DAVID'S COMING OF AGE AND MASCULINITY CONSTRUCTION:

A NARRATIVE CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE EPISODES OF TRANSITION FROM BOYHOOD TO ADULTHOOD IN THE DAVID NARRATIVE CYCLE

NOZIPHO PRINCESS SIBONGOKUHLE DLODLO

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THEOLOGY DEGREE IN THE DISCIPLINE OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

AT

THE SCHOOL OF RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND CLASSICS, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, PIETERMARITZBURG

Promoter: **Prof. Charlene van der Walt**

22 AUGUST 2021

DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I Nozipho Dlodlo declare that this dissertation and the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by University of KwaZulu Natal will not infringe any third-party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification. I submit this under the field of Biblical Studies, Old Testament, in the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

Student Signature .....

Rev. Nozipho Princess Sibongokuhle Dlodlo

As candidate supervisor, I hereby approve this dissertation for submission.

Supervisor Signature

Professor Charlene Van der Walt

Date: ……

ENGLISH CERTIFICATION

This certifies that this thesis has been language edited by Lou Levine. It was submitted on 6 August 2021 and returned by 22 August 2021.

Copyright 2021 University of KwaZulu Natal

All rights reserved.

Abstract

This study results from an observation in relation to increasing gender-based violence. This was that men in the institute of the Church and outside were implicated in violent activities. Involvement of male religious leaders in these incidents left this researcher questioning the calibre of men in community. The study explores if there were no great Biblical models for men to follow. Furthermore, this study investigates the process of coming of age, specifically how a boy transitions to be a man, with special focus on King David, a 'well-known' figure for men within the institute of the Church and outside. It explores what the transition process entails and what 'teachings' or absence of teachings could inform gender-based violence. It offers the uniqueness of combining two theories (coming of age and constructions of masculinity) to read into the David Narrative Text. The study analyses the connection between men, their context and cultural background. It utilises the life of David presented in 1st and 2nd Samuel; focusing on four episodes the author thought integral to conceptualizing the process of coming of age from *boyhood to adulthood*. It analyzed aspects of coming of age in the life of King David by using narrative analysis as a method to read these texts.

In framing this study, selected theories of coming of age and masculinity construction were applied to King David, to begin the reflection of what coming of age entails. This study observed that there are elements from the life of King David that could be emulated; as well as aspects that needed a more detailed read before assimilation to daily life. I argue that some masculine traits (ability to show strength or to be violent, high levels of sexual expression), appear to be the same traits found in men implicated in gender-based violence. Therefore, expectations of what a true man is, appear to clash with how normal people should interact. Men are caught between the expectations of culture and contextual masculine performance. This is both a structural and a systematic problem, which can afflict both men and women. I, therefore, argue that change from the observed could happen if there is a shift to men being at the center of conversations about their coming of age process. This study is essential because it observes a problem in society which is a daily lived reality (*the problem of GBV*), goes through the rigor of scientific research and then returns to society to argue that men need to be at the center of the conversations around constructions of masculinity and coming of age — if true change is to be experienced. This study offers those who use the Bible as a reflective

surface[1] for those who depend and seek to consult the Bible in matters patterning to life and more specifically for those who seek to understand the processes of coming of age and masculinity construction.

[1] Van der Walt says, "By using the Bible as a reflective surface in the process of intercultural Bible reading, the dominant or final nature of biblical text is countered in that it is welcomed as one conversation partner amongst others. It is put on an equal level with the socially embedded narratives of the women and men taking part in the Bible reading exercise. Modern readers can be encouraged, within these reading communities, to ask critical questions of the Bible text and to read against the grain in order to unmask patriarchal ideas and practices" (Van der Walt 2017,19). I will continue to use this specially coined term by Van der Walt, especially to focus on the Bible as a spring board for reflecting on pertinent issues of society.

Dedication

This research is to honour my mom's sister *Blessings Karen Ndiweni* who gained her heavenly wings on the 18th February 2021. She was my support and she had taken over caring for me since my mom *Makhosazana Dlodlo* who passed on the 19th March 2010. Mom, when you left, I was 5 months from writing my matriculation exams and everything seemed impossible. I want to thank my maternal grandmother, *Brightness Masinga*, who is my only surviving parent, for her support. This is her gift at the age of (81). I want to appreciate my mentor Miss *Thobekile Zulu*; she has kept me from insanity over the years.

Fr. Ntsikelelo Bambatha, who I met in Rome in 2019, your support has been immeasurable. You are a great leader and I could not ask for more from you. You modelled a love unimaginable. To my sibling's *sis-Dudu* and *baby Sabelo*, thank you for doing life with me. I expect nothing less from you both. Everything is possible if you put your mind to it.

To all clergy, let us continue to study and be like the saints in Berea.…We are the missing voice!

Table of Contents

Abstract ..... **iv**

Acknowledgements ..... **xiv**

Foreword ..... **xv**

Introduction **1**

1.0 Background 1

1.1 Introduction 3

1.2 Research problem 7

1.3 Research hypothesis 10

1.4 Research focus, questions and objectives 11

1.4.0 Research focus 11

1.4.1 Key Research question 11

1.4.2 Research Sub-Questions 11

1.4.3 Objectives 12

1.4.4 Method to read and analyse the selected scenes 12

1.4.4.1 Narrative analysis 12

1.4.4.2 Construction of masculinity 13

1.4.4.3 Coming of age 14

1.4.4.4 What combining masculinity and coming of age frames could offer potentially when reading 1st and 2nd Samuel 15

1.4.4.5 Contextual Bible 16

1.5 Selected scenes and rationale 18

1.6 Structure of the research project – development of the argument 19

Theoretical Framework **23**

2.0 Introduction 23
2.1 Masculinities definition and conceptualization 24
(a) Development of the field 25
2.2 Masculinity as contextual – South Africa 27
(a) Religious masculinities 30
(b) Masculinities as an analytical category 31
2.3 Masculinities in the Hebrew Bible 33
2.4 Coming of Age 38
2.4.1 Definition and use of coming of age as an anal 38
2.4.2 Coming of age theorist Erick Erikson 40
Introduction of Erikson's work 40
2.4.2.1 Erikson's psychosocial development theory 41
2.4.2.2 Discussing coming of age and identity 43
2.4.3 Coming of Age contemplations within the Bible 47
2.5 Combining masculinity construction theory and coming of age theory as essential tools for analysis of the David Narrative Cycle 48
Questions for masculine analytical tool 48
Questions for Coming of Age and Masculine Tools Combined 49
2.6 Conclusion 50

This chapter gives a detailed step by step explanation of how portions of 1st and 2nd Samuel will be read in an attempt to understand constructions of masculinity and the process of coming of age. 51

3.0 Introduction 51
3.1 Critical biblical hermeneutics 51
3.2 African biblical hermeneutics 53
3.3 Narrative Analysis 57

3.3.1 Character....65
3.3.2 Plot....66
3.3.3 Time....68
3.3.4 Limitations....69
3.3.4.1 Masculinity Construction and Coming of Age as Analytical Tools....70
3.4 Masculinity as a methodological tool....71
3.5 Coming of age as a methodological tool....73
3.5.1 Queer biblical hermeneutics....74
3.6 Scene selection and rationale....76
3.6.1 How to guide and layout for Chapter 4 for each selected scene....78
3.6.2 Chapter 4 Step by step method of doing a narrative analysis of the selected scenes....79
3.6.3 Plot Sketch Explained....79
3.7 Conclusion....80

Narrative analysis of the selected scenes....82

4.1 Introduction....82
4.2 Authorship of 1st and 2nd Samuel....83
4.3 Origins and Source....85
4.4 The Focus of 1st and 2nd Samuel....87
4.5 Scene 1:1 Samuel 17: 40-51 - David and Goliath and David receiving Michal the reward wife in 1 Samuel 18:27-28 David and the Trophy Wife Michal....91
1 Samuel 17:40 -51 HBS....91
1 Samuel 18: 27-28 -HBS....92
1 Samuel 18: 27-28 -English Standard Version....92
a) Why this scene?....93
b) Summary of Episode in Focus in my own words....94
c) Narrative analysis of David and Goliath....95

4.6 Scene 2: 1 Samuel 18:1-5 - *David and Jonathan* and 2 Samuel 9:1-7 - *David and Mephibosheth* 103
a) Why this scene 104
b) Summary of the episode in my own words 105
c) Narrative analysis 106
(i) Plot Sketch 106
(ii) Character 107
(iii) Place 110
(iv) Time 110
(v) Repetition of keywords 111
4.7 Scene 3: 1 Samuel 25: 18 -34. David and Abigail and 1 Samuel 25: 39-42 ... 112
1 Samuel 25:18-34 David and Abigail HBS 112
1 Samuel 25:18-34 English Standard Version 113
1 Samuel 25: 39-44 David's Wives HBS 114
1 Samuel 25:39 -44 English Standard Version 114
a) Why this scene? 115
b) Summary of Episode in my own words 115
c) Narrative analysis 116
(i) Plot Sketch 116
(ii) Character 117
(iii) Place 119
(iv)Time 119
(v) Repetition of keywords 120
(vi) Conclusion 120
4.8 Scene 4: 2 Samuel 11: 1-17 and 26-27, David and Bathsheba 121
2 Samuel 11:1-17 HBS 121
2 Samuel 11:1-17 English Standard Version 122
2 Samuel 11: 26-27 HBS 123
2 Samuel 11:26-27 English Standard Version 123

a) Why this scene? 123

b) Summary of Episode in my own words 123

c) Narrative analysis 125

(i) Plot Sketch 125

(ii) Characters 126

(iii) Place 127

(iv) Time 127

(v) Repetition of keywords 128

(vi) Conclusion 129

4.9 Chapter Conclusion 129

Exploring Constructions of Masculinity and Coming of Age 131

5.0 Introduction 131

5.1. Scene 1: David and Goliath 132

Summary of Basic Issues Distilled from the Narrative Analysis of David and Goliath 132

Focus on Masculinity Construction 132

5.2 Scene 2: David and Jonathan 138

Summary of Basic Issues Distilled from the Narrative Analysis 138

Focus on Masculinity Constructions 139

5.3 Scene 3: David and Abigail 145

5.3.1 Summary of Basic Issues Distilled from the Narrative Analysis of David and Abigail 145

5.3.2 Focus on Constructions of Masculinity 146

i.) Violence/strength 146

ii) Wisdom/persuasive speech 146

iii) Beauty 149

5.4 Scene 4: David and Bathsheba 151

Summary of Basic Issues Distilled in the Narrative Analysis of David and Bathsheba 151

i) Violence/strength 152
ii) Persuasive speech 152
iii) Beauty 153
Second Section: A Focus on Coming of Age Insights 159
5.5 Scene 1: David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17) 159
5.5.1 Coming of age insights, as discussed by Wilson 159
5.6 Scene 2: David and Jonathan 161
Coming of age insights – as discussed by Wilson 161
5.7 Scene 3: David and Abigail 162
Coming of age insights - as discussed by Wilson 162
5.8 Scene 4: David and Bathsheba 163
Coming of age insights – as discussed by Wilson 163
Third Section 165
5.9 Summative comments on the process of coming of age and transition from boyhood to manhood 165
5.10 Arising themes from this research 166
5.11 Conclusion 167

Possible Ideo-theological Resources 168

6.0 Introduction 168
6.1 Dominant Themes within the Research Project (Expansion on the themes gained, combining masculinity and coming of age) 168
6.1.1 Masculinity as cultural, contextual and temporal 168
6.1.2 Transition to masculinity as inclusive of tasks/rites of passage 171
6.1.3 The Male-Body 172
6.1.4 Hegemonic notions of masculinity 175
6.2 The Bible as a frame of reference: contextual bible study applied 177

(a) Potential applicable insights from the scenes....177
(b) The Bible as a resource to be used by contemporary men....180
(c) The Contextual Bible Study Explained and Reflected on as a Methodology....184
(ii) Explanation of the image....186
(iii) The steps....187
(iv)The importance of method....188
(v) Summary of the CBS Method....189
6.3 Contemplative Examples of CBS that can form ideo-theological resources to help contemporary men understand masculinity constructions and coming of age....191
6.3.1 CBS questions for Scene of David and Goliath 1st Samuel 17:40-51 and 1st Samuel 18:27-28 (David Receiving the Reward Wife)....191
Possible Question for CBS on David and Goliath....191
6.3.2 Possible Question for CBS on David and Jonathan....192
6.3.3 CBS questions for David and Abigail: 1 Samuel 25:18-34 and 1st Samuel 25:39-42....193
6.3.4 CBS questions for David and Bathsheba: 2 Samuel 11: 1-7 and 26-27....195
6.4 Conclusion....196
General Conclusion and Recommendations....197
7.1 Arising Themes....202
7.2 Possible Future/ Further Research....204
Bibliography....206

Acknowledgements

This journey has not been one without challenges. It has called me to put on hold family life and other 'normal' daily life duties and responsibilities. As a young clergy person, choosing to study over practical ministry in the field felt like a constant battle. I desired to practice in ministry but also understood the value of education amongst young religious leaders. Despite this, my spiritual leadership remained understanding and caring, supporting my pursuit to complete this journey. While I rightly acknowledge my family and my supervisor I want to say it would have been completely impossible for me to come this far had it not been for the help and moulding of the following individuals: *Dr. Xolani Sakuba* who taught me since my first year at UKZN and who continues to mentor me, *Prof Herbert Moyo* who has continuously challenged me to greater heights, *Rev. Vernon Hammond* who taught me to do and submit academic work; *Rev. Veronica Koster* who was one of my funders and supporters believing in my potential. I also would like to express my appreciation for the short-lived co-supervisory role of Prof. Gerald West and Dr. Jonathan Jodamus as we continued to fine tune and perfect my research focus.

Prof. Charlene Van de Walt, thank you for your insights and constructive criticism and hopefully this was the chiselling process for me to be a better researcher and scholarly writer. Thank you for pushing me, yet also understanding that the call to daily ministry remained a part of my reality that was inescapable. The tango and attempt to balance the research life and call to full time ministry has not been easy and I am grateful for your patience. Everyone who held my hand and supported me, you were surely God sent and became an extension of heaven on earth.

Finally, above all human support, I want to acknowledge God for what unfolds today, as a complete thesis is what he 'planned' for my life many years ago. Being orphaned at a young age meant the absence of resources and funding to continue my studies, and so I still look back and say "If it had not been for your provision, Lord, I would not have made it." Ngithi Ebenezer Nkosi, kude kwalana Thixo ungigcinile… (Thank you Lord for thus far you have carried me). From being the child who did not care to read or finish their homework without supervision; to a young lady who has completed her doctorate at the age of 29 – all I can say is He is a faithful God and nothing is impossible.

Foreword

This research project is presented in South African English and as such adheres to the spelling and grammatical conventions of South African English. Sources written in American English and quoted directly have been kept in their original form. In order to avoid the cumbersome use of "sic" in such occurrences, this foreword serves as a general statement pertaining to all such instances.

As this research is based on a special focus on the Hebrew Texts (parts of 1st and 2nd Samuel), I make use of the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS) and an English translation found in the following website: https://www.mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt08a01.htm.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Background

In my earlier work in my Masters Project titled, *Sexuality and Religion in the Novel Oranges are not the Only Fruit by Jeanette Winterson (2017),* I focused on the general response of the church in parts of Southern Africa to those who 'came out' in the LGBTIQA+ community. The semi-autobiographical novel which the study is based on, is about the girl Jeanette who grows up in a conservative Christian home and discovers she is lesbian. At the time of this project, I was troubled by the widespread hate crimes and hostility experienced by any who visited the church who were suspected to be part of the LGBTIQA+ community. One of the key themes that emerged was the centrality of the Bible as it was appropriated to sustain different forms of hate crimes. This is something that troubled me and it raised questions as to why the church was not a safe space for all people. I discovered through this study that there was a direct correlation between how the pastor interpreted the Biblical texts to the general animosity later found in congregants perpetrated against the LGBTIQA+ community. I also learnt that some members of the Church read the Bible literally, meaning they assume that each word or action in the Bible (written many centuries ago) was exactly the same in their context (many years later). Alongside hate crimes, I observed that there were long-standing issues regarding gender-based violence and I noticed the prevalence of variations of what could better be understood as toxic masculinity.

This was the case both in the church and outside the church. This meant that, as in my earlier study, the church has become less and less of a safe haven for many. The abuser very commonly is now in the church and at times in the leadership of the church. Rakoczy in her work *Religion and Violence: The Suffering of Women* argued that there were "…insidious links between patriarchy, violence and Christianity and their effects on women as seen through the prevalence of domestic violence in South Africa. Patriarchy, as the rule of the father/male over women, is in itself a form of violence because of its effects on women's dignity and place in society" (Rakoczy 2004,1). The connections I see in the work of Rakoczy date further back to the work of Rene Girard, who says, "the links between violence, the sacred and sexuality are established. Christianity, as a patriarchal religion, does violence to women through its preponderant use of

male language for God, its traditional teaching on women's inferiority…" (Girard 197734). Anderson and Umberson (2001,8) recently argued, "Violence is male-gendered and men use it as a means to control and exercise their power over women and other marginalized bodies. The exercise and abuse of power by men is supported by patriarchy which in turn is sustained by religion and culture."

There are different levels of violence discussed in the introduction. Firstly, I focused on hate crimes and these are crimes that thrive in hostility and prejudice and are in my examples channelled at the LGBTIQA+ community. The second refer to violence directed at woman, sustained in scripture, patriarchy and under the cover of hegemonic masculinity. In referring to the first group of violence, which is the hate crimes, I felt an urgent need to discuss the root of hate crimes when thinking of the case of Eudy Simelane who was violently raped and killed and had a glass inserted in her vagina as a way of showing that she was making the 'wrong decision' by being lesbian. In referring to the second form of violence directed against woman, there are many cases and I mention only a few. The case that includes Christianity (*scripturally sustained and structurally sustained*) mentions Tim Omotoso,[2] a pastor who was accused of sleeping with women in the church as well as grooming young girls.

Alongside the story of Tim Omotoso, is the sad story of the life of Uyinene Mrwetyana[3] aged 19 (*who could be any woman in the street doing basic life duties*), who was raped and killed by Luyanda Botha (42), a guy working at the post office. Two distinct issues about this case were how the judge described Luyanda Botha as *callous and vicious* and that he was not remorseful for his actions, despite some Christian religious connections in his upbringing. I found the appetite of Luyanda Botha as insatiable and this can be seen by him raping, killing and even going to the extent of burning Uyinene. The case of Uyinene is one of many that flood our media around gender-based violence and horrific killings of both women and children. However, it was around about the time I heard this case that caused me to wonder about the state of the fiber of men in South Africa. I wondered are there no longer men in the Bible that men can imitate as models of ideal masculinity. Another case is Tshegofatso Pule, who was 8 months pregnant and found hanging on a tree with an open chest. This grievous story has his lover, the fingerprints of Shoba his lover, who sent Muzikayise Malephane[4] to kill her.

[2] https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/protestors-force-closure-of-rape-accused-pastor-omotosos-church-in-pe/
[3] https://www.iol.co.za/weekend-argus/news/i-intended-to-rape-and-kill-uyinene-post-office-murderer-37311528
[4] https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2020-06-19-tshegofatso-pule-murder-accused-has-history-of-brushes-with-the-law/

Furthermore, the pain experienced by all these mentioned[5] victims, (Uyinene Mrwetyana, Eudy Simelane and Tshegofatso Pule) is beyond a religion or sexuality question, but it also points to the absence of humanity in those taking part in these atrocities.

My initial interest concerning LGBTIQA+ community and violent hate crimes was further affirmed by the brutal crimes committed against woman in intimate partner settings. This can be seen in the argument that, "gender-based violence occurs in intimate partner relationships though not limited to it" (Jewkes et.al 2002,1425). The violence against LGBTIQA+ woman in South Africa holds certain affinities. The perpetrators in most of these cases were men and very often Christian men. Having Christian men at the centre of these atrocities appeared irrational because there is a long-standing trend of Christian men in their coming of age process and construction of masculine identity, depending on Biblical characters as models of masculinity placing the Bible as a reflective surface.

A question I asked in my earlier work which was, *what Biblical Text, sustained hate crimes* arises and informs this study in that, in a similar vein this study wondered *what Biblical Texts are informing the toxic masculinities instead of a smooth coming of age process and construction of masculine identities?* The wondering is which Biblical characters are men modelling that endorse forms of hate crimes and/or forms of gender-based violence? With these key questions, I then choose to look at David because he is one of the characters widely acknowledged and known by both religious and unreligious people. Moreover, David is acknowledged in the three Abrahamic religions. David is also well known for the killing of Goliath and this particular story is again known both in religious and non-religious men. I have thus dedicated this study to an exploration of excerpts from the David Narrative Text specifically, of David's portrayal in 1st and 2nd Samuel in an effort to offset meaningful reflections on constructions of masculinity and the process of coming of age. In an ambitious state, this research would at its completion be of use in providing or being a resource for those who seek to use the Bible as a source.

1.1 Introduction

As mentioned above, this study will focus on the life of David. This research focuses on some of the selected episodes in the life of the Biblical character David that depict elements of

[5] These are only a few of the mentioned victims. Some victims remain nameless, thrown in bushes or live amongst us and are afraid to come out in the open.

masculinity construction as David comes of age. I found that David is acknowledged as an important figure in all the Abrahamic faiths, however this research will focus on the portrayal of David within the Judeo-Christian tradition as it finds expression in the Biblical books of 1 and 2 Samuel. According to Tsumura, "David is marked as important because he was the youngest in the family of eight brothers born to Jesse yet he is the one chosen to be anointed as King over Israel. Secondly, David is seen as special because the Spirit of the Lord left Saul and rested on him. Thirdly, God makes a covenant with David and promises that his house will be an eternal dynasty" (Tsumura 2007, 12). These three factors focus David as special because at a young age he is to assume kingship over Israel and since the covenant made to him was for an eternal dynasty, David becomes central to the lineage of Jesus, who is foundational to the Christian faith. This is significant because the lineage of Jesus and the role of Jesus continues to be important in the Abrahamic faiths. In introducing David and 1st and 2nd Samuel, Hu 2013 says, "In particular, these books give a comprehensive account of the life of David, a man of faith even while a man of weakness, as illustrated from his victories and struggles and his trust and reliance upon God. As the youngest of the eight sons of Jesse, David was born in Bethlehem and served as a shepherd during his childhood. Besides being a great king, David was also well known as a great psalmist as well as a great warrior" (Hu 2013, 70). Hu further says, "In the New Testament, Jesus is described as a 'descendant of David according to the flesh' (Romans, 1: 3) according to God's Davidic covenant recorded in (2 Samuel, 7)" (Hu 2013,70). David's importance can be seen by how he features throughout the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. Hu also mentions that, "the name David is the third most often used name in the whole Bible, with Moses and Abraham being first and second respectively" (Hu 2013,70).

This research will focus on the portrayal of David within the Judeo-Christian tradition as it finds expression in the Biblical books of 1 and 2 Samuel. According to Samuel Tongue, in *Scripted bodies: Reading the spectacle of Jacob wrestling the angel*, "if biblical depictions of male patriarchal power had enormous cultural influence across the years in which the Bible has been sourced as an authoritative text (with authoritative interpretations) then it is not simply believers and Bible readers who are bound into an intertextuality of which this Bible is part and who are forced to stretch the limits and ligatures of the influence of these particular texts" (Tongue 2012,9). This means that in reading the story of David there are progressive and constructive lessons that the reader can draw and transfer to daily life; the person who reads the story is not the only one who benefits but the whole community. Inversely, also if the story

read is unconstructive the whole community is plagued by how one read and understood/interpreted a particular story. Van der Walt says, "By using the Bible as a reflective surface in the process of intercultural Bible reading, the dominant or final nature of biblical text is countered in that it is welcomed as one conversation partner amongst others. It is put on an equal level with the socially embedded narratives of the women and men taking part in the Bible reading exercise. Modern readers can be encouraged, within these reading communities, to ask critical questions of the Bible text and to read against the grain in order to unmask patriarchal ideas and practices" (Van der Walt 2017,19). At a later stage *(Chapter 6),* I will return to explain what using the Bible as a reflective surface entails, including but not limited to how the Bible is situated in the process of people grappling with contemporary issues when reading the Bible. I argue that for a long time gaining positively from the text and Biblical characters, has been difficult because, "Patriarchy is interwoven in the Christian tradition in distinct and pervasive ways. The oppression of women through patriarchal social structures increases in the religious context since the presumed 'maleness' of God and the male identity of Jesus are used to justify women's subordination" (Rakoczy 2004, 12). This I understood to have a dual meaning in that, men could become violent and be in control over women, and this is sustained by the men placed and compared with Jesus and God. Secondly, I understand that women immediately see themselves as inferior and allow domination because of the power held by men (who are like or God). This research presupposes that the complexity of the relationship of Christianity, patriarchy, violence and male conduct will better be understood through an exploration of the famous Biblical character David.

My interest and motivation for this research project is rooted in my positionality as a young Christian woman leader, who continues to either see and experience the ills of patriarchy and also my societal role as clergy, as I am at the centre of the gender-based violence cases, either through mediation, grief support or initiations to bury gender-based violence victims. Beyond the examples and motivations highlighted above, the motivation for this study is also deeply personal. My embodied experience is that as a four-year-old in Botswana, Molepolole, in 1996, while I was growing up, I witnessed the abuse of my mother by my father. My mother was Christian in terms of faith affiliation and while my father was less concerned about religion because of his career; my mother tells me that he was also raised Christian. My father in terms of career was a national boxer in Zimbabwe. The incident I recount is one of many years of torture and violence experienced by my mother. On that fateful day, my father threw down my mother down a block of cement staircase. I as a four-year-old, sat the whole night till day break

asking my mother to wake up from a pool of cold blood. The neighbours did hear my mother fall but my father was so violent and had promised that anyone who came closer would receive the relevant punches for being nosy. Someone at day break did brave it and informed my grandmother who in turn called for help. My mother was air-flown to the nearest hospital for help and the doctors managed to save her life but they said they wondered how she had survived up to day break. This is also the incident that led my mother to lose her eye-sight which changed my whole life. Again, my mother is one of many who continue to live under perilous conditions under the frame of love and what will the community say. My embodied experience inspired me to engage in this study and inquire on the layers of complex dynamics between Christianity, gender-based violence, patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity, to mention but a few layers. My basic hypothesis is that Christian men use Biblical characters as models and informants of the 'ideal masculinity constructs' and the process of coming of age and if this is the case, what can be learnt from the life of David the Biblical character in 1st and 2nd Samuel. Ultimately, I seek to explore the complex process of coming of age and constructions of masculinities, understanding a bit the role of religion, patriarchy and culture.

The story of David in this research will serve as a case study as I try and explore the link between men and violence in contemporary society. While I have a hypothesis on how Christian men navigate the process of coming of age and transition from boyhood to manhood, which would encompass constructions of masculinity, this research will explore the congruency of this hypothetical theory. In restating my hypothesis, I posit that men model and emulate Christian Biblical characters to understand their coming of age and masculinity construction process. If this is the case, I have found that Christian men continue to hide under the shadow of emulating Biblical male characters in their navigation of this transition process and sustaining of violent masculinity traits. Also, I am cognisant of how some men move seamlessly between culture and faith as and when the transition process favours them on either side. Connell and Messerchmidt argues differently when saying that, "culture and religion are mutually exclusive when it comes to men constructing perceptions of masculinity but differ across different contexts" (Connell and Messerchmidt 2005, 43). This will be further explored within the project. Using the Bible as a reflective surface and drawing the character David into conversation with current processes of transition from boyhood to personhood could potentially offer essential resources and insights in the coming of age process, as well as contribute to the primary hypothesis of some understandings of constructions of masculinities.

In light of this background introduction to this research project, I now turn to the research problem, followed by the research hypothesis.

1.2 Research problem

In attempting to understand the research problem, one notes that, "men construct, perform and negotiate their masculinity which is influenced by their social context" (Sumerau 2012,30). This I understand to be a great part of what constitutes masculinity construction and what men embody as masculine is informed by the social context as masculinity. Craig and Goffman argue, "Masculinities and male bodies are socially and historically constructed, created, and reinforced by social expectations based on shared meanings, especially by gender display in the mass media" (Craig 1992; Goffman 1979). In further attempting to explain the research problem I use Ratele who says, "masculinity is achieved through the embodied activities that are socially conceived to define masculinity" (Ratele et al 2010, 559). This I understand to mean, *some* men will do everything expected of them including being violent, taking risks as long as it secures the objective of not having their masculine identity questioned. In a later work it is argued that, "men that display these assumed ideal characteristics are socially attractive to women and women are the custodian of masculinity. Men must embody all these traits and failure to do so, they lose the honour of being called a man thus losing respect. Often when men try to regain honour and respect they resort to the use of violence against women just to remind them of their dominant position and to prove their manhood" (Matthews and Abraham 2015,8). The above seems to suggest that this could explain why in the past few years in South Africa there have been increased levels of gender-based violence where *some* men kill, hit and abuse the women and children mostly. The murder cases and gender-based violence actions committed show the mental state of *some* men in our country must change and *disassociation with toxic stereotypes of masculinities* need to be reconstructed and re-negotiated to be more life-encompassing.

This implicitly suggests that there is a correlation between the man's coming of age process and transition to manhood and his actions as society encounters him. This is why when using David in 1st and 2nd Samuel I select episodes of him in relation to different people like David in relation to Goliath (*a giant in stature and in public performance*), David in relation to Jonathan (*a peer almost an age mate*), David in relation to Abigail (*a woman who is named and celebrated for taking the lead in a patriarchal society over her husband Nabal*), and David

in relation to Bathsheba (*the wife of one of his army men*). We come to know David by what he says, how he relates to people and how others respond to him. I posit that it is complicated to navigate the transition from boyhood to personhood in general. The 'split' responsibility between the role of society, the role of culture, the role of faith community, the role of the family and many other factors continue to be at the centre of this complexity of the process of coming of age and masculinity construction.

In framing the argument, there is a complexity in how men understand themselves culturally and religiously or within any social context. Jewkes et. al argues, "cultural masculinity is constructed through heteronormative and heterosexual norms which include toughness, strength, aggression, risk-taking, non-feminine traits and dominance" (Jewkes et. al 2011,67). I argue that the construction of masculinity is complex and it remains a process for all men. Moreover, in unpacking the complexity of this process, I am cognisant of how coming of age and masculinity is constructed within the framework of patriarchy which in and of itself carries expectations. This means that men find themselves privileged or forced to comply with some aspects of it, including aspects of patriarchy that are problematic, even to them as men personally. I am aware that hegemonic constructions of masculinity are informed by patriarchy, which is also hurtful to men. This can be seen when Ratele and Schefer argue that, "Patriarchy or patriarchies is not only bad news for women, but also in different ways for many boys and men. Women suffer directly under patriarchy; men suffer from other men; men and boys must be made into men. Patriarchy creates risks and problems for women, children, and men too. While most contemporary societies can be characterized as patriarchies or male-dominated gender orders, by patriarchal social relations of patriarchal gender contracts, this does not mean that men are all powerful therein. Risk is double-edged. It involves recognizing risk to others, women, children, other men, and it also involves the risk to the self, men themselves, individually, or more collectively" (Ratele and Schefer 2007, 4).

