above that I know Pentecostal traditions. This awareness enriched the research process. I was able to control my bias and subjectivity as much as possible. I focused on the purposes of conducting this research; to collect data so that I will write the thesis. I find my experience of being an organic member of this community and also being a trained scholar validated by Nadar who worked among women from her Indian community, some of who raised her, yet they were not ‘suspicious’ of her intentions.¹⁴⁴

I was expecting some level of suspicion from the male pastors even before I interviewed them. When I asked for permission to do research in their churches, I had to explain the research at length. Although being male and being a pastor are both positions of power in my community, I was not intimidated. Maybe the reason was that I did not have to probe them for answers like I did with the women, especially in the beginning. The pastors spoke for long periods without me having to probe and they answered most of my questions before I even asked them.¹⁴⁵ This meant that the power dynamics that I thought would be at play did not hamper the data I collected from them.

When Musa Dube was doing research among women in African Independent churches in Botswana, she introduced herself with the phrase “I have come to learn from you”.¹⁴⁶ I also introduced myself to the Pentecostal women in this way. This is profound and empowering as it acknowledges the women’s experiences and I was communicating to them that they are knowledgeable as interpreters of Luke-Acts. Further, I was giving them a space and a voice to express their theologies and ways of reading the Bible.

I was born and raised in Molepolole. I attended one of the churches under study from when I was thirteen until I married. The older women in this church saw me growing up. It was no

¹⁴⁴ Nadar, “Power, Ideology and Interpretation/s,” 197.

¹⁴⁵ When I reflected on this later, I realised it was a “deliberate” act for the pastors not give me a chance to “talk back” to them. This was a demonstration of who has authority when it comes to interpretation. I am a woman and they as pastors have authority and they were asserting that authority even though at the time I was not conscious of it. It is possible that the pastors themselves might not have been aware of this.

¹⁴⁶ M.W. Dube, “Readings of *Semoya*: Batswana Women’s Interpretations of Matt 15:21-28,” *Semeia* 73 (1996), 111-129.

surprise that during the research process I was constantly referred to as *ngwanaka*, meaning my child. I was applauded for coming to “*learn from us*, because younger women do not value the wisdom of the elders”. While I appreciated this welcome, I was aware, however, of the limitations that were imposed by the cultural dynamics between me and the older women in the group. In my context, younger women must give older women respect, and this involves not talking back to the elders. This plays an important role in determining the theme and depth of the discussions that women of different ages could have. Therefore, I minimised the impact this could have on the research by probing the women’s responses until I was satisfied that I had exhausted the answers I could possibly get. Unlike the male pastors, the women required a lot of probing especially in the beginning of the research process. This is a demonstration of the subordination of women which leads to the lack of confidence in interpreting the Bible.

Within the younger women in Gaborone, it was different because some of them are close to me in terms of age and association as well. The first focus group was not successful because they said things they thought I wanted to hear, thus undermining the purpose of my study. For example, when I asked the question “are men and women equal in your society?”, I had responses like, *men and women are not equal but it is wrong, Galatians 3:28 says that there is neither male nor female so the church is wrong in teaching that*, and *No man can ever claim to be above me*. I realised that their responses were too “neat” and seemed rehearsed. I then reintroduced the study and stressed the importance of honesty to the success of this project. We had to redo the focus group again, asking the same questions, and the responses were contradictory, full of tensions and ambiguities.

2.7. Judging the Success of the CBS and Focus Groups

I judged the CBS and focus group to be a success when I had two or all of the following responses:

1. Responses affirming patriarchy in the church, Bible and culture.
2. Responses that were contradictory.
3. Responses that were subversive.

The women who affirmed patriarchy in the Bible were those who approached the Bible and the interpretation of the Bible with a complete hermeneutic of trust. These are women who

maintain clearly that patriarchy is ordained by God as “it is written in the Bible”. The contradictory response came from women who tried hard to conform to women who affirmed patriarchy and those who were subversive. The subversive response came from “resisting readers”; women who approached the Bible with a hermeneutics of trust but approached Pentecostal hermeneutics with suspicion. This resistance to patriarchy varied; there were few who were clear in their critique of the patriarchy in the church, in the Setswana culture and the Pentecostal frames of reading.¹⁴⁷ Then there were those who were “reservedly suspicious”. These women will, for example, argue that the Trinity is a model of equality for men and women to emulate, but they will still insist that the Trinity is male and it is blasphemous for one to think otherwise.

In most instances I had responses 1 and 2 and I was satisfied because it demonstrated that genuine discussions were taking place.

2.8. Capturing Data

The data collection was mostly conducted in the vernacular; however there were some digressions into English especially among younger women in all the three locations. We joked that we developed a new lingua that we called “Tswanalised English”. The CBS questions were translated into Setswana and the respondents were informed that they could use either English or Setswana, the two official languages in Botswana.

I am fluent in both Setswana and English, so I transcribed and translated some of the data in the tapes and the research assistant verified the transcripts. The process was long and tedious but it was important for me to do it because I was able to check the transcripts for accuracy and capture the mood of the respondents as I remembered it.¹⁴⁸

Transcription was challenging and complex as it also involved translation from one language to another, and that sometimes compromises meaning. Meaning is sometimes not accurate and according to Marshall and Rossman, interpreters must aim for “a reasonable approximation” of the participants’ words as some words rarely translate directly into another

¹⁴⁷ Although they denounced patriarchy in the small groups, they made it clear that they could not express the same views publicly because they do not want to be “demonised” and perceived negatively. They believe that patriarchy is the order of the day in Botswana and they “do what they have to do” to thrive even within the Pentecostal church. These women stressed that they are not oppressed but they are marginalised. They are not oppressed because they have accepted the liberating power of the gospel of Jesus and the liberating power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore no culture can oppress them, but the cultures can marginalise them.

¹⁴⁸ Some of the data remains untranslated, especially in instances where we thought the participants were repeating what we already had from the others.

language.¹⁴⁹ In the case of this study, the translations from Setswana to English meant that somehow meaning might have been lost sometimes because there is no word in English that captures the Setswana word or phrase adequately. In that case, my assistant and I decided to use the English word closer to the phrase used and sometimes we decided to leave the word or phrase un-translated. Leaving some of the phrases un-translated is validated by Marshall and Rossman who argue that it helps “decenter the hegemony of an English centered world”.¹⁵⁰ One of the challenges with translating the participants’ words is the issue of representability. Marshall and Rossman point us to the fact that when we translate the participants’ words, we are actually representing them and their world views. While it is never possible to completely represent another person’s worldview and voices, my research assistant and I tried to translate the words of the participants as accurately as we could, pausing where they paused and leaving some sentences incomplete.

Transcription on the one hand also compromises meaning in that it does not capture non-verbal communications in the form of gestures, body language and facial expressions.

Monique Hennink suggests that each transcript should be labelled with markers that make sense for the project, to reflect, for example, where and when the data was collected, the age and gender of the participants.¹⁵¹ While Hennink is specifically referring to focus groups, the same can be applied to any qualitative data. For the purposes of data analysis, data coming from the CBS 1, interview 1 for example, will be labelled CBS1, or INT1 or FC1, with the name of the respondent, followed by gender; F for female, M for male; level of education, (no formal education= Z, primary= P, secondary =S, diploma= D, first degree and up= De) where she lives (urban U; semi urban SE; or rural R) and her age (20-30=20+; 30-40=30+; 40-50=40+, 50-60=50+) followed by the date. Such that for example, (CBS1MaipeloFDU20+) means the data comes from CBS, comment made by female named Maipelo who had a diploma, lives in an urban area, and falls in the 20-30 age group. If the same woman attended the interviews (INT), the labels will be INTMaipeloFDU20+. If a reference is made in general to a particular focus group, for example, it will appear as FC and the date. Labelling respondents in this way may also be helpful in the future if I decide to compare urban Pentecostal dwellers with rural dwellers on a particular theme. If I use three extracts from different participants following each other that will be indicated in one footnote

¹⁴⁹ Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 165.

¹⁵⁰ Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 166.

¹⁵¹ Hennink, *International Focus Group Research*, 217.

in the order they are used. The participant observation notes will be presented as PO and the date.

2.10. Summary

This was a chapter on the research design and methodology. In this chapter I discussed and provided the rationale for doing empirical exploratory research. Because of the textual nature of this study, textual approaches, narrative and reader response criticism will be employed. This chapter gives a justification for using textual approaches in regards to Luke-Acts. The qualitative research methods used in this study: focus groups, CBS, in-depth interviews and participant observation - were explained in detail. In this chapter I also explained my role in the research process, reflexivity. The next chapter is a discussion of the status of women in Botswana as a background to understand Pentecostal women's interpretation of their lives using the Bible.

CHAPTER 3

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN BOTSWANA

3.0. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed in detail the methodology used in this study. This chapter describes the status and position of women in Botswana by demonstrating how the cultural, social, political, legal and economic systems favour men and disadvantage women. African women have demonstrated that the patriarchal African culture and church mutually reinforce each other in marginalizing women (chapter 1). This chapter is important as not only does it describe the status of women in Botswana, it also demonstrates how some of the Tswana attitudes about women are reinscribed within Pentecostal hermeneutics. The chapter provides the basis for understanding how and why Pentecostals in Botswana use the Bible to advance male supremacy and female subordination. This chapter is important because it demonstrates that in many cases in Botswana, the position of women within the Pentecostal church reflects wider socio-cultural understandings about the roles and positions of women in society.

The Pentecostal church in Botswana discourages some cultural practices, like consulting traditional healers and observing mourning rituals, which some non-Pentecostal church members practice. However, it endorses and encourages some practices that reinforce the place of a Motswana woman as submissive, like the paying of *bogadi* (the so-called “bride price”) which I will discuss below. Whilst I am more concerned with the dual patriarchies of the Setswana and Pentecostal contexts, it must be noted that neither context is static nor isolated from the wider impacts of globalization and the hybrid cultural forms which global encounters produce. European and American cultural forms are highly influential within Botswana.¹⁵² This further complicates the position of a Motswana Pentecostal woman who must contend not only with the dual patriarchies of the Pentecostal church and Setswana culture but also with the import of aspects of wider global forms. This importation does not happen monolithically but selection frequently reflects pre-existent patterns of power and patriarchy, rendering new forms of oppression.

This chapter draws from existing books, articles, pamphlets and from my own fieldwork data. It is organized as follows: the first section presents the political, social and economic statuses of women in Botswana, going back and forth between the past and the present. The second

¹⁵² This refers to the importation of both Christian and secular books, magazines, and TV shows which inform and shape gender identities through patriarchal lenses.

part focuses on the changes taking place within the country and efforts that are taken by different groups to elevate the status of women in Botswana.

3.1. Patriarchy in Botswana

The position and status of men and women is not equal in Botswana, as male superiority and female subordination is built into all kinship structures.¹⁵³ Tswana society, reflecting patriarchal traditions, defines women as the ‘other’ to a male self. Women are subordinate to men, classified as minors and are expected to be passive and obedient. Research indicates that Botswana is patriarchal, hierarchical, patrilineal and conservative. Men are privileged to have access to power in various aspects of life while women are placed in a position of powerlessness and are regarded as secondary members of society.¹⁵⁴ This patriarchy is reflected in the way boys are socialised differently from girls from an early age (boys visit cattle posts with their fathers over weekends tend cattle and de-stump the fields while girls remain home with the mothers, fetching water, cooking, cleaning the house and yard); it is reflected during weddings and funerals (women cook, cover their heads while men gather firewood and slaughter cattle); in the political, legal and the economic structures of the country, men occupy higher positions and hold better paying jobs than women. Seldom holding public leadership positions when compared with their male counterparts, women are underrepresented in decision making structures. Not only are men in Botswana in power within households, they hold higher management positions, which means that crucial decisions that ultimately affect women, be they political, economic and health-related, are made by men. Men dominate numerically at Parliament and local councils and these are institutions which are central in determining whether laws and policies are passed or not—even in affairs which directly affect women.¹⁵⁵ The patriarchal nature is demonstrated and expressed in different ways in Botswana. I discuss some of these below.

¹⁵³ *Beyond Inequalities 2005*, 26.

¹⁵⁴ N. Phaladze and B. Ngwenya, “Women Status, Custom and Tswana Traditions in Contemporary Tswana Society’ in *Gender: Opportunities and Challenges, Conference Proceedings*, eds. S. Kaye, L. Machacha and T. Maundeni (Gaborone, 2008), 25; *Beyond Inequalities 2005*, 40; T. Maundeni, “Gender Based Violence Against Women and Children and HIV/AIDS,” in *Report of the First National Conference on Gender and HIV/AIDS* (Gaborone: Women Affairs Division, 2001), 73-83; *Report on Review of All Laws Affecting Women in Botswana* (Gaborone: WAD, 1998); *Botswana Country Report on the Implementation of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development: The Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children* (Gaborone: WAD, 2000); *Situational Analysis of Gender Based Violence in Botswana* (Gaborone: Government Printer, 2009); *Gender Disaggregated Report* (Gaborone: WAD, 2002).

¹⁵⁵ *Beyond Inequalities 2005*, 26-27.

3.1.1. Language and Leadership

Further, the patriarchal nature of Botswana society is reflected in the language. Tapologo Maundeni holds that Setswana is thoroughly sexist, and language is one of the ways that a patriarchal ideology is maintained.¹⁵⁶ It is through the Setswana idioms and proverbs that the position and status of women is revealed and maintained. For example, Setswana expressions are loaded with proverbs that discourage women's leadership, both in the home and in public. Proverbs such as, *ga di ke di etelelwa ke monamagadi pele, di atle di wele ke selomo, banna ke baeteledipele ka tlhologo*, meaning a female cannot lead, if she does she will lead the people astray, men are born leaders and *tshukudu e tonanyana ga e ke e etelelwa ke e namagadi pele*, meaning a male rhino can never be led by a female rhino. These proverbs express the Batswana's attitudes towards power and leadership; power resides in the male as my respondents argued.¹⁵⁷

Men must be on top and women must follow....We do not have confidence in women, because women are weak.

These expressions are a reality because the fact is that in 2012, there are only four women in Parliament out of 44 members; two who stood for parliamentary elections, Botlhogile Tshireletso and Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi; and two who were specially elected by the president, Dorcus Makgetho-Malesu and Gloria Somolekae. The fifth woman in parliament is Margaret Nasha who is the speaker of the National assembly, the first woman ever to hold that position since independence in 1966.¹⁵⁸ Women are not in political positions of power in Botswana because "traditional stereotyped attitudes, gender insensitive party policies, and procedures still prevail".¹⁵⁹ While the constitutions of other SADC countries have provisions for a quota policy to increase the representation of women at parliament and higher political levels, Botswana does not. Further, Botswana does not have affirmative action which helps put women in leadership positions either.¹⁶⁰ The absence of the quota policy and lack of

¹⁵⁶ T. Maundeni, "Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language: How Females are Disadvantaged," *Gender, Opportunities and Challenges*, Conference Proceedings of the 1st National Conference of the Gender Policy and Programme Committee, University of Botswana 22-24 October 2001, 39.

¹⁵⁷ FC, 7 July 2011.

¹⁵⁸ *Gender Disaggregated Report*.

¹⁵⁹ *Beyond Inequalities 2005*, 23.

¹⁶⁰ *SADC Gender Protocol Baseline Barometer*, eds. Colleen Morna and D. Walter (Johannesburg: SADC Gender Protocol Alliance, 2009), 10, 21, 56.

affirmative action reflects the society's socio-cultural attitudes and resistance towards women and their ability to lead.

3.1.2. Leadership within the Judiciary and the House of Chiefs

Within the judiciary, we have a woman Attorney General, Athaliah Molokomme, but there is no female judge. Within the House of Chiefs, which I will explain below, there is only one woman paramount chief, Mosadi Seboko, and all the other paramount chiefs constituting the House of Chiefs have always been and are male. Not only are women underrepresented at Parliament, traditional courts and at local councils, they are also inadequately represented in positions of power in management structures of the private sector,¹⁶¹ and in land boards, brigades, churches and other community decision making structures, so that decision making at higher levels is completely dominated by men.¹⁶² The underrepresentation of women at these higher levels of power means women do not have a good chance of influencing policies that affect their lives.

3.1.3. Marriage and Family Life

Social systems in Botswana are highly patriarchal as well. Institutions like marriage have endowed men with enormous power over women and married women in particular are perceived as unequal partners to their husbands. In Botswana, men pay the bride-price (*bogadi*), they are heads of the household and decision makers while women are the subordinates generally classified as *bana* (children). Traditionally a woman was and still is *ngwana wa monna*, meaning that the wife is her husband's child, who can be "chastised if she incurs her husband's discipline".¹⁶³ Maundeni observes that the child status of a woman is further confirmed even today when a married man is greeted by saying *ba tsogile jang bana?*, meaning, "How are the children?" The wife is included as part of the *bana*.¹⁶⁴ Underpinning this perception are deeply rooted gender assumptions about the status of a woman in Tswana

¹⁶¹ *Beyond Inequalities*, 23. See also *Gender Disaggregated Report*, 13. This report by the Women Affairs Division reveals that in the private and parastatal sectors, the gap between men and women is even wider. In the private sector, out of 474 decision making positions, only 134 are occupied by women and in the parastatal sector out of 106 management positions 45 are held by women. Another report reveals that there are some improvements within government as women are advancing in holding top positions, even though they hardly advance to top positions of permanent secretary which is a male domain, *Beyond Inequalities*, 24-25.

¹⁶² Maundeni, "Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language," 45.

¹⁶³ *Botswana Country Report on the Implementation of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development*, 3. See also *Report on Review of All Laws Affecting Women in Botswana*, 10.

¹⁶⁴ While *ba tsogile bana* includes the wife, among some families, the greeting might be directed to the wife to ask about the wellbeing of the family, including the husband. However, this is not a common way of greeting a woman.

society; she is a perpetual minor who can never be equal to her husband. She should be subordinate, passive and obedient to her husband. Studies and my fieldwork data indicate that this is still what is passed on to younger women getting into marriage today in and outside the church. A proper Motswana woman must be all of the above.¹⁶⁵

3.1.4. Marital Power Act and Male Dominance

Until 2005, the constitution of Botswana under the Marital Power Act reflected this perception. The man was legally classified as the head of the household and the woman was legally classified as a jural minor, subordinated legally, socially, economically to her husband. Under this act, the woman was deprived of full legal capacity. She could not, for example, apply for a loan. She could not lease or sell property and she could not answer for cases at court without her husband's consent, while the husband could do all the above without the wife's consent.¹⁶⁶ This act institutionalised male dominance over women. The abolition of the Marital Power Act came into effect on the 1st of May 2005. This means that legally men and women whose marriage is contracted under the Marriage Act are equal; they can access loans and answer for cases at courts as individuals. However, the abolition of the Marital Power Act still has limitations in that it does not apply to religious and customary marriages which occur quite frequently in Botswana. And there is evidence that "Batswana marry in accordance with customary rules and an increasing number of Batswana nationals are converting to religions other than Christianity".¹⁶⁷ This means there are women in Botswana who are still legally incapacitated in that they need the consent of the husbands to conduct legal and business affairs since they are still classified as minors. While the abolition of the Marital Power Act legally empowers and protects both wives and husbands, the data from my field work reveals that men still regard themselves and are regarded by women as the heads of the households, because they believe that it is the "preferred order of God", as I will demonstrate in chapter 4. Further, the existence of the customary law which informs the lives of Batswana,¹⁶⁸ and the church in its turn, sustain this perception, because in these

¹⁶⁵ CBS3 August 20 2011. See also Maundeni, "Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language," 41, 37-48.

¹⁶⁶ A. Molokomme, *His, Mine or Ours: The Property Right of Women Married Under Botswana Common Law* (Gaborone: Women Affairs Unit, 1986), 4; *Situational Analysis*, 80.

¹⁶⁷ *Situational Analysis*, 80.

¹⁶⁸ Customary law refers to the often unwritten norms, practices and traditions of a group of people. Athalia Molokomme, *Customary Law in Botswana: Past, Present and Future Botswana in the 21st Century* (Gaborone: Botswana Society, 1994), 347-349, defines customary law in the Botswana context in two ways. The first is what she calls the Traditionalist law which includes the values, habits and traditional norms that characterized the Batswana. These were obtained before Botswana was colonized and came into contact with the missionaries and Western traders. The Traditionalist understanding of Customary law is equated with unchanging cultural

contexts the man is the head of the household and he must be the sole decision maker in the home and in public.¹⁶⁹ Unfortunately, the customary law and the church are much more influential when it comes to the position of men and women in Botswana than progressive legislation in parliament. The abolition of the Marital Power Act was met with resistance from men and women in different contexts. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 4, even Pentecostal pastors resisted this change. Unfortunately, this resistance is still ongoing, even in 2011/2012, among Batswana, as my fieldwork data confirms. What this demonstrates is that while men and women are legally equal, if there is no change in attitude and perceptions about women, the marginalisation of women will continue. Further, making use of the law, according to A. Maboreke, depends on women's "socioeconomic situation, levels of literacy, ideological consciousness and financial ability."¹⁷⁰ For most women, especially poor, illiterate women residing in rural areas, the legal reforms and changes do not mean much as these legal changes do not translate into social, economic, social and political changes in their status.

3.1.5. Operation of a Dual Legal System: Customary Law and Civil Law

Botswana is a country that operates a dual legal system; the application of the customary law operates alongside the application of the civil law. The Magistrate and High Courts administer the civil law/common law while the Customary Courts, official organs of the state, administer the customary law through the authority of Chiefs, deputy Chiefs, Headmen and Wardmen who are mostly men.¹⁷¹ There are customary courts in all the urban areas and the

values and its authority is evoked by traditionalists in their efforts to resist new laws and policies. The second is what she calls the Living Customary law which "describes a way of life based upon certain norms of behavior which are based, in varying degrees, on tradition". This Living contemporary law is demonstrated in the way Batswana in rural and urban areas live and it is dynamic, negotiable and fluid as it reflects the way Batswana adapt to the socio-economic changes taking place in Botswana today. Further, the Living customary law closely reflects the lives of ordinary people; it is a way of life for Batswana today. However, the custodians of the Traditionalist customary law perceive the Living customary law as contaminated by modernity and foreign values (347-349). While Molokomme makes this distinction, I find that Batswana evoke the authority of both when it is convenient and when it suits them. For example, during the focus group with older women, they argued that it is not Setswana culture for younger women to be seen in public openly talking to boys whereas they did not find it "UnTswana" and problematic when they demand that *bogadi* should be paid in cash instead of cattle as was the traditional practice before colonization (CBS3, 20 August 2011). Anne Griffiths, a researcher of customary law in Botswana, writes that the customary law "exists beyond the written texts embodied in legislation and judicial decision making". It is uncodified. "Gender, Power and Difference: Reconfiguring Law from Bakwena Women's Perspective," *PoLAR* 23, no. 2 (2000), 90, 89-106.

¹⁶⁹ *Situational Analysis*, p 19.

¹⁷⁰ M. Maboreke, "Introducing Women's Law," in *The Legal Situation of Women in Southern Africa 2*, eds. J. Stewart and A. Armstrong (Harare: University of Harare Press, 1990), 5.

¹⁷¹ In most villages, mine included, women are excluded from holding these positions. It is rare, as I mentioned above, to find women holding these positions. See Griffiths, "Gender, Power and Difference," 92. The Customary Courts and the Customary Courts of Appeal are subordinate to common law structures. The

villages in Botswana, where Chiefs and Headmen preside over and pass judgements on cases.¹⁷² Customary Courts deal with, among others, domestic cases of violence, rape cases, estate sharing and custody of the children.

The Customary Courts' dealing with these cases is problematic and a challenge because the customary law is gender biased and often favours men and reinforces traditional norms that marginalise women, so that it is often difficult for women to access justice under the customary law.¹⁷³ While the civil law and the Constitution are constantly being amended to advance the status of women, the customary law remains rigid and oppressive towards women. According to the Constitution of Botswana, all persons are equal and should be subjected to the same practices, but under the customary law that does not happen. Unfortunately, the customary law dictates the general lives of men and women in Botswana, much more than the Constitution and the civil law.¹⁷⁴ Further, the Constitution does not address the contradictions between the civil law and the customary law.¹⁷⁵ Nthabiseng Phaladze and Barbara Ngwenya demonstrate this by pointing out that in Kanye (a village in Botswana) dead children of unmarried women are taken in and out of the household for burial through the back door, not the main entrance of the home. This is to demonstrate their "illegitimacy". They have come through the "back door" because their mothers never married.¹⁷⁶ Another example that demonstrates how the customary law contradicts the Constitution comes from my own community of Bakwena. Unmarried women, regardless of their age, do not sit in on meetings during their daughters' marriage negotiations because they are still regarded as "girls", whereas the fathers of children born out of wedlock can sit in those meetings and negotiate *bogadi* for their children. As long as they have been active in their child's life they can sit on their daughters' marriage negotiations whether they are married or not, and regardless of whether they are married to the child's mother or not, for it

Customary Courts deal with minor civil and criminal cases. Often family disputes about land, domestic violence, child maintenance, conflicts between couples and minor criminal offences like stealing livestock, causing bodily harm and house breakings among others are dealt with at the Customary Courts with Chiefs presiding over these cases. When the complainants and plaintiffs are not satisfied with the judgements, they have the option of taking the cases to the Customary Courts of Appeal, and if they are still not satisfied, they take them to the Magistrates Courts and then the High Court followed by the High Court of Appeal. Murder cases for example are never tried in Customary Courts, they are tried at the Magistrate Courts and the High Courts.

¹⁷² See *Beyond Inequalities*, 21 for a detailed discussion.

¹⁷³ *SADC Gender Protocol Baseline Barometer*, 8: *Situational Analysis*, p.45.

¹⁷⁴ W. Morapedi, "Demise or Resilience? Customary Law and Chieftaincy in Twenty-first Century Botswana," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* (2010), 215-230; *New Economics Foundation: Botswana Review* (Country Watch: 2012), 137.

¹⁷⁵ *SADC Gender Protocol Baseline Barometer*, 17, 24.

¹⁷⁶ Phaladze and Ngwenya, "Women Status, Custom and Tswana Traditions," 22-23, 21-36.

is believed that children belong to their fathers. This unequal treatment of men and women, first, discriminates against and stigmatises unmarried women by upholding practices based on the perceived inferiority of women. Second, it contradicts Section 3 of the Constitution which upholds the equal treatment of men and women.¹⁷⁷ Unfortunately, since it is men who are in positions of power even at national levels, patriarchy is maintained from high places in government and there is a reluctance to harmonise the civil law/Constitution and the customary law, since after all the men's wellbeing is not threatened by this arrangement. A case of Unity Dow versus the State reveals the maintenance of the patriarchy in high institutions of the land and it reveals how challenging the customary laws threatens the wellbeing of men. During this case, Unity Dow challenged the Citizenship Act which stated that children born of a Motswana woman national married to a non-citizen should not take Botswana citizenship even when the children were born in Botswana. In its defence the State argued that,

.... the way Botswana society is structured made it impossible for the Constitution to outgrow sex discrimination since Tswana society is patrilineal, and that logically, gender discrimination is inherently natural, if outlawed, very little customary law would remain.¹⁷⁸

In this instance, the State was reluctant to outlaw "gender discrimination" for fear that the customary law which favours the male will cease to exist. This reluctance to challenge the customary law is at the core of the marginalising of women as demonstrated by the two examples above. Men in higher offices of the land, the policy and decision makers, do not challenge these customary practices because they legitimise male power, their power. Some scholars such as Lilybert Machacha argue as I do, that the civil law, Acts of Parliament, and the customary law are founded in the entrenchment of a patriarchal system,¹⁷⁹ which benefits the legislators and disempowers women in the process.

One of the ways in which patriarchy is maintained from higher places is through the House of Chiefs, a highly influential official and legal 15 member male body consisting of the Paramount Chiefs of Botswana, 14 of whom are male (with one recent female member) that

¹⁷⁷ Most of the time, the customary law does not harmonise with the Constitution when it comes to the legal status of women.

¹⁷⁸ Phaladze and Ngwenya, "Women Status, Custom and Tswana Traditions in Contemporary Tswana Society," 26.

¹⁷⁹ L. Machacha, "Power Sharing, Decision Making, Gender and HIV/AIDS: An Assessment of Targets, Progress MAde and the Power Relations," in *Report of the First National Conference on Gender and HIV/AIDS* (Gaborone: WAD/UNDP, 2001), 85.

advises Parliament on customary law and practices. Chiefs are known as the custodians and repositories of Setswana cultures, values and customs. Further, they are known to be resistant to gender reforms as well.¹⁸⁰ While it is known that the House of Chiefs and individual Chiefs are resistant to gender reforms, politicians never openly criticise them because they need their support to have voters. In Botswana, Chiefs have a stronger power base than politicians because they have good following and backing from their people through the system of patronage. It is also known that politicians have the power to challenge the practices that marginalise women which most Chiefs encourage. However, doing so would be the demise of the politicians; they would lose votes, as it is already happening in some villages. In villages such as Mochudi and Kanye, Chiefs influence their people to vote for the opposition parties because they (the chiefs) have conflicts with the ruling party.¹⁸¹ Therefore, it serves the interests of men in government not to challenge the customary law because it maintains and legitimises male power while it marginalises and disempowers women.

3.1.6. Maintenance of Male Power through *Bogadi*

The status and position of women is revealed through practices that elevate men over women. I will discuss one such practice, *bogadi* (bride-price),¹⁸² in detail to demonstrate how it reveals the minority status of women in Botswana. I will discuss how the paying of *bogadi* gives men power over women's reproductive and sexual rights and the implications of that. Then I will discuss how the paying of *bogadi* gives the husbands' family the right to the couple's property and how *bogadi* legitimates violence against married women.

Families regard marriages where *bogadi* had not been paid as illegitimate even though they may be legal.¹⁸³ The children born within that union do not belong to the husband's family.

¹⁸⁰ For example the House of Chiefs were vehemently opposed to the abolition of Marital Power. In some villages Chiefs have made rules that no woman can enter the customary courts wearing trousers.

¹⁸¹ Morapedi, "Demise or resilience?," 223.

¹⁸² *Bogadi* or bride price/wealth refers to the resources that the groom must give to the bride's family before marriage. In Botswana these resources are mostly in the form of cows or cash. The payment of *bogadi* is an essential practice which is core to marriages in Botswana as marriages are only regarded as complete after the paying of *bogadi*. The payment of *bogadi* is part of the marriage processes which take place even before the solemnizing of the vows under the civil law. Most Botswana nationals, Christian or not, educated or not, marry under both the customary law first in which *bogadi* is a requirement. Later, when the customary processes are complete, can they marry under the civil law.

¹⁸³ After the couple decides to get married, they inform the parents of their intention. The man's family visits the woman's family and the marriage negotiations are set in motion to discuss the dates for the wedding, the gifts that should be bought and most importantly the giving of *bogadi*. If the couple are Christians, their pastors are allowed to attend these meetings. For example, in my case my pastor Leselamose, who also happen to be my husband's neighbour, was involved in advising parents about what the church expects from me. This is a tedious process that can even take a year to complete. When these customary processes are complete, the woman and man then go to the magistrates' office to apply for marriage under the Marriage Act. The magistrates office then

Schapera points out the centrality of this practice in Botswana: “A woman married with *bogadi* holds a far more honoured position.”¹⁸⁴ Similarly, Phaladze and Ngwenya point out that “A woman for whom *bogadi* was not paid for may not feel fully married or valued”.¹⁸⁵ Therefore for some women in Botswana, the practice secures an honourable position for them. The data from my study confirms this and more. Some women are willing to give money to their boyfriends if they do not have enough to buy cows for *bogadi*, or to help with the cash balance where parents want *bogadi* paid in cash.

*I will feel more like a proper wife if my man gives my parents the eight cows required in my community.*¹⁸⁶

*Even if my man does not have money, I can help and it will be our little secret, but I will be respected by his parents and family because he will have paid bogadi for me.*¹⁸⁷

publishes the bans by posting them in the church where the couple intends to marry or any other place such as an administrative building close to where the couple resides, for at least three weeks. Under the common law, polygamy is not allowed, so the publication of the bans is to notify the public about the marriage so that if either the man or woman is married under the common law then the marriage can be stopped. After the three weeks have elapsed, the marriage is solemnised either through a licensed Marriage officer at the government offices or by Pastors in the presence of two or more witnesses. When this process is done and all the necessary papers have been signed, the couple is given a marriage certificate and they go back home to engage in a two or three day celebration with food and singing. After the celebrations, the bride moves from her family home to her husband’s home because marriages in Botswana are virilocal. So, the bride’s family, a group of women to be specific, take the bride to her in-laws place where the women in her husband’s family wait for them. A special ceremony which may take hours is held where the older married women surround her and she is taught how to be a good wife, she is taught about marriage and the importance of having children. Of great significance for this thesis is that the new bride is taught about her subordinate role as a wife since the man is the head of the household, and she is told that her husband is father. Having experienced this ceremony myself as a bride and subsequently as a part of the married women giving instructions to the new bride, it is a time where the patriarchal norms are drilled into the new bride. The bride is told that she should never ask about her husband’s whereabouts, how much money he earns and that *mosadi o a rutubala*; to this the other women who are seated on the floor, hit their thighs with their hands and repeat *rutuba, rutuba*. This means that a woman, even when she is in pain, when her buttocks are on fire she should be calm, she should not move thus teaching the bride to be silent when things are not going well, or even when there is abuse going on. Other women share their stories of how *matlo a na otlhe*, meaning all households experience difficulties and abuse, thus teaching the new bride that she must also conform and tolerate violence. Thereafter, the bride’s family return to their home and the bride stays at her mother-in-law’s for some days. Today, since women work, the bride stays for a few days and she returns to work and to stay with her husband. In case the bride is not employed and the husband has no house then the bride stays with her parents-in-law. See Maundeni, “Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language,” 44 and U. Dow and P. Kidd, *Women, Marriage and Inheritance* (Gaborone: WILSA, 1994), 21.

¹⁸⁴ I. Schapera, *A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, 3rd ed (Hamburg: International African Institute, 1994), 138, 144.

¹⁸⁵ Phaladze and Ngwenya, “Women Social Statuses,” 28.

¹⁸⁶ FC3RatangFDse20+ 21 July 2011.

¹⁸⁷ FC3NeoFDse20+ 21 July 2011.

The Bible is not against the paying of bogadi, look at the story about Jacob and Rachel and Leah, I want to feel like a proper woman, “mosadi tota”.

*A real woman is not given away freely, if I am going to develop stretch marks for carrying his children, my parents need to get something out of him.*¹⁸⁸

3.1.6.1. Bogadi and Women’s Reproductive and Sexual Rights

According to the customary law, a woman is placed in a position of powerlessness and is regarded as a secondary member of society who is a perpetual minor who needs the guardianship of her father or male relatives before marriage until her husband takes over that guardianship upon marriage. A recent study carried out in Botswana revealed that,

A woman’s control over her body including reproductive rights is vested in her family group and controlled by her father. Upon marriage, these rights are transferred to her husband’s family group and are controlled by her husband.¹⁸⁹

First, the husband acquires these rights through the payment of *bogadi*. Isaac Schapera writes that “the main function of *bogadi* is to transfer the reproductive power of a woman from her own family into that of her husband”.¹⁹⁰ In some quarters the payment of *bogadi* gives husbands the right to have sexual intercourse with their wives whenever they want to because the wife then has no control of her sexuality.¹⁹¹ Some studies reveal that the practice “strengthens men’s hold over women” and their children as they legally belong to the husband and his family.¹⁹² Since children’s descent is traced through the father, the children born within a marriage where *bogadi* was paid belong to the husband and his family; they take his totem, his clan name and his surname. This practice is essential for the maintenance of male progeny. I perceive it, among other things, as a manipulation of the fertility of women. The *Botswana Human Development Report* reveals that HIV positive men refuse to use condoms when having sexual intercourse with their wives because they have paid *bogadi*.

¹⁸⁸ FC3BonangFDse20+ 21July 2011.

¹⁸⁹ *Situational Analysis*, 36.

¹⁹⁰ Schapera, *Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, 139.

¹⁹¹ Maundeni, “Gender Based Violence Against Women and Children and HIV/AIDS,” 75.

¹⁹² *SADC Gender Protocol 2011 Barometer: Introducing the SADC Gender and Development Index*, eds. C.L. Morna and Jambalaya L. Nyakojarah (Johannesburg: Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance, 2011), 122.

One woman reports that “I still have itching down there but he has refused to use condoms with a woman he had paid *bogadi* for.”¹⁹³

3.1.6.2. *Bogadi* and Marital Rape

Second, because the wives reproductive rights have been transferred to her husband, the customary law denies the existence of marital rape. At marriage “the husband has total control over his wife sexual and reproductive rights”.¹⁹⁴ While this is problematic, state laws and policies such as the Marriage Act and the Domestic Violence Bill also deny the existence of marital rape; it is not a crime for a husband to rape his wife. In 2003 a woman reported that her husband raped her, and the case was lodged with the Magistrate Court. While awaiting trial, the woman sought protection at the women’s shelter in Gaborone and the husband found out where she was. He abducted her and raped her several times. The case was dismissed because it is not legally possible in Botswana for the husband to rape his wife.¹⁹⁵ Laws and policies of any country reflect to a large extent the belief system of a country and the failure to make marital rape a crime reflects the minority status of women, and their subordination to men. At this point, the customary law and state policies including the law collude and are in harmony to marginalize women. Even though the Marital Power Act has been abolished, as I indicated above, the husband still controls his wife’s sexuality according to both the customary law and state laws.¹⁹⁶

3.1.6.2.1 Implications for Men’s Control over Women’s Sexuality

In a country where HIV infections are high, some married women are in danger because they cannot refuse to have unprotected sex with their husbands whether they are HIV positive or not. This is more so since in Botswana male infidelity is tolerated and expected. It is common

¹⁹³*Towards an AIDS Free Generation: Botswana Human Development Report* (Government of Botswana and UNDP, 2000), 23, cited in N. Phaladze, “Gender and HIV/AIDS in Botswana: A Focus on Inequalities and Discrimination,” in *Gender: Opportunities and Challenges, Conference Proceedings*, eds. S. Kaye, L. Machacha and T. Maundeni (Gaborone, 2008), 200, 195-204.

¹⁹⁴ *Situational Analysis*, 36.

¹⁹⁵ *Situational Analysis*, 36.

¹⁹⁶ Some feminist writers such as Alice Mogwe locate the woman’s lack of control over her sexuality even in state laws. She argues that the woman’s lack of control over her sexuality and reproductive rights is not only enforced through the customary law, it is also located in state laws as well. Her focus was on the Abortion Bill which makes abortion illegal in Botswana unless the woman was raped, is not well mentally and physically and the fetus has congenital abnormalities. Mogwe condemns the Abortion Bill for safe-guarding patriarchy by denying women control over their reproductive health. She argues that the Bill “falls short of increasing women’s control over their bodies”. Further, she argued that in a patrilineal context like Botswana, this particular law is meant to protect the “male progeny” not women’s right to reproductive health. A. Mogwe, *Women and the Law in Southern Africa Project* (1992), 42. See also Maundeni, “Gender Based Violence Against Women and Children and HIV/AIDS,” 81.

to hear in every day discourse and in the process of teaching a bride about her role as wife, expressions such as *monna ke selepe o a hapaanelwa* (a man is on demand like an axe, which is shared by many); *monna ke phahana o a happanelwa* (a man is like a gourd that is shared), and *monna ke thotse o a nama* (a man spreads like a pumpkin seed). While these expressions give the husband the right to be promiscuous, the wife is not supposed to know about her husband's whereabouts, *monna ga a botswe kwa a tswang*. Further, the wife's infidelity is completely prohibited because it is a serious offence that gives the man grounds for divorce.¹⁹⁷ Scholars from Botswana, including me, have condemned these Setswana expressions, for two reasons. First, not only do they encourage male promiscuity, they are dangerous for women in light of high HIV infection rates in Botswana. Second, not only do these expressions reveal the Batswana patriarchal orientation, they also reveal the status of women in Botswana; women are powerless.¹⁹⁸ Studies from NACA on HIV infections among women conclude that the high rates of HIV infections among women are a result of lack of sexual negotiating power and gender inequalities in Botswana.¹⁹⁹ Unfortunately, because marital rape is not legally recognised, married women who have been raped, cannot access Post Exposure Prophylaxis which is available for all rape victims.²⁰⁰ The root of all these problems is that married women have transferred their reproductive rights to their husbands when they paid *bogadi*.

3.1.6.2.2. Women and Abuse

An interrogation of the practice reveals a deep rooted desire by both men and women to keep the patriarchal worldview alive so as to justify and legitimize the marginalization of women and their abuse as well as to keep women in a minority status. Athalia Molokomme writes that "the institution of *bogadi* confers on a man more control over the person of the wife, for example a man who has paid *bogadi* is allowed to chastise his wife more freely than one who has not".²⁰¹ Dow, Kidd, Maundeni and Molokomme argue that *bogadi* gives men enormous power over their wives, including the right to abuse the women since they have "bought"

¹⁹⁷ Under the civil law, unfaithfulness by both men and women is grounds for divorce, however the customary law which we apply in cases of adultery dictates otherwise. Therefore there is the need to harmonise the two.

¹⁹⁸ Maundeni, "Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language," 40; *Children, Women and Development in Botswana: A Situational Analysis* (Gaborone: UNICEF, 1989), 21; *Research Report on Femicide in Botswana* (Gaborone: WILDAF, 1995); R.M. Gabaitse, "Passion Killings in Botswana: Masculinity at Crossroads," in *Redemptive Masculinities, Men, HIV and Religion*, eds. E. Chitando and Sophie Chirongoma (Geneva: WCC, 2012).

¹⁹⁹ *Towards Zero New HIV Infections: Report on National HIV Prevention Conference* (Gaborone: NACA, 2005).

²⁰⁰ See *Situational Analysis*, 84.

²⁰¹ A. Molokomme, *The Legal Situation of Women in Southern Africa* (Harare: WILSA, 1990), 21.

them.²⁰² Further, they argue as I do, that *bogadi* is equivalent to purchasing a wife, she becomes a commodity and some men have used this to abuse women as they own them. Gloria Thupayagale-Tshweneagae and Esther Salang-Seloilwe conducted research among abused women in Botswana who are diploma and degree holders. Their research reveals that the women wish *bogadi* would be “done away with” because some men thought “they have bought them”, and therefore had the right to abuse them. The women wanted their husbands to “respect and treat them as equals”, but because they had paid *bogadi*, the husbands did not perceive their wives as equals deserving respect.²⁰³ While this practice is open to multiple interpretations, this empirical data reveals that *bogadi* legitimises violence against women. The custodians of this practice vehemently deny that *bogadi* is equivalent to purchasing a wife; however the songs that are sung on the day of the giving of *bogadi* reveal this aspect in unambiguous ways. One of the popular songs on the day is *se ntseele mosadi, ke morekile ka dikgomo, wa rekwa, wa ithekelwa, ke mo rekile ka di kgomo*, literally translated, “Please do not take my wife, I have bought or purchased her with cows, go and buy your own”. Therefore, not only does this practice legitimise violence against women, it is also not as innocent as our communities want to portray.²⁰⁴

3.1.6.2.3. Women and Inheritance Laws

According to the customary law, when *bogadi* has been paid and upon the death of the husband, the couple’s property does not belong to the wife, it belongs to the husband’s family. Even if the husband’s family does not take all the property, they have a “right to benefit from the estates of their sons”.²⁰⁵ To exclude the family from benefiting from their son’s estate and to protect themselves, women must exercise an option of excluding “customary law from governing dissolution of marital property at divorce or death” of the husband.²⁰⁶ Unfortunately, a lot of women in Botswana, including myself, are ignorant of this option at the beginning of marriage so that some women do not exercise it. Clearly the civil law is more progressive than the customary law on this issue. There is the need therefore to educate women about their rights and options under the civil law, so that they are able to

²⁰² Dow and Kidd, *Women, Marriage and Inheritance*; Maundeni, “Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language,” 41.

²⁰³ G. Thupayagale-Tshweneagae and E. Salang-Seloilwe, “Emotional Violence Among Women in Intimate Relationships in Botswana,” *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* 31 (2010), 42.

²⁰⁴ See Maundeni, “Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language,” 42.

²⁰⁵ *Situational Analysis*, 81.

²⁰⁶ *Situational Analysis*, 81.

contest and weaken the patriarchal tendencies of the customary law upon the death of their husbands.²⁰⁷ Disinheriting wives upon their husband's death follows the customary inheritance rules which favour men over women. Sons and male relatives used to inherit all the wealth generating resources such as cows, land and the homestead, while the daughters and wives inherited household utensils.²⁰⁸ According to Faustin Tirwirukwa Kalabamu these laws have been recently modified somewhat because in some households in Tlokweng, a peri-urban settlement next to Gaborone, inheritance practices "have changed from privileging sons to being gender inclusive".²⁰⁹ He attributes this change to the commodification of labour as some women are employed and therefore are able to earn money to buy land and cattle and other things.²¹⁰ However, Kalabamu laments that the exclusion of daughters from inheritance of houses and homesteads still persists in Botswana as the data from his study shows. While some of his respondents wanted an equal share of property between sons and daughters, some (young men and women included) wanted daughters excluded as per the customary rules of inheritance because she "will get married" or she will "move away to start her own life".²¹¹ In his interview with the deputy Chief of Tlokweng who is also the Customary Court president, Kalabamu concludes that "contemporary gender practices are acceptable as long as they remain uncontested by family members. In case of disagreements, his court is obliged to rule as per the customary laws".²¹² To rule as per the customary law invariably means to side with the male,²¹³ and it means that many women today are still excluded from inheriting their parents' and husband's estate by the Customary Courts and laws.²¹⁴ However, on the positive side it also means that the customary law changes and it is often negotiated because of the emerging changes within families as reflected by the Chief's rhetoric above.

²⁰⁷ *SADC Gender Protocol Baseline*, 19.

²⁰⁸ Dow and Kidd, *Women, Marriage and Inheritance*; Schapera, *Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*.

²⁰⁹ F.T. Kalabamu, "Towards Egalitarian Inheritance Rights in Botswana: The Case of Tlokweng," *Development Southern Africa* 26, no. 2 (2009), 218.

²¹⁰ While I agree that the inheritance rules have been modified in places like Tlokweng, which is peri urban area, they have not been as modified in villages and rural areas in Botswana, though they are not as rigid as they used to be. Kalabamu's research indicates that his women respondents in the 70 and 80's have a different experience, their parents inheritance like cattle and homesteads were given to their brothers. Therefore the equal sharing of property is a "recent" phenomenon. "Towards Egalitarian Inheritance Rights in Botswana," 215.

²¹¹ Kalabamu, "Towards Egalitarian Inheritance Rights in Botswana," 221.

²¹² Kalabamu, "Towards Egalitarian Inheritance Rights in Botswana," 213.

²¹³ *Situational Analysis*, 81.

²¹⁴ See Griffiths, "Gender, Power and Difference," 98.

3.2. Economic Situation of Women in Botswana

3.2.1. Men Dominate the Economic Structures

The economy of Botswana is a further indicator of the status and position of women in Botswana. The national economic report states that men control the economic sector of Botswana because they dominate “the formal sector; employment, commercial agriculture, and majority land holdings and operate highly profitable businesses”.²¹⁵ Despite government interventions in setting up financial assistance programs for all citizens through LEA and CEDA, few women make use of these programs. According to the SADC Gender Barometer of 2011, one of the reasons why women are not benefitting from these programs is because the programs are not gender responsive. The reports points out that “business policies do not have incentives that promote the participation of women, as such women’s access to and participation in business empowerment loans is low as compared to men”.²¹⁶ Further, women’s participation in business arenas is still very much defined by traditional sexual divisions of labor, where women were confined to the domestic sphere while men engaged in public affairs where most wealth was generated.²¹⁷ Today, men and women still operate “in the traditional business informed by gender roles” which makes it challenging for women to access credit and to engage in high cash earning businesses.²¹⁸ Women are engaged in businesses that are “traditionally associated with household roles” such as bakery, knitting and sewing and these businesses are mostly informal.²¹⁹ The financial programs above lend money to entrepreneurs whose businesses focus on the formal sector of the economy (where professional proposal writing is required and contracts are signed) and exclude the small informal sector where “the majority of women entrepreneurs operate”.²²⁰ The challenge facing women engaged in the informal sector is that banks may require collateral and they

²¹⁵ *Beyond Inequalities*, 20.