I acknowledge the pain experienced by men as they negotiate their masculine identity and I do not in any way minimize their plight, especially for those men who do not fit into the hegemonic masculinities, yet within patriarchal structures. However, because this study is limited and rooted in a detailed focus into gender-based violence where 'these men'/ 'some men' are the perpetrators, I will not focus on the dynamics of the oppressed and sidelined men because of their subordinate, marginalized or complicit masculine identities. I argue that the sidelined men who I speak of as embodying complicit, subordinate or marginalized masculine identities, are allies to my plight of understanding toxic masculinities and will be lenient in my unintentional

omissions and generalizations on men in some places in my research project, all in an effort to get to the root of understanding constructions of masculinity and the root of toxic masculine traits.

The contribution that this study seeks to bring is the bridge between the academic and the community and lived realities of contemporary men. Moreover, at a later stage in the research, as I return to the purpose of this research for contemporary men, I argue that in the chosen model of the *Contextual Bible Study Model safe space* all men will have a place around the table to tackle what the process of coming of age entails and how they negotiate masculinity constructions. The safe space that men will occupy, as they deliberate on the Bible as a reflective surface, could offer a breakthrough, not only in so far as gender-based violence cases are concerned, but it could be essential for men amongst themselves as they process what is pivotal for positive constructions of masculinity and the process of coming of age.

Subsequently, having established that this research is premised on the presupposition that David is an important Biblical character, I move on to its implications. These are that because of the popularity of David, it is more than possible to use him as a model of masculinity, as it is common among Christian men that people read the Bible in order to know how to conduct themselves and navigate daily realities. In this process of singling out characters from within the Bible and deducing lessons, I acknowledge that the life of David when met at face value without the appropriate tools could be used to perpetuate hegemonic, toxic masculinity. This research will focus on combining masculinity theory and coming of age theory to the narrative study of the Biblical character David, who becomes a reflective surface for men to navigate through masculinity construction, paying particular attention to transition from boyhood to adulthood. The insights gained from the narrative analysis of selected episodes of 1st and 2nd Samuel which is the reflective surface, will be essential in being part of the building blocks of creating ideo-theological resources. The model I suggest here is the use of Contextual Bible Study (CBS), in terms of a method that depends on the Bible as a reflective surface. Moreover, the model of Contextual Bible Study is essential because it creates spaces for men to sit and talk about the crisis of masculinities. I argue that up to this time there have not been safe spaces for men to process their coming of age and masculinity construction process.

The value of the space present in the process of doing a Contextual Bible Study is that the space is safe, allowing everyone to share freely and prioritizing everyone. This study recognizes that

not all men are part of the toxic masculinity[6] chains and are greatly appalled and broken by the atrocities committed to their grandmothers, mothers, aunties and sisters. The safe space as explained by (Zwane 2020), provided by the Contextual Bible Study model, is very important, because I understand that it is hard and complicated to navigate the construction of masculinity and the process of coming of age. It is also a safe enough space for men to deliberate on the nuances and complexities of coming of age and bring each other to accountability on who they are as men and how what they want to continue to inform hegemonic masculinities. The output from these Contextual Bible Studies grown from the safe spaces, could then be part of ideo-theological resources that can be shared in the form of a manual for the local communities to offset the beginning of a new understanding of the process of coming of age and how masculinities are constructed. As men in society the men will be able to process the role that the society plays in the construction of masculinity and in this same process men can contemplate what could be eliminated, changed, avoided and/or increased to lessen the complexity of the masculinity construction process. This will be information from the men themselves and so it would cover all the basics that an observer/outsider could have missed if a prescription was sent out as to how ideal men should 'act' and 'be' in society.

1.3 Research hypothesis

My hypothesis is that the character David is an important figure in Christianity and there is a possibility because of him being the 'chosen' king by 'God' that many would study his life to learn behaviour and how they should be in community. Now, if this is the case, there is a pertinent need to study episodes of his life to see what can be understood through the person David. I will use excepts from the work of Bruner, who explains narrative as, "taking the story as the investigating focus. Narrative is a conventional form, transmitted culturally and constrained by each individual's level of mastery. Narratives are a version of reality whose acceptability is governed by 'convention' and narrative necessary rather than by empirical verification and logical requirements although ironically we have no compunction of calling stories true or false" (Bruner 1991,2). I value the work of Bruner, as it shows how 1st and 2nd Samuel could be valuable scientific research of understanding the life story of David and what implications there are as people attempt to understand the life of David in their process of coming of age and construction of masculinity process. I am of the view that when you read

[6] According to Cisneros, "About 1 in 17 men (5.9% or an estimated 6.8 million) were forced to penetrate someone else at some point in their lives with reportable state estimates ranging from 5.3% ro 10.6%" (Cisneros 2020,4).

the story at face value you can miss so much of what the narrator sought the contemporary readers to understand. The story of David is important as it allows insights into some aspects of coming of age and constructions of the masculine identity. The modelling of Biblical characters by Christian men is not generally a conscious and intentional process but it is usually assumed and so taken for granted, meaning contemporary men could be assimilating so many more complex issues than meet the eye and this is the between the lines detail that this project seeks to explore.

1.4 Research focus, questions and objectives

1.4.0 Research focus

The study focuses primarily on excerpts from the life of David as drawn from parts of 1st and 2nd Samuel and the interests are in depictions, interpretations and deductions of David's transition process and constructions of masculinity.

1.4.1 Key Research question

In doing a narrative analysis of the selected scenes of the David Narrative Cycle, employing masculinity and coming of age theory as lenses, what ideo-theological resources can be developed for contemporary readers to understand the complexity of negotiating masculinity construction and the process of coming of age?

1.4.2 Research Sub-Questions

1. What are the main issues and factors that impact the process of masculinity construction and the coming of age process for men in the South African context?

2. How could contemporary theory pertaining to masculinity construction and the negotiation of identity construction in the coming of age process offer a unique lens to engage episodes in the David Narrative Cycle?

3. What ideo-theological resources could be developed from a close reading of the David Narrative Cycle to engage contemporary readers in the process of negotiating masculinity construction and coming of age?

1.4.3 Objectives

1. To ascertain what the real issues and factors are that are impacting the process of the construction of masculinities and what encompasses the coming of age process for men within the South African context.

2. To draw theoretical insights from both contemporary masculinities and identity formation that could be foundational in reading the David Narrative Cycle and that could be crucial in understanding the nuances around masculinity negotiations.

3. To attempt to compile primary ideo-theological resources that can be gained when engaging the character of David in a close reading of the David Narrative Cycle and to see how this could inform contemporary readers in reconstructing and modelling life-giving masculinity trajectories in the complex process of becoming.

1.4.4 Method to read and analyse the selected scenes

1.4.4.1 Narrative analysis

This study selected the use of a Narrative Analysis. In framing narratives, Berlin posits that, "the Bible is certainly a literary work and as such becomes subject to literary criticism. The purpose of which is to bring to clearer focus the subtleties of language, style and meaning that are the fabric of the text" (Berlin 1982, 69). In terms of definitions of narrative analysis, I will consider the definition as presented by Ska who says, "By narrative we mean first of all a literary genre distinct from poetry or dramatic art, from philosophical or theological treatises, prophetic oracles and wisdom literature. But we also use it to refer to the concrete texts belonging to this literary genre (the narratives)" (Ska 1990,6). Mark Powell says, "Narrative criticism focuses on stories in biblical literature and attempts to read these stories with insights drawn from the secular field of modern literary criticism. The goal is to determine the effects that the stories are expected to have on their audience" (Powell 1992, 239). Bruce et al (2016,16), says, "Narrative analysis is about examining stories: seeking to understand and interpret, focusing on the particular, and using the story as the anchor of analysis."

The analysis could take a variety of forms and it could be thematic or relate to a concept or phenomenon of interest. The analysis could involve whole stories, a participant's narrative context, stories within stories and particular exemplars" (Bruce 2016, 32). In this particular

research I focus on the character David. Furthermore, Fraser 2004 points out that, "in the process of re-reading stories they represent their identities and societies and narratives help people to organize their experiences into meaningful episodes that call upon cultural modes of reasoning and representation. Narratives are integral to human culture because culture is constituted through the ensemble of stories; we talk about ourselves. Culture produces the conventions for living e.g., community, work place and home and culture shapes how individuals envisage their world and speak about it. Also, narratives can be used to reinforce but also contest dominant social practices" (Fraser 2004, 180).

1.4.4.2 Construction of masculinity

In attempting to use masculinities as a theory in my research, firstly I want to acknowledge that there are a vast number of definitions and understandings of what masculinity is, but more importantly within the South African context masculinity could be referred to both in a singular way and at times in a plural way. Ratele is an ideal theorist for my work because he engages notions of coming of age and liminality. Ratele (2007) says, "Men have always been the privileged partners in the binarism of gender, by their normativity, yet assumed to be the center by their dominance. Most dominant studies on men and boys have been predominantly in the traditional mode. The gap that he recognizes is that the stories and narratives of boys and men have been ignored and this means their vulnerabilities remain unattended. This is because men are looked at as perpetrators and that unlike femininity, masculinity does not come naturally but is rather constantly and continuously fought for through performances of idealized and normative versions of masculinity including being macho and hyper-sexual" (Ratele 2007, 5).

Using this frame is important for this research as it obliges me as a woman to slow the analysis down and filter my bias and see what else I could be missing out from a close reading of the selected narrative that could be essential to understanding narrative coming of age and conceptualizing masculinities. In exploring masculinities as a methodological and analytical tool, I will also engage the work of David Clines and a few of the many biblical scholars who engage masculinities. expectations because of the need to belong to a community. Clines (1995) says, "Masculinity like femininity is a social construction, the product of historical processes. The significant fact is that not all males, in whatever culture, conform to the social norms. The norms may privilege young heterosexual, strong and physical men, and those who cannot be characterized will be deviants from socially acceptable maleness" (1995,12). Engaging Clines in my work will be essential in his approach that offers an eye into the social

context of the world of the text as well as the world of contemporary men, allowing this study to reflect on the role of society in constructions of masculinity. For the purposes of this research I utilize the theoretical framework of coming of age as a method of how to draw out some important observations about coming of age in the life of David and later in making sense of coming of age in some cases for men in South Africa.

1.4.4.3 Coming of age

I argue that the way I read 1st and 2nd Samuel and my focus on David's coming of age process could be categorized as a coming-of-age text. The term coming-of-age in so far as the adolescent and literary theory world, is used synonymously with the term a bildungsroman. A bildungsroman is a story that relates an adolescent's movement toward adulthood and the corresponding awakening to a new understanding of his or herself and the world around him or her. Au argues, "The *Bildungsroman* genre focuses on the coming of age and rites of passage of an adolescent and/or young adult and is recognized for how it educates its readers about personal growth and self-consciousness" (Au 2017, 1). When we are introduced to David in 1st and 2nd Samuel, he appears as a young boy, given duties of taking care of sheep, but soon in the narrative transitions to be a husband, army leader and a man in a powerful position of being a king without a necessary change of age significantly. In using the work of Au and his characteristics of coming of age such as: (a) *Movement is to social success and self-realization* – which we see David doing when he is taking care of his father's sheep, and taking responsibilities given by his father and also when he kills a bear and a lion with his bare hands; (b) *Confrontation with the adult world* – which we see when David talks to King Saul and negotiates permission to fight Goliath and becomes an adult by being a husband to Micah and leader of the army; (c) *Moral challenges/ moral growth* – which we see in how he navigates his relationship with Jonathan and later Mephibosheth; and also in the case of Abigail where he reasons with her; (d*) Individual needs and desires vs external pressures/expectations/norms* – which we see in the case of David and Bathsheba where he negotiates his individual needs, desires and external pressures of his duty as King and the expectations of people of him that led him to attempt to hide that he had desired Bathsheba; (e) *Failure/disappointments/ awake to limitations* which we see leading to David releasing and instruction for Uriah to be killed and him using his leadership for Joab to do killings one not forgetting that even from the onset David sent his servants to go and bring Bathsheba to him. Some of *the limitations* that David had, can be seen in other scenes, like the story of Tamar when Amnon (his son) raped Tamar (his daughter). He never quite acted on the issues accepting the complexities and *greyness of*

the world and an awareness of self. The exploration of the line by line characteristics presented by Au (2017), are to help my reader to understand why I categorically frame it as a coming of age narrative and review it in this project as such.

According to Gallyot, "Adolescence is a beautiful phase where a child is transitioning into an adult. The body undergoes a cascade of hormonal reactions thereby developing the child physically and emotionally. This is a very vulnerable phase in a child's life, especially for personality development. It is during adolescence that children may seem irrational and difficult to understand which is normal and a part of growing up" (Gallyot 2020,1). The vulnerability of David is seen in his earlier life, before he sat on the throne as King. David is seen acting irrationally and difficult, showing what I argue that coming of age is continuous and non-linear. With society at the center of the coming of age process, it would mean with a changing context the process of coming to age would change. I argue as shall be seen in my research that coming of age and masculinity construction are intertwined because of society at the center of the two processes. Coming of age is a gender-neutral process and embraces all aspects of coming of age, including but not limited to figuring out one's sexual identity and sexual expression or non-thereof. I got to understand this better during my Master's project as alluded to in section (1.1). Masculinity constructions focus on how 'males' or assumed 'men' negotiate their way from boyhood to manhood/adulthood including the societal, cultural, religious expectations of how 'true men' are meant to act. The common denominator between coming of age and masculinity is society. This next section will focus on what combining masculinity constructions theory and coming of age could offer for those who use 1st and 2nd Samuel as a reflective surface.

1.4.4.4 What combining masculinity and coming of age frames could offer potentially when reading 1st and 2nd Samuel

In drawing out what is important, not only will I use the narrative analysis method, I will also use aspects of coming of age and masculinity as theories to draw out important elements from the selected episodes that help me understand David. By combining the coming of age theory and masculinity theory, I argue that a holistic approach and understanding the crisis of masculinity as explained in the (1.2) research problem, could almost be understood more comprehensively. For an example, in the incident of Pule referenced, which is the story of a pregnant girl who was killed by her boyfriend and was found hung on a tree in Johannesburg, South Africa, this cannot merely be looked at as skewed masculinity. Instead, it caused me to

question what process was involved in this man's masculine identity as he came of age. By combining the coming of age theory and masculinity theory together, the method allows the research to take into consideration the psychological aspects of manhood, role of society, role of self, cultural engagement, race and what identity formation constitutes for each man.

I posit that engaging the masculinity elements which are: *questions of strength, violence, sexual expression, societal expectations of men and cultural detects,* to mention but a few aspects, I provide a limited approach as most factors focus on pleasing an outside world and over performing to be accepted and endorsed. Coming of age allows an entry and introspection into the personal life of the particular man's life. I argue that the first step is the identification of the real problem in that the research attempts to address the existing problem. However, the masculinity problem is more structural and systematic and without including the coming of age theory, men remain discussed within a problematic system and do not personally become involved in identifying their role in their masculine actions. Combining the two methods allows the researcher to hold both the society and the individual man as accountable for their actions. While much work has been done around masculinities, what will be unique is the use of my combined method in reading the David Narrative Text. This next section will briefly define a contextual bible study which I have already referred to in 1.2 which was the Research Problem and how I ultimately seek to work on the research problem.

1.4.4.5 Contextual Bible

Defining CBS?

In the book, *Contextual Bible Study 1993,* West says, "Contextual Bible study recognizes that our context influences our readings of the Bible. Instead of denying that we are shaped, for example by our race, culture, gender and class, the factors influencing our reading of the Bible. A commitment of contextual Bible study is that we acknowledge and recognize the environmental factors that have formed us" (West 1993,13). Furthermore, "The Bible is and has been one of the basic sources of African and black theology. Not only has the Bible been a significant text in Africa, but Africa has also had a significant impact on the Bible. There is a significant African presence and influence in the Bible" (West 1993,61). West argues that "African biblical hermeneutics is a reflective discipline, analyzing what African biblical scholars do. Though often cast in a prescriptive mood, it is properly a descriptive project. Of course, identifying, describing and analyzing what scholars are up to when they do their work can take on normative or even imperative force" (West 2013,2).

In, *Doing Contextual Bible Study, A Resource Manual,* according to West, "Contextual Bible study is based on asking questions about our context and about the biblical text. The resources of biblical text. The resources of biblical scholarship focus on the three dimensions of the text: (a) behind *the text* focusing on the socio-historical world that produced the text, (b) *on the text* focusing on the text itself as a literary composition and (c) *in front of the text* focusing on the possible worlds the text projects beyond itself towards the reader" (West 2011,9). Furthermore, "Contextual Bible Study works with the framework of ***SEE--JUDGE--ACT*** approach to social transformation. This approach or process or method was developed by Fr. Joseph Cardijn in the 1930s in Belgium. The ***see-judge-act*** method has been one of the basic genres of theology propagated in South Africa. This method meant starting with a social analysis, then proceeding to the reading of the biblical text and then to action. *See* involves careful social analysis of a particular context from below by organized groups of the marginalized. This reality is then judged by the biblical and theological tradition of God's project" (West 2011,29). Also, "in the contextual Bible study methodology two types of questions are used in the Bible reading which are the contextual community consciousness questions and textual critical consciousness questions. The literary modes of reading which facilitate a careful and close reading of text. The focus here is on the internal relationships within the text – beginning and ending of text, character, plot, setting, role, narrator. The historical and sociological modes of reading are used to explore the relationship between the text and the world that produced the text. Focus here is on the world behind the text: historical origins, author-date and social, cultural, economic, political and religious analysis of the society that produced the text" (West 2011,30).

Nadar argues, that the "*ordinary readers* of the Bible and proponents of CBS have claimed that the end goal of CBS is transformation, liberation and change. My own definition of CBS which I have used in training workshops and university classes on the subject is that Contextual Bible Study is an interactive study of particular texts in the Bible, which brings the perspectives of both the context of the reader and the context of the Bible into dialogue, for the purpose of transformation. Hence, the main purpose of CBS, it can be said, is transformation and change" (Nadar 2009,387). Similarly, Van der Walt argues that, "By bringing together critical Biblical scholars and lay readers with a variety of interpretative tools to communally engage with the Bible text as a reflective surface, the possibility is opened for the 'troubling' of ideologies of male dominance, which are often based upon exclusive practices of Bible interpretation" (Van der Walt 2017, 18). At the end of my research I seek to utilize information to build CBS that

can be instrumental in the process of making/reforming of masculinities. This next section discusses the selected scenes and the rationale I used.

1.5 Selected scenes and rationale

Scene 1: 1 Samuel 17:40-54 and 1 Samuel 18:27-28 (David and Goliath) is important because it is here that we are introduced to David as a young boy. I argue that it is here that he transitions from boyhood to manhood. This is seen when he fights Goliath, is victorious and is awarded a wife. Similarly, David in this episode shows violent actions that appear distinctly expected of him. This will be explored further for an enhanced understanding on coming of age and constructions of masculinity.

Scene 2: 1 Samuel 18:1-5 and 2 Samuel 9: 1-7 (David and Jonathan) is important because David finds Jonathan the son of Saul having an overwhelming love for David which he confesses and we see David reciprocating love for Jonathan. I choose this scene because David and Jonathan's love provides a platform for reflection on male to male closeness and love. This story touches on family, succession narrative, and 'unconventional love' and it touches on the process of coming of age and masculine identity.

Scene 3: 1 Samuel 25:18-34 and 1 Samuel 25: 39-44 (David and Abigail) is important because it was because of Abigail a woman that David does not kill a great number of people, especially because he had desired to kill Nabal and his people for disregarding his leadership. Abigail being a woman also presents David in a progressive light, especially because he is able to listen to a woman and take counsel from a woman. This scene is important in so far as how women shaped/ continue to shape the construction and expression of masculinities.

Scene 4: 2 Samuel 11:1-17 and 2 Samuel 11: 26-27 (David and Bathsheba) is important because it helps us to see how David leads and who he is in relation to his staff and his female counterparts. When I began this research one of the primary research problems that this study sought to address was skewed masculinities. I also began from the presupposition that for some within the confines of the Abrahamic religions David remains a role model of true masculinity. Within my context of research and responding to the problem, if the account of David and Bathsheba is under scrutiny, it would explain the existence of toxic masculinities. During the time David relates to Bathsheba, he takes a wife that is married to one of his army men Uriah, he has unprotected sex with her and she becomes pregnant. David then calls the army

commander, instructing him to ensure Uriah is killed, and then to cover up his actions. By the time Uriah dies, Bathsheba was pregnant with the child of David. Uriah never got to know about the pregnancy of Bathsheba. David takes a grieving Bathsheba who had just lost her husband to be his wife. Violence is at the center of what is captured as masculine within this context and this study will problematize the celebration of such attribute as informing the process of coming of age and construction of the masculine identity. Within these episodes, different aspects speak to leadership of men, David relating to women and there is room to reflect on how David has come of age and what type of a man he has become. This particular series of scenes is important because most of the things documented in the story appear to be happening within the South African context and it will be important to see how these shapes an understanding of the process of coming of age and constructions of masculinity.

I have limited my scene selection to these four episodes because of the scope of this research, however within the research of the *Davidic Narrative,* there are many other incidents that could have been pivotal for the reflections on coming of age and construction of masculinities. The limitation is based on that this research aimed at modelling what using the Bible (*1st and 2nd Samuel*) as a resource could offer *contemporary men* in their negotiations of coming of age and masculinity constructions amidst a widespread presence of *gender-based violence,* which is a *fraction of toxic masculinity expressions* in South Africa. In the next section, I tabulate how these scenes will be read and I will later provide a step by step guide to use in *(Chapter4)* of this research.

1.6 Structure of the research project – development of the argument

This research project has been structured as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a basic orientation to the project, including the background, research problem, research hypothesis, methodology and hermeneutical approach and an overview of the structure of the research project. I discuss here the possible value of this research project which is conducted during a rising period of unrest of Gender-Based Violence cases in South Africa.

Chapter 2 will serve as the literature review of this research project and sets out to map the landscape of already existing studies pertaining to the Davidic Narrative Cycle. The first section in this chapter gives a preliminary operational definition of masculinities and how it

will be used as an analytical tool. The second section will map out existing scholarship in the South African context and masculinity conversations. The third section delves into definition and a preliminary understanding of coming of age within the scope of this research and how it will be used as an analytical tool. The fourth section will focus on existing Hebrew-based masculinities scholarly work. The fifth and final section will discuss how combining masculinity theory and coming of age could be a rich reflective surface for reading 1st and 2nd Samuel.

Chapter 3 will focus on the *details* in the method and the framework this research will use to dissect the selected episodes from the David Narrative Cycle, as drawn from parts of 1st and 2nd Samuel. I will primarily depend on narrative analysis as the tool to analyse the selected episodes. The first section of the chapter focuses on explaining what Critical Biblical Hermeneutics is and this research locates itself within the field of African Biblical Hermeneutics. This first section will end by answering what narrative analysis is about, noticing the role of the narrator, the role of the different characters, and understanding the plot within each selected episode. The second section of this chapter will focus on masculinity as a methodological tool, what it entails and what its benefits and limitations are. The third section will focus on coming of age as a methodological tool and a discussion on what it encompasses. I will briefly acknowledge scholarly work that has been done on gendered readings of the Bible and what can be learnt. The fourth and last section will focus on the limitations of the narrative analysis method and how combining masculinity theory and coming of age theory could augment this gap. I will end this section by presenting a layout of how I will read and layout my *Chapter 4.*

Chapter 4 will focus on the detailed discussion of the selected narratives from the David Narrative Cycle. Each selected episode begins by laying out the Hebrew-English text, a summary of the selected episode in my own words, then narrative analysis where I focus on character, plot, time and word selection. An assertion in this section will be the sketch drawing I have developed to understand each selected scene and the development of the plot that this book is about David and all the other personalities help us understand David and know him, because one of the ways we can know people is by looking at how they relate to other people. Generally, masculinity has set a standard for men and this usually guides the life of the males as they desire so much to be welcomed and acknowledged as men. This places masculinities

in the framework of performativity. I argue overall that coming of age and construction of masculinities are somewhat intertwined and one is a mirror of the other.

Chapter 5 will be built on the findings of chapter 4, which will be a narrative analysis. It discusses constructions of masculinity within the frame provided by Clines and the second part discusses constructions of coming of age within the frame provided by Wilson. It begins by summarizing findings given by doing a narrative analysis in Chapter 4. This chapter particularly helps this research answer some of the initial connections made in this research about Biblical constructions of masculinities and the process of coming of age. The standard maturation process of transitioning from boyhood to manhood as lived out by David, holds expectations of performing violence and actions to show strength against whomever is considered as the other. Secondly, at least as espoused through the life of David presented in 1st and 2nd Samuel, in so far as coming of age and transitioning from boyhood to manhood, there is a need for performance of masculine characteristics and ideals set by the community and typically when you do those things set apart for men specifically, a community observe and qualify and welcome the boy from boyhood to manhood. There is power in the community of observers who accepted one's actions as less of a boy and more of a man. Lastly, some other basic manly expectations are: risk-taking, ability to protect and provide for the family and an openness to be taught, prepared and guided by those who have successfully transitioned from boyhood to manhood. I posit that engaging the masculinity elements which are: questions of strength, violence, sexual expression, societal expectations of men, and cultural detects, to mention but a few aspects, provide a limited approach, as most factors focus on pleasing an outside world and over performing to be accepted and endorsed. Coming of age allows an entry and introspection into the personal life of the particular man's life. I argue that the first step is the identification of the real problem, in that the research attempts to address the existing problem. However, the masculinity problem is more structural and systematic and without including the coming of age theory, men remain discussed within a problematic system and do not personally become involved in identifying their role in their masculine actions.

Chapter 6 will attempt to answer the contemporary reflection question in that it focuses on the findings from each of the episodes. This chapter will begin by discussing some themes that run throughout the study and what contemporary readers can make of them such as:

(i) Masculinity as cultural, contextual and temporal

(ii) Transition to masculinity as inclusive of tasks/rites of passage

(iii) The complexity of the male-body

(iv) An exploration of the hegemonic notions of masculinity.

The second part will focus on the use of the Bible as a reflective surface and I argue that when employing the Contextual Bible Study model, it becomes possible to gain ideo-theological resources that could be used by contemporary men. The third part will develop Contextual Bible Study questions that can be used in communities to help men reflect on masculinities and the state of masculinities in the country. I argue that the value of the Contextual Bible Study model is that men working together pause and reflect on the text and context and then work together to map a way forward, rather than the solution to the community being prescribed externally. The ideo-theological resources gained include this research bridging the gap between academia and the community. I argue that when these two works separately, we work in silos with less effective results. Yet bridging the gap allows a platform, making change possible.

Chapter 7 will present possible ideo-theological resources that can be gained when using the Bible as a reflective surface, as it builds from Chapter 6 and it also primarily focuses on how this work will be developed at a Post-Doctoral Level. I propose that using the Contextual Bible Study as a methodological tool will develop ideo-theological resources that can be used by men. Throughout my work around advocacy and navigating the different issues that come with Gender-Based Violence, I have noticed that men do not have spaces to talk about these complexities because processing is considered weak and not manly. In my contribution I am proposing that Contextual Bible Spaces are helpful and offer important resources. This serves also to acknowledge that more work needs to be done to better the state of men in our country.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

2.0 Introduction

This research focuses on selected episodes of the Davidic Narrative as presented by the author in 1st and 2nd Samuel. This project looks at how masculinity theory and coming of age theory help us to think of the character David, because I ultimately believe that the text could be used as a productive reflective surface for contemporary readers navigating this complexity. Having explained my positionality, I also begin from the hypothesis that David remains a heroic figure, at least within most Abrahamic religions. It is congruent with a general knowledge that many aspects of being a man are learnt from the biblical character within faith communities. A close re-reading of these selected narrative episodes could potentially offer insights into the South African masculinity contemporary issues as discussed in *1.2 the research problem.* In this chapter I will focus on the conceptual understanding of masculinities and coming of age theories as essential tools in terms of tools for the research.

This chapter attempts to address 1.1.2, the sub-question that says: *What are the main issues and factors that impact the process of masculinity construction and the coming-of-age process for men?* The first section *(2.1)* will define masculinities, investigate the development within the field and end with how masculinities can be used as an analytical tool. The second section *(2.2)* will attempt to show what work has been done in the context of South Africa pertaining to masculinity conversations. The third section *(2.3)* will primarily be a presentation of how masculinities have been discussed within the Hebrew Bible to date. The fourth section *(2.4)* is focused on theories and definitions of coming of age and identity formation process. This section focuses on naming what aspects of coming of age will be drawn into the analytical process in the reflective close reading. The fifth (*2.5)* and last section will assess how the combining of masculinity theory and coming of age could be essential tools for re-reading the narrative cycle.

2.1 Masculinities definition and conceptualization

This research attempts to utilise masculinity theories as lenses of reading the David narrative to gain insights on the complexities in coming of age and developmental dynamics. This first section defines masculinity, and the second section gives a brief history of the field, and the third section focuses on beginning to pick out what masculinity aspects could be essential as analytic resources.

The scholars Connell (2005) and Demetriou (2001) theorize that "*the positioning of masculinities*: in gender studies broadening the premise of the study of gender considering the role that social constructions, such as culture, class, race, and generation, contribute to the formation of gender" (2005,6). "*Masculinity*" *as* a term, if we can briefly define it at all, is simultaneously a place in gendered relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture. Masculinity is a configuration of practice, within a system of gender relations (Connell 2001,18). While there are many definitions of masculinities, these definitions are foundational to this study, as I will primarily begin with this definition and hopefully at the end come to richer enhanced definitions and understandings of masculinities. Moreover, this research seamlessly tackles issues of gender and masculinity construction, across cultural, racial and class divides. The complete 'new' understanding and framing of masculinity will ideally include as many men as possible overriding cultural, class, and racial divides, especially as the research emanates from a highly diverse background (South Africa).

The four strategies used in the work of Connell (2001 and 2013) divide masculinity definitions into these following segments: (1) essentialist definitions, including elements of hard work, risk taking, responsibility and aggression, (2) a positivist social science definition – referring to ethnographic and cultural experiences and frame of reference, (3) normative definitions – this encompasses elements of what stereotypically a man ought to be with focus on sex roles as expected religiously and culturally and (4) semiotic definitions – dwelling on negating and focusing for an example on masculinity as anything that is not femininity. The two definitions that remain important to this study will be "masculinity refers to specific gender identities belonging to individuals who have specific experiences of what it means to feel, think and be a male person" (Connell 2005,12). Miescher and Lindsay argue, "As a gendered identity for men, masculinity therefore refers to a cluster of norms, values and behavioural patterns expressing explicit or implicit expectations of how men act and represent themselves to others"

(2003, 8). Similarly, Beynon in his work points out that maleness focuses on the biological aspect and then masculinity encompasses the cultural dynamic (Beynon 2001, 3).

This means that what is 'male' is the anatomy of a boy and as to which type of 'man' one becomes is largely influenced by the 'cultural experience and cultural reality.' Beynon further posits that, "Men are not born with masculinity as part of their genetic make-up; rather masculinity is a gendered identity into which men are acculturated and is composed of social codes of behaviour, which men learn to reproduce in culturally appropriate ways" (Beynon 2001, 2). While Connell presents a bigger frame to understand masculinities, Beynon focuses on a small facet of masculinities as defined by anatomy. The recognition is that all these work together and some aspects of masculinities may become more pronounced in different settings.

Alongside these dominant voices of masculinity, I introduce Daniela Gennrich, whose approach on masculinity focuses on how one experiences life as a man within a particular social context. Gennrich (2013) says masculinities are not intrinsic to men but rather masculinities constitute learnt and taught norms from the given context (2013, 4). Furthermore, Gennrich is aware that to sustain whatever is set as the 'normative masculinities', the different communities create a reward-punishment system, celebrating those who conform and punishing and excluding those who do not adhere to the normative. The definition by Gennrich allows an analysis of the systematic development of masculinities in so far as clarifying and decoding intricate male conduct and navigating societal 'unhealthy' expectations of what being a 'real man' compromises of.

(a) Development of the field

Connell's interest in work around masculinities was initially due to a survey on a teenager group in Sydney circling around the analysis of sex-differences. My research places Connell's work at the centre of this framework because of her personal transition of undergoing a medically-assisted gender reassignment process. Connell says, *"I've never felt, personally, very comfortable with conventional masculinities. I've always identified strongly with women"* (Wedgwood 2009, 329). This demonstrates the embodied negotiations and wrestling with gender that were at the centre of her life. The value of this is that Connell's reflections are processed and reasoned at a personal and application level. The initial systemic work produced for masculinities that Connell worked with was a response to the liberation of women at the end of the 1960s and the larger frame of response was in a growing feminist structure (Connell

1993, 598). The coining and use of the term gender became an explicit research interest until the 1980s and until this time the study centred on class-stratification in a political and cultural world. Subsequently, Connell's writings became more explicit about gender, however the context was very heated as feminism was experiencing both internal and external scrutiny (Wedgwood 2009).

Though the project's original focus was on class differences in educational outcomes, it later extended to gender because, in the process of interviewing male and female students, their mothers and fathers, and their male and female teachers, gender issues became evident. Connell says it would certainly be true to say that the way she worked on gender was structured by the way she worked in class. Connell saw gender as a structure or a system of social inequality, with its own logic and its own internal complexities. Her approach to understanding gender became intertwined with her exploration of class (Wedgwood 2009, 335).

In a later article, Connell acknowledges that masculinity cannot be spoken of comprehensively without reference to femininity; pluralization of masculinity in my understanding broadens the scope of what is under review, and it is less about males dominating lives of females (Connell 2005, 12). Except for the mentioned political, economic, and social class that contributes to the framing of masculinities, masculinities I argue continue to be diverse, as presented by Messerschmidt (2018) and this can include types such as:

(a) *Hegemonic*: Includes guaranteeing the position of men and subordination of women using institutional power and cultural ideals, transforming when challenged.

(b) *Subordinate:* The varying levels of power and control e.g., heterosexual men in relation to the subordination of homosexual men. These differences are sustained by violence, exclusion etc.

(c) *Complicity:* Acknowledging that not all men meet the normative standards of masculinity, and this type of masculinity does not directly challenge other men or women in society.

(d) *Marginalized:* marginalization here refers to relationships between masculinity in dominant and subordinated classes or ethnic groups.

Until the work of Gardiner, the emphasis was primarily on the political, social, and economic. Gardiner (2002) presents the angle whereby the feminist, lesbian and progressive black men came together to develop a voice and raise concerns and how masculinities in their varying

types impacted them (2002,15). The three mentioned groups came together acknowledging that we struggle daily with black men against class and race similarly. The work focused on systemic political male negotiations with the feminist movement. A more fragmented fight against systemic masculinity would be self-defeating at the time because Pease (2000) observed that white heterosexual males weren't consciously aware of biases/ exclusion and conclusion drawn based on one's race and sexual orientation. For example, men are not consciously aware of how patriarchy and social structure place them at advantageous places. Yet more progressively men are becoming aware and then either continue to benefit or question their 'male privilege'. There continue to be dialogues and debates on whether men can speak 'authentically' and in a 'non-biased' manner about men's issues or that women could offer 'perspective' on such issues. In the development of masculinities and their exploration, the key conversational partners were feminists and lesbians. In summary, my working hypothesis is that masculinity construction is temporal, contextual, and relational.

2.2 Masculinity as contextual – South Africa

The concept ''hegemonic masculinity'' is widely used in South African gender research. It made its appearance in this work in the early 1990s because of the uptake of Raewyn Connell's theoretical work (1987, 1995), generally on masculinities but specifically, hegemonic masculinity and was consolidated in the period thereafter by Connell's visits to South Africa. In two edited volumes (Morrell 1998, 2013), the concept is used by many of the contributors and used as an organizing concept for the periodization and analysis of men and masculinity in South African society. Schippers (2007) says, "Hegemonic masculinity is the qualities defined as manly that establish and legitimate a hierarchical and complementary relationship to femininity and that by doing so guarantee the dominant position of men and the subordination of women. Given the centrality of the relationship between masculinity and femininity in the new definition, we now have conceptual space for hegemonic femininity. Hegemonic femininity consists of the characteristics defined as womanly that establish and legitimate a hierarchical and complementary relationship to hegemonic masculinity and that by doing so, guarantee the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Schippers 2007, 94).

In the construction and sustenance of what consists in the hegemonic masculinity, circumcision of the male and a focus on the penis becomes very central to this. The role of circumcision is

dual in that it was a form of initiation rite, and it was a mark used to reinforce male belonging to a certain group. Traditionally in many contexts there is an expectation that true men will partake in this ritual as part of the complex process of coming of age from boyhood to adulthood. In the South African context, the Xhosa culture includes circumcision and spending time in the mountains training to be a man or transitioning to be a full man According to Magodyo, Andipatin and Jackson in the article *The role of Xhosa Traditional Circumcision in Constructing Masculinity*, they explain that *"Ulwaluko* is a Xhosa word that refers to an initiation ritual. The purpose is to transform boys into men. Circumcision is one of the rituals performed. The ritual aims to instil good moral and social values. Due to socio-cultural shifts, the practice of *Ulwaluko* has changed and this has culminated in instances of criminal activity, drug abuse, risky sexual behaviours, and inhumane behaviours among some of the initiates" (Magodyo & Jackson 2017, 344). Prior to this, the boy is called, *'inkwenkwe'* meaning a small boy and post time at the mountain if you do not die, 'you are now -*indoda* meaning a full man. Also, after circumcision a male is expected to go out and use and try his new penis on the girls in the community. This is what the authors now explain as risky sexual behaviours.

This example shows the physical risk, violence and health risk that comes with the process of coming of age within the Xhosa culture. Like most cultures, the final training into manhood appears only to be complete once a boy is circumcised (Magodyo & Jackson 2017, 345). There appears to be a close connection between the circumcision ritual to the making of a man, as we see the scholars explaining how this is the end step of this celebration of the identity of a boy who is now a man. Moreover, the scholar mentions that there is some sexual education but despite this, the society has seen a rising amount of risky sexual behaviour from newly initiated men.

Kimmel, Robert et al 2005, argues that "the most important accomplishment of the 20th Century is the concept of gender as a social construction; that is the idea that masculinity and femininity are loosely defined…" (Kimmel 2005,35). The more developed African masculinities are those written in the post-colonial era, as they are detailed reflections and attempts at regaining lost masculinities post colonization. According to Morrell, "Postcolonial theory draws on postmodern theory to unpick the modernist project, exposing its twin nature: freedom, self-determination, reason and yet also submission, marginalization, and inadequacy of the "other." Postcolonial theory is primarily associated with "the holy trinity" (Robert Young, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak.) What unites them are their intellectual debt to

postmodern writers, their focus on the importance of culture, and their political opposition to the cultural domination of the West" (Morrell et al 2012, 95).

The postmodern masculinity constructions remain cognizant of the complexity of hegemonic masculinity. Morrell 2012, says, "Masculinities as influenced by external factors such as the leadership-subordinate masculinities e.g., white men leading black male, white men having all the resources and black men working to get resources for their families under white men" (Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger 2012, 12). Morrell et. Al argue, "In the first instance, it was driven by gendered metropolitan forces and reflected the gender order of the metropole. More so, this new theory attempts to offer an alternative reading of agency and subjectivity and, at the same time, tackles the issue of representation and power in the periphery" (Morrell et.al 2012, 92). When we speak of masculinities within the African context it is crucial to not forget the history around the era of colonialism (apartheid precisely in South Africa). It would follow then that the men's identities changed, and they had to contend with the arrival of males who lead them economically, socially, and politically.

A constructive shift towards a great construction of life-affirming masculinity options would entail an acknowledgement and a mental registering that says, "Men need a place (safe *space*) where they can just be men, where they can laugh, cry, seek counsel…. They need to identify with each other, to take the mask off and be themselves" (Owino 2012). Anderson says, "The existence of inclusive masculinities highlights that there is awareness that heterosexual men can act in ways once associated with homosexuality with less threat to one's public identity as heterosexual. This then is a positive influence for men to associate with women, femininity, and gay men. The influence of this change is multiple and varied" (Anderson 2011, 80). Kopano Ratele in *Masculinities without Tradition,* focuses the psychological motivation and sustenance of toxic or hegemonic masculinities and he connects this to a need to belong and be recognized as a true man. In the event that one is suspected to be anything else, such as being gay, one receives exclusion and is treated as not manly. Many men fear this exclusion and as such men will overcompensate by abusing women and dominating them (Ratele 2013, 4). Similarly, in *Hegemonic African Masculinities and Men's Heterosexual Lives: Some Uses for Homophobia,* in 2014, he argues, "the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' is defined as the pattern of practice (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allow ...men's dominance over women to continue. Hegemonic masculinity [is] distinguished from other masculinities, especially subordinated masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity is not

assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it" (Ratele 2014, 117).

(a) Religious masculinities

According to Van Klinken (2011), "Masculinities and religion are often analysed by means of a rather monolithic concept of patriarchy. The concept posits a fixed structural inequality between men and women, and it tends towards a dichotomous understanding of gender in terms of female submission and male domination. This view of patriarchy, which is in line with early feminist theory, has been increasingly subjected to criticism in more recent theories of gender. They draw attention to the complexity of gender relationships and to the fluidity and ambiguity of gender identities" (Klinken 2011,120). Enhancing the argument, Ratele (2018) posits that "hegemonic masculinities are many things done by males that perpetuate the subordination of females to males and these include living dangerously, using illegal drugs, alcohol, unsafe driving, sexual promiscuity and engaging in violence and conflict" (Ratele 2008,18).

This approach to life by men in his study shows that this conduct has increased the mortality rate of men in South Africa. Also, as observed in the study by Ratele, men try to comply with the 'ruling masculinities expectations' and they do so to fit in and belong. People in religious or faith communities find that there is still an expectation or rite of passage before one is fully accepted as a real man. Not only did boys and men die trying to be incorporated and recognized as complete men; the advent of HIV endangered both men and women. Chitando, & Chirongoma, 'In *Redemptive Masculinities: Men, HIV and Religion,* explain this process as more complex and they say, "The idea of gendered vulnerabilities means that not only women but also men can be disadvantaged by certain concepts of masculinity. This has proved to be especially true in the context of the HIV epidemic, where the virus infects and affects both men and women" (2012,14). Chitando (2012), says, "sexuality is about power for those who determine the what, when where and how of sex, be it socio-economic and/or religio-cultural" (2012, 6). A close focus will also be made to observe how traditional and religious beliefs contribute to or enforce the perpetuation of toxic masculinities.

African feminist theologians like Musa Dube (2011) and Isabel Phiri (2004) have argued that both African traditional religion and Christianity uphold notions of male supremacy, such as the idea of male headship, which directly or indirectly assign all authority and power to control to men, including the control of women's bodies and female sexuality. Alongside this approach

there is, “Pentecostalism made a meaningful contribution by shaping ‘soft masculinities’, that is, concepts of manhood defined by values such as sexual abstinence, marital faithfulness, family involvement” (Chitando & Klinken 2011,23). There is not much progress holistically with Pentecostal understanding of masculinities, and this could be because the church attempts to transform masculinity from within a patriarchal frame (Klinken 2010,11).

(b) Masculinities as an analytical category

In attempting to use masculinities as a theory in my research, firstly I want to acknowledge that there are a vast number of definitions and understandings of what masculinity is, but more importantly within the South African context masculinity could be referred to in a singular way and at times in a plural way. Also, while men’s gendered identities are more given and fixed, gender relations are constructed and are constantly changing, though some features of gendered masculinities are non-changing as they form part of the hegemonic/patriarchal reality which cuts across culture, class and race. The key masculine theorist that this research shall focus on is excerpts from the work of Kopano Ratele, as his work joins together the continued struggle of coming of age and developing one’s identity from the time of being a small boy then focusing on all the stages in between.

Ratele (2008) says, “Men have always been the privileged partners in the binarism of gender, by their normativity, yet assumed to be the centre by their dominance. Most dominant studies on men and boys have been predominantly in the traditional mode. The gap that he recognizes is that the stories and narratives of boys and men have been ignored and this means their vulnerabilities remain unattended to. This is because men are looked at as perpetrators and that unlike femininity, masculinity does not come naturally but is rather constantly and continuously fought for through performances of idealized and normative versions of masculinity including being macho and hyper-sexual” (Ratele 2008, 515). Using this framework is important for this research as it obliges me as a woman to slow the analysis down and filter my bias and see what else I could be missing out on from a close reading of the selected narrative that could be essential to understanding narratives of coming of age and conceptualizing masculinities.

Part of the real problem that this study is cognizant of is that: “In South Africa, the focus on gendered identities and sexualities has been accelerated by the imperatives of challenging HIV/AIDS and the growing awareness of the extent and severity of gender-based violence”

(Ratele 2008,19). Furthermore, Ratele says, "Patriarchy or patriarchies is not only bad news for women, but also in different ways for many boys and men. Women suffer directly under patriarchy; men suffer from other men; men and boys must be made into men. Patriarchy creates risks and problems for women, children, and men too. While most contemporary societies can be characterized as patriarchies or male-dominated gender orders, by patriarchal social relations of patriarchal gender contracts, this does not mean that men are all powerful therein. Risk is double-edged. It involves recognizing risk to others – women, children, other men, and it also involves the risk to the self, men themselves, individually, or more collectively. These two forms of risk are interrelated. When we say 'risk', it is usually risk in a negative sense: that is, the risk of a problem. Risk implies the risk of difficulty, failure, harm, violence, damage and so on. But risk can also be a means to gain power, money, profit" (Ratele 2008, 25). The advantage of the work of Ratele is that his approach offers intersectionality. Ratele allows not only a socio-psychological detailed analysis of David's Narrative; but also provides room for incorporation of identity formation theory which forms a subsection of understanding coming of age.

The work of Ratele as my key theorist and frame is important in the critical reading of David's Narrative Cycle because:

i. The society that David's story is set in is the patriarchal Israel context and it will be important to see how the transition from boys to manhood typically looked.

ii. Analyzing the place of women in David's life. This section will focus on David and how he dealt with women who he was in communication or relation with.

iii. The way David related to other men in this narrative and how he handles power and an influential position.

iv. David within the set-up of a family with roles as relative, husband and father.

In the above section, I observed that masculinities are very broad and encompass a lot of aspects. The key role of this section was particularly what aspects of masculinity one can draw on in an in-depth understanding of coming of age and becoming, yet honouring the gender complexities. Posed differently, this section attempted to understand what masculinities as a frame of analysis could offer to a re-reading of an ancient Hebrew text.

In a larger framework, masculinity is only a subsection under gender work which is only a small aspect in conceptualizing and framing one's identity. Within masculinities it is important to say that while there are rites of passages that initiate or welcome a boy into manhood, this transition is not linear. The boy will graduate into manhood, but continue to embody his boyhood. At a later stage the man can either regress to being a boy or else it is a lifetime of continuous reinforcement of manhood. Daily there arise contexts and situations where the man must choose what conduct is expected by him from society, for him to maintain the status of 'full-manhood'. Observing masculinity as an analytical tool offers a lens into what masculinity entails and it also begins to show the fluidity and liminality that exist even as a man attempts to find out who they are. The next section will focus on understanding what work has been done in the Hebrew Bible around masculine identity, formation and daily living.

2.3 Masculinities in the Hebrew Bible

This section discusses existing scholarly works, their engagements with the Hebrew Bible and their conceptualization and framework of holistic boyhood/manhood and masculine identity. Firstly, in the book *Masculine Journey: Understanding the Six Stages of Manhood*, Robert Hicks says, "The term *zakar* translates as man/male in the Hebrew lexicon. It is important to recognize that in Hebrew the male identity focused primarily on the anatomy rather than the psychological or sociological aspects of the man. The Bible simply defines manhood by the phallus – the very way the doctor did when a child is born in the hospital (Hicks 1993,48). The big shift in modern day psychology is 'you are male if you feel like you are male'. According to Genesis 17:10, the first use and focus on the male anatomy begins by a Jewish expectation that every male must be circumcised. At circumcision the male organ is singled out as the unique site for the wound and bloodletting, endorsing a covenant with God and adhering to Jewish cultural male identity expectations (Hicks 1993,52).

Hicks notes that, "People are uneasy with the correlation of sexuality and religion. Christianity has made it to be separated and irreconcilable. Yet, many men get stuck in a phallic city, though it is a normal part of a developing manhood. It begins in adolescence and continues throughout the lifespan of a man" (1993,54). Seeing how the phallic focus remains central to the male experience of growth, the silence seems unreasonable. It is not shocking that the silence on the role of the male body and its use has filtered into the contemporary church.

Avioz in *The motif of beauty in the books of Samuel and Kings* attempts to follow closely on what the authors of Samuel and Kings think of physical appearances. The big question beyond beauty is, "is there a differentiation between masculine and feminine beauty" (Avioz 2009, 342). Furthermore, Avioz, "refers to Ringgeren beauty which is positive and claims there is no difference between masculine and feminine beauty, focusing particularly on the Hebrew text. However, when referring to masculine beauty there is much to the following terms: (i) extraordinary height, (ii) perfect body with no flaw, (iii) long hair and beautiful eyes. On the other hand, when referring to feminine beauty, the following terms are used: (i) tenderness, (ii) same symmetry, (iii) black long and flowing hair, (iv) beautiful eyes, (v) light skin, pleasant voice, impressive garments, jewellery, washing, putting on makeup and perfume" (Avioz 2009, 342).

The author Avioz found that "feminine beauty is closely tied to sexual attraction and marriage, while masculine duty is linked closely to management and pre-selection into leadership roles. As an example, with reference to male characters, we see King Saul's beauty as leading him to his selection as king while David's physical beauty seems less emphasized" (Avioz 2009, 243). Consequently, the focus seems to be on David being selected by God and God's affirmation as more than a focus on his physical appearance. "For the feminine beauty, we see beauty as a disadvantage because Bathsheba and Tamar are women, and both are forced to have sexual intercourse against their own will. The 'unconventional' beauty of Absalom works as he fights for his sister Tamar and Absalom named his daughter after his sister. The author has introduced a new dynamic of beauty, making it include gestures and life-giving actions" (Avioz 2009, 58).

Zsolnay (2017) writes with the Archaic period dating between 3350-3000BCE as a frame of reference. The Archaic period focuses on questions around what it means to be a man and how men live out and perform their masculinity. The research findings conclude that class, ethnicity and culture are great determinants in what comprises model masculinities. Zsolnay (2017) references Kimmel (2000) who says observing then performing constitute a great part of what being a man entails (Zsolnay 2017,1). Like Kimmel (1994), Walsh (2010) notes that masculinities are both embodied and embedded in the social and political domain and these sects become arenas of performativity for gender and sexual roles (2010, 2). Zsolnay (2017) notes that "masculinities are ever changing cultural projects that fluctuate in response to other variables such as class distinctions, sexual orientations, religious precepts, racial views and economic stratification" (2017,3). Walsh (2015) seems to suggest that an adherence to these masculinities and fluctuations thrive on a human's need to belong. This means that humanity

will work hard to learn and adapt to cultural expectations because of the need to belong to a community.

Clines (1995) says: "Masculinity like femininity is a social construction, the product of historical processes. The significant fact is that not all males, in whatever culture, conform to the social norms. The norms may privilege young heterosexual, strong and physical men, and those who cannot be characterized will be deviants from socially acceptable maleness" (1995, 212). His work is written from a western context and so he begins by framing what is true of western males. The second focus of his work is to focus on portraying what it was like to be a man in the Hebrew Bible (1 Samuel 16 – 1 Kings 2). Clines points to four expectations of what a 'real/ideal' man should do, namely: "(a) a real male should shy away from anything that is done by women, (b) the value of a man is measured in how successful and how independent he becomes, (c) being aggressive, being tough, being fighters and military life become avenues of living and expressing successful manhood, and (d) it is expected that a real man is sexually experienced and is always prepared to perform sexually" (Clines 1995, 215).

Clines uses David as a Hebrew model of masculinity and draws on the text where he is referred to as a mighty man of valour, warrior, intelligent in speech and skilful. The richness of the work of Clines is in that while he draws on David's sexual escapades and conquests, he begins to challenge the stereotypical masculinity by showing David as one who cries, which is a 'feminine attribute'. Clines is concerned in how modern-day readers of the text seem interested in defending David. Clines thinks David remains a celebrated man or is perceived as the face of 'true' masculinity, despite drifting away from the stereotypical image of real manhood, probably because David is a pre-figurement of the messiah (Clines 1995,23). In more recent work (2002), Clines also shows the role of God as performing some divine violence and how it is appreciated and welcomed. Exum (1996) argues that "some critics deny the presence of tragedy in the Bible on the ground of the biblical portrayal of God as just and merciful" (1996,7). Scholars continue to wrestle with the role of God in empowering masculinities and this is seen through interpretation of texts and attempted reinforcement through scriptural references. Furthermore, the moving goal posts of what is perceived as masculine show how masculinity is shaped differently from one society to another, including factoring in the power dynamics.

The work of Macelaru (2014) focuses textually on 1 Samuel 9-15 (which focuses on Saul) and 1 Samuel 16 to 2 Samuel 5 (which focuses on David). Macelaru's work is interested in male-

to-male relationships in the Bible. “Male bonding is seen in one’s capacity to attract and maintain relationships with other males and male beauty as a recurring component in the portrayal of masculinity in the Hebrew Bible” (Macelaru 2014, 55). In the work of Macelaru, there seems to be some comparison of Saul and David and Saul is ruled as presenting failed masculinities. What can be drawn from these parallels according to the author is that while both Saul and David are chosen by God they experience and live out their manhood differently. The author seems to suggest that no one masculinity is perfect but rather that both characters and their expressions of manhood could be foundational in developing a more balanced masculinity.

Tolson (1977) posits that “the language of patriarchy is communicated for the most part unconsciously in early childhood, before the individual learns ways of speaking. The unconscious language of patriarchy permeates all the official definitions of state institutions” (Tolson1997, 74). As such, this is the difficulty of developing alternate masculinities. Figlio (2001) deals with the reality of an absentee father and the reality of women being the exclusive caregivers to the boys. Pertinent to this observation is noting how women play a role in maintaining and reinforcing masculinity. Parallel to this, the author draws on the issue of absentee fathers as a problem because sons lack immediate role-model figures to emulate, which could be tantamount to the ills perpetuated by present fathers who have ‘toxic masculinities’ to pass on.

Haddox’s work begins by clarifying that it is important to understand biblical masculinity and contextual realities during the formulation of the ancient text because, “some people take the biblical characters and situations as models for contemporary behaviour” Haddox (2016,5). Before her contributions, Haddox points out that modern day readers should remember that there is a critical distance between them and the reality of the world of the text (implied reader). She seeks to draw the attention of contemporary readers of the Bible to the notion that there is no one single fixed masculinity and using the text and the narrator of the text it is not easy to accurately capture what a true conceptualization of masculinity or manhood could be. She invites contemporary readers in an attempt at understanding biblical masculinities to assess what factors shaped the construction of biblical masculinities. Both Haddox (and Clines) list the following as standard expectations of what a real man is, namely:

a. ability to protect and provide for one’s family, especially women and children;

b. masculinity is power to war, power to lead;

c. power sexually speaks to the power to control and physical strength over the woman;

d. having wisdom and showing good judgement skills.

In excluding the listed expectations of what an ideal man should embody, Haddox points out that God can accept/use or endorse a man who does not comply/align with the set contextual masculinity expectations. This introduces a completely new dynamic, as the author shows how God uses men who have: weakness, tears, disability, or dependence on the wife in his agenda. This then paints masculinities as unstable. Masculinities according to Haddox "could change as needed so that it is more accommodating as such creating space for diverse men within contemporary contexts" (2016, 176).

Reynaud (2014) in his work with the angle of masculinities as socially constructed alludes to examples of set gender role distribution and expectations. An example is the socially accepted idea that women should be nurturing and that it is the role of the mother to be present for the children. This leads potentially to the oppression, exclusion and justified treatment of those who do anything contrary to the social construction. Reynaud (2014) references the work of Beauvoir (1953), who notes how gendered social constructs and divisions perpetuate subordinate and oppressive relations, where women remain controlled by these constructs.

The biblical aspect Beauvoir introduces is connected to comments and observation on the Judeo-Christian civilization and how the stratification of this community capitalizes on divisions of sexes. Some further constructs include but are not limited to: "(a) thinking rationale is relegated to the male species and (b) that women are just beautiful and meant for the sexual amusement or relief of the males, aside from child-rearing. The forums of expressions are rooted in either the institute of marriage, prostitution and rape" (Reynaud 2014, 145). The scholar Marling (2013) in the *work Strong women and masculinity crisis: adulterous appropriations of the Old Testament* focuses on countering the social constructs and questions the 'acceptable normative' in a pursuit to frame female agency (2013,1).

The above presentation of literature in the Hebrew Bible and masculinities shows that my approach on focusing on David and transition from boyhood to adulthood are not foreign, but what is distinct will be my integration of coming of age and identity formation discussion with masculinity construction. This next section focuses on defining coming of age and how it will be used as an analytical tool. The last part of this next section will show some of the existing work on coming of age within the Text.

2.4 Coming of Age

2.4.1 Definition and use of coming of age as an anal

In this fourth section I will be attempting to frame and understand coming of age, at least within the context of my research. I will focus on the history of how the term 'coming of age' came about and I will then focus on Erikson (1986) and his conceptualization of coming of age. The work of Eric Erikson and Jean Piaget (which fall within a literary theory) will be explained and be important to my framing and understanding of coming of age. The elements I draw from coming-of-age theorists will be foundational to how I use some of the coming-of-age excerpts in understanding the Bible text and David's process of coming of age, constructions of masculinity and identity formation. I begin from the presupposition that coming of age is a human process that all humans go through despite personal culture, religion, or personal convictions. Being as such, if I am to come to understand the process of coming of age of David and make any meaningful conclusions, I argue that my work would not be complete without a basic understanding of coming of age primarily. I will read the biblical text (1st & 2nd Samuel) and engage coming of age as a theory to gain insight into the nuanced process of coming of age and the development of masculinities.

The way I read 1st and 2nd Samuel and my focus on David's coming of age process in the words of the scholar John Au, shows how the David Narrative could be categorized as a coming-of-age text. According to Gallyot, "Adolescence is a beautiful phase where a child is transitioning into an adult. The body undergoes a cascade of hormonal reactions, thereby developing the child physically and emotionally. This is a very vulnerable phase in a child's life, especially for personality development. It is during adolescence that children may seem irrational and difficult to understand which is normal and a part of growing up" (Gallyot 2020,1). Moreover, according to Arnett, "Emerging adulthood is the age of identity explorations in the sense that it is the period when people are most likely to be exploring various possibilities for their lives in a variety of areas, especially love and work, as a prelude to making the enduring choices that will set the foundation for their adult lives. While exploring possibilities in love and work, emerging adults clarify their identities, that is, they learn more about who they are and what they want out of life" (Arnett 2010, 255). I consider the story of David as a coming of age one, because as David emerges to adulthood, he explores many possibilities and makes enduring

choices that set the tone for most of his adult life. I as the reader and researcher am privy to David's process of figuring out what he wants as he comes of age.

The term 'coming of age' in the adolescent and literary theory world is used synonymously with the term 'a Bildungsroman'. A Bildungsroman is a story that relates an adolescent's movement toward adulthood and the corresponding awakening to a new understanding of his or herself and the world around him or her. According to John Au, *in Bildungsroman genre: defining the old, the new, and the same,* "The Bildungsroman genre focuses on the coming of age and rites of passage of an adolescent and/or young adult and is recognized for how it educates its readers about personal growth and self-consciousness" (Au 2017, 1). Au further says, "Coming of age novels are known to educate their readers about personal growth and self-consciousness, usually towards adolescents and young adults" (Au 2017, 2)

Furthermore, "This genre of literature allows individuals to understand the subjects of rite of passage and liminality. The stories tend to have the protagonists depart their stage of being a youth and entering adulthood. The books did not just allow readers to intellectually develop, but socially as well. For the novels to educate their readers, the genre must inform them through several literary aspects: psychological, social, and cultural, philosophical, aesthetical and historical. The focus is not aimed towards the surrounding circumstances and problems, but towards the protagonist's personal growth and development" (Au 2017, 3). In my adaptation and incorporation of a literary theory which is coming of age, in the David narrative I would like to focus on David's personal growth and coming of age process. Coming of age as a methodological tool used in a biblical text analysis will be beneficial in that it will systematically focus on the rites of passage that David goes through to transition from boyhood to adulthood. Through tracing David's self-awareness of his surroundings, one would ultimately hope to capture the complexity of the process of coming of age.

Au presents a list of factors that contribute implicitly and explicitly to the process of coming of age. In tracing this process of coming of age in 1st and 2nd Samuel with David as the protagonist, this study will investigate some of the coming of age characteristics given by Au (2017) such as:

a. Movement is to social success and self-realization

b. Confrontation with the adult world

c. Moral challenges and moral growth

d. Individual needs and desires vs. external pressures/ expectations/ norms

e. Failure and disappointment bringing an awareness to one's limitations

f. Acceptance of the complexities and 'greyness' of the world

g. Awareness of the self.

This means that within the analysis chapter (5), the integration of coming of age as a theory will be seen when I as the researcher spend time analyzing in the David Narrative text firstly where can the reader begin to see makers of David moving to social success and self-realization which 'for this research will be the first maker of David's coming of age process'. Secondly, I will investigate when David comes into confrontation with the adult world and what moral challenges he faces and where moral growth can be measured within his narrative cycle. Through the identification of the plot, and the words of the narrator, I will be able to investigate David's needs and desires, also analysing what external pressures he was answering to. Fourthly, in tracing his coming-of-age process, I will investigate his failures, disappointments, and limitations to see how he works and lives with them. The last will be to focus on David's ability to adjust as the plot of 1st and 2nd Samuel thickens and his ability to maintain his identity. The next section will give an example of the holistic stage process of coming of age as modelled by Erick Erikson. While the interest of this research is not seeing how much of Erick Erikson's 'formula' of coming of age that David ticks, Erick Erikson as theorist helps this study articulate the nuances of coming of age and what the researcher can be on the lookout for in reading the David Narrative Cycle Text, as espoused in excerpts of 1st and 2nd Samuel.

2.4.2 Coming of age theorist Erick Erikson

Introduction of Erikson's work

The work on Erik Erikson models a preliminary expected psychological development and matches it to tentative years of the explained stages. Erikson is interested in the role of how boys come of age into adulthood, and he sees this process as highly dependent on the hard work of the older generation of men in mentoring the younger generation. This can be seen in his work, *Identity Youth and Crisis: Childhood and Society* when he argued that "In looking at the youth of today, one is apt to forget that identity formation, being critical in youth, is really a generational issue. So, we must not overlook what appears to be a certain abrogation of responsibility on the part of the older generation in providing those forceful ideas which must

antecedent identity formation in the next generation; if only so that youth can rebel against a well-defined set of older values" (Erikson 1968, 30). Erikson seems to suggest that if in the process of coming to age we focus only on the product of the adult we see and do not focus on the holistic process of 'what and how he became the adult he is', we have missed the mark in so far as understanding the process of coming of age. Erikson believes there is a large correlation between what young people see as their daily reality and the 'adults' that they come to be as they come of age. While I will not engage the development theory in detail, I will table it so that at a later stage I could refer to it as per the need of the discoveries I make exploring 1st and 2nd Samuel focusing on David and his development from boyhood to adulthood.