²¹⁶ *SADC Gender Protocol 2011 Barometer*, 122.

²¹⁷ While the naming system can also be gender neutral, it can be gender specific. The way children are named reveals much about the economic distribution of wealth as well as the distribution of labour according to gender. The gender names given to boys and girls demonstrate their place and role in the division of gender roles. For example girls are called *Segametsi* (the one who fetches water), *Mosidi* (the one who grinds sorghum), *Mosalagae* (the one who stays home), *Motshodi* (the one who dishes food), while the boys are named *Modisa/Modisaotsile/Modisawatsonne* (the one who takes care of the cattle), *Mojalefa* (the one who inherits wealth). These names reflect not only the division of labour in the olden days and wealth distribution, this naming still influences business ventures that men and women pursue. For further discussion on Setswana naming and its social and economic implications for men and women, see also Maundeni, “Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language,” 42; M. Dube, “Youth, Masculinities and Violence in an HIV/AIDS Context: Sketches from Botswana Cultures and Pentecostal Churches,” in *Redemptive Masculinities: Men, HIV and Religion*, eds. E. Chitando and S. Chirongoma (Geneva: WCC, 2012), 323.

²¹⁸ *SADC Gender Protocol 2011 Barometer*, 122.

²¹⁹ *Beyond Inequalities 2005*, 14.

²²⁰ *Beyond Inequalities 2005*, 11; *SADC Gender Protocol Baseline*, 108.

may find it difficult to finance women's businesses. The lack of cash injections from banks means that the growth of businesses run by women is slower compared to that of men.

3.2.2. Female Headed Households below the Poverty Datum Line

Studies from Botswana are unanimous that female headed households are poor compared to male headed households and that most female headed households²²¹ fall below the poverty datum line,²²² for three reasons. First, unemployment rates are higher among women as compared to men. Second, Botswana women tend to occupy low paying jobs such as domestic work, primary school teaching and receptionists because they are relatively unskilled compared to the men,²²³ who might even have other resources such as land and cattle that can be converted into cash. Third, men have always been ahead of women, since traditionally women could not access land except through their male relatives; husbands, sons and uncles. As recent as 2003, married women were refused land ownership unless the husband gave consent to the land boards.²²⁴ These factors widen the economic gap between men and women which has always been wide, and they push women further into poverty. Until recently, there were laws like the Mines Act among others, prohibiting women from working in the mines, construction sites and in the army. The mining and construction sectors generate wealth for Botswana and for individuals who work there, so that women were excluded from high income generating jobs. The army personnel in Botswana earn higher salaries as compared to other civil servants because they have a separate pay structure. Even though these biased laws have been abolished, some of them as late as 2009, women are still

²²¹ Although women act as *de facto* heads of households when there is no male in the house making day to day decisions, the nature of the Tswana tribes is such that there will always be a male who represents the household in public matters. That male, according to Anne Griffiths, has the "de jure jurisdiction". For example, in cases where children get married, the "female head" cannot start the marriage negotiation process and represent the family in public, rather it is the male adult relatives, brothers, uncles, fathers who take care of this process. Therefore, while literature uses the term "female headed households" to refer to households where there is no man making daily decisions, it must be noted that in Botswana there is no absolutely female headed households, women can only be *de facto* heads and they always depend on the male relatives to take care of matters in the public domain. See A. Griffiths, *In The Shadow of Marriage: Gender and Justice in an African Community* (Chicago: Chicago Press, 1997), 47.

²²² *SADC Gender Protocol 2011 Barometer*, 122; *Beyond Inequality 2005*, 12-13; *National Policy on Gender and Development* (Gaborone: Women Affairs Division, 2008).

²²³ E.P. Mukamaambo and V.R.N. Mutabihirwa, "Gender Research: The Importance of Data Collection and Analysis of Male Involvement in Reproductive Health Issues," in *Male Involvement in Sexual and Reproductive Health: Prevention of Violence and HIV and AIDS in Botswana*, eds. T. Maudeni, B. Osei-Hwedie, E. Mukamaambo and P. Ntseane (Cape Town: Made Plain Communications, 2009), 156; G.N. Lesetedi and N.L. Ngcongco, "A Demographic and Socio-economic Profile of Women and Men in Botswana: A Review of Summary Indicators of Population Composition and Distribution, Mortality, Migration and Economic Ability," in *Proceedings of the Population and Housing Census Dissemination Seminar* (Gaborone: Central Statistics, 1995), 179, 176-188; Maudeni, "Gender Based Violence Against Women and Children and HIV/AIDS," 74.

²²⁴ *Natural Resource Services* (Gaborone: Department of Lands, 2003); Phaladze and Ngwenya, "Women Status, Custom and Tswana Traditions in Contemporary Tswana Society," 22.

lagging behind men.²²⁵ Women do not advance at the same pace in these industries as their male counterparts who have been working in these industries for a long time. For example, it is difficult for a woman to be an underground manager at the mines or a commander in the army because there are men who have worked there long before her. Second, these laws continue to disadvantage women as they have created wage differences between males and females. This strengthens their subordinate status, further leading to unequal power relations between women and men, which can lead to women's vulnerability to gender based violence.²²⁶

3.3. Steps towards Positive Change

Notwithstanding the subordinate position of women described above, there are pockets of progress as civil organizations and even the government of Botswana has taken commendable steps towards overcoming this anomaly.

3.3.1. Botswana Commits to Eradicating Gender Discrimination

Botswana is a signatory to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development mandate is to eradicate the minority status of women by 2015. CEDAW, Article 5, calls nations to take appropriate measures to modify the social and cultural prejudices against women and to eliminate customary practices based on the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes. External and internal NGO's like WILSA have put pressures on government to amend laws that marginalize women.

3.3.2. National Organizations Fighting for Gender Equality

Nationally we have a National Policy on Women in Development and a Women Affairs Division (WAD) which advises government on gender and law reforms. There are feminist campaigns led by *Ditshwanelo* and *Emang Basadi* that aim at educating women in urban and rural areas about their rights, reproductive rights, and educating them about government financial resources. Through these initiatives, some women have acquired some financial independence, and have invested in real estate. Some women are able to transform their lives by accessing government resources mentioned above to start small business that have grown

²²⁵ The first group of military female trainees was recruited in 2009.

²²⁶ Mukamaambo and Mutabhirwa, "Gender Research: The Importance of Data Collection," 156.

into big businesses. Through education, some exceptional women are breaking ranks by applying for and holding positions of power in government, positions that were exclusively male not so long ago.

3.3.3. Amendment of Oppressive Civil Laws

The most commendable step is that the government has amended a great deal of civil laws that discriminated against and marginalized women, some of which I mentioned above, such as the Marital Power Act, Citizenship Acts and the Mines Act. These legal reforms have given women opportunities to challenge and negotiate the customary laws as well as to contest judgments from the customary courts. While the customary law is contested, the patriarchal structures are slowly weakened.

3.3.4. Education

One of the ways in which the customary law is weakened is through education. There used to be a time when women were discouraged from becoming educated because they were expected to marry and leave formal employment. Now more women are getting diplomas and degrees. As women become educated they are assuming new statuses, and they are exposed to the global perceptions about issues and other external forces, so that their autonomy and statuses is enhanced. Further, education gives them the power to challenge male power at home and in public. Educated women are able to challenge both the civil law/state powers and the customary law. One of these women is Unity Dow who challenged the Citizenship Act 1984²²⁷ on the basis that the act violated the Constitutional Bill of Rights.²²⁸ It is through education that Dow, a lawyer at the time, was able to use the section 3 of the Constitution which provides for the equal treatment of men and women to her advantage to challenge laws that were inconsistent with this clause. Her case has since led to the amendment of the Citizenship Act to allow children to acquire Botswana citizenship either through the mother or father.²²⁹ Therefore, education is critical as it gives women opportunities to challenge the

²²⁷ The act stated that children born of a Motswana woman national married to a non-citizen should not take the Botswana citizenship even when the children were born in Botswana. This prevented Dow's children, whose father was American, to take their mother's citizenship. Not only was Dow challenging the civil law, she was also challenging the customary law for, in both, children belong to the fathers. Since the Dow case, the Act has been amended, however in the customary law children belong to their fathers still.

²²⁸ *Citizenship Law in Africa: A Comparative Study* (New York: Open Society Institute, 2009), 48.

²²⁹ Citizenship Act 1995, section 5.

law that marginalizes them, be it civil or customary, because they know they have recourse under the Constitution of Botswana, as the cases reported by Anne Griffiths show.²³⁰

3.3.5. Migration into the City

Another change that leads to upward mobility is the migration of women into the cities in search of better paying jobs in order to become financially independent so that they can provide for their families back in the villages.²³¹ To be financially independent is to resist male superiority and is one of the steps that can weaken men's hold and control over women. There are many challenges that women face in the city away from the support of the families in the villages, including the possibility of ending up in prostitution to survive. Even so, migration to the city has given some women upward mobility, in that they found jobs in private companies which may not exist in the villages. Further, migration to the city loosens the patriarchal stronghold as women in the city do not have to uphold the patriarchal tendencies and practices of their peers in the rural areas.

3.4. Radical Change is needed to Overcome Sexism

While the legislative, constitutional reforms and interventions put in place in Botswana are commendable, it is unfortunate that “the ideological and hegemony of sexism creates an invisible institutional mechanism, which serves to protect and perpetuate male power in Botswana”.²³² There is a great need to radically change the Botswana patriarchal orientation and outlook because as long as patriarchy is the dominant gender system in Botswana, women will be at the margins. As long as the customary law carries more weight in practical terms than the civil law and statutory laws, then it is not an exaggeration to argue that Botswana women will still be marginalized for the foreseeable future in Botswana. A quote from Wazha Morapedi's research on the Chieftaincy and the customary law captures the vitality of the customary law in Botswana. He writes:

The majority of Botswana live in rural areas, and even those who stay in towns cannot afford the exorbitant fees and services of attorneys. Customary courts have been introduced in towns and despite the

²³⁰ Griffiths, “Gender, Power, and Difference,” 93.

²³¹ See detailed discussions in E.P. Mukamaambo, “Rural to Urban Migration and Changing Roles of Women,” in *Gender: Opportunities and Challenges, Conference Proceedings*, eds. S. Kaye, L. Machacha and T. Maundeni (Gaborone, 2008), 72-78.

²³² *Beyond Inequality 2005*.

transformations that have taken place, many Batswana still seek, and shall continue to seek recourse in the customary courts.²³³

Since there is no need for legal representation at the customary courts, men and women are likely to turn to them. While men and women degree holders in Botswana still insist that their manhood and womanhood is validated by the giving of *bogadi*, even when the policies change, the attitudes and perceptions are left behind. At the moment, the law reforms are still new—they happened in the last ten years—so that knowledge of these laws has not reached people in the villages and rural areas. Thus there is a need to educate for change in social attitudes towards women among both men and women.

3.5. Summary

This chapter discussed the socio-economic, political and legal status of women in Botswana. Literature indicates that the gender system in Botswana is patriarchal; the male is privileged and occupies a superior status, while the woman occupies a lower status. The chapter discussed the disadvantages of the status and position of women in Botswana, since they are underrepresented at higher echelons of power, in parliament, councils and land boards; they do not control their sexuality and they occupy low paying jobs. The legal reforms that have taken place in the last five years should afford men and women the same civil rights and privileges, but the existence of the customary law means that their legal status does not translate into their social, economic and political emancipation. This means that economic, social and political constraints are imposed on women but not men, and this leads to their minority and subordinate status in Botswana. This is the real context of the Pentecostal women in my study which becomes evident in their rhetoric even inside the church context.

The next chapter focuses on the principles of the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic in order to further demonstrate the context that the women in my study inhabit. Most importantly, the chapter will demonstrate the need for a liberating hermeneutic.

²³³ Morapedi, “Demise or Resilience?,” 223.

CHAPTER 4

PENTECOSTAL HERMENEUTICS: BIBLE, HOLY SPIRIT, COMMUNITY AND EXPERIENCE

4.0. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the status and position of women in Botswana as a context that influences Pentecostal women's way of life and ultimately influences their biblical interpretations. The aim of this chapter is to reflect critically on the principles which undergird Pentecostal hermeneutics. Most scholars of Pentecostalism have identified three defining characteristics of what should constitute a Pentecostal hermeneutic. These are the Bible, the continuing operation of the Holy Spirit and Community constituted by baptism in the Holy Spirit. Others add the fourth dimension to Pentecostal hermeneutic, namely Experience.

Pentecostal scholars generally discuss these dimensions of Pentecostal hermeneutics separately. Christopher Thomas, a Pentecostal, is the only Pentecostal scholar I am aware of who has discussed and demonstrated the role of the community, the Holy Spirit and the authority of the Bible during the interpretive process using a New Testament text. I will discuss his model below before explaining the Pentecostal interpretive process.

Pentecostal hermeneutics is not just an academic exercise, it happens within Pentecostal communities through song, testimonies and preaching. Therefore, this chapter engages with Pentecostal hermeneutics as defined by scholars, but also as practiced by Pentecostals in the churches. The first task before discussing the four dimensions of Pentecostal hermeneutics is to differentiate between these two kinds of Pentecostal hermeneutics; the one practiced within the churches and the other one as an academic exercise. Then I will proceed to describe, engage and evaluate the four dimensions of Pentecostal hermeneutics.

4.1. The Two Kinds of Pentecostal Hermeneutics

There are two kinds of Pentecostal hermeneutics; unarticulated and articulated Pentecostal hermeneutics.

4.1.1. Unarticulated Pentecostal Hermeneutics

The unarticulated Pentecostal hermeneutic happens within a Pentecostal church community; it is practiced, acted and performed in the churches, mostly by untrained Pentecostal pastors and believers in the pews.

4.1.1.1. Characteristics of Unarticulated Pentecostal Hermeneutics

First, it is a performed hermeneutic which is utilised practically in preaching, prayers, Bible studies, songs and testimonies. All Pentecostal members are engaged in shaping and developing this hermeneutic, although they may not articulate this. Pentecostals in the pews, for example, shape and authenticate Pentecostal hermeneutics when they share testimonies, participate in Bible readings and they shout hallelujahs and Amens when preaching is going on. Second, some of it is not even written down in Africa, given the oral nature of the communities like Botswana. Third, this form of hermeneutic is patently pre-critical in nature and is unconcerned with the contexts in which the Bible was produced; neither is it interested in the process of compiling the Bible or in any other critical methods of reading and engaging biblical texts. Fourth, the Bible is understood at face value and since this has implications for this thesis, I will explain in detail.

4.1.1.2. The Bible Understood at Face Value

The Pentecostal hermeneutic as it is practiced in most churches places no significance on “the historical context of the text, the Bible is the Word of God and it is to be understood at face value”.²³⁴ Kenneth Archer notes that Pentecostals read the Bible with a “thoroughly popularistic, pre-critical, text-centred approach”.²³⁵ Because of the Pentecostals’ tendency to remain pre-critical, Craig Allert accuses them of adopting what he calls a “dropped from the sky” approach to the Bible, whereby “they take for granted that the Bible was always there and handed on to us as such”, without considering the debates that took place before it was compiled and regarded as more important than other documents of the early church.²³⁶ Gordon Fee further maintains that Pentecostal hermeneutics has no regard for:

²³⁴ K. Archer, “Early Pentecostals Biblical Interpretation,” *JPT* 18 (2001), 67.

²³⁵ Archer, “Early Pentecostals Biblical Interpretation,” 68.

²³⁶ C.A. Allert, *A High View of Scripture? The Authority of the Bible and the Formation of the New Testament Canon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academy, 2007), 10. See also R. Spitzer, “Scripture and Theological Enterprise: View from a Big Canoe,” in *The Use of the Bible in Theology*, ed. R.K. Johnson (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), 63.

...scientific exegesis and carefully thought out hermeneutics...Scripture is the Word of God and is to be obeyed. In place of scientific hermeneutics there developed a kind of pragmatic hermeneutics – obey what should be taken literally; spiritualise, allegorise or devotionalize the rest.²³⁷

Ogbu Kalu writing from within an African Nigerian Pentecostal context confirms that Pentecostals refuse to engage with critical biblical interpretation. Apart from the Bible, many Pentecostal preachers hardly use any additional material such as biblical commentaries in preparation for their preaching.²³⁸ Walter Hollenweger reiterates Kalu's argument by pointing out that

They [Pentecostals] have no time for that. What others have thought and believed; matters to which they have devoted a lifetime of thought, are unimportant to them, for what good can come from an unenlightened human understanding?²³⁹

The above scholars explain hermeneutics that I am familiar with from Botswana Pentecostal contexts. Not only are Pentecostals selective in their application of their hermeneutic, they read the Bible literally and if that process is done they either spiritualise or allegorise. This has implications for the status of women within Pentecostal churches in Botswana, as I will explain and demonstrate in the next chapter. Unarticulated hermeneutics results in biblical interpretations that are superficial and are unsubstantiated.

4.1.2. Articulated Hermeneutics

Articulated Pentecostal hermeneutics on the other hand, is an academic exercise and a recent development.

4.1.2.1. Characteristics of Articulated Hermeneutics

First, it is the kind of hermeneutic that is propounded by scholars of Pentecostalism, some of whom have been trained in biblical interpretation and hermeneutics. The hermeneutic is

²³⁷ G. Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent - A Major Problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," in *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism*, ed. P.S. Russell (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1976), 121; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 228; see also G. Fee, "Baptism in the Holy Spirit: The Issues of Separability and Subsequence," *Pneuma* 7, no. 2 (1985), 87-99.

²³⁸ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, xiii. See also McClintock-Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject*, 280.

²³⁹ W. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals: The Charismatic Movement in the Churches* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1972), 394-395.

Pentecostal because scholars still engage with Pentecostal theologies and convictions. Second, it is methodologically organised. It has principles and it is critical as it has to be compatible with academic rigour and modern scholarship. While pastors in Botswana can get away with making statements like “thus says the Lord and that’s it”, Pentecostal scholars can also say that, but they have to substantiate their claims. Further, their hermeneutical expositions have to conform to the language and style acceptable within the academic discourse on the Bible

4.1.2.2. The Journey towards Articulated Pentecostal Hermeneutics

Gordon Fee accused Pentecostals in the West not long ago of having “bad” hermeneutics because they refused to engage in critical biblical interpretation.²⁴⁰ Hollenweger also discusses a time when almost all Pentecostal denominations in the West perceived critical scientific biblical interpretation and methodologies as “poisonous and pernicious”. Critical biblical scholarship was perceived as “mutilating” the book and as “monstrosity inspired by the devil”,²⁴¹ as such “pulpits should be purged of the pestilence”.²⁴²

Similarly, Archer points to a time when even Pentecostal scholars had a deep suspicion of critical scholarship; they resisted the methods of higher criticism and instead engaged in pre-critical, pietistic hermeneutics.²⁴³ Even though Pentecostal Bible schools refused to engage in biblical exegesis, some Pentecostals obtained doctorates with no secondary education. While Archer is referring to the recent past, Keith Warrington, writing in 2008²⁴⁴ from within the context of UK-based Regent Theological College, points out that not only did Pentecostals in the past engage pre-critically with the texts, but “many still do”. However, Warrington also points out that some Pentecostals have only recently begun to engage the Bible with the benefit of critical biblical tools of interpretation as well as to listen to others who comment on it, while still holding on to their Pentecostal traditions. Warrington rightly sees this as a sign of maturity, however, the critical nature of scholarship is an ongoing process, hence my desire to contribute to this endeavour by attempting to construct an African Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic. While the Pentecostal hermeneutic is developing and taking shape, it is important to engage with how it affects women within Pentecostal churches.

²⁴⁰ See for example, Fee, *The Gospel and the Spirit*, 85-86.

²⁴¹ George Jeffreys, *Elim Evangel* 17, no. 6, (7.2.1936), cited in Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, 295. (He also does not know the title of the article).

²⁴² Jeffreys, *Elim Evangel* as quoted in Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, 293.

²⁴³ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 72, 74, 124.

²⁴⁴ K. Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 194.

4.1.2.3. Articulated Pentecostal Hermeneutic is Born

The early 1990s have seen a marked increase in the number of Pentecostal scholars who are intentional about developing a Pentecostal biblical hermeneutic.²⁴⁵ According to Christopher Thomas, the desire to construct a Pentecostal hermeneutic arose because Pentecostal scholars were less content with “adopting a system of interpretation that is heavily slanted towards rationalism and has little room for the role of the Holy Spirit”.²⁴⁶ Such a Pentecostal hermeneutic must reflect on the tradition and ethos present within the Pentecostal tradition in order to appreciate the role of the Holy Spirit and religious experience in the interpretation of the Bible.²⁴⁷ Archer echoes the same sentiment that there is a need for the Pentecostal movement to develop and define a hermeneutic that is distinctively Pentecostal. He writes:

Pentecostals need a hermeneutical approach that not only elucidates the original meaning of the biblical texts...but also answers the questions of what the text means today...Pentecostals see the full purpose of Biblical interpretation as not only to uncover and discover truth but to apply Scripture to one’s own life and to the community of faith.²⁴⁸

Today, Pentecostals scholars engage in critical biblical scholarship while remaining true to the Pentecostal ethos and tradition. There is willingness by both scholars and church members to engage critically with the Bible in the West. In Africa, scholars of Pentecostalism

²⁴⁵ Chief amongst these are: Archer, Kenneth, J. “Early Pentecostals Biblical Interpretation.” *JPT* 18 (2001), 32-70; Archer, Kenneth J. *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture and Community*. London: T&T Clark International, 2004; Autry, “Dimension of Hermeneutics in Pentecostal Focus”; Coulter, D. “What Meaneth This? Pentecostal and Theological Inquiry.” *JPT* 10, no. 1, (2001), 38-64; Davies, A. “What Does it Mean to Read the Bible as a Pentecostal?” *JPT* 18, no. 2 (2009), 216-229; Ellington, “Pentecostalism and the Authority of Scripture”; Ervin, “Hermeneutics: A Pentecostal Option”; Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent”; Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 292-293; C.B. John and J.D. John, “Yielding to The Spirit: A Pentecostal Approach To Group Bible Study,” *JPT* 1 (1992), 109-134; L.R. Martin, “Hearing the Book of Judges: A Dialogue with Reviewers,” *JPT* 18, no. 2 (2009); Massey, “The Word of God: Thus Saith the Lord”; Nadar, “The Bible Says!”; C.H. Pinnock, “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics,” *JPT* 2 (1993); R. Stronstad, “Pentecostal Experience and Hermeneutics,” *Paraclete* (1992); C. Thomas, “Women Pentecostals and the Bible: An Experiment in Pentecostal Hermeneutics,” *JPT* 5 (1994), 41-56; Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*.

²⁴⁶ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 4, 41. See also, Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*; Pinnock, “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics.”

²⁴⁷ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 41.

²⁴⁸ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 142.

have begun to engage critically with Biblical interpretation, but the same cannot be said of the majority of church members, including the Pentecostal pastors, especially in the Botswana context. This is one of the issues that motivate this study: the uncritical reading of the Bible marginalises women.²⁴⁹

I have already mentioned that Christopher Thomas engages three aspects of Pentecostal hermeneutics through a textual reading of Acts 15. His article deserves attention before I engage with Pentecostal hermeneutics as a whole.

4.2. Christopher Thomas Tridactic Model: Scripture, Spirit and Community

4.2.1. Community Comes Together First

In his detailed study of Acts 15, titled “Women Pentecostals and the Bible: An Experiment in Pentecostal Hermeneutics,” Thomas notes that a Pentecostal hermeneutic is made up of three components, the community, the Holy Spirit and the Bible, and he demonstrates that all three factors are given prominence in the interpretation process in Acts 15. Thomas cogently argues that for the author of Acts, it was important that the community met together to discuss the Gentile issue, so that the entire community would “be involved in the interpretive decision reached”.²⁵⁰ He demonstrates that the process of interpreting the Bible begins within a community and moves towards the Bible texts. As he correctly observes, “the church seems to have begun with its experience and only later moved to a consideration of Scripture”.²⁵¹ Thomas demonstrates that the community was able to give and receive testimony as well as assess the reports of God’s activity in the lives of those who were part of the community. As such, it was the community that was able to discern and come up with a decision under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Thomas concludes that any model of hermeneutics must seriously consider the significant role that is played by the community.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ I use the concept of critical reading to refer to a reading that is conscious of pursuing and enhancing life. A critical Pentecostal reader is aware that at the plan of God is that all human being must have life, such that there is a conscious agenda to enhance life holistically. A critical reader of the Bible does not need to know the history of how the Bible was compiled. Given the oral nature and illiteracy levels in Botswana, one cannot expect women who have very little reading skills to know the world of the New Testament. However, those women know what it means to enhance and affirm life, such that they are aware when life is not enhanced through the use of the Bible.

²⁵⁰ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 45.

²⁵¹ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 45.

²⁵² Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 49.

4.2.2. Appeal to the Holy Spirit

The second factor in the interpretive process identified by Thomas is the role of the Holy Spirit. Thomas argues that the appeal to the Holy Spirit is made so often in this pericope and the final decision of the council is described as “seeming good to the Holy Spirit”. In other words, the Holy Spirit helped the community to choose the OT texts cited in Acts 15.²⁵³ Thomas argues that there were plenty of texts to choose from; texts which appeared to teach that there was no place for the Gentiles in God’s household, but the Holy Spirit influenced the choice and use of Scriptures that were in opposition with those. Thomas thus concludes that in the story of Acts 15, the role of the Holy Spirit in the interpretive process is not

Reduced to some vague talk of illumination, but creates a context for interpretation through his [sic] actions, as a result guides the church in the determination of which texts are most relevant in particular situations.²⁵⁴

4.2.3. From Context to the Bible

The third factor in the interpretive process identified in Acts 15 is that of the Bible. Thomas notes that in Acts 15, the community as interpreters began their interpretation from their own context towards the biblical text and not the other way round as some historical critical methods tend to do (i.e., text to context).²⁵⁵ As such, the text’s authority is not “unrelated to its relevance to the community”.²⁵⁶ In Acts 15, only the relevant Bible text is used to enhance the dignity of the Gentiles. Indeed, Thomas argues that there were other OT texts that the community could have used but they did not because they were not relevant.²⁵⁷

Thomas’s tridactic model demonstrates that Scripture is not static; it functions in dynamic ways that transcend the cognitive. His model is important as it demonstrates that the Bible needs to speak to our people’s contexts and lived realities. Thomas then proposes a Pentecostal hermeneutic built on the Acts 15 model which has three primary components, namely the role of the community, activity of the Holy Spirit and Scripture. The following section focuses on these components in detail as other scholars explain them.

²⁵³ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 49.

²⁵⁴ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 55.

²⁵⁵ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 50.

²⁵⁶ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 50.

²⁵⁷ Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 50.

4.3. The Authority of the Scripture

There is consensus from both scholars of Pentecostalism and Pentecostals in the pews that Pentecostals love their Bibles. They have “long treasured Scripture” and “never questioned the authority of the written Word”.²⁵⁸ As the source of their theology, the Bible is so central and authoritative that Pentecostalism has been classified as a “Bible-centred faith”.²⁵⁹ The Bible is as central to Pentecostal scholars as much as it is central to Pentecostal members of the church; the common belief undergirding both hermeneutics is the conviction that the Bible is normative and has the ultimate authority in matters concerning daily living. For Pentecostals, the Bible is not a “textbook of theological or historical propositions”, to be studied as a mere academic exercise, but a story about the “redemption in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit”.²⁶⁰ Davies Andrew has cogently argued that Pentecostals do not perceive the Bible as a site for doing critical exegesis and intellectual comprehension; it is a place where Pentecostals encounter God, because it is a trustworthy testimony of the revelation of who God is.²⁶¹ To this end the Bible must be uncritically “read, believed and obeyed”, as Fee and Anderson argue above. Because the Bible is central to Pentecostals, scholars have pointed out that Pentecostals adopt a contentious and high view of Scripture as the inspired, inerrant, infallible and immediate word of God. Sarojini Nadar calls this the “4 I’s” approach to the biblical text.²⁶² Below I will discuss each of these approaches in turn.

4.3.1. The Bible as the Inerrant Word of God

Inerrancy is a term “used to define the belief that contents of the original texts are completely true and without error”.²⁶³ It means that the Bible is understood as the “reliable revelation of

²⁵⁸ Wonsuk Ma, “Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal Tradition: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,” *The Globalisation of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds. M. Dempster, B. Klaus and D. Petersen (Irvine CA: Regnum, 1999), 54; See also Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 118; Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 225; Jose Miguez Bonino, “Changing Paradigms: A Response,” in *The Globalisation of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made To Travel*, eds. M. Dempster, B. Klaus and D. Petersen (Oxford: Regnum, 1999), 117; Andrew Davies, “What Does it Mean to Read the Bible as a Pentecostal,” *JPT* 18, no. 2 (2009), 219-220.

²⁵⁹ Bonino, “Changing Paradigms,” 117.

²⁶⁰ Powers, “Your Daughters Shall Prophesy,” 317; See also Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 188.

²⁶¹ Davies, “What Does it Mean to Read the Bible as a Pentecostal.”

²⁶² Nadar, “The Bible Says!”; K.P. Peterson, “Feminist Hermeneutics and the Bible: Feminism, Homosexuality, and Hermeneutics: Exercises in Eisegesis,” (1997) <http://www.scholarscorner.com/Critical/Feminist.Html>. Accessed February 17, 2010; See also Wonsuk Ma, “Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal Tradition.”

²⁶³ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 184. See also Allert, *A High View of Scripture*, 160; Lemke, “The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture,” 185; G. Fee, *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 1.

God and that it relates the exact truths which the Holy Spirit intends to convey”.²⁶⁴ Allert Lemke discusses the different forms of inerrancy. His discussion demonstrates that the theory of inerrancy is diverse and takes different forms.²⁶⁵ Two of these, propositional and pietistic inerrancy resemble the Pentecostal view of the Bible in Botswana.

4.3.1.1. Propositional and Piestic Inerrancy

Propositional inerrancy “affirms that every sentence in the Bible is a true proposition including those relating to science and history”.²⁶⁶ Pietistic inerrancy is

[A] non-critical approach that simply assumes that all statements in the Bible are true....an expression of simple trust in the Bible rather than an interest in more technical scholarly discussions of the doctrine of inerrancy...it overlooks apparent contradictions, assuming by faith that there is some explanations.²⁶⁷

Both pietistic and propositional inerrancies have to do with the accuracy of Scripture and Pentecostals hold to either or both of them. John Higgins, for example, maintains that “Scripture does not err because God does not lie”.²⁶⁸ Commenting on this view held by Pentecostals, Warrington²⁶⁹ observes that Pentecostals believe that the Bible contains facts, has no imperfections, inaccuracies and contradictions. Instead of acknowledging that there are inaccuracies in the Bible, Pentecostals opt to “harmonise or spiritualise” them, or “wait for the ‘truth’ to be revealed”. Pentecostals would prefer to believe that “errors are impossible” rather than acknowledge that the Bible contains them. Harold Foss and Paige Petterson write, “it should be clear that to question the inerrancy of Scripture is to raise questions about the very character of God”, because the Bible was superintended by God.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁴ F.L. Arrington, “The Use of the Bible by Pentecostals,” *Pneuma* 16, no. 1 (1994), 101, cited by Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 184.

²⁶⁵ See for example Lemke, “The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture,” 185, who makes a distinction between (i) Nuanced inerrancy; (ii) Critical inerrancy; (iii) Functional inerrancy; (iv) Pietistic inerrancy and; (v) Propositional inerrancy. While Pentecostal scholars may believe in functional inerrancy, the untrained and layperson will in all probability adopt Pietistic inerrancy.

²⁶⁶ Lemke, “The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture,” 185.

²⁶⁷ Lemke, “The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture,” 185.

²⁶⁸ J.R. Higgins, “God’s Inspired Word,” in *Systematic Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective*, ed. Stanley Horton (Springfield: Logion Press, 1995), 183.

²⁶⁹ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 183.

²⁷⁰ H.D. Foss and L.P. Patterson, “The Revelation, Inspiration, and Inerrancy of the Bible,” in *The Fundamentals for the Twenty-First Century: Examining the Crucial Issues of the Christian Faith*, ed. M. Couch (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2000), 99 cited by Allert, *A High View of Scripture*, 148.

Therefore, Pentecostals would rather hold on to the belief in inerrancy, even in the face of seeming contradiction, rather than acknowledge that the Bible contains inaccuracies.

The consequence of holding on to pietistic and propositional inerrancy is that the historical and cultural contexts that produced the Bible are of no significant value, because “narratives are assumed to be historically factual, texts are understood atomistically, and there is a presumption that all texts agree and cohere”.²⁷¹

4.3.1.2. Inerrancy and Literal Readings of the Bible

First, a Pentecostal hermeneutic is characterised by a literalistic framework in order to sustain the belief in inerrancy. In order for texts to cohere, the Bible must be understood as the literal word of God.²⁷² According to Wonsuk Ma, literalism is maintained to safeguard the sanctity of Scripture in the midst of the rising influence of critical interpretation of the Bible. Pentecostals dismiss forms of intellectualism and embrace their own literal perspective so that their assumptions of the Bible as historically and culturally factual are sustained.²⁷³ In the Botswana context, Pentecostal hermeneutics is literalistic because this is the only way to guard the “sanctity of the Scriptures”. Pastor Thato from Botswana argued that their suspicion of critical scholarship stems from the fear that intellectuals ask a lot of questions about the Bible and point out the “contradictions in the word”.²⁷⁴

As literalists, some Pentecostals believe for example, that the world was really created in six days and that the Bible contains all the answers for humankind. In addition, through the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals believe that people’s physical and material needs can be met, just as those needs were met in the stories contained in the Bible. By so-doing, Pentecostals are unable to separate their personal experiences from the events described in the Bible.²⁷⁵ They identify fully with the events and characters in the Bible and therefore do not maintain any form of critical distance from the text.

4.3.1.2.1. Consequences of Literalist Interpretation of the Bible

Allen Anderson has pointed out that literalistic readings of the Bible have led to:

²⁷¹ Gifford, *Ghana's Christianity*, 79.

²⁷² Archer, “Early Pentecostals’ Biblical Interpretation,” 32.

²⁷³ Ma, “Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal tradition,” 54.

²⁷⁴ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

²⁷⁵ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 226-227.

Unconventional expressions of Christianity, such as the snake handlers....who base their practices upon a literal reading of the disputed ending of Mark 16 or the Pentecostal groups who take first century dress codes quite literally and legislate the same for their members (especially women).²⁷⁶

Literalist reading of the Bible leads to naïve and superficial interpretations of the Bible which can have perilous consequences, such as demonstrated during the apartheid regime in South Africa.²⁷⁷ In the next chapter I will demonstrate how Pentecostal literalistic interpretation of the Bible is linked to the marginalisation of women in Botswana. In this section I just wanted to demonstrate that in order to sustain the belief in pietistic and propositional inerrancies, Pentecostals then have to read the Bible literally.

4.3.2. The Bible as the Infallible Word of God

Closely linked to the belief in the inerrancy of the Bible is the belief in the infallibility of Scripture. This means that the Bible teaches timeless truth and as such, cannot deceive or mislead.²⁷⁸ Nadar, drawing on Archibald Hodge's work, argues that the infallibility feature is a bit "softer" than the inerrancy belief, because it acknowledges that the Bible may have errors of a scientific or historical nature, but that this does not alter its "truth". The difference between infallibility and inerrancy is subtle; although both terms describe the notion of truthfulness and accuracy in association with the Bible, "infallibility is used to refer to its reliability in matters of faith and practice".²⁷⁹ Further, Nadar argues that infallibility of Scripture implies that the central message of Scripture cannot be corrupted by fallible human writers.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 226.

²⁷⁷ Masenya, "The Sword that Heals!," 51.

²⁷⁸ B. Corley, S. Lemke and G. Lovejoy, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2002), 452.

²⁷⁹ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 184.

²⁸⁰ Nadar, "The Bible Says!," 137.

4.3.3. The Bible as the Inspired Word of God²⁸¹

4.3.3.1. Plenary Verbal Inspiration

Pentecostals believe in plenary verbal inspiration, where the claim is made “that the Bible is fully inspired, even down to the choice of words and grammatical forms”.²⁸² According to this theory, God dictated the words of the Bible to human authors who “functioned as human word processors”²⁸³ and the word of God tumbled out onto the pages and they just wrote them as they came to them. Pentecostals find support for this theory in 2 Timothy 3:16-17:

¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for teaching in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work (NRSV).

The New Testament Greek term ‘*theopneustos*’ used in the above text can be translated ‘God-breathed’ and within Evangelical circles this is used as proof that God literally breathed-out Scripture thus making the Bible the “direct product of God”.²⁸⁴ Other Biblical texts such as Acts 28:25, 1 Corinthians 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:21 have also been used to support this perspective. Warrington has pointed out that Pentecostal hermeneutics’ appeal to the divine inspiration of the Bible “carries with it an authority that is above tradition and that which reason might dictate”.²⁸⁵

4.3.3.2. Limitations of Plenary Verbal Inspiration

Warrington further points out three problems associated with Pentecostal plenary-verbal theory of inspiration. First, it does not adequately take into consideration the fact that the Bible reflects times, contexts and cultures different from our own. Second, it does not take into consideration that the Bible was written a long time ago, and as such we are separated by time and distance. Third, the role of human agency in the production of the Bible is not clear.²⁸⁶ I acknowledge the problems that Warrington points out, however, I propose that there is a fourth problem which relates to this study. The weight of the theory of inspiration

²⁸¹ S. Lemke, “The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture,” in *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2002), 177-183. Lemke distinguishes five theories of inspiration, namely (i) Illumination; (ii) Dictation; (iii) Dynamic; (iv) Plenary-verbal, and the (v) Multi-methodological view of inspiration. Evangelicals and especially Pentecostals will more or less adopt the plenary-verbal view of inspiration.

²⁸² Allert, *A High View of Scripture*, 148.

²⁸³ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 182.

lies in the claim that God wrote it. The implications for this claim is that women who may want to question the authority of the Bible on those portions which subordinate the role and function of women are afraid to do so, because by questioning the Bible, they are effectively questioning the character of God. This was confirmed by a young woman during my fieldwork, who said,

*Even if I do not agree that men are the head of the household, it is written in the word of God by God himself and I cannot question that without doubting if God is really alive.*²⁸⁷

4.3.4. The Bible as the Immediate Word of God

Ma acknowledges that, “the immediacy of God’s word in Scripture has long been a held Pentecostal value”.²⁸⁸ Because of this sense of the immediate, Pentecostalism is a “praxis oriented and experiential” theology.²⁸⁹ Similarly, Frank Machia holds that Pentecostals believe that the Bible has answers to their contexts and experiences in the present. He writes, “there is for Pentecostals a certain present-ness to the words and events of the Bible, so that what happened then happens now”.²⁹⁰ Timothy Cargal calls this present-ness that Machia describes “the immediacy of the text”.²⁹¹ Similarly, Ma states that “the Word of God initially given to the ancient community of faith is appropriated “just as if it was given to present-day Christians”.²⁹² What these scholars highlight is that Pentecostals focus on the meaning of the

²⁸⁴ Allert, *A High View of Scripture*, 149. Allert argues however that even though the Greek word (*theopneustos*) may literally mean ‘God breathed’, it does not have to be understood in the literal sense. For Allert, the word needs to be understood within the context of the passage as a whole, only then will the main thrust of the passage be correctly understood (154-157).

²⁸⁵ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 182.

²⁸⁶ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 182.

²⁸⁷ INT21FDU20+ 15 October 2011. This rhetoric on a deeper level reveals a problematic insinuation that if God is alive then the male must necessarily be the head of the household.

²⁸⁸ Ma, “Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal tradition,” 63.

²⁸⁹ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 16.

²⁹⁰ F.D. Machia, “Theology Pentecostals,” *NIDPCM* (The New Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements), eds. Stanley Burgess and Gary McGee (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 1122, cited in Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 189.

²⁹¹ T.B. Cargal, “Beyond the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: Pentecostal and Hermeneutics in a Post Modern Age,” *Pneuma* 15, no. 2 (1993), 164, cited in Warrington *Pentecostal Theology*, 189.

²⁹² Ma, “Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal Tradition,” 55.

Bible as it applies to them in the present and they assume that texts hold an immediate and straightforward relevance in new times and situations.²⁹³

4.3.4.1. Implications of the Bible as the Immediate Word of God

This sense of immediacy and present-ness has implications for Pentecostal hermeneutics. First, Pentecostals expect God to perform the same miracles God performed in the Bible. Paul Gifford captures this sense of the immediacy where he quotes pastors from Nigeria verbatim. These pastors understand the Bible in the present “to tell my story; it explains who I am; I can do what the Bible says I can”.²⁹⁴ The Bible is understood as addressing their immediate context of need; of childlessness and lack of financial resources. Gifford goes on to demonstrate that examples from the Bible of people, like Abraham and Sarah who conceived in their old age, are used to persuade believers to believe that they will conceive immediately. Second, Pentecostals’ sense of the immediacy of the text leads them to engage in a literalistic interpretation of the Bible because they just have to apply the Bible to their contexts and situations immediately. This is called plenary relevance; the Bible can be literally and rigidly applied to people’s situations in the present. While Pentecostals apply the Bible in the present, however, when it comes to texts which can be used for the liberation of women this immediacy is not applied.

Third, the “immediacy” and “present-ness” of the Bible is manifested through the practice of proof-texting. Asamoah-Gyadu has argued that Pentecostals have a tendency to proof-text. This he defines as:

[The] practice of using selected biblical verses to support arguments regardless of the context. These selected texts are then taken as sufficient proof of God’s mind and purpose on particular issues...because of its subjective and arbitrary approach to biblical interpretation, proof-texting leads to truncated if not erroneous views on theological issues.²⁹⁵

²⁹³ J. Green, “Hermeneutical Approaches to the Tradition,” *Commentary 2000*, eds. J.D.G. Dunn and J.W. Rogerson (Michigan: Eerdmans, forthcoming 2012) cited by Archer, “Early Pentecostals Biblical Interpretation,” 34.

²⁹⁴ Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 71.

²⁹⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 215.

Proof texting is using isolated passages to sustain a particular theory and position. Asamoah-Gyadu further argues that some Pentecostal churches in Ghana advance a prosperity theology by using selected biblical texts to claim that God wills all believers to prosper in this life. In the Botswana context, proof texting is used to support, among other things, the marginalization of women, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter. Texts such as I Peter 3:1-7 and Genesis 2:23 are read in isolation and used to support and call women into subordination. When Pentecostals proof-text they can support any doctrine and argument by utilizing a single verse from the Bible without taking in consideration its historical and grammatical context, all because the Bible has to apply to their immediate contexts.²⁹⁶

In summary, the 4 I's approach to the Bible is characteristic of unarticulated Pentecostal beliefs and hermeneutic about the authority of the Bible. It is the sum-total of their general approach to the Bible.

4.4. The Difference between Pentecostal Scholars' and Pentecostal believers views on the Authority of the Bible

Notwithstanding the above, Pentecostal scholars differ from non-academic Pentecostals in their view of the Bible in five ways. First, Pentecostal scholars acknowledge that the Bible has a historical past and a cultural particularity.²⁹⁷ Second, they recognise the instrumentality of human beings through the Spirit in the production of the Bible. Third, they acknowledge that the Bible is locked in tensions and ambiguities. To acknowledge the tensions and the ambiguities that exist within Scripture allows for realistic negotiation of meaning. Fee points out that since Scripture is locked in tensions and ambiguities, some people have capitulated in despair "either toward the certainties of fundamentalism or the ambiguities of liberalism".²⁹⁸ Fourth, Pentecostal academics acknowledge that the interpretation of the Bible must be within contextual realities. The Bible is adaptive and should be allowed to speak in different contexts throughout generations. This has implications for this study as it demonstrates that the Bible has to prophetically speak to the marginalisation of women within Pentecostal churches as it is adapted to their context of oppression. Fifth, and most important for this thesis, is that the authority of the Bible lies in its ability to serve the needs of the community.

²⁹⁶ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 47.

²⁹⁷ Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent"; Pinnock, "The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Interpretation," 165.

²⁹⁸ G. Fee, *Gospel and the Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 33.

Christopher Thomas's argument above demonstrates this point. If the Bible could be allowed to serve the needs of all the community, then the Pentecostal space could be liberating. This is not the case at the moment because women are still marginalised through hermeneutics within Pentecostal churches.

4.5. The Holy Spirit and Pentecostal Hermeneutics

4.5.1. Pentecostal Community and its existence defined by the Holy Spirit

A further characteristic of Pentecostal hermeneutics is the role of the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals claim absolute dependency on the Holy Spirit. Pentecostal scholars asserts that the baptism and infilling of the Holy Spirit is the most important factor that distinguishes Pentecostal groupings from other denominations. Fundamental to a Pentecostal believer is a "personal, experiential encounter of the Spirit of God".²⁹⁹ Pentecostalism is a movement of the Holy Spirit; a movement which places central emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts through the Holy Spirit. Pastors and scholars alike perceive the Holy Spirit as a living power that must be at work in the lives of individuals and the church.³⁰⁰ Without the Holy Spirit's participation, there can be no authentic Pentecostal community because the Holy Spirit, according to John Gordy, is the one who "illumines, indwells, intercedes, searches the heart, knows the mind of God, liberates, guides...teaches...". Gordy maintains that Pentecostal believers know and experience the presence of God through the illumination of the Holy Spirit. This encounter with the Holy Spirit leads to personal transformation.³⁰¹

Seeing that the Holy Spirit is central to Pentecostal existence, Pentecostals maintain that it is impossible to understand the Bible without the Holy Spirit. Anderson can claim that "the role of the Spirit in human experience is an essential part of understanding the biblical text".³⁰² Clark Pinnock can argue that without the Holy Spirit, the Bible becomes nothing more than reading "an old English novel".³⁰³ Expressing the same sentiment, Warrington writes that

²⁹⁹ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 19-20.

³⁰⁰ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011, INT16MDR50+ 3 September 2011. See also works by scholars of Pentecostalism such as, R. Gerloff, "Pentecostals in the African Diaspora," in *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, eds. A. Anderson and W.J. Hollenweger (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 82.

³⁰¹ J. Gordy, "Toward a Theology of Pentecostal Preaching," *JPT* 10, no. 1 (2001), 93.

³⁰² Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 228.

³⁰³ C.H. Pinnock, "The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics," *JPT* 2 (1993), 4, cited by Ellington, "Pentecostalism and the Authority of Scripture," 24.

“the sole interpreter of Scripture; any competitor to his³⁰⁴ [*sic*] role has been viewed with suspicion”.³⁰⁵ This was confirmed by a pastor from Botswana who argued that other pastors, especially from non-Pentecostal churches who read the Bible without listening to the Holy Spirit end up contradicting God’s word and they compete with the Holy Spirit as they make God’s word support “abominations like homosexuality”.³⁰⁶

Pentecostal scholars find a form of hermeneutics that does not engage with the role of the Holy Spirit as both problematic and unwelcome within Pentecostal circles.³⁰⁷ These Pentecostal scholars are patently intentional in their desire to move away from hermeneutical approaches that “are heavily slanted toward rationalism and tend to downplay experience and/or the role of the Holy Spirit”.³⁰⁸ Pinnock has openly criticised Western liberal scholars for neglecting the role of the Holy Spirit in hermeneutics. He argues that doing so does not allow the Bible to transform and change lives because the Bible is treated like a code book “rather than a more flexible case book. When the Bible is approached as a code book, the Spirit cannot open it up. No room is left for that”.³⁰⁹ Further, he laments the fact that liberal scholars discuss hermeneutics “in terms of a creative human activity without mentioning the supernatural dimensions of it”.³¹⁰ Warrington argues that the Bible cannot only be adequately explored through “the grid of human hermeneutics, however valid,” but, discovering the meaning of the Bible through the Holy Spirit is superior. Therefore, both the creative human activity and the supernatural dimension are essential to Pentecostal hermeneutics. While the scholars can overtly suggest that hermeneutics is an exercise of both the intellect and the Holy Spirit, most Pentecostals in Botswana would maintain that the Holy Spirit is the sole interpreter of the Bible. There is a sense that there is an over-reliance on the Holy Spirit to “lead us into right interpretation” without interrogating and nuancing what that means and the role of the intellect within hermeneutics.

³⁰⁴ Note how the Holy Spirit is referred to using the masculine pronoun; almost all the Pentecostals scholars I cite in this chapter refer to the Holy Spirit as a He. Within the Pentecostal circles, especially in Botswana, the Holy Spirit has been referred to as a ‘He’, thus making all three members of the Trinity entirely male. This is unfortunate because especially in the Tswana language the name for Spirit is *Moya*, which is neither male nor female. I will engage with this more in chapter 8.

³⁰⁵ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 195.

³⁰⁶ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

³⁰⁷ Pinnock, “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics,” 3-23; Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 141. See also Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 39; Ellington, “Pentecostalism and the Authority of Scripture,” 24.

³⁰⁸ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 141. See also Pinnock, “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics,” 7; Ervin, “Hermeneutics: A Pentecostal Option,” 27 cited in Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 144, footnote 96.

³⁰⁹ Pinnock, “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics,” 8.

³¹⁰ Pinnock, “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics,” 7.

From the discussions of scholars, three main roles played by the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal hermeneutics are discernible.

4.5.2. The Holy Spirit Makes the Bible Authoritative and Transformative

The authority of the Bible depends upon the Holy Spirit for the Holy Spirit actualises the Bible into life, making the Bible authoritative and transformative. Hence, the Bible “is not of itself the Word of God, it only becomes the Word of God through the continued inspiration of the Holy Spirit”.³¹¹ Without the Holy Spirit, Ellington argues that the Bible is but a series of mere words which do not possess the power to transform lives.

Still on the authority of the Bible, Steven Land demonstrates the centrality of the Holy Spirit by arguing that the order of authority must be, “Spirit, Scripture, church...Without the Spirit there would have been no Word, incarnate or written”.³¹² With this argument, Land points out that the Bible only becomes authoritative because of the transformative power of the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit is more authoritative because the Holy Spirit is “is prior to the written word”.³¹³ The implication of this assertion for my own work is that Pentecostalism should not be based on a rigid biblical literalism because the Holy Spirit enables new interpretations of texts. While this is the practice even within the Pentecostal churches in Botswana, texts that have traditionally been used to marginalize women are interpreted in the same way, year after year. It seems they are closed to the illumination of the Holy Spirit. The need to construct a liberating Pentecostal hermeneutic arises from this realisation that Pentecostal hermeneutics have the power to be transformative and liberating because of the openness to new revelation and interpretations of the Bible through the Holy Spirit.

4.5.3. The Holy Spirit as the Inspirer and Illuminator of the Bible, Then and Now

The Holy Spirit must be acknowledged in the “creation, transmission, reception and application of the text”.³¹⁴ Pentecostal scholars argue that the Holy Spirit inspired the writing of the Bible and in the same way that inspiration is still active when the Bible is read

³¹¹ Ellington, ‘Pentecostalism and the Authority of Scripture’, 24.

³¹² S. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, JPT Sup 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 106.

³¹³ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 39.

³¹⁴ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 199.

today.³¹⁵ In as much as the Holy Spirit was at work in the original authors' life, the Holy Spirit is also at work in the life of the believer reading the text today. Similarly, Land asserts that the Bible only becomes the word of God to the reader or hearer through the action and participation of the Holy Spirit in a continuum of inspiration.³¹⁶ Archer too perceives the Holy Spirit as both the "inspirer and illuminator of Scriptures.... the Holy Spirit plays an important part in elucidating the contemporary meaning of Scripture".³¹⁷ All these scholars acknowledge that inspiration of the Holy Spirit did not end after the Bible was compiled. If the Bible is to have any meaning to present day readers, then the Holy Spirit plays a role in actualising the Bible into God's word by offering new inspiration and illumination. Arrington argues that since Scripture was given by the Holy Spirit, then the same Scripture must be mediated interpretively by the Holy Spirit.³¹⁸ Janet Powers rightly observes that through the Holy Spirit, a bridge is created between the text and the reader so that the biblical text is accessible and that makes it easy for Pentecostals to experience life as a participation in the biblical story. Because of the bridging role that the Holy Spirit plays, the hermeneutical gap between what the text meant to the original readers and what it means now is narrowed.³¹⁹

4.5.4. The Holy Spirit Gives the Bible New Meaning and Makes it Contextual

Pentecostal scholars take the context of the reader and that of the Bible seriously. They recognise that the Biblical text can speak differently in different contexts through the Holy Spirit.³²⁰ The ability of the Holy Spirit to offer multiple interpretations of a text makes the Bible meaningful and real to people in their different contexts.

Dale Coutier argues that the Bible has multilevel meanings which can only be experienced when a Pentecostal is open to the Spirit's on-going revelation, which occurs when the individual spiritual experience and the narrative of the text intertwine.³²¹ This recognition by scholars of Pentecostalism could have implications for how our contexts must necessarily dictate how we read and interpret the Bible. For example, presently, Pentecostal women inhabit a world rife with inequalities. What if Pentecostal hermeneutics were to take seriously the marginalisation of women and seek contextual liberating ways of reading the Bible that counteract this marginalisation? Since the role of Holy Spirit is able to lead the community

³¹⁵ Pinnock, "The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics," 4.

³¹⁶ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 40.

³¹⁷ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty first Century*, 77.

³¹⁸ Arrington, "The Use of the Bible by Pentecostals," 105.

³¹⁹ Powers, *Your Daughters shall Prophecy*, 316.

³²⁰ Most Pentecostals in the pews do not take the historical contexts of the Bible seriously while scholars do.

³²¹ D.M. Coulter, "What Meaneth This? Pentecostal and Theological Inquiry," 61.

into the possibility of multiple interpretations of the text, texts that are used to subordinate women to men can be read differently. I find the exposition of Ulrich Luz helpful as he argues that for the Holy Spirit to guide the community, four aspects have to come together; the Holy Spirit illumination, the context of human lives, the intellect and the exegesis of a text. He writes,

The Holy Spirit works not only through illumination but through the involvement of human lives and intellects...through exegetical and hermeneutical work.³²²

The discussion above clearly acknowledges that it is possible to move away from literalist interpretations of the Bible while staying true to Pentecostal belief; one does not need to be literalist to be Pentecostal. Non-academic Pentecostalism downplays historical criticism, and emphasises the open-ended nature of the text. This implies that a multiplicity of meanings is possible, even on texts regarding women.

4.6. Community and Pentecostal Hermeneutics

4.6.1. The Pentecostal Community is Unique

The third central feature of a Pentecostal hermeneutic is community. Pentecostal scholars maintain that reading and interpretation of the Bible is a communal exercise which takes place among people who share similar convictions and experiences. Biblical authority arises not only from personal endeavour but from a community of faith. Even though it is part of a larger Christian community; it “exists as a distinct coherent narrative tradition within Christianity” with a shared theology especially with respect to pneumatology. Therefore, the frames for reading Scripture are also distinctive because they are guided by the Pentecostals’ metanarrative. Archer argues that the Pentecostal community lays claim to a distinctive hermeneutic because:

The Pentecostal community...is bound together by their ‘shared charismatic experiences’ and ‘shared story’. The Pentecostal narrative tradition attempts to embody the Christian metanarrative....However, Pentecostals will engage Scripture and reality from their own community and narrative tradition...The Pentecostal story is the primary hermeneutical

³²² L. Ulrich, “A Response to Emerson B. Power,” *JPT* 14 (1999), 26.

context of the reading of Scripture, hence providing the context for the production of meaning. The Pentecostal narrative tradition provides the Pentecostal with an experiential, conceptual hermeneutical narrative that enables them to interpret Scripture and their experience of reality.³²³

The same argument is pursued by Warrington when he writes:

The Pentecostal community brings its own unique comment on the text, based on its social and religious contexts and belief in the dynamic nature of the Spirit and experiential aspect of the faith, such a context being as important to the hermeneutical process as any exegetical or theological method.³²⁴

Both Archer and Warrington maintains that for an individual to lay claim to the Pentecostal hermeneutic, they must identify themselves as Pentecostal and be rooted in a Pentecostal community in order to produce what Archer calls a “Pentecostal reading of the Scripture”. In addition, for a person to participate in the Pentecostal community they should have a Pentecostal experience and participate in what Archer descriptively calls the “Full Gospel”. Further she/he must share the Pentecostal community’s story, needs, experiences and aspirations as well as embrace the central narrative convictions of Pentecostalism.³²⁵ Similarly, Asamoah-Gyadu maintains that a person has to affirm and identify “albeit experientially” with the Holy Spirit in order to be regarded as part of a Pentecostal community.³²⁶ I concur with Archer and Asamoah-Gyadu that Pentecostal hermeneutics takes place within a community of individuals who overtly identify, not sympathise with a Pentecostal community. Pentecostal hermeneutics takes place when members share testimonies about what God has done in their lives and read the Bible together bound by a common metanarrative. These testimonies serve a dual purpose; they not only prove that

³²³ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 98. Archer explains a metanarrative as a grand story by which human societies and their individual members live and organise their lives in meaningful ways. The Christian metanarrative refers to the general Christian story about the meaning of the world and the God who created it and humanity’s place in it. A story that begins with a good creation includes a fall into sin, redemption through the Messiah, the development of the Christian Community and the final restoration of all creation. The Christian metanarrative is primarily dependent on the Bible for this general narrative.

³²⁴ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 198-199.

³²⁵ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century*, 164.

³²⁶ Asamoah, *African Charismatics*, 12.

miracles still take place, but they demonstrate that members are involved in the process of interpreting Scripture.³²⁷

4.6.2. Four Major Roles of a Pentecostal Community within Pentecostal Hermeneutics

There are four discernible roles of the Pentecostal community in the hermeneutical process suggested by scholars of Pentecostalism. First, communities have a final say in proclaiming what a text means based on their Pentecostal theology. Second, communities establish ground rules for interpreting texts. Third, Pentecostal communities offer a safe environment for inquiring about texts.³²⁸ Fourth, the community provides perspectives of balance and accountability, while protecting members from subjective tendencies.

Without the involvement and consensus of the wider community, one's interpretation of the text can become stridently dogmatic, divisive, and thus ultimately and fundamentally flawed.³²⁹

4.6.3. Critique of the Role of Pentecostal Community within Pentecostal Hermeneutics

The scholars' exposition of the centrality of the Pentecostal community in the interpretive process within Pentecostal churches is commendable. However, they fail to capture the complex gendered nature of Pentecostal communities and they neglect the power relations that exist between men and women in Pentecostal communities. Gender is a contentious subject among Pentecostals and in my experience as a Pentecostal who has done fieldwork among Pentecostals in Botswana, I dispute the exposition above that all members of the community equally participate in developing a Pentecostal hermeneutic. Pentecostal males often determine interpretations that are "valid", normative and upheld within the community, more so because they have access to the pulpit where a Pentecostal hermeneutic is developed and communicated. In the context of this thesis, they determine how texts about men and women are understood, how gender is performed at home and in the church. These men officiate at weddings where they reinforce dominant narratives that call women into subordination. Women do not have the same authority that men have to influence Pentecostal hermeneutics. It is true that Pentecostal men and women share testimonies and hold Bible

³²⁷ Archer, "Pentecostal Hermeneutics: Retrospect and Prospect," 66-67.

³²⁸ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 198.

³²⁹ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 198.

studies and that woman preach, however the interpretations that are acceptable are mostly determined by males. When Archer argues that communities have a final say in proclaiming what the texts means, he is not being realistic both within his context and the African context, for it is a few members, predominantly male, who decide which reading and interpretation is final. I think it is important to construct principles of a liberating hermeneutic that seek to ensure that both men and women within the Pentecostal community are treated as equal. The vision of this hermeneutic is to have principles that ensure the existence of an egalitarian church. This is so that questions such as “Who are the members who decide which interpretation is valid or not?” “Do men and women’s interpretations of the Bible carry the same weight in influencing a Pentecostal hermeneutic?” and “Who is in the pulpit?” are answered.

4.7. Experience and Pentecostal Hermeneutics

The final factor to take into consideration when reviewing a Pentecostal hermeneutic is the role of experience in the process of interpretation. Some Pentecostal scholars like Stephen Parker do not agree that experience is a legitimate place to begin theological reflection.³³⁰ This is an outdated argument because it is now commonly held that theologies emerge out of people’s experiences. Other scholars of Pentecostalism do note that the strength of Pentecostal hermeneutics lies in the role it gives both the biblical text and human experience.³³¹

These scholars maintain that experience is an integral and valid factor in Pentecostal hermeneutics. This means that the Pentecostal experience of being born again and baptism of the Holy Spirit are valid hermeneutical presuppositions.³³² Similarly, the experience of God is more than a doctrinal confession; it consists of an intense human-divine experience that is central to the Pentecostal interpretation of the Bible.³³³ Since Pentecostal hermeneutics comes out of the lived experiences of Pentecostals, these experiences are integral to the Pentecostal hermeneutical exercise.

³³⁰ S. Parker, *Led By The Spirit: Toward a Practical Theology of Pentecostal Discernment and Decision Making* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 21.

³³¹ Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 226; Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 321.

³³² Ellington, “Pentecostalism and the Authority of Scripture,” 18.

³³³ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 16.

Yet, as Warrington has rightly warned, experience alone is insufficient to determine truth or praxis. Instead, there is the need to engage a methodology that engages with the value of experience but protects from its inherent dangers.³³⁴ Warrington, Thomas and Powers propose that experience must be validated and tested against the Bible, and the Holy Spirit.³³⁵ They are suggesting that all the features of the Pentecostal hermeneutic must be measured against each other to determine relevant meaning in any context. Engaging all the features of Pentecostal hermeneutics is important considering that Fee accuses Pentecostals of “exegeting” their experiences and making it normative for all other Christians.³³⁶ Similarly, Janet Powers hold that Pentecostals tend to look for biblical narratives to discover a pattern of experience and assume that such a narrative has normative theological value.³³⁷

4.7.1. Critique of Experience

Ironically, although both Pentecostal scholars and pastors focus on experience, it is always of a “spiritual” nature, such as the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit and of being born again. In addition to focusing on spiritual experience, the Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic that I seek to construct focuses on the life experiences of social, economic and cultural marginalization and oppression of women as necessary and valid in biblical interpretation. I find the Pentecostal scholars’ exposition on experience as part of the Pentecostal hermeneutic lacking in that this experiential orientation does not include the lived experiences of Pentecostal women, especially the lived experiences of exclusion and marginalisation of Batswana women, which I described in detail in chapter 3.

4.8. Summary

In this chapter I explained the four dimensions of Pentecostal hermeneutics; Bible, Spirit, Community and experience. I demonstrated that there are two types of Pentecostal hermeneutics, what I call the unarticulated and articulated hermeneutics. An unarticulated hermeneutic is not critical, whereas articulated Pentecostal hermeneutics is a critical academic exercise by scholars of Pentecostalism. I have discussed the authority of the Bible as the inerrant, inspired, infallible and immediate word of God within Pentecostal hermeneutics. This section especially focused on the ways that this authority is expressed

³³⁴ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 193.

³³⁵ Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 194; Thomas, “Women, Pentecostals and the Bible,” 55; Powers, “Your Daughters shall Prophecy.”

³³⁶ Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent,” 121-122.

³³⁷ Powers, “Your Daughters Shall Prophecy,” 317.

within Pentecostal churches. Although the scholars of Pentecostalism perceive the Bible as authoritative, their perspective is not characterised by the literalism and naivety that defines the unarticulated hermeneutics. I also discussed the other principles of Pentecostal hermeneutics which are the Holy Spirit, Community and Experience. Regarding the role of the Holy Spirit, both scholars and members in the churches agree that the Holy Spirit transforms the message of the people. One of the strengths of Pentecostal hermeneutics is the role that experience plays, although this experience is often the spiritual. Although the role of community is important within Pentecostal frames of reading, scholars fail to engage with the gendered nature of Pentecostal communities.

The next chapter establishes the link between Pentecostal hermeneutics and the marginalization of women in order to establish the need for a liberating hermeneutic. This chapter establishes that the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic marginalises women. While it is true that Pentecostal women and men can be filled with the Holy Spirit and have experiences that parallel the experience detailed in Acts 2, it is also true that Pentecostal women nonetheless occupy an inferior status in the church and in their homes. This inferior status is established and maintained through Pentecostal interpretations of the Bible.

CHAPTER 5

PENTECOSTAL HERMENEUTICS AND THE MARGINALISATION OF WOMEN

5.0. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the study focused on the principles of Pentecostal hermeneutics as defined by scholars and practiced by Pentecostals in the pews. I focused on the authority of the Bible as inerrant, infallible, inspired and immediate. The chapter also highlighted the tridactic Pentecostal hermeneutical strategy as consisting of Scripture, Spirit and Community as proposed by Christopher Thomas and discussed further by other scholars such as Kenneth Archer. In addition to these, the role of Experience as the fourth strategy proposed by other Pentecostal scholars was also highlighted. These four factors provide the parameters within which Biblical interpretation is usually undertaken in Pentecostal churches. Interpretations which do not conform to these principles are likely to be regarded with suspicion or even outright hostility. This in its own way constitutes a Pentecostal “hermeneutic of suspicion” equivalent to that exercised by critical scholars within the academy. Nevertheless, these four principles do not function as if they were carved in stone since openness to the Holy Spirit remains the primary principle for all Pentecostal activity. Hence, there is an acknowledged destabilizing principle at work at the heart of Pentecostal hermeneutic. The problem is already famously expressed in Deut 18:15-22 and in the characterization of “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit” as the unforgiveable sin in Matthew 12:32, “Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come”. (Cf. Didache 11:7 “Also, do not test or evaluate any prophet who speaks in the Spirit, for every sin will be forgiven, but this sin will not be forgiven”³³⁸).

Building on this background, the aim of this chapter is to describe the links between Pentecostal biblical interpretation and women’s marginalization. The two essential aspects of Pentecostal biblical interpretation that I will focus on in this chapter are literalist interpretations and proof texting of the Bible. In addition to these, I will describe how the Pentecostal doctrines of the Trinity and Christology (which are derived from the Bible) further contribute towards the marginalization of women in Pentecostal churches in

³³⁸ Holmes, M. *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations* (Baker Books: Grand Rapids 1999), p. 265. Spirit has been capitalized by myself.

Botswana. While the focus of this chapter is on Pentecostal women, I want to stress that these women are equally affected by the customary laws in Botswana as discussed in chapter 3. Unfortunately for them, they are not only faced with the patriarchy from the culture itself, their position is further complicated by the use of the Bible to subordinate them. The dual patriarchies of the Setswana culture and the church intersect in the oppression of these women. This chapter will draw from a literature review and from the information gathered during fieldwork from Pentecostals who affirmed the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic which privileges men. I must state here that there were Pentecostals who were subversive, the “resisting readers” and their views will be reflected on more in chapter 8. The information in this chapter will be filtered through a feminist theoretical framework of analysis.

This chapter is organized as follows: the first section focuses on the impact of literalistic interpretations of the Bible on the marginalization of women in Pentecostal churches in Botswana, while the second section analyses the significance of proof texting on the status of women in Pentecostal churches in Botswana. The third section highlights the role of the theologies of the Trinity and Christology on the marginalization of women in these churches. The fourth section relates my findings to the extant literature on the status of women in global Pentecostalism. In this particular section, I review the available literature and illustrate points of convergence and divergence in relation to my own findings. However, I do interact with the available scholarly literature in the earlier sections.³³⁹

5.1. Literalist Reading of the Bible and the Marginalisation of Women

An analysis of the material I collected from the field shows that the Bible plays a key role in Pentecostal churches in Botswana and it is regarded as an undisputed source of authority. It is the final court of appeal in theological debates. It provides a guide to belief and action. The Bible is revered as a sacred text and it features prominently in Pentecostal sermons. In chapter 4, I mentioned that the reluctance of Pentecostals to engage in critical biblical interpretation leads to literalist readings of the Bible which are not always life giving and affirming to women. Pentecostals in Botswana adopt the unarticulated hermeneutics discussed in the previous chapter, which is characterised by an uncritical reading of the Bible.

³³⁹ While this chapter focuses on Pentecostal hermeneutics and the marginalization of women, it must be noted that if the Setswana culture was not sexist itself, maybe Pentecostals frames of reading might not enforce the subordination of women. The subordination of women within the Pentecostal church takes its cue from the Setswana culture and they reinforce each other. In my interviews with Pentecostals, their justification for the subordination of women moved between what the “Bible says” and what is “Tswana”. Therefore, Pentecostal women are doubly marginalised.

One of the most dominant models of biblical interpretation in Pentecostal churches in Botswana is the literalist one, i.e. a text is held to say “exactly what it says, no more, no less”. A literalistic reading of the Bible is the kind that takes the Bible at face value and uncritically. This resonates with the observation that I made in the previous chapter that, for Pentecostals, the interpretation of the Bible has to be as rigid and literalistic as possible and that is one aspect of Pentecostal hermeneutics that subjugates women.³⁴⁰

5.1.1. Selective Literalism

However, there is inconsistency with regards to Pentecostal hermeneutics in that Pentecostals are not always literalists in the interpretation of Scripture, but when it comes to reading texts that marginalise women, they become literalists. The findings from my fieldwork revealed that some Pentecostals would, for example, argue that it was a fact that Adam was created first. But when I probed further to point out that Genesis 1:27 may suggest that both men and women were created at the same time, one respondent argued that³⁴¹

Genesis 1:27 does not have much authority, it is an introduction to Genesis 2, which actually tells a complete story.

This means that the Pentecostals’ literalist reading of the Bible is actually selective reading, as it is not upheld consistently. However, when it comes to promoting male supremacy, the Bible is read literally and uncritically. My findings are consistent with some earlier studies on Pentecostalism and the Bible in Africa. For example, Kalu mentions, albeit briefly, that variations abound within the Pentecostal movements in Africa, where the literalist reading of the Bible has actually excluded women from the pulpit.³⁴² Kalu makes a good point (even though he does not explain it further) that it is because of the literalist reading of the Bible that women are marginalised in some Pentecostal churches.³⁴³ While he makes reference to gender inequality and biblical interpretation, he does not take up the opportunity to engage further and comprehensively with the issue.

³⁴⁰ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 184. See also Allert, *A High View of Scripture*, 160; see also Lemke, “The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture,” 185. See also Ma, “Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal tradition,” 54.

³⁴¹ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011

³⁴² Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 152.

³⁴³ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 152.

5.1.2. First Ladies and Jezebels

While Kalu's approach to this theme begs elaboration, it was informative for my fieldwork. For example, Kalu discusses four categories of women in Pentecostal movements, namely, (i) founders; (ii) sisters; (iii) first ladies; and (iv) Jezebels. Founders are those who begin their own movements; sisters are those who are endowed with charismatic gifts and allowed to minister in the church; first ladies are the pastor's wives and serve "as a nodal power point for mobilising and deploying female evangelical power"; so-called 'Jezebels' are women who are "controlling and immoral", who use "beauty and harlotry" to seduce the pastor and destroy the church.³⁴⁴ After discussing what these women do, Kalu concludes that a negative gender discourse lurks within Pentecostal theology. However, Kalu does not elaborate what it means to categorise women in the Pentecostal church in this way and how the Bible is used to construct these roles. Hence for example, what does it mean when the Pentecostal church refers to some women as Jezebels? Is there a biblical and hermeneutical basis for such categorisation? While Kalu does not elaborate on this, one male pastor whom I interviewed had the following to say about Jezebel and her spirit.³⁴⁵

Women can be very cunning like Jezebel. Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, she was evil. The Bible tells us that she killed the prophets of God in I Kings 18:13; she had Naboth killed in I Kings 21:15-25 and she led to the downfall of Ahab the king by forcing him to commit sin. The New Testament continues to characterise her as a wicked woman. Revelation 2:18 classifies her as a false prophet, who teaches God's servants to commit fornication, she worships idols and she is adulterous. There are a lot of women today even in the Pentecostal churches who have got Jezebel's "spirit". These are the women who can seduce pastors and lead them astray with their beauty. These are the women who are always at the centre of controversy in the church; they gossip and cause a lot of confusion in the church and these are women who refuse to be under the authority of any man. They are not contained and they do as they please.

³⁴⁴ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 152-154.

³⁴⁵ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

The pastor was using I Kings 21:15-25 about Jezebel and argued that some women, even within Pentecostal circles, literally epitomise evil. He “demonises” women in order to justify their subordination. According to him, that is why God saw it fit to command women to submit to the men. In this way, a man will have authority over the woman and keep her in control.³⁴⁶ This kind of reading and characterising women is problematic in that men are not characterised in the way that women are characterised through a literalistic reading of the Bible. While women today might be labelled Jezebels, men are hardly called Ahab’s (Jezebel’s husband). There is always a scriptural basis for marginalising women and silencing them. This marginalisation is done through a literalistic reading of the Bible which advances the “headship of men” while encouraging women to submit to their husbands at all cost.

5.1.3. Literal Interpretations of the Bible and Headship of the Man

The headship of men is advanced through the literal reading of texts such as Genesis 2. The respondents in this study had this to say:³⁴⁷

The headship of man is also supported by the story of creation in Genesis, in the beginning God created Man, and out of the man the woman was created, that makes the woman the man’s helper and she must submit to him.

One pastor argued that male dominance and female submission is a command from God which is not negotiable, and the moment that order is disturbed the world literally goes into chaos and disorder.³⁴⁸

*Female submission and the authority given to men is a command from God himself and if this command is not followed there will be chaos as we have right now in this country.*³⁴⁹

³⁴⁶ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

³⁴⁷ CBS3OmolemoFPR40+ 20 August 2011.

³⁴⁸ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

³⁴⁹ The chaos that the pastor is referring to are the recent debates on legalising homosexuality in Botswana with some pastors like Rupert Hambira advocating for this. He is also referring to the killing of women by their partners. The pastor held that in instances “where men marry other men, who is in authority there? God never intended for this to happen”.

5.1.4. Literalist Readings are Dangerous

My research findings are consistent with observations within academia where scholars have demonstrated that the Bible becomes a dangerous book in the hands of literalistic readers.³⁵⁰ For example, Madipoane Masenya similarly points out that the Bible has been used as a “wounding sword” to inflict pain on the poor, on abused women, and on young single female children who become pregnant within the Pentecostal church.³⁵¹ While Masenya is making a general statement about how the Bible is interpreted, I can deduce that it is through a selective reading that the Bible becomes a wounding sword to the women. Similarly, Nadar specifically argues that the literalistic reading of the Bible in the Pentecostal church is dangerous for women as some women have stayed in abusive marriages because God hates divorce and the “Bible says so”.³⁵² While the two scholars are writing within the South African context, they are demonstrating that violence against women is sometimes justified through a literal reading of the Bible.

5.1.4.1. Literalist Readings and Violence against Women

The female respondents in my study confirmed this assertion as they pointed out that “godly women” must stay in difficult marriages for the sake of God’s kingdom.³⁵³

On marriage break-up, I am saying that when there is a slight misunderstanding in the marriage, the woman flees; she fails to understand that marriage is sacred and she should respect that sanctity by obeying her husband...

When I probed with the question: At all costs? The answer was:

Yes, because in Malachi 2:16 the Bible says God hates divorce. A woman who actually leaves her husband is not rooted in the word of God, she does not understand patience and she does not have the gifts of the Holy Spirit, long suffering/patience is one of them.

Another woman said:

³⁵⁰ Masenya, “The Sword that Heals!,” 51

³⁵¹ Masenya “The Sword that Heals!,” 54.

³⁵² Nadar, “The Bible Says!,” 153; see also I. Phiri, “Domestic Violence in Christian Homes: A Durban Case Study,” *Journal of Constructive Theology* 6, no. 2 (2000), 85-110.

³⁵³ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011, CB4GorataFDeU40+ 14 April 2011, FC3FDSse20+ 21 July 2011.

Marriage is sacred, it is never easy and women must not leave their marriage bed even if their husbands are abusive. If a woman prays, it can get better, even if it does not get better, she must stay, and that is her cross to carry. The word of God in Malachi 2:16 says that God hates divorce!

The church teaches that God hates divorce, so there should never be divorce as long as the woman knows her place and as long as the man also knows his place.

One of the male pastors I interviewed clearly made a link between women's lack of subordination "as the Bible says" and a form of violence that is commonly called passion killings in Botswana. He said

We have lost so many women to passion killings because women fail to submit to their partners as the Bible commands in 2 Corinthians 11:8 and Ephesians 5:23. They fail to obey God's word and failure to obey the word of God leads to death, you cannot ignore the law of God and remain unpunished.³⁵⁴

According to him, the reason why there are so many passion killings in Botswana is because women fail to submit to their partners as God demands. And failing to submit to one's husband is failure to God, as the Bible demands. What comes out of the pastor's rhetoric is that women are responsible for the violence inflicted on them since they think they have "equal rights as men" and secondly women are violated because they refuse to stay in "their place but constantly want to occupy men's place".³⁵⁵ Pentecostal hermeneutics do not discourage violence against women as demonstrated above, thus affirming McClintock-Fulkerson's argument that women's willingness to be battered is often linked to the "kind of ecclesiastically supported language of submission that appears in Pentecostal women's

³⁵⁴ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011. The pastor said that the unmarried women who are killed by their boyfriends demonstrate that they are breaking God's laws, they should not be engaging in those relationships anyway. He further says that "I condemn murder at all costs, I am simply saying women can avoid being killed by obeying God's commandments... and the men who kill must also obey God's commandments. The Bible condemns murder. This country has degenerated, both men and women do not obey the word of God, that is why we have the problems that we have today".

³⁵⁵ The last 10 years have seen a dramatic rise in violence against women in Botswana. One form of violence against women is extremely brutal; it defies words. It is commonly called passion killings in Botswana and intimate femicide in other contexts. Women are brutally murdered by their boyfriends and husbands, for example on suspicion of infidelity. Some of these women are shot, some are strangled, while some are beheaded. The statistics of women who have died since 2000 is horrifying. For example in 2011 alone there were 116 cases of women who were killed by their partners.

stories”.³⁵⁶ The rhetoric of female submission and male dominance advanced through a literalistic selective reading of the Bible puts women’s lives at risk both within and outside Botswana.

5.1.4.2. Literalist Readings and Sex as “Act of Submission”

One of the recent debates in Botswana is about passing a law that criminalises marital rape. I have already indicated in chapter 3 that both the customary and the civil laws do not recognise the existence of marital rape. On May 27 2011, during a radio call-in programme called *Masaasele*, the issue was debated and callers were asked to identify their religion. Most Christian men and women who called in to the radio argued that a godly woman who submits to her husband cannot be raped because sex is also an *act of submission*.³⁵⁷ The callers not only evoked the authority of the Tswana culture, they also evoked the authority of the Bible. The traditionalists also argued that a “proper” Motswana woman cannot be raped because according to the customary laws and practices of the people of Botswana, a man who has legally taken the wife and paid *bogadi* has free limitless sexual and reproductive access to his wife. They argued that rape can only happen outside marriage where the man is not “entitled” to the woman because they have not paid *bogadi*. The Pentecostal women in my study also argued that married women cannot be raped by their husbands because a woman’s duty to her husband is to submit to him as the head of the household all the time, whether she feels like doing that or not, and sex is an act of submission. This they justified by using texts such as 1Peter 3 and 1Timothy. Thus, they denied the existence of marital rape because of the literal interpretation of what they think submission is.³⁵⁸ What is clear is that ultimate submission is advanced through the use of a few biblical texts and ultimate submission can lead to the rape of married women who then are forced into silence, for fear that they can embarrass themselves and their families because a “proper” Motswana woman who submits to her husband cannot be raped.³⁵⁹

According to McClintock-Fulkerson, the commitment by Pentecostals to take and interpret the Bible literally means that “scriptural directives that insist on women being silent in church

³⁵⁶ McClintock Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject*, 296-297.

³⁵⁷ *Masaasele*, *Lekgotla* programme, RB1, May 27, 7-9 am, 2011.

³⁵⁸ *Masaasele*, *Lekgotla* programme, RB1, May 27, 7-9 am, 2011.

³⁵⁹ While the literal interpretation of the Bible leads to this perception, the Setswana customary law calls women into total submission to their husbands and husbands’ families as I have demonstrated in chapter 3.

are also taken literally”³⁶⁰ and they are obeyed. This flows directly from the notion of the infallibility of the Bible. McClintock-Fulkerson has pointed out the danger of the Pentecostal belief in the infallibility of the Bible and implications for the rules of reading; “they implicitly require that all Scriptures that refer to women must be obeyed”.³⁶¹ She further contends that even though Scripture is said to be infallible, certain texts are given more “interpretive power” than others.³⁶² Powers, in agreement with McClintock Fulkerson, argues that because of the Pentecostals’ belief in the infallibility of the canon, biblical texts that advocate for men’s authority over women both in the home and church are read literally, enforced and maintained.³⁶³

Similarly, Tan-Chow argues that the marginalisation and absence of many Pentecostal women in positions of authority is the result of the literalistic interpretation and understanding of texts such as 1Corinthians 11:3 and 1Timothy 2:9. Tan Chow mentions that:

These texts are interpreted literally and with universal legislative force, and in so doing exclude any female leadership.³⁶⁴

My interaction with Pentecostals in Botswana demonstrates that the male heads of Pentecostal churches especially are willing to fall back on literalist and selective reading of those texts that grant them power over women and secure their patriarchal grip on power, while they abandon the literalist reading of texts that promotes gender equality and justice. Some women also fall back on the literalistic reading of the Bible because “that is how the Bible is read”, and some believe that not taking the Bible at face value is defying God and they were not willing to do that. One young woman said this:³⁶⁵

We can take the lead, but who wants to do that when the Bible teaches that women must be under her husband because God says so, who wants to defy God?

³⁶⁰ Powers, “Your Daughters shall Prophecy,” 323.

³⁶¹ McClintock Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject*, 254.

³⁶² McClintock Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject*, 255.

³⁶³ Powers, “Your Daughters shall Prophecy,” 323.

³⁶⁴ Tan-Chow, *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty First Century*, 137.

³⁶⁵ INT4NonoFSR20+ 9July 2011.

5.1.5. The Ambivalence of Literalist Readings

Notwithstanding these arguments, I had a sense that the literal reading of the Bible can also liberate women. During our CBS on Acts 2, some Pentecostal women argued that the Bible was literally saying that men and women are equal and this text is confirmed by Galatians 3:28. One female respondent said that³⁶⁶

This is the word of God, it says in Galatians 3:28 that there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave or free, male or female. I do not need to know the context in which these words were said, all I know is what the Bible tells me that there is neither male nor female.

The Galatians' verses were taken at face value to argue that God has dissolved gender distinctions. Although in this instance the literalist reading of the Bible produced a liberating interpretation, this kind of interpretation is rare and can be highly problematic when there are no clear guidelines on how to read the Bible as a whole.

5.2. Proof Texting and the Marginalisation of Women

Apart from the challenges emerging from literalist readings of the Bible, my fieldwork also began to reveal the role of proof texting in the subordination of women within Pentecostalism in Botswana. I have demonstrated in the previous chapter that proof texting refers to the art of using and harmonising a few biblical texts to narrowly support any one argument without looking at the Bible as a whole. Christopher Thomas can assert this about the Pentecostals and proof texting:

Many Pentecostal churches have not paid nearly enough attention to the activity of the Holy Spirit in empowering women...but have allowed one or two texts to undermine the balance of biblical teaching on this topic, as well as the Spirit's own witness.³⁶⁷

The first example of proof texting that I will utilise in this chapter took place in Botswana during a debate on the abolition of the Marital Power amendment bill that was introduced to the Botswana Parliament in 2004/2005. I have discussed how the Act gave men power over

³⁶⁶ CBS7MphoFDU20+ 15 November 2011.

³⁶⁷ Thomas, "Women Pentecostals and the Bible," 56.

women. A Pentecostal pastor, John Ramotshabi, argued in the newspapers against implementing the bill by suggesting that abolishing the marital power was against God's principles as stated in the Bible. He argued that men are divinely appointed as heads of households and because the bill allegedly took away the right of husbands to be heads of households, Ramotshabi protested that it was a blasphemy and undermined God's will.³⁶⁸

The second example coming from one of the pastors I interviewed, also from Botswana, demonstrates that proof texting leads to the promotion of negative views about the status of women.

*The Bible is clear and there is no ambiguity with the authority vested upon the man by God himself. This is not child's play, it is the established perfect will of God that man must have authority over a woman and nowhere does the Bible instruct women to have authority over men. Texts that support this include Ephesians 5:22 and 23, you cannot argue with this text, it is clear as daylight... Even if a woman preaches under the influence of the Spirit, she is still under the authority of her husband.*³⁶⁹

5.2.1. Proof Texting: A Double Edged Hermeneutical Strategy

5.2.1.1. Proof Texting and the Production of Stereotypes about Women

Proof texting is a problematic double-edged hermeneutical strategy, in that not only is male supremacy and female subordination advanced through it, it is used to produce stereotypes about women. Pentecostal women who are the recipients of certain stereotypes produced through proof texting are also engaged in the production of such stereotypes through proof texting as well. For example, some women used the story of creation in Genesis 2:19 and 1 Peter 3:7, which suggests that women are weaker vessels, to literally suggest that women are second class and by necessity must be subordinate to men. Even more interesting were the words that women used to describe themselves. They compared themselves to ants and grasshoppers and the men were referred to as giants.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ "Pastor Criticises Abolition of Marital Power," in *Mmegi Monitor* 5, no. 9 (Monday March 7, 2005).

³⁶⁹ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

³⁷⁰ CBS3MaLoratoFZR60+ 20 August 2011.

I will say they (the men) are giants, and we are ants and grasshoppers just like the Israelites were as compared to the Canaanites in Numbers 13:25.

When I asked what it means to say men are giants and women are ants, one woman within the group said:³⁷¹

it means that men are better than us, we are nothing as compared to the men.

The Numbers 13 text which they are referring to is a text about Caleb and the Israelite spies who were sent by Moses to spy on Canaan. All the men of Israel, except Caleb, reported that the inhabitants of Canaan were giants and they (Israelites) were like grasshoppers. This text does not even refer to the relationships between men and women, but because Pentecostals in general are preoccupied with selecting a few texts to support issues, the women did the same. The choice of animals that they compared themselves with are used to describe and denote inferiority in the Botswana context. But these Pentecostal women actually used biblical texts on power relationships to produce stereotypes about their status and identity so as to enforce their inferiority and to argue that they epitomise weakness; after all the “the Bible says” they are the weaker vessels.³⁷² Their narratives echo the Pentecostal hermeneutic and it echoes the interviews with the male pastors whom I interviewed.

The foregoing sections show that Pentecostal women in Botswana have internalized their own subordination through proof texting. Further, their self-worth is constructed through this hermeneutical exercise as well. Men in “high positions” (the pastors as women referred to them) have taught women to use proof texting to make women accept their secondary status. Patriarchy and other oppressive ideologies succeed by securing the consent of the oppressed. By accepting interpretations of the Bible that endorse women’s subordination and embracing pseudo-scientific justifications of women’s marginalization, Pentecostal women in Botswana demonstrate that proof-texting is at the centre of the marginalization of women.

³⁷¹ CBS3MaItumelengFPR50+ 20 August 2011.

³⁷² CBS, Mogobane 22 August 2011.

5.2.1.2. Proof Texting Determines Practice

To further demonstrate that proof texting is a double-edged hermeneutical strategy, not only are a few texts on female submission used to force women into submission, but they are also used to determine practice: “if it is not written in the Bible, then it should not happen!” Therefore, what the Bible does not say is also taken to determine practice. This came out very clearly during field work when I asked most Pentecostals, both men and women, why women cannot be the heads of the household. They argued that:³⁷³

The Bible gives men the mandate to rule, but where does the Bible give women the mandate to rule? There is nowhere in the Bible where God instructs women to have authority over the man, the Bible does not say that, so it cannot or should not happen.

The Bible is clear and there is no ambiguity with the authority vested upon the man by God himself. This is not child’s play, it’s the established perfect will of God that man must have authority over a woman and nowhere does the Bible instruct women to have authority over men...

When probed as to why women cannot have authority over men, they said the Bible does not say anything of that sort. According to some women and the pastor, there is no (supposed) instance in the Bible where women had authority over men. Therefore (for them), women cannot have authority over men today.

This Pentecostal attraction to proof texting has been commented on and employed by some scholars. Amos Yong points out that when it comes to the submission of women to men, Pentecostals simply justify the authority of males by quoting relevant scriptural texts such as 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-24 among others; they proof-text.³⁷⁴ Joshua Adjabeng, a Pentecostal male writing within an African Ghanaian context, instructs women through the seeming biblical support of Ephesians 5 that “the lordship of your husband in the home is a command by God that cannot be compromised”.³⁷⁵ Adjabeng uses a Bible text which advances male-

³⁷³ INT1LesegoFDU20+ 14 July 2011; INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

³⁷⁴ A. Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global of Theology* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005), 191.

³⁷⁵ J. Adjabeng, *How To Enjoy Your Marriage* (Accra: Olive Publications, 1995), 45.

dominated hierarchy in order to advance the subordination of women to men as well as to claims that gender hierarchies and binaries are God-given. His hermeneutical strategy is such that one text is chosen to justify this.

Going further, Wayne Grudem, a Pentecostal scholar and pastor from the USA, uses 1Peter 3:1 to argue the same. He says that wives should willingly “submit to your husbands’ authority or leadership in marriage”, including submission to “good or harsh husbands”.³⁷⁶ Grudem utilises the same selective hermeneutical strategy that Adjabeng and Ramotshabi used, namely, proof texting. Thus according to these four Pentecostal pastors, one from Ghana, one from North America and two from Botswana, men are seen as being divinely commissioned by God to be leaders and women are also divinely sanctioned to be under the authority of the men because there are texts that seemingly support this. To this end, Powers argues that proof texting has led Pentecostals to claim that the subordination of women towards men is “a creation principle that must be acknowledged by anyone who acknowledges the authority of the Bible”.³⁷⁷ It is clear that this selective hermeneutical approach which characterises the dominant Pentecostal hermeneutic is one of the reasons for the marginalisation of women. Readings of texts such as Genesis 2:23, I Corinthians 11:3 and 1Timothy 2:9 become normative for undermining women and promoting gender inequality through proof texting.

5.3. Patriarchal Trinitarian Theology and the Subordination of Women

The third argument that is used to advance the marginalisation of women in Botswana is a theologically based doctrine of the Trinity. The marginalisation of women is built upon a patriarchal Trinitarian theology. Johns, writing within a North American context, has pointed out that Pentecostals argue that God has established a chain of command—even within the Trinity there is an established chain of subordination, where God the Son is seen to be subordinate to God the Father.³⁷⁸ The results of my fieldwork confirm this. One of the Pentecostals I interviewed had this to say about the hierarchy between men and women:³⁷⁹

There is nothing wrong with hierarchy. Look at the trinity, its God the Father, God the Son and the Spirit. God is the one in authority, at the top

³⁷⁶ Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p.135.

³⁷⁷ Powers, “Pentecostalism 101,” 147.

³⁷⁸ Johns, “Spirited Vestments,” 174.

³⁷⁹ FCKgomotsoFDeSe20+ 18 November and INT16MDR50+ 3 September 2011.

of the hierarchy, followed by both the Son and the Holy Spirit. Someone must be in control, not that the Son or the Spirit is inferior, just that God steers the ship.

Another said:

Men are heads of the households and have authority over women, the same way that God is the head of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Within Pentecostalism there is an understanding that the relationship of God, Son and Holy Spirit are ordered hierarchically and that the relationship between men and women must emulate this. According to these extracts, the Trinitarian God is patriarchal and is the ‘head’ of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The findings from my study confirm that in this divinely sanctioned hierarchy, a husband must be in authority.³⁸⁰

It’s the same even with men and women, men must steer the ship and God has given both men and women different roles, they complement each other, they should never contradict each other.

Christ is head of church, meaning that both men and women must submit to Christ. Further, God is the head of Christ and so Christ must submit to God. So you can see that there is order, even within the heavenly realms. There is need for a Company Executive Officer (CEO) in any organization, otherwise there will be chaos.

5.3.1. Gender Complementarity as Ordained by God

What is clear from the extracts above is that first, the differences between men and women are used to advance their marginalisation, because according to the Pentecostals there are God given roles for both men and women, such that the performance of gender roles are meant to really demonstrate that some roles are assigned to men and some to women and they must complement each other as God intended. These roles start from the conviction that men have the prerogative to rule, they command as “CEO’s” and women must obey as per the

³⁸⁰ CBS1Pontsho FDeU40+ 6 September 2011 and INT16MDR50+ 3 September 2011.

extract above.³⁸¹ McClintock Fulkerson has observed that while Pentecostals will not prohibit women from speaking through the Holy Spirit, “submission is couched in the language of gender complementarity”.³⁸² Unmasking this so-called gender complementarity reveals gender binaries that are too strict and are not invertible where “men have been given the ruling role and women the subordination role in the home and the church”.³⁸³ John sees beyond this gender complementarity and argues that the appeal to the doctrine of the Trinity to support is an effort “to keep viable a patriarchal worldview”.³⁸⁴ I concur with John that the so-called Trinitarian hierarchy is meant to keep women subordinate more than keep the Son and Holy Spirit subordinate. During one of the church services I attended, one of the same pastors who in the interview declared hierarchy in the Trinity, had something different to say in the sermon:³⁸⁵

God the father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are one. God does not do anything without knowledge of the Son or of the Spirit. Understand this relationship like you would understand what the sun does. The same sun gives light, heat and energy; it is one object which does three things. God is one, no one in the Trinity is greater than the other.

Then during the interviews the same pastor argued that:³⁸⁶

God has set an example of how we should relate, you see Jesus is equal but subordinate to God as the word of God says in Philippians 2:4-11. Since the son is subordinate to God, women should be subordinate to men, full stop!

When I reminded him of his preaching on 2 March, he said that it is true that there is equality within the Trinity; however, God has the overall authority still. As such, the appeal to the Trinitarian theology that is advanced by Pentecostals both abroad and in Botswana is meant to keep male hegemony afloat as well as to validate the marginalisation of women.

³⁸¹ See also, Johns, “Spirit Vestments,” 176.

³⁸² McClintock Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject*, 255.

³⁸³ K. Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God and The Contemporary Gender Debate* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002), 185, cited by Johns, “Spirit Vestments,” 175.

³⁸⁴ Johns, “Spirited Vestments,” 174-175.

³⁸⁵ PO, 2 March 2011.

³⁸⁶ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

5.3.2. Trinity as a Model of Interdependence

That being said, feminist scholars like Denise Ackermann, Mercy Oduyoye and Elizabeth Johnson understand the Trinity in a way that acknowledges feminist values of mutuality, interdependence, equality and community in diversity.³⁸⁷ Johnson, for example, argues that “the persons of the Trinity are constituted by their relationships to each other; each is unintelligible except as connected with the other”.³⁸⁸ She further argues that “the very essence of God is in relation to and thus relatedness rather than the solitary ego is the heart of all reality”. She contends that elevating God above the other two persons of the Trinity is tantamount to justifying “social structures of dominance/subordination and an androcentric worldview inimical to the genuine and equal dignity of women”.³⁸⁹ Johnson is arguing that there is no hierarchical ordering in the Trinity, there is a relationship of coexistence. One of the oldest women from all my respondents had this to say about the Trinity:³⁹⁰

The Trinity shows the different manifestation of God and it shows that God has a very equal relationship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. I understand that this is a relationship of equals; there is no one who is higher than the other. So that men and women can learn from this relationship to live as equals.