2.4.2.1 Erikson's psychosocial development theory

"Stage 1: Trust vs Mistrust (0-1year): infants learn to trust or mistrust depending on whether or not their basic needs are met. Growth looks like a baby's willingness to let mother out of sight without undue anxiety or rage.

*Stage 2: Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt (*2-3years): Toddler learns autonomy in that they take on an interest in achieving things by themselves and caregivers should allow this space but set limits.

Stage 3: Initiative vs. Guilt (4-5years): Increased desire to have social relations with friends and adults and the role of caregiver is to regulate wrongful relations and boundaries in relations.

Stage 4: Industry vs. Inferiority (6-12): Learns to win recognition by producing things leading to high self-esteem and development of talent. It's also a time for over pleasing.

Stage 5: Identity vs. Role Confusion: The key question for adolescent development is "who am I?" Adolescents need positive role models, empathetic listeners, and healthy social environments.

Stage 6: Intimacy vs. Isolation: As a young adult does or does not engage in relationships with significant others, they experience intimacy or isolation. This does not stop a desire to give of themselves to others. There is great value for the community.

Stage 7: Generativity vs. Stagnation: Middle adults typically deal with questions of productivity – will they bear offspring/ how or what will be their contribution to society, how will the lineage be preserved and what career can be meaningful?

Stage 8: Ego Integrity vs. Despair: The older adult will look back on the successes and failures of life with an overall sense of wholeness and satisfaction or may be overwhelmed with feelings of regret" (Erikson 1986,35)

In his development theory, while Erikson values each stage and the holistic conceptual framing and understanding of coming of age, he views the final stage which is one's identity as important. The process of boyhood to adulthood is important but Erikson dwells on the final product 'adulthood/manhood' as the important identity that needs to be understood more clearly. Therefore, it remains for this research to clarify 'what can be considered a standard of masculinity or a successful male identity and what preparatory stages cannot be missed in the making of a reasonably mature man?'

Erikson in the complex process of becoming shows how belonging forms primarily the important stages of belonging in a group setting from the time of child training. The 'ability' of a child to keep up with bodily experiences and 'be normal' in so far as what the age mates are 'expected to be doing' feeds into being normal culturally, beginning of social recognition hereby awakening the ego and 'self-esteem'. Erikson posits that, "Adolescence is the last stage of childhood. The adolescent process, however, is conclusively complete only when the individual has subordinated his childhood identifications to a new kind of identification, absorbing sociability, competitive apprenticeship with and among his age mates. The coming of age then in this stage entails (a) the playfulness of childhood and experimental zest of youth and (b) the dire urgency they force the young individual into choice and decisions which will with increasing immediateness lead to commitments for life" (Erikson 1986,137).

Kerrins (2008) points out that, "In human development theory, the development of independence and identity, gaining independence from family and figuring out who you are and what you could do with your life has been considered the task of adolescence. Furthermore, it is not the demographic transitions, finishing education, marriage, parenthood, career, that emerging adults consider important criteria for attaining adulthood but qualities of character that indicate self-sufficiency, accepting responsibility for oneself; making independent decisions; and becoming financially independent" (Kerrins 2008,47). This 'becoming and this process in between suggests persons in a type of limbo state. The research of Kerrins and Arnett speaks strongly of the value of transition being focused on more than the material or tangible aspects of life and this shifts the focus to character and responsible conduct as yardsticks measuring 'successful transition'. "The focus group and realization made within the study by

Kerrins was that successful coming of age entailed the individual (a) grabbing the endless series of opportunities, (b) the search for self-fulfilment vs. the ability to 'pay bills and keep a standard job' – the ideal jobs for those in the precarious process of becoming entailed ensuring whatever job was compatible with sense of self-identity and self-worth" (Kerrins 2008,54). This means that in accessing the life of David it will be important to process 'self-identity' at least how the narrator seems to speak of him and how he speaks of himself. It is my observation that 'coming of age', 'human development' or 'emerging adulthood' are complex and have different measures and expectations within various contexts and these may further vary and become gender specific. It is in the interest of this research to focus on the bridge in the time in between the life of David as a boy to his time as a man, king, father and many other roles.

2.4.2.2 Discussing coming of age and identity

Latinadad (2003) posits that, "Identity is about situatedness in motion, embodiment and spatiality. It is about a self that is constituted through and against other selves in contexts that serve to establish the relationship between the self and the other" (Latinadad 2003, 24). On the other hand, according to Gecas, people come to know themselves based on two sources which are the psychological and the sociological aspect. In the psychological aspect of coming to know the self the focus is the internal view of what causes behaviour and sociologically the focus in on "the external behaviour outside of the individual such as how culture, social structure and social situation' shape how self-expresses itself and how one is known" (Gecas 1982,2). In explaining identity and the knowledge of oneself, Gecas distinguishes between: (a) self and (b) self-concept and he says, "Self as used here refers to a process, the process of reflexivity which emanates from the dialectic between the 'I' and 'Me' and the 'self-concept', on the other hand, is a product of this reflexive activity. It is the concept the individual has of himself as a physical, social and spiritual or moral being " (Gecas 1982, 4).

What is distinct between self and self-concept is that "self is how an individual explains, theorises and introduces who they are, and this focus is usually on the 'unknown' internal self that no one else can access or measure accuracy on and the 'self-concept' is formed by how the individual views themselves as part of the society as a (a) social being, (b) physical being and (c) moral/spiritual being. It is in the interest of my research to clarify if what informs orientation and gender is shaped by 'self' or the 'self-concept'. Beyond this whether you adhere to constructs of self (internally) or you, focused on self-concept (defined by society) you

develop self-esteem and here lies the concept of identity and how you have organized self-concepts" (Gecas 1982,13). For Gecas, "Identities are viewed mainly as internalized roles and this connection directly links self-conceptions to social structures because roles are elements of social structure, and it provides the basis for considering the self-concept in organizational terms" (Gecas 1982,15).

For Gecas, he concludes that "the more dominant angle is the self-concept as there is a hierarchical organization of an individual's role-identity. There is an intense need to be acknowledged and respected by society as we focus on the self-concept and Gecas argues that one is committed to an identity (self-concept) to the degree that will make one 'acceptable' in society and to social relationships" (Gecas 1982,18). Thus, it is important that there is a greater commitment to an identity that is acceptable socially and thus the need to be accepted is esteemed more than the concept of self, which Gecas showed cannot be measured or known except by self as they develop guts to express and verbalize who they are.

Brzezińska (2012), in *The determinants of identity formation during the transition from adolescence to adulthood,* argues that "Identity formation continues throughout the life course. However, childhood, and particularly adolescence seem to be pivotal from the point of view of what developmental path the individual is on now of entry into adulthood and what the quality of identity status is, both at the onset of the next stage of identity formation and modification and at consecutive stages of adulthood which emerge in response to new challenges and life plans" (Brzezińska 2012,1). *On the other hand,* James Marcia (1966) focuses on identity statuses and the primarily important one connected to Brzezińska (2012) is identity foreclosure. Marcia (1966) argues that identity foreclosure is "A commitment to an identity without a crisis. Foreclosure involves committing to an identity prematurely without exploration or choice. This occurs when parents hand down their traditions and commitments and the adolescent does not make a conscious choice (1966). The negative consequences are that the adolescent may later feel resentment about not being allowed to choose for herself or himself. This stage involves being committed to an identity without any exploration" (Marcia 1966,22). Here the argument of Marcia (1966) is pivotal in that it is formulated based on part of what constitutes the self as explained by (Gecas 1982).

Sedikides (2015), in explaining self, says this is far more complex because the human experience comprises (a) the individual self, (b) the relational self and (c) the collective self, which is determined by contextual or cultural factors (Sedikides 2015, 98). The distinction

between the three is that the individual self is who you are without learning about being this or expressing themselves in that way; however, the relational self and the collective self are regulated by a need to fit in and be acceptable in society and be accepted. How oneself represents is now 'connected' to a desire to be recognized in society and thus an 'identity' is constructed bearing in the society and what is 'normative' there. Furthermore, Sedikides, clarifies that, "…This self-representation is relatively independent of relational bonds or group memberships, and it reflects valued interpersonal attachments" (Sedikides 2015,99). Identity or how one desires to be seen is dependent on the hold that people have on the 'self' and ability of one to express themselves. The opposite of recognition is shaming and rejection which excludes one from society. Brzezińska (2012) argues that "the experience of shame may play an important and constructive role in development of the self and the individual's social adaptation, but it may also lead to deformation of the 'self-image' and interfere with the individual's relations with the environment". Thus, one may posit that, how oneself represents which constitutes identity is not necessarily a 'true reflection' of self but it is an objectified, reflected upon 'self'. The interest of this research is to know the sexual 'self' and access to the 'un-empirical self'; yet the looming question is if there is a way of accessing this self. The underlying question is do children exude any of the unknowable self, the unreflected upon self?

Lemire and Arsenio (2010), argue that in beginning to conceptualize how children respond and shape who they are; "... children's understanding and interpretation of situations influences their related behaviours. Social information processing theory offers a detailed model of how children process and interpret cues in a social situation and arrive at a decision that is competent" (Lemire and Arsenio 2010, 108). This points out that the measure of what is recognized, accepted, or shunned, is 'normally' guided by the emotions it triggers internally and externally. It is important to note that: "Primary emotions are innate, pre-organized, and relatively inflexible responses to certain combinations of stimuli. Although these primary emotions provide a quick and efficient set of responses, the next step is the feeling of emotion in connection to the object that excited it, and this is secondary emotion. It is a secondary emotion because awareness of the connections between object X and certain emotions serve several adaptations" (Lemire and Arsenio 2010,111). In the language of Gecas (1982), "alongside the 'unempirical self' are the primary emotions that are not planned, yet secondary emotions are post reflection of self and are processed with a focus on surroundings and involved party members" (Gecas 1982,40). From this point, identity is formulated. As an example, one can say that she is so thoughtful based on reflected upon secondary emotions.

Rust (1993) argues that "… identity formation is not orderly and predictable; individuals often skip steps in the process, temporarily return to earlier stages of the process, and sometimes abort the process altogether by returning to a heterosexual identity" (Rust 1993,51). While sexual identity formulation stages cannot be tabulated and clearly labelled, there are traces of this process of development. Furthermore, Rust (1993) says, "The developmental paradigm has been challenged by symbolic interactionists who view sexual identity formation as a process of creating an identity through social interaction rather than a process of discovering identity through introspection" (Rust 1993,54). Rust shows that individuals often switch back and forth between sexual identities. Women in the current study also experience periods of ambivalence during which they wonder about their sexual identities and periods during which they have no sexual identity" (Rust 1993,54).

Moreover, based on the definition given by Rust, "Social constructionism teaches that self-identity is the result of the interpretation of personal experience in terms of available social constructs. Identity is therefore a reflection of socio-political organization rather than a reflection of essential organization and coming out is the process of describing oneself in terms of social constructs rather than a process of discovering one's essence" (Rust 1993,68). Similarly, Torres & Jones (2009) posit that "Identity is socially constructed and naturalized in temporal and cultural contexts. The study of identity, which is already acknowledged as socially constructed in psychology, sociology, and developmental ecology, becomes nearly impossible if postmodernism and post structuralism are carried to their theoretical extreme, a condition in which identities are so constantly under construction and reconstruction that they cannot be fixed long enough to be measured or interpreted" (Torres & Jones 2009,579).

However, to tie up the conceptual aspect of coming of age, Lemon (1993) & Stenbnick (2012) both agree that sexuality involves the body, the feelings one has toward others in a community, social responses to whom you love or receive love and how you communicate and live out what you feel within. Medlar (1998) emphasizes the importance of fulfilling or living out your sexuality as it embodies the spiritual, the emotional and the physical. If one's orientation is not accepted or an 'accepted' means of showing love and being loved, Stenbnick argues that this may be difficult, seeing that within all humanity there is an innate need to feel desired and wanted within our daily relations. On the other hand, one may learn that their orientation is unacceptable from verbal demeaning words used at you, visual rejection of the 'other' and refusal to touch and be in company of those who are perceived as the marginal or minority group (Medlar 1998, 3).

2.4.3 Coming of Age contemplations within the Bible

Stephen Wilson in his dissertation, *Male coming of age theme in the Hebrew bible* 2013, focuses on the transition from boyhood to manhood in Deuteronomistic History. The work of Wilson also dwells on the role of the narrator and Bible redactors in drawing out these themes. In making and building these themes he makes use of the (i) David in 1 Samuel, (ii) Solomon in 1 Kings, (iii) Moses in Exodus 2 and (iv) Samson in 1 Judges. Wilson depends on David Clines for a frame of what manhood encompasses in the world of the Old Testament. Some of these include strength, wisdom, persuasive speech, beauty and avoidance of association with women. Some characteristics of biblical manhood left out by Clines include self-control, fertility, marriage, honour, kinship solidarity and legal manhood. For his study, Wilson notes how David's story mimics the coming-of-age tripartite structure of the rite of passage, which is separation, liminality, and reincorporation.

Susan Ackerman in *When heroes love: the ambiguity of eros in the stories of Gilgamesh and David* (2005), focuses on the rite of passage as a hermeneutic and it becomes applied to a large section of the David narrative. For Ackerman, the rite of passage is well demonstrated in the story of David and Jonathan. However, some have critiqued her focus on only one state of the rite of passage, particularly the liminal stage. Such a focus could be limiting and a disadvantage to all the other aspects of the rite of passage such as separation and reincorporation. The liminal stage as used by Ackerman is important because it allows for the time when someone is still getting to know themselves, usually encompassing the sexual angle and this liminal stage allows the crossing of cultural norms. Such sections in biblical texts can be identified with the use of sexual language, images or examples that could connote to sexual relations of some sort.

For the purposes of my research project, I will draw on some of the detects of coming-of-age theory in the Hebrew Bible as used by Wilson. Wilson argues, "These principles, which were designed to add specificity to this study's attempt to locate the coming-of-age theme and to avoid some of the mistakes evident in previous research, are: (1) terminology is a key indicator of a character's status as a boy or as a man; (2) a coming-of-age narrative will feature a boy acquiring and/or displaying qualities associated with manhood; (3) the presence of a rite-of-passage schema can help to identify a narrative as a coming-of-age story, although it is not necessary; and (4) the changes that signify a boy's coming-of-age must happen within the defined borders of an individual narrative for it to be considered a coming-of-age story"

(Wilson 2013,320). Any of the coming of age sections will be framed from within this paradigm and asking the above numbered questions in the selected sections of the narrative.

2.5 Combining masculinity construction theory and coming of age theory as essential tools for analysis of the David Narrative Cycle

In this research, masculinity theory helps to think about men in temporal, contextual and relational ways. We need to think of men and masculinity because these constructions are central to gender relations and gender relations are central to many social constructions and situations of inequality, gender-based violence and homophobic hate crime. So, it is clearly important to reflect on this. Moreover, masculinity is learnt, it is something that shifts over time and that men learn and develop in community. After applying the masculinity theory in conjunction with the coming-of-age theory, I will then hope that whatever these tools produce about David can be essential to assist contemporary men in the process of masculinity construction and negotiation. The work of Van der Walt justifies the choice of the Old Testament narrative text as a basis for a modern intercultural engagement based on the following considerations: (a) "the Bible is a well-known piece of literature that functions in believing and unbelieving communities and (b) narrative text is more approachable for modern readers in the sense that readers approach characters in stories as they do people in everyday life. She argues that stories are a unique tool for gaining insights and making sense of reality" (Van der Walt 2012,182). This research focuses on the story of David, and his life as presented in 1st and 2nd Samuel and in combining masculinity theory and coming of age, one hopes to develop a broader frame of understanding the connections of masculinity as temporal, cultural and relational. Lastly, a combination of masculinity theory and coming of age as analytical tools allows me as the researcher to ask different questions such as:

Questions for masculine analytical tool

i. Determining in any episode what constructions of masculinities appear conspicuously.

ii. Distinguishing the type of masculinity and how it plays out, considering other males involved and putting into perspective societal influence.

iii. What could have been alternate life-giving ways of responding to the situation or in relation to others in men in the narrative or other women?

iv. How is masculinity performed or lived out?

Questions for Coming of Age and Masculine Tools Combined

i. David as a son – What can help us understand more about David as a son based on what boyhood entailed in Israel (cultural practices and rites of passage)?

ii. David as a father – What could be insightful about coming of age transition from boyhood to adulthood in David's context of reality?

iii. David as a king – What could be understood about expectations from a king, norms of royal family and maintaining the dynasty and wife selection?

iv. David's whole life – How do the different stages of life influence the process of masculinity construction?

In answering or tentatively understanding most of these questions, this research will be able to come to meaningful conclusions about what coming of age and masculinity construction is depicted within the David Narrative and how what is depicted could become a resource in a contemporary understanding of coming of age and masculinity construction process. The hypothesis is that the character David is an important figure in Christianity and there is a possibility because of him being the 'chosen' king by 'God', therefore some would study his life to learn behaviour, how they should be and how they should conduct themselves as men in society. Now, if this is the case, there is a pertinent need to study episodes of his life to see what can be understood through the David narrative cycle in conceptualizing coming of age and masculinity construction with current contextual relevance.

In doing a critical engagement of David's coming of age process and his masculinity construction process, the main aim is to attempt to trace how transition and coming of age is portrayed by the narrator in parts of the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel. The interest is to see what conceptual framing seems conspicuous and essential to constructions of masculinity. The questions on the role of society, culture and the role of the narrator are fundamental to a holistic conceptualization of masculinity construction. All these elements (coming of age theory, masculinity construction theory, socio-historical truth of the text, role of narrator,) will be brought together by myself as a young (28), female, biblical scholar, analyzing the text from a South African context.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the development of masculinities globally and narrowed down to masculinities in the context of the research which is South Africa. I then further discussed masculinities in the frame of existing work in the Hebrew Bible around masculinities. Here, the study notices some links and patterns that have existed in the world of the Hebrew Bible and what is happening in contextual South Africa. Subsequently, I then defined what coming of age entails and the development of this theory globally alongside the psychological identity development material. Again, I concluded that section by delving into scholarly work on what work has been done on the Hebrew Bible in so far as coming of age is concerned. Chapter 3 will explain the method and offer a how-to guide of how coming of masculinity and coming of age will be used as a methodological tool in reading the selected episodes from 1st and 2nd Samuel.

Chapter 3

This chapter gives a detailed step by step explanation of how portions of 1st and 2nd Samuel will be read in an attempt to understand constructions of masculinity and the process of coming of age.

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the method and the resources that will be important in the reading and re-reading of excerpts of 1st and 2nd Samuel. The focus on re-reading the Hebrew Texts and a special focus on David as a model identity will be to attempt to scrutinize if there is anything that can be learnt in a close narrative reading of excerpts from the books 1st and 2nd Samuel. The need to re-read and draw on elements of the narrative of 1st and 2nd Samuel will be sparked by the problematic state of live conduct of some men in South Africa, which is my context of reality. In terms of method, I will do a close narrative reading of excerpts of 1st and 2nd Samuel and then I will apply masculinity and coming of age methodological tools to each episode.

3.1 Critical biblical hermeneutics

Kulikovsky in *The bible and hermeneutics* says, "Hermeneutics is the formal process by which the interpreter employs certain principles and methods in order to derive the author's intended meaning" (Kulikovsky 2005,14). Furthermore, "Biblical exegesis is paramount, even when the scientific challenge is under consideration. This raises the question of epistemology, the theory of knowledge and the possibility of knowing. How can the interpreter know whether his exegesis is accurate or whether a particular interpretation is the correct one? Can the interpreter know anything for certain, or should all interpretations be held tentatively? Upon which criteria can such an assessment be made? (Payne 1964,6). Hugh Ross, for example, argues that since biblical Hebrew has a much smaller vocabulary than English, Hebrew words can convey many different 'literal' meanings" (Ross 1997,2).

Ross further argues that, "This is surely a very naïve view of language. Vocabulary size is irrelevant. Indeed, all languages 'are quite able to express complex, deep, or subtle ideas. Virtually anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, provided one takes enough time" (Poythress 1984,352). The element of language introduced by Ross is

intrinsically connected to historical criticism, which has an interest in the dating of the text, the author and the language it was first written in and in what language it is now being read by the 'actual reader'. In the work of translation and transmission, elements of narrative such as 'implied/intended reader' or the 'target audience', play a vital role in engaging the process of interpretation because it gives additional information to the 'actual reader and present-day interpreter of the text' on what is it that the 'author' left out as 'common knowledge' or what the 'implied author sought' to draw attention to. As such, in reading selected narratives from 1st and 2nd Samuel I will draw on the Hebrew Text manuscripts and also my native language isiZulu translation to see what could be 'learnt' or is 'missing' or lost in translation.

Johnson posits that, "Hermeneutics is frequently defined as the science of textual interpretation of the Bible. As such it forms a natural complement to the Bible study methods that seek to encourage the skill of the biblical interpretation. Linguistics impinges on hermeneutics in terms of the scientific study of language. Biblical hermeneutics involves studying the way that information is conveyed from the author in what he says, how he chooses to say it and why. Author's intent considers all the relevant factors of the context to narrow the possible meanings down to one intended in the composition. Literary analysis focuses attention on genre units such as story, poetry or drama to determine whether they characterize a whole book or only themes and motifs contained in the book" (Johnson 1990, 8). Here there is great focus on form, structure of language and the order of words in a sentence. Johnson further clarifies that "a conservative or evangelical hermeneutical system uses five premises to recognize viable interpretations (literal, grammatical, historical, literary and theological)" (1990,10).

According to Kulkovsky in the article titled *The bible and hermeneutics,* "Hermeneutics is the formal process by which the interpreter employs certain principles and methods in order to derive the author's intended meaning" (Kulkovsky 2005,14). Furthermore, the book chapter titled *Interrogating the comparative paradigm of the African biblical scholar* says "the key to understanding the biblical text is to apply a hermeneutic which considers the historical and literary context. This can be done by employing, "historical-grammatical exegesis. Historical grammatical exegesis involves a systematic approach to analyzing in detail the historical situation, events and circumstances surrounding the text and semantics and syntactic relationship of the words which comprise the text" (West 2008,37). Knut Holter posits that, "traditional exegetical methodology is of course found here however the Old Testament and the New Testament is approached from a perspective where African exegetical methodology is subordinated to this perspective. African biblical scholarship is exegetical,

thereby deflecting any potential charge that the African biblical scholarship is merely contextual" (Holter 2002,88).

3.2 African biblical hermeneutics

Firstly, in defining and explaining African Biblical Hermeneutics, Adamo says, "African biblical hermeneutics is vital to the wellbeing of African society. African biblical hermeneutics is a methodological resource that makes African social cultural contexts the subject of interpretation. This is a methodology that reappraises ancient biblical tradition and African world-views, cultures and life experiences, with the purpose of correcting the effect of the cultural, ideological conditioning to which Africa and Africans have been subjected in the business of biblical interpretation" (Adamo 2015,59).

David Adamo in *The task and distinctiveness of African biblical hermeneutics,* 2015 begins by defining it as, "the principle of interpretation of the Bible for transformation in Africa. It can also be called African cultural hermeneutics/Cultural hermeneutics and African Biblical transformational hermeneutics" (Adamo 2015,31). This method tries to understand the Bible and God according to scripture and African culture and tradition and the plan is to interpret the Bible existentially and blacken the Bible. The African biblical hermeneutics has the following distinctiveness, which is the communal reading and interpretation of the Bible as power, Africa and Africans in the Bible, African comparative and African evaluative using Africa to interpret the Bible. Ukpong (2000) is empathic that Africans and Africans in the Bible call for a methodological approach that cannot be ignored. African biblical hermeneutics is the biblical interpretation that makes African social cultural context a subject for interpretation.

Musa Dube is an example of a scholar who was at the forefront of African biblical hermeneutics, although in a stricter sense her work became famous also for feminist theology and African women's issues. In that field, it would be difficult not to mention some other key scholars such as Musimbi Kanyoro in her work both in (1999) and (2001). "Musa Dube's interpretation of the Bible is influenced by her conviction that biblical texts have multiple meanings. She believes that each biblical text can have as many meanings as the readers of the text and the methods they use to interpret the text" (Dube 2004, 50). According to Lovemore Togarasei, in the work, *Musa Dube and the study of the bible in Africa*, he says, "Methods of interpretation are then determined by the social conditions of the readers/interpreters. Based on these convictions, Dube has used a number of methods of interpretation, depending on the

issues she seeks to address" (Togarasei 2008,12). This approach by Dube is essential in that she posits that as one reads the Bible they come with biases of race, cultural, economic reality and social location, to mention but a few examples. This means that in my narrative analysis reading of 1st and 2nd Samuel of the selected scenes, what I am able to understand or interpret from the text will be lumbered with the weight of my reality, such as that I am an unmarried, childless clergy-lady in my late 20's reading the story of David, hoping to understand constructions of masculinity and understanding the male coming of age process.

The complexity of including the social, economic and cultural context when reading the Bible, dates way earlier as can be seen in the work, *Biblical hermeneutics and black theology in South Africa,* by Itumelang Mosala (1989), who argues, "An approach to the study or appropriation of the Bible that begins with the theological notion of the Bible as the Word of God, therefore, presupposes a hermeneutical epistemology for which truth is not historical, cultural, or economic. For such an epistemology the Word of God is pre-established. The political, cultural, economic, or historical relevance of this Word of God comes out of its capacity to be applied to the various facets of human life, and in this case of black human life. Its relevance does not issue out of its very character as a historical, cultural, political, or economic product" (Mosala 1989,19). In explaining the implications of race, cultural, social setting and economic reality, Farisani (2010) in *Black biblical hermeneutics and ideologically aware reading of texts* argues that, "the role of Black Biblical hermeneutics in the development and propagation of Black theology and then goes on to argue for a sociological analysis of biblical texts as a preferred methodological approach for Black theology to effectively unearth the ideologies embedded in biblical texts" (Farisani 2010,2).

While this research will not focus on a sociological reading of the text, the research seeks to transition after a narrative analysis and ask what can be learnt or transferred for benefit within a sociological/ societal realm in so far as understanding masculinity constructions and the coming of age process. The value of this works well with the Gerald West model of contextual Bible study approach. This can be seen in West's work*, Locating 'Contextual Bible Study' within biblical liberation hermeneutics and intercultural biblical hermeneutics* (2014). *A contextual Bible* places focus on the '*untrained readers'* of the Bible which is our daily normal people reading for themselves and asking themselves what they can learn from the various stories within the Bible to better modify their reality. In a later work, *Anything new under the sun of African biblical hermeneutics in South African Old Testament scholarship: incarnation,*

death and resurrection of the word in Africa, Madipoane Masenya(2015) posits that, "The task of African biblical hermeneutics has to be a three-fold process for the Bible to be 'gospel' in Africa: Firstly, the incarnation of the Word the Bible as the Other has to incarnate into African contexts for it to become an African Word. Secondly, the death of the Word entails a critical engagement with the Word from multiple perspectives for it to be relevant to the struggles of African people. Thirdly, the resurrection of the Word the biblical text has to be allowed to address and transform an African person in new creative ways" (Masenya and Hulisani 2015, 1). In my reading of the text I begin by focusing on the Hebrew Text (1st and 2nd Samuel) and these are read in response to the African context of the dominance of troubling and toxic masculinity patterns in South Africa. Secondly, by doing a narrative analysis of the text and employing masculinities and coming of age, I am doing a critical engagement of the text, exploring how it can be relevant in this struggle of African people. Thirdly and lastly, this research exploration is especially important in that the resurrection of the text as used by Masenya and Hulisani will be to ascertain what ideo-theological resources can be obtained from a narrative analysis reading of the Davidic Narrative.

Hans Snoek in *Key concepts in the dialogue between African and European biblical scholars,* (2008), posits that, "context plays an important role in the reflection on exegesis and actualization. Indeed, explanation and interpretation of the Bible do not occur in a vacuum but are partially determined by tradition and culture" (Snoek 2008,86). In Africa two methods and approaches to reading the Bible included, "the distinction between biblical scholars on the one hand, who are primarily focused on inculturation in discussion with ordinary readers and on the other hand, biblical scholars who are mainly focused on 'liberation' (Ukpong 2000, 14). "As an African biblical scholar however ended up not in hermeneutics of caution, but rather hermeneutics of involvement, in which appropriation of the Bible is the central theme. In other words, Bible exploitation does not necessarily lead to hermeneutics of caution. Other hermeneutic reactions are also conceivable" (Snoek 2008,89). A careful reading of the David Narrative Text, ideally should lead to an appropriation of the Bible to the context of the readers of the Bible, otherwise the Bible in the words of Masenya remains dead and in my words the Bible if not appropriated can be equated to a historical novel.

Coleman in *Walter Brueggemann in enduring influence on biblical interpretation,* says, "rhetorical criticism is for Brueggemann, an approach consistent with both the pluralism of postmodernity and the supple nature of the Old Testament text itself. He says that there can be a right or ultimate interpretation, but only provisional judgements for which the interpreter is

prepared to take practical responsibility, and which must always yet again be submitted to the larger conflictual conversation. Brueggemann is open about his quest to join the exegesis of the text with the hermeneutics of its appropriation. He is never satisfied with applying the critical method as an end in itself; he always pushes his interpretation to another level, where he is able to envision how the texts engage the large issues of life and faith" (1997,63) (in Coleman 2015,90). For this study it will be important to understand the context in which the text arose, the context that David was responding to or relating to. It is important to zoom in on the setting in life and to see how the setting in life contributed to the output.

According to Gottwald in *The history bible: a social literary introduction*, "The Bible has been freed from an exclusively doctrinal confessional and church-centred ecclesiastical religious approach. It has now become approachable in scientific ways according to the many possibilities of inquiry that the various sciences have opened up" (Gottwald 1985,7). In a more recent read, Jonker and Lawrie (2005), argue that there are multiple approaches, such as the historical-critical approach, the text-critical studies, literary critical approach, traditional-critical, form-critical, redactional criticism, to mention but a few scientific ways that have been developed to read the Bible. I will focus on the historical critical approach and the movement towards the narrative analysis. Jonker and Lawrie posit that, "the historical-critical approaches hold in common the presupposition that biblical texts can and should be understood only in the light of the historical context within which they originated or the world behind the text" (Jonker and Lawrie 2005,26). Knowing the contextual situation historically is important information to understand the text you are assessing. Furthermore, when we deal with text production, 'historical-critical approaches assumed that a text can be understood only in light of the historical context within which it originated. The text is merely the medium through which the original intentions of the author, which lie behind the text, find expression. Historical-critical approaches focused on the origin of a text and text immanent approaches on the relationship among elements in the text itself" (Jonker and Lawrie 2005,66). In tracing the role of the historical-critical approach it is noted that, "there was a further shift making interpreters focus on the text itself, paying attention to literary features rather than its historical background. This displaced some of the historical critical questions such as who wrote the text and under what circumstances. The shift moved from focusing on the mind of the author to looking at the text itself" (Jonker and Lawrie 2005,67). This is what the narrative approach focuses on. In defining narrative criticism, they argue that, "the assumption that the author's intention is decisive in the interpretation event was shelved. The historical circumstances within which the text

originated and more particularly the specific circumstance of the author need not to be considered in the understanding of the text. Once the literary work has been completed it assumes a life of its own" (Jonker and Lawrie 2005,95). The value of the text itself to contemporary readers is to focus on the world in front of the text and this is best explained in the work of West 2013, *Exegesis, seeking appropriation*. This study draws from behind the text but dwells in the text itself and moves to the front of the text. In reading the story of David, from 1st and 2nd Samuel, I focus on it using the narrative analysis and in the story of David I zoom in on the understandings of masculinities. Much work has been done on masculinities and David or coming of age and David, however, the value of this approach of combining masculinity and coming of age in reading the Davidic narrative, could offer essential resources for contemporary readers.

3.3 Narrative Analysis

Robert Alter (2011) in *the art of biblical narrative,* begins with the assertion that "history is far more intimately related to fiction than we have been accustomed to assume". Alter suggests that prose fiction was the best means for biblical authors to present history. The history which the biblical authors present, however, is not historiography, but rather "the imaginative re-enactment of history by a gifted writer who organizes his materials along certain thematic biases and according to his own remarkable intuition of the psychology of the characters." He speaks of this art of biblical prose fiction as "historicized fiction" before adding that it may perhaps be better understood as "fictionalized history" (Alter 2011, 47). Biblical narrative as explained in *Theology narrative: critical introduction* by Michael Goldberg (1982) says, "in short Christian storytelling is history-telling. For an example; the preaching of the early Christian church was not an argument for the existence of neither God nor an admonition to follow the dictates of some common human conscience, unhistorical and super-social in character. It was with the historical appearance of Jesus Christ and a confession of what had happened to the community of disciples. In framing narratives, Berlin posits that, "the Bible is certainly a literary work and as such becomes subject to literary criticism. The purpose of this is to bring to clearer focus the subtleties of language, style and meaning that are the fabric of the text" (Berlin 1982, 69).

In terms of definitions of narrative analysis, I will consider the definition as presented by Ska who says, "By narrative we mean first of all a literary genre distinct from poetry or dramatic

art, from philosophical or theological treatises, prophetic oracles and wisdom literature. But we also use it to refer to the concrete texts belonging to this literary genre (the narratives)" (Ska 1990,6). Mark Powell says, "Narrative criticism focuses on stories in biblical literature and attempts to read these stories with insights drawn from the secular field of modern literary criticism. The goal is to determine the effects that the stories are expected to have on their audience" (Powell 1992, 239).

Bruce et al (2016), says, "Narrative analysis is about examining stories: seeking to understand and interpret, focusing on the particular, and using the story as the anchor of analysis. The analysis could take a variety of forms and it could be thematic or relate to a concept or phenomenon of interest. The analysis could involve whole stories, a participant's narrative context, stories within stories and particular exemplars" (Bruce et.al 2016, 2). The research draws on narrative analysis as a frame of reading and attempting to understand the character of David, while there will be potentially arising themes post reading the phenomenon of interest in this reading is understanding how masculinities are presented through this narrative and what ideo-theological resources can be developed for those that use the text as a reflective surface.

My hypothesis is that the character David is an important figure in Christianity and there is a possibility because of him being the 'chosen' king by 'God' that many would study his life to learn behaviour and how they should be in community. Now, if this is the case, there is a pertinent need to study episodes of his life to see what can be understood through the person David. I will use excepts from the work of Bruner, who explains narrative as, "taking the story as the investigating focus. Narrative is a conventional form, transmitted culturally and constrained by each individual's level of mastery. Narratives are a version of reality whose acceptability is governed by 'convention' and narrative necessary rather than by empirical verification and logical requirements although ironically we have no compunction of calling stories true or false" (Bruner 1991,2).

The focus in reading the books of Samuel is not enquiring (historical) if they are fictional or not but, however, to attempt to learn and understand the narratives learning from the involved culture and language holistically. I will explore and include aspects of hermeneutics as put by Bruner. "A preliminary word of explanation is needed here. The word hermeneutic implies that there is a text or a text analogue which somebody has been trying to express a meaning in. This, in turn, implies that there is a difference between what is expressed in the text and what the text might mean, and furthermore that there is no unique solution to the task of determining the

meaning for this expression. In effect, the best hope for hermeneutic analysis is to provide an intuitively convincing account of the meaning of the text as a whole in the light of constituent parts that make it up" (Bruner 1991,8). I will have narrative analysis as the broader frame of reading the story of David and the selected scenes.

Heather 2004 points out that, "in the process of re-reading stories they represent their identities and societies and narratives help people to organize their experiences into meaningful episodes that call upon cultural modes of reasoning and representation. Narratives are integral to human culture because culture is constituted through the ensemble of stories; we talk about ourselves. Culture produces the conventions for living e.g., community, work place, home and culture shapes how individuals envisage their world and speak about it. Also, narratives can be used to reinforce but also contest dominant social practices" (Heather 2004, 180). It will be impossible to understand the story of David outside his background, context, culture and language. To find deeper and possibly new meanings post a re-reading of the story of David, would entail going to understand what it meant to be a man in the days of the context of David, what it meant to be a king, what was permissible and what was unaccepted in the society. From there one may access which lines David 'crossed' if any and 'if not' how do we reconcile the projection of masculinities and identity into today's context, especially analyzing the process of becoming. My role as a narrative researcher is to retain an awareness of social conditions as they consider how culture and social structures surface in the stories re-read and retold through the researcher's analysis**.**

To assess if the selection of the Davidic Episodes has been well planned and rationally selected, I use the work of Reissman who is a scholar in thought of Elliot Mishler (1986,1991,1997). For Reissman a narrative should consist of (i) reliance on a detailed transcript which in my study of the Books of Samuel will be much reference to the Masoretic Text (MT) and the (LXXb), and Deuteronomistic Retributive Theology but also primarily the Hebrew text will be the frame for clarity, (ii) focus on the language and contexts of production in this research the focus language is the Hebrew language and the context of production is the Israel background, (iii) some structural features of discourses – I will also focus on the structure of the text, and the language for an example determining meaning for words**.**

In further explaining the complexity of interpreting any one narrative, Poindexter expresses the importance of the narrator's language and choice of words and he also says "language is far from clear cut. Words are often ambiguous, meanings are various and not necessarily obvious"

(Poindexter 2003, 384). He argues that, "researchers may miss or misinterpret text excerpts due to the style of narration, heavily influenced by factors such as class, age, religious background, region origin, ethnicity etc" (Poindexter 2003, 385). In the work of Poindexter, "the role of the narrator in exploring narrative concepts is to choose among all the things that could be included. The narrator is the boss and has absolute authority about how to build the story. The narrators' job is to figure out which of the things you could put into the story you will put in, and how you will string them together and to make what points" (Poindexter 2003, 385). It is my observation that listening for the narrator in a text such as a Bible is complex and what is more complex is my role as the researcher and the question of what I have put under focus through selecting various narratives makes me a form of a narrator, as I am putting together a collection of narratives that are to be read side by side to find and make particular points at a later stage. The role of a narrator can also be partially burdened by bias and personal agenda or what can be termed eisegesis; however, I will be careful to not fall into this trap.

What will also be important to explore is how Jean Louis Ska (1999), in *Methods of Biblical Interpretation*, explains the relationship between the reader and the narrator in the Hebrew Text. In ensuring rigorous and solid analysis what grounds such a study as Phelan and Rabinowitz (2005), would explain is that narrative theory is concerned with historical, political questions which the researcher cannot 'tamper' with as these are unchangeable. However, one of the problems in narratology is the difficult relation between theory and practice. On the one hand, narratology claims to deliver a set of instruments for analyzing texts. On the other hand, narratology focuses on why and the wherefore, the semiotics and grammar of the narrative. It would be categorized as both an applied science and theory of narrative texts in its own right. In analysis of the narrative discourse for me this will essentially be a study of the relationships between narrative and story, between the narrative and narrating and to the extent that they are inscribed in the narrative discourse between story and narrating as best captured by Genette in *Narrative discourse* (1980).

For the purposes of this research, the work of Sarah Earthy and Ann Cronin (2008) will be pivotal in explaining and understanding the focus of how the narrative analysis is used in reading the selected David narrative cycle. They state that "narrative analysis is an approach taken to analyse data that is concerned with understanding how and why people talk about their lives as a story or a series of events/stories. This inevitably includes issues of *identity* and the interaction between the narrator and the audiences" (Earthy and Cronin 2008,1). The focus on David when reading 1st and 2nd Samuel is not merely to learn about his story and who he is, but

it is to begin to tap into issues of identity formation and growth. This in my understanding also means that narrative analysis allows me as the researcher to question the study in detail. In employing the narrative analysis to 1st and 2nd Samuel, I will be able to draw out different facets of the story, such as analyzing (i) David as a young boy, (ii) David as he becomes a man and a husband, (iii) David in leadership and in interaction with subordinates and (iv) David in sexual relations. The narrative analysis allows me to interview all these scenes and ask meaningful questions that could present meaningful conclusions around constructive reflections around masculinity construction and identity formation.

Bal wants the users of narrative analysis to note the following, "firstly, that the processes are not to be confused with the author's activity, secondly, that the events are arranged in a sequence that can differ from the chronological sequence, thirdly, that the amount of time allotted in the story to the various elements of the fabula is determined with respect to the amount of time these elements take up in the fabula, fourthly, that the actors are provided with distinct traits. Thus, they are individuals and transformed into characters and lastly that the locations where events occur are also given distinct characteristics and are thereby transformed into specific places" (Bal 2017,25).

Amidst the existing contemporary scholarly work, I will make use of the existing body of knowledge to identify the existing gaps as I perceive them. As such my research focuses on the selected David narrative scenes. The selection of scenes will be a focus on David in relationship with the following individuals, namely Goliath, Jonathan, Abigail and Bathsheba. In these scenes, I seek to analyse each scene to understand what can be learnt about the coming-of-age process and the transition from boyhood to adulthood. More so, David being a man, my interest is to trace his growth from boyhood and hopefully learn something about his formation of the masculine identity; with the hope of learning something for the construction of masculinity in my immediate context.

In defining and introducing what compromises narrative critical reading, according to Christopher Paris in *Narrative obtrusion in the Hebrew Bible,* 2014, we are cautioned of times when, "narrative criticism tries to determine how various signals within a text guide the readers in deciding what the text means. This study of narrative obtrusiveness may help to bring these approaches together, because obtrusions represent areas where the narrator actively attempts to influence the thinking of the reader. While a narrator generally endeavours to affect the thinking of the audience, sufficient consideration must be given to these instances where a

normally laconic narrator interrupts the flow of the text to change the way a reader interprets a story, an event, or a character" (Paris 2014, 15).

The focus on David when reading 1st and 2nd Samuel is not merely to learn about his story and who he is, but it is to begin to tap into issues of constructions of masculinity and negotiating the process of coming of age. In employing the narrative analysis to 1st and 2nd Samuel I will be able to draw out different facets of the story such as analyzing (i) David as a young boy, (ii) David as he becomes a man and a husband, (iii) David in leadership and in interaction with subordinates and (iv) David in intimate relations. The narrative analysis allows me to interview all these scenes and ask meaningful questions that could present meaningful conclusions around constructive reflections around masculinity construction and coming of age processes.

Smith will be important with the followings steps that he provides for one doing a narrative analysis which are:

Step 1: Deciding what the story is – in explaining a story he says, it contains:

(i) characters,

(ii) plot - expresses a point of view,

(iii) structure of events over time which has a complicated action where some events disturb the initial state of affairs and a resolution that is an overarching consequence or explanation for why something happened.

Step 2: Choose the length of the text deciding where to start and end for the particular analysis.

Step 3: Transcription is much more than a technical exercise. It is a constructive process in which analytical thoughts can emerge and percolate the analytic process (Smith 2016,203). Each literary unit that will be analysed will have to include the named steps and process of categorizing and qualifying the sections as complete literary units.

According to Bal, "Narrative is everywhere but it isn't always important. The present return of narratology is most welcome for those interested in analyzing narrative texts. A first reason may simply be the omnipresence of narrative in culture, which logically calls for a method to deal with it" (Bal 2017,25). Waltke in Bal, makes a distinction between (i) a narrative, (ii) a story and (iii) a fabula. He defines them in the following way, (i) "A *narrative text* is a text which an agent or subject conveys to an addressee (tells the reader, or listener) of a story in a

medium such as language, imagery, sound, buildings or a combination thereof; (ii) *a story* is the content of that text and produces a particular manifestation of, inflection and colouring of a fabula and (iii) a *fabula* is a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors. For the purposes of my research in narrative texts we need to recognize three levels of authorship; the characters in the narrative, the human author presenting their statements, and God" (Waltke 1991,87).

Furthermore, an event is the transition from one state to another state. Actors are agents that perform actions. To act is defined here as to cause or to experience an event which is not necessarily caused by a human. Herbert Louis reiterates most of what is stated by Mieke Bal when he says, "It is important to grasp the distinction between narratology's fundamental entities which are: story, narrative and narration. The story generally corresponds to a series of events and actions that are told by someone, the narrator and represented in some final form, producing a narrative. As a field of study narratology looks at mechanisms of narrative, and the form taken by a narrated story" (Louis 2019,250). (Reissman, Kohler and Quinney 2005) further posits that, "What makes such diverse texts narrative is sequence and consequence: events are selected, organized, connected and evaluated as meaningful for a particular audience. Storytellers interpret the world and experience in it, they sometimes create moral tales of how the world should be" (Reissman, Kohler and Quinney 2005, 391)

Bar-Efrat, in *"Some observations on the analysis of structure in biblical narrative"* (1980), argues "in the field of biblical narrative particularly it seems to be impossible to define the boundaries of the literary unit rigidly. In the Bible narratives which are more or less complete in themselves link up with one another so as to create large literary units" (Efrat 1980,156). This is why in this research I struggled with selecting the focus texts and the demarcation of the literary unit. Efrat further presents tools that are essential to structurally analyse the text such as: "(i) the verbal level, (ii) narrative technique, (iii) level of the narrative world and (iv) the level of the conceptual content." For this research I will make use of his explanation of the narrative techniques which he says, "are based on the narrator's account as opposed to speech (dialogue). In scenic presentation narrated time flows rather slowly, whereas in summary it runs quickly relative to narrative time." Similar to the work of Efrat around narration and time, Bal wants the users of narrative analysis to note the following:

"(i) the processes are not to be confused with the author's activity

(ii) the events are arranged in a sequence that can differ from the chronological sequence

(iii) the amount of time allotted in the story to the various elements of the fabula is determined with respect to the amount of time these elements take up in the fabula

(iv) actors are provided with distinct traits. Thus, they are individuals and transformed into characters and lastly

(v) the locations where events occur are also given distinct characteristics and are thereby transformed into specific places" (Bal 2017,6).

Consequently, "the moulding of time in narrative pertains not only to its relative rate of progress but it's order. The author can begin his story at the beginning, middle or end and also introduce flashbacks. Flashbacks are clearly indicated by the use of the '*qatal'* form of the verb denoting past present tense. Also, flashbacks are all located at the points of transition" (Efrat 1980, 160). Efrat begins to present me with important tools which I can draw on when I am doing a narrative analysis, such as:

(a) "Focusing on the narrator and what they appear to be emphasizing

(b) Noticing the narration time and time allocation in the various selected texts

(c) Noticing flashbacks inserted in the story which may change the chronological order

(d) Noticing narrative content which is to focus on the different characters and events, and places they occur in the story" (Efrat 1980,161).

The work of Labov will help me in the selection of literary units. I will also incorporate elements from William Labov in 1997, found important to narrative analysis, namely:

(a) Having an abstract which is the summary or point of the story

(b) Focusing on orientation (time-place, characters and situations)

(c) Noticing the complicating action (event-sequence or plot usually with crisis and turning point)

(d) Evaluation (where the narrator steps back from the action to comment on meaning and communicate emotion - the soul of the narrative)

(e) Noticing the resolution - the outcome of the plot and finally

(f) A coda - noticing the ending of the story and bringing action back to the present.

Within narrative analysis, Reissman, Kohler and Quiney (2005) points to more models within this method and for the purposes of this research I will elaborate on thematic analysis and structural analysis as I will embed them into my analysis section of this chapter. For Kohler, "*Thematic analysis* emphasizes the content of a text and what is said more than how it is said, the told rather than the telling. The thematic approach is useful for theorizing across a number of cases finding common thematic elements across research participants and the events they report. Yet in *structural analysis* emphasis shifts to the telling the way a story is told. Although thematic content does not slip away, focus is equally on form. How a teller by selecting particular narrative devices makes a story persuasive. Unlike the thematic approach language is treated seriously, an object for close investigation over and beyond its referential content" (Kohler and Reissman 2005,5). When reading the text and focusing on the Hebrew parts, I will be focusing on a narrative analysis and when I am about to draw meaningful conclusions on what the plot and the story is about, I will then be focusing on the possible developing themes.

3.3.1 Character

According to Jonker and Lawrie, 2005, "*Characters* in a narrative normally featuring characters. The plot emerges precisely when characters are described in their relationships to themselves, to other characters and to events, Biblical narratives are no exception. One has to be forewarned, however, that biblical narratives show far less interest in the psychological aspects of characters than modern narratives do. In biblical narratives the characters serve the story line; they are seldom employed in the narrative for the purpose of finding the attention of the characters themselves.... Not all characters necessarily function in the same way in a narrative and therefore a distinction between different types of characters is commonly made' (Jonker and Lawrie 2005,94). Furthermore, "there are different versions of this distinction. Some simply distinguish between sound characters (characters that are described in some detail, that undergo development during the narrative, of whom more than one dimension is revealed to the readers) and fat characters (characters that act in a purely functional way in the narrative, that do not undergo character development, of whom little is said). A variation on this bipartite distinction is the tripartite model that distinguishes between *"fully-fledged characters", "types"* and "agents". The "fully-fledged" character is a complex one, of whom the narrative shows a number of traits and qualities. The "type is described only in terms of

one feature of her character, one that is of particular importance to the storyline" (Jonker and Lawrie 2005, 95). According to Dekker "characters are an essential part of virtually any story, and the stories in the Hebrew Bible are no exception" (Dekker 2016,81).

In the book *Why ask my name: anonymity and identity in biblical narrative,* Reinhartz argues: "The existence of clear boundaries between one person and another underlies the very notion of personal identity. Although the absence of the proper name does not rule out the presence of individuality, it potentially blurs the lines between characters upon which construction of identity depends" (Reinhartz 1998,137). Furthermore, "Narrative context often provides the information necessary to distinguish one character from another. Biblical narrative presents two sorts of situations, however, in which the lines of demarcation remain murky. In some cases, it can be difficult to determine whether a proper name is in fact provided in the narrative. This situation challenges the notion of a fixed boundary between the properly named and the anonymous. In other cases, personal pronouns make it hard to distinguish between two or more anonymous characters within one story, particularly when both are identified by the same role designations" (Reinhartz 1998,138).

While in the story of David the characters are quite clear and properly named in the narrative, through critical reading I will focus on how the presentation of David by the authors appears to differ, thereby drawing out 'different aspects of masculinities' and notions of coming of age. Furthermore, Alter says Hebrew characterization is quite different from the modern conception, which is driven mostly by the novel. Characters can be revealed through actions, dialogue, and comments by the narrator, among others, but one of the key aspects of characterization in Hebrew narrative is the recognition of the "drastic selectivity" of the omniscient narrator (Alter 2011, 158). In reading 1st and 2nd Samuel, the work of Alter will be crucial to draw from as it allows deeper focus on the named and unnamed characters on the overt and covert information presented 'intentionally' by the narrator.

3.3.2 Plot

According to Jonker and Lawrie, "*the plot/storyline in* some literary critics (in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the term) are of the opinion that this is the most important aspect of narrative texts. For any narrative to be a narrative, it has to have a storyline or plot. Without this it would not be considered a narrative" (Jonker and Lawrie 2005,97). Furthermore, "analysis of the plot/storyline helps the interpreter in two important ways. Firstly, it enables the interpreter of

narratives to get a grip on the line of tension in the narrative. Secondly, and closely connected to this, it provides a way of identifying the changes the narrative wishes to bring about, whether these are changes in knowledge (that is, by the end of the story the reader knows more), changes in values (which concern the development of the characters' values and also the values of the reader) or changes in situation (those concerning the events recounted in the narrative)" (Jonker and Lawrie 2005,98).

In the diagram below, extracted from Louis Ska's work, this research will attempt to get a functional grasp of the plot/storyline of the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel. I argue that subsequently it will be easier to follow the development of the narrative, the exploration of the complications as presented by the narrator, the climax of the story where the plot has thickened and to see how the story begins to 'self-resolve' and thus seeing what contemporary readers can learn from the close narrative reading and thus reaching a conclusion and areas that need to be contested for contemporary readers as presented by the author and previous interpretations of the text.

In terms of a method and what aspects of the plot can be useful, Wink suggests that we focus on "the progress of the thought from the beginning to the end of the text. For this, one should also return to the outline. In doing this we are bringing literary structure and semantic structure together" (Wink 1980,6). The special focus, however, for this research will be a focus on the narrative structures. Some of the guiding questions in analyzing the narrative are as follows:

a. Compare the initial situation with the final situation. What is the turning point?

b. Pay attention to the different characters and their interrelationships.

c. Structural analysis likes abstraction and will therefore pay attention to the characters as actants, in as far as they are expressions of purely logical or conceptual oppositions.

The suggested steps by Wink lead this research to a place of biblical hermeneutics which primarily focuses on what is essential for the 'closest' appropriate interpretation of the biblical text. More so, I will also draw from Jonker and Lawrie who argue for the role of the frequency of narration. "The frequency of narration, closely connected to the order of the narration of events, is another important narrative aspect to be considered in the interpretation of biblical narratives. In this regard there are various possibilities, such as: (i) something. occurs once and is recounted more than once but is recounted once only; and (ii) something is recounted the

same number of times that it occurs. A narrative approach would want to account for the motive for, and effect of the variations in frequency" (Jonker and Lawrie 2005, 112).

3.3.3 Time

According to John Allison in *Narrative and time: a phenomenological reconsideration, "*The prevailing perspective on time in narrative has been articulated by structuralist narratologists who, on the basis of an objective model of time, insist that narrative is characterized by a duality of time, a demarcation between the time of the events (story) and the time of the telling (discourse)" (Allison 1994,108). The work of Allison is similar to the work of Mieke Bal in *Introduction to the theory of narrative* who presents the concept of the fabula. For Bal, "A fabula is a series of logically related events that are caused or experienced by actors. The fabula for instance contains the elements, event and actor. Within the fabula, those processes are not to be confused with the author's activity. The events are arranged in sequence that can differ from the chronological sequence. Also, the amount of time allotted in the story of the various elements is determined with respect to the amount of time these elements take" (Bal 2017, 34). In reading the David Narrative as found in 1st and 2nd Samuel, I will focus on time mainly as Allison explains, time of events, and I will be careful to look into those aspects that the author dwells on and repeats.

According to biblical scholar Muilenburg in *The biblical view of time,* "time is experienced in the periodicity and rhythm of man's own life as well as in the life of nature. Each phase of man's life, childhood, adolescence, maturity, and old age is a unique time" (Muilenburg 1961,178). As such, in the selection of scenes I will be careful to ensure that in reading and accessing David's coming of age narrative, I will look at the time when he is in his childhood, the time when he is categorically in his adolescence, how he matures and aspects of his aging process. The complexity of time as explained in the Old Testament is that "the Old Testament has no way of distinguishing between chronological and concrete or "realistic" time. The Septuagint renders the word as *kairos* in over two-thirds of all the instances of its appearance" (Hemman and Vervaeck 2019,23). Muilenburg says, "The clause *it came to pass* is one of the most frequent in the Bible, which is generally omitted in the R.S.V., and represents a distinct loss since the eventfulness of biblical mentality is thereby obscured. The word is associated very frequently with the events and phenomena of nature or man's life in nature in the activity of farming. Thus, times are described as those of rain (the former and the latter), of threshing,

of pruning, of harvest, of the singing of birds, of the drying up of the wadies, of the birth of mountain goats and so on. Or it is characterized by the events of human life: birth, adolescence, menstruation, old age, and death" (Muilenburg 1961,235).

According to Brettler, "The research field of biblical time conception blossomed especially in the fifties and sixties, and it is currently experiencing a reawakening. While prominent scholars in the middle of the twentieth century discussed especially the possibility that the Hebrew Bible writers had a different, and possibly more limited, conception of time than we do in the Western world today, some of the more recent research contributions raise the bar even higher. Perhaps most radically, Sacha Stern argues that the biblical authors were not in possession of a functional concept of time at all" (Brettler 2004,1). Because of observations found in Stern and Brettler, I will be quick to focus on time as I know it and to pick on literal mentions of time or repetitions since the authors believe time worked differently for the authors of the Biblical Texts which are central to the study of this research.

3.3.4 Limitations

In explaining what I saw as limitations, I draw on Powell who argues that, narrative criticism merely identifies how we as readers are expected to be affected by the text if we read it from the point of view that the text assumes that we possess" (Powell 1992, 253). Alongside the narrative reading is the use of textual criticism as a method that is somehow intertwined with narrative criticism. In *Grammatical Problems,* Bruce K. Walter says, "*Textual Criticism:* The starting point in the historical-grammatical method is that of establishing the correct text of the "original autograph" from the witness of the Hebrew manuscripts and ancient versions. Through the canons of textual criticism, the exegete seeks to restore this text, and for both scientific and theological reasons we have good reason to think that the text is well-preserved and that no essential doctrine stands in doubt. But in spite of these convictions we must admit that the practice is fraught with problems" (Waltke 1991,78). I want to point out that at this point there is no correct text of the autography but rather merely witnesses and reconstructions of the Old Testament.

The importance of noticing the limitations of this research is that the source texts for 1st and 2nd Samuel were written so many biblical centuries ago and this research is not a historic study of the context that David lived in; it does not pay sufficient attention to the society and cultural setting of David. Secondly, this research is limited, because as I read the text today it is not its

original language and much has been lost in the various translations and formulations of the final text. Having stated these limitations, I will still go ahead and attempt to understand the selected narratives so as to increase the existing body of knowledge. At the end of this chapter, I envision being able to have understood something of David's coming of age and masculinity as projected by the narrator in the text and through the various selected episodes. According to *Defending the Concept of Time in the Hebrew Bible* by Mete Bundvad, "Time-talk is always difficult, but the biblical near-absence of reflection on time as an independent subject raises additional questions: to what extent does the textual material enable us to discuss how the biblical authors conceptualized time? Can we even be sure that it is really time which they discuss when time-related issues such as mortality, calendar, and history take to the stage?" (Bundvad 2014,281).

3.3.4.1 Masculinity Construction and Coming of Age as Analytical Tools

The relationship of masculinity and coming of age in my research is that masculinity is a bigger framework and within it coming of age is essential in aiding the process. In the selected scenes David who is the protagonist is showcased by the narrator as becoming either of the following: a head of Israel, a head of war, a husband and a father. All the activities that David is doing are to become a man, to develop his masculine qualities. David transitions from being a boy to being a man functioning under each of the names. For him, to function in each or all of the roles he is performing is part of the broader framework of coming of age and identity formation. Masculinity constructions and coming of age as tools are pivotal to my research as they will be used to understand what the process of coming of age entailed for David. The selection of episodes from 1st and 2nd Samuel, to understand David and the process of boyhood to adulthood is limiting outside of the combination of this method. This is because the text was written a long time ago and, what we know of David can only be learnt in the Davidic Narrative as offered by the author/s of 1st and 2nd Samuel.

This combination of masculinity construction and coming of age as analytical tools is premised on the hypothetical frame that posits that masculinity falls categorically under the larger identity formation and identity as falling within the frame of coming of age. I argue that masculinity construction and the lived-out understanding cannot be understood holistically on their own because masculinity is a social construction. Social construction suggests that one needs to clearly understand something of the people that surround the individual, the economy

and historical facts of this society. Masculinity being socially constructed means masculinities need to be understood within a society. Society generally frames and defines what coming of age entails and what identity one has. All efforts are ultimately to understand the masculine identity. An inquiry on David, his life, and the different stages that he passes through in the process of coming of age, based on the 1st and 2nd Samuel excerpts, will be pivotal to this research.

3.4 Masculinity as a methodological tool

Haddox in *Is There a "Biblical Masculinity": Masculinities in the Hebrew Bible* (2016) shows that the society of ancient Israel which the book of 1st Samuel is situated in was patriarchal and male dominated in the public realm. Also, the biblical texts were written probably exclusively by men and focused largely on male characters and concerns (Haddox 2016). Thus, a narrative critical reading of the Davidic Cycle by me as a young female, which is the lenses I bring to the table, would allow a navigation and observations that no male reader could draw as they are at a place of 'ignorable conflict of interest'. Some of the work done acknowledges the ambiguity in the story presented in 2 Samuel but implies that in 2 Sam 11, Bathsheba's action to bathe in proximity to the royal palace was deliberately provocative (Nicol 1997). Such writings, though they clarify that such interpretation or reading into this situation does not exempt David of his irresponsible actions, it does minimize the extent of the trauma and the hardship that Bathsheba is faced with by the 'move made to him by David' i.e. sexual violation of her choice; having to hide what happened from Uriah (husband) and at that same moment the husband dies and she is holding on to such a big secret and just after the death of her husband, David takes her in and she is with child but the child dies. The looming question again is around power narrative and control of the body of any female in the Old Testament as it encompasses the notion of pleasure.

In *Men and Masculinity in the Hebrew Bible and Beyond*, Ovidiu Creanga (2014) focuses on a collection of work done by scholars around understanding biblical masculine characters and how they have been read and understood. The key points are: (a) uniquely and explicitly on men and the world they inhabit and (b) it is documenting changes in the type of men and masculinities deemed legitimate/illegitimate across the social and historical context of the Near East. Some of the other work include *Men in Travail: Masculinity and the Problem of the Body in the Hebrew Prophets.* Here Graybill (2012) says "male bodies of the Hebrew Prophets

subvert the normative representation of masculine embodiment in the biblical text. While the Hebrew Bible establishes a relatively rigid norm of hegemonic masculinity emphasizing strength, military, valour, beauty and power over others in speech and action, prophetic figures do not operate under these masculine constraints" (Graybill 2012,42). The above and many other works around the Hebrew Bible and masculinities show much work that has been done around masculinities; however, not much has been specifically covered on the David Narrative Cycle. Research on the David Narrative Cycle capitalizes on the multidimensional and transformational images of masculinity as presented complexly, for an example: the leap of David as he fights Goliath as a young boy and is seen as a complete man; yet on the other hand after becoming a complete man we see that he is still perceived as a small boy and is requested by King Saul to play the harp and later the same King is pursuing him to kill and he is on the run. How can David fluidly flow from being a man to be a boy and then a man again? It is the shift and identity changing that this research focuses on.