Thus she was confirming what feminist scholars have asserted about Trinitarian theology; it can be used as a charter for equality between men and women.

5.4. Christology and the Marginalization of Pentecostal Women

Alongside appealing to the Trinitarian theology, the fourth argument that is used to advance the marginalization of women and still linked to Pentecostal hermeneutics is Christological. Christ becomes a model to be emulated, not just by the women themselves but by the Pentecostal community as a whole. The findings of my study reveal that this argument was taken further to encourage women, especially married women, to emulate Christ’s suffering and second, his ability to forgive.

³⁸⁷ Ackerman, “Being Woman, Being Human,” 97; M. Oduyoye, “Trinity and Community,” in *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996); E. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroads, 1993), 191-223.

³⁸⁸ Johnson, *She Who Is*, 216.

³⁸⁹ Johnson, *She Who Is*, 40.

³⁹⁰ INT10MaONEFZR60+ 22August 2011.

5.4.1. Emulating Christ's Suffering

On emulating Christ's suffering, one of the Pentecostal women argued that³⁹¹

Jesus also suffered but look at his prize; he was glorified after he endured it all. He was the son of God but he did not defy the people who were in authority at the time.

This statement was uttered by an older woman who was appealing to younger women to be patient when their husbands do not treat them well; they should keep in mind that Christ also suffered under harsh leaders, but he still submitted himself to their authority. The women are encouraged to “endure” suffering and that suffering is made normative because Christ suffered to a point of being killed. Still on the same theme, the Pentecostals believe that sufferings are essential, for:

*Through suffering they are strengthened just like sufferings made Jesus stronger.*³⁹²

The uncritical acceptance of Jesus' suffering leads to the conclusions that he was passive and this gives a religious warrant for Pentecostal women to be passive as well. A critical study of Christology by scholars such as Johnson reveals that he was highly radical, subversive, against injustice and was on the side of the oppressed. Several scholars argued that he was killed because he destabilized the religious and the political systems of his time.³⁹³

5.4.2. Emulating Christ's Forgiveness

Second, on emulating Christ forgiveness, my respondents had this to say:³⁹⁴

As for Christian women, they should learn to forgive their husbands and they should not just leave. We have lots of divorces because Christian women, especially the younger women, do not forgive their husbands for indiscretions. But Christ commanded in Matthew 18:22 that we should

³⁹¹ CBS4OsiamFSU40+ 14 April 2011.

³⁹² CBS2NeoFDU40+ 3 September 2011.

³⁹³ Johnson, *She Who Is*, 159.

³⁹⁴ CBS6PunaFZSe50+ 13 November 2011 and CBS4SoneFSU40+ 14 April 2011.

forgive 70 times 7 and secondly that Christ forgave the people who crucified him. On the way to the cross he said “father forgive them, for they know not what they do”; this is after they had tormented him.

Jesus forgave the people who killed him when it was really tough, as human beings we learn forgiveness from Jesus and when its tough women should know that through suffering they are strengthened just like sufferings made Jesus stronger.

What comes out of these narratives is that Christ is an embodiment of forgiveness because he forgave his tormentors and the people who crucified him, and he taught that people should forgive seventy times seven. So not only did he demonstrate forgiveness, according to the extracts above he instructed that people forgive limitlessly. In both extracts above, there is a clear appeal for women to stay in life denying situations, to forgive *their husbands for indiscretions* as Christ forgave the people who crucified him. The argument makes it normative for women to stay in abusive relationships both at home and the church. This appeal to emulate Christ as an epitome of forgiveness is problematic because it is made without comprehensively looking at how the themes of forgiveness, repentance and justice are related in the Bible as a whole. This is one of the ways that demonstrates that Pentecostals read the Bible in uncritical ways as scholars of Pentecostalism like Fee argue (Chapter 4).

5.5. Summary

In this chapter, I have demonstrated the shortcomings and limitations of Pentecostal hermeneutics in regards to the marginalization of women. My research findings relate to the extant literature on Pentecostalism and gender, especially in Africa. On the basis of these results and in dialogue with scholarly sources, the chapter demonstrated the link between Pentecostal hermeneutics and the marginalization of women. The chapter confirms that the marginalization of women exists in Pentecostal churches. In this regard, it is consistent with the views of scholars such as Alexander, Masenya, Mate, McClintock-Fulkerson and Nadar who contend that Pentecostalism does not promote the full dignity and rights of women in any radical way. Second, the data in this chapter serves to critique the views of scholars who celebrate Pentecostalism as empowering towards women to recognize that while the Pentecostal movement is potentially a liberating space, ambivalent attitudes towards women still exist. The chapter demonstrated how women remain marginalized within Pentecostalism

and this marginalization is largely a result of the literal readings, proof texting and the doctrines of the Trinity and Christology.

The next chapter discusses Lukan scholars' views about Luke and his presentation of women. At the end of this chapter I will establish whether there are grounds for using Luke-Acts to advance the equality of men and women within Pentecostal churches today.

CHAPTER 6

LUKE-ACTS AND THE PRESENTATION OF WOMEN

6.0. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the relationship between Pentecostal hermeneutics and the marginalisation of women. I demonstrated that the marginalisation of women in Pentecostal churches, especially in Botswana, is advanced through a literalist reading of the Bible and proof texting as well as through the theologies of Christology and the Trinity. This chapter is a review of scholars of Luke-Acts' understandings of the role of women in the narrative in order to answer the research question, "Can the text of Luke-Acts provide a basis for developing principles to construct a Pentecostal hermeneutic that is liberating for women?"

Some Lukan scholars argue that Luke was "pro women". Some maintain that Luke was ambivalent towards women, while others argue that Luke was prejudiced towards women. I will present these views and suggest that Luke-Acts may be "negative" towards women, but he offers opportunities in which Luke can be "read against Luke"³⁹⁵ in order to deconstruct his patriarchal intentions.

The chapter is organised as follows: the first section gives a brief overview of the political and hierarchical world in which Luke-Acts was conceived and produced, then the status of women in Roman and Jewish societies. Then I will focus on Lukan scholars' views about Luke-Acts and women. The section begins with showing the centrality of gender in Luke-Acts.

6.1. The Greco-Roman World of the Mediterranean Region during the First Century

It is important to briefly discuss the world of Luke-Acts so that we will understand the context and cultures that influenced Luke's ideology, especially when it comes to his presentation of women.

6.1.1. The Political Situation of the Mediterranean Region during the First Century

The New Testament is firmly anchored in the political environment of the first century CE during the time when the Roman Empire was in control of the Mediterranean world and

³⁹⁵ I borrow this phrase from Barbara Reid whom I will discuss below.

beyond.³⁹⁶ It is clear from the beginning of the gospel of Luke that the Roman Empire is highly significant. Luke-Acts locates the narratives within the Roman imperial governance, for example, Luke 3:1-2 ‘In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea....’³⁹⁷ Further, the story about Paul, Peter and Barnabas and the spread of Christianity is tied to the Roman emperors (Acts 13; Acts 18:12-17; Acts 24:25-26 among others). According to Court and Court, Luke seems to make Rome the centre of Christianity because Paul preaches in Rome and that “is the triumphant conclusion of Luke’s view of Christianity in the Roman world”.³⁹⁸ Since the spread of Christianity in Acts happens within the margins and political context of the Roman Empire, the Roman Empire and emperors are central to our understanding and interpretation of the New Testament and in particular Luke-Acts. Some scholars argue that Luke-Acts seem to have been written as a political apology, so as to present Christianity not as a threat to the Roman Empire and order.³⁹⁹ This information is important for this thesis because some of the scholars such as Mary D’Angelo and Jane Schaberg among others whom I will engage with below, argue that Luke-Acts’ presentation of women is also an apology to the Roman Empire.

6.1.2. Hierarchy and the Roman Empire

The ancient Mediterranean world was complex, deeply patriarchal and gendered. Studies on social relationships reveal stratified and hierarchical relationships; the relationships between men and women, slaves and masters were characterized by hierarchy and inequalities. Elite males occupied positions of power and influence and they had power, status and privilege over women and other men.⁴⁰⁰ The hierarchy of the Roman Empire was such that the emperor was at the peak of the political pyramid, followed by Senate, Equestrians and the top hundred officials in the administration, who were required to be male. The Greco-Roman world was

³⁹⁶ A. Bell, *Exploring the New Testament World: An Illustrated Guide to the World of the First Christians* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), 57.

³⁹⁷ See also Luke 2:1, 2:2 and 3:1; Acts 12:1-3.

³⁹⁸ Court and Court, *The New Testament World*, 3.

³⁹⁹ Luke as a political apology was popularized by E. Haechen, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971). See also F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 22; Court and Court, *The New Testament World*, 3; C.J. Martin, “The Acts of the Apostles,” in *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Commentary* ed. E. Schüssler Fiorenza (New York: Crossroads, 1994), 767; Conzelmann and Lindemann, *Interpreting The New Testament*, 235; I.H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1988), 81. This view is challenged by some like Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, 94-95 and J. Gonzalez, *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2001), 7. They hold that Luke does not always yield a romantic view of the Roman Empire. For example, Sergius Paulus is characterized as a ‘shadowy figure.’ Felix is described as corrupt (Acts 24:26). These scholars maintain that Luke-Acts represents a political critique of the Roman Empire.

⁴⁰⁰ W. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 55.

characterized by “constructions of gender difference and hierarchy”; the societies were governed by men, and women were generally kept at the margins, subordinate and out of action.⁴⁰¹ George Shillington observes that the New Testament writers were part of the “social matrix of the imperialist system that privileged men over women”.⁴⁰² Similarly, E. Dowling has submitted that the “gospel of Luke was written within the context of the Greco Roman imperialist patriarchal society”.⁴⁰³ But do the narratives of Luke-Acts reflect either or both the patriarchal and the imperial contexts? Does Luke want the women in his narratives to be like the women in the Greco Roman world? Some Lukan scholars that I will discuss in the next sections seem to think so. Before answering these questions, I will describe, albeit briefly, the status of women in the Roman society and in the Jewish cultures before moving to the presentation of women in Luke-Acts.

6.3. The Status of Roman Women

Within the established hierarchy, women occupied lower places, often sharing these places with slaves and children.⁴⁰⁴ Hallet points out that politically, Roman women could not “vote, hold public office or serve in the military”.⁴⁰⁵ Similarly, Tal Ilan attests that in the Roman Empire “no woman ever held office”.⁴⁰⁶ Amy Wordelman gives the reason why women did not hold office: they were supposedly “mentally and physically inferior beings, irrational and superstitious”.⁴⁰⁷

Within the Roman households, relations followed a patriarchal order in which fathers, *patres familiae* or family heads had control over women, children, slaves and property. Under this established patriarchal order, women had roles assigned to them.⁴⁰⁸ Male relatives had enormous power over women. They played key roles in controlling the lives of elite females,

⁴⁰¹ J. Hallet, “Women’s Lives in the Ancient Mediterranean,” in *Women and Christian Origins*, eds. R.S. Kraemer and M.R. D’Angelo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 44.

⁴⁰² G. Shillington, *An Introduction to the Study of Luke-Acts* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 105.

⁴⁰³ E.V. Dowling, *Taking Away the Pound: Women, Theology and the Parable of the Pounds in the Gospel of Luke* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 4.

⁴⁰⁴ J.E. Stambaugh and D.L. Balch, *The New Testament in its Social Environment* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 110.

⁴⁰⁵ Hallet, “Women’s Lives,” 18.

⁴⁰⁶ Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 174.

⁴⁰⁷ A.L. Wordelman, “Everyday Life: Women in the Period of the New Testament,” in *The Women’s Bible Commentary*, eds. C.A. Newsom and S.H. Ringe (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 391. She notes though that on the ‘periphery of the empire’ there were some women who held political power.

⁴⁰⁸ A.J. Levine, “Women in the Q Communit(ies) and Traditions,” in *Women and Christian Origins*, eds. R.S. Kraemer and M.R. D’Angelo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 165.

from father, to uncle and brothers.⁴⁰⁹ Wordelman holds that it was socially unacceptable for Roman elite, upper class women to be seen in public without a male guardian to guard her honor and that of her family.⁴¹⁰ Elite Roman women depended on male guardians to undertake transactions on their behalf as well as accompany them to undertake those business transactions when it was necessary to go in person. While the Roman woman could own and inherit property from her father, “she still needed to be represented by a male legal guardian when dealing with and disposing of her material possessions”.⁴¹¹ Therefore, while the Roman matron had some autonomy, property rights and social conventions still favored males and curtailed women’s personal autonomy.

Further, Roman women were not to engage in public speaking freely with men because public speaking was the domain of the socially privileged male. They had to be modest and unobtrusive.⁴¹² While these women could go out in the public arena, their conduct was regulated and “there were narrow boundaries for what was seemly”.⁴¹³ However, some Roman elite women could sometimes socialize and dine with men in their families and since some were educated, they were able to share in the conversations of men.⁴¹⁴ Furthermore, some “shared qualities and traits with men, a notion which in turn facilitated and justified elite women’s participation in what were ordinarily deemed to be masculine pursuits”.⁴¹⁵ However, Hallet cautions us that even though elite women shared some attributes with their male relatives, this “should not be confused with notions of gender equality. Rather, such a conceptualization served as a convenient means of distinguishing elite women from those of lowly backgrounds and, indeed utilized the category of gender to elevate one particular social class.”⁴¹⁶ Even though elite Roman women seemed to enjoy the same privileges as men, some scholars argue that their place was still inside the home where they were expected to practice domestic crafts such as spinning and weaving.⁴¹⁷ Roman upper class women “were “emancipated” only in a very restricted, vicarious sense. They were without real decision

⁴⁰⁹ Hallet, “Women’s Lives,” 31.

⁴¹⁰ Wordelman, “Everyday Life,” 392, argues that a woman risked severe punishment if she consorted with any man other than her husband, whereas the man could, as long as it was not with the wife of a Roman citizen.

⁴¹¹ Hallet, “Women’s Lives,” 18.

⁴¹² M. Gleason, “Elite Male Identity in the Roman Empire,” in *Life, Death and Entertainment in the Roman Empire*, eds. D.S. Potter and D.J. Mattingly (Ann Arbor MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 37, 67-84.

⁴¹³ Seim, *Double Message*, 120. See also Wordelman, “Everyday Life,” 392.

⁴¹⁴ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 151.

⁴¹⁵ Hallet, “Women’s Lives,” 20-21.

⁴¹⁶ Hallet, “Women’s Lives,” 33.

⁴¹⁷ Bell, *Exploring the New Testament*, 228. See also Wordelman, “Everyday Lives,” 392.

making authority and leadership.⁴¹⁸ The Roman society was still highly hierarchical and operated within a patriarchal framework and order, and the women were expected to occupy subordinate positions.⁴¹⁹ Further demonstrating that, they had what Bell calls the legal status of children.⁴²⁰ Balsdon notes that “complete equality of the sexes was never achieved in ancient Rome because of the survival long after it was out of date of a deep rooted tradition that the exclusive sphere of a woman’s activity was inside the home...”⁴²¹ One can conclude that even though the Roman matrons enjoyed a certain amount of freedom and liberation, they were always regarded as second class persons who needed to be tolerated and always defined in relation to the men in their life: husband or father.⁴²²

6.4. The Status of Jewish Women

The status and position of women within Judaism is important as well because the movement that Luke wrote about started from within the Jewish cultures.

6.4.1 Women’s Roles and Inheritance

The Jewish culture was patriarchal and like other patriarchal societies, the roles and duties assigned to women and men in the Jewish society differed considerably as they were separated by the social and religious spaces.⁴²³ Men occupied the public space, they could be rabbis, emperors and judges, and while some women could be, as the literature will show, they mostly occupied the private domain. According to Tal Ilan, a Jewish feminist scholar, women’s duties were mostly confined to the household and included tasks such as grinding corn, cooking, washing her husband’s face, hands, and feet as well as taking care of the children. Among the Jews, women were subordinate to their fathers and their husbands.⁴²⁴ An unmarried woman was first under the care of her father and upon marriage; power was transferred to her husband. Sons were preferred over daughters and double standards were applied for sons and daughters in regards to inheritance, owning property, and betrothal. Although some scholars such as Ilan argue that women had the limited right to owning property and inheritance from their fathers, male heirs, however, had precedence over female

⁴¹⁸ J. Schaberg, “Luke,” in *The Women’s Bible Commentary*, eds. C. Newson and Sharon Hinge (Kentucky: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1992), 279.

⁴¹⁹ Stambauch and Balch, *The New Testament*, 115.

⁴²⁰ Bell, *Exploring the New Testament*, 196.

⁴²¹ J.P. Balsdon, *Roman Women: Their History and Habits* (London: Bodley Head, 1962), 45, cited in Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 16.

⁴²² Bell, *Exploring the New Testament*, 196.

⁴²³ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 150.

⁴²⁴ Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 122; Seim, *Double Message*, 121.

heirs.⁴²⁵ The laws of inheritance, and betrothal were heavily biased toward the male side and women could not easily inherit their fathers' property.

6.4.2. Women's Testimony

Some Jewish sources point out that women were not considered credible witnesses. Josephus, in *Antiquities of the Jews* and *Jewish Wars* writes: "Put not trust in a single witness, but let there be three or at least two whose evidence shall be accredited by their past lives. From women let no evidence be accepted, because of the levity and temerity of their sex." Judith Wegner, on the one hand, uses the Mishnah to report instances where women were regarded as credible witnesses.⁴²⁶ Tal Ilan also states that woman could testify in some instances. However, there were instances where their testimony was not credible, for example, a woman could not testify to "the observation of the new moon and intercalation of the year and judgments involving money and capital cases".⁴²⁷ Ilan and Wegner show that women's testimonies were not treated in the same way as men's testimonies. While men could testify on all matters, be they personal or public, women's testimony was limited and not always admissible.

6.4.3. Women and Education

In regards to educating women, Ilan argues that Jewish law explicitly excluded women from studying the Torah, because it was not their traditional obligation. The knowledge about the Torah that they were given was so that they would be able to keep a *kosher* Jewish household.⁴²⁸ Similarly, Seim holds that the study of law was restricted to elite men and women had neither right nor obligation to study the Torah.⁴²⁹ Although that was the case, Seim points out that there were cases of learned Jewish women who had knowledge of the law but these were exceptions to the rule. She explains this exception by pointing out that women needed certain knowledge of the law in order to be able to adhere to the rules concerning their prohibitions and how to run a household and to offer support on the domestic side so that the husband could have time to study the law.⁴³⁰ Barbara Reid disagrees with the arguments held by Ilan and Seim. She maintains that there were no legal injunctions

⁴²⁵ Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 50.

⁴²⁶ According to J. Wegner, *Chattel or Person: The Status of Women in the Mishnah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 120.

⁴²⁷ Tal Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 164.

⁴²⁸ Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 191, see especially 204.

⁴²⁹ Seim, *Double Message*, 102.

⁴³⁰ This position finds support in the works of also L. Swindler, *Biblical Affirmations of Women* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979).

against women studying the law in Judaism and gives examples from Judaism where women studied the Torah. Further she states that epigraphical evidence proves that there were some Jewish women who were educated and were leaders of the synagogues, which means they must have been educated in the Torah.⁴³¹ Of course, there are some scholars who believe that women were kept on the periphery and the margins, in the temple and synagogue.⁴³² This is confirmed by some scholars who argue that Jewish women were not allowed to serve as priests, nor could they participate in leadership of the temple or synagogue. In fact, in the temple they were confined to what was called ‘the court of the women’ - well beyond the sphere of action.

6.5. Patriarchal Jewish and Roman Contexts

While it appears that some scholars maintain that Jewish women were not constrained, I submit that the Jewish culture was patriarchal. Reid maintains that women studied the law. The question that arises is to what extent did the education of Jewish women empower them as much as it empowered men? Was it meant to equip them to teach in the synagogues just like men?

Although this is a brief synopsis of the status of women in Roman and Jewish societies, it is important to note that there is not enough evidence about the status of women from women themselves. Second, Judith Hallet reminds us that literary representations of women at this time were documented by elite Roman *and Jewish* male authors whose motive was to reinforce and create assumptions about how women must behave. These writers also present women as homogeneous, yet different women belonged to different classes and did not occupy the same economic and social status. This will always remain a challenge that scholars have to grapple with.

From the above information, it is clear that the writer of Luke-Acts was writing within a deeply patriarchal and imperial world. The Roman world operated within a patriarchal framework, characterized by inequalities between men and women. Women’s movement, abilities and what they could or could not do was limited; elite men could be economic, political or religious leaders without many constraints. That being the case, I also believe that there were a few instances where the gender line was crossed; instances where women for

⁴³¹ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 153.

⁴³² Freed, *The New Testament*, 29. See also Kraemer, “Women’s Judaism(s),” 72.

example, were well educated as some literature indicates. But those cases were rare and wide apart. There is no doubt that the gendered inequalities of the Roman world and the Jewish cultures can be glimpsed in Luke-Acts. Some scholars of Luke-Acts argue that Luke's portrayal of women reflects and conforms to the ideals of the Greco-Roman world. They argue that Luke-Acts' presentation of women conforms to the way women were portrayed within the Roman Empire and Luke tried hard to prove to the Roman authorities that the women in the Jesus movement and early church were as modest as was expected of women in the empire. Luke-Acts should be read against this patriarchal imperial background.

6.6. Centrality of Gender to Luke-Acts

6.6.1. Luke Has More Stories about Women

Lukan scholars have pointed out that gender is a central category in Luke-Acts.⁴³³ This is demonstrated in two ways. The first is that Luke-Acts has a lot of stories about women, some of which are unique to Luke. Luke-Acts contains more stories about women than anywhere in the New Testament. One might think that the multiplication of stories about women means that Luke-Acts is liberatory towards women, but not so, according to D'Angelo. She maintains that "the multiplication of representations of women is accompanied by a corresponding limitation of their roles".⁴³⁴ A further point from my perspective which makes gender central to Luke is that the birth of the central character, Jesus, is told from the point of view of the women, Mary and Elizabeth (Luke 1 and 2). This is unlike in the gospel of Matthew where the story is told from Joseph's point of view and where his genealogy is also traced through Joseph.

6.6.2. Male-Female Parallelism

The second way is that Luke-Acts has a tendency to put in pairs stories about women and men: this is called gender pairing or male-female parallelism.⁴³⁵ Esther De Boer applauds the Lukan writer for doing this and maintains that "Luke seems to be consciously aiming at an

⁴³³ M. D'Angelo, "(Re)Presentations of Women in the Gospel of Matthew and Luke-Acts," in *Women and Christian Origins*, eds. R. Kraemer and M.R. D'Angelo (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 181.

⁴³⁴ D'Angelo, "(Re)Presentations of Women," 187.

⁴³⁵ See the list of male-female pairs in D'Angelo, "(Re)Presentations of Women," 182-183. But she notes that men still outnumber women and that not every story about a man is coupled with a story about women. See also Seim, *Double Message*, 15; Scott Spencer, *The Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 43-44; Seim and D'Angelo do not agree on this list. While D'Angelo, for example, considers the story of the possessed man in Lk 4:31-39 and the story of Peter's mother-in-law as a pair, Seim does not because the two stories do not satisfy "formal criteria for similarity" and therefore she argues that more rigorous examination of what really constitutes gender parallelism is needed, (16).

audience of both men and women”.⁴³⁶ Similarly, Tannehill states that the gender pairing “suggests an inclusive application” and “that women share in what Jesus brings”.⁴³⁷ Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza disagrees with De Boer and Tannehill and argues that in spite of Luke’s gender pairing:

...the Lucan text represses the knowledge that women and men have shaped the missionary movement, insofar as the gospel does not parallel a single story about a leading male disciple, such as Peter, with that of a leading female disciple, such as Martha. By paralleling stories about male and female characters who are the objects of healing and instruction, the Lukan work genderizes membership in Jesus’ community of disciples while simultaneously subordinating the women disciples to the male leaders.⁴³⁸

6.7. Scholarship on Luke and Women

The above arguments give us a glimpse on how Lukan scholarship is divided about Luke’s agenda about women. The question is, “was Luke intentional about the inclusion of women for empowerment or was he deliberately reinforcing gender stereotypes about women and men in the Greco Roman world?” This section seeks to examine literature on the role and status of women in Luke-Acts and assess if the writer of Luke-Acts was conforming to the Roman ideals of gender. In each camp, I will discuss up to three scholars only so as to give a glimpse of this debate which is beyond the scope of this thesis.

6.8. Luke-Acts is Positive towards Women

6.8.1. Ben Witherington III

Ben Witherington III celebrates Luke-Acts for elevating the status of women. Witherington holds that Luke-Acts is liberatory towards women; women are given new freedom and they are hailed as true disciples. Further, “men and women stand together side by side before

⁴³⁶ E. De Boer, “The Lukan Mary Magdalene and the Other Women following Jesus,” in *A Feminist Companion to Luke*, eds. Amy Jill Levine and Marianne Blickenstaff (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 150.

⁴³⁷ R. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation, Volume 1: The Gospel According to Luke* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 135-136.

⁴³⁸ Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said*, 65. See also M.R. D’Angelo, “The ANHP Question in Luke-Acts: Imperial Masculinity and the Deployment of Women in the Early Second Century,” in *A Feminist Companion to Luke*, eds. Amy Jill Levine and Marianne Blickenstaff (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 45.

God”.⁴³⁹ Women are presented as credible witnesses and they receive the more complete revelation than men; for example, while the women remembered what Jesus told them about his death and resurrection in Luke 24:24, the men like Peter could not. Therefore women are given much more prominence than men.⁴⁴⁰ He further holds that the story of the resurrection is told from the point of view of women, thus making them credible witnesses, something that was contrary to Jewish tradition.⁴⁴¹ Luke-Acts portrays “women as true disciples in their own right...”⁴⁴² This portrayal of women is “unreservedly positive” and it “emphasizes the equality of women and their worth”.⁴⁴³

From the beginning of the gospel, Luke involves women in God’s plan of salvation and he portrays women as capable of performing various tasks in both the ministry of Jesus and the community. Since the birth narratives are told from a point of view of women, they present women as active participants in God’s salvation. Mary is presented as a disciple, in that she sacrifices everything - her engagement and reputation - for the purposes of God.⁴⁴⁴ Acts 18 presents Priscilla who, together with her husband, was a teacher. However, “Luke intends his audience to think of Priscilla as of higher social rank...than her husband”.⁴⁴⁵ Therefore Luke stresses the viability of women performing various tasks of ministry for the community and that men and women are equal.

6.8.2. Reflections on Witherington’s Position

While it is true that women are prominent in Luke-Acts, I find it problematic that Witherington celebrates Luke’s liberatory stance uncritically. For example, he points out that “Luke’s mention of Phillip’s prophesying daughters is tantalizingly brief, but it is sufficient to indicate that Luke affirmed women...”⁴⁴⁶ While it is true that the mention of Phillip’s daughters is important, it remains problematic that their story is brief, they are not named and readers are not told about the content of their prophecy. Certainly the mention of the prophesying daughters gives us a glimpse into the active roles women played in the early Christian movement, but the text must be read critically. Witherington seems unaware of the problem of gendered roles; indeed he celebrates the way in which women are performing

⁴³⁹ Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 129.

⁴⁴⁰ Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 133.

⁴⁴¹ Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 132.

⁴⁴² Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 131.

⁴⁴³ Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 156.

⁴⁴⁴ Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 137, 138.

⁴⁴⁵ Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 153.

⁴⁴⁶ Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 155.

their traditional roles with “new meaning”. Commenting on the women in Luke 8:1-3 for example, he states that:

...being Jesus’ disciples did not lead these women to abandon their traditional roles in regard to preparing food, serving and so on. Rather, it gave these roles new significance and importance, for now they could be used to serve the master and the family.⁴⁴⁷

Overall Witherington praises Luke-Acts’ portrayal of women positively without engaging with the problem of gendered roles as a given. Second, his comments on Jewish culture are blatantly anti-Semitic because he vilifies Jewish treatment of women in order to show that Jesus treated women better by overturning the gender stereotypes within Judaism. He argues that this is why women were attracted to the Jesus movement.

6.9. Luke-Acts Silences and Subordinates Women

6.9.1. Jane Schaberg

Jane Schaberg points out the apologetic nature of Luke-Acts and argues that Luke was under severe pressure to conform to the status quo. Luke restricts women to roles that were acceptable within the imperial world so that Christianity will not be seen as engaging in “un-Roman” activities and thus contradicting imperial standards. She maintains that the writer of Luke-Acts was “motivated by the desire that Christian leaders and witnesses be acceptable in the public forum of the empire, the world of men and therefore, Luke blurs traditional and historical traces of women’s leadership and exaggerates the leadership by men.”⁴⁴⁸ According to Schaberg, Luke-Acts is androcentric and dangerous. She writes:

The gospel of Luke is an extremely dangerous text, perhaps the most dangerous in the Bible. Because it contains a great deal of material about women that is found nowhere else in the Gospels, many readers insist that the author is enhancing or promoting the status of women....⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁷ B. Witherington, “On the Road with Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and Other Disciples-Luke 8:1-3,” in *A Feminist Companion to Luke*, eds. Amy Jill Levine and Marianne Blickenstaff (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 138.

⁴⁴⁸ Schaberg, “Luke,” 279.

⁴⁴⁹ Schaberg, “Luke,” 275.

But read more carefully, she says, women are

Models of subordinate service, excluded from the power centre of the movement and from significant responsibilities.⁴⁵⁰

She demonstrates this by arguing that even though women are part of the Jesus entourage and table community, they are not treated as equals of men because they are never given the commission to be apostles.⁴⁵¹ Even though some women are prophets, as in “they suffer as prophets no one hears” (Luke 1:47-55 and Luke 24:11), no woman challenges Jesus, no woman embarks on a mission to the Gentiles, while men are “empowered to speak and act and bear responsibility within the movement”.⁴⁵² Only two women are spoken to directly in Acts and they are both silenced: Sapphira (Acts 5) is silenced by death and the slave girl (Acts 16) is silenced by exorcism.⁴⁵³ The women in Acts are valued as “mothers” of the emerging church; they are valued because they subsidize the believers with their material wealth. Only Priscilla is recognized as a missionary together with her husband Aquila.⁴⁵⁴ Therefore, the ministry and leadership of men is exaggerated while the ministry of women is downplayed. It is men who are in the forefront of running the church in Acts and deciding how the church is run. Women are “models of ‘listening to the word,’ but their prayer and study, unlike that of Jesus or other male characters, does not lead beyond itself to decisive action or to their being recognized as teachers in their own right.” In the end, female ministry and prophetic ministry is silenced.

Schaberg maintains that the quality and functions of female roles is not good even though Luke has more material about women than Mark, Mathew and John. One of the reasons why Luke does not have quality female roles is because Luke omits stories about women from the other three gospels. For example, Luke omits the story of the “feisty” Syrophoenician woman in Mark 7:24-30, and the story of the Samaritan woman in John 4. This means that Luke has no story of a woman who challenges Jesus like the Syrophoenician woman and there is no woman who engages in a theological debate with Jesus like the Samaritan woman.⁴⁵⁵ Further, Schaberg points out that Martha and Mary have more “significant and powerful roles” in the

⁴⁵⁰ Schaberg, “Luke,” 275.

⁴⁵¹ Schaberg, “Luke,” 280.

⁴⁵² Schaberg, “Luke,” 281.

⁴⁵³ Schaberg, “Luke,” 280.

⁴⁵⁴ Schaberg, “Luke,” 281.

⁴⁵⁵ Schaberg, “Luke,” 279.

gospel of John than they do in the gospel of Luke. She concludes that the gospel of Luke “fosters women’s silence” and women are cast into fearful, silent and disempowering roles as compared to the other gospels.

6.9.2. Mary Rose D’Angelo

Mary Rose D’Angelo also holds that Luke is negative towards women and is intent on presenting the behaviour of Christian women as comparable to that of Roman women. D’Angelo argues that Luke-Acts is interested in presenting Christian women as conforming to the Roman ideal of womanhood. She writes:

The roles in which women appear are more restricted by what is acceptable to the convention of the imperial world than are the roles of women in Mark or John.⁴⁵⁶

She perceives Luke-Acts as a story of salvation history divided into three epochs. The first is the era of the law and prophets through to John the Baptist, the second is the time of Jesus’ ministry and the last is the era of the church which begins with the Pentecost story in Acts.⁴⁵⁷ She further points out that the only women who are given prophetic speeches in Luke-Acts are Mary and Elizabeth, but these women belong to the era of the law and prophets. They do not belong to the era of the church; therefore, that distance of eras separates them from modern readers.⁴⁵⁸

The women’s participation in the ministry of Jesus and the church are “denigrated and restricted”.⁴⁵⁹ Further, D’Angelo argues that the women who belong to the era of the church and who can relate to modern readers of the church were also silenced throughout Luke-Acts, even though the books raise expectations that women, especially in the era of the church, were going to prophesy because the Spirit had been poured on their daughters and maidservants.⁴⁶⁰ The four daughters of Phillip who are said to be prophets “are not permitted to speak”, but a male prophet who is paired with them is allowed to speak. The slave girl who

⁴⁵⁶ M. D’Angelo, “Women in Luke-Acts: A Redactional View,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109, no. 3 (1990), 442. See also D’Angelo, “Reconstructing ‘Real’ Women,” 107.

⁴⁵⁷ D’Angelo, “(Re)presentation of Women,” 180. While this was a perspective that was prevalent, I believe it is now being left behind because of its latent anti-Semitism.

⁴⁵⁸ D’Angelo, “(Re)presentation of Women,” 186.

⁴⁵⁹ D’Angelo, “(Re)presentation of Women,” 181.

⁴⁶⁰ D’Angelo, “(Re)presentation of Women,” 186.

speaks in Acts 16:16-18 is silenced because her words are not from the Holy Spirit but are from the demon from which Paul frees her.⁴⁶¹ Women who could be seen as speaking prophetically are silenced; for example, women in Luke 10:41ff and 11: 27ff who speak are corrected by Jesus. On the other hand, women who do not speak are affirmed, Jesus approves of them and defends them; for example, Mary in Luke 10:38-40 and the woman who repents and anoints Jesus in Luke 7:36-50 are affirmed.⁴⁶² Thus, according to D'Angelo, the writer of Luke is intentional about taming women so that they keep silent. Further, he limits women's prophecy because no woman is engaged in prophetic ministry and given powerful speech in the time of Jesus and the era of the church. Only men speak and in the gender pairs, women are rarely allowed to speak in direct discourse.⁴⁶³

Roles and functions in Luke-Acts are determined by gender: women are given roles that are subordinate and different to men. In Luke 6:12-16 for example, men are specifically called to be disciples, are given the title of apostle, and associated with the ministry of Jesus. Women on the other hand follow Jesus because he healed them and they are showing their gratitude to him; they follow as "benefactors to the preachers and healers".⁴⁶⁴ Thus women do not share in the ministry of preaching and healing like the male disciples, even though they minister to Jesus and the male disciples by subsidising his ministry while the men are the active participants.⁴⁶⁵ Further, D'Angelo points out that in Luke-Acts, women are excluded from holding leadership positions, therefore they are denied an opportunity to engage in public ministry (Acts 1:21).⁴⁶⁶ In the end, D'Angelo asserts that Luke silences women because he is interested in reasserting Roman family and social values, by depicting men and women as displaying appropriately gendered behaviour, acceptable to the Roman imperial context.⁴⁶⁷

6.9.3. Reflections on Schaberg and D'Angelo's Positions

Like Schaberg and D'Angelo, I acknowledge that Luke is informed by the patriarchal ideology of the Roman Empire in his construction of gender roles. It is impossible for an author to escape the limitations of the cultural world view which shapes her or him. All the examples given by both scholars to demonstrate that Luke-Acts silences women make their

⁴⁶¹ D'Angelo, "(Re)presentation of Women," 186.

⁴⁶² D'Angelo, "(Re)presentation of Women," 187.

⁴⁶³ D'Angelo, "(Re)presentation of Women," 187.

⁴⁶⁴ D'Angelo, "(Re)presentation of Women," 185.

⁴⁶⁵ D'Angelo, "(Re)presentation of Women," 185.

⁴⁶⁶ D'Angelo, "(Re)Presentation of Women," 185.

⁴⁶⁷ D'Angelo, "The ANHP Question," 66, and D'Angelo, "Reconstructing 'Real' Women," 107.

argument strong. However, I do not agree that Luke is deliberate about silencing women and diminishing their roles. Despite the fact that his culture constrained him with respect to the Roman ideal of gender, I think he was still able to tell the stories of women such that women are not totally invisible even if they are by and large silenced. Both scholars argue that the world at the time was extremely patriarchal and Luke was also writing under an imperial setting. While that was the case, from my perspective I celebrate his ability to tell stories about women's involvement in the ministry of Jesus and the early church. More important, Luke was able to bring Mary and Elizabeth into the center by telling the story of the birth of Jesus from their point of view. The role Mary plays in reciting the magnificat is a case in point. By narrating stories about women's involvement, no matter how inadequate they may seem to modern feminist readers, Luke was far more progressive than could be expected in terms of the conventional Graeco-Roman world view. He was not only stretching the limits of his context and culture, his presentation of women at critical moments could be perceived as liberating for women.

Both scholars deny that women were prophets, yet Luke 1 and 2 present women who were engaged in prophetic speech. The problem is that Schaberg and D'Angelo remove Mary and Elizabeth from the era of the church. Yet if Luke 1 and 2 are treated as a prelude or introduction to the whole of Luke-Acts then women were prophets in Luke-Acts. I will state here that Luke 1 and 2 are paradigmatic for my reading and understanding of Luke-Acts as a whole; they set a tone for Luke's agenda concerning women. Even though Mary, Elizabeth and Hannah may not belong to the era of the church as the two scholars argue, they still represent Luke's ability to make women visible within the patriarchal and imperial contexts that he inhabited. From my perspective, examples abound that demonstrate that Luke was subverting what was expected of women within the empire by making women visible. For example he gives Dorcus the title of a disciple, and nowhere else in the New Testament is a woman referred to as a disciple. Further, Luke-Acts leaves open the possibility that women can be prophets in Acts. The fact that there are no clear injunctions for women not to be prophets or to be silent means that he is not cloaking women into silence. This is where readers can employ a reader response approach to texts. Therefore, I hold that Luke-Acts is not silencing and subordinating women as the two scholars suggest.

6.10. Luke-Acts is Ambivalent Towards Women

6.10.1. Turid Seim

Turid Seim's opinion is that Luke conveys and transmits a "double message". It is both liberatory and marginalising towards women and it is riddled with tension between the liberation and subordination of women. Seim writes that Luke-Acts

conveys a picture of a world divided by gender, of a culture and a mediation of tradition in which men and women, within the same community, nevertheless keep each to their own sphere of life.⁴⁶⁸

The public domain was exclusively male and the "separation of sexes is ideologically undergirded and maintained".⁴⁶⁹ Women's activities are confined to the house and while women could be seen in public, there were boundaries to be observed as their behaviour was regulated.⁴⁷⁰ Since Luke serves apologetic aims, women in Luke conform to what was expected of women in the Greco Roman world, thus sometimes women's activity is restricted to the private arena.⁴⁷¹ For example, the angel meets Mary in her house (Luke 1:26-28), and Elizabeth and Mary are filled with the Spirit in Elizabeth's house (Luke 1:40-56). The woman who loses a coin in Luke 15:8-10 searches for it inside the house; she finds it and celebrates with her "female friends and neighbours". However, there are instances where women's activities take place outside the house in the public arena. Hannah prophesies inside the temple in Luke 2:36-38, and the woman with haemorrhages declared her healing to the people in the public space in Luke 8:47.⁴⁷² Seim holds that even though the women were in the public, the public sphere still remains the realm of males and of power.⁴⁷³ This is the reason why Acts uses the masculine form of address in discourses because the public domain was for men. Seim holds that "only men are recognised as active participants in public contexts, which officially were all male".⁴⁷⁴ It was a male privilege to appear, speak and act in public, women were "seldom direct participants in a public context" while men were.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁶⁸ Seim, *Double Message*, 24.

⁴⁶⁹ Seim, *Double Message*, 255.

⁴⁷⁰ Seim, "The Gospel of Luke," 752.

⁴⁷¹ Seim, "The Gospel of Luke," 761.

⁴⁷² Seim, "The Gospel of Luke," 754.

⁴⁷³ Seim, *Double Message*, 256.

⁴⁷⁴ Seim, "The Gospel of Luke," 752.

⁴⁷⁵ Seim, *Double Message*, 255.

Notwithstanding the above, Seim rightly observes that while women's activities are mostly confined to the houses, in Acts the writer constructs houses as an empowering space for women. The whole community of believers gather together in the house, creating a house church. The house becomes the centre of activity while the Temple, square and Synagogue seem not to be the main centre of activity anymore. Men and women participate in 'private gatherings', so that when women are inside the houses they are not at the periphery but close to the heart of the life of the community.⁴⁷⁶ She writes that:

Women's identification with the house does not imply a peripheral location, but on the contrary, corresponds to a more and more central place in the life of the community...even in domestic contexts, they are primarily asked to carry out non domestic functions... and there is no demand, nor any narrative adjustments, to indicate that they are to subordinate themselves more generally or more directly to (all) men. The independent integrity of the group of women is respected.⁴⁷⁷

The movement of the community from public to private gatherings means that women acquired some level of authority. Thus according to Seim, house churches were central and subversive and women did not have to subordinate themselves to the established masculine order of leadership in the strict sense.⁴⁷⁸ In this sense Luke presents the tension between the subordinating and affirming nature of house space for women.

Seim holds that sometimes "women are brought to silence, but at the same time they continue to speak through the story".⁴⁷⁹ Elsewhere she captures this ambivalence and tension of Luke-Acts when she writes,

The tension in Luke's narrative has indeed shown itself to be its ambivalent evidence both of strong traditions about women on the one hand and of the social and ideological controls that brought to silence and promoted male dominance in positions of leadership on the other⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁶ Seim, "The Gospel of Luke," 754.

⁴⁷⁷ Seim, *Double Message*, 256.

⁴⁷⁸ Seim, *Double Message*, 256.

⁴⁷⁹ Seim, "The Gospel of Luke," 761.

⁴⁸⁰ Seim, *Double Message*, 68.

The gospel of Luke preserves strong traditions about women. Narratives about women are told in a positive light; they are disciples of Jesus, they are Abraham's children, they are allowed to cross boundaries of social marginalisation and they are active participants in the ministry of Jesus. Unfortunately, the number and roles of women decrease in Acts because Acts is dominated by masculinisation. However, she holds that this masculinisation

does not cover the whole of Luke's story cloaking women in silence and invisibility...They are located in the past and given the character of remembrance...What was, is not to be forgotten...On the contrary, Luke's own employment of the motif of 'memory' shows that it is precisely in the remembrance of this past story that the key to critical insight and to a new evaluation and a new understanding is to be found...The double message nurtures a dangerous remembrance.⁴⁸¹

According to Seim, a liberating praxis is possible in Luke-Acts if the texts are read together and as readers engage Luke's motif of "memory". The gospel of Luke has already given us clues about the active role that women played in Luke-Acts so that even when Acts or some pericopes in Luke seem to be silencing women, readers must negotiate those tensions by holding onto memories about the active role of women provided by the gospel of Luke. What Seim is rightly suggesting is that the liberatory pericopes can function as a critique of oppressive pericopes in Luke-Acts especially when a reader uses the reader response approach which acknowledges that texts do have ambiguities that must be negotiated.

6.10.2. Gail O'Day

Gail O'Day argues that the ministry of women is diminished in Luke-Acts because the writer is concerned with the mission to the Gentiles.⁴⁸² The story of Acts especially is concerned with demonstrating the success and the spread of Christianity and how the church persevered and thrived within the Roman imperial setting. The storyline revolves around Peter and Paul, the two people who "embody for him the movement of the gospel from Jews to Gentiles".⁴⁸³

⁴⁸¹ Seim, *Double Message*, 259-260.

⁴⁸² O'Day, "Acts," 306.

⁴⁸³ O'Day, "Acts," 306. For a similar argument see De Boer, "The Lukan Mary Magdalene," 159. Luke's focus in Acts is on the apostles Paul and Peter not on the emerging church as a whole, that is why the contribution of Galilean women is left out but that does not mean that women were insignificant and did not play any role.

This makes Paul and Peter the center of Acts, and the ministries of most people, both men and women such as Barnabas and Priscilla, are diminished. O'Day points out that women especially do not have a role to play in accomplishing the writer's purposes.

The other reason why the ministry of women is diminished is that the writer of Luke-Acts wanted to present a Christianity that was favorable to the Roman Empire. She argues that "Luke's picture of women in the church thus fits with the conventions of the Greco Roman world". This means that women had to be portrayed in ways that would not be "embarrassing or threatening to men in the Roman Empire". Luke achieves this by refusing to portray women as public leaders, because public leadership was for men not for women.⁴⁸⁴

To further illustrate how the ministry of women is diminished, O'Day points out that the writer of Luke presents the church as the New Jerusalem, and that the twelve apostles represent the twelve sons of Jacob and the twelve tribes of Israel. By portraying the church as Israel, he is forced to portray the twelve apostles in Acts as men; Acts 1:21-36, which tells the story of the replacing of Judas illustrates this point, only a man can be chosen to replace Judas. She holds that women and men do not have equal standing in Acts. The second point that illustrates that men and women do not have equal standing in Acts is the use of the term apostle. O'Day argues that with the exception of Acts 14:14, the term is used by Luke to exclusively refer to the twelve men, not to church leaders in general, and it occurs when it is used in relation to the Jerusalem church only. In instances where the narratives focus on the Gentiles, the word is dropped. O'Day concludes that apostle in Luke-Acts "thus refers to those men who carry the ministry of the historical Jesus into the emerging church. It describes a very limited ministry that excludes all women and most of the men in Acts."⁴⁸⁵

O'Day's argument is that the writer of Luke-Acts is a man who writes and develops his story within a patriarchal and imperial world and his perspective and rhetoric are inevitably influenced, constrained by and reflective of this world view. A point captured by Oeming Manfred's argument is that "it is likely that patriarchal tradition has edited texts with strong feminist impulses and weakened or distorted emancipatory content matter".⁴⁸⁶ Because of his patriarchal world, Luke ended up ignoring the participation of women in leadership roles and

⁴⁸⁴ O'Day, "Acts," 312.

⁴⁸⁵ O'Day, "Acts," 307.

⁴⁸⁶ M. Oeming, *Contemporary Biblical Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (England: Ashgate, 2006), 106.

he succeeded in silencing them.⁴⁸⁷ O'Day further points out that even though Luke succeeded in silencing women, especially those engaged in prophetic ministry, he could not avoid mentioning Phillip's daughters and Priscilla who may have been well known, but he had to tell the story with "as much restraint and decorum as possible". Therefore, Luke's story is only a tip of an iceberg, the stories he tells are only a fraction of women's involvement in the early church. She points out that "the reality of women's prophetic activities in the church may have constrained Luke from suppressing all mention of it, but he did succeed in keeping this ministry at the margins of his story".⁴⁸⁸

O'Day further argues that in spite of Luke's rhetoric of silencing women, "glimpses of women's lives and experiences slip into the story and work against Luke's aims".⁴⁸⁹ For example, in the story of Sapphira and Ananias and of Priscilla we get glimpses of the role that women played in the home as well as in the public sphere. Priscilla, for example, was an equal partner to her husband; she was a teacher and missionary just like her husband, Sapphira made decisions together with her husband. Acts 5:1-11 makes it clear that the decision to deceive the believers was a joint decision of both Sapphira and Ananias. Ananias did not make unilateral decisions for his family, he consulted with his wife.⁴⁹⁰

While Luke tries to silence women, he let it be known that the church in Acts was dependent upon wealthy women to survive, especially at its teething stage. The positive characterization of women in Acts gives us glimpses into the women's roles and functions. Further, the writer of Acts offers these women as "models for his female readers".⁴⁹¹ According to O'Day, offhand descriptive remarks such as Acts 16: 13, "On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place for prayer and we sat down and spoke to the women who were gathered there" also give us clues about women's involvement in the early church. Based on these offhand descriptive remarks, we can read Luke's story and work "against Luke's aims"⁴⁹² of silencing women. Even though O'Day's argument is weighted towards a critique of the texts, she maintains that Luke does allow for a liberatory potential once the oppressive texts are critiqued and neutralized. Therefore Luke-Acts can play a liberatory role towards women.

⁴⁸⁷ O'Day, "Acts," 312.

⁴⁸⁸ O'Day, "Acts," 308.

⁴⁸⁹ O'Day, "Acts," 312.

⁴⁹⁰ O'Day, "Acts," 308-309.

⁴⁹¹ O'Day, "Acts," 312.

⁴⁹² O'Day, "Acts," 312.

6.10.3. Barbara Reid

Barbara Reid highlights the patriarchal tendencies and bias in Luke-Acts and argues that Luke-Acts reinforces gender divisions.⁴⁹³ Women do not participate equally with men and they are given different roles which are subordinate to those of men. Women perform domestic duties such as serving men, for example, Luke 4:38-39.⁴⁹⁴ While it is true that women receive the word, are followers of Jesus and host house churches, Reid asserts that Luke-Acts does not tell stories of women disciples who were specifically commissioned to preach, who endured persecution and ministered under the power of the Spirit. Like D'Angelo, Reid holds that Luke separates the period of Judaism and that of the church. Thus Elizabeth, Mary and Anna belong to the period of Judaism and so belong to the "mold of the prophetic women of Israel".⁴⁹⁵ Luke makes Christian women assume passive and quiet roles rather than have them "emulate Jewish women", for that was what was expected of women in the Greco-Roman world - men belong to the public prophetic ministries not women.⁴⁹⁶ Reid argues that after these powerful stories about Jewish women speaking and prophesying found in Luke 1 and 2, there are no women who speak as prophets. Those who speak are silenced by Jesus and those who speak are corrected (Luke 10:38ff) and disbelieved (Luke 24:11).⁴⁹⁷ The ministry of women is seen as "ancillary service to the mission of Jesus and his twelve chosen male apostles".⁴⁹⁸ The ministry of prominent women like Dorcas, the daughters of Phillip and that of Tabitha, are silenced and thrown 'behind-the-scenes'.⁴⁹⁹

Women are not allowed and afforded opportunities to be leaders. The Galilean women in Luke 8:1-3 possess the same qualities as the male disciples, they listened to Jesus and followed him, but unlike the male disciples they are not afforded public ministry of the word.⁵⁰⁰ Luke edits Mark's version about these women in such a way that their role is diminished. While these women are the sole witnesses to the death and resurrection of Jesus in Mark 14:50 (all the male disciples have fled), in Luke they become part of the crowd

⁴⁹³ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 52.

⁴⁹⁴ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 101.

⁴⁹⁵ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 95. From my perspective, the narratives about Mary and Elizabeth can be perceived as preludes to Luke-Acts. The stories set a tone for what Luke-Acts is about; it is about people on the margins even though he may not have told these stories in a way that is convincing for the readers in the 21st century. Luke 1 and 2 embody all that Luke-Acts stands for; women are filled with the Holy Spirit, Gentiles come into God's Kingdom and women are involved in God's plan of salvation.

⁴⁹⁶ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 206.

⁴⁹⁷ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 94.

⁴⁹⁸ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 52.

⁴⁹⁹ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 53.

⁵⁰⁰ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 132.

(23:49). Unlike Mark, the women in Luke are not named in this part of the passion narrative, they are not commissioned to tell the news of the resurrection to the male disciples and they do not see the risen Christ. Reid concludes that because of Luke's intention to present women as silent and passive, Luke redacts Mark to deliberately silence and diminish the role of the Galilean women at "crucial moments of Jesus crucifixion, burial and resurrection".⁵⁰¹

Notwithstanding Luke's silencing of women, Reid rightly suggests that Luke can be read "against Luke" to affirm women. In her book she reads all the stories about women in Luke-Acts that seem to be disempowering on the surface to unearth their liberatory potential. For example, she demonstrates how Luke can be read against Luke by analysing the story of the widow in Luke 7:11-17. She notes that the widow is not given a name and she is silent. Her son who was "her only means of support and status is dead". Thus the widow is cast in a more "traditional widow's role". Reid argues that while this story may seem to have no liberatory potential, readers may choose to see her "tears and her noiselessness as protest" which has an "effect of moving Jesus to restore life".⁵⁰² While Reid is critical of Luke's portrayal of women as subordinate, 'passive' and 'silent' she is able to read against the grain of Luke's intent. Thus Reid maintains that Luke should be read critically in order to "reinterpret and reconstruct" stories about women, so as to expose and unmask the patriarchal bias embedded in the narratives. She argues that failure to read Luke against Luke will "continue to reinforce patriarchal role divisions".⁵⁰³

6.10.4. Reflections on Seim, O'Day and Reid Positions

All the three writers acknowledge that Luke-Acts was written within a patriarchal setting where women were contained and subjugated. While this patriarchy and empire dictated his presentation of women, he found ways of making women visible. They maintain that in his narrative Luke manages an extraordinary feat of preserving strong traditions about women and attributing a positive function to them, while at the same time harboring an ironic dimension that reveals the reasons for the masculine preferences in Acts' presentation of the organization of the Christian group, of the public missionary activity and legal defence before the authorities.⁵⁰⁴ Luke preserves the stories about women who played a role in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. He preserves memories of women who accompanied Jesus during his

⁵⁰¹ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 201.

⁵⁰² Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 106.

⁵⁰³ Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 205.

⁵⁰⁴ Seim, *Double Message*, 259.

long journeys and those who followed him, yet Luke silences them and prevents them from “public proclamation and teaching activity”.⁵⁰⁵ Because of this, Reid calls us to “read Luke against Luke”; O’Day calls us to read “against Luke’s aims”; and Seim holds that women “continue to speak through the story”, even as they appear to be silenced.

Of the three positions that I have discussed above, I identify with Seim, O’Day and Reid’s positions about Luke’s ambivalence. While Seim, Reid and O’Day hold that Luke-Acts is ambivalent towards women, Reid and O’Day seem to explore the oppressive dynamics of Luke-Acts far more than the liberating dynamics of Luke-Acts.⁵⁰⁶ While arguing that Luke-Acts transmits a double message, Seim, on the other hand, lifts and emphasizes the liberation potential more than the oppressiveness of Luke-Acts. My reading of Luke-Acts is closer to Seim’s feminist and narrative reading of Luke. I am more inclined towards the liberatory orientation of Luke’s framework. Here Sandra Schneider’s work becomes helpful. Her argument is that since texts are open to diverse and multiple interpretations, they are able to explode the very world out of which they came, such that it is possible for the Gospel to “subvert the patriarchal world which produced it and whose bias it expresses.” She further asserts that text attain a

relative semantic autonomy in relation to the author’s intentions... [and therefore] escapes the finite intentional horizon of the author. The text now means what it means and all that it can mean regardless of whether the meaning was intended by the author or understood by the original audience. This autonomy is not absolute, for the text means only what it can mean, not anything anyone might want it to mean, and what it can mean is determined by linguistic content, structure, and dynamics.⁵⁰⁷

The implication for my work is that in contrast to Seim, Reid and O’Day who argue that the writer of Luke-Acts intended to silence women, I hold that the texts of Luke-Acts is no longer his to control, but rather what the text means can evolve as new meanings are accumulated in the “surplus of meaning” as Schneiders argues. So that there is enough material in Luke-Acts to explode his so called intentions of silencing women because *the text now mean what it means*. Further Schneiders argues that because texts “can mean what they

⁵⁰⁵ Seim, “The Gospel of Luke,” 752.

⁵⁰⁶ O’Day, “Acts,” 291.

⁵⁰⁷ Schneiders, S. Feminist Ideology Criticism and Biblical Hermeneutics *Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 1989, Vol 19:3 p.7.

can mean”, they are able to transcend their own psycho-sociological conditions of production and can therefore be

.... decontextualized and recontextualized by successive readings... And these recontextualizations will explore and exploit the surplus of meaning which the new autonomous text enjoys in virtue of its emancipation from authorial intention and particularities of the context of production.⁵⁰⁸

Therefore, while the author of the text of Luke-Acts might have intended to suppress women voices, we the resisting readers are called to acknowledge the patriarchal context of the text as well as the horizon of the author, as we have to move in the direction of the “horizon of the text” (to realise its full hermeneutical potential) by decontextualizing and recontextualizing the text. The text itself is thus set free from authorial intentions by “the death of the author” and opens itself to diverse meanings. I live with the contradiction in that, as a Pentecostal, my approach to the Bible is characterized by a hermeneutics of trust but by insisting on a reading “in front of the text” I am able to hold this in tension with a hermeneutics of suspicion which characterizes a critical reading. I acknowledge the ambiguity of Luke’s work. However, at the heart of his message is a liberatory and empowering vision for women. An “in front of the text reading” of Luke-Acts embodies a wholesome, positive and life giving message which is mediated by the Holy Spirit. And this is where I deviate from what I consider to be overly sceptical Lukan scholars discussed above and even Seim’s framework which I affirm. They approach Luke only from a hermeneutics of suspicion and their conclusions demonstrate a “suspicion” and “distrust” towards Luke which ceases to see the liberatory potential in the text. I defend the position I adopt in the following section.

6.11. “Defending” Luke-Acts’ Ambivalence

6.11.1. Ambivalence due to Constrains of the Empire and the Patriarchal Surrounding Cultures

The ambivalence in Luke-Acts has to do more with the constraints of both the empire and this patriarchal setting. I acknowledge that Luke was writing within the historical constraints of two patriarchal cultures and his rhetoric is reflective of that. Perhaps D’Angelo and Schaberg are unrealistic in their expectations of Luke. As a cultural being, Luke’s work is in continuity with his context and culture. While his inability to explicitly emphasize the active role of

⁵⁰⁸ Schneiders, *Feminist Ideology Criticism*, p. 7-8.

women could be attributed to the limitations of his cultures, I maintain that he has still offered a critique of his cultures, even if the critique is not adequate. Todd Penner and Caroline Stichele have argued that Luke's writing about women is actually an act of resistant survival in circumstances that rendered any explicit resistance suicidal.⁵⁰⁹ Based on their thesis, I hold that Luke-Acts is a concealed and subversive act. It is subversive considering that it was produced in a world where women were constrained by patriarchy; yet, he included a substantial amount of material presenting women as Jesus' followers. Here I agree with one of Richter Reimer's conclusions, that Acts reflects no "particular tendency to keep women at home and subject them to men".⁵¹⁰ In Luke-Acts there are no clear arguments that the writer wanted to preserve the patriarchal systems and hierarchies of his time by explicitly instructing women to be subordinate. In that sense, Luke-Acts does not compare with for example, Pastoral Letters such as Titus 2:5, I Peter 3:1, Colossians 3:18 which are explicit about the subordination of women and slaves.

6.11.2. Luke has a Vision about Women

By feminist standards, Luke-Acts appears partial and at its worst oppressive towards women; the books are not explicitly pro-women as feminist studies require. However, I maintain that Luke seems to have a vision about women even beyond his time. Let me illustrate this by the following two incidents.

6.11.3. A Woman is Called μαθήτρια

It is only in Acts 9:36 where the feminine form of a disciple is used; in reference to Tabitha. How do we make sense of a woman called a disciple? This is one instance where we can capitalize on the openness of biblical texts and creatively interpret this text as a hint to Luke's vision of wanting to empower women even beyond his times. Women were disciples and can still become disciples in God's kingdom today. Here I find Schneider's argument helpful. She holds that written texts have the ability to refer "no longer to the real world in which the original speaking took place and to which it naturally and necessarily referred, but rather allows it to create a world which it projects ahead of itself."⁵¹¹ The reader of the text is therefore invited to discern that projected world and to inhabit it. For me, Schneider's'

⁵⁰⁹ T. Penner and C. Stichele, *Contextualising Acts: Lucan Narrative and Greco Roman Discourse* (Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003).

⁵¹⁰ Ivoni Richter Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles: A Feminist Liberation Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 267.

⁵¹¹ Schneiders, 'Feminist Ideology Criticism,' p. 7.

invitation is helpful since I relate it to Acts 9:36 where Luke projects a world where women can be disciples.

6.11.4. I Will Pour Out My Spirit upon All Flesh

In the previous section, I highlighted the process of decontextualizing Luke-Acts from its patriarchal cultural context. In this section, I will recontextualize Luke-Acts within the cultural context of Batswana Pentecostal women. When Acts 2 announces that “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh”, Luke was extending the emancipation of women beyond his time as well. In the claim that the ‘Spirit shall be poured upon all flesh’, on young and old, men and women, slaves and free equally, Luke-Acts offers a possibility of recontextualizing the text. In this way Luke-Acts can subvert gender stereotypes in the same manner in which house churches could be understood as Luke’s way of making women visible. The text works against the Roman patriarchal ideology and Luke’s culturally mediated silencing of women by offering the possibility of equality under the Holy Spirit. Luke’s assertion that the “Spirit shall be poured upon all flesh” provides ground for viewing Luke-Acts as liberatory and empowering towards women. The text says all that it can say and not only what it said in its own context. Luke-Acts’ portrayal of the Holy Spirit was offering readers an opportunity to imagine a world where both men and women can be filled with the Holy Spirit. Beverly Gaventa argues that one of the purposes of the writer of Luke is to demonstrate that God fulfils God’s promises. Even if Luke promises that daughters will prophesy and none do so in Acts, he still projects a world which allows “the reader to conclude that these other prophecies will also be fulfilled”.⁵¹² Using reader response approaches, it is possible to use the openness of this prophecy to subvert both Luke’s and the Pentecostal frames of reading which are characterised by a patriarchal cultural context. The inclusion of narratives like these counter and subvert Luke’s patriarchal framework. Like Seim, I maintain that Luke has also left us with memories; while his narrative effectively makes women invisible and voiceless, since “what was is not to be forgotten”.⁵¹³ Even though women are sometimes silenced, I hold that at the same time we can reconstitute their presence throughout Luke-Acts so that the gift of tongues they were given at Pentecost will continue to speak through those implicit memories. Based on this, I can positively answer my research question which is, “Can the text of Luke-Acts provide a basis for developing principles to construct a

⁵¹² B. Gaventa, “Whatever Happened to the Prophesying Daughters?,” in *A Feminist Companion to the Acts of the Apostles* ed. A. Levine and Marianne Blickenstaff (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 60.

⁵¹³ Seim, *Double Message*, 260.

Pentecostal hermeneutic that is liberating for women?” This can be done because Luke-Acts explodes its own patriarchal framework to embody a liberatory vision mediated through the Holy Spirit.

6.12. Summary

In this chapter I discussed the political situation during the writing of Luke-Acts, an important piece of information considering that some Lukan scholars argue that Luke-Acts presents women in the way that conforms to the Roman ideals of womanhood. The chapter also described the status of women in the Roman Empire. Further, the chapter demonstrated the centrality of gender in Luke-Acts; there are more stories about women in Luke-Acts than in the other gospels and Luke tended to pair male and female characters in his narratives. I then discussed Lukan scholars’ positions on women. Some hold that Luke was positive about women; some maintain that Luke was negative, while some assert that Luke was ambivalent towards women. Lastly, I state my position regarding Luke’s agenda and women; he is ambivalent. However, I emphasize his liberatory elements much more than the oppressive elements.

The next chapter is an exegesis of Acts 2:1-47 in order to establish the implications of “the Spirit poured upon all flesh”, for Pentecostals today. After the exegesis, this chapter will demonstrate how the Pentecost event can be an opportunity to read Luke against Luke, that is, reading Luke to look for possibilities and moments of liberation towards women. Reading this particular text in this manner is important because this text is central to the Pentecostal church, yet the text is not widely used within Pentecostal frames of reading to call for the equality between men and women.

CHAPTER 7

FEMINIST AND NARRATIVE EXEGESIS OF ACTS 2:1-47

7.0. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the Lukan scholars' perspectives on Luke and women. I demonstrated that some view Luke as positive and some as negative towards women, and still others view Luke as ambivalent towards women. I adopted a position of ambivalence in regards to Luke and women, although I lean more towards the positive orientation of Luke-Acts. The foregoing was meant to position our understanding of the position of women within Luke Acts.

This chapter is an exegesis of Acts 2:1-47; the chapter about the original Pentecost (whatever its historical origin). In this chapter, I closely read Acts 2:1-47 and its immediate context of Acts 1 in order to understand the significance of Pentecost to the Lukan community and to contemporary Pentecostals. The close reading of Acts 2:1-47 is undertaken in the context of Luke-Acts considered as a whole narrative, in order to establish the importance of using this text for the study. After a close reading of Acts 2:1-47, I will demonstrate that Pentecost was transformative, radical and affirming. This chapter will draw on a detailed literature review by different feminist, Pentecostal and Lukan scholars in general. It will highlight Pentecostal theologies through the use of footnotes.

7.1. The Application of the Narrative Approach

The exegesis of Acts 2:1-47 involves narrative criticism as discussed in chapter 2 and the feminist employment of a hermeneutic of suspicion. The narrative elements (characters, settings and others) unfold throughout this exegesis; I am not discussing them under their formal headings. My immediate purpose in undertaking this exegesis is to attempt to understand the presentation of women within his broader themes of the universalisation of salvation and prophecy-fulfilment. The exegesis attempts to highlight the presence of women even in instances where they seem to be silenced by the narrator. To achieve these goals, my emphasis will be on some narrative elements, such as characters and rhetoric, much more than others. Robert Tannehill categorises different characters in Luke-Acts, the characters

that he classifies as “marginal and oppressed, those that appear and disappear”.⁵¹⁴ Regarding characterization of women in Luke-Acts, I will say they belong to this category. Although I do not believe that women in Luke-Acts are oppressed, I hold that they are marginal and they “appear and disappear”; not because they were not there, but because they were made invisible through textual silence.

7.2. The Application of the Hermeneutic of Suspicion

A hermeneutic of suspicion is a critical suspicious reading of the Bible that identifies the Bible as a male-centred book and seeks to expose the patriarchal bias embedded in biblical texts.⁵¹⁵ Feminist biblical scholars have always argued that “androcentricism pervades the Bible”⁵¹⁶ and as a result “all biblical texts are articulated in grammatically masculine language”.⁵¹⁷ This androcentricism and the use of masculine language have rendered women invisible in Biblical narratives. Biblical texts have excluded, silenced and downplayed their roles in shaping the history and growth of the church.⁵¹⁸ Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza sees this textual silence as an “indication of that reality about which they do not speak”. So she cautions readers of the Bible that “we must learn to read the silences of androcentric texts in such a way as to provide ‘clues’ to the egalitarian reality of the early movement”.⁵¹⁹ Similarly, Wilfred Oeming has also observed that “women play a much more important role in the Bible than reception history may have led us to believe over the past centuries”.⁵²⁰ Schüssler Fiorenza and Oeming are calling Bible readers to be suspicious and critical “beyond the surface”⁵²¹ readers in order to unmask the texts’ silencing of women. A hermeneutic of suspicion leads to other hermeneutical processes such as a hermeneutic of creative actualization, a hermeneutic of reconstruction, a hermeneutic of proclamation and a hermeneutic of remembrance.⁵²² As we read *beyond* the text, we are able to reconstruct the history of women in the formation of the early church (applying a hermeneutic of

⁵¹⁴ R. Tannehill, “Israel in Luke-Acts,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985), 70-85.

⁵¹⁵ Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said*, 53.

⁵¹⁶ G.W. Stroup, “Between Echo and Narcissus: The Role of the Bible in Feminist Theology,” in *Interpretation* 42, no. 1 (1988), 24, 19-32.

⁵¹⁷ Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said*, 53.

⁵¹⁸ M. Dube, “Talitha Cum! A Postcolonial Feminist & HIV/AIDS Reading of Mark 5:21-43,” in *Grant Me Justice! HIV/AIDS & Gender Readings of the Bible*, eds. Musa W. Dube and Musimbi Kanyoro. (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004b), 130-131. Masenya, *How Worthy*, 2.

⁵¹⁹ Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 41.

⁵²⁰ Oeming, *Contemporary Biblical Hermeneutics*, 106.

⁵²¹ By “beyond the surface” reader, I understand women readers who do not accept the surface meaning of the text but continually explore and interrogate the so-called “plain meaning” of the text, because such “plain meanings” have been largely determined by men.

⁵²² Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said*, 76; See also Marcella Althaus-Reid, and Lisa Isherwood, *Controversies in Feminist Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2007), 42.

reconstruction) as we also bring the memories of women who have been silenced by the text into the history of interpretation (applying a hermeneutic of remembrance).

Some scholars of Luke discussed in the previous chapter have pointed out that the role of women in Luke-Acts has been obscured and diminished. While it may appear so, my role as a feminist exegete is to read beyond the surface of the text not only by questioning the masculine language used in Luke-Acts, but also by asking questions such as who is named and who is not named in the text? Who is present and who is not present in the narrative and why? When a feminist biblical exegete engages in all these processes, the ultimate goal is to bring to the fore biblical women whose memories have been buried by the text, by the interpretation of the text and the traditions of the church, in my case the Pentecostal tradition in particular. In the following section I undertake an exegesis of Acts 2:1-47 guided by feminist principles of exegesis as set out briefly above.

7.3. Acts 1: The Immediate Context of Acts 2

Acts 2:1-47 has its beginnings in Acts 1 in the post Easter period where the followers of Jesus are gathered in the upper room. The followers of Jesus are to remain in Jerusalem and “wait for the promise of the father” (Acts 1:4). Jerusalem, the spatial setting of this narrative, is a religious center in Luke-Acts and it is a place for action. Major activities take place within Jerusalem, in the temple, synagogues and upper room. Most important, Luke’s agenda is for the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they have received the power of the Holy Spirit. The choice of Jerusalem as the setting is a deliberate exercise by Luke. The good news about God’s universal kingdom starts in Jerusalem, extending unto the ends of the world, such that there is a progressive unfolding of salvation from the center outward. This is important for this thesis because this salvation is guided by the Holy Spirit and it happens among Jews, then moves to the Gentiles and all nations. The disciples are constantly made aware that salvation is not only for the Jerusalemites; it has to be taken from the center; Jerusalem to other places.

Verse 5 has an anticipatory tone as the group is again promised that they will receive the Spirit “not many days from now”. This promise is detailed in Acts 1:8, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (restating Luke 24:49 “so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high”). Daniel Marguerat sees Acts

1:8 as programmatic to the whole book of Acts as it locates the “origin of the venture of Christian mission in the founding gift of the Holy Spirit”.⁵²³ The Holy Spirit is an important character Luke-Acts as it appears that the activities of the characters in Acts are driven by the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:1-8 has an anticipatory tone that something will happen.⁵²⁴

Verses 9-11 record the ascension of Jesus. Acts 1:11 addresses “Men of Galilee”, who are instructed to return to Jerusalem (to wait for the promise of the father 1:4) where they then stayed in the upper room (verse 12). At this point, readers are introduced to some of the main characters in this narrative; there is Peter, and there are men of Galilee. Are the women absent while Peter addresses the “Men of Galilee” or is this one instance of textual silencing of women? In verse 13 we are given the names of the eleven male apostles who were in the upper room, the same list in Luke 6:14-16 excluding Judas. By now we know with certainty that there are at least eleven of them in the upper room, we know their names and we also know that they were the disciples of Jesus while he was still alive.

The plot for Acts 1:14 is the upper room. In Acts 1:14 we learn more about whom else was in the upper room with the eleven: “All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with *certain women*, including *Mary the mother* of Jesus, as well as his brothers.” Therefore, the eleven male disciples are with the unnamed women, Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Jesus’ siblings, his brothers to be exact because of the use of the masculine noun ἀδελφοὶς in the upper room. The text does not say how many women were present in the upper room but we know with certainty that there were women there. The text situates at least one woman, Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the upper room. She is the only woman named in this text. Mary has remained unnamed in the Lukan text since Lk 2:51. In Lk 8:19-21, Mary’s presence is made known together with Jesus’ brothers, yet she is not named but is characterized as the mother of Jesus. Given the general “invisibility” of women in this particular pericope, the mention of Mary by name is highly significant as it indicates that other women were present even though this Lukan narrative does not mention them. The mention of Mary by name is also significant in demonstrating that women were central in the post Easter community probably in the same way they were in Jesus’ earthly ministry. Mary is mentioned by name together with the eleven male disciples, who are the principal actors.

⁵²³ D. Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge: University Press 2002), 115.

⁵²⁴ For Pentecostals this is important as the tone is set for global spreading of the message of salvation to the ends of the world.

This makes Mary's character to be at par with that of the male principal characters. Some scholars maintain that the defining characteristic of Mary here is that she is the mother of Jesus. Her mention is to validate the identity of this group as the followers of Jesus.⁵²⁵ While it is true that she is the mother of Jesus, I maintain that she represents the women who have followed Jesus much more than she validates the identity of the group. She has proven to be the hearer and doer of God's words and fits into the new family of Jesus alluded to in Lk. 8:21, 8:15.

Verse 15 introduces Peter standing up in the midst of the disciples and addressing them. In the same verse we learn that there were 120 more people with the eleven men, unnamed women, Mary and Jesus' brethren. What are we to make of the order of verses 13, 14 and 15 in terms of the central figures of this community? No one can dispute that the twelve male disciples had always been central to the ministries of Jesus, so they were at the top of the hierarchy of other men and the women. So does this order tell us something about who is at the center of this movement? First there is the eleven, then the women, followed by Mary, Jesus' family and the 120. If this analysis is true, then it means women are at the center of this movement, very close to the eleven apostles. Women had always been followers of Jesus; they were mentioned together with his "acquaintances" (Luke 23:49). Thus Acts 1:14 reaffirms the position of women as disciples of Jesus. Following Turid Seim's argument, I also believe that women are "given a prominent position, women were not added on summarily merely to strengthen the significance or magnitude of what occurs", unlike in Matt 14:21 where women are added to make the miracle spectacular.⁵²⁶

Who are the *σὺν γυναῖξίν* of verse 14? The narrator of the story does not tell us the identity of these women. Are they the followers or disciples of Jesus or are they the wives of the eleven apostles? Gerd Lüdemann thinks the women were the wives of the apostles for two reasons. The first one is a purely linguistic reason; he argues that the article before *γυναῖξίν* is missing. The second reason takes its cue from the Codex Bezae (Codex D) which suggests that these women were the wives of the apostles for it was well known "that the apostles had wives".⁵²⁷ The same Codex D also adds that children were there as well, and

⁵²⁵ L. Nortije-Mayer, "The Mother of Jesus as Analytical Category in John's Gospel," *Neotestamentica* (2009), 126.

⁵²⁶ Seim, *Double Message*, 20.

⁵²⁷ Gerd Lüdemann, *Early Christianity According to the Traditions in Acts: A Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 1987), 27.

therefore Lüdemann concludes that verse 14 presents the “holy family of the earliest community”.⁵²⁸ Codex D has been critiqued for being anti-Semitic⁵²⁹ and anti-women because it eliminates the “ecclesial leadership of women”.⁵³⁰ If the reader concludes that the women were wives of the apostles, we do them an injustice by locating them within patriarchal familial structures. Further, we subordinate them to men and that takes away their independent status as followers of Jesus. Further, if we refer to the women as wives of the apostles, we eliminate their role in the formation of the Christian history.⁵³¹ Verse 14 has already done an injustice to them by failing to explicitly name them apart from Mary. The tradition of interpretation has then done injustice to them by referring to them as the wives of the apostles. Feminist readers cannot perpetuate this injustice. It is possible that the women were there because they were disciples of Jesus. Since Mary, who is specifically named, is not anyone’s wife, why should the women mentioned with her be the wives of the apostles? These could be the women who are named in Luke 8:1-3 or the ones in Luke 24:10. To think that these women might be the ones mentioned in Luke 8:1-3 may not be implausible looking at the fact that the list of men in Acts 1:13 is exactly the list in Luke 6:14-16 minus Judas. The *certain women* in Acts 1:14 could be assumed to include Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Susanna as per the list in Luke 8:1-3. However, it is proper to suggest like Turid Seim that other women besides these three were present in the upper room. She argues that any list of women given in Luke represents a larger group, just like the ‘inner circle’ of the three male apostles Peter, John and James often represents a larger group of twelve.⁵³² This suggestion is important because then feminist exegetes are able to argue for the invisibility and active presence of women as followers of Jesus.⁵³³

Therefore, I submit that the *certain* women in Acts 1:14 are the same women in Luke 8:1-3 and they were the disciples of Jesus not the wives of the apostles. These were women who have been followers of Jesus in their own right. Discipleship within Luke is understood as serving others with whatever means the disciples have. In Luke 8:1-3, the women use what they own for the benefit of all and by so doing they were practicing what, according to Esther

⁵²⁸ Lüdemann, *Early Christianity*, 27.

⁵²⁹ See E.J. Epp, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts* (Cambridge: MSSNTS3, 1966) who argues that the text of Codex Bezae has a consistent theological agenda against Jews.

⁵³⁰ Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 52.

⁵³¹ Richter Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles*, 232.

⁵³² Seim, *The Double Message*, 31.

⁵³³ Pauline letters give an impression that there were all kinds of women in the movement; some were even married to unbelievers. Therefore it is highly possible that these women even attended the meetings alone.

de Boer, was an important Christian ideal, “not only restricted to women, but one meant for all believers”.⁵³⁴ It is not unlikely that some of them might have been the apostles’ wives. However, to conclude like Lüdemann that all the unnamed women in verse 1:14 were the wives of the apostles is to exclude women who have consistently been Jesus’ followers.

Verses 15-26 describe the choosing of Matthias to replace Judas. The address is made to ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί thus on the surface assuming an audience consisting of men and brothers only, even though I have already established that there were women in the upper room. Justo Gonzalez seeks to solve the exclusive masculine orientation of Peter’s address in verse 16 by arguing that the scene has changed between verses 13 and 14 “so that the 120 gathered when Peter speaks in verse 16 are a group different from the one described in verses 13 and 14”. Gonzalez holds that the setting, the upper room, could not accommodate 120 people. So Peter’s address in verse 16 takes place somewhere such as the synagogue where women were present but did not share in the decision making process.⁵³⁵ While this argument that the room was not big enough to accommodate 120 is likely, it is also possible that the upper room here might be the upper room mentioned in Luke 22:12, which is described as large and furnished. Barrett argues that during this time there were rooms big enough to accommodate 120 people.⁵³⁶ Nelson Estrada points out that later tradition such as the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* has suggested that the upper room might even be Mary’s, John Mark’s mother, which was often used for gatherings, studies and prayer.⁵³⁷ The size of this room is not that important for my thesis, what is important and most relevant is that the followers of the Jesus movement, men and women, were together in one setting. Peter’s exclusively masculine address is not because of the change in scenes. Rather, I concur with feminist scholars including Turid Seim, Ivoni Richter Reimer and Schüssler Fiorenza, who are suspicious of biblical texts that assume a male only audience. Seim⁵³⁸ argues that there was no generic term to refer to women; rather “maleness is regarded as the human norm”, such that addressing women and children in the masculine voice was a way of perpetuating male hegemony. Reimer⁵³⁹ argues that the absence of women in the Bible has a linguistic explanation; a

⁵³⁴ De Boer, “The Lukan Mary Magdalene,” 140-160, 144.

⁵³⁵ Gonzalez, *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit*, 28.

⁵³⁶ See Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 86-87.

⁵³⁷ N. Estrada, *From Followers to Leaders: The Apostles in the Ritual of Status Transformation in Acts 1-2* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 109, citing *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 7.1, 109.

⁵³⁸ Seim, “Feminist Criticism,” 52, In *Methods for Luke*, ed. J. Green (Cambridge: University Press, 2010), 52.

⁵³⁹ Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles*, xi.

congregation of men, women and children is addressed as men and/or brothers. Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza writes that

a historical adequate translation must take into account the interpretive implications of androcentric language which functioned as inclusive language in a patriarchal culture. Such androcentric inclusive language mentions women only when their presence has become in a way a problem or when they are “exceptional,” but it does not mention women in so called normal situations...androcentric language is inclusive of women but does not mention them explicitly.⁵⁴⁰

What is clear from these scholars is that masculine language is often used generically to address both men and women. Taking my cue from these scholars, I submit that even though Luke has used androcentric language in Acts 1:16, women were nevertheless there, they were included as part of the ‘men and brothers’ (ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί).

Acts 1:21-22 δεῖ οὖν τῶν συνελθόντων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν ἐν παντὶ χρόνῳ ᾧ εἰσῆλθεν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς, calls for the choosing of a man (ἀνδρῶν ἀνὴρ) to replace Judas who betrayed Jesus. The person who is going to be chosen must be “one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,²² beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us -- one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection” (verses 21-22). This verse explicitly excludes women from being possible candidates for taking Judas’s place in spite of the fact that they satisfy the criteria for candidacy; except maleness. The women had accompanied the male disciples during Jesus’ earthly ministry and they followed Jesus to the tomb so they are witnesses to the resurrection (Luke 23:49, 55). Luke 23:49 is especially revealing because the indicative durative (αἰ συνακολουθοῦσαι) used here suggests that the women *have been following* Jesus from the beginning of his ministry. They also witnessed the resurrection (Luke 24:24). It is problematic that they are excluded from candidacy because they were not male. Why were they not chosen to replace Judas? Was Luke intent on excluding women from leadership as some scholars have suggested in the previous chapter? Here I maintain that Luke is demonstrating the limiting factor of his cultures. There is plenty of evidence that

⁵⁴⁰ Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 44-45.

twelve is a symbol of the renewal of Israel and the twelve male disciples represent that for Luke.⁵⁴¹

7.4. Acts 2: Fulfilment of Prophecy

The fruition of the promise made in Acts 1:8 is found in Acts 2 where men and women (though unnamed) are waiting in anticipation for the Holy Spirit.⁵⁴² Acts 2 is paradigmatic as it embodies themes found in different places throughout Luke-Acts. Acts 2:1-47 has four units; 1-4, 5-12, 13-39 and 40-47, although some scholars think that it has three units; 1-13, 14-20 and 41-47.⁵⁴³ Acts 2 starts with the adverb of time “When the day of Pentecost had come”. The only other time this expression is used in Luke-Acts is when introducing interpolation from Lk. 9:51 to Lk 19. In both instances, it is used to signify significant turning points.⁵⁴⁴ Several scholars point out that Pentecost represents the fulfillment of God’s promise made throughout Luke-Acts and in 1:8 in the immediate context. Within Pentecostal scholarship, Pentecost is seen as crucial as power for witnessing, it is hardly foregrounded as a crucial moment for the liberation of women. Further, there is hardly an interrogation of the people present when this promise came to pass.⁵⁴⁵ Feminist Lukan scholars, however, are interested in the characters that were present when this happened.

The time for the fulfillment of God’s promise has come: “When the day of Pentecost had come they were *all* together in one place”.⁵⁴⁶ The followers of Jesus have been waiting

⁵⁴¹ D. Horsley, *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003).

⁵⁴² Lukan scholars rightly draw parallels between the beginnings of the ministry of Jesus in Luke and the beginning of the ministry of the church in Acts 2. Jesus is baptised with the Spirit (Luke 3:21, 22) and then he starts his healing-redemptive ministry (Luke 4:14-30) (Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 108). This becomes very important because the ministry of Jesus in Luke 4 is to overturn oppression and to set the captives free. The Holy Spirit takes over this ministry through the Church. This has implications for the contemporary church, which claims to have received the Spirit; Christ’s replacement. They have the obligation to overturn oppression, gender oppression included.

⁵⁴³ Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 57.

⁵⁴⁴ J. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 394.

⁵⁴⁵ See for example, M. Wenk, *Community-Forming Power: The Socio-Ethical Role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts* (JPTS Supplement Series 19; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000). He represents most Pentecostal commentators of Acts 2. The text is often celebrated within Pentecostal circles for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit without fully engaging with the implication of that for Pentecostal women.

⁵⁴⁶ Pentecost, also known as the Feast of Weeks, was the second of the great pilgrimage feasts of the Jewish year and was a thanksgiving for the wheat harvest. It was a day-long annual event and Jews living in Jerusalem and the diaspora attended this feast to worship, so that there were many people in Jerusalem at this time. Narrative critics maintain that geographical references are more than “simply geographical references”, but setting “often participate in the drama of the narrative...rich in connotational or associative values, and these values contribute to the meaning of the narratives for the implied reader”. (Marlbon, “Narrative Criticism,” 24, 31. Luke deliberately chooses Jerusalem as a strategic setting for Pentecost to achieve his theme of the universalization of God’s salvation.

together in “one place”. This verse refers us back to the upper room in 1:13-14 where the followers of Jesus, men and women, were waiting in prayer. The “all” πάντες not only refers to the twelve, but it refers to women as well, although they are unnamed. Seim⁵⁴⁷ argues that the “all” is emphatic to hint at the inclusiveness of people who are normally excluded from participation and that “from now onwards they will be included in Luke’s calendar of events”. Further the *all* strengthens the correspondence with the prophecy from Joel which forms the bulk of Peter’s argument from 17-25.

Verses 2 and 3 describe the coming of the Holy Spirit which is arresting and charismatic. It is both visible “There appeared tongues of fire” and audible “there came from heaven a sound as of a powerful rushing wind, and it filled the whole room...and there appeared to them tongues...dividing up among them...rested upon each one of them”. The coming of the Spirit cannot be denied as it is manifested in tangible ways. Pentecostals identify with and appreciate the charismatic manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Then verse 4, “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability”.⁵⁴⁸ *All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit* is a profound statement as it implies a lack of discrimination based on gender or even ethnicity at this point, all men and women have equal access to the Holy Spirit. While I maintain that the *all* in this verse refers to the eleven, the unnamed women, Mary, and the 120 who were in the upper room, Nelson Estrada argues that the *all* refers to the twelve male disciples only.⁵⁴⁹ Similarly, Bolt maintains that the identity of those who receive the Holy Spirit is “revealed when Peter stands up with the eleven (2:14) to address the crowd. Promising an explanation of what has gone on for “these men” (15-16), his address provides further confirmation. When he eventually gets to his explanation, these men have become “witnesses” (32-33); a group which has already been limited to the twelve”.⁵⁵⁰ Both scholars argue that because Peter stood up with the eleven when addressing the crowd that is proof that only the twelve males received the gift of the Holy Spirit. This kind of exegesis excludes women from the group that receives the Spirit and

⁵⁴⁷ Seim, *The Double Message*, 166.

⁵⁴⁸ Speaking in tongues is a central doctrine for Pentecostals; it is the doctrine that has always set them apart from other denominations, their distinctive mark. From early on, Pentecostals saw a direct link between the experience of Acts 2 and theirs. Speaking in tongues is seen as one of the charismatic manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit. To some, it is seen as the definitive mark of the of post-conversion experience. From time past to present, Pentecostals have always defended the speaking in tongues using these texts. It is the charismatic manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁴⁹ Estrada, *From Followers to Leaders*, 204-207.

⁵⁵⁰ B. Bolt, “Mission and Witness,” in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, eds. I.H. Marshall and D. Peterson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 199 cited in Estrada, *From Followers to Leaders*, 205.

continues in the line of scholarship that has excluded women from being part of the history of the Christian movement. This argument also ignores other exegetical clues in the text itself that could be used to situate the women in the upper room. I agree that there were two groups in this pericope, but I argue that it is the 120, consisting, amongst others, of twelve male disciples, Mary, and the *certain* women who form the first group. The second group consists of the crowd that gathers together in Acts 2:5-13. While Acts 1:11, 13 and to some extent 15 uses a masculine tone “you men of Galilee”, I have demonstrated earlier that men and women are present, even where they are not specifically mentioned, since in biblical texts coming out of patriarchal contexts the male was taken to represent all unless otherwise specified. I like Seim’s argument that the setting of the scene and the word of scripture interpreting it must be in reasonable accord with one another.⁵⁵¹ It does not make sense for the *all* in 2:1, 4 to exclude women when Joel’s prophecy in Acts 2:17-18, the core of this pericope, gives both men and women the prophetic ability through the Holy Spirit. I insist that the *all* in 2:1 and 4 refers not only to the twelve male disciples, it includes women as well.

Jerusalem as the religious center for the Jews was filled with pilgrims, including Gentile “god fearers” who had come to celebrate the Feast of Weeks/Pentecost. The setting is strategic because it reveals one of Luke motives; that salvation begins among the Jews, yet it is not exclusively for Jews only, it will move to other nations. To achieve this, the coming of the Holy Spirit who drives this comes when the city is flooded with the Jews. The scene is set for one of Luke’s plots to unravel.⁵⁵² Luke introduced the globalised vision of salvation in Lk. 1 through Mary and Simeon. The *Magnificat* already introduced the fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham which has a universal outlook (1:54-55). There is no ambiguity in regards to the role Mary plays in moving the story of salvation forward. Luke places women at crucial points in his narratives even though sometimes they are not as visible as men. Lk. 1 presents Mary as obedient to God in the same way as Zachariah. Luke makes Mary the center of the birth narratives in a way that eclipses Joseph. Lk. 1 and 2 as already mentioned, points us to the centrality of the fulfillment of God’s promises. For the narratives to be told from Mary’s point of view is important as this can be used to argue against Luke’s rhetoric of silencing women. Gaventa rightly observes that Mary has multiple roles that are not in competition with each other, she is a mother, prophet and disciple. Therefore Mary’s

⁵⁵¹ Seim, *Double Message*, 166.

⁵⁵² There seem to be different plots in Luke-Acts, for example prophecy-fulfilment and universalisation of the Gospel. For a detailed discussion on the different plots in Luke-Acts see S.M. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts* (Journal for the Study of the New Testament Sup72; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 138-148.

centrality in Luke-Acts is not due to her role as the mother of Jesus only, she serves as a model of discipleship.⁵⁵³

Verses 7-11 records the miracle of the Pentecost. There are different people in Jerusalem who had come to attend the Feast of Weeks/Pentecost. This crowd is amazed when they hear the followers of Jesus (Galileans) who were filled with the Holy Spirit speak their own (crowd's) languages. Verses 9, 10 and 11 give a list of people who heard the 120 speak in their own tongues, however, the list is not without problems according to scholars. Barrett points out that it has never been satisfactorily explained. He holds that the list is not based on astrological geography, as some have claimed, but rather that Luke wanted to "assert that various areas and peoples were represented in Jerusalem" on this particular occasion.⁵⁵⁴ Similarly, Marguerat holds that this kaleidoscope of nations is meant in Lukan style to announce the acts of God to the whole world.⁵⁵⁵ Therefore, the focus is not on the literal meaning of every nation that is listed in 9-11 but it is on expressing one of Luke's theme about the universal nature of God's salvation and later of the Holy Spirit (in 2:39). For the purposes of this study I will not set out to prove the accuracy of the list in verses 9-11, rather I will agree with scholars who hold that Luke's inclusion of this list was to free the gospel from "exclusive geographical restriction",⁵⁵⁶ as well as to demonstrate the universal significance of Acts. Throughout the history of Lukan scholarship, Luke has been celebrated for bringing people who were traditionally on the margins of society, the Gentiles and the poor, into the center, therefore, the mention of the 'many nations' means that like Israel, they are embraced into the kingdom of God; they are brought into the center of God's kingdom.

Pentecost aroused different emotions among the crowd; some are amazed, some are in doubt and others mock (12, 13). The role of the crowd as minor characters in Luke-Acts is to help unravel and move the story forward.⁵⁵⁷ Peter's sermon is prompted by the criticism in verse 13, that "they are filled with new wine". Verse 14 is highly androcentric; not only does Peter stand up with the eleven men, his address is directed towards men of Judea (ἄνδρες

⁵⁵³ B. Gaventa, *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 49.

⁵⁵⁴ Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 121-122.

⁵⁵⁵ Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian*, 116.

⁵⁵⁶ Klauck, *Magic and Paganism*, 12.

⁵⁵⁷ R. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* 2 vols (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986 and 1990).

Ἰουδαῖοι), yet we are certain that there were women in this audience.⁵⁵⁸ This is especially confirmed two verses down when the presence of women is acknowledged. The temporal setting of this pericope is 9 in the morning and since it is early, Peter's defence makes sense; the people are not drunk with wine, but the events of the day are a fulfilment of Joel's prophecy that:

In the last days it will be, God declares that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

This narrative reveals a plot where the past, present and future converge; the promise was made in the past (Acts 1:8), it is fulfilled in the present while they were gathered together in one place, and it is directed to the time in the future, "Your daughters shall prophesy".⁵⁵⁹ One of Luke's motifs is to show that God's promises are fulfilled and in this text he demonstrates that well; God has made a promise to the people, God fulfils it in their midst and shall continue to fulfil in the future. This is important as I later argue that even when Luke textually silences women, this promise in 17 and 18 will be fulfilled as well.

Lukan scholarship is in unanimity that the writer of Luke quotes Joel 2:28-32 with variations.⁵⁶⁰ The variation that I find interesting for the purposes of this study is Luke's insertion of "in the last days" instead of the LXX "after these things". This indicates a heightening of the eschatological expectation which is already present in Joel even in the

⁵⁵⁸ He does the same thing at verses 22 and 29. I find it problematic that his addresses assume a masculine tone yet the women are present. Some scholars see verses 14, 22 and 29 as marking off the three sections of the sermon because the three sections seem to have the same internal characteristics. See for example, Barret, *The Acts of the Apostles*.

⁵⁵⁹ Up until the time I read this text with Pentecostal women from Botswana, my understanding of prophecy was abstract. When I asked the women what they understood about prophecy, she said "prophecy means an ability to speak on behalf of God to the children of God, about money, cars, prayer and weddings. With no regards to one's gender, with no intimidation". Then I decided to imagine prophecy as a concrete space of liberation for all people. This is the metaphor that I use throughout this thesis.

⁵⁶⁰ Klauck, *Magic and Paganism*, 11; Barrett *The Acts of the Apostles*, 129; Shillington, *Introduction*, 114; Lüdemann, *Early Christianity*, 44.

Hebrew. Hans-Josef Klauck points out that this verse serves as a prophetic interpretation of the outpouring of the Spirit as a sign for the last days.⁵⁶¹

The second variation that I find interesting is the change of Joel's sequence 'old-young' to 'young-old'. Maybe Luke was intent on demonstrating that indeed change has come and the tables have turned on who has privilege and who has not. The third variation is the insertion of the possessive pronoun *my* twice after male slaves and female slaves. I think that insertion twice was emphatic of the fact that no longer will servants be left out, they too are included in Luke's creation of a universal family of God. By so doing, Pentecost overturned social convention by de-marginalising slaves or servants who belonged to the lowest category of rank in the first century. The last variation is Luke's addition of "and they shall prophesy" to Joel's quotation referring to the sons and daughters, thus both men and women can be God's mouthpiece.⁵⁶² This assertion is important because it demonstrates that both men and women, old and young are called into new ways of being in the ear of the Holy Spirit. Considering that Luke-Acts was produced in a patriarchal world, his adaptation of the Joel prophecy was very important. The idea that the Holy Spirit could fall equally on men and women was exceptional. Further, in Joel, "all flesh" referred to the Jews only. The Gentiles are not included as part of the "all flesh". Luke includes the Gentiles as part of the "all flesh" in order to demonstrate his rhetoric that God's kingdom has spread from Jerusalem to the ends of the world. The Joel quotation is central to Luke-Acts as a whole because from now on the message of God's salvation is for all nations, starting from Jerusalem.⁵⁶³

Verse 17 is the climax of this chapter as it confirms my insistence that the women were present even from Acts 1. The verse highlights the fulfilment of the promise made to the community of men and women by Jesus (at 1:4, 8). On the day of Pentecost, the power of God's kingdom breaks into human history without regard to gender, class and age. This was revolutionary for people in the first century. Since gender and social categories are central to

⁵⁶¹ Klauck, *Magic and Paganism*, 11. There are some points of divergence such as Verse 17 reading "in the last days" while Joel reads "after these things" and the change of sequence 'young-old' instead 'old young' in Joel.