In terms of coming of age work done in the Hebrew Bible, Wilson 2013 says, "This study identifies and elaborates on a theme in the Hebrew Bible that has largely gone unnoticed by scholars: the transition of a male adolescent from boyhood to manhood. Beyond identifying the coming-of-age theme in different HB texts, the project also describes how the theme is employed by biblical narrators and redactors to highlight broader messages and transitions in the historical narratives of the HB. It also considers how these stories provide insight into the varying representations of biblical masculinity" (Wilson 2013, 1). Wilson's work in terms of selection of texts focuses on "David in 1 Sam 17; Solomon in 1 Kgs 1-2; an alternative tale of Solomon's maturation in 1 Kgs 3; Moses in Exodus 2; and Samuel in 1 Sam 3" (Wilson 2013, 2). Lastly, "The project ultimately proves that the theme of male coming-of-age, heretofore virtually unrecognized, is found in several biblical texts. Moreover, this theme is often used to indicate other important messages and transitions in Israel's historical narrative and can provide unique insight into biblical constructions of masculinity" (Wilson 2013, 5). While not much work has been done around the understanding of coming of age in connection to the Hebrew Bible, the work of Wilson serves as a starting point and as a frame of reference for framing the complex coming of age discussion.

3.5 Coming of age as a methodological tool

Stephen Wilson in his 2013 dissertation, *Male coming of age theme in the Hebrew bible,* focuses on the transition from boyhood to manhood in Deuteronomistic History. The work of Wilson also dwells on the role of the narrator and Bible redactors in drawing out these themes. I will make use of the work of Wilson because he focuses on narratives that have examined the importance of notes of passage between boyhood to manhood in cross-cultural perspectives. He draws from *psychology* and anthropology, defining hegemonic masculinities emphasizing the importance of rites of passage in the coming of age narratives. Wilson's work focuses on framing biblical constructions along an axis of contrast between boyhood and manhood, instead of manhood/womanhood. To select coming of age selection of text, he looked for the following: (i) appearance of specific terminology within the texts themselves, (ii) an explicit display of masculinity by the boy protagonist that marks his transition to manhood, (iii) attention to structure of separation, liminality, reintegration seen as integral to most rites of passage, (iv) changes that mark the transition from boyhood to manhood must take place within the borders of the narrative self.

Wilson depends on David Clines for a frame of what manhood encompasses in the world of the Old Testament. Some of these include: strength, wisdom, persuasive speech, beauty and avoidance of association with women. Some characteristics of biblical manhood left out by Clines include: self-control, fertility, marriage, honour, kinship solidarity and legal manhood. For his study Wilson notes how David's story mimics the coming of age tripartite structure of the rite of passage which is separation, liminality and reincorporation.

Susan Ackerman in *When Heroes Love: The Ambiguity of Eros in the Stories of Gilgamesh and David* in 2005 focuses on the rite of passage as a hermeneutic and it becomes applied to a large section of the David narrative. For Ackerman, the rite of passage is well demonstrated in the story of David and Jonathan. However, some have critiqued her focus on only one state of the rite of passage, particularly the liminal stage. Such a focus could be limiting and a disadvantage to all the other aspects of the rite of passage such as separation and reincorporation. The liminal stage as used by Ackerman is important because it allows for the time when someone is still getting to know themselves, usually encompassing the sexual angle and this liminal stage allows the crossing of cultural norms. Such sections in biblical texts can be identified with the use of sexual language, images or examples that could connote to sexual relations of some sort.

For the purposes of my research project I will draw on some of the detects of coming of age in the Hebrew Bible as used by Wilson. Wilson argues, "These principles, which were designed to add specificity to this study's attempt to locate the coming-of-age theme and to avoid some of the mistakes evident in previous research, are: (1) terminology is a key indicator of a character's status as a boy or as a man; (2) a coming-of-age narrative will feature a boy acquiring and/or displaying qualities associated with manhood; (3) the presence of a rite-of-passage schema can help to identify a narrative as a coming-of-age story, although it is not necessary; and (4) the changes that signify a boy's coming-of-age must happen within the defined borders of an individual narrative for it to be considered a coming-of-age story" (Wilson 2013,320). Any of the coming of age sections will be framed from within this paradigm and asking the above numbered questions in the selected sections of the narrative.

3.5.1 Queer biblical hermeneutics

In my understanding, queer biblical hermeneutics is an avenue that allows for special focus on the reading of the Bible that is not conventionally 'acceptable'. The part that the interpretation of the text is not conventionally acceptable is not because they are not true or incomplete but rather it is because they are hard to absorb within a 'patriarchal dominant situation'. In the work *Sex and Gender and Liminality in Biblical Texts: Venturing into Postcolonial, Queer Biblical Interpretations,* Punt and Fuchs says, "Intersections between postcolonial and queer theories have been investigated, considered and even asserted in other areas of academic inquiry (cf. Campbell 2000; Hawley 2001b) such as literature studies, but the value of similar comparative studies for biblical interpretation are yet to be accounted for in any sustained way" (Punt and Fuchs 2007,12).

Queer theory assists in exposing and challenging the different ways in which a "factual sexual order of things" was created, while postcolonial theory provides analytical categories that can be an entanglement of such sexual structures in political arrangements, such as what happened with "the alliance of patriarchy between Europeans and natives" (Althaus-Reid 2000, 12). Furthermore, "while the emphasis here is on power in society as a particularly important area of investigation for both theoretical constellations – and their concurrence – it will be addressed from the perspective of what is really more one of its effects, viz. liminality" (Althaus-Reid 2002,13).

It is often noted that queer theory's particular value is related to two important approaches, which again are related to its own development and subsequent procedures. "Firstly, the socially constructed nature of gender and sex in society generally is taken as the point of departure, rather than assuming a biological or physiological approach; in short, and (overly?) simple terms, gender and sex is "queered" through the exposure of the (powerful) systems and structures of convention which require, define and prescribe the form and function of sex and gender: gender and sex are manufactured" (Punt and Fuchs 2007, 388). This fluidity and liminality and room for not boxing everything gives room for this study to adequately unpack and attempt to understand depictions and constructions of masculinity with ease.

"While a focus on established conventions and accompanying forms of control (of sexed human bodies) often prevent readers from noticing the queer instances in the biblical narratives, it is ironic that much of the biblical story is of a kind of taunting, and then a wrestling match, between the deity (sometimes in angelic form) and human beings, many of whom wish to match him in developing a perfect body. The rivalries seem to have been sexio-religious in all instances and homoerotic at times Moreover, from the above, queering the Bible hardly seems to be one-way traffic, since there are significant instances of queering gender already to be found in the biblical texts, as much observable in the first as in the twenty-first century" (Punt and Fuchs 2007, 389).

Thus, "Operating at metaphorical level, living in and through textual embodiments, these arrangements of and for sex, gender and sexuality, are nevertheless replete with social embodiment, indicative of the societal, physiological and other material manifestations of human living, and of power and control particularly, in biblical times" (Punt and Fuchs 2007, 390). Loughlin argues that "Queer theories practically present themselves as viable options for the analysis of biblical texts. It is as and through bodies as sexual and gendered entities, within communities and societal systems at large, that texts are constituted, and today, read and interpreted" (Loughlin 2005,10). As an example, "The male biblical author, or narrator, constructs not only a narrative but an argument for a particular configuration of power relationships. The male narrator wields rhetorical control; he has the power of discourse. He also has the power to omit or close off alternatives, options and narrative possibilities that may interfere with or challenge this politics" (Loughlin 2005,11).

By referring to a 'narrator', I do not intend to suggest that we are dealing with a particular individual. The narrator here refers to a construct, a collective male-centred consciousness

spanning many periods, styles and approaches. By describing the narrator as male, I do not mean to suggest that he is empirically male, but rather that he represents a male-centred perspective. This can be seen when Fuchs says, "Even if we are to accept recent suggesting according to which certain texts have been authored by women, the basic perspective of the stories remain androcentric" (Fuchs 2003,15). While an open reading of the text which is sexually fluid and all encompassing, I am of the view that applying masculinities as a lens and method to read the text will prompt and extract multi-faceted layers and dynamics of interpretation and understanding masculinities. This analytic approach reveals the underlying assumptions around masculine identity and constructions which are fundamental to contemporary interpretations of the text as well as what can be learnt from the excerpts of 1st and 2nd Samuel.

3.6 Scene selection and rationale

The scene selection is built on my hypothetical pre-supposition that we know each other and reveal more about ourselves while in relation to someone. Studying or analyzing the life of a character is complex in that the observation is purely based on what the character says and how the narrator seeks to present the character to the audience. In attempting to understand David through his narrative as presented in 1st and 2nd Samuel, I am aware of this bias and limitation even besides how objective I desire to be in my analysis of the scenes as named above. However, I would like to briefly explain why I selected each of the four scenes and how they form the bigger frame, the succession narrative and my analysis of constructions of masculinity and coming of age.

Scene 1: 1 Samuel 17:40-54 and 1 Samuel 18:27-28 (David and Goliath) is important because it is here that we are introduced to David as a young boy. I argue that it is here that his career and great leadership skills begin to be showcased. It is also within this same scene that we see David become a full man and become regarded as one by King Saul, who thus gives him his daughter as his wife. The age of David has not changed, but he seems to have gone through the fight with Goliath as a stepping stone and a rite of passage to come into full adulthood, for him to be suddenly regarded as a man. There is a lot to unpack from his age, to his masculine expression when fighting Goliath and how David receives his victory.

Scene 2: 1 Samuel 18:1-5 and 2 Samuel 9: 1-7 (David and Jonathan) is important because David finds Jonathan the son of Saul having an overwhelming love for David which he

confesses and we see David reciprocating love for Jonathan. It appears unconventional that David and Jonathan are this close as men and moreover it does appear unconventional that Jonathan loves David who is his rival for the throne. It is also unconventional that Jonathan would regard his relationship to David as more important than that of him and his father King Saul. In later years, even after the death of Jonathan, we see that David loved him earnestly, because David extended a loving hand to Mephibosheth, stating that it was because of his relationship to Jonathan. I choose this scene because David and Jonathan's love provides a platform for reflection on male to male closeness and love. This story touches on family, succession narrative, 'unconventional love' and it touches on the process of coming of age and masculine identity.

Scene 3: 1 Samuel 25:18-34 and 1 Samuel 25: 39-44 (David and Abigail) is important because it was because of Abigail that David does not kill a great number of people, especially because he had desired to kill Nabal and his people for disregarding his leadership. Abigail being a woman also presents David in a progressive light, especially because he is able to listen to a woman and take counsel from a woman. Their relationship also as David marries Abigail after the death of Nabal again proves interesting in relation to David and his sexual relations. This scene is important in so far as how women shaped/ continue to shape the construction and expression of masculinities.

Scene 4: 2 Samuel 11:1-17 and 2 Samuel 11: 26-27 (David and Bathsheba) is important because it helps us to see how David leads and who he is in relation to his staff and his female counterparts. When I began this research one of the primary research problems that this study sought to address was skewed masculinities. I also began from the presupposition that for some within the confines of the Abrahamic religions, David remains a role model to what true masculinity looks like. Within my context of research and responding to the problem, if the season of David and Bathsheba is under scrutiny it would explain the existence of toxic masculinities. During the time David relates to Bathsheba, he takes a wife that is married to one of his army men Uriah. He has unprotected sex with her and she becomes pregnant. David then calls his army commander, instructing him to ensure Uriah is killed, and then to cover up his actions – David takes a grieving Bathsheba to be his wife. Within this episode different aspects speak to leadership of men, David relating to women and there is room to reflect on how David has come of age and what type of a man has he become.

Through these episodes I desire to make meaningful observations about the representations of masculinities and the close connections to coming of age as portrayed in the selected scenes. These observations will be a preparation for *Chapter 5* which will discuss masculinities and coming of age. I will bring this chapter to a close by providing a step by step guide of how I will do methodological work in Chapter 4. It was the attempt of this chapter to explore the method in biblical studies that I shall use, which is narrative analysis.

3.6.1 How to guide and layout for Chapter 4 for each selected scene

This research study is based on a narrative critical focus of David as espoused through 1st and 2nd Samuel that are categorically in the Old Testament component of the canonized Bible, which is ascertained to have been written in the Hebrew Language. As such, I began by making a table containing the Hebrew text of the focus where I selected four scenes. I am aware of how limiting the selected four scenes could be, but methodologically and because of the size of the research it would have been impossible to include more than the selected scenes, as it would limit my ability to do an in-depth study. Parallel to the Hebrew is the English, which is the functional translation for the purposes of this research. After the selected scenes and the translation, I summarize the scene to the best of my understanding in my own words. Because this research is read with narrative analysis focus, I spend time focusing on David as the protagonist and then I slowly unpack the plot of the narrator alongside with complicating actions, crisis, turning point and the resolution of the story, in which I use the plot sketch image which I created for myself to better understand each narrative scene. The next step in the section will be to focus on how time has been used by the narrator to move the story forward and how time is used to emphasize and draw the reader's attention.

Within the scope of narrative analysis, I found it important to explore some words and notice what words have been repeated and what I as the reader could come to conclude. The second most final step is to explore what comes of the narrative scene if I particularly look at the scene using masculinity insights as presented by Clines. Again, using a similar step and methodological approach as the final step I will use the coming of age insights as presented by Wilson and I will look into what can be learnt about coming of age. I am aware that the use of particular theorists in methods such as '*Clines in masculinities'* and '*Wilson in coming of age'* is limiting, however, within the scope of these two methodological resources I have found that there are many explanations and definitions of masculinities or coming of age which make it

difficult to bundle up explanations in the process of theorizing. I, however, think for the purposes of this work, limiting my study to these theorists in key discussions will allow me to make meaningful small-scale conclusions about contemporary notions of masculinity and coming of age processes. What is distinct about this research is the uniqueness of combining the two theories in my work. Below is a detailed step by step guide of how each section in Chapter 4 will look as I navigate each narrative scene of 1st and 2nd Samuel.

3.6.2 Chapter 4 Step by step method of doing a narrative analysis of the selected scenes

a. Table of text in Hebrew language on the left and translation in English on the right

b. Telling the story in my own words

c. Narrative analysis:

   (i) *character-key and why focus on them*

   (ii) *plot – complicating action-event sequence, crisis and turning point*

   (iii) *time – orientation to place, characters and situation*

   (iv) *repetition of keywords*

d. Short Summary of key findings for the narrative section in focus *(themes)*

e. Existing scholarly conversation on the above discussed s*ection.*

After each of the narrative analysis scenes I have a plot sketch and so I would like to explain how I developed it and what I sought to achieve with the drawings.

3.6.3 Plot Sketch Explained

Under the narrative analysis section, I have designed a sketch of the plot. It is a triangle that helps the reader see the progression of the story. There is a model offered by Ska (1990), when he says, “The structural components in the construction of the plot are exposition, inciting moment, complication, climax, turning point, falling action, resolution, last delay and denouncement (conclusion)” (Ska 1990,21). Aside from this he has an image which helped me

develop and re-create, read and understand the selected scenes in this research. As a researcher, I grow a lot from using as many of my senses as possible while I study and explain my work; therefore, I attempt to make a figure that would detail the story in an understandable way. These figures of the plot sketch help readers understand: (i) the beginning of the story, (ii) what are the rising actions that happen so that the story continues, (iii) what incidents or happenings within the text present complications and which of them become the turning point of the story. Subsequent to every climatic situation it is common that there are actions by the main characters to fix the situation as it stands and also this leads to the resolution of the episode. This sketch is important in so far as visually understanding which episode and where the literary unit will be assessed. In looking for the aforementioned such as (i) beginning of story, (ii) rising action, (iii) climax, (iv) falling action and (v) resolution; these could be instrumental in framing the text and understanding what each section encompasses.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the how-to aspect of the research. The sections included are *3.1* Critical Biblical Hermeneutics, *3.2* African Biblical Hermeneutics, and *3.3* narrows done to explaining the Narrative Analysis and subsections lik*e 3.3.1* discuss Character and *3.3.2* Plot in the framing of the method for this research project. *3.3.3* Discusses limitations of the narrative analysis method when reading a text as a biblical narrative. *3.4* Explains how masculinity as theory will be used as a tool to read and understand parts of the selected Davidic episodes, while *3.5* explores the addition of coming of age as a methodological tool. Section *3.6* does a detailed explanation of what scenes will be considered for this research project and the rationale behind each selected episode. While many other scenes could have been useful in framing coming of age and understanding masculinity I limited this to four episodes. The final section *3.6.2* shows the step by step guide that will be used in Chapter 4 and the explained sections were part of the formative process of compiling this step by step guide for approaching Chapter 4. This chapter fundamentally provided functional definitions of the narrative theory as method, masculinity theory, and coming of age theories to be used.

By combining the coming-of-age theory and masculinity theory I argue that a holistic approach and understanding the crisis of masculinity as explained in the (1.2) research problem, could almost be understood more comprehensively. For an example, in the incident of Pule referenced which is the story of a pregnant girl who was killed by her boyfriend and was found

hung on a tree in Johannesburg, South Africa; this cannot merely be looked at as skewed masculinity, but it caused me to question what process was involved in this man's masculine identity as he came of age. By combining the coming of age theory and masculinity theory together, the method allows the research to take into consideration the psychological aspects of manhood, role of society, role of self, cultural engagement, race and what identity formation constitutes for each man.

Chapter 4

Narrative analysis of the selected scenes

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the selected scenes from the David Narrative Cycle. I begin from the hypothetical stance that David is used by men as a model for masculine identity construction and this would suggest that many men depend on the text as a solid reflective surface. I found it important to firstly provide a section that details work on scholarship that engages the possible author of the text 1st and 2nd Samuel. The second section details the origins of the text and the possible dating. The third section focuses on scholars who try to explain what the purpose of 1st and 2nd Samuel is, as best understood from the history and a close following of the narrator's voice. As discussed at the end of Chapter 3, I focus on the four scenes and in each scene, I focus on the Hebrew Text, the translation, summary and understanding in my own words, character analysis, and a focus on time and place of each selected scene. The selected scenes will be a focus on David in relationship with the following individuals, namely Goliath, Jonathan, Abigail and Bathsheba. In these scenes, I seek to analyze each scene to understand what can be learnt about the coming-of-age process and the transition from boyhood to adulthood. More so, David being a man, my interest is to trace his growth from boyhood and hopefully learn something about his formation of the masculine identity; with the hope of learning something for the construction of masculinity in my immediate context.

The objective here is to gain insights which will become the building blocks for potentially understanding masculinity construction and the process of coming of age, which could be a resource for contemporary men who look at David's story as a reflective surface. More so, this analysis could potentially bring me to a closer understanding of pieces of David's coming of age process and I could gain insights into the process of growth and transition from boyhood to adulthood and understand how masculinity constructions are formulated and understood as shall be discussed in Chapter 5 in great length.

4.2 Authorship of 1st and 2nd Samuel

Merrill in *1 Samuel and Old Testament* presented that, the "The Babylonia Talmud (ca. AD500) attributed authorship of 1 Samuel 1-24 to the prophet Samuel and the rest to Nathan and Gad. One conservative estimate of the final date of composition is about 960BC (Merrill 1991,12). Knoppers and Green in *Deuteronomistic History* says, "The Deuteronomistic History (DH) is a modern theoretical construct holding that behind the present forms of the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings there was a single literary work. In the late 19th Century, some scholars conceived of the DH as a loosely edited collection of works, written about some of the scholars espoused in the book of Deuteronomy" (Knoppers and Green 2010, 1). Furthermore, "the Deuteronomistic History which partners 1st and 2nd Samuel with Kings and Deuteronomy suggest that these books were written as a connected and coherent narrative and that the norms by which the narrator assess what he reports are closely related to standards proclaimed in the core of the book of Deuteronomy" (Knoppers and Green 2010,3).

According to Stone 2021in *1st and 2nd Samuel,* "It was once common for scholars to argue that the story of David recounted in 2 Samuel is a reasonably accurate historical account of David's reign. Numerous historians of ancient Israel have therefore used the book of 2 Samuel with confidence as a source for reconstructing Israel's history during the time of David, though they have usually acknowledged that this source (like all ancient sources) is written from a particular perspective and is influenced by the political and theological biases of its author" (Stone 2021, 270). However, Stone says, "Other scholars have argued, on different grounds, that these central chapters of 2 Samuel were written much later than the time in the early tenth century BCE that they claim to recount, perhaps even later than the sixth-century BCE Babylonian exile. Moreover, since the final form of the larger narrative complex in which the books of Samuel and their older narrative sources are now embedded certainly dates no earlier than the exilic or post-exilic era, compelling arguments have also been made that this later period, rather than the period which the text claims to recount, actually provides us with the socio-historical context in relation to which the entire narrative of 1 and 2 Samuel can most usefully be interpreted" (Stone 2021, 271). While this research focuses on 1st and 2nd Samuel it is less focused on the detailed socio-historic reading of 1 and 2 Samuel.

According to Tsumura, “it is most likely the name refers to Samuel, not as the author but as the key figure, one who established the monarchy in Israel by anointing first Saul and then David. Samuel was the kingmaker in the history of Ancient Israel. Thus, it was reasonable to name him. And he couldn’t have authored the books because his death is recorded in 1 Samuel 25:1, 28:3” (Tsumura 2007,2). Tsumura acknowledges that the authorship of the books in unclear but appears to have been composed in several stages. Tsumura, recognizesing the composition of the books and amidst disputes on the demarcations of the book of 1st and 2nd Samuel, as presented by Tsumura; this research focuses on what he terms the History of David’s Rise. This begins from 1 Samuel 15/16 and continues until 2 Samuel 5/7 and is the complete literary unit (Tsumura 2007,13).

The book of Samuel establishes hierarchy in the Israel monarchy, for an example, “the king in Israel is to be subject to the prophet through whom God conveys his Word and obedience to God’s word is a necessary condition for a king to be acceptable to God in Israel” (Tsumura 2007,75).

According to Constable, “1st and 2nd Samuel were originally one book called the Book of Samuel in the Hebrew Bible. The Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament made (ca.250BC) was the first to divide it into two books. The Septuagint translators titled these books 1 and 2 kingdoms” (Constable 2021,2). Similarly. John Schultz in *Bible Commentaries* echoes the same sentiments when he says, “First and Second Samuel were written as one book. They appear as such in the Hebrew manuscripts. We owe the division of the one volume into two to the Septuagint” (Schultz 2010,1).

According to J. Sidlow Baxter in Explore *the Book*, “The present division into 1 and 2 Samuel has been decried by some scholars; yet undoubtedly it has much merit. Second Samuel is distinctively the book of David’s forty years’ reign; and it is well that such an epochal reign should be marked off and given a book to itself. The title Samuel was given by Jerome in his Latin, the Vulgate (ca.AD 400)” (Schultz 2010,1).

The original community of faith gave the name Samuel to it because Samuel is the first major character in the book. Samuel anointed both Saul and David so in this respect he was superior to both” (Constable 2021,2). Constable and Gordon both agree that the unity of the contents of first and second Samuel suggests that these two books are one book as seen from the original Hebrew text (Gordon 1999,70). In further reporting, Constable further argues that “statements in the book of Samuel imply that someone who had witnessed at least some of the events

recorded wrote it. However, someone or more than one person must have written most of it after Samuel's death and some of it even after the division of the kingdom following Solomon's death.

Davis in *A history of Israel* says, "Our guess is that the author was a high state official (what Römer termed the mandarin official) in frequent attendance at the court, enjoying the full confidence of David and his household, who served David throughout his reign in Jerusalem and also Solomon during the early years of his reign and whose duties may have been connected with literary work" (Davis 2008,182).

4.3 Origins and Source

In the work *1st Samuel*, Kyle McCarter, Jr. A *new translation with introduction and commentary,* he argued that the "Masoretic Text (MT) is a defective text. It has suffered extensively from haplography that is from scribal omission triggered by repeated sequence of letters, most often at the end of the word or phrases. It is also important to note that the received Hebrew text of Samuel in its Masoretic dress (MT) is in poor repair. By expert and judicious comparison of the evidence of the MT and LXX and other versions, Wellhausen established the outline of an eclectic text of Samuel which is better than any other reconstruction has withstood the influx of new date brought by subsequent research and discovery" (Kyle 1984,5).

In the work *Notes on the Hebrew text of the books of Samuel* by S.R Driver, 1980, he argues that "The Codex Vaticanus (LXXb) in 1st Samuel represents a Greek tradition which seems to have escaped the systematic revisions to which other Greek MSS were subjected. A point that has not received sufficient stress is that (LXXb) has itself suffered from haplography though not nearly to the extent of the Masoretic Text (MT). Also, he presents that the Codex Alexandrinus (LXXa) is the second major uncial MS witnessing to the Greek text of Samuel it shows systematic revision towards the developing tradition of the MT" (Driver 1980,9). In the Eerdmans dictionary it is argued that "The books are fraught with text critical problems in that the MT appears to have many scribal errors and the LXX is longer and was considered more reliable contrary to the usual text critical rule that the shortest and more difficult text is more original. With discoveries at Qumran, the possibilities of the different Hebrew texts of Samuel have called into question some of the earlier assessments, while confirming others. This is also because of the many texts critical problem where sources critical work on authorship were not fully developed until the early 20th century. One marked feature of the book is the several

duplicate narratives, such as the rise of Saul to kingship (1 Samuel 8:9, the rejection of Saul asking (chapters 13-15), and David's arrival at the court of Saul (Chap 16:14-23). The position of these duplicate narratives in the book underscores their disagreements e.g., in 1 Samuel 19. Jonathan tells David about Saul's plot to kill him yet in 1 Sam Ch 20, David reports the plot that Jonathan is ignorant of" (Freedman, Myers, & Beck, 2000,1163). The work *Succession Narrative* by Leonhard Rost argues that "the earliest source critical studies attempted to trace the Pentateuchal Sources J and E into Samuel, along with some recognition of Deuteronomistic materials as a way of explaining the duplication. Furthermore, 2nd Samuel was heavily influenced by Deuteronomic Retributive Theology and divides David under the blessing (Ch 1-10) and David under the curse (Ch 13-24)" (Rost 1962,12).

According to the Eerdmans dictionary, "1 Samuel 16 - 1 Kings 2 are main sources about David supplemented by 1st Chronicles. Others name him but in the main to emblematize either the dynasty in Jerusalem or a salvific ideal. Much evidence shows that David's place in the literary canon was secured by Jerusalem court long before the exilic era" (Eerdmans 2000, 318). It is important to point out that there is what is known as Source B. "Source B joins or captures from 1 Samuel 15-16 and elements of 2nd Samuel, and it has been misunderstood as a late anti-monarchical source. Its position is more complex, and its presentation concerning the origins of the monarchy as an institution adopted by humans and tolerated by Yahweh was programmatic for Israelite theologies of the monarchy (Hos 13:10, Duet 17:14-15 and Judges 8:22-23)" (Freedman, Myers, & Beck, 2000, 318).

Alter (1999) argues that "readers should not be confused by the conventional division into books. The entities 1 and 2 Samuel are purely an artefact of ancient manuscript production. Scrolls used by scribes were roughly the same length, and when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek in the third century a single scroll was not long enough to encompass the whole book, so it was divided into two parts in no way intrinsic to the original" (Alter 1999,26). This is important for my research, and this explains why I freely move between the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel. Römer in *Transformations in Deuteronomistic and biblical historiography* posits that, "if we take historiography in the Greek sense of enquiry about historicity of events, then he is right when he underlines that there is no historiographical project in the Hebrew Bible. Rather the Old Testament intends to offer normative interpretations of Judean and Israelite history and that this fabric of his is understood as an intellectual construct. The Deuteronomistic history categorizes the Old Testament into the works by (a) prophets, (b) priests and (c) mandarin officials" (Römer 1997, 3). Römer further argued that "The close

relation between Deuteronomy and Joshua had already led Spinoza to the theory that all these books should be considered as the work of one single author who lived after the events of 587BCE. This ties up with the work of Martin Noth of 1943, a German scholar who elaborated on his theory of the Deuteronomistic History that holds 1 and 2 Samuel together. "*Martin Noth* was the 20th century father of this Deuteronomistic History hypothesis. He located the single Deuteronomist among the disappointed exiles of the mid-sixth century BCE but recognized that much of the source material was first assembled in the Deuteronomistic History and it had been more positive about the monarchy" (Knoppers and Green 2010,20). Furthermore, Gordon says, "three important theological concerns of Deuteronomy play prominent roles in those books such as: (i) the anticipation of a king of Israel, (ii) the anticipation of rest for Israel and (iii) the anticipation of blessing for obedience and punishment for disobedience" (Gordon 1999,68).

In conclusion, regarding the question of origins of the text and authorship there continues to be a widespread conversation and scholars are not agreed on most of the information and because of the limitations of my research, I wanted to introduce some of the arguments around the origins of the text and authorship. This next section focuses on what some of the scholars have dealt with in the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel.

4.4 The Focus of 1st and 2nd Samuel

There are various schools of thought of what or why the book of 1st and 2 Samuel were written.

Firstly, John Barton argues that "at first, the Hebrew Bible presents what appears to be a seemingly coherent narrative about the past. The story of the people commonly known in the texts as Israel spans their descent from a shared ancestor Abraham in (book of Genesis) through their escape from forced labor in Egypt and on to Canaan the land divinely promised to Abraham (Leviticus to Deuteronomy) where they conquer the indigenous inhabitants and form a tribal polity (Joshua to Judges) and finally emerge as a kingdom in 1st and 2nd Samuel. The focus of 1st and 2nd Samuel then appears to show the fracturing of the kingdom into two monarchic neighbors, Israel in the north governed by a series of short-lived rulers and Judah in the South reigned over by the descendants of David" (Barton 2016,27).

Secondly, according to Bar-Efrat "a basic theme to be discerned in 1st Samuel and functioning as a cornerstone of its structure is the transference of leadership from: (a) Eli to Samuel, (b)

Samuel to Saul and Saul to David" (Bar-Efrat 1980,169). Furthermore, he says, "The book can be divided into three parts which are: 1. David-Bathsheba} killing of Uriah, 2. Amnon and Tamar} killing of Amnon, Absalom rebellion and David's concubines} killing of Absalom" (Bar-Efrat 1980,170). On the other hand, Römer (2015) suggests differently when he says, "in the Deuteronomistic construction of the History, the prophet Samuel is also the last judge who marks the transition into the monarchic period through his farewell speech in 1 Sam.12" (Römer 2015,267).

Like Bar-Efrat (1980), Dillard and Longman (1994) have identified themes in 1 and 2 Samuel. They pick up on themes including the reversal of fortune. They focus on :

"(a) David as King

(b) David as a man

(c) Exploring and understanding the Lord's Anointed.

(d) The rise of Israel's kingdom and increasing role of the prophets in Israel" (Dillard and Longman 1994,35).

However, for David Firth, the identified themes are the following:

"(a) the reign of God, (b) kingship and (c) prophetic authority" (Firth 2008,22).

For Auld the book can be divided into four sections namely:

(a) "David's predecessor and rival king Saul, his daughter Michal who becomes David's wife, Saul's son Jonathan who becomes David's friend;

(b) Abigail's wife of that fool (Nabal) who later becomes ones of David's wives;

(c) David's daughter Tamar, with her half-brother Amnon who rapes her and with her full brother Absalom, who avenges her and then becomes viral to David;

(d) David's loyal soldier Uriah and his wife Bathsheba, who becomes one of David's wives" (Auld 2011,45).

Thirdly, according to Davis, "A main purpose of the Book of Samuel seems to have been to record the establishment of kingship in Israel and to explain its theological significance. It deals with the Israelites initial request for a king, the establishment of that king Saul and the tragic

results of that king's reign. It then explains the consolation of power under a second king David, God's promises to him and his decline in later years. The writer clearly wanted to legitimize the Davidic monarchy and dynasty" (Davis 2008,185). Like Davis, Hu in the 1st *book of Samuel commentary on the Old Testament* said, "These books were named after Samuel because his life formed the foundation of 1st Samuel, and he was a partial author of the book. Samuel was not merely an editor and a character of this book, but the author of this book, the author of the history of this critical period of Israel, who played a pivotal role in the rise of kingship of Israel" (Hu 2013,80).