⁵⁶² For the purposes of this thesis, I use prophecy to symbolise: 1. A public office of leadership in all spheres of life, including the social, economic, political and spiritual; 2. An empowering space for spiritual, economic, political, cultural power where no one is denied the power to thrive. Thus, when the text says "you daughters shall prophesy," it means that the daughters will be affirmed and empowered in the same way that men are within the home, society and church.

⁵⁶³ For further discussion see, D.K. Williams, "'Upon All Flesh': Acts 2, African Americans and Intersectional Realities," in *They Were All Together in One Place: Toward Minority Biblical Criticism*, eds. B. Randal, L. Tat-Siong and F. Segovia (Atlanta: SBL, 2009), 295.

the texts, I concur with George Shillington who holds that the emphasis in verses 17-18 is on the overturning of accepted socio-religious ideology.⁵⁶⁴ Similarly, Gonzalez opines that verses 17-18 demonstrates how the “Holy Spirit is manifested as a levelling power that destroys privilege”.⁵⁶⁵ Here prophecy ceases to be the exclusive preserve of elite prophets and priests; it is no longer confined to the Temple and is vested in all people, women included. I qualify Gonzalez’s argument by adding that not only will prophecy cease to be the preserve of prophets and priests, it ceases at this moment to be the preserve of *male Jewish* prophets and priests. Craig Keener writes “about pious rabbis who were worthy to receive the Holy Spirit, but who could not, because their generations were unworthy of its effects”.⁵⁶⁶ Thus Keener demonstrates that there was a time when the Holy Spirit was a preserve of a few. In the gospel of Luke, the Holy Spirit is associated with few people as well; with Jesus (Luke 3:21-22; 4:1, 4:14, and 4:17), and with John and his parents (Luke 1:15, 41, 67; Luke 7:26-27). This indicates that the Holy Spirit was not given to just anyone prior to Acts 2:17-18. Pentecost dissolves the privilege that was bestowed on the few and now the Holy Spirit is available to all people. As such, Pentecost can be perceived as liberational and empowering to men and women, young and old.

Peter continues with a long programmatic sermon from verses 19-41 which reminds the audience about the life, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus. Peter’s speech alludes to the law and prophets to demonstrate how God in Jesus fulfilled God’s promises. In verses 33-36 especially, Luke demonstrates that God’s agenda is to fulfil God’s promises in the last days, first through Jesus who then gives the church the Holy Spirit to continue his ministry. Some Lukan scholars maintain that Luke-Acts is a story about God’s redemptive plan of salvation; salvation history.⁵⁶⁷ This is evident in verses 21 and 38, which Wenk calls “salvation historical”.⁵⁶⁸ Thus the crux of Luke-Acts theology is that God through Jesus is working out God’s plan to save the world. That is why, when Peter explains Jesus’s miracles, it is because ‘God did them in your midst’ (22); ‘God who knew beforehand about Jesus’s death’ (23); God ‘who raised this Jesus’ (32); ‘God who made Jesus Lord and Christ’ (36).

⁵⁶⁴ Shillington, *Introduction*, 113.

⁵⁶⁵ Gonzalez, *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit*, 42-47.

⁵⁶⁶ Keener, *The Spirit in the Gospels*, 20. See also G. Hovenden, *Speaking in Tongues: The New Testament Evidence in Context* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 96.

⁵⁶⁷ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 194, 84; H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St Luke*, ET (London: Faber & Faber, 1960); D.G. Duling, *The New Testament History, Literature and Social Context* (Toronto: Wadsworth, 2003), 378-379; G. Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 98; Shillington, *Introduction*, 22.

⁵⁶⁸ Wenk, *Community Forming Power*, 246.

These scholars hold that Jesus' actions are programmed by God because, "God is the primary actor in Luke-Acts and his (sic) actions form the basis of salvation history".⁵⁶⁹

The climax of Acts 2 comes after Peter's sermon when the crowd repents in verse 37. The crowd "were pricked in their heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter responds to the question from the crowd by telling them to repent and be baptised, after which "You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit". The promise is for "You and your children and to all who are far off, for all whom the Lord our God will call" (38-39).⁵⁷⁰ Not only will the Spirit be poured upon the apostles, the women and the 120 in the upper room, the Spirit will be poured upon those listening to Peter, to their children, to those far off and "to all whom the Lord our God will call". Thus Peter reminds us again of the inclusive nature of the Holy Spirit: it will be poured upon all flesh (17 and 18). The only requirement for receiving the Holy Spirit here is repentance and nothing else. The number of people who repented and received the Holy Spirit after Peter's sermon was about three thousand on that day (41). A claim can be made that the three thousand include men and women of different nationalities listed in 9-11, as we have argued above. It may even include those who mocked the community in the beginning and we do not know whether they were men or women. It is highly improbable that only 3000 men could be converted in one day; there must have been women there as well. The text is silent about the constitution of the 3000; however, we can legitimately conclude that women as well as men were converted. Verses 38-39 embodies Luke's motif of the universalization of God's salvation to all nations.

Matthias Wenk summarizes the views of scholars who do not consider the life of the community described here a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁷¹ I identify with the views that perceive the life of this community as a result of the outpouring of the Spirit. It is only after the Spirit had come that a clear sense of mutuality is demonstrated, not just among the initial disciples but within the group of 3000 believers. Failing to acknowledge this is failing to acknowledge the miracle of Pentecost.

⁵⁶⁹ S. Cunningham, *Through Many Tribulations: The Theology of Persecutions in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 296. See also Acts 2:23, "this man handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God..."

⁵⁷⁰ These texts contain some of the most important Pentecostal theologies in Botswana; repentance, water baptism and Spirit baptism. This is the experience of Pentecostal men and women. The women in my group called this *go rupa*, an equivalent of initiation. *Go rupa* means to be initiated so that one becomes a full member of the group and has the same rights and privileges. And since they have gone through *go rupa* as Pentecostal women, then they do not understand why they do not have the same benefits as men.

⁵⁷¹ Wenk, *Community Forming Power*, 45, 260.

Verses 42-47 give a description of the community which had repented, had been baptized in the name of Jesus and received the Spirit. First they “continued in the apostles teaching and fellowship to the breaking of bread and to prayer”. Κοινωνία, or fellowship has been given a range of meanings by different scholars. It has been described as “corporation”, “common enterprise”, “solidarity”,⁵⁷² spirit of communion, unity, and mutual obligation of partnership.⁵⁷³ This fellowship was demonstrated in the way they broke bread together from house to house;⁵⁷⁴ they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching (42), “had all things in common” (44), sold their possessions and provided for the needs of others (45), they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, (ἀγαλλιάσει καὶ ἀφελότητι καρδίας).(46) and praised God together (47). One of the markers of this community that I and the Pentecostal women sometimes miss is the “glad heart”, due to the failure of the Pentecostal church to fully include women as part of the community. As the introduction of this study indicated, the “gladness of heart” that characterizes members of this community is missing in the church whose theology emerges from Acts 2.

Κοινωνία, is a basis and a mark for Christian fellowship which creates an opportunity for equality and unity. Luke makes this equality and unity normative for this church.⁵⁷⁵ Jonathan Draper argues that κοινωνία must be taken in its material sense as sharing of property as well as sharing in spiritual things. Further, κοινωνία, reflects this community's awareness that they were living at the time of the new covenant. So they developed a “new sense of fellowship and equality”.⁵⁷⁶ The effects of being community are felt externally - day by day new members were added. It is not clear from Draper's work what kind of equality he was referring to. I am inclined to conclude that the picture that emerges here is an egalitarian community of men and women. This community shares in spiritual things; they are constantly in prayer together. They share in economic things; they sold their possessions and provided for the needs of each other and they shared their social life by breaking bread together.

⁵⁷² Gonzalez, *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit*, 50-51.

⁵⁷³ B. Malina, J. Pilch, *Social Science Commentary on the Book of Acts* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 36.

⁵⁷⁴ Whether this means the actual meal or the Eucharist is irrelevant for my study. However, let me note here that there was no difference between the actual meal and Eucharist in the early church. The problem started when Paul told the Gentiles that they could eat idol meat, and the Christian Jews would not eat with them. So he stopped the real meal and told the Christian community to eat at home as a way of getting himself out of a trap of his own making.

⁵⁷⁵ Wenk, *Community Forming Power*, 264-265.

⁵⁷⁶ J. Draper, “The Social Milieu and Motivation of Community of Goods in the Jerusalem Church of Acts,” in *Church in Context*, 86, 77-87. Κοινωνία was so important in the early Church that it ends up on the creeds of the Church. “We believe in the communion of the Saints.” Unfortunately the unity of saints is not practiced.

From the above analysis, I can conclude that Luke was presenting a new alternative and inclusive community of “all that believed”, have received the Spirit, and where everyone was important. Studies indicate that during this time, the Greco-Roman world operated a patron-client system. Patron-client relations take different forms: brokerage and benefactor-patron. Without downplaying the complex nature of patron-clients relation, Halvor Moxnes describes patron-client as a system where social relationships between two parties are defined by unequal social status and difference in power. In this system, a client depended on the patron as the patron had the social, economic and political resources that the client needed.⁵⁷⁷ The Roman Empire was characterized by hierarchal relationships as earlier discussed. It is no surprise then that patronage was the “dominant part of the political system” within the Roman Empire. It was expected for example that public figures including the emperor will give “beneficia”, or favors, to friends.⁵⁷⁸ Clearly this meant that there was not much mutuality between people engaged in patron-client relations. People from the lower classes depended on people who had wealth for favors. While Luke-Acts demonstrates some aspects of patron-client relations somewhere else, these aspects are not present in Acts 2:42-47, rather Moxnes rightly asserts that he is “arguing for the transformation of patron-client relations”.⁵⁷⁹ While Moxnes does not attribute this transformation within Luke-Acts to the work of the Spirit, I, on the other hand, credit the Holy Spirit for this transformation.

The presentation of a community in 42-47 defies the patron-client system. Members of the community command the same status of honor and privilege. Those who had wealth sold it in order to share with others. By selling their property and sharing with each other with no expectation of loyalty means that there is no power at play, the relationships that emerge are based on mutuality and equality.⁵⁸⁰ Luke was presenting a community that did not conform to the social conventions of the time, where social status was determined by wealth. Moxnes does not establish a connection between the transformation of patron client relationship and the Holy Spirit. Yet this transformation could be ascribed to the fact that the community has the Spirit.

⁵⁷⁷ H. Moxnes, “Patron-Client Relations and New Community in Luke-Acts,” in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, ed. J. Neyrey (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 241.

⁵⁷⁸ Moxnes, “Patron-Client Relations,” 245.

⁵⁷⁹ Moxnes, “Patron-Client Relations,” 265.

⁵⁸⁰ Moxnes, “Patron-Client Relations,” 264.

Since the text is silent about those who believed, it is perhaps good to argue that the categories of “all flesh” are utilized in this narrative. Barrett concludes his commentary on these texts by saying that Luke depicts “the story of a community of the people of God”.⁵⁸¹ This new community is the ideal community where hierarchies and distinctions seem not to matter. But what formed the many into a community? The Pentecostal women from Botswana argued that it is the Holy Spirit who is encouraging this egalitarian existence between men and women. In their words, they said *it is a taboo* (ga se mokgwa) for men and women to coexist on equal footing. However, the women suggested that it is necessary for a community of Spirit filled believers to be “together in one place” to create an opportunity and a space of liberation and affirmation that is only possible when there is an openness to new channels for the Spirit. Therefore, a claim can be made that the Lukan community was only able to mutually co-exist because of their openness to the work of the Holy Spirit.

I have demonstrated that from Acts 1 through most parts of Acts 2, this Lukan text assumed a masculine tone, male leadership is expected, and the text addresses men. From 41, the focus is on a community of those who have repented, believed and received the Holy Spirit. The community that is not defined by ethnicity and gender, even though we know that there are different ethnicities represented in this group and there are men and women within this group. In a world of Luke-Acts where male leadership seems to be preferred (Acts 1:15 above, see also 6:1-7), the shift in focus from men to the community of Spirit filled believers who are at the same level and have fellowship with each other is an appreciated development. The women in Botswana pointed out that these verses are a demonstration of the Spirit at work leveling inequalities. Thus, one of the manifestations of the ‘Spirit poured upon all flesh’ is being a community of equals, where relationships between conventionally unequal partners, such as men and women, young and old, rich and poor are transformed into relationships of equals; of people who share spiritually, socially and economically. Luke-Acts provides an egalitarian community which has received the Holy Spirit. When the modern Pentecostal church claims to model their theology after Acts 2, this is the model of communal existence that should define them.

In concluding the exegesis of Acts 2:1-47, I submit that Luke’s rhetoric highlight the active role of women from the gospel to Acts. In spite of writing within the Roman Empire and

⁵⁸¹ Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 160.

influenced by the Jewish cultures where women were constrained, Luke has presented a picture of women who were not passive and who are included in God's scheme of salvation. Women are present at crucial foundational moments in Luke-Acts. In Acts, women were present when the promise of the Holy Spirit was made (Acts 1:8) and when Jesus ascended into heaven (1:9). Women were in the upper room praying together with the eleven male disciples (1:14); women were there when Judas was replaced (1:21-26); they were there when the Spirit was given (Acts 2:1, Acts 2:17-18); and they were there when the community of Holy Spirit filled believers lived as a community of equals in 2:42-47. Even this is a rather broad sketch as I indicate how women were present during fundamental moments. Luke makes women present throughout his narratives. However, even though women are present at the crucial moments mentioned above and are referred to especially in Acts 2:17-18, there is no overt acknowledgement that they played an active role. They are not named nor given a clear identity with the exception of Mary, the mother of Jesus. They are not given an active role and voice like Peter and the "men" and "brothers." As such the text is still evidently patriarchal. However, the Lukan text itself has provides enough material for us to judge Luke, this means even though it is evident that Luke suppresses women's voices, the text deconstructs that voicelessness by referring to them in Acts 2:17-18 which is a core passage in the entire narrative of Luke-Acts in that the Spirit is the central player in directing the narrative of Luke-Acts. This means that the text explodes its own oppressiveness. Schneider argues that fidelity to the meaning of biblical texts demands that we repudiate the text's oppressiveness "in the name of its own referent."⁵⁸² Acts 2:17-18 does this by exploding the patriarchal framework of Acts 2 as a whole.

Interestingly, the Batswana Pentecostal women in the fieldwork also found this pericope liberating. According to the women it offers a radical equality between men and women, but only if there is openness to the Holy Spirit who makes it possible for women and men to exist as equals. They emphasized the importance of seeing the Holy Spirit as the power behind Peter's boldness, the spread of Christianity, the promise for women to prophesy, and the existence of the community of women and men as equals. Since Pentecostal theologies emerge from Acts 2, Acts 2:1-47 can be perceived as a "canon within a canon". The egalitarian potential that the text embodies could be taken further and actualized within the Pentecostal church in obedience to the Holy Spirit which is professed by the church and by

⁵⁸² Schneiders, 'Feminist Ideology Criticism,' p.8.

giving women voice, status and active recognition. Therefore, the openness to the Holy Spirit in regards to this text can actualize its radicality to continually explode the patriarchal framework of Luke-Acts and the Pentecostal church.

7.5. Summary

In this chapter, I have demonstrated through feminist narrative exegesis how women were present from before Jesus was born, and throughout his ministry on earth. I have demonstrated that women have always been the disciples of Jesus, they subsidized his ministry, they followed him to the grave, they were there when he was crucified and they witnessed his ascension. I have argued that even though Luke does not name the women in Acts 1:14, he still situates them at the upper room, such that when the “day of Pentecost has come”, the women were present and they received the Holy Spirit as well. The women were present even when the ideal Lukan community emerged in Acts 2:42-47 through the Holy Spirit. Further, I have demonstrated that the coming of Pentecost signaled a new era where the social conventions of gender, prophecy and patron-client are broken.

In the next chapter, I engage with the importance of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit for Pentecostals today. I will show how Pentecost is a critique of Luke’s silencing of women and of the patriarchy that is rife in the Pentecostal churches today.

CHAPTER 8

PENTECOST AS A CRITIQUE OF PATRIARCHY

8.0. Introduction

The previous chapter was a feminist narrative exegesis of Acts 2:1-47. I demonstrated that women were present even though they are not named, except for Mary. I further demonstrated how Luke's use of the Joel prophecy overturned traditional ways of understanding gender and social class. I argued that through the Holy Spirit the community in Acts ended up practicing *κοινωνία*

In this chapter, I discuss the liberatory significance of the Pentecost event and Acts 2 in regards to themes of gender equality within the Pentecostal church. It presents my reading and understanding of what Pentecost could mean to the Pentecostal church whose theologies derive from Acts 2. The chapter reiterates the importance of Luke-Acts and Pentecost for Pentecostals today, and then it will discuss the importance of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts.

8.1. The Application of Reader Response Approach

The second part of the chapter focuses on my own interpretation of Pentecost, using reader response criticism. In chapter two, I discussed reader response as an exercise where the reader of the Bible provides answers for gaps in biblical stories. More than filling the gaps, reader response allows texts to have multiple meanings. Texts are always open and have endless and diverse multiple interpretations.⁵⁸³

To explain what Pentecost might mean for Pentecostals today is to engage in a reader response exercise of imagination and interpretation. This is important in order to appropriate and actualize the meaning of the Pentecost event. Feminist commentators on Acts 2 seem to be silent on the experiential nature of the Holy Spirit while they focus on the theology of the Holy Spirit. While this is important, I also believe in the experiential aspect of the Holy Spirit and that Pentecost can happen among 21st century Pentecostal believers. Thus, the liberating power of the Holy Spirit is not just on issues of theology but the Holy Spirit is also experienced by men and women as a power that liberates. Foregrounding the experiential aspect of the Holy Spirit means that I can use the Pentecost narrative to critique the Pentecostal church for being patriarchal. There is no denying that Pentecostals from my

⁵⁸³ Schneiders, 'Feminist Ideology Criticism,' p.7-14.

community still believe in experiencing the Holy Spirit. This involves receiving or being baptized with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues.⁵⁸⁴ If both men and women can experience the Holy Spirit, then why are women still marginalized?

8.2. The Importance of Luke-Acts within Pentecostal Churches

Khalid Tarig argues that Luke and Acts are classic texts for Pentecostals. Acts describes in great detail the events that took place on the day of Pentecost and the “acceptance of its narration forms the heart and core of the Pentecostal movement past and present”.⁵⁸⁵ Globally, Pentecostal movements derive their doctrines, theologies and beliefs from Acts. Acts 2, especially, is perceived as effective and authentic within Pentecostal circles. Wonsuk Ma also opines that not only does the book of Acts provide a “strong motivation to seek the empowerment of the Spirit”, it supplies a biblical pattern for the Pentecostal believer today.⁵⁸⁶ The beginning of the Pentecostal movement in the US in the 1900’s is the direct result of the narrative of Acts 2:1-47. But importantly, the texts were used to overturn racial barriers in the US as well as to defend the equality of men and women, and to embrace people at the margins of society.⁵⁸⁷

The fieldwork data shows that Luke-Acts is important for the identity of the Pentecostals in Botswana. Acts especially is a charter for Pentecostals both as individuals and as a community. As an individual, one is called to repent, be born again, be filled with the Holy Spirit, speak in tongues and be baptized in water and all these are described in Acts 2. The identity of the Pentecostal community revolves around the Spirit who takes center stage in Acts 2. The Pentecostals identify themselves as *Mapentekoste*, literally meaning the “people of Pentecost” or as *batho ba Moya o boitshepo*, meaning the “people of the Holy Spirit”.⁵⁸⁸ The pastors were able to articulate the importance of Luke-Acts in three ways. First, it is from Luke-Acts that they are able to defend the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Second, it is from Luke-Acts that they are able to defend the speaking in tongues which set the

⁵⁸⁴ Although these are not terms used in the academy, this is the language of Pentecostals in Botswana. These express their beliefs in the experience of the Holy Spirit. It is common to hear people say they were “swimming in the Spirit”; praying in the Spirit and the Spirit said.

⁵⁸⁵ T.A. Khalid, *The Pentecostals: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly* (The First African Arabian Press, 1991).

⁵⁸⁶ Ma, “Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal Traditions,” 62, 55.

⁵⁸⁷ See C. Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Oppressed* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 69; Tan-Chow, *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty First Century*, 29, 136.

⁵⁸⁸ The overemphasis on being “people of the Spirit” is problematic because then Pentecostals claim to have the exclusive revelation of God, and others do not. This has a wide range of implications. One of the implications might be that the Pentecostals do not engage in meaningful dialogue around the text of the Bible with other denominations.

Pentecostals apart from other types of Christianity. In this sense Acts is prescriptive and normative for the development of the most important Pentecostal theologies. While this is true, Pentecostals apply the Acts 2 model selectively; they fail to embody the model to advance an egalitarian existence between men and women.

8.3. The Centrality of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts

The Holy Spirit takes centre stage in Luke-Acts as a whole. The writer of Luke-Acts makes the Holy Spirit visible in the way that he narrates the stories of Jesus and the church.⁵⁸⁹ It comes as no surprise that Gusto Gonzalez argues that the Holy Spirit is the “main character” of Luke Acts. The Holy Spirit was at the center of Jesus’ ministry on earth in the same way that the Holy Spirit is at the center of the work of the church in Acts.⁵⁹⁰ In the interest of this thesis, I submit that the Holy Spirit is at the core of both Acts 1 and Acts 2:1-42, moving the story forward. Therefore it is important to discuss how the Holy Spirit fits into Luke-Acts and the implications of that to contemporary Pentecostals - “the people of the Spirit”.

8.3.1. The Holy Spirit and Salvation History

Hans Conzelmann introduced the concept of salvation history in Luke. He asserted that Luke-Acts divides history into three defined periods or stages. The first period is the time of the Old Testament and the prophets up to the time of John the Baptist. The second period, the central/middle period, is the time of the ministry of Jesus and the third period is the time between the ministry of Jesus and his second coming, it is the time of the church and of the Holy Spirit which begins at Pentecost and continues till the end of the world.⁵⁹¹ Raymond Brown neatly calls the first period that of Israel, the second period that of Jesus and the third period that of the church.⁵⁹² In the period of Jesus’ ministry (the centre period), the Holy Spirit works through Jesus, in the third phase of history, the period of the church, the Holy Spirit guides the church in taking and proclaiming salvation to all nations. In this third stage, the Holy Spirit emerges as the principal actor, taking over the earthly role of Jesus through the ministry of the church.⁵⁹³ Amos Yong and Gusto Gonzalez are among contemporary

⁵⁸⁹ For example, Acts 4:31, 8:29, 15:8, 19:21.

⁵⁹⁰ Gonzalez, *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit*, 8.

⁵⁹¹ H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St Luke*, ET (London: Faber & Faber, 1960).

⁵⁹² R. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Double Day, 1997), 228.

⁵⁹³ The concept of the “third era of the Spirit” has had a long and sometimes problematic role in Christian apocalyptic. For example, there was a time when the Roman Empire claimed in some ways to rule in this space of the third era and this issued in Adolf Hitler’s proclamation that his German Empire was the breaking in of the “Third Empire” signifying the coming of God’s rule on earth. The way it was interpreted by both the Roman Empire and Hitler was irresponsible and life denying. I still think that Pentecost ushered in a new era and when

scholars who see a link between the Holy Spirit and salvation history. Pentecost ushered in an era of the Holy Spirit which fits well with Luke's salvation history. This era of the Holy Spirit is the inauguration of Christ's reign which is gradually being extended across the world.⁵⁹⁴ This period of the Holy Spirit is also the same period which the present Pentecostal church inhabits.

If the Holy Spirit has inaugurated a new era according to Luke's scheme of salvation history, then the modern Pentecostal church is living in the time of the Holy Spirit. Men and women equally prophesy because the Holy Spirit cuts through social barriers in this period. Scott Spencer calls the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts an "equal opportunity employer" for the "Spirit graces people across the social spectrum, cutting across typical discriminations of age...gender...class..."⁵⁹⁵ Craig Keener holds that the Holy Spirit ultimately forced the church to cross ethnic boundaries (8:29; 10:19-20; 11:12-18).⁵⁹⁶ Amos Yong holds that the Holy Spirit brought in concrete ways to work for racial reconciliation, class reconciliation and gender reconciliation.⁵⁹⁷ Based on Spencer, Keener and Yong's submissions, it is logical to argue that the contemporary Pentecostal church through its hermeneutics has to be relevant to the time of the Holy Spirit.

8.3.2. The Holy Spirit and the Jewish-Gentile Tension

Acts carries a report of how the Holy Spirit directed the church to resolve tensions between the Jews and Gentiles. Several scholars have commented on how the Gentiles were admitted into the church and affirmed as God's children, through the inclusive power of the Holy Spirit. Christopher Thomas argues that

the Spirit's activity in the community was able to lead the church to a decision regarding the inclusion of Gentiles despite the diversity of Biblical statements on this topic...⁵⁹⁸

it is responsibly perceived as the era of the life giving power of the Holy Spirit, men and women of all races and nations can thrive.

⁵⁹⁴ Gonzalez, *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit*, 8, 43; Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 84. See also G. Duling, *The New Testament History, Literature and Social Context* (Toronto: Wadsworth, 2003), 382.

⁵⁹⁵ E.S. Spencer, *The Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville: Abington Press, 2008), 67 see also 219.

⁵⁹⁶ Keener, *The Spirit in the Gospels*, 194.

⁵⁹⁷ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Upon All flesh*, 95.

⁵⁹⁸ C. Thomas, "Women Pentecostals and the Bible: An Experiment in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 5 (1994), 56.

Craig Keener maintains that the Holy Spirit united the church that was “initially divided between Jewish and Gentile believers... but those truly obedient to the Spirit were ultimately forced to cross ethnic boundaries (8:29; 10:19-20; 11:12-18)”.⁵⁹⁹ Similarly, Philip Esler’s conclusion is that the fact that the Holy Spirit was poured out on Gentiles was the “final and irrefutable legitimation” for their acceptance as part of the Christian community.⁶⁰⁰ Further, the Holy Spirit moved the church into a multicultural diversity as it was able to transcend ethnic barriers that could have separated them.⁶⁰¹ The community could have insisted on circumcising the Gentiles before accepting them as part of the community by applying the Law of Moses and enforcing Acts 15:5, “that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the Law of Moses”. But the Jews could not enforce that law because God has “given them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us. And put no difference between us and them” (15:8-9). “No difference” is crucial because the people of Israel regarded themselves as the people of the Covenant; those who God had specifically chosen to fulfill God’s own purpose. The reception of the Holy Spirit by Gentiles is critical because it indicates in concrete ways that God’s promises are theirs too. The Jews and Gentiles cross the ethnic barrier because “It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials” (Acts 15:28 see also Acts 10:45, 11:15, 17). The community listened to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and was open to the transformation that the Holy Spirit required; not to conform to the established structures of power and authority.⁶⁰² The Law of Moses was authoritative and powerful and yet in this instance the Holy Spirit called the community to defy it.

8.3.3. The Holy Spirit and Structures of Oppression

Apart from legitimizing the acceptance of Gentiles as part of the Christian community, Luke-Acts demonstrates how, when the Holy Spirit intervenes, human standards of power are shaken, objections are overcome and social status is reversed.⁶⁰³ First, people who are at the margins are brought to the center; for example, Mary, a woman, was “highly favored” by God and became instrumental in God’s plan of salvation. Second, structures of oppression are

⁵⁹⁹ Keener, *The Spirit in the Gospels*, 194.

⁶⁰⁰ P.F. Esler, *The First Christians in their Social Worlds: Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1994), 38.

⁶⁰¹ M. Wenk, *Community Forming Power: The Socio-Ethical Role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press), 329.

⁶⁰² Seim, *The Double Message*, 167.

⁶⁰³ Seim, *The Double Message*, 168.

dissolved (Luke 4:18-19). Here, Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, brings salvation from hunger, disease and oppression. The Pentecostal women from my fieldwork testified to how they were physically healed when they accepted the Holy Spirit.⁶⁰⁴ Third, the Holy Spirit dissolves gender, class and ethnic barriers, making it possible for all people to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-47). Last, whenever people are said to be filled with the Spirit or whenever the presence of the Holy Spirit is mentioned in Luke-Acts, there appears to be affirmation of life and freedom of existence (Luke 1:35; 4:17-18; 10:21 and Acts 2:17-18; Acts 2:38; 6:10 among others).⁶⁰⁵ This stands as the complete opposite of ‘unclean’ or evil spirits who enslave people with sickness, and makes them lose their integrity (they go out naked (Luke 8:27)).

Since by modern Pentecostal standards these are the last days inaugurated at Pentecost through the Holy Spirit, it is also the time when the concrete tangible work of the Holy Spirit should be demonstrated in the life of individual men and women within the Pentecostal community. The Pentecostal “resisting readers” from my fieldwork maintained that one expression of the liberating power of the Spirit is reading the Bible in ways that denounce the marginalization of women, so that women thrive inside and outside the church.

8.4. "What does this mean?" - Understanding Pentecost

The crowd in Acts 2:12 asked, “What does this mean?” Peter’s speech from verses 14-47 answers this question. By the end of his speech, the people knew what the coming of the Holy Spirit and the miracles that accompanied that event meant. The consequence of understanding Pentecost was the formation of a new community of believers who had received the Holy Spirit and had fellowship with each other in a community of equals (*koinonia*). The question “What does this mean” is relevant for Pentecostal women today. One Pentecostal woman encouraged others to rephrase this question and ask “*What does Pentecost mean for Pentecostal women today?*”⁶⁰⁶ To answer this question is to engage in a reader response exercise of imagination and interpretation in order to appropriate and

⁶⁰⁴ Whether the healing was verified by doctors or not is not the main point, the main point for me and them was that they were demonstrating that the Holy Spirit does not function in an abstract manner, but in tangible ways. This is one of the strengths of Pentecostal hermeneutics; miracles still happen and Scripture becomes real. However, this aspect is not applied when it comes to women who are faced with oppression from culture and social injustice.

⁶⁰⁵ The story of Sapphira and Ananias might not be perceived in this way. Without getting into discussions of whether it was right or wrong for them to die, the couple lied about the proceeds of their property. According to Luke, not only did they lie to the community, they lied to the Holy Spirit who seeks nothing but the truth.

⁶⁰⁶ INT10MaONEFZR60+ 22August 2011.

actualise the meaning of the Pentecost event. Pentecost has created “an effective history, a tradition, through which the text is drawn forward from its past into our present. This tradition is simultaneously purified by and purifying of the text.”⁶⁰⁷ In this section I am giving my own interpretation of what Pentecost means and what it could mean to the women in the Pentecostal tradition if we are faithful to what it embodies.

8.4.1. Pentecost: A Never Ending Story

My entry point is that “Pentecost is a never-ending story” that Christians at different times can decontextualize and recontextualize through an openness to the work of the Holy Spirit. Unlike other feminist scholars, I hold that the events of Acts can happen and can be experienced by 21st century Christians within their contexts. Pentecost is not an abstract event that happened during the early church. Since the activity of the Holy Spirit is to recontextualize texts for us, the charismatic manifestation of the Spirit can still happen today. Therefore, Pentecost can live again. It is upon the belief in the charismatic manifestation of the Spirit that spaces of liberation in regards to Pentecostal hermeneutics are open; the Bible becomes a text that is actualised and opened by the Spirit who is *experienced* and allowed to work in dynamic ways. This principle is saying that Scripture is not closed because the Holy Spirit is continually at work in prophecy, tongues and inspired speech and action.

8.4.2. Pentecost Levels Inequality

Since the Holy Spirit is continually opening scripture, there is legitimacy in arguing for a continuous revelation of Scripture which critiques the patriarchal silencing of women. This principle “explodes” the attempt on the part of some Pentecostals to entrench patriarchy within a “closed canon” principle. Pentecost overcame prejudice and exclusion of people at the margins. Here I agree with Jean-Jacques Suurmond who submits that the “Spirit poured upon all flesh” must be understood as signaling “a decisive new change in the relationship between God and the world and thus also in a relationship between human beings”.⁶⁰⁸ Pentecost was an event that reconciled a world that was divided by gender, class, race and rank. Pentecost certainly gives “daughters” the ability to prophesy, but the gifts brought by the Spirit are not limited to some kind of church spiritual activity alone. Rather, Pentecost levels the hierarchies between men and women to initiate a community of equals in society,

⁶⁰⁷ Schneiders, “Feminist Ideology”, p. 8.

⁶⁰⁸ Jean Jacques Suurmond, *Word and Spirit at Play: Towards a Charismatic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 201, cited in Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 195.

at work, church and home. After Pentecost there should not be a place for a hermeneutic that still calls women into subordination and silence inside or outside the church. Yong developed a solid thesis to demonstrate how Pentecost dissolved ethnic divisions. While he develops his thesis on ethnicity in Acts, he observes the reality of women in the Pentecostal churches. He argues that the manifestation of the Spirit among Pentecostals gives women recognition concerning “things spiritual and ecclesial” while most pastoral and elder positions remain with men. Women exercise some authority in the Sunday school and women’s ministries and various contexts. However, women are still located “in spheres under male domination”.⁶⁰⁹ Even though he does not elaborate further, Yong states that Pentecostalism has failed to effect social transformation on the issue of sexism.⁶¹⁰ This is the case with Pentecostals in Botswana. The women in my study elaborated on this.

*Pentecost makes men and women equal on a spiritual level, women can preach both in the church and crusades, they can lead praise and worship, they preach on Sunday. But the Holy Spirit does not make men equal to women on a day to day basis. This means that in terms of authority, men have the authority over women at home and even in the church.*⁶¹¹

*We are equal before God yes, but because we live in this world that has divisions, and where people are categorised in terms of the titles, the Holy Spirit makes men and women equal in dilo tsa moya, (in spiritual things) like prayer, praise and worship, and speaking in tongues.*⁶¹²

The “resisting readers” in my group were able to highlight how this “spiritual equality” is problematic because it limits the power of the Holy Spirit to

*Transform relationship between men and women, not just at a spiritual level but also at social levels. So that when we attend marriage negotiation for our children, the Spirit is there making us equal to men.*⁶¹³

⁶⁰⁹ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 40.

⁶¹⁰ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 42.

⁶¹¹ CBS7GonnaFDU20+ 15 November 2011

⁶¹² INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011; CBS7MphoFDU20+ 15 November 2011.

⁶¹³ FCBommeFDu20+21 July 2011.

The women were essentially pointing to other possible roles that Pentecost can play, thus confirming Yong's thesis that the Holy Spirit has the capacity to empower in "concrete and political ways" and that Pentecost can effect not only equality in terms of human standing before God but also in terms of male-female relationships in the home, the churches and the society.⁶¹⁴ Based on the Pentecostal women's argument above, I maintain that if Pentecost inaugurates God's universal salvation for men and women through the Holy Spirit, then the equality it endows should transcend gender barriers and move men and women into social, cultural and political equality.

8.4.3. Pentecost: Transforming Spheres of Oppression into Spheres of Liberation

Acts 2 legitimates the status of women. It is a contradiction for a woman to prophesy in church in the same way that a man can, while that equality is denied at home and the society. The present Pentecostal hermeneutic operates in this way; while women can prophesy under the infilling of the Holy Spirit, they are still instructed through the use of the Bible to remain second class citizens. This means they are still left on the periphery even though Pentecost is a rejection of exclusion and marginalization. The Pentecost narrative was communal, *all* are praying, *all* are assembled (2:1), *all* are filled with the Spirit (2:4), the Spirit is for *all* flesh (2:17), the Holy Spirit is given to 'each of you' (2:37). Now if Pentecostal women are excluded through a hermeneutic that holds that they are second class citizens, the Pentecostal church is not being true to Pentecost which they claim forms the core of their theologies and who they are. They deny the social-political consequence of Pentecost and by doing that Pentecostals fail to transform the religious landscape in Botswana and elsewhere. They fail to be relevant in a country where one of the greatest challenges is gender inequality. Pentecostal churches' influence should be felt in making women visible in Botswana instead of confirming the subordinate status of women to men in Botswana society. Samuel Kutty critiqued the treatment of Dalits in Indian Pentecostal churches and his argument that "Pentecostals preached equality but practiced inequality".⁶¹⁵ This resonates with my encounter with Pentecostalism in Botswana. I have demonstrated in the previous chapters that oppression and exclusion of women exists within the Pentecostal church through the use of the Bible. I have attempted from chapter 6 to argue that exclusion is inimical to the true spirit of Pentecost and Acts 2 as a whole. Pentecost is egalitarian, transformative and empowering.

⁶¹⁴ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Upon All Flesh*, 45.

⁶¹⁵ S. Kutty, *The Place and Contribution of Dalits in Select Pentecostal Churches in Central Kerala from 1922 to 1972* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), 119, cited by Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 57.

The manifestation of a Pentecostal church living in the era of the Holy Spirit should be the equal treatment of men and women at home, church and society, as well as equality between social classes and age groups. The Pentecost event and Acts 2:1-47 stand as a critique to the Pentecostal church for marginalising women through hermeneutics thus denying them the “gladness of heart”.

8.4.4. Pentecost Critiques Luke-Acts: “All Prophecies shall be fulfilled.”

In the previous sections I have already mentioned that it is possible for texts to explode the patriarchies and prejudices of the very world that produced them (See also Schneiders). What this means is that we can use the primary narrative of the gift of the Spirit against the Luke’s secondary narrative frame to critique the world of the text. In this thesis I hold that the foundational event of Pentecost can indeed be used to critique the rhetorical patriarchal framework of Luke-Acts as a whole. Apart from critiquing the Pentecostal church, the event of Pentecost and its continuing power ironically subverts and critiques the narrative of Luke-Acts itself for sometimes failing to implement the equality of all people and especially for the apparent voicelessness of women. Acts has failed to live up to Joel’s inclusive paradigm even after raising expectations that “daughters” will prophesy. It is true that there is no woman who actively prophesies in Acts. Phillip has four daughters who are said to be prophets but they are silent, we do not know the contents of their prophecies (Acts 21:9). However, that these women are silent does not take away from the fact that there were women prophets who were filled with the Holy Spirit during Luke’s time. The mention of the nameless four female prophets attests to the existence of female prophets in the early church. Whether Luke writes about them or not, he has already made his readers believe that indeed the “sons and daughters” shall prophesy. That vision critiques his silence about the “prophesying daughters”. Like all prophecies in Luke which were fulfilled, this one will be fulfilled too, regardless of this silence and his intentions; *the text now means what it means*. When I read this text with Pentecostal women in Botswana they compared themselves to these daughters of Phillip; they too have the Spirit but they are kept silent. What was profound was that they insisted that Phillip’s daughters were kept silent but they were not oppressed. They too (Pentecostal women) may be ignored and silenced but they are not oppressed because they have a greater power who will never silence them.

Reid cautions the reader of Luke-Acts not to look to Luke's narrative for clues that women and men participated equally in the Jesus movement because "we will be disappointed".⁶¹⁶ I agree that readers will be disappointed, but they should not despair because Luke's Pentecost narrative undermines and critiques Luke's silence on prophetic women. I have already argued that Luke-Acts exists in tensions and contradictions. While it anticipates mutuality, equality and inclusivity, the rhetoric of Luke's story sometimes undermines women and writes them off. Who is silencing these women? Clearly according to Luke's admission it is not the Holy Spirit, because the "daughters will prophesy". Luke's silencing of prophetic women demonstrates the limiting factor of his culture and his rhetoric which conceals what the Holy Spirit can do, but the intentions of the "implied author" do not in any way constrain our recontextualizing and appropriation to discern what the text means for Batswana women today. Both Luke's culture and rhetoric need to be highlighted, critiqued and resisted, what Schneiders calls decontextualization.⁶¹⁷ When prophetic women are silenced, we are able to read against this silence by using narratives of Pentecost to critique the rhetorical thrust of Luke-Acts, those narratives invites us to do that.⁶¹⁸ The way Luke narrates his story leaves Spirit filled women nameless and voiceless, but Pentecost tells its own story of women who speak, who are part of the community of equals that Luke presents in the last verses of chapter 2. Pentecost as a "never ending story" of the unfolding of God's plan for renewal and empowerment explodes Luke's patriarchal orientation. If the Holy Spirit was able to critique the limiting factors of Jewish and Roman cultures, the same Holy Spirit critiques the rhetoric of Luke-Acts in its exclusion of women. Yong argues that prophecy "never ceases, instead it is denied, ignored, neglected or rejected".⁶¹⁹ Even if Luke places female prophecy in the background of his story, female prophecy will never cease through Pentecost as the ministry of women bursts the constraints of the narrative. I concur with Beverly Gaventa who holds that Acts 2 "stands only partially fulfilled".⁶²⁰ Until it is fulfilled, it will haunt and critique the whole of Luke-Acts and it will also critique the Pentecostal church and its hermeneutics. The resisting readers clarified this for me during the CBS when one woman said:

The Spirit empowers me in this culture where a woman is a child. Both the church and the culture make me feel disabled, yet the Holy Spirit in me

⁶¹⁶ See Reid, *Choosing the Better Part?*, 3-4.

⁶¹⁷ Schneiders, 'Feminist Ideology Criticism,' p. 7-9.

⁶¹⁸ Schneiders, 'Feminist Ideology Criticism,' p. 7-9.

⁶¹⁹ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 142.

⁶²⁰ Gaventa, *Whatever Happened to Those Prophesying Daughters*, 60.

*has helped singlehandedly raise two doctors and an engineer while my husband died in 1975. Who can tell me that my achievements are not adequate? To me I know I did these things because the Holy Spirit was not manipulated by what the church tells me; that I am weak, nor was the Holy Spirit manipulated by the culture that said a woman needs a man. All I ever needed was the Holy Spirit and no one can deny that I am what I am because the Holy Spirit made me regardless of my culture.*⁶²¹

The strength of this argument is that the Holy Spirit cannot be constrained and contained by patriarchal structures and cultures.

8.5. Summary

In this chapter I reiterated the importance of the Pentecost narrative to Pentecostal theologies. Then I discussed the centrality of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts to demonstrate the Holy Spirit's liberatory work. I proceeded to give my own reading of Pentecost as the space where all people should be affirmed, not just spiritually but socially as well. Pentecost then becomes a critique of the manifestation of patriarchy within the Pentecostal church and Luke-Acts. If Pentecost is understood as one of the moments in Luke-Acts where hierarchies are leveled then there is no place for hermeneutics that still call women into subordination within the very church that identifies with Pentecost in name and theology. Pentecost offers a legitimate reason for Pentecostal men and women to be on an equal platform socially, culturally, economically and spiritually. This should not be a problem because Acts 2 is already central to Pentecostal theologies in Botswana and elsewhere.

The following chapter attempts a construction of a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic. It provides and explains principles that should guide liberatory Pentecostal frames of reading. This thesis has demonstrated that the way the Bible is currently read to and by some women in the Pentecostal church is marginalising. Therefore, there is a need to develop new hermeneutical principles which could be used within Pentecostal communities in order to transform them into communities which exist in mutuality and genuine fellowship.

⁶²¹ CBS7BonnoFDU20+ 15 November 2011.

CHAPTER 9

PRINCIPLES OF A PENTECOSTAL FEMINIST HERMENEUTIC

9.0. Introduction

The previous chapter gave attention to the centrality of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts. I argued that since Acts 2 with its emphasis on the Holy Spirit is central to Pentecostals, then it should critique the patriarchal orientation of the Pentecostal church especially in regards to hermeneutics that marginalise women. Although Pentecostal theologies derive from Acts 2, the significance of the Pentecost event in levelling relationships between men and women is not fully embraced within the Pentecostal church.

This chapter aims at developing principles of a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic. Some of the principles that guide this hermeneutic are lifted from the fieldwork extracts. The reason for undertaking empirical research and engaging with Pentecostal women in reading Luke-Acts was so that I will learn from and listen to them and then generate theory that is influenced by their interpretations and insights. These principles remain at a theoretical level; however, the strength of these principles lies in the actual engagement with Pentecostals. I have given these women a voice by engaging with them as women. This has not happened in my community. My next project after completing my studies would be to actualize these, so that they become tools of transformation within the Pentecostal church in Botswana. The principles I suggest draw from the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic in that the centrality of the Bible, the Holy Spirit, the importance of experience and the centrality of Pentecostal community is foregrounded in this new liberating Pentecostal hermeneutic. However, this liberating hermeneutic offers new ways of reading the Bible that engage with the reality of gender oppression and inequality within the Pentecostal church.

The strength of the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic lies in the fact that both men and women trained or untrained are allowed to read and to interpret the Bible in the midst of an assembly. The Pentecostal churches should ideally be places where women are affirmed, more than other branches of Christianity. While there is a sense that the Pentecostal space can be affirming to women, I have already established that it is a space of both exclusion and embrace.

9.1. Introducing the Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic

Before I outline the principles that should guide a *Pentecostal* (where the role of the Spirit in the lives of Pentecostal women and in interpretation is emphasised) and feminist (where the concern is on the liberation of all human beings especially women) hermeneutic, let me briefly define it. First, the Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic embodies both the hermeneutic of trust that underlies the traditional Pentecostal hermeneutic in regards to the Bible as liberatory, but engages the hermeneutic of suspicion in regards to the interpretation of the Bible and how the other aspects of the traditional Pentecostal hermeneutic (Spirit, experience and community) are applied. This requires a balance between the hermeneutic of suspicion (a feminist approach) and the hermeneutic of trust (the Pentecostal approach). Second and most important, it derives its authority from Luke-Acts, especially Acts 2, a text which is already central to Pentecostal theologies and doctrines. Third, because it derives from Acts 2, a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic is firmly rooted in the Pentecostal traditions. It takes the role of the Holy Spirit and the Bible in interpretation seriously while taking the real life experiences of oppression, exclusion and marginalization of women seriously too. It is driven by justice and the equality of men and women in church and society, which is embodied in the Acts 2 model. Therefore, it is a hermeneutic that critiques the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic which does not challenge the pervasive marginalisation of women within the church and society. Fourth, it is a hermeneutic that is concerned with the real life consequences of interpretation because interpretation produces stereotypes that are internalized, believed and lived out as the Pentecostal women's rhetoric demonstrated in chapter 5. Fifth, it calls the Pentecostal church to be a space of liberation and affirmation. I saw the possibility of this happening during fieldwork when women had the space to read the Bible together and some affirmed the liberating power of the Spirit. Sixth, this hermeneutic requires accountability and responsibility from community members to others in regards to interpreting the Bible. Communities must be responsible with the kinds of interpretations they advance and the agendas that drive them. All members must be held responsible about why and how they privilege certain texts over others and why they interpret the Bible the way they do. Accountability and responsibility means asking questions such as "Is the interpretation coming out of Pentecostal communities inclusive and affirming to all members of the community? Last, it is a hermeneutic that proposes new ways of being that recognise all dimensions of human existence, the social, economic and spiritual, as equally important.

All of these aspects of humanity must find affirmation through Scripture interpretations that emerge from Pentecostal communities.

In this section below I propose eight principles of a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic. I will discuss them in turn.

9.2. The Principles of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic

9.2.1. The First Principle: Spirit-led Bible Interpretation is Life Giving and Life Affirming

The way the Bible is read and interpreted influences the way people live and conduct themselves, i.e., interpretation is lived out. Interpretation of the Bible must be life affirming and life giving. Yielding fruits is not a foreign concept for Pentecostals; testimonies, miracles and outward expressions of charisma are seen as fruits of faith. One of the fruits of the present Pentecostal hermeneutic are women who read the Bible in order to belittle themselves and to advance their marginalization using the Bible as I have demonstrated in chapter 5. It is a fact that biblical interpretation bears fruits and those fruits can either lead to the fullness of life or to the denial of that life. If the fruits of the interpretation include subordination and exclusion, then such an interpretation must either be rejected, or renegotiated. Scriptural interpretation is a process and Pentecostals have to be open to the work of the Spirit who can drive them into interpretations of the Bible which are transformative. The centrality of the Spirit in hermeneutics within the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic is a resource. As I demonstrated in chapter 4, the Spirit opens possibilities for multiple interpretations of one text. Pentecostal pastors in Botswana are known to preach on one text for weeks, and each week a new interpretation is offered. However, when it comes to texts about women and submissions to male authority, Pentecostals do not allow texts to have multiple meanings, the texts are forever closed; they are given the same interpretation over and over.