Fourthly, Dillard and Longman in *An introduction to the Old Testament,* argue that *"*the books of Samuel are mainly narrative stories with some poetic sections interspersed. The main genre is theological history. No book of the Bible has been the object of such intense interest to literary analysts as has Samuel" (Dillard and Longman 2015,158).

Fifthly, for Römer (2005), if the book of 1st Samuel is somehow accredited to Samuel as the author in the categorization of (1997 Römer), "Samuel would fall under the priestly category which in the Römer (2015) model explains that the priestly writing attitude reflects the position of representatives of the collapsed social, political and religious structures. The focus is on origins and God given instructions that reflect divine will" (Römer 2005,135).

Sixthly, for Auld, "This book is about David. It brings the first king of Israel and his reign in Jerusalem a larger place in the Hebrew Bible story than any other figure. This book is about David and all the other personalities are there so that we may see and know David better, but the book is called 1-2 Samuel or 1-2 Kingdoms. The books of Samuel invite us into a fascinating world. No other biblical books in such detail take us into the lives of their principal characters and their families" (Auld 2011,12). Similarly, Gunn concurs with Auld when he says, "the story of 1st Samuel is a story of David's fortunes through accession, rebellion and succession. Put very badly, it might be said that the central themes are the interrelation of the political and personal spheres in David's life and the giving and grasping which takes place in the various events relating to these spheres and which is the key to this fortune" (Gunn 1988,14).

Seventhly, McCarter (1986), puts the study of the history of David's rise on an independent footing, identifying a unified account of David's early career extending from 1 Samuel 16 to 2 Samuel 5. Moreover, scholars influenced by the work of Grossmann and his successors have found it necessary to emphasize that HDR (History of David's rise), even apart from

Deuteronomistic expansion, has a strikingly heterogeneous appearance betraying in their judgement diverse traditional backgrounds as seen in Weiser and Ward (1967,12) and Gronbaek (1971)) but the same scholars have stressed the creative role of the author who brought the bits of material together and imposed upon them their present unity (1976, 27). Furthermore, Jobbling maintains that "the subject of heredity is key to the book of Samuel which revolves around the question of kingship" (Jobbling 1998,1). Polizin (1989), proposes reading Samuel as a message to the exiles in which kingship is called into question.

The above scholars posit that 1st and 2nd Samuel are written for these reasons: (i) history of a people with a common shared ancestor Abraham who formed a kingdom, (ii) this as a leadership and succession narrative which saw the actual establishment of kingship – from the time of Eli when kings were unheard of until the reign of David, and (iii) that the books focus on a character David and his interaction with people and him assuming different roles and the theological significance embedded in such texts. Like Auld, I focus on these books and to me and in the frame of this research the books focus on David and his kingship and how all these mini episodes shape up and build an image of what masculine identity and expressions are like in the life of David and what his transition from boyhood to adulthood looks like. Moreover, analyzing David from the time he is a small forgotten boy to the powerful young male leader are important factors in tracing what identity formation entails.

Summary to this Point

This chapter began by a presentation of scholarly work of authorship around 1st and 2nd Samuel. This section engaged some of the key scholars around authorship and the Hebrew Text such as Merrill, Knoppers, Schultz, Gordon, Tsumura and Davis, to mention but a few of them. This was followed by a section that dealt with the origins of the text and here I dealt with scholars such as Martin Noth, Kyle, Freedman, Myers, Alter and Römer. Again, these resources used were not in any way exhaustive. These sections on their own have the depth of being of a research field of its own. The resources used were preliminary framing the ground for scholarly work. In this last section I made mention of how the scholars who have written before me have used portions of 1st and 2nd Samuel and what themes have been engaged. Again, this is a miniature sporadic representation of what some scholars have focused on in 1st and 2nd Samuel. All this was foundational ground preparing for this next section, which is a non-exhaustive narrative analysis of four selected scenes from 1st and 2nd Samuel.

4.5 Scene 1:1 Samuel 17: 40-51 - David and Goliath and David receiving Michal the reward wife in 1 Samuel 18:27-28 David and the Trophy Wife Michal

1 Samuel 17:40 -51 HBS

40 וַיִּקַּח מַקְלּוֹ בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּבְחַר־לוֹ חֲמִשָּׁה חַלְּקֵי־אֲבָנִים מִן־הַנַּחַל וַיָּשֶׂם אֹתָם בִּכְלִי הָרֹעִים אֲשֶׁר־
לוֹ וּבַיַּלְקוּט וְקַלְעוֹ בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּגַּשׁ אֶל־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי׃

41 וַיֹּלֶךְ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי הֹלֵךְ וְקָרֵב אֶל־דָּוִד וְהָאִישׁ נֹשֵׂא הַצִּנָּה לְפָנָיו׃

42 וַיַּבֵּט הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּרְאֶה אֶת־דָּוִד וַיִּבְזֵהוּ כִּי־הָיָה נַעַר וְאַדְמֹנִי עִם־יְפֵה מַרְאֶה׃

43 וַיֹּאמֶר הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶל־דָּוִד הֲכֶלֶב אָנֹכִי כִּי־אַתָּה בָּא־אֵלַי בַּמַּקְלוֹת וַיְקַלֵּל הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶת־דָּוִד בֵּאלֹהָיו׃

44 וַיֹּאמֶר הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶל־דָּוִד לְכָה אֵלַי וְאֶתְּנָה אֶת־בְּשָׂרְךָ לְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְבֶהֱמַת הַשָּׂדֶה׃ o

45 וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אַתָּה בָּא אֵלַי בְּחֶרֶב וּבַחֲנִית וּבְכִידוֹן וְאָנֹכִי בָּא־
אֵלֶיךָ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי מַעַרְכוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר חֵרַפְתָּ׃

46 הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יְסַגֶּרְךָ יְהוָה בְּיָדִי וְהִכִּיתִךָ וַהֲסִרֹתִי אֶת־
רֹאשְׁךָ מֵעָלֶיךָ וְנָתַתִּי פֶּגֶר מַחֲנֵה פְלִשְׁתִּים הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְחַיַּת הָאָרֶץ וְיֵדְעוּ כָּל־
הָאָרֶץ כִּי יֵשׁ אֱלֹהִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל׃

47 וְיֵדְעוּ כָּל־הַקָּהָל הַזֶּה כִּי־לֹא בְחֶרֶב וּבַחֲנִית יְהוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה כִּי לַיהוָה הַמִּלְחָמָה וְנָתַן אֶתְכֶם בְּיָדֵנוּ׃

48 וְהָיָה כִּי־קָם הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקְרַב לִקְרַאת דָּוִד וַיְמַהֵר דָּוִד וַיָּרָץ הַמַּעֲרָכָה לִקְרַאת הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי׃

49 וַיִּשְׁלַח דָּוִד אֶת־יָדוֹ אֶל־הַכְּלִי וַיִּקַּח מִשָּׁם אֶבֶן וַיְקַלַּע וַיַּךְ אֶת־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶל־
מִצְחוֹ וַתִּטְבַּע הָאֶבֶן בְּמִצְחוֹ וַיִּפֹּל עַל־פָּנָיו אָרְצָה׃

50 וַיֶּחֱזַק דָּוִד מִן־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי בַּקֶּלַע וּבָאָבֶן וַיַּךְ אֶת־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיְמִיתֵהוּ וְחֶרֶב אֵין בְּיַד־דָּוִד׃

51 וַיָּרָץ דָּוִד וַיַּעֲמֹד אֶל־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי וַיִּקַּח אֶת־חַרְבּוֹ וַיִּשְׁלְפָהּ מִתַּעְרָהּ וַיְמִתְתֵּהוּ וַיִּכְרֹת־בָּהּ אֶת־
רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּרְאוּ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי־מֵת גִּבּוֹרָם וַיָּנֻסוּ׃

1 Samuel 17:40 -51 English Standard Version

40Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherds' pouch. His sling was in his hand, and he approached the Philistine.41And the

Philistine moved forward and came near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him.42And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance.43And the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.44The Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field.”45Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with la javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.46This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day no the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,47and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the Lords, and he will give you into our hand.”48When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.49And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground.50So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of David.51Then David ran and stood over the Philistine rand took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead

1 Samuel 18: 27-28 -HBS

27 וַיָּ֨קָם דָּוִ֜ד וַיֵּ֣לֶךְ׀ הֽוּא וַאֲנָשָׁ֗יו וַיַּ֣ךְ בַּפְּלִשְׁתִּים֮ מָאתַ֣יִם אִישׁ֒ וַיָּבֵ֤א דָוִד֙ אֶת־
עָרְלֹ֣תֵיהֶ֔ם וַיְמַלְא֣וּם לַמֶּ֔לֶךְ לְהִתְחַתֵּ֖ן בַּמֶּ֑לֶךְ וַיִּתֶּן־לֹ֥ו שָׁא֛וּל אֶת־מִיכַ֥ל בִּתֹּ֖ו לְאִשָּֽׁה׃ ס

28 וַיַּ֤רְא שָׁאוּל֙ וַיֵּ֔דַע כִּ֥י יְהוָ֖ה עִם־דָּוִ֑ד וּמִיכַ֥ל בַּת־שָׁא֖וּל אֲהֵבָ֥תְהוּ׃

1 Samuel 18: 27-28 -English Standard Version

27David arose and went, along with his men, and killed two hundred of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, which were given in full number to the king, that he might become the king’s son-in-law. And Saul gave him his daughter Michal for a wife.28But when Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved him,

a) Why this scene?

The story of David and Goliath is important as it introduces us to David, who most scholars claim is central to the book of 1st and 2nd Samuel. We see David, developing from a small unrecognized boy to a senior boy who is a husband and king. According to Alter (2008), who views 1st and 2nd Samuel as succession narrative and a book on the history of the people of Israel, a focus on David as a key character would be important (Alter 2008,10). Moreover, it would be important to study this scene because it details the life of David who is appearing as the one specially chosen by God to lead, despite his many brothers and his stature as the youngest. In this research project, studying David is important because this research is interested in tracing the coming of age process and masculinity construction of David, so all these various scenes allow us a window of observation into these processes.

Alter argues that "the joining of the two accounts leaves us swaying in the dynamic interplay between two theologies. Two conceptions of kingship and history, two views of David the man. In the one account the king's election one might say ratified rather than initiated by God and instead of the spirit descending we have a young man ascending through his own resourcefulness, cool courage and quick reflexes and through this rhetorical skill" (Alter 2008,12). In my own view the focus here really is on David coming into the scene as a boy and turning out to be a man who is a king and a husband. According to Serrano, "A specific turning point in the Israelite leadership narrative occurs in 1 Samuel 17:1-58. The narrative of 1 Samuel 17, better known as the story of David and Goliath connects to a variety of topics. Some argue that the narrative is a story about a place. Others argue that the narrative is about the development of identity" (Serrano 2014,2). I agree with Serano and I see all these selected scenes as important in framing the development of identity. "In terms of structure it appears there are three major sections in 1 Samuel 17 which are: the first section begins with the narrator describing the battlefield and the Israelite dilemma in vs.1. The second section begins with the introduction of David and progresses toward a possible evolution to the Israelite drama" (Serrano 2014,3). According to Martin Kessler in *Narrative Technique*, "David suspense is built by the narrator that David's name is not out till the end of the pericope. David as chosen king is haqqatan – the youngest also in stature in relation to Saul. The author focuses on Jesse's assignment to David also sheep as symbolic of him as prepared for kingship keeper of sheep/shepherd" (Kessler 1972,7). David as a focus character is important because it seems strange that David is more special than all his brothers and is chosen as king amongst many, yet he was the youngest.

b) Summary of Episode in Focus in my own words

This episode begins by informing us about Goliath who is a representative of the Philistines. There is a detailed explanation of Goliath's armor and preparation for a fight against the Israelites. In the other camp, we are introduced to David who is the youngest of the sons of Jesse. Up until this time it appeared that his role as a young man was simply to bring food for his brothers and take care of the father's sheep.

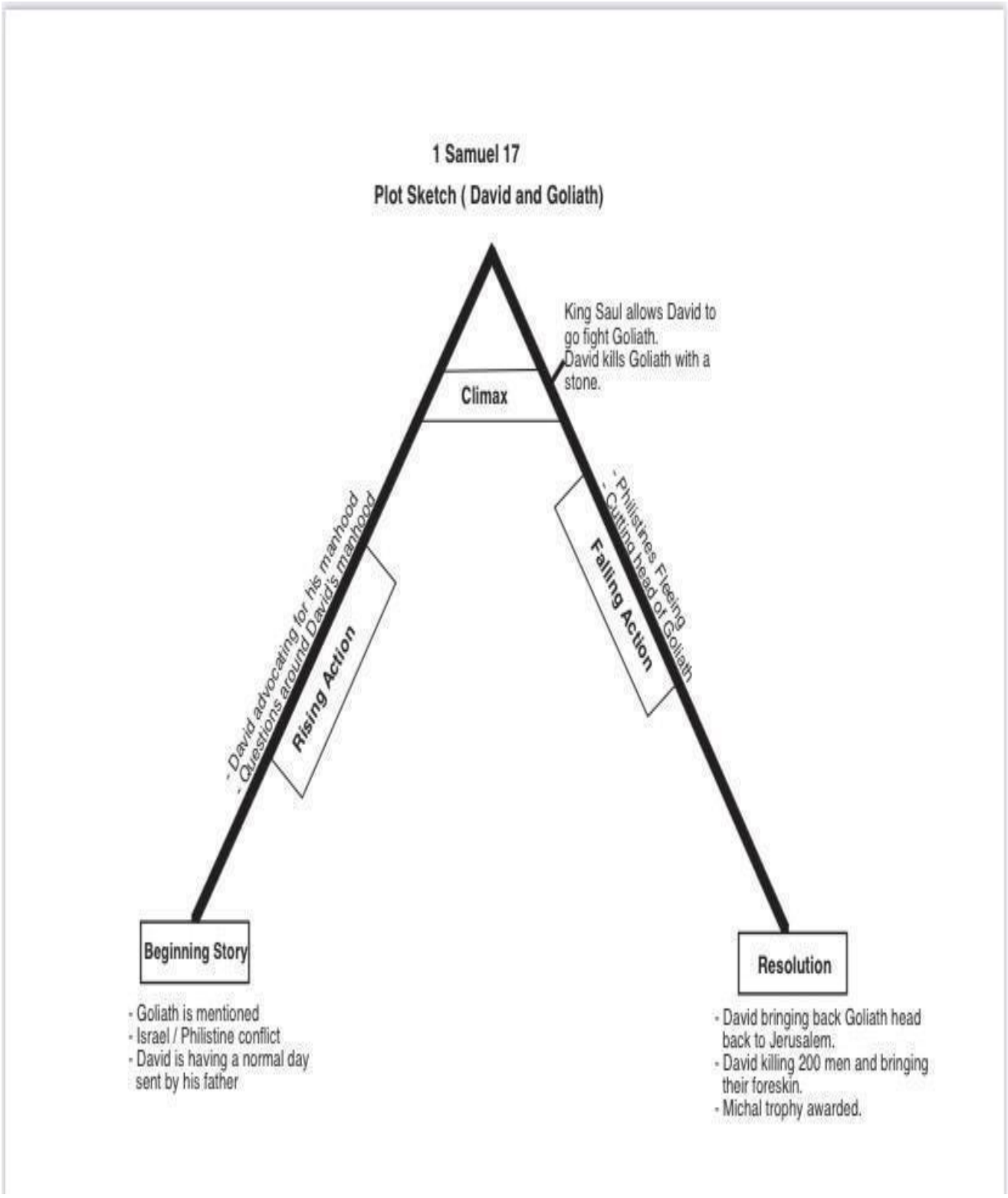
David on arrival finds there is no one who wants to stand against Goliath in the Philistine/Israel fight. David offers himself to King Saul. He uses reference to him killing a bear with his bare hands as qualifying him as a fit candidate to stand as a man before Goliath. The conversation led him to being accepted to going to represent the Israelites in the fight against the Philistines. Unlike Goliath who was well suited and armed for the war, David went into the fight with only a sling and five stones. David's stature made Goliath mock David.

David killed Goliath by throwing the stone and it hit his forehead and he fell and died. David as a sign of victory stood on Goliath, took his sword and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw this, they ran away. David brought back his head as a trophy and as Saul had promised, he gave his daughter Michal as a reward. Before taking Michal to stay with her, David killed 200 more Philistines and he brought back their foreskins to show the king so that he could be the son-in-law.

c) Narrative analysis of David and Goliath

(i) Plot Sketch

Figure 1



(ii) Character

As this scene begins, David appears like a flat character as he is sent to transport food to his brothers at war. In comparison to other men being at war, David being designated to take care of sheep positions him to be a flat character. However, I see the role of David changing from a flat character to a round character, when he presents himself as a solution to King Saul, when he asks permission to fight Goliath. According to Forster's definition, David is a round character because "he is being of small structure untrained, unprepared for war, was expected to die but actually kills a fully prepared man of great stature" (Forster 1981,22). David becomes a round character in so far as the war is concerned because he gains the necessary fame by partaking in violence, which is masculinity identity trait, though toxic. Moreover, in the analysis of Jason, "David's brothers play the role of the unsuccessful brother of the fairy tale hero" (Jason 1979,11). It would be expected by me and many readers that David's brothers be able to fight Goliath and so it is strange that they do not offer themselves to fight but instead discourage David. Also, I would expect like Auld, "David was to hide himself among the baggage to view the battle from afar but note the series of nine verbs in two verses describing how fearless David is about what is happening before his eyes and how quickly he accomplishes his errand. David *rose* and *left* and *took and went and came and left and ran and went and greeted.* We almost hear how breathless the storyteller is as he tries to utter these two verses, giving clear staccato emphasis to each action David took to reach his brothers at their most dangerous moment of the episode" (Auld 1992,19).

David not being involved in the war and tending to the sheep, insinuates that he is still categorically a boy; however, after fighting publicly and conquering we see him awarded a wife, meaning he is now man enough and we see him promoted to being head of the army. Jason says, "David will receive Saul's daughter only after he has performed an additional task (1 Samuel 8: 20-28). David's joining the royal court is a 'quasi-ending'" (Jason 1979,46).

It would seem David's fight with Goliath, was him fighting to acquire and transition from boyhood to manhood. While David in time past did participate in very manly things such as killing the bear with his bare hands and killing the lion, these victories which are very manly, seem insignificant until he has fought Goliath in the public. It is risky that David who is not trained for military goes up against Goliath without armour; but could it be part of his efforts in acknowledging him as a man. The narrator appears to make it too easy for David to 'acquire'

his acknowledged masculine identity and this I argue because, it seems almost impossible that David would without any military prowess kill Goliath a giant, armed man with one stone.

Goliath begins as a round character because without him this scene would not have happened. The provocation and insults that he spews form key instigators of why the Israelites and David seek to settle the ground. In the words of Bar-Efrat, Goliath can be considered a flat character as "he is known for his single trait of being a giant" (Bar-Efrat 1989,11). I would agree with Bar-Efrat in that he does begin as a round character and ends up as a flat character because he ends up dead – a giant killed by one small stone and a small boy cutting his head off.

According to Michael, "The story of David and Goliath has narrowly been interpreted as the dramatic victory of an underdog David over a formidable Philistine giant Goliath. This understanding of the story has largely dominated popular and scholarly interpretations of 1 Samuel 17. However, this typical reading of the story often ignores the intertextual character, the polemic intent and the rhetorical agenda of the David/Goliath story to the overall reading of the book of 1 Samuel. The purpose of this story has largely eluded the modern studies of this pericope" (Michael 2020, 221). In explaining what we have missed as modern researchers, Michael further posits that, "the narrator of 1 Samuel places the David/Goliath story before the David-Saul conflicts to act as a literary preview which subtly mirrors the subsequent conflict of David with another Giant-like character Saul" (Michael 2020,223). Michael (2020) would differ with my view that this was an opportunity for David to qualify his masculinity, instead he argues that, "the David/Goliath story is not primarily to introduce David as often assumed, but it is polemically deployed with a subversive agenda which primarily placed Saul in the same character zone as the villain Goliath" (Michael 2020,225). Despite presenting David as faced with two giants, Goliath explicitly and Saul implicitly, Michael acknowledges that, "The David/Goliath story has clearly enjoyed a popular appeal because of its dramatic representation of the victory of a young shepherd boy against a giant fighter" (Michael 2020, 243).

However, in an earlier work, "Johnson also raises theological and moral questions, such as the theological significance of the human "heart" that God sees into (1 Sam 16:7). One of the thorny theological questions is the evil spirit that torments Saul (1 Sam 16:14), which, Johnson notes, "is specifically said to be 'from the Lord" (p. 50). Noting the several LXX lexical choices for Hebrew but, he renders the LXX with "and an evil spirit from the Lord strangled him." Johnson further explains that God, by means of this evil spirit, is "bringing David to the throne" (p.50). Very true. But perhaps the theological quandary remains when we envision the Lord's

evil spirit strangling Saul" (Johnson 2015,505). Michael and Johnson seem to agree about Saul being a character David needs to fight to sit on his throne, but Johnson introduces the new dynamic which is the Lord, helping David as seen by the evil spirits attacking Saul sent from the Lord. Johnson would allude to my earlier comment where I argued that the narrator seems to make it too easy for David to conquer Goliath without any military preparation. Contemplatively, could it be that David, is helped by the Lord to fight Goliath. My thoughts would fall under the scholarship of the Elohist who centres everything around God and giving credit to him. DeVries on this says, "One could say that is in the form of a modified holy-war narrative, beginning with a description of Israel's peril and ending with a report of Israel's annihilating victory. But its chief concern lies not with Israel's deliverance, nor with David's heroism, but with Yahweh's successful contest against his rival" (DeVries 1973,26). In a later work DeVries concurs with Jason when he says, "Saul gives David means by which to defeat Goliath but being conventional, they are not appropriate. David chooses himself the appropriate means; they are unconventional. Our text does not imply that David possesses the supernatural knowledge that these unconventional weapons he chooses are precisely the right ones to use to defeat Goliath. Such knowledge is possessed by the hero of the fairy tale in which it fills the narrative role of a marvellous helper" (Jason 1979,46). Alongside Jason's argument, Deem posits that, "The biblical account in 1 Samuel XVII narrates that Goliath clad in his impressive but rather heavy equipment arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and it struck the Philistine on the forehead. At this point Goliath was wearing his bronze helmet, the stone sunk into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground" (Deem 1978, 349). Also, "As the biblical battle scene unfolds, the heavily armoured Goliath approached clumsily. The agile young shepherd, skilled with his sling aims his stone at the shinbone" (Deem 1978,350).

Wailand counters my contemplations about David being solely helpless and successful because the Lord helped him when she says, "What may be less known is that David had spent time practicing his lethal sling shot in defending the herds he guarded. He had started his practice on small targets, perfecting the accuracy of his aim and the velocity of his stone over time. Prior to his famous battle with the giant, he managed to kill a lion and also a bear that had attacked the flock. What may also be less known is that the giant on the other hand, was not alone. There were actually others like him, his brothers. Interestingly, however, once David slew Goliath, the other giants receded as well. The act of overcoming Goliath established David

as the undisputed leader" (Wailand 2002,433). Jacob echoes similar sentiments when he says, *"*Our composition ends without David having been granted his promised reward. More importantly, "David is placed as the hero character and Goliath and Philistines are viewed as the villain while David is a helper to himself" (Jacob 1979,47). David helps the Israelites and is not only out to prove and confirm his masculine identity.

At the end of these minimal contemplations on David and his character one wonders as to the purpose of this research, how all these issues are important in understanding the process of coming of age and masculinities and the viability of those who use 1st and 2nd Samuel as a reflective surface. Serrano acknowledges David as a leader and makes the following comment saying, "Servant leaders are characterized by the qualitative characteristics of agape love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, service and empowerment. It seems David demonstrated altruism, service and vision by his willingness to fight the giant at great personal risk. In fact, David referred to himself as your servant multiple times in the pericope. David was willing to risk everything in order to resolve the Israelite dilemma with no ulterior motive and this is an example of servant leadership. Some argue that once David became king, he ceased to utilise the servant aspects of his leadership and transitioned towards more autocratic and self-serving forms of leadership" (Serrano 2014,39). There is a shift I recognize from the young innocent boy who submits himself to King Saul and offers to solve the problem of Israel by fighting Goliath the giant. Through David's interactions with other people we are able to learn more about him, in so far as how he *comes of age* and how his *masculine identity is constructed* and how *he maintains his masculine identity*.

(iii) Place

Firstly, I would like to mention that the Philistines gathered armies in Sochoh, which belongs to Judah. Israel led by Saul were gathered in the Valley of Elah. When the fight started, the Philistines were on one mountain and Israelites on the other mountain and the valley between them was the battlefield. According to David Adams in *Between Socoh and Azekah: The Role of the Elah Valley in Biblical History and the Identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa,* "Geography is the unseen skeleton of history; a *skeleton* because it provides the physical framework that shapes the way the events of history unfold, *unseen* because our focus on the events themselves commonly distracts us from the way the unfolding of those events is shaped by the relationship between the people who perform them and the places in which they are performed. A perceptive observer might take note of this physical framework of history, even when it goes unmentioned,

but only occasionally do the texts which record history remind us of the unseen role of topography in the events that concern us" (Adams, 2008,47). Secondly, the "Two factors suggest the reason that the Elah, rather than the Sorek, became the site of the famous battle described in 1Samuel 17. First, as it penetrates inland toward Jerusalem, the Sorek Valley becomes quite narrow and steep, and therefore a more difficult location for military battle maneuvers. The Elah Valley provides easier access for more of the distance and is therefore a more attractive military option. Second, and probably more significant in this case, is the make-up of the invading force. Of the five major Philistine cities, only Ekron is closer to the Sorek Valley than to the Elah Valley. Just as Ekron guards the entrance to the Sorek Valley, Gath holds the entrance to the Elah, and the other major Philistine cities lie to the west and to the south of Gath. This fact, and the association of the invading force in I Samuel 17 with Gath, the home of Goliath, make the Elah Valley the closest and easiest path for the Philistine army to follow" (Adams 1997, 48). Furthermore, "The encounter of I Samuel 17 is certainly the most famous incident associated with the Elah Valley in the Hebrew Scriptures, but it is not the only reference to events in the valley. Given the nature of the terrain described above and its resulting strategic significance, it should not be surprising that most of the events described as having happened in the valley are military in nature. The valley itself is mentioned by name in the Scriptures only in connection with the military exploits of David. Twice it is named in the account of David and Goliath (I Sam. 17:2 & 19:19). The only other direct mention of the valley comes in a conversation between David and the priest Ahimelech, when Ahimelech offers to return to David the sword of Goliath that he had been given for safekeeping (I Sam. 21:9)" (Adams 1997,49).

Secondly, here I would also want to mention place as the place of speaking of *the place that society places people*. As a small boy, in this narrative his place was to take care of his father's sheep and accept the duty assignment by the elders and in this case his father Jesse. I think the narrator wants us to take note of the '*rightful place of David'*, because repeatedly his brothers question his presence at the battlefield and he is only there on assignment until he takes an *initiative to question the place that society designates to him*. The *third* and last strand of place that I will discuss in more detail is the role of masculinity and the public space. By this I refer to that David's private masculine fights with the lion and bear as unrecognized until his public fight with Goliath and then his masculine identity is acknowledged and he transitions form being a boy to being a man and husband.

(iv) Time

With reference to time there is reference to the Philistines that drew near in the morning as seen in vs.16 and David being sent early in the morning in (vs.20). The narrator in terms of framing how long the people are gathered, there is a mention of a forty-day period. The significance of forty days in this episode is not clear for me as the reader, however this explains the categorization and reference to the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel as compiled at least within a Deuteronomistic History period.

In terms of narration time, the narrator allows a great time allocated to David's brothers ridiculing why he is not a man and not appropriate for entering a fight with Goliath. The narrator also allotted time to allow David to defend himself and justify himself as the right candidate to go and represent Israel against the Philistines. It would then be implicit that the process of coming of age and transitioning from boyhood to manhood is noteworthy for the implied audience. Lastly, the actual fight between Goliath and David seems to be so short. The narrator appears to be confirming that David was ready for a smooth transition into manhood.

(v) Repetition of keywords

Serrano argues that, "the repetitive texture of a pericope refers to the multiple uses of words or phrases within a passage which may offer insight into the meaning and progression of the text. For example, 1 Samuel 17: 1-58 the Lord is mentioned five times, the Philistines are mentioned by name nine times, the Israelites are mentioned nine times, King Saul is referred to eighteen times, Goliath is referred to twenty-nine times and David is mentioned thirty-three times. This repetition not only signifies the key people in the pericope but it also demonstrates the progressive nature of character development within the pericope" (Serrano 2014,33).

The key repeated words are: *David was the son of Jesse*, as seen in vs 12 and 56-57. The question of lineage arises. This talks to grooming and upbringing questions. The genealogy and the birth history of an individual helps, especially that of David being listed which becomes important because Jesus the New Testament savior was to be born through the lineage of David. This means the focus is linked to identity and lineage preservation.

The other key words that are repeated are: *vs.9 to kill him*

vs. 25 kill him

vs.27 kill him

vs.36 killed both

vs. 51 killed him

These words raise a solid theme of violence and fighting and harming the next individual. It is clear when the narrator focuses on these terms that it informs a great part of manhood in the Old Testament Text. In what I am observing, killing and fighting are some of the male attributes and actions that are expected of a boy or it is is to be able to fight and kill. Similarly, in the case of David, I assume that the measure set before him was that of being able to kill Goliath and if he succeeds at this, he will now have been granted entry into the society of manhood.

(vi) Conclusion of Scene 1

Based on *Scene 1 (David and Goliath)*, some of the key observations in so far as how one comes of age and how masculinities are constructed are: firstly, masculinities/manhood is some sort of community and those standing outside need those inside to endorse and authenticate them so that they have a true masculine identity. Secondly, to be admitted into manhood from boyhood one appears to need to take risky actions that show him as strong and daring and also one needs to have an audience to weigh the viability and authenticity of the action as qualifying or disqualifying. Thirdly, in my observation again, the need to be endorsed and authenticated makes men perform and act out actions that fall within the criteria and gender description of what a 'true man' is expected to do. This means that a boy usually would do anything that includes risk-taking in a public space, anything that promotes the ability to be violent and fight, so that their masculine identity is confirmed. This in our communities can fall within the scope of rites of passage. Lastly, without doubt the religion and culture remain central to the depictions and expectations of what manhood encompasses. Inadvertently, religious systems and cultural systems become sustainers and perpetuators of masculine identities whatever they are.