Pentecostal feminist hermeneutics challenge interpretations of the Bible that make women who are filled with the Holy Spirit see themselves as “grasshoppers”. Rather, this hermeneutic holds that, “to embrace intimate experience of the Spirit is to claim the power to challenge dominant ideologies”.⁶²² The interpretations that emerge from within the Pentecostal church must yield life, in its fullness for all men and women, and at present that

⁶²² Crumbley, D.H., ‘Sanctified Saints –Impure Prophetesses: A Cross- Cultural Reflection on Gender and Power in Two Afro- Christian Spirit Privileging Churches’ In *Philip’s Daughters*, p.93, pp.74-94.

is not the case. My fieldwork shows that the impetus will come from the women themselves as they discover the liberating potential of the Spirit; otherwise they will remain subordinate for a long time. Pentecostal feminist interpretations challenge the Pentecostal church to take a look at the relationships between men and women and be challenged to allow the Spirit to level the hierarchies between them, so that genuine transformation can take place and the results can be demonstrated in the way that men and women live in the community and in their homes. Women who are affirmed both within and outside the Pentecostal church are a demonstration of the fruits of a liberating hermeneutic.

9.2.2. The Second Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Acts 2:1-47 should be a Standard that Determines Acceptable Interpretation within Pentecostal Circles.

All the Pentecostal theologies converge in this chapter of Acts; it is a manifesto for Pentecostals. Pentecostals in Botswana confirmed that all their important theologies, the theology of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, being born again, being saved, being baptised and living as a distinct community of the Spirit - converge in this chapter. These theologies are the distinct “marks” of the Pentecostal church in Botswana. However, the present Pentecostal hermeneutic fails to engage Acts 2 to advance the equality between men and women even while this text embodies that equality. The present Pentecostal hermeneutic fails to acknowledge that Pentecost levelled and continues to level hierarchies and divisions between people and between men and women in particular. The focus of the Pentecostal church is on what they term “spiritual levelling” of men and women, in that women can prophesy under the Spirit in the same way that men do, however, that equality does not translate into the equality of men and women beyond the spiritual. Pentecostals do not focus on the characteristics of the community described clearly in verse 42 where spiritual, economic and social hierarchies are levelled as well. The effect of Pentecost was not just spiritual, the effect of Pentecost transformed relations between men and women into relationships of mutuality and equality. However, Pentecostals fail through their blinkered interpretation of the Bible to translate “spiritual equality” into the social equality between men and women. However, the continuing revelation provided by the Holy Spirit that is embodied in the Pentecostal hermeneutic also calls us to critique the evident voicelessness of women in the text itself which subverts Scripture’s own account of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on men and women in Joel and Acts. The continuing outpouring of the Holy Spirit necessarily calls us to be critical of the fact that Acts 2, even though it offers a potential for liberation is still conveying a “double message.” However, the Pentecostal approach of

allowing the Holy Spirit to continually offer new ways of understanding the text is in itself offering a critique and opening the church to new ways of obedience to the Holy Spirit in the world today. To approach a text in this way is not to abandon my Pentecostal hermeneutic but to sharpen and intensify it. The Batswana Pentecostal women in my study suggested that Acts 2 become a “canon within a canon.” While I am in agreement with them, Acts 2 can only begin to be a genuine “canon within the canon” if it is allowed to be recontextualized through the Holy Spirit so that it explodes both the patriarchal structures of voicelessness within the text itself and voicelessness within the Pentecostal churches. The writer of Luke-Acts began by presenting a community that gave only men a voice. It is Peter, men and brothers who are often mentioned. Verse 42-47 presents a community of the Spirit with no emphasis on gender. Whether this is taken up and practiced throughout Luke-Acts is not a pressing issue at this point. What is important is that the classic texts for Pentecostals have a place where men and women were equal, spiritually, socially and economically even if it is silenced by subsequent patriarchal interpretations. Therefore, as a Pentecostal feminist, I regard this text as criterion to be used to judge all other interpretations that come out of our hermeneutic. Pentecostals can challenge the inferior social status of women in Botswana by using this text in the same way that they use this text for defending the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. This should not be difficult because Acts 2 is already a classic text for Pentecostals. Any sexist, exclusivist and negative interpretations of the Bible can be rejected on the basis of not living up to the ideals of this text, where all members are equal through the power of the Holy Spirit. Through Acts 2, Pentecostals will be able to be responsible and accountable towards each other in their interpretation. Based on my argument in chapter 6 that Luke is affirming to women and based on chapter 7 that Pentecost judges both the rhetoric of Luke-Acts and the Pentecostal church, I can positively answer my research question, “Can the text of Luke-Acts provide a basis for developing principles to construct a Pentecostal hermeneutic that is liberating for women?” This text is a resource that the Pentecostal community can use to affirm women within the tradition and to counter the marginalisation of women that characterises the Botswana community. The Pentecostal church could be a in the forefront in affirming women through using the Acts 2 model.

9.2.3. The Third Principle Undergirding a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Redeem the Spirit from a Masculine Voice

Almost all the Pentecostal scholars I referred to in chapter 4 invariably refer to the Holy Spirit as a male and therefore use the pronoun *he*.⁶²³ Ascribing the male gender to the OT and NT words for Spirit, that can take a feminine or even neuter form, by Pentecostal scholars betrays their scholarly exercise and seriously limits their engagement with the implications of the role and liberatory function of the presence and infilling of the Holy Spirit. The OT Hebrew word for the Spirit is *ruach* which means wind or breath and it is in the feminine form, especially as used in Genesis 1:2. The NT word for Spirit, *pneuma*, means breath or life spirit and it is grammatically neuter. It is clear that the incarnate Jesus is male and that the church has constructed God as male; referring to the Holy Spirit as a male merely continues this trend. Therefore, the Trinity is understood as male in total. Pentecostal scholars easily call the Holy Spirit ‘He’ without at least acknowledging the complexity of the gender of the word itself. Hollenweger makes the profound statement that the Holy Spirit should be seen as “ruach Yahweh” meaning the “life-giving, life sustaining Spirit of God following the Old and New Testament”. He goes on to argue that *ruach* is female.⁶²⁴ Schüssler Fiorenza confirms that the Spirit of God is grammatically feminine both in the Hebrew and Aramaic and it is sometimes used interchangeably with *sophia* in the NT, for example in Phil. 2:6-11.⁶²⁵ As a way of breaking this hegemony I shall refer to the Spirit as “she” henceforth.

Similarly, Pentecostal men and women in Botswana refer to the Holy Spirit as ‘he’ when they spoke in English, but when they spoke in Setswana they used *o*, which is neither male nor female. The word for Holy Spirit in Setswana is *Moya o boitshepo* and it does not have a gender attached to it, such that the Holy Spirit can be both a he and she. It came as a surprise that upon further interrogation the Holy Spirit is imagined as male and *must* be referred to as ‘he’ in Pentecostal circles. The respondents justified this by saying:

He is part of the Godhead

⁶²³ See for example, A. Anderson, “Stretching the Definition of Pneumatology and ‘Syncretism’ in African Pentecostalism,” *JPT* 10, no.1 (2001), 101; C. de Smidt, “Hermeneutical Perspectives on the Spirit in the Book of Revelation,” *JPT* 4 (1999), 27-47; Johns, *Pentecostal Formation*, 135-137; Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 205.

⁶²⁴ Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 219.

⁶²⁵ Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 188.

We know that God is our father and Jesus was male, so there is no way the Holy Spirit cannot be male.

*He is an extension of a male God.*⁶²⁶

A suggestion by me to my respondents to refer to the Holy Spirit as both male and female was met with resistance from all the pastors and some of the women. The refusal to refer to the Holy Spirit as both masculine and feminine shows Pentecostals' inability's to subvert gender binaries. This is problematic because it unmasks a consistent sexist agenda to make the Trinity male in order to exclude and marginalise women, as I have already demonstrated in chapter 5. Further, rigidly imaging the Trinity as male only means that a Pentecostal hermeneutic places the saving power of the Holy Spirit in masculinity; the Spirit liberates as long as he is male, and imaging the Spirit as anything else is blasphemy.

Ascribing masculinity to the Spirit within Pentecostal hermeneutics means that the Spirit is co-opted into supporting male supremacy and hierarchy. This perception assumes that the Holy Spirit knows, supports, and maintains the Pentecostal church's hierarchy which informs how men and women think about gender. This was confirmed by one of the young women in Molepolole, who says:⁶²⁷

Listen, hear, God is not the God of confusion, the woman has the Spirit yes, but her roles still remain her roles, we serve God who cannot cause confusion in the assembly. The Holy Spirit is no respecter of persons when it comes to gifts [he] gives, but it does not mean that a woman stops being a woman just because she has the same Spirit that a man has. The Holy Spirit, who is God, understands that hierarchy is there to maintain order. So women can preach, can prophesy and teach as long as she has the Spirit who will actually teach her how to behave like a godly woman. However, if there is a man over her in that office, then the man should have the last word.

A Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic that I propose challenges this rigid use of masculine language to refer to the Holy Spirit both among Pentecostal scholars, pastors and Pentecostals

⁶²⁶ CBS7 15 November 2011.

⁶²⁷ CBS4OpeloFDR20+ 14 April 2012.

in the pew. I suggest that the Holy Spirit remain at least grammatically neuter, if scholars are unwilling to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit can be feminine. More so I maintain that the Spirit can exist without a male voice. The saving power of the Holy Spirit remains, regardless of how we imagine her.

9.2.4. The Fourth Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: the Spirit Subverts Culture, the Bible and Pentecostal Community⁶²⁸

This principle comes from the extracts below:

The Spirit is a power that is beyond us, beyond the laws that we make that says women are weaker, the Holy Spirit has come to destroy the bondage that was imposed on women, culturally and physically, the Holy Spirit sets free. If the Bible says women must be silent and if they must be under the authority of the man, then the Holy Spirit says that all men and women must not be bound by those laws.... I listen to the Holy Spirit much more than I listen to the Bible and the Pastor, and the church. Plus I do not know how to read that much, so the voice I hear when I sleep and when I am walking is that of the Holy Spirit. He is with me all the time and I do not carry the Bible with me all the time...No culture or church can oppress me, I have been set free. The structures that are controlled by men can marginalise me, but not oppress me.⁶²⁹

The Holy Spirit is power that goes beyond our cultures, our languages, our perceptions and even the Bible. The Holy Spirit can critique us as well, he can direct us, interact with us to transcend barriers that make men more important than women...Yes I think the Holy Spirit can actually critique the Bible and the church. Look the Bible has stories that are terrifying, for example the Bible authorises the annihilation of races, look at the story of how the Israelites took over Canaan in Judges, the Holy Spirit will critique those texts today, he can say it is wrong to kill isn't it? He says and I believe that he is even now critiquing the Pentecostal

⁶²⁸ Before translating their words which were in Setswana for MaOne and a mix of Setswana and English for Rethabile, I asked these two women how I should translate the pronoun for Holy Spirit and they both said I should use "he".

⁶²⁹ INT10MaONEFZR60+ 22August 2011.

*church and our pastors for telling women that they are made from a rib and therefore cannot be equal to men.*⁶³⁰

These words from these “resisting” Pentecostal readers demonstrates that they approached the Bible with a “little suspicion,” although they will never admit that their approach was suspicious not only to Pentecostal frames of reading, but to the Bible as well. The fact that in the first extract, the woman said she does not know how to read and that she does not carry the Bible with her all the time means that she encounters the Spirit without the mediation of the Bible. In both extracts the women argued that since Pentecostals are “people of the Spirit”, authority does not lie in Scripture only but in the dynamic liberating power of the Spirit who is with them at all times. Further, they demonstrate ways in which Pentecostal women insert their experiences of the Holy Spirit into the ambiguity that surrounds Pentecostal hermeneutics. That is why it is possible for them to argue that they are *marginalized* but they are not *oppressed*. Pentecostal women are claiming that while Biblical interpretations within the Pentecostal community are used to exclude and marginalize them, the Holy Spirit challenges and critiques their subordination as she subverts both Scripture and culture. It is subversive to hear a Pentecostal woman in Botswana say that *I listen to the Holy Spirit much more than I listen to the Bible and the Pastor, and the church.*

A Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic takes seriously the role of the Spirit in interpretation for this very reason; she is able to challenge and critique values, practices and Biblical interpretation that excludes any group of people. I have already demonstrated in chapter 7 that where ever the Holy Spirit is mentioned in Luke-Acts, there is life and restoration of life. Barriers such as gender, culture and ethnicity that exclude some people from experiencing God’s love and grace are overturned. The Holy Spirit becomes the ultimate power and giver of life and justice. From the responses of the women above, cultures, the Bible and Biblical interpretations and human beings submit to the authority of the Holy Spirit, who gives fullness of life.

9.2.5. The Fifth Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Consistency

The present Pentecostal hermeneutic is characterised by inconsistency in two main ways. The first is the application of narrative or historical texts versus didactic texts. The second way is

⁶³⁰ INT17RethabileFDeU30+ 8 September 2011.

in regards to the authority and shape of Scripture; the 4I's discussed in chapter 4. I will discuss this in turn below.

9.2.5.1. The Selective Application of Narrative versus Didactic Texts

Fee and Powers point out that Pentecostals in general often do not distinguish between didactic and historical portions of the Bible. Pentecostals also tend to translate the “descriptive history” of the early Church period into the “normative experience” for the church today.⁶³¹ However, Powers⁶³² observes that most Pentecostals are selective as to how and when they apply such a hermeneutical principle. When they defend Spirit baptism, Pentecostals use the narrative texts, but when they instruct women to be subordinate to men they use didactic texts. Further, Powers notes that Pentecostals have a firm hermeneutic that refuses to accept distinctions between teaching passages and narrative passages. The hermeneutic that the Pentecostals refuse assumes that since Paul's writings were ‘teachings’ they were more authoritative than the narratives of the gospels and Acts. However, Pentecostals do not refuse this hermeneutical principle when they advance female subordination and male supremacy. Pentecostals want to make Paul's writings such as 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 the basis from which all other biblical texts about women must be interpreted. Powers laments that:

In doing this, Pentecostals have accepted a hermeneutical premise that they do not accept in discussing Spirit baptism with traditional Protestants – that there is clear distinction between the didactic portions of Scripture and the purely narrative portions and that doctrine should be constructed from these didactic portions and not from narrative accounts.⁶³³

On the basis of Powers' argument, Paul's work is not any more valid for advancing doctrine on the subordination of women than the historical narratives of the gospels and Acts, such that a liberating hermeneutic will be consistent and not selective in applying narrative and didactic texts equally to all doctrines. I have already established in chapter 1 and 6 that narrative passages in Luke-Acts, especially Acts 2, are used to formulate doctrine about

⁶³¹ G. Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent: A Major Problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics,” in *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism*, ed. P.S. Russell (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1976), 121; Powers, “Your Daughters Shall Prophesy,” 324.

⁶³² Powers, “Your Daughters Shall Prophesy,” 324.

⁶³³ Powers, “Your Daughters Shall Prophesy,” 328.

salvation and Spirit baptism, yet they are not perceived as normative for formulating church doctrine about gender equality. If this hermeneutical principle was not applied selectively, narrative texts such as Acts 2 could be used to formulate doctrine about women instead of Pauline teachings which were actually addressed to a specific community addressing a specific problem. One Pentecostal woman from Botswana articulated this selective use of didactic portions within the present Pentecostal hermeneutic when she said that:

*Within my church Pauline portions on slavery are not enforced, they are flatly critiqued by the Pentecostal church, however Paul's teachings about women and silence and subordination are enforced.*⁶³⁴

The Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic that I propose calls for consistency as a principle that determines Pentecostal frames of reading and interpreting the Bible that is the shape of Scripture in general. If narrative portions are good enough to formulate the core theologies of Pentecostal churches in Botswana, then they should be enough to formulate doctrines on the equality of men and women. If Pauline teachings on slavery are not 'enforced' and are 'flatly critiqued' then Paul's teachings on the subordination of women must not be enforced, as is happening in the present Pentecostal hermeneutic.

9.2.5.2 The application of the Authority of the Bible

The second way in which the present Pentecostal hermeneutic is inconsistent is the application of the authority of the Bible as the inerrant, inspired, and infallible and immediate word of God. Below I discuss these principles in order to highlight their problematic nature.

9.2.5.2.1. Bible as Inerrant

In chapter 4, I described inerrancy as the belief that the Bible is the reliable revelation of God and that it contains facts in all its parts. From the analysis of my data, it came to the fore that Pentecostals believe in pietistic inerrancy, which is a non-critical approach to the Bible that assumes all statements in the Bible are culturally and historically true. While this is what Pentecostals will say, they still find ways of "harmonising" statements that seem to contradict one another on different issues. For example, they will argue that Genesis 1:28, which claims that a man and a woman were made on the same day, is explained in detail in Genesis 2:22ff or they will argue that:⁶³⁵

⁶³⁴ INT17RethabileFDeU30+ September 8 2011.

⁶³⁵ INT12ThatoMSR30+ 16 April 2011.

Genesis 1:27 does not have much authority, it is an introduction to Genesis 2, which actually tells a complete story.

This is done so that there is no contradiction between the two texts and so that in the end male human beings emerge as powerful. They do the same with texts that have to do with women with devastating results. While the aim is to harmonise texts so that in the end male supremacy is advanced, it is the opposite to harmonising away those texts that have the potential to uplift the status of women. This is where the inconsistency with inerrancy becomes problematic. The following extract demonstrates this problem.

Gal. 3:28 should be read with the whole plan of God in mind. If Paul, for example said this, has he sustained this argument, does the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation support this argument? No it does not. Which means we read Gal. 3:28 as advocating the equality of men and women in the spiritual sense. It is accurate, but we need to understand it in a larger scale...the Bible does not err, this one needs to be read in conjunction with what the plan of God is about men and women and the plan of God is that a man is the head of the household.⁶³⁶

The agenda of the present Pentecostal hermeneutic is to subordinate and marginalise women so texts are harmonised to achieve this goal. Texts that advocate for the equality between men and women are harmonised with other texts and explained away so that in the end they are less authoritative as the rhetoric above demonstrates. This demonstrates some contradiction and ambiguity within the Pentecostal hermeneutic. Whatever Pentecostals say, not all texts are perceived as the “factual” word of God.

9.2.5.2.2. Bible as the Inspired Word of God

I demonstrated in chapter 4 that when Pentecostals call the Bible the ‘inspired word of God’, they mean that God dictated the words of the Bible to human authors who “functioned as human word processors”.⁶³⁷ This perception rules out the possibility that the Bible was produced within particular cultures and that human beings had a role to play in compiling it.

⁶³⁶ INT16KaboMDR50+ 3 Sep. 2011.

⁶³⁷ Warrington, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 182.

A Pentecostal hermeneutic stresses the inspiration of the Bible, yet there is a sense in which the principle is not applied with force to texts such as Galatians 3:28 and Acts 2:17-18. While Pentecostals refuse to acknowledge that the Bible was produced within a particular culture by groups and that it was written by groups of men, they want to enforce that cultural specificity on Gal. 3:28; that Paul was writing to *women in his times*.⁶³⁸ A Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic challenges this inconsistency by recognising that not all texts are perceived as inspired within Pentecostal frames of reading. Consistency is needed so that the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation is regarded as inspired; all narratives about slavery and violence are acknowledged as inspired. Consistency is also needed so that the whole of the OT is read and applied in the same way. Once it is put like this, then the difficulty of such a position becomes clear and more nuanced and a flexible approach to the Bible as the inspired word of God is adopted. At present, there are texts in the OT which are classic in the Pentecostal churches in Botswana and are more “inspired” than others - for example, Mal.3:10 to support tithing and Gen. 1 and 2 to support male supremacy. Then there are texts which are hardly read or referred to at all within Pentecostal traditions. By being consistent in acknowledging that the whole of the Bible is the inspired word of God, several things might happen. For one, the Pentecostal church will start to critically interrogate what inspiration is and what it means. If the whole Bible is taken as inspired, then a hermeneutical problem is created because there are texts that are problematic such as the ones that, for example, encourage bashing the heads of children.

Second, the role of human authors may be interrogated so that Pentecostal readers may grapple with the theological agendas and the patriarchal cultures that influenced the writers of the Bible. The present Pentecostal hermeneutic does not adequately account for the role of human beings in the production of the Bible, hence the need to proof text and to read the Bible literally. Third, Pentecostal readers of the Bible will begin to engage with difficult texts and narratives about women and to realise that it is not the “plan” of God for women to be subordinate to men. This exercise will force Pentecostals to consistently interrogate their agenda and ask themselves questions such as: Why is it that our hermeneutic does not consider all texts inspired in the same manner? Why is Pentecostal hermeneutics insistent on not privileging Gal 3:28 as the inspired word of God? What is at stake if texts that call women and men to equality are perceived as the inspired word of God? What would it mean

⁶³⁸ INT16KaboMDR50+ 3 Sep. 2011.

for Pentecostal women if Gal. 3:28 is considered as the inspired word of God? As Pentecostals ask these questions, they will be applying a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic which challenges the lack of consistency which characterises the present Pentecostal hermeneutic in regards to the Bible as the inspired word.

9.2.5.2.3. Bible as Infallible

The same selective disposition is also evident when it comes to the Bible as the infallible word of God. McClintock Fulkerson points out that the consequence of the Pentecostal's belief in the infallibility of Scripture means that all Scripture referring to women must be obeyed.⁶³⁹ However, she also argues that some texts have more interpretive power over others, for example, texts such as Gal. 3:28 are not obeyed. A Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic proposes that there should be consistency; let the message of all narratives of the whole Bible be true and factually correct. If the whole of the Bible is factually correct, Pentecostals will begin to critically engage with the hermeneutical problems that underlie their understanding of infallibility as well as the tensions and paradoxes that characterise their Biblical interpretation. The Bible carries stories of exclusion; God chooses Israel over and above other nations. We will discover patterns of exclusion of races and tribes, such that if Pentecostal frames of reading uncritically insist on the infallibility of Scripture they will realise that some people are actually excluded from participating in God's kingdom. Therefore, consistency and criticality should be at the centre of how the concept of infallibility is applied within Pentecostal hermeneutics.

9.2.5.2.4. Bible as Immediate Word of God

Pentecostal hermeneutics is also inconsistent in the application of the Bible as the immediate word of God. It is characterised by the application of the Bible in the present and there is an urgency to "make" the Bible speak in the immediate contexts of the Pentecostal believers. However, that urgency is not evident in the immediate contexts of women's oppression and marginalisation. In fact there is a sense that women in abusive relationships, for example, are expected to be patient because their happiness and solution to their problems is in heaven. The Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic challenges this inconsistency by pointing out that the reign of God in the books of Luke-Acts is already here. So that it is appropriate that the liberatory messages that Luke-Acts embody apply to the immediate contexts of women in

⁶³⁹ McClintock Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject*, 254.

abusive relationships. The immediacy of the Bible has to be applied to Pentecostal women in Botswana who occupy inferior status.

As one of the principles undergirding a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic, consistency ensures that hermeneutical processes within the Pentecostal churches are not selectively applied to different contexts. There is the need to find new ways of expressing the kind of hermeneutics of trust in regards to the authority of the Bible which underlies the traditional Pentecostal hermeneutic in more appropriate justice seeking ways. Pentecostals in Botswana are hermeneutically inconsistent and that always has implications for the role and position of women.

9.2.6. The Sixth Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Interpretation Must Happen within a Community of Men and Women as Equals

Pentecostals foreground community, as I have discussed in chapter 4. However, the role that the Pentecostal community plays in the lives of African women is both complex and challenging. While it is a home for them, it can also be constraining. Examples from Africa and elsewhere show that the Bible has been effectively used within Pentecostal communities to encourage women to remain in life denying relationships.⁶⁴⁰ This happens because it is men, at least in my context, who establish rules for reading and whose voice determines whether an interpretation of the Bible is acceptable or not or whether particular texts become prescriptive, normative or not. Even though women participate in Bible reading and interpretation in the assembly, they do not have the same authority as men to produce interpretations that determine practice. At the moment, the kinds of interpretation that emerge from the Pentecostal community result in the marginalisation of women.

The Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic holds that Pentecostal Bible reading communities have a responsibility to interpret the Bible in a way that enhances life and provides affirmation. This means being overt about who should read, why, what drives frames of interpretation, and what kinds of readings must emerge out of the community. What I am suggesting here is that every reading and interpretation of the Bible within Pentecostal groups should have an honest and critical agenda, to do mercy and justice. If Bible interpretation happens within a

⁶⁴⁰ T. Maluleke and S. Nadar, "Breaking the Covenant of Violence Against Women," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 114 (November 2002), 11; McClintock Fulkerson, *Changing the Subject*, 296.

community of men and women as equals, with an agenda to do mercy and justice, then their readings will critique, expose and denounce sexist interpretations of the Bible.

This is only possible in a community where all members have the same voice and authority to decide through the Holy Spirit whether texts are acceptable or not, if they empower or not. The Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic foregrounds the importance of community during interpretation, but calls for an inclusion of all members of the Pentecostal community especially women, who are in the margins at present. A Pentecostal community can only be empowering if both men and women are equally perceived as centres of authority, at home and in the church, and affirmed by Pentecostal biblical interpretation. This requires a level of openness so that new ways of being a community of equals is embraced. The Pentecostal women from my fieldwork suggested that this can happen as women themselves begin to believe that the Holy Spirit is the liberator and they are centres of the liberating power of the Spirit. This community also provides creative and free spaces for men and women to read the Bible in the full power of the Holy Spirit for the liberation of all for “it is only in conflict, debate, and agreement with the whole people of God, and also with non-Christian readers that we get a glimpse of what Scripture means”.⁶⁴¹

9.2.7. The Seventh Hermeneutical Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Focus on Spiritual Matters as well as the Social, Economic and Life Contexts of Women

Pentecostals have a selective dualistic understanding of the world. The world is divided into the spiritual and the social. The present Pentecostal hermeneutic focuses on spiritual things and experiences, because Pentecostals are not of this world. They focus on being born again, speaking in tongues, prayer, intercession and worship. While all these spiritual things are essential and very important to Pentecostal living, social, cultural and economic experiences are real and essential and they must be attended to as well. The dual understanding of the world is manifested in many ways. For the purposes of this study I will focus on three that I find problematic and that have a direct bearing on the marginalization of women.

9.2.7.1. Social Problems Need Prayer and a Social Solution

The first one is that social real life problems are “super spiritualized” and I will demonstrate this with the following example from my research. One Pentecostal woman told me that her

⁶⁴¹ Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 325.

husband earns a lot of money but he is always broke; it turns out he gambles. The couple sought counseling with the pastor and she said:

*I really needed a “worldly” solution, something that will solve our problems here and now. I was hoping that the pastor will address the problems caused by my husband’s gambling. My children do not have enough food, good toys and they do not have good clothes. The electricity bills have to be paid, I did not need to fast and pray about anything. I have been praying for a long time and there has been no change. The pastor encourages me to do with the little money in the house to cover my husband’s failures.*⁶⁴²

While it is true that prayer is central to Pentecostal living, it is clear that this is a social problem that needed prayer coupled with a practical solution here and now. For example, the couple can budget together, and divide financial responsibility among themselves; the list of solutions is endless. Instead, the pastor prayed for them and told them to pray hard because *the devil does not like Christian marriages*.

9.2.7.2. Focus on Experiences of Oppression

The second way in which Pentecostal hermeneutics manifests the dualistic understanding of the world is through a focus on spiritual experience versus experiences of oppression. I have demonstrated in chapter 4 that experience is a legitimate focus within the present Pentecostal hermeneutic. However, this experience is mostly of a “spiritual” nature, whereas an alternative might be to focus on other experiences too, experiences of women in patriarchal contexts, some of which might be life denying; these must also count.⁶⁴³ Stories of women being told to pray for solutions, being told to ‘suffer for the kingdom’ instead of leaving an abusive Pentecostal partner are many in Botswana and elsewhere, as I demonstrated in chapter 5. The discussion of the status of women in Botswana demonstrates that women experience marginalization socially, culturally and economically, yet these experiences of women are often downplayed or excluded within the present Pentecostal hermeneutics. A

⁶⁴² Int20Kena FDU40+ September 16, 2011.

⁶⁴³ Texts such as Luke 4:16-18 are read by some Pentecostals to refer to “spiritual poverty, spiritual blindness” instead of actually focusing on people who are hungry here and now. The texts make sense to them when they are referring to “spiritual things”. Texts such as Gal. 3:28 is interpreted to refer to spiritual equality rather than the social equality between men and women, in the here and now. CBS, Mogobane, July 18 2011: CBS, Mogobane August 2012.

Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic takes cognizance of the spiritual, social, cultural and economic experiences of women in patriarchal Botswana society and the Pentecostal church as a legitimate focus of biblical interpretation.

9.2.7.3. Salvation is Holistic

The third way the dualistic tendency of the Pentecostal hermeneutic is manifested is through their understanding of salvation. Within Pentecostals' frames of reading, salvation refers to the saving of the soul, versus the flesh which is mortal. The salvation of the soul is not tangible. This understanding is other worldly and there is a sense in which the Pentecostal should be immune to the problems of this world. While the world is faced with civil wars, HIV, child abuse and other social problems, the Pentecostal church reads these as *signs of the last days and we have to pray that more souls come to Christ and be saved*. Pentecostals are encouraged to see spiritual salvation, salvation for the soul, which paves a way for Pentecostals to enter heaven one day, where "there will be no war, no hunger". In this sense, salvation is abstract and does not translate into the social, political and economic. Such that when women are in life denying social and cultural situations and live in dire poverty, they are encouraged to seek the salvation of the soul. Further they are told that their salvation is in heaven. A Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic encourages members to seek both spiritual and this "world's" salvation. Yet God desires that God's children experience fullness of life here and now. There is no need for the spiritual and social salvation to exist in antagonism. A quote by Allen Anderson captures this. He writes:

The power of the Holy Spirit has more than just spiritual significance. It also has to do with dignity, authority and power over all types of oppression. God loves and desires the welfare of the whole person: and so needs his (sic) Spirit to bestow that divine, liberating ability and strength.⁶⁴⁴

Pentecostals are selective in applying this principle. For example when it comes to prosperity teachings, Pentecostals want the wealth here and now. It is common to hear Pentecostal preachers in Botswana say that;

⁶⁴⁴ A. Anderson, *Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1999), 63 .

The Bible says Abraham's blessings are mine. That means that the cars, the houses and the jobs are yours. I want all teachers to claim the top posts at the Ministry of Education; I want all the soldiers here to claim the position of the commanders of the army.

*God desires his (sic) children to drive Mercedes Benz now, God wants his children to have houses in Phakalane now. These riches are yours to enjoy here on earth.*⁶⁴⁵

While the prosperity theology is oriented towards release from economic oppression in the here and now, the same is not extended to the oppressive situations women face in the here and now.

9.2.8. The Eighth Principle of a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic: Interpretation must be a Meeting Place of the Intellect and the Holy Spirit

Extracts from two of the respondents capture this principle:

*In the 21st century, it is just wrong for the Bible to be used to tell women that they are below men in any shape and form. In the secular world women are moving high up, laws are changing to give women equal opportunity to be anything that men can be. Why does the church still want to remain outdated like that? The reason why Pentecostal men and women read the Bible in the way that makes women inferior is because they fail to realise that reading the Bible is an intellectual exercise as much as it is a spiritual exercise. I mean intellectual as in a "I can THINK" way, the "I have brains" way. We do not ask ourselves if an interpretation is relevant today or not.*⁶⁴⁶

What can we do, in the Bible we encounter God yes, but the Bible has also been misinterpreted. Can the Holy Spirit be misinterpreted? I think if women are to set themselves free, then we should interpret the Bible with our minds and invite the Holy Spirit to open our minds to hear what God

⁶⁴⁵ PO, 19 August 2011. Phakalane is one of the top suburbs in Botswana.

⁶⁴⁶ INT17RethabileFDeU30+ September 8 2011.

*is saying to us in the 21st century. The problem with our pastors is they claim to rely on the Holy Spirit only. This is a good thing because we are Pentecostals, we are led by the Holy Spirit. But I also think that God wants us to think through our interpretations. The Holy Spirit leads us to right interpretation like a father leads an intelligent child. The child is guided to walk through life making intelligent choices because she can think about what her father told her. The same with the Holy Spirit, [he] guides us but he still wants us to think through what he tells us. Is someone hurt by the way I interpret the Bible? Does my reading make a child of God feel less about herself? If the answer is yes, then we have to apply our minds so that we come up with interpretation that affirms through the Holy Spirit.*⁶⁴⁷

Studies suggest that Pentecostals often rely on the illumination of the Holy Spirit only to guide them in interpreting the Bible and they are “simply an innocent, unmediated voice of the Spirit”.⁶⁴⁸ Yet the women argued that this has not been helpful within Pentecostal frames of reading. A claim for relying on the Spirit only has led many women and men to believe that the Holy Spirit approves of the marginalization of women within the Pentecostal churches.

These Pentecostal women are affirming that the Holy Spirit is an essential part of interpretation; however, she does not function in an abstract way. She functions in ways that affirm the intellect and the capability of human beings to think about the ways interpretation can “hurt” or make another person feel “less” about themselves. Critical reading of the Bible is exercised under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and it is the exercise of the intellect to open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This principle contradicts the present Pentecostal hermeneutic where interpretation is often ascribed to what “the Spirit says” and not what “I think the Spirit says”, as well.

While there is an insistence that it is only the Holy Spirit who interprets the Bible, my experience with how Pentecostals actually read the Bible tells a different story. Pentecostals engage their intellect as they move back and forth between texts that subordinate women and supporting practices within the Setswana cultures. The women are suggesting that they let the

⁶⁴⁷ CBS4BotsileFDR20+ 14 April 2011.

⁶⁴⁸ Nadar, “The Bible Says!,” 157.

meeting of the intellect and the Holy Spirit produce interpretations that take cognizance of the times and context we live in (*in the 21st century*), and that are affirming (*does my reading make a child of God feel less about herself?*). The Holy Spirit becomes a power who transforms relationships of domination through diligent critical reading of texts and contexts through the mind of a believer. This transformation can only take place if there is genuine engagement between the Spirit and intellect. The present Pentecostal hermeneutic becomes inadequate in addressing the marginalization of women because of the over-reliance on the Spirit only.

A Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic places emphasis on both the reliance on the Holy Spirit and the intellect so that Pentecostal communities are transformed by Scripture reading and interpretation. The intellect alone will never transform texts into sources of life and an overreliance on the Holy Spirit is as dangerous as literalist readings of the Bible.

9.3. Summary

This chapter was a construction of a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic. I proposed eight principles that should define this hermeneutic that challenges exclusion and marginalisation of all people, especially Pentecostal women. The above principles could be central to Pentecostal biblical interpretation as they mutually reinforce each other. The application of these hermeneutical principles will make Pentecostalism truly at home on the African continent and among the African people, especially Batswana women.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

10.0 Thesis Conclusion

The previous chapter proposed the principles undergirding a Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic, a hermeneutic of liberation that takes Pentecostal traditions seriously. This chapter is a brief summary of this thesis and offers recommendations for further research.

The aim of this thesis was to construct a Pentecostal Feminist Biblical Hermeneutic, a way of reading the Bible within the Pentecostal church that takes women's experiences seriously. This thesis was born out of the reality that Pentecostal Batswana women inhabit patriarchal spaces, both within the church and outside the church. While it is a reality that Batswana love and treasure their culture, the Setswana culture, it is unfortunate that it is patriarchal and male supremacy is not just encouraged, it is enforced and demonstrated on a day to day basis. It is enforced in the economic, political and social structures. It is enforced in courts, for example, which do not recognise marital rape as a crime. While Pentecostal women inhabit this patriarchal space, they are further faced with the patriarchy from within the Pentecostal church. This patriarchy is demonstrated in the way the Bible is read and interpreted, through implicit and explicit Pentecostal hermeneutics. Therefore, this thesis aimed at proposing a new hermeneutic that remains true to the Pentecostal tradition but that is liberating and transformative, calling women and men into a community of equals.

In Chapter 1, I introduced the aims and objectives of the study, the methodologies and justification for undertaking this study. Chapter 2 focused on the methodologies used in the study. The methods used in the study were qualitative, empirical research and critical textual study using an eclectic array of critical tools but particularly focusing on narrative methodology. The qualitative research gave me the opportunity to read the Bible with Pentecostal women and gather data that I have used to construct and authentically Batswana Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic through my dialogue with the women in the communities of my fieldwork. As such I tried as much as possible to incorporate this data throughout the thesis. The qualitative research was important for this study since I wanted Pentecostal women's insights and interpretation of Luke-Acts to inform the insights underpinning the construction of a liberating hermeneutic. Contextual Bible Studies, Focus Groups, In Depth Interviews and Participant Observations were all used to generate the empirical data that I used to write this thesis. The textual methods used in this thesis include narrative criticism

and reader response criticism and socio-historical criticism and these gave me the opportunity to decontextualize and recontextualise the Lukan texts.

Chapter 3 focused on the patriarchy and its different manifestations in Botswana. It offered an analysis of the intersection of the social, economic and legal factors that contribute to a highly gendered Botswana society. It offered an analysis of how the customary law and civil laws of the country sometimes intersect to marginalise women. For example, both the customary laws and the constitution of the country do not recognise marital rape as a crime. While there have been legal reforms in Botswana, these reforms have not yet transformed the social status of women in the country. Few women occupy positions of power at councils, within companies and at Parliament. This means that women are generally not part of decision making even when the decision concerns them. Therefore women remain marginalized at almost all levels.

The focus of chapter 4 was on the explanation and analysis of the factors that make up the Pentecostal hermeneutic. It focused on the tridactic model proposed by Christopher Thomas and expanded by others, i.e. the Spirit, Community and the Bible, expanded to include Experience. The roles of each of these factors within Pentecostal frames of reading were discussed as a way to demonstrate their shortfall and inadequacies so as to build a case for the construction of a Pentecostal Feminist Biblical hermeneutic. In this chapter I discussed the characteristics unarticulated and articulated hermeneutics. The former is engaged by the Pentecostals in churches and it remains uncritical of the Bible. The Bible is taken at face value and emphasis is placed on it as the infallible, immediate, inspired and inerrant word of God without engaging with the implication of perceiving the Bible that way. The latter is an academic exercise where critical scholarship is incorporated. In this chapter I provided an analysis of the inadequacy of the elements of the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic. For example, while the Pentecostal community is very crucial during biblical interpretation, evidence abounds that suggests that the Pentecostal community is a place of exclusion for women. There is a need therefore to interrogate the role, status and position of men and women when biblical interpretation takes place within the Pentecostal community.

At the moment the Pentecostal church is a place of both embrace and exclusion. It is a space where women can receive the Holy Spirit, and Levitical taboos are not imposed on them. They can read the Bible in the midst of the assembly at any time. In theory and even according to the constitution of most Pentecostal churches in Botswana, they can occupy any

position in the church. However, the reality on the ground is different. Women often exercise authority in Sunday schools and church choirs. Pentecostal frames of reading the Bible marginalises women and advances the superiority of men. Through a selective reading of texts, women are called the “weaker sex” and they have to submit to the men in their lives. The irony with the marginalisation of women is that the Pentecostal church claims Acts 2 as its central narrative. Most of its theologies and doctrines emerge from Acts except the doctrines about the subordination of women.

Chapter 5 aimed at establishing the link between women’s subordination within the Pentecostal church and Biblical interpretation. I suggested that the literalistic reading of text, proof-texting and the theologies of the Trinity and Christology are at the core of the marginalisation of women. It is through the uncritical reading of texts which call women into subordination to men that Pentecostal women today are induced to submit to the men in their lives. I demonstrated in this chapter that Pentecostals adopt selective literalism. They only insist that texts that marginalise women must be applied literally but they do not insist on the literal application of texts for example that call them to handle snakes or slavery. This selective literalism is one of the reasons why Paul’s injunctions are enforced and this has resulted in the continuous marginalisation of women both within the church and outside the church. I also demonstrated how proof texting (using one text to justify a particular practice) marginalises women. Further the theologies of the Trinity and Christology have been used in the process of justifying why women must submit. Pentecostals have argued that because there is a hierarchy in the Godhead, there must be a hierarchy between men and women. Further, Christ suffered and yet he forgave his tormentors so women also should endure abuse.

Chapter 6 focused on the Lukan scholars’ appraisal of Luke-Acts and his representation of women. There are scholars who perceive Luke as positive towards women and those who perceive Luke as negative towards women and those who argue that Luke was ambivalent towards women. Of these three positions I aligned myself with the position that argues that Luke was ambivalent towards women: he transmits a double message of liberation and suppression of women.. I explored the ambivalence of Luke-Acts towards women in detail in this chapter. While I agree that Luke-Acts is ambivalent, I tend to emphasise its liberatory nature more. Women are present at crucial moments in the narratives of Luke. They are present during Jesus’s birth, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension. They are there when the promise of the Holy Spirit is made, when the promise is fulfilled and when a new

community of the Spirit emerges. Further, this inclusion of women and the Pentecost event critiques Luke's patriarchal framework and offers us the readers an opportunity to decontextualize and recontextualize text as we appropriate them. Even if Luke silences women by failing to name them, for example, he can never succeed because texts transcend the author intentions as argued by Schneiders. Therefore, if Luke-Acts is read critically it can be liberating and affirming towards women and it can explode the very patriarchy that is sometimes evident even within the texts of Luke.

Chapter 7 was a close reading of Acts 2; 1-47. In this section I focused on Acts 1 which provides the immediate context of Acts 2. Using different commentaries I argued that women have always been present at crucial moments in the life of Jesus. They were present when the ascension took place; they waited in Jerusalem for the coming of the Spirit and were present on the day of Pentecost. I also pointed out that even though there is enough evidence from Acts 2 that women are present, the text is also characterised by the silencing and voicelessness of women who are not even given an active role. Even though Luke seems to be cloaking women in silence I maintain that at the same time he still makes them visible.

Chapter 8 offered Pentecost as a critique of the patriarchy in both Luke-Acts and the patriarchy advanced through Pentecostal hermeneutics. I argued that the Holy Spirit is a central actor in Luke-Acts, the Spirit is central in resolving the Jewish-Gentile tensions and therefore the "Spirit poured upon all flesh" signaled transformation of ethnic, gender and class relations. Today the Pentecost event can be perceived as a never ending story where gender equality must be normative for Pentecostals. Since Pentecostals are the "people of the Spirit", then they are living in the era of the Spirit who liberates and sets free from oppression, the more so because she has taken the place of Jesus; the same Jesus who came to set the captives free. In this chapter I demonstrated that radical Pentecostalism is egalitarian, transformative and empowering. If Pentecostals were to take Acts 2:1-47, the Pentecost event and all that embodies, and the role of the Holy Spirit seriously then Pentecostalism would be a catalyst for gender transformation. This is not to say that Pentecostal churches always conform to these ideals. On the contrary, this study has demonstrated that gender remains problematic in these churches. Their leadership remains primarily male. Women seem to be confined to singing, dancing and other non-leadership positions. Further, many Pentecostal churches openly proclaim and perpetuate the patriarchal subordination of women, and this contradicts and betrays the theology and egalitarian origins of the foundations of Pentecostalism. The Pentecost event will forever haunt and judge the Pentecostal church if

we ignore what Pentecost stands for. The Acts 2 model offers an opportunity for the Pentecostal church to develop and adopt frames of reading that affirm the spiritual, social, economic existence of both men and women equally.

Chapter 9 is the construction of the Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic that chapter 1-8 has been building towards. In this chapter I proposed eight principles which should constitute a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic. The role of the Holy Spirit remains at the centre of each principle. For example the first principle states that Spirit-led Biblical interpretation must be life giving and life affirming. Since pneumatology forms the centre of Pentecostal theology it was befitting that a hermeneutic that aims at liberating women and men must rely and be guided by the Holy Spirit who transforms spaces of oppression into spaces of liberation. These principles subvert the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic which is characterised by the marginalisation of women. Further these principles are a critique not only of Pentecostal hermeneutics, but also of the Pentecostal church which is failing the Holy Spirit by enforcing and encouraging the marginalisation of women. If they are actualised, these new hermeneutical principles have the potential to transform Pentecostal hermeneutics and Pentecostal community into a space of liberation for all women and men..

No one who has experienced the fullness of the Spirit should be denied experiencing the fullness of life. Unfortunately, Pentecostal women are often excluded and denied this experience through the use of the Bible. These new hermeneutical principles point out that oppression and exclusion of women in any form is contrary to Pentecostal beliefs.

10.1. Recommendations for further research

Further fieldwork will strengthen and modify the conclusions drawn in this thesis with regard to the construction of a Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic. The sample was relatively small and would be strengthened by a larger sample with implications for other Pentecostal churches than the one researched here. There is a massive growth of new Pentecostal churches which advance what is commonly called the prosperity theology in Botswana. Further research is recommended to find out if their hermeneutics are the same as the one practiced by the two churches in this study. It will also be helpful to include a larger sample of African men who are open to dialogue around the interpretation of the Bible and issues of gender. As it is, this study had a large sample of women and few men.

One might also ask how the research here might be related to other non-Pentecostal churches and how the principles that I propose might be helpful in engaging an ecumenical hermeneutical debates and discussions.

The principles of Pentecostal feminist hermeneutic that I have proposed remain at a theoretical level at this point. It can be actualized within the Pentecostal church when Pentecostal women themselves begin to be subjects of their own destiny, by first creating an alternative community that emphasizes the liberatory potential of the Spirit through hermeneutics. There were unexpected moments during fieldwork in which I found resistance to the existing Pentecostal hermeneutic and the Setswana culture. If women can begin to gather together to share their pains and read the Bible together in the Spirit with the aim of emphasizing liberatory hermeneutics, then these principles can be actualized. This is where conscientization becomes crucial because while these women read the Bible in Spirit, they inhabit patriarchal Pentecostal spaces and so they do not read the Bible in ways that denounce their marginalization. Rather, some have internalized it. In the end, it will be the women themselves who call the church to accountability. The fact that women are at the margins does not necessarily mean that they are completely without power; the margins can become a space of power and community from which they can begin to build.⁶⁴⁹ Therefore, the next step might be to actualize these principles so as to first conscientize women about their own marginalization and to help them and the Pentecostal church as a whole to engage in critical Biblical hermeneutics with the aim of transforming relationships between Christian women and men.

⁶⁴⁹ Draper, J. "Was There No One Left to Give Glory to God Except this Foreigner?" Breaking the Boundaries in Luke 17:11-19." In *Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic Witness in South Africa* (Festschrift), edited by L. Hulley, L. Kretzschmar and L. Pato, 223-229. Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1996.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achtemeir, P., J. Green and M. Thompson, eds. *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Ackerman, D. "Being Woman, Being Human." In *Women Hold Up Half the Sky: Women in Church in Southern Africa*, edited by D. Ackerman, J. Draper and E. Mashinini, 93-105. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1991a.

Adjabeng, J. *How to Enjoy Your Marriage*. Accra: Olive Publications, 1995.

Alexander, E. "Introduction." In *Philip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, edited by Estrela Alexander and Amos Yong, 1-15. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2009.

Albrecht, D.E. *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality*. *JPTS* 17. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

Allert, Craig. *A High View of Scripture? The Authority of the Bible and the Formation of the New Testament Canon*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academy, 2007.

Althaus-Reid, M., and L. Isherwood. *Controversies in Feminist Theology*. London: SCM Press, 2007.

Anderson, Allen. *Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context*. Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1991.

Anderson, Allen. "World Pentecostalism at a Crossroads." In *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, edited by, A. Anderson and W.J. Hollenweger, 19-31. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999a.

Anderson, Allen. "World Pentecostalism at a Crossroads." In *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, edited by A. Anderson W.J. Hollenweger, 19-31. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999b.

Anderson, Allen. *Zion and Pentecost: The Spirituality and Experience of Pentecostal and Zionist/ Apostolic Churches in South Africa*. Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2000.

Anderson, Allen. "Stretching the Definition of Pneumatology and 'Syncretism' in African Pentecostalism." *JPT* 10, no. 1 (2001), 98-119.

Anderson, A. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004a.

Anderson, Allen. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2004b.

Anderson, A. "Pentecostalism in India and China in the Early Twentieth Century and Inter-Religious Relation." In *Global Pentecostalism: Encounters with Other Religions*, edited by D. Westerlund, 117-136. London: I.B. Taurus, 2009.

- Archer, Kenneth. "Pentecostal Hermeneutics: Retrospect and Prospect." *JPT* 8 (1996), 63-81
- Archer, Kenneth, J. "Early Pentecostals Biblical Interpretation." *JPT* 18 (2001), 32-70.
- Archer, Kenneth J. *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture and Community*. London: T&T Clark International, 2004.
- Arrington, F. *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary*. Hendrickson: Peabody, 1988.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena. "'Fireballs in our Midst': West Africa Burgeoning Charismatic Churches and the Pastoral Role of Women." *Mission Studies* 15-16, no. 296 (1998), 15-31.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena. *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- Autry, Arden. "Dimension of Hermeneutics in Pentecostal Focus." *JPT* 3 (1993), 29-50.
- Babbie, E. and J. Mouton. *The Practice of Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Babbie, E. *The Practice of Social Research*. Belmont: Wadsworth, 2010.
- Balsdon, J.P. *Roman Women: Their History and Habits*. London: Bodley Head, 1962.
- Blackie, N. *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation*. Malden: Polity Press, 2010.
- Bam, B. "Women and the Church in (South) Africa: Women are the Church in South Africa." In *On Being Church: African Women's Voices and Vision*, edited by Isabel A. Phiri and Sarojini Nadar, 8-15. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005.
- Barr, James. *The Scope and Authority of the Bible*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980.
- Barrett, C.K. *The Acts of the Apostles* volume 1. New York: T& T Clark, 1994.
- Bell, A. *Exploring the New Testament World: An Illustrated Guide to the World of the First Christians*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998.
- Beyond Inequalities 2005: Women in Botswana*. Southern African Research Documentation Centre Gaborone and Harare, 2005.
- Boadi, Adelaide M.A. "Engaging Patriarchy: Pentecostal Gender Ideology and Practices in Nigeria." In *Religion, History, and Politics in Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Ogbu U. Kalu*, edited by Chima Korieh and Ugo G. Nwokeji, 172-186. New York: University Press of America, 2005.
- Bolt, B. "Mission and Witness." In *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, edited by I.H. Marshall and D. Peterson, 191-214. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Bonino, M.J. "Changing Paradigms: A Response." In *The Globalisation of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made To Travel*, edited by M. Dempster, B. Klaus and D. Petersen, 116-123. Oxford: Regnum, 1999.

Brown, Raymond. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Double Day, 1997.

Botswana Country Report on the Implementation of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development: The Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children. Gaborone: WAD, 2000.

Cargal, Timothy B. "Beyond the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: Pentecostal and Hermeneutics in a Post Modern Age." *Pneuma* 15, no. 2 (1993), 163-187.

Clark, A.C. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes on Selected Passages*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933.

Chilisa, B., and J. Preece. *Research Methods for Adult Educators in Africa: African Perspective on Adult Learning*. Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education, 2005.

Conzelmann, H. *The Theology of St Luke*, ET. London: Faber & Faber, 1960.

Conzelmann, H., and A. Lindemann. *Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the Principles and Methods of New Testament Exegesis*. Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1988.

Corten, Andre, and Ruth Marshall-Fratani, eds. *Between Babel and Pentecost: Transnational Pentecostalism in Africa and Latin America*. London: Hurst & Company, 2001.

Cox, H. *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Cassell, 1996.

Corley, B., S. Lemke and G. Lovejoy. *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2002.

Coulter, D. "What Meaneth This? Pentecostal and Theological Inquiry." *JPT* 10, no. 1, (2001), 38-64.

Court, J., and K. Court. *The New Testament World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Crumbley, D.H. "Sanctified Saints –Impure Prophetesses: A Cross-Cultural Reflection on Gender and Power in Two Afro-Christian Spirit Privileging Churches." In *Phillips Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, edited by Estrela Alexander and Amos Yong, 74-94. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2009.

Cunningham, S. *Through Many Tribulations: The Theology of Persecutions in Luke-Acts*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

D'Angelo, M. "Women in Luke-Acts: A Redactional View." *JBL* 190 (1990), 441-461.

D'Angelo, M. "Reconstructing Real Women from Gospel Literature." In *Women and Christian Origins*, edited by R. Kreamer and M.R. D'Angelo, 105-128. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999a.

D'Angelo, M. "(Re)Presentations of Women in the Gospel of Matthew and Luke-Acts." In *Women and Christian Origins*, edited by R. Kraemer and M.R. D'Angelo, 171-195. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999b.

D'Angelo, M.R. "The ANHP Question in Luke-Acts: Imperial Masculinity and the Deployment of Women in the Early Second Century." In *A Feminist Companion to Luke*, edited by A. Levine and Marianne Blickenstaff, 44-68. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

Davies, A. "What Does it Mean to Read the Bible as a Pentecostal?" *JPT* 18, no. 2 (2009), 216-229.

De Boer, E. "The Lukan Mary Magdalene and the other Women Following Jesus." In *A Feminist Companion to Luke*, edited by A.J. Levine and M. Blickenstaff, 140-160. London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

De Kock, Wynand J. "Pentecostal Power for a Pentecostal Task: Empowerment through Engagement in South African Context." *JPT* 16 (2000), 102-116.

De Smidt, K. "Hermeneutical Perspectives on the Spirit in the Book of Revelation." *JPT* 14 (1999), 27-47.

Dow, U. and P. Kidd. *Women, Marriage and Inheritance*. Gaborone: WILSA, 1994.

Dowling, E.V. *Taking Away the Pound: Women, Theology and the Parable of the Pounds in the Gospel of Luke*. New York: T&T Clark, 2007.

Draper, J. "The Social Milieu and Motivation of Community of Goods in the Jerusalem Church of Acts." In *Church in Context*, edited by C. Breytenbach, 77-87. Pretoria: NG Kerboekendal, 1988.

Draper, J. "Was There No One Left to Give Glory to God Except this Foreigner?" Breaking the Boundaries in Luke 17:11-19." In *Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic Witness in South Africa* (Festschrift), edited by L. Hulley, L. Kretzschmar and L. Pato, 223-229. Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1996.

Droogers, A. "Globalisation and Pentecostal Success." In *Between Babel and Pentecost: Transnational Pentecostalism in Africa and Latin America*, edited by A. Corten and R. Marshall-Fratani, 41-61. London: Hurst & Company, 2001.

Dube, M.W. "Readings of *Semoya*: Batswana Women's Interpretations of Matt 15:21-28." *Semeia* 73 (1996), 111-129.

Dube, M.W. *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretations of the Bible*. St Louis: Chalice, 2000.

Dube, M. "Talitha Cum! A Postcolonial Feminist & HIV/AIDS Reading of Mark 5:21-43." In *Grant Me Justice! HIV/AIDS & Gender Readings of the Bible*, edited by M. Dube and M. Kanyoro. 115-140 Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004.

Dube, M. "Youth Masculinities and Violence in an HIV/AIDS Context: Sketches from Botswana Cultures and Pentecostal Churches." In *Redemptive Masculinities: Men, HIV and Religion*, edited by E. Chitando and S. Chirongoma, 305-353. Geneva: WCC, 2012.

Du Bois, B. "Passionate Scholarship: Notes on Values, Knowing and Method in Feminist Social Science." In *Theories of Women's Studies*, edited by G. Bowles and R.D. Klein, 105-117. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1993.

Duling, D. G. *The New Testament History, Literature and Social Context*. Toronto: Wadsworth, 2003.

Edet, R., and B. Ekeya. "Church Women of Africa: A Theological Community." In *With Passion and Compassion: Third Women Doing Theology*, edited by M.M. Fabella and M.A. Oduyoye, 3-13. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996.

Ellington, S. "Pentecostalism and the Authority of Scripture." *JPT* 9 (1996), 16-38.

Epp, E.J. *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts*. Cambridge: MSSNTS3, 1966.

Ervin, H. "Hermeneutics: A Pentecostal Option." In *Essays on Apostolic Themes*, edited by P. Elbert. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1985, 23-35.

Esler, P.F. *The First Christians in their Social Worlds: Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Estrada, N. *From Followers to Leaders: The Apostles in the Ritual of Status Transformation in Acts 1-2*. London: T&T Clark, 2004.

Fee, G. "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent: A Major Problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics." In *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism*, edited by P.S. Russell, 118-132. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1976.

Fee, G. "Baptism in the Holy Spirit: The Issues of Separability and Subsequence." *Pneuma* 7, no. 2 (1985), 87-99.

Fee, G. *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991.

Fetterly, J. *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978.

Finger, R.T. *Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

Fitzmyer, J.A. *Luke the Theologian*. New York: Paulist, 1989.

Foos, H., and P.L. Patterson. "The Revelation, Inspiration, and Inerrancy of the Bible." In *The Fundamentals for the Twenty-First Century: Examining the Crucial Issues of the Christian Faith*, edited by M. Couch, 85-110. Kregel: Grand Rapids, 2000.

- Fowler, R. "Reader Response Criticism: Figuring Mark's Readers." In *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, edited by J.C Anderson and S. Moore, 50-83. Fortress Press: Minneapolis, 1992.
- Franklin, E. *Luke: Interpreter of Paul, Critic of Matthew*. JSNTSup 92; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.
- Gabaitse, R.M. "Passion Killings in Botswana: Masculinity at Crossroads." In *Redemptive Masculinities, Men, HIV and Religion*, edited by E. Chitando and Sophie Chirongoma, 305-321. Geneva: WCC, 2012.
- Gaventa, B. *Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995.
- Gaventa, B. "Whatever Happened to the Prophesying Daughters?" In *A Feminist Companion to the Acts of the Apostles*, edited by A. Levine and M. Blickestaff, 49-60. New York: T&T Clark, 2004.
- Gerloff, R. "Pentecostals in the African Diaspora." In *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, edited by A. Anderson and W.J. Hollenweger, 67-86. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
- Gifford, P. *The New Crusader: Christianity and the New Right in Southern Africa*. London & Concordia, MA: Pluto, 1991.
- Gifford, P. *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.
- Giles, Kevin. *The Trinity and Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God and the Contemporary Gender Debate*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002.
- Gleason, M. "Elite Male Identity in the Roman Empire." In *Life, Death and Entertainment in the Roman Empire*, edited by D.S Potter and D. Mattingly, 67-84. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999.
- Gonzalez, J. *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2001.
- Gordy, John. "Toward a Theology of Pentecostal Preaching." *JPT* 10, no. 1 (2001), 81-97.
- Gramsci, Antonio. *Letters from Prison by Antonio Gramsci*. Translated from Italian by L. Lawner. London: Quartet Books.
- Green, Joel. *The Gospel of Luke*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
- Green, Joel. "Hermeneutical Approaches to the Tradition." *Commentary* 2000, edited by J.D.G. Dunn and J.W. Rogerson. Michigan: Eerdmans, forthcoming.
- Griffiths, Anne. *In The Shadow of Marriage: Gender and Justice in an African Community*. Chicago: Chicago Press, 1997.

Griffiths, Anne. "Gender, Power and Difference: Reconfiguring Law from Bakwena Women's Perspective." *PoLAR* 23, no. 2 (2000).89-106.

Grudem, W. *I Peter*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

Grudem, W. *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism?* Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2006.

Haddad, B.G. "African Women's Theologies of Survival: Intersecting Faith, Feminisms and Development." PhD thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 2000.

Haechen, E. *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971.

Higgins, J. "God's Inspired Word." In *Systematic Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective*, edited by S. Horton, 69-81. Springfield: Logion Press, 1995.

Hall, D. and I. Hall. *Practical Social Research: Project Work in Community*. London: Macmillan, 1996.

Hammersley, M. *The Politics of Social Research*. London: Sage Publications, 1995.

Hallet, J. "Women's Lives in the Ancient Mediterranean." In *Women and Christian Origins*, edited by R.S. Kraemer and M.R. D'Angelo, 13-34. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Hennink, M. *International Focus Group Research: A Handbook for the Health and Social Sciences*. Cambridge: University Press, 2007.

Hollenweger, W. *The Pentecostals: The Charismatic Movement in the Churches*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1972.

Hollenweger, W. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997.

Hollenweger, W. "The Black Roots of Pentecostalism." In *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, edited by A. Anderson and W. Hollenweger, 33-44. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999a.

Hollenweger, W. "Crucial Issues for Pentecostals." In *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, edited by A. Anderson and W. Hollenweger, 177-191. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999b.

Horsley, D. *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

Hovenden, G. *Speaking in Tongues: The New Testament Evidence in Context*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

Ilan, T. *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine*. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996.

Jeffreys, G. (?) *Elim Evangel* 17, no. 6 (7.2.1936). (title unknown).

Johns, C. "Yielding to the Spirit: A Pentecostal Approach to Group Bible Study." *JPT* 1 (1992), 109-134.

Johns, C. *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Oppressed*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.

Johns, C. "Spirited Vestments or Why the Anointing Is Not Enough." In *Phillip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, edited by E. Alexander and A. Yong, 170-184. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2009).

Kalabamu, F.T. "Towards Egalitarian Inheritance Rights in Botswana: The Case of Tlokweg." *Development Southern Africa* 26, no. 2 (2009), 209-223.

Kalu, O. *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Kanyoro, M. "Feminist Theology and African Culture." In *Violence against Women*, edited by G. Wamue and M. Getui Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1996.

Kanyoro, M. "Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Contribution." In *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and The Bible*, edited by M. Dube, 101-113. Atlanta: SBL, 2001.

Kanyoro, M. *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics an African Perspective*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

Keener, C. *The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts: Divine Purity and Power*. Michigan: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.

Khalid, T.A. *The Pentecostals: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly*. San Francisco: The First African Arabian Press, 1991.

Kim, Sung-Gun. "The Resurgence of Neo-Pentecostalism and Shamanism in Contemporary Korea." *Global Pentecostalism: Encounters with Other Religions*, edited by D. Westerlund, 137-156. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2009.

Klooster, F. "The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Hermeneutic Process: The Relationship of the Spirit Illumination to Biblical Interpretation." In *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy and the Bible: Papers for the ICBI Summit ii*, edited by E. Radmacher and R. Preus, 451-472. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984.

Kraemer, R. "Jewish Women and Christian Origins: Some Caveats." In *Women and Christian Origins*, edited by R. Kreamer and M.R. D'Angelo, 35-49. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Kutty, S. *The Place and Contribution of Dalits in Select Pentecostal Churches in Central Kerala from 1922 to 1972*. Delhi: ISPCK, 2000.

Kwame, Bediako. *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non Western Religion*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995.

Land, Stephen. *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*. *JPT* Sup 1, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.

Lemke, S. "The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture." In *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture*, edited by B. Corley, S.W. Lemke and G.I. Lovejoy, 176-193. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2002.

Lesetedi, G.N., and N.L. Ngcongco. "A Demographic and Socio-economic Profile of Women and Men in Botswana: A Review of Summary Indicators of Population Composition and Distribution, Mortality, Migration and Economic Ability." In *Proceedings of the Population and Housing Census Dissemination Seminar*, 176-188. Gaborone: Central Statistics, 1995.

Levine, A.J. "Women in the Q Communit(ies) and Traditions." In *Women and Christian Origins*, edited by R.S. Kraemer and M.R. D'Angelo, 150-170. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Longman, T. *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation*. Leicester: Apollos, 1987.

Lovett, L. "Perspectives on Black Pentecostalism." Unpublished paper, 1972.

Ludemann, G. *Early Christianity According to the Traditions in Acts: A Commentary*. London: SCM Press, 1987.

Ma, W. "Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal Tradition: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow." In *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion made to Travel*, edited by M. Dempster, B. Klaus and D. Peterson, 52-69. Irvine CA: Regnum 1999.

Maboreke, M. "Introducing Women's Law." In *The Legal Situation of Women in Southern Africa 2*, edited by J. Stewart and A. Armstrong, 1-6. Harare: University of Harare Press, 1990.

Machacha, L. "Power Sharing, Decision Making, Gender and HIV/AIDS: An Assessment of Targets, Progress made and the Power Relations." In *Report of the First National Conference on Gender and HIV/AIDS*, 85-94. Gaborone: WAD/UNDP, 2001.

Machia, F. "Theology Pentecostals." *NIDPCM*, edited by T. Burgess and G. McGee. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.

Maddox, R. *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985.

Malbon, E.S. "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?" In *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, edited by J.C Anderson and S. Moore, 23-49. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.

Malina, B. *Social Science Commentary on the Book of Acts*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008.

Maluleke, T. and S. Nadar. "Breaking the Covenant of Violence Against Women." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 114 (2002), 5-17.

Marguerat, D. *The First Christian Historian: Writing the Acts of the Apostles*. Cambridge: University Press, 2002.

Marshall, C., and G. Rossman. *Designing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage, 2011.

- Martin, D. *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 2002.
- Martin, C.J. "The Acts of the Apostles." In *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Commentary*, edited by E. Schüssler Fiorenza, 763-799. New York: Crossroads, 1994.
- Martin, L.R. "Hearing the Book of Judges: A Dialogue with Reviewers." *JPT* 18, no. 2 (2009), 30-50.
- Masenya, M. "Esther in Northern Sotho Stories: An African South African Women's Commentary." In *Other Ways of Reading African Women and the Bible*, edited by M. Dube, 27-49. Atlanta: SBL, 2001.
- Masenya, M. *How Worthy is the Woman of Worth: Rereading Proverbs 31:10-31 in African-South Africa*. New York: Peter Lang, 2004.
- Masenya, M. "An African Methodology for South African Biblical Sciences: Revisiting the *Bosadi* (Womanhood) Approach." *Old Testament Essays* 18, no. 3 (2005a), 741-751.
- Masenya, M. "The Sword that Heals! The Bible and African Women in African-South African Pentecostal Churches." In *On Being Church: African Women's Voices and Visions*, edited by I. Phiri and S. Nadar, 47-59. Geneva: WCC, 2005b.
- Masenya, M. "Seeking Security through Marriage: Ruth 1:6-18 Placed under an African Woman's HIV and AIDS Lens." *Journal of Constructive Theology* 13, no. 2 (2007), 57-70.
- Mason, J. *Qualitative Researching* 2nd edition. London: Sage, 2002.
- Massey, R.D. "The Word of God: Thus Saith the Lord." In *Pentecostal Perspectives*, edited by K. Warrington, 64-79. UK: Paternoster Press, 1998.
- Mate, R. "Wombs as God's Laboratories: Pentecostal Discourses on Femininity in Zimbabwe." *Africa, Journal of the International African Institute* 72, no. 4 (2002), 549-568.
- Maundeni, T. "Gender Based Violence Against Women and Children and HIV/AIDS." *Report of the First National Conference on Gender and HIV/AIDS*, 73-83 (Gaborone: Women Affairs Division, 2001a).
- Maundeni, T. "Images of Females and Males in Setswana Language: How Females are Disadvantaged." *Gender, Opportunities and Challenges*, Proceedings of the 1st National Conference of the Gender Policy and Programme Committee, University of Botswana 22-24 October 2001b, 37-48.
- McClintock-Fulkerson, M. *Changing the Subject: Women's Discourse and Feminist Theology* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.
- McGee, G. "Pentecostal Missiology: Moving beyond Triumphalism to Face Issues." *Pneuma* 16, no. 2 (1994), 276-277.

Meeks, W. *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

Menzies, R. "The Essence of Pentecostalism." *Paraclete* 26, no. 3 (1992). 1-9.

Menzies, W. "The Methodology of Pentecostal Theology: An Essay on Hermeneutics." In *Essays on Apostolic Themes, Studies in Honor of Howard M. Ervin* edited by P. Elbert, 1-14. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985.

Menzies, W. and R. Menzies. *Spirit and Power*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

Mogwe, A. *Women and the Law in Southern Africa Project*. Gaborone: WAD, 1992.

Molokomme, A. *His, Mine or Ours: The Property Right of Women Married Under Botswana Common Law*. Gaborone: Women Affairs Unit, 1986.

Molokomme, A. *The Legal Situation of Women in Southern Africa*. Harare: WILSA, 1990.

Molokomme, A. *Customary Law in Botswana: Past, Present and Future Botswana in the 21st Century*. Gaborone: Botswana Society: Gaborone, 1994.

Moore, R. *The Bible in Politics: How to Read the Bible Politically*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1989.

Morapedi, W. "Demise or Resilience? Customary Law and Chieftaincy in Twenty-first Century Botswana." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* (2010), 215-230.

Moxnes, H. "Patron-Client Relations and New Community in Luke-Acts." In *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, edited by J. Neyrey, 241-268. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993.

Mukamaambo, E.P. "Rural to Urban Migration and Changing Roles of Women." In *Gender: Opportunities and Challenges, Conference Proceedings*, edited by S. Kaye, L. Machacha and T. Maudeni, 72-78. Gaborone, 2008.

Mukamaambo, E.P., and V.R.N. Mutabihirwa. "Gender Research: The Importance of Data Collection and Analysis of Male Involvement in Reproductive Health Issues." In *Male Involvement in Sexual and Reproductive Health: Prevention of Violence and HIV and AIDS in Botswana*, edited by T. Maudeni, B. Osei-Hwedie, E. Mukamaambo and P. Ntseane, 149-164. Cape Town: Made Plain Communications, 2009.

Mwaura, P. "Gendered Appropriation of Mass Media in Kenyan Christianities: A Comparison of Two Women Led African Instituted Churches in Kenya." In *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*, edited by O.U. Kalu and A. Low, 274-295. Michigan: William Eerdmans, 2008.

Nadar, S. "A South African Indian Womanist Reading of the Character of Ruth." In *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and The Bible*, edited by M. Dube, 159-175. Atlanta: SBL, 2001.

Nadar, S. "Journeying in Faith: The Stories of Two Ordained Indian Women in the Anglican and Full Gospel Churches in South Africa." In *Herstories: Hidden Histories of Women of*

Faith in Africa, edited by I. Phiri, B. Govinden and S. Nadar, 137-158. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2002.

Nadar, S. "Power, Ideology and Interpretation/s: Womanist and Literary Perspectives on the Book of Esther as resources for Gender-Social Transformation." PhD thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 2003.

Nadar, S. "'The Bible Says!' Feminism, Hermeneutics and Neo-Pentecostal Challenges." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 134 (2009), 131-146.

Nadar, S. "On Being the Pentecostal Church: Pentecostal Women's Voices and Visions." In *On Being Church: African Women's Voices and Visions*, edited by I. Phiri and S. Nadar, 60-78. Geneva: WCC, 2007.

Nortije-Mayer, L. "The Mother of Jesus as Analytical Category in John's Gospel." *Neotestamentica* (2009), 123-143.

Oakley, A. "Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms." In *Doing Feminist Research*, edited by H. Roberts. 30-61. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981.

Obioma, N. "Nego-Feminism: Theorizing, Practicing and Pruning Africa's Ways." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29, no. 2 (2003), 357-385.

O'Day, G. "Acts." In *The Women's Bible Commentary*, edited by Carol Newsom and Sharon Ringe, 305-312. Louisville Kentucky: John Knox Press, 1992.

Oduyoye, M. *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995.

Oduyoye, M. *Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa*. Ghana: Regnum Africa, 2002.

Oeming, M. *Contemporary Biblical Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. England: Ashgate, 2006.

Olubanke, D. *The Ministry of Women in Lucan Narratives: A Model for Aladura Churches in Nigeria*. Ibadan: AASR, 2005.

Parker, E. *Led By The Spirit: Toward a Practical Theology of Pentecostal Discernment and Decision Making*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.

Penner, T., and C. Stichele. *Contextualising Acts: Lukan Narrative and Greco Roman Discourse*. Atlanta: SBL, 2003.

Phaladze, N., and B. Ngwenya. "Women Status, Custom and Tswana Traditions in Contemporary Tswana Society." In *Gender: Opportunities and Challenges, Conference Proceedings*, edited by S. Kaye, L. Machacha, and T. Maundeni, 21-36. Gaborone, 2008a.

Phaladze, N. "Gender and HIV/AIDS in Botswana: A Focus on Inequalities and Discrimination." In *Gender: Opportunities and Challenges, Conference Proceedings*, edited by S. Kaye, L. Machacha and T. Maundeni, 195-204. Gaborone, 2008b..

Phiri, I. A., and S. Nadar. "What's in a Name? Forging a Theoretical Framework for African Women's Theologies." *Journal of Constructive Theology* 12, no. 2 (2006), 5-24.

Pinnock, C.H. "The Work of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics." *JPT* 2 (1993), 3-23.

Powers, J. "'Your Daughters Shall Prophesy': Pentecostal Hermeneutics and the Empowerment of Women." In *The Globalisation of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made To Travel*, edited by M. Dempster, B. Klaus and D. Petersen, 313-337. Irvine: Regnum, 1999.

Powers, J. "Recovering a Woman's Head with Prophetic Authority: A Pentecostal Reading of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16." *JPT* 10, no. 1 (2001), 11-37.

Powers, J. "Pentecostalism 101: Your Daughters Shall Prophesy." In *Phillip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, edited by E. Alexander and A. Yong, 133-151. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2009.

Poythress, V.S. "The Church as Family: Why Male Leadership in the Family Requires Male Leadership in the Church." In *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, edited by J. Piper and W. Grudem, 237-250. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1991.

Pui-Lan, K. "Racism and Ethnocentrism in Feminist Biblical Interpretation." In *Searching the Scriptures: Feminist Introduction* vol 1, edited by E. Schüssler Fiorenza, 101-116. New York: Crossroads, 1993.

Rackoczy, S. *In Her Name: Women Doing Theology*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004.

Ramodibe, D. "Women and Men Building Together the Church in Africa." In *With Passion and Compassion: Third Women Doing Theology*, edited by M.M. Fabella and M.A. Oduyoye, 14-21. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996.

Reid, B. *Choosing the Better Part? Women in the Gospel of Luke*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996).

Reimer, R.I. *Women in the Acts of the Apostles: A Feminist Liberation Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Robert, J.K. "Women and Discipleship in Luke." In *Feminist Companion to Luke*, edited by A. Levine and M. Blickenstaff, 23-43. New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003.

Russell, B., and G. Ryan. *Analyzing Qualitative Data: Systematic Approaches*. LA: Sage, 2010.

Salomonsen, J. "The Dark Side of Pentecostal Enthusiasm: Abraham and Sara's Sacrifice in Knutby, Sweden." In *Spirits of Globalisation: The Growth of Pentecostalism and Experiential Spiritualities in a Global Age*, edited by S.J. Stalsett, 105-130. London: SCM Press, 2006.

Sapsford, R., and V. Jupp. *Data Collection and Analysis*. London: Sage, 1996.

Schaberg, J. "Luke." In *The Women's Bible Commentary*, edited by C. Newsom and S. Ringe, 275-292. Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992.

Schapera, I. *A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*. Hamburg: International African Institute, 1994.

Schüssler- Fiorenza, E. *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*. New York: Crossroads, 1983.

Schüssler Fiorenza, E. *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.

Schüssler-Fiorenza, E. *Wisdom Ways: Introducing Feminist Biblical Interpretation*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2001.

Seaman, C. *Research Methods: Principles, Practice and Theory for Nursing*. Norwalk: Appleton and Lange, 1987.

Segovia, F. "Cultural Studies and Contemporary Biblical Criticism: Ideological Criticism as Mode of Discourse." In *Reading from this Place: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspectives*, edited by F. Segovia and M.A. Tolbert. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995a.

Segovia, F., and M.A. Tolbert. *Reading from this Place: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States* vol 1. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995b..

Seim T.K. "The Gospel of Luke." In *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Commentary*, S vols. E. Schüssler Fiorenza, 728-762. New York: Crossroad, 1994a.

Seim, T.K. *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke-Acts*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994b..

Seim T. "Feminist Criticism." In *Methods for Luke*, edited by J. Green, 42-73. Cambridge: University Press, 2010.

Sheeley, S.M. *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992.

Shillington, G. *An Introduction to the Study of Luke-Acts*. New York: T&T Clark, 2006.

Spencer, S. *Dancing Girls, Loose Ladies and Women of the Cloth: The Women in Jesus' Life*. New York: Continuum, 2004.

Spencer, E.S. *The Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles*. Nashville: Abington Press, 2008.

Spitter, R. "Scripture and Theological Enterprise: View from a Big Canoe." In *The Use of the Bible in Theology*, edited by R.K. Johnson. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985.

Stalsett, S.J. "Introduction: Pentecostal Growth and Global Transformations." In *Spirits of Globalization: The Growth of Pentecostalism and Experiential Spiritualities in a Global Age*, edited by S.J. Stalsett. London: SCM Press, 2006. 1-10

- Stambaugh, J.E. and D.L. Balch. *The New Testament in its Social Environment*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1996.
- Stanley, F. *Is there Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980.
- Stanton, G. *The Gospels and Jesus*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Stronstad, R. "Pentecostal Experience and Hermeneutics." *Paraclete* (1992).
- Stroup, G.W. "Between Echo and Narcissus: The Role of the Bible in Feminist Theology." *Interpretation* 42, no. 1 (1988), 19-32.
- Suurmond, J. *Word and Spirit at Play: Towards a Charismatic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Swindler, L. *Biblical Affirmations of Women*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979.
- Talbert, C.H. *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and Genre of Luke Acts*. SBLMS 20; Missoula, MT: Scholars 1974.
- Tan-Chow, M.L. *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty First Century: Engaging with Multi-Faith Singapore*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007.
- Tannehill, R. "Israel in Luke-Acts." *JBL* 104 (1985), 69-85.
- Tannehill, R. *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* 2 vols. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986 and 1990.
- Thiselton, A. *Thiselton on Hermeneutics: The Collected Works and New Essays of Anthony Thiselton*. Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006.
- Thomas, C. "Women Pentecostals and the Bible: An Experiment in Pentecostal Hermeneutics." *JPT* 5 (1994), 41-56.
- Thupayagale-Tshweneagae, G., and E. Salang-Seloilwe. "Emotional Violence among Women in Intimate Relationships in Botswana." *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* 31 (2010), 39-44.
- Thurston, B. *The Widows: A Women's Ministry in the Early Church*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- Ulrich, L. "A Response to Emerson B. Power." *JPT* 14 (1999), 19-26.
- Via, J. "Women in the Gospel of Luke." In *Women in the World's Religions: Past and Present*, edited by Ursula King, 38-55. New York: Paragon House, 1987, 38-55.
- Warrington, K. *A Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter*. New York: T&T Clark, 2008.
- Wegner, J.D. *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Wenk, M. *Community-Forming Power: The Socio-Ethical Role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts*. JPTS Supplement Series 19. England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

West, G. *Contextual Bible Study*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publication, 1993.

West, G. "Reading the Bible Differently: Giving Shape to Discourses of the Dominated." *Semeia* 73 (1996), 21-38.

West, G. "Contextual Bible Study: Creating Sacred Spaces for Social Transformation." *Grace & Truth* 2 (1999), 51-63.

West, G. "Contextual Bible Studies in South Africa: A Resource for Reclaiming and Regaining Land, Dignity and Identity." In *Toward an Agenda for Contextual Theology: Essays in Honour of Albert Nolan*, edited by M. Speckman and L. Kaufmann, 169-184. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001.

West, G. "The Not So Silent Citizen: Hearing Embodied Theology in the Context of HIV and AIDS in South Africa." In *Heterotopic Citizen: New Research on Religious Work for the Disadvantaged*, edited by Trygve Wyller, 21-42. Germany: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2009.

Williams, D.K. "'Upon All Flesh': Acts 2, African Americans and Intersectional Realities." In *They were All Together in One Place: Toward Minority Biblical Criticism*, edited by B. Randal, B. Tat-Siong and F. Segovia, 289-310. Atlanta: SBL, 2009.

Witherington, B. *Women in the Earliest Churches*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Witherington, B. *Women and the Genesis of Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Witherington, B. "On the Road with Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna and other Disciples: Luke 8:1-3." In *A Feminist Companion to Luke*, edited by A.J. Levine and M. Blickenstaff, 133-139. New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

Wordelman, A.L. "Everyday Life: Women in the Period of the New Testament." In *The Women's Bible Commentary*, edited by C.A. Newsom and S.H. Ringe, 390-396. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press: Louisville, 1992.

Wolfgang, I. *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1980.

Yong, A. *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global of Theology*. Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005.

Reports and articles

Children, Women and Development in Botswana: A Situational Analysis. Gaborone: UNICEF, 1989.

Citizenship Law in Africa: A Comparative Study. New York: Open Society Institute, 2009.

Gender Disaggregated Report. Gaborone: WAD, 2002.

National Policy on Gender and Development. Gaborone: Women Affairs Division, 2008.

Natural Resource Services. Gaborone: Department of Lands, 2003.

New Economics Foundation: Botswana Review. Country Watch, 2012.

Report on Review of All Laws Affecting Women in Botswana. Gaborone: WAD, 1998.

Research Report on Femicide in Botswana. Gaborone: WILDAF, 1995.

SADC Gender Protocol Baseline Barometer, edited by Colleen Morna and D. Walter. Johannesburg: SADC Gender Protocol Alliance, 2009.

SADC Gender Protocol 2011 Barometer: Introducing the SADC Gender and Development Index, edited by C.L. Morna and J.L. Nyakojarah. Johannesburg: Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance, 2011.

Situational Analysis of Gender Based Violence in Botswana. Gaborone: Government Printer, 2009.

Towards an AIDS Free Generation: Botswana Human Development Report. Government of Botswana and UNDP, 2000.

Towards Zero New HIV Infections: Report on National HIV Prevention Conference. Gaborone: NACA, 2005.

Appendix 1 A.

Consent form for Pentecostal women

Study Title

Towards an African Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic of Liberation: A Case Study of Interpreting Luke-Acts with Batswana Women

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

- a. Review conceptualisations and experiences of gender in Pentecostal churches in general and specifically in Botswana.
- b. Sketch the current context of gender justice or lack thereof in the Pentecostal church in Botswana.
- c. Explore modes of reading among Pentecostal women which may subvert or embrace patriarchy in the church and local culture.
- d. Find out how Batswana Pentecostal women read selected texts in Luke-Acts.
- e. Find out how the Batswana social construction of men and women influences the Batswana Pentecostal construction of gender.
- f. Expose the various and interlocking patriarchal stratas confronting Pentecostal Batswana women.

For you to be part of this study, you must:

- a. Be a woman
- b. Motswana by birth
- c. Pentecostal
- d. Have been a member of the Pentecostal church.

Description of Procedures/Tasks

If you agree to be part of this research, you are kindly asked to do one of three things: to attend a focus group meeting and Contextual Bible Study with other women in the church hall and after these you can volunteer to do an in-depth open-ended interview with the researcher.

During the focus group meeting and Contextual Bible studies, the researcher will ask you questions in Setswana or English, whichever language you prefer. The conversations during the focus groups will be tape recorded and the research assistants will take notes of your responses. The Contextual Bible study will take two hours and the focus groups may take two hours as well.

If you are asked to do an in-depth interview, you will be asked to reveal your age group, place of residence, occupation and level of education. It is up to you whether you provide your name but you are not under obligation to do so. If you do, any information which is used from your interview will be totally anonymized (Information about who you are will not be revealed to anyone).

Confidentiality

Your responses to the questions are confidential. You are kindly asked not to discuss other people's responses within the focus group and Bible studies with anyone else, especially those who are not part of the study. To protect your identity, all participants in the study whose material is written about will be given code names by the researcher.

Voluntary Participation

You are not going to be paid to participate in this study. The purpose of the study is to find out how Pentecostal women read some texts from Luke Acts. You are willingly volunteering to participate in the study and will receive no monetary benefits. You are free to withdraw your participation from this study anytime without suffering any negative consequences. Light snacks will be provided for you during our breaks.

Time for consultation before consent

After the study has been explained to you, you will have time to think about whether or not you want to be involved in the study.

Consent Statement

I _____ confirm that I understand that the research is about Pentecostal women and/or how they read selected passage from Luke-Acts. I agree to voluntarily participate in the focus groups and/or questionnaire completion.

The Project has been explained to me satisfactorily. I have had an opportunity to have my questions answered. I voluntarily agree to participate in the study of how Pentecostal women read the Bible. I am aware that I can amend my consent at any time and to also withdraw from participating in the study at any time without penalty.

Personal Demographic details.

Please circle the appropriate answer.

1 **Age:** a. 25-35 b. 35-45 c. 45-65 d. 65 and older

2. How long have you been a member of this church? 5-10 years 10-15 years 15 and up

3. **Education:** a. None b. Primary level c. Secondary level d. Diploma certificate e. Degree f. Post graduate degree certificate

4. **Place of Residence:** a. Molepolole b. Gaborone

5. **Occupation** _____

Your name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Your witness _____ **Signature** _____ **Date** _____ -

Name of researcher _____
Signature _____ **Date** _____

Contact of details of researcher

Rosinah Mmannana Gabaitse, Block 8, 34855
Gaborone.
Phone 72116166 or 3665652

Contact details of Supervisor

Professor Jonathan Draper

School of Religion and Theology
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Scottsville, Pietmaritzburg.

Tel +27 820768898

Email Draper@ukzn.ac.za

Dr Sarojini Nadar.
School of Religion and Theology
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Scottsville, Pietmaritzburg.

Tell+27825707177

Email NadarS@ukzn

Appendix 1B

Mametelelo 1.

Tumalano ya bomme ba kereke

Setlhogo sa patlisiso

Towards an African Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic of Liberation: A Case Study of Interpreting Luke-Acts with Batswana Women

Moalo wa Kgang

Baebela e botlhokwa that mo botshelong jwa mokereresete. Bomme le b oree ba a e bala, mmme gantsi bo rre ke bone ba di gogang ko pele mo go e baleng le go e tlhalosa. Jaanong patlisiso e e itebagantse le gore bomme ba bala baebale jang, ba e tlhalosa jang, mo go harologanang le kaha borree ba e balang babo ba e tlhalosa ke teng. Patlisiso e e itebagantse le gore a bomme ba Batswana ba bakeresete bana le ditsela dingwe tse ba tsenyang mo tirisong ha ba bala baebale, ditsela di dumalang le ngwao ya Setswana kana tse di sa dumalaneng le ka fa basad iba tlhalogangwang ka teng mo Setsswaneng le mo kerekeng.

O tlhophelwe kana o ithaopele go tsaya karolo mo patlisisong e ka gore

- a. O mosadi yo o tsholetsweng mo Botswana
- b. O tsena kereke ya Pentekoste
- c. O leloko la kereke ya Penetecoste .

Tsamaiso ya Patlisiso

Jaaka motsaya-karolo kgotsa moarabi mo patlisisong e, go tsaya karolo ga gago go tshwanetse ga dirwa ka boithaopo jwa gago. O solofelwa go tsaya oura e le nngwe kgotsa go feta mo potsolotsong le mmatlisis, kana mo go baleng baebela mmogo le bomme ba bangwe. O tla botswa dipotso ka Setswana kana ka Sekgoa mme o di árabe ka puo e o e batlang. Puisanyo ya rona e tla a gatisiwa mo thaping, mme mmatlisisi le b aba mo thusang ba tla gatisa puisanyo ya rona. Ha o nna le puisanyo le mmatlisisi le le babedi, o tla kopiwa go bolela dingwaga tsa gago, motse kana toropo e o nna mo go yone, gore o badile bo kae le tiro e o e berekang.

Khupa-marama

Dintlha tsotlhe tse di tlaa tsewang mo go wena di tlaa tsewa di le masisi mme e nne khupa-marama. Re tlaa tlhomamisa gape gore ga go ope yo o tlaa itseng ope yo o buileng sepe ka gore ga o tshwanele gore o ntshe leina la gago lefa e le disupo tsa gore omang. Tshedimotsetso e e tswang mo go wena ga ena go phatlaladiwa mo bathong.

Dipoelo

Ga re kake ra solofetsa batsaya-karolo le ba bangwe dipoelo dipe tse di ka solofelwang mo patlisisong e, go akarediwa le meputso go neelwa batsaya-karolo. Ga gona dipoelo dipe tse ditlhamaletseng mo go wena ka go tsaya karolo ga gago. Le fa go nntse jalo tshedimotsetso e

e tlaa phuthwang mo patlisisong e, e ka thusa kereke go itse go bala baebela ka ditsela tse di sa kgokgontsheng ope.

Ditsamaiso tse dingwe

Fa o sa batle go tsaya karolo mo patlisisong e, o gololesegile go itsise motlhotlhomisi gore ga o batle go tsaya karolo ka gore go dirwa jalo ka boithaopo. Fa o sena go tlhalosediswa ka patlisiso e, o ka tsaya nako go ikakanya gore a o batla go tsaya karolo kana nnyaa. Fa o dira tshwetso ya go tsaya karolo, o tlaa kopiwa go baya monwana mo fomong ya tumalano. Fomo e ga e golege ope, o sa nntse o gololesegile go tswa mo patlisisong e ka nako nngwe le nngwe ebile ga o patelesege go ntsha mabaka a gore ke eng o tswa.

Tumalano

Nna _____ ke dumalana gore ke tlhaloganya gore patlisiso e ke kaha bomme ba balang baebela ka teng. Ke dumela go tsaya karolo mo go baleng lekwalo la Luke le Ditiro le bomme ba bangwe, ga ke a patelediwa ke ope go dira jalo. Ke a itse gore ke gololesegile go tswa mo patlisisong e ka nako nngwe le nngwe, ebile ga ke patelesege go ntsha mabaka a gore ke eng ke tswa.

Dintlha ka wena

Tswee tswee tshwaa mo go go lebaneng

- 1 Dingwaga tsa gago di magare ga:** a. 25-35 b. 35-45 c. 45-65 d. 65 go ya kwa godimo
- 2. O sale o nna leloko la kereke ya gago lebaka/dingwaga le le kae?** Magare ga 5-10 10-15 15 le goya kwa godimo
- 3. A o tsenye sekolo:** a. Nnyaa b. Se sebotlana c. Se segolwana d. Diploma certificate e. Degree f. Post graduate degree certificate
- 4. O monni wa kae:** a. Molepolole b. Gaborone
- 5. O bereka o le eng** _____

Leina _____ **Setlanyo** _____

Letsatsi _____

Mosupi wa gago _____ **Setlanyo** _____ **Letsatsi** _____ -

Leina la mmatlisisi _____ **Setlanyo** _____ **Letsatsi** _____

Motho yo o ka itshwaraganyang nae

Appendix 2

Consent Form for Pastors

Study Title

Towards an African Pentecostal Feminist Hermeneutic of Liberation: A Case Study of Interpreting Luke-Acts with Batswana

Main objective of the Study

- a. Find out how Batswana Pentecostals read selected the Bible.
- b. How the Batswana social construction of men and women influences and/or is influenced by the Bible.

Description of Tasks/Procedures

You have been selected to be a participant in the study because you are a pastor and your views are very important. You are kindly asked to do an in-depth interview with the researcher.

Confidentiality

Your responses to the questions are confidential. To protect your identity, all participants in the study whose material is written about will be given code names by the researcher.

Voluntary Participation

You are not going to be paid to participate in this study. You are willingly volunteering to participate in the study and will receive no monetary benefits.

Time for consultation before consent

After the study has been explained to you, you will have time to think about whether or not you want to be involved in the study.

Consent Statement

I _____ confirm that I understand that what the research is about
I agree to voluntarily participate in the one to one interview with the researcher.

The Project has been explained to me satisfactorily. I have had an opportunity to have my questions answered and I voluntarily agree to participate in the study. I am aware that I can amend my consent at any time and to also withdraw from participating in the study at any time without penalty.

Contact of details of researcher

Rosinah Mmannana Gabaitse, Block 8, 34855
Gaborone.
Phone 72116166 or 3665652

Contact details of Supervisor

Professor Jonathan Draper

School of Religion and Theology
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Scottsville, Pietmaritzburg.

Tel +27 820768898

Email Draper@ukzn.ac.za

Dr Sarojini Nadar.
School of Religion and Theology
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Scottsville, Pietmaritzburg.

Tell+27825707177

Email NadarS@ukzn.ac.za

Appendix 3

Focus group 1 questions

- a. How does your culture define manhood and womanhood?
- b. How does your church define manhood and womanhood?
- c. Do men and women have the same roles in the society and in your church? **Probe**
- d. What does the Bible say about the role of men and women in the church?
- e. How are messages about womanhood and manhood communicated in your church/society? Are these methods different? **Probe**

Appendix 4

Questions for Contextual Bible Study 1: Luke 4: 16-30

Preliminary question for CBS one is: **Name the specific ways in which women, men and children relate to each other in your church.**

- a. Tell the story in your own words/What is the text about?
- b. Who are the characters in this story and what do we know about them?
- c. What does Jesus mean by 'setting the captives free'? Focus on verses 18-19.
- d. Are there people who are oppressed in your church? Name them and how they are oppressed?
- e. What does the text say to women in your church?
- f. How will you read this text to ensure that women are not oppressed in your church?

Questions for Contextual Bible Study 2: Acts 2:1-19

Preliminary question for CBS 2 is: **What do you think of the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of men and women?**

- a. What is the text about?
- b. Who are the characters in the story and what do we know about them?
- c. How has this text been interpreted in your church?
- d. Now focus on verses 18-19, what do they say about the ministry of men and women?
- e. What is the role of women in your church? What do the texts say about the relationship between men and women?
- f. What is the role of men and women in the text?
- g. Are the roles of men and women the same in your church?
- h. How can this text empower men and women in your church today? Or how can you encourage the church to preach on the equal ministry of men and women?

Questions for CBS 3: Acts 6:1-7.

Preliminary question for CBS 3 is: **Do men and women have the same roles in your church?**

- a. What is the text about?
- a. Who are the characters in the story and what do we know about them?

- b. How has this text been interpreted in your church?
- c. What does this text teach us about leadership in the community then and leadership now?
- d. Are the similarities between what is happening in your text with what happens in your context?
- e. How does this text speak to our contexts?
- f. What will you do/say to your church about this text after reading Acts 2?
- g. How does the Bible speak of women in leadership roles?

Questions for CBS 4: Acts 21:1-14

Preliminary question for CBS 4 is: **How does the Bible speak of prophecy?**

- a. What is the text about?
- b. Who are the main characters in the story and what do we know about them?
- c. Why are Phillip, Agabus, and Paul named and Phillip's daughter not named?
- d. What is the content of Phillip's daughters' prophecy?
- e. What is the content of Agabus' prophecy?
- f. Are there similarities between what is happening in the text and your context?
- g. How has women's prophecy been silenced in your church?
- h. What strategies are you going to implement to ensure that both men and women are listened to when they have 'word from God'?

Appendix 5

Questions for Pastors in-depth interviews

1. Which biblical text/texts form the basis of Pentecostalism?
2. How do we define a Pentecostal/ what defines a Pentecostal believer?
3. What does the Bible mean to Pentecostals? (infallibility of Scripture, reliance on the Holy Spirit, the belief in the divine inspiration of Scripture, and the dualistic understanding of the world as material and spiritual).
4. What is the role and ministry of women in your church?
5. What are the roles of men? How do these roles differ if at all from the roles of women?
6. What is the teaching of the Bible on the role of men and women in your church? Does your church teach about the equality of men and women? Which Biblical texts does your church use for teaching about the equality of men and women?
7. What does your church polity say about women and leadership?
8. How do women respond on the teaching of your church on their roles in the church?
9. What is the significance of Acts 2:17-42 to the Pentecostal church?
10. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in interpretation?
11. What factors come into play during the process of reading and interpreting the Bible?