4.6 Scene 2: 1 Samuel 18:1-5 - *David and Jonathan* and 2 Samuel 9:1-7 - *David and Mephibosheth*

1 Samuel 18: 1-5 David and Jonathan HBS

וַיְהִי כְּכַלֹּתוֹ לְדַבֵּר אֶל־שָׁאוּל וְנֶפֶשׁ יְהוֹנָתָן נִקְשְׁרָה בְּנֶפֶשׁ דָּוִד וַיֶּאֱהָבֵהוּ יְהוֹנָתָן כְּנַפְשׁוֹ׃1

וַיִּקָּחֵהוּ שָׁאוּל בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וְלֹא נְתָנוֹ לָשׁוּב בֵּית אָבִיו׃2

וַיִּכְרֹת יְהוֹנָתָן וְדָוִד בְּרִית בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ אֹתוֹ כְּנַפְשׁוֹ׃3

וַיִּתְפַּשֵּׁט יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־הַמְּעִיל אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ לְדָוִד וּמַדָּיו וְעַד־חַרְבּוֹ וְעַד־קַשְׁתּוֹ וְעַד־חֲגֹרֹו׃4

וַיֵּצֵא דָּוִד בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁלָחֶנּוּ שָׁאוּל יַשְׂכִּיל וַיְשִׂמֵהוּ שָׁאוּל עַל אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה וַיִּיטַב בְּעֵינֵי כָל־5
הָעָם וְגַם בְּעֵינֵי עַבְדֵי שָׁאוּל׃ פ

1 Samuel 18:1-5 English Standard Version

81As soon as he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.2And Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house.3Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul.4And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, and his armour, and even his sword and his bow and his belt.5And David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him, so that Saul set him over the men of war. And this was good in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

2 Samuel 9: 1-7 David and Mephibosheth -HBS

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד הֲכִי יֶשׁ־עֹוד אֲשֶׁר נוֹתַר לְבֵית שָׁאוּל וְאֶעֱשֶׂה עִמֹּו חֶסֶד בַּעֲבוּר יְהוֹנָתָן׃1

וּלְבֵית שָׁאוּל עֶבֶד וּשְׁמֹו צִיבָא וַיִּקְרְאוּ־לֹו אֶל־דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵלָיו הַאַתָּה צִיבָא וַיֹּאמֶר עַבְדֶּךָּ׃2

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ הַאֶפֶס עֹוד אִישׁ לְבֵית שָׁאוּל וְאֶעֱשֶׂה עִמֹּו חֶסֶד אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר צִיבָא אֶל־3
הַמֶּלֶךְ עֹוד בֵּן לִיהֹונָתָן נְכֵה רַגְלָיִם׃

וַיֹּאמֶר־לֹו הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵיפֹה הוּא וַיֹּאמֶר צִיבָא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ הִנֵּה־הוּא בֵּית מָכִיר בֶּן־עַמִּיאֵל בְּלֹו דְבָר׃4

וַיִּשְׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וַיִּקָּחֵהוּ מִבֵּית מָכִיר בֶּן־עַמִּיאֵל מִלֹּו דְבָר׃5

וַיָּבֹא מְפִיבֹשֶׁת בֶּן־יְהוֹנָתָן בֶּן־שָׁאוּל אֶל־דָּוִד וַיִּפֹּל עַל־6
פָּנָיו וַיִּשְׁתָּחוּ וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד מְפִיבֹשֶׁת וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה עַבְדֶּךָּ׃

וַיֹּאמֶר לֹו דָּוִד אַל־תִּירָא כִּי עָשֹׂה אֶעֱשֶׂה עִמְּךָ חֶסֶד בַּעֲבוּר יְהוֹנָתָן אָבִיךָ וַהֲשִׁבֹתִי7

2 Samuel 9:1-7 English Standard Version

9 1 And David said, “Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him
kindness for Jonathans sake?” 2 Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose
name was Ziba, and they called him to David. And the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?”
And he said, “I am your servant.” 3 And the king said, “Is there not still someone of the
house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?” Ziba said to the king,
“There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet.” 4 The king said to him,
“Where is he?” And Ziba said to the king, “He is in the house of Machir the son of
Ammiel, at Lo-debar.” 5 Then King David sent and brought him from the house of
Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar. 6 And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son
of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said,
“Mephibosheth!” And he answered, “Behold, I am your servant.” 7 And David said to
him, “Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan,
and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my table
always.”

a) Why this scene

In the larger frame of focus which is that the research focuses on understanding coming of age and constructions of masculinity, the episode of David and Jonathan allows a more nuanced understanding of David who is in relation to Jonathan. This episode is not only distinct as it shows David in close relation with another man but it is significant to note how David who is the chosen king by God to be the successor of king Saul, converses with Jonathan who is systematically the rightful heir to be the successor of king Saul by lineage and birth. This episode shows a different angle of male submission. In the story of David and Goliath, David takes control over David using physical fight and violence. Yet in this episode of David and Jonathan, we see David and Jonathan entering a covenant and friendship, which makes Jonathan voluntarily submit to David. Peleg asks the question, “Why should the royal siblings develop such deep passion for such an inexpedient alliance? Moreover, just as Jonathan is feminized, David’s masculinity is emphasized” (Peleg 2005,176). While David is presented as non-expressive towards Jonathan, later as king David, he fulfils the covenant he made to Jonathan by honoring Mephibosheth. Stansell further posits that, “Jonathan’s gifts of robe, sword, bow and girdle (18:4) represent a promotion for David. McCarter concludes that “Jonathan is shown here to transfer his privilege of succession willingly to David out of his admiration and affection for him and the loyalty he spontaneously feels toward him”’ (Stansell 2011,116). Furthermore, “Scholars agree that this symbolic action reverses their status, for

David now possesses the emblems of power and perhaps succession. Jonathan has in effect abdicated his right to succession. Symbolically, David stands now above Jonathan. David also becomes the king's son-in-law by virtue of his marriage to Michal; David is thus a part of the family and is, of course, Jonathan's brother-in-law" (Stansell 2011,115). It is this complex friendship-brother in law, succession competitors, that this episode seeks to explore and understand.

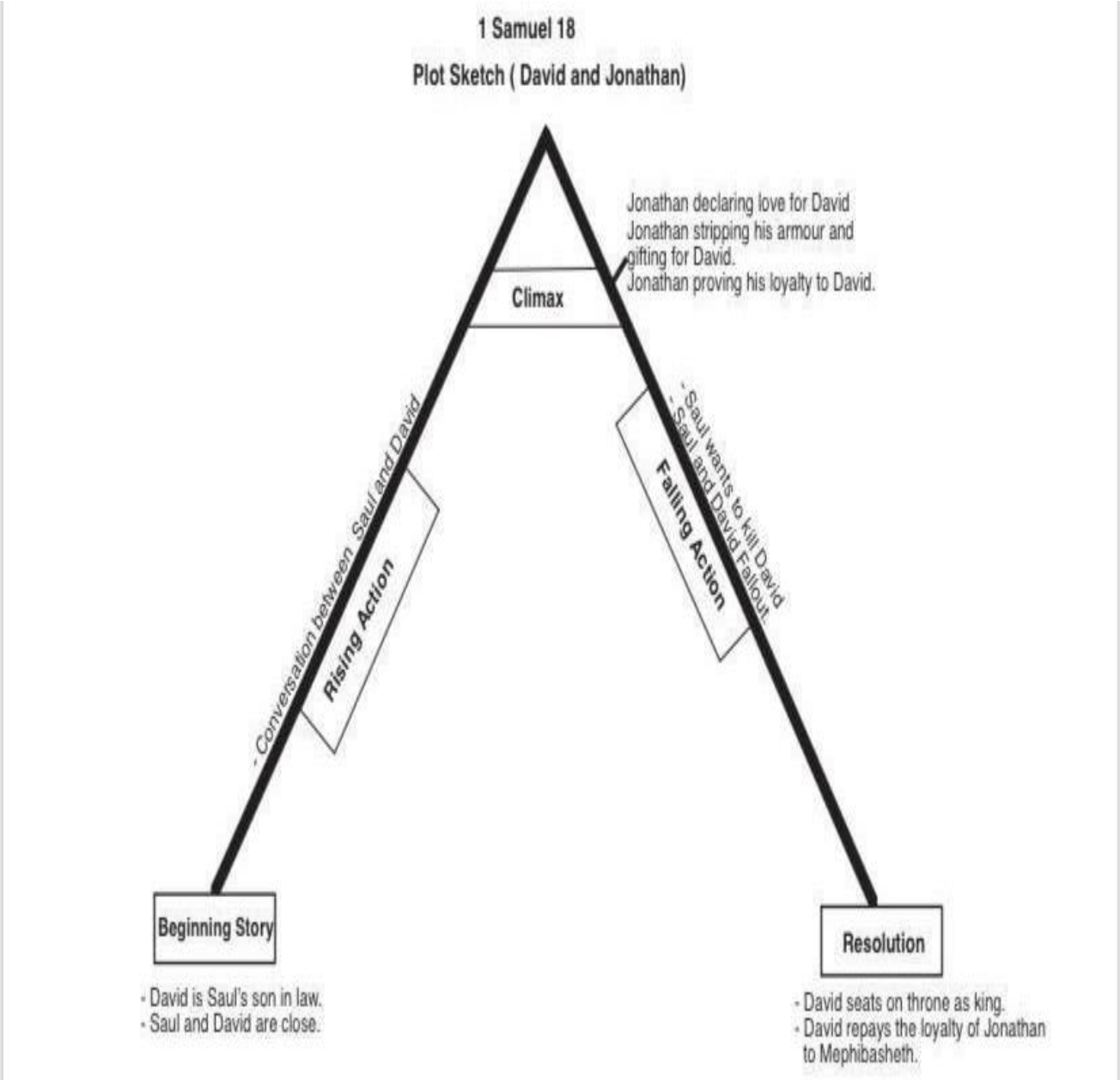
b) Summary of the episode in my own words

In this episode we are introduced to Jonathan. Jonathan was a son to king Saul. The narrator is clear that David and Jonathan have not had direct communication, but it does appear as if Jonathan had information about David, through listening in on a conversation between the father king Saul and David. The story begins with Jonathan declaring a closeness that he felt particularly to David, even saying their souls were knit together and that he loved him as he loved his own soul. From the way the narrator explains, it suggests that David moved in with Saul's family from that day as soon as the meeting was over. Jonathan immediately on talking to David makes a covenant with him pushed by the love he felt for David. We see Jonathan giving his special armor and removing his robe and giving it to David. Jonathan in the subsequent chapters proves how his soul is knit to that of David and this is seen when he shows his loyalty to David over his father. Jonathan plays a pivotal role in the preservation of the life of David as he and Saul appear to be in an 'unplanned' competition. Jonathan instead of being a son to Saul and honoring him, he prioritizes his relationship to David to an extent that he becomes an informant to David on Saul's next steps. After David was in position as King, he repays Jonathan's loyalty by looking for the survivors of Jonathan's family and he finds Mephibosheth who the narrator tells us stayed at the king's table daily.

c) Narrative analysis

(i) Plot Sketch

Figure 2



(ii) Character

This episode introduces David as in relation to Jonathan. David is now a part of king Saul's daily life. In this character in the introduction of David he has just become a full man, he is now a husband and he is now the head of war. David is in a perfect place for his career as he just became the son-in-law of king Saul, and he is now the special assistant to the king. Now to be loved by Jonathan, the king's son and rightful heir is extra special. Jonathan is also important because according to the account given by the narrator Jonathan does most of the acting and the talking in this episode starting with his declaration of love for David.

According to Forster, "David is in this episode a flat character. David is the one receiving words and declarations of love from Jonathan and he does not accept or decline the advances from Jonathan, only instead at a later stage it appears he heard the declarations by Jonathan and took them seriously as seen by him taking care of Mephibosheth" (Forster 1981,78). Again, in the words of Forster as explained in the work of Van der Bergh, "Jonathan is the round character as he takes the story forward. He takes the story forward by expressing his love for David and actively expressing the love. Jonathan in loving David gives up his role as automatic successor of the kingship as the son of Saul, secondly Jonathan prefers to be open and honest to David and lets out many of the plans of the royal life which helped preserve the life of David" (Van der Bergh 2002,12). I also like to observe that while in this scene Jonathan is the round character, and David is a flat character; David in the previous scene was a round character which shows that identity and roles are constantly changing. The work of Fokkleman identifies "David as a hero and helper, because he helps Mephibosheth and keeps his covenant with Jonathan" (Fokkleman 1981,78).

More recent work has focused less on David and Jonathan as a normal biblical narrative but has been read as offering an alternate lifestyle and this can be seen when Heacock argues that, "The interpretation of the David and Jonathan narrative within 1-2 Samuel has confused many interpreters who do not know what to make of this biblical instance of a close and passionate relationship between two men, particularly when the relationship appears in the same literary tradition that condemns male homogenital behaviour. While conventional interpretations of the narrative have resisted discussions of a sexual aspect to the relationship between David and

Jonathan, developments in the recently-minted discipline of the history of sexuality have enabled interpreters to approach biblical eros in new ways" (Heacock 2007,21).

I realize even within my community and close family that male closeness is frowned upon and immediately connected to that one is gay. Furthermore, "The question of the nature of the relationship between David and Jonathan as portrayed in what I shall refer to as the 'David and Jonathan narrative' of 1 Sam. 18:1 to 2 Sam. 1:27 is hotly debated among many modern readers. Although we know that the narrative appears in the same literary tradition as outright condemnation of homogenital practices, this biblical tale of a love between two men that 'surpasses the love of a man for a woman' creates confusion for many contemporary interpreters, irrespective of their stance on homosexuality and the Bible, leaving them pondering: 'were David and Jonathan gay'? Few interpreters are as bold as the Reverend Nancy Wilson, who asserts that king David is 'the most clearly bisexual figure in the whole of the Bible and that Jonathan was *more truly gay* than David" (Heacock 2007,15). I think these terms are assigned to Jonathan mainly because of the way he expresses love. However, "a small number of academic biblical interpreters indebted to theories from the recently-minted discipline of the history of sexuality have begun to advocate the need for caution when talking about the sexual behaviour of ancient biblical figures such as David and Jonathan. Thus, scholars such as Marti Nissen (2000) and Susan Ackerman (2005), among others, have provided a fresh voice to discussions about homoeroticism in biblical narrative, stressing the fact that many readings of 1 Sam. 18:1 – 2 Sam.1:27 are grounded more in the polemics of today's contemporary society vis-à-vis modern notions of (homo)sexuality than they are in the historical/ideological milieu of the ancient biblical world" (Heacock 2007, 22).

Moreover, "Given the large conceptual gap between the ancient biblical text and modern interpreters, insists that the question of a sexual relationship between David and Jonathan is a matter of semantics that cannot be answered adequately with the use of words such as homosexual. He suggests, therefore, that biblical interpreters clarify what would make a relationship homosexual; specifically, would it necessarily include sexual behaviour, undercurrents of desire, or tenderness without sexual expression?" (Nissen 2000, 80, 252). I am not as completely sure as the author Nissen what constitutes as homosexual; however, all those questions continue to be at the heart of what those feeling uneasy about male to male closeness should negotiate.

Nissen situates David and Jonathan within the ancient Mediterranean world of segregation of men and women that resulted in strong homosocial ties between men; a process known as male bonding. Nissen, "refutes a sexual interpretation of the relationship between the two biblical heroes, arguing that, while it is conceivable that some modern readers might interpret their close friendship as erotic, the biblical narrative depicts a standard form of male companionship in the ancient Mediterranean world, whereby expressions of intimacy were not viewed with suspicion. He accepts that the relationship between David and Jonathan could be interpreted as 'homoerotic' (referring to homogenital behaviour without imposing sexual orientations onto the pair) but prefers to read their relationship as 'homosocial' because 'nothing indicates that they slept together' and 'neither of the men are described as having problems in their heterosexual sex life'" (Nissen 2000,56).

Ackerman's (2005) recent publication *When Heroes Love* is a further attempt to untangle the web of confusion that surrounds the interpretation of the story of the love between David and Jonathan. Contrary to many other interpreters, Ackerman believes that "the ambiguous and potentially erotic language and imagery of the biblical narrative is not as much a hindrance as a key to understanding what the biblical narrator intended to portray" Ackerman (2005, xiii-xiv). Furthermore, she believes that "the only way to appreciate fully the extent of this eroticism is to unravel the rationale underlying acceptable sexual relations and gender roles and relations in the wider world of the ancient Near East" (Ackerman 2005,162). Yet, according to Gary, "*The* narrative of the David and Jonathan friendship in 1 Samuel continues to fascinate modern readers as a tale of an enduring friendship under strong political and family pressures. Modern readers are apt to read the story through a lens somewhat beclouded by romanticism and anachronism" (Gary2011,115). Peleg says, "The notion that the relationship between Jonathan and David involved more than just friendship, that it was also sexual, is not new. The friendship between the two men already gained exemplary status as a love story in early Christianity. Jonathan's submission to David is so utter and complete that it almost defies belief, and even the hypothesis of homosexuality as a pretext for giving up the kingship on the altar of such love is a narrow excuse for it. In the fierce and competitive world of the Bible, men do not readily give up their privilege, not even for the women (or men) they love" (Peleg 2005,175).

Jobling's commentary (1998) emphasizes that, "Saul is not just David's father-in-law but his 'surrogate' father. Within Saul's house, friend has now also become kin. This redresses to a certain degree an imbalance in their family roots, for David is now incorporated into the ruling kinship unit. Jonathan is willing to do David's bidding: according to chapter 20:4, Jonathan

states to his friend, “Whatever you say, I will do for you” (20:4). Finally, David is not the only one to ask for favours. As Jonathan and David hatch the plan to inform David of Saul’s intentions toward David, for good or ill, it is Jonathan’s turn to ask for favours” (Stansell 2011,123). The narrator tells us so little information in this scene and some of my curiosity rests on wondering, how could Jonathan be more faithful and closer to David a stranger at the expense of the royalty of his family? The close relationship that Jonathan has with David, seems to by insinuation suggest that Jonathan and Saul have a difficult father/son relationship.

(iii) <u>Place</u>

In terms of place, what I would like to focus on in this part is a symbolic place named in the text which is seen in vs. 3 when the text says ‘*knit to his soul’.* Place in an analysis typically speaks of geographical location. In this particular section, attention is placed on location as David and Jonathan are intertwined within each other's souls. While the meaning is not clear, I am sure of the bond, the closeness and the special connection that the two had. Peleg says, “One of the main difficulties in reading this text as a homosexual love story, I think, is not the impossibility or even the apprehension of such love as much as the usefulness of it as an exemplary literary paradigm. While the story might certainly resonate as such for readers today, it was probably much less so for the original readership of this old text” (Peleg 2005,173). This means that Peleg is drawing us back to the source text and origin and is suggesting that any interpretation must focus on the place *(Sitz im leben)* that gave birth to the text for the closest interpretation of the text. Peleg in offering an alternate reading says, “Jonathan's strong emotional reaction to David is surprising. As dramatic as David’s fight with Goliath must have been, it was not outside of Jonathan’s own extensive military experience and could not have overwhelmed him to the point of losing his head in such a way. Moreover, as it stands in the verse, the intensity and depth of Jonathan’s affection for David is not compatible with the short time they know one another, with their probable age difference, or the difference in their social standing. One way to read this perplexing description, then, would be as the infatuation of an older man with a younger and socially inferior man” (Peleg 2005, 178).

(iv) Time

The narrator does not spend much time setting the scene to introduce the closeness between David and Jonathan. The narrator also flies directly to the introduction and the love declaration. Could this potentially point to an uncomfortable narrator who does not know how to ‘process’ and hold space for the type of love that Jonathan is offering David? The bigger question is: Is

the uncomfortableness due to it being a male friendship or a male bond or could it be because Jonathan was 'selling' his birthright of being the automatic heir to the rule of the kingdom of his father, King Saul.

(v) Repetition of keywords

In this section one of the repeated words or phrases can be grouped under a theme of love and intimacy. In Ch.18 vs 1 it is 'knit to his soul', in vs 3 Jonathan loved him and made a covenant in vs 4. It's Jonathan stripping his clothes to give David, in Ch. 20 vs.17 it loved in, in Ch.20 vs.41 its they kissed one another and in Ch 23 vs.16 its Jonathan and David sneaking to strengthen each other.

Instead of merely picking words, I recognize the words that belong together and form a theme of love and intimacy. Like any love story, there is a declaration of love in this case done by Jonathan, by using the phrase 'knit to his soul or that he loved him as his own soul'. Jonathan could have been poetic which is a characteristic of many love expressions, however they all imply a type of closeness and proximity to the other. Jonathan shows sacrifice and devotion and ensures to emphasize that he is doing all that he is for David purely because of his love for him. The use of more intimate language such as kissing each other in Ch 20 vs 41 and the secret meetings form a message of loving each other even when it's not acceptable. David and Jonathan are defying the odds by their closeness and had Saul been aware of this, it is unclear how he would have dealt with them both seeing that Saul was already pursuing David to kill him.

(vi) Conclusion

At the end of this scene which focused on the relationship of David and Jonathan, in so far as the process of coming of age and how masculinities are constructed, I deduce the following: firstly, the narrator appears to ease us into what can be termed in the following way as male to male closeness/ intimacy, bonding or 'unnatural love'. Expectedly, such male-to-male closeness continues to be 'unnatural' if the criteria for defining a 'true man' says – a true man must be harsh, rough and have capability and practice violent acts as often as possible. David when relating to Jonathan does not embody these traits, similarly Jonathan's expression of love for David suggests a softness unexpected of men. Furthermore, it seems almost 'unnatural' in and of itself that David was now loved by the siblings who were king Saul's children; Michal and Jonathan because their father viewed David as a threat to his kingship. Moreover, it is odd

that David is portrayed as defying the masculine criteria of what masculinity is at least in his context because he does not kill or fight Saul; instead, he flees. I argue that David defies what a 'true man' is by not seeking and pursuing King Saul to kill him. This act of David to not confine to the masculine expectations is what I cling to in the process of what can be learnt by coming of age and reconstruction of masculinities in our context. I argue that a successful coming of age process can be seen in that David is confident in the man that he is and is not interested in proving his identity and delving in toxic masculine identity traits such as violence and killing to prove one's manhood. Similarly, in his relation to Jonathan, David is comfortable in male closeness and does not worry about what the community will understand and insinuate by their relationship. The final coming of age process is the reintegration into society with ease and assurance in himself as David. David introduces integrity as a key masculine trait of what a true man is, because long after Jonathan has died David cares for Mephibosheth to honor a promise made to Jonathan which is integral.

4.7 Scene 3: 1 Samuel 25: 18 -34. David and Abigail and 1 Samuel 25: 39-42

1 Samuel 25:18-34 David and Abigail HBS

18 וַתְּמַהֵר אֲבִיגַיִל וַתִּקַּח מָאתַיִם לֶחֶם וּשְׁנֵי נִבְלֵי־
יָיִן וְחָמֵשׁ צֹאן עֲשׂוּוֹת וְחָמֵשׁ סְאִים קָלִי וּמֵאָה צִמֻּקִים וּמָאתַיִם דְּבֵלִים וַתָּשֶׂם עַל־הַחֲמֹרִים׃

19 וַתֹּאמֶר לִנְעָרֶיהָ עִבְרוּ לְפָנַי הִנֵּנִי אַחֲרֵיכֶם בָּאָה וּלְאִישָׁהּ נָבָל לֹא הִגִּידָה׃

20 וְהָיָה֙ הִיא֙ רֹכֶ֣בֶת עַל־הַחֲמֹ֔ור וְיֹרֶ֖דֶת בְּסֵ֣תֶר הָהָ֑ר וְהִנֵּ֤ה דָוִד֙ וַאֲנָשָׁ֣יו יֹרְדִ֔ים לִקְרָאתָ֖הּ וַתִּפְגַּ֥ש אֹתָֽם׃

21 וְדָוִד אָמַר אַךְ לַשָּׁקֶר שָׁמַרְתִּי אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לְזֶה בַּמִּדְבָּר וְלֹא־נִפְקַד מִכָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לֹו מְאוּמָה וַיָּשֶׁב־
לִי רָעָה תַּחַת טֹובָה׃

22 כֹּה־יַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים לְאֹיְבֵי דָוִד וְכֹה יֹסִיף אִם־אַשְׁאִיר מִכָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לֹו עַד־הַבֹּקֶר מַשְׁתִּין בְּקִיר׃

23 וַתֵּרֶא אֲבִיגַיִל֙ אֶת־דָּוִ֔ד וַתְּמַהֵ֖ר וַתֵּ֣רֶד מֵעַ֣ל הַחֲמֹ֑ור וַתִּפֹּ֤ל לְאַפֶּי֙ דָּוִ֔ד עַל־פָּנֶ֖יהָ וַתִּשְׁתַּ֥חוּ אָֽרְצָֽה׃

24 וַתִּפֹּל֙ עַל־רַגְלָ֔יו וַתֹּ֣אמֶר בִּי־אֲנִ֤י אֲדֹנִי֙ הֶעָוֹ֔ן וּתְדַבֶּר־נָ֥א אֲמָתְךָ֖ בְּאָזְנֶ֑יךָ וּשְׁמַ֥ע אֶת דִּבְרֵ֖י אֲמָתֶֽךָ׃

25 אַל־נָ֣א יָשֶׁ֤ים אֲדֹנִי֙ אֶת־לִבֹּ֔ו אֶל־אִישׁ֙ הַבְלִיַּ֣עַל הַזֶּ֔ה עַל־נָבָ֖ל כִּ֣י כִשְׁמֹ֑ו כֵּ֥ן
הֽוּא נָבָל שְׁמֹו וּנְבָלָה עִמֹּו וַאֲנִי֙ אֲמָתְךָ֔ לֹ֥א רָאִ֖יתִי אֶת־נַעֲרֵ֣י אֲדֹנִ֑י אֲשֶׁ֖ר שָׁלָֽחְתָּ׃

26 וְעַתָּ֡ה אֲדֹנִי֩ חַי־יְהוָ֨ה וְחֵי־
נַפְשְׁךָ֜ אֲשֶׁ֣ר מְנָעֲךָ֣ יְהוָ֗ה מִבֹּוא֙ בְּדָמִ֔ים וְהֹושֵׁ֥עַ יָדְךָ֖ לָ֑ךְ וְעַתָּ֡ה יִֽהְיוּ֩ כְנָבָ֨ל אֹיְבֶ֜יךָ וְהַמְבַקְשִׁ֧ים אֶל־אֲדֹנִ֛י רָעָֽה׃

וְעַתָּה֙ הַבְּרָכָ֣ה הַזֹּ֔את אֲשֶׁר־הֵבִ֥יא שִׁפְחָתְךָ֖ לַאדֹנִ֑י וְנִתְּנָה֙ לַנְּעָרִ֔ים הַמִּתְהַלְּכִ֖ים בְּרַגְלֵ֥י אֲדֹנִֽי׃ 27

שָׂ֣א נָ֔א לְפֶ֥שַׁע אֲמָתֶ֖ךָ כִּ֣י עָשֹׂ֤ה יַֽעֲשֶׂה֙ יְהוָ֣ה לַאדֹנִ֔י בַּ֖יִת נֶאֱמָ֑ן כִּי־מִלְחֲמ֤וֹת יְהוָה֙ אֲדֹנִ֔י נִלְחָ֖ם וְרָעָ֥ה לֹא־ 28
תִמָּצֵ֥א בְךָ֖ מִיָּמֶֽיךָ׃

וַיָּ֤קָם אָדָם֙ לִרְדָפְךָ֔ וּלְבַקֵּ֖שׁ אֶת־ 29
נַפְשֶׁ֑ךָ וְהָיְתָ֞ה נֶ֤פֶשׁ אֲדֹנִי֙ צְרוּרָ֔ה| בִּצְר֖וֹר הַחַיִּ֑ים אֵ֚ת יְהוָ֣ה אֱלֹהֶ֔יךָ וְאֵ֥ת נֶ֖פֶשׁ אֹיְבֶ֑יךָ יְקַלְּעֶ֖נָּה בְּת֥וֹךְ כַּף־הַקָּלַֽע׃

וְהָיָ֗ה כְּי־יַֽעֲשֶׂ֨ה יְהוָ֤ה לַאדֹנִי֙ כְּכֹ֣ל אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּ֣ר אֶת־הַטּוֹבָ֣ה עָלֶ֔יךָ וְצִוָּ֖ךְ לְנָגִ֑יד עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵֽל׃ 30

וְלֹא֩ תִהְיֶ֨ה זֹּ֜את| לְךָ֣ לְפוּקָ֗ה וּלְמִכְשׁ֤וֹל לֵב֙ לַאדֹנִ֔י וְלִשְׁפָּךְ־ 31
דָּ֥ם חִנָּ֖ם וּלְהוֹשִׁ֣יעַ אֲדֹנִ֑י לוֹ֙ וְהֵיטִ֣יב יְהוָ֔ה לַאדֹנִ֖י וְזָכַרְתָּ֥ אֶת־אֲמָתֶֽךָ׃ ס

וַיֹּ֣אמֶר דָּוִ֔ד לַאֲבִיגַ֖ל בָּר֣וּךְ יְהוָ֔ה אֱלֹהֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל אֲשֶׁ֣ר שְׁלָחֵ֑ךְ הַיּ֥וֹם הַזֶּ֖ה לִקְרָאתִֽי׃ 32

וּבָר֣וּךְ טַעְמֵ֔ךְ וּבְרוּכָ֖ה אָ֑תְּ אֲשֶׁ֥ר כְּלִתַ֛נִי הַיּ֥וֹם הַזֶּ֖ה מִבּ֣וֹא בְדָמִ֑ים וְהוֹשֵׁ֥עַ יָדִ֖י לִֽי׃ 33

וְאוּלָ֗ם חַי־יְהוָה֙ אֱלֹהֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל אֲשֶׁ֥ר מְנָעַ֖נִי מֵהָרַ֣ע אֹתָ֑ךְ כִּי֙| לוּלֵ֣י מִהַרְתְּ֔ וַתָּבֹאתִ֖י לִקְרָאתִ֑י כִּ֣י אִם־ 34
נוֹתַ֤ר לְנָבָל֙ עַד־אֹ֣ור הַבֹּ֔קֶר מַשְׁתִּ֖ין בְּקִֽיר׃

1 Samuel 25:18-34 English Standard Version

18Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves and two skins of wine and
five sheep already prepared and five seahs1 of parched grain and a hundred clusters
of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on donkeys.19And she said to
her young men, “Go on before me; behold, I come after you.” But she did not tell her
husband Nabal. 20And as she rode on the donkey and came down under cover of the
mountain, behold, David and his men came down toward her, and she met them.
21Now David had said, “Surely in vain have I guarded all that this fellow has in the
wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him, and he
has returned me evil for good. 22tGod do so to the enemies of David2 and more also,
if by morning I leave so much as one male of all who belong to him.”23When Abigail
saw David, she hurried and got down from the donkey and fell before David on her
face and bowed to the ground.24She fell at his feet and said, “On me alone, my lord,
be the guilt. Please let your servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your
servant. 25Let not my lord regards this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so
is he. Nabal3 is his name, and folly is with him. But I your servant did not see the young
men of my lord, whom you sent.26Now then, my lord, as the Lord lives, and as your
soul lives, because the Lord has restrained you from bloodguilt and from saving with
your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my lord
be as Nabal.27And now let this present that your servant has brought to my lord be
given to the young men who follow my lord.28Please forgive the trespass of your
servant. For the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord is
fighting the battles of the Lord, and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live.29If
men rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my lord shall be bound in

the bundle of the living in the care of the Lord your God. And the lives of your enemies he shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling.30And when the Lord has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you and has appointed you prince4 over Israel,31my lord shall have no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause or for my lord working salvation himself. And when the Lord has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant."32And David said to Abigail, blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me!33Blessed be your discretion, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodguilt and from working salvation with my own hand!34For as surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, who has restrained me from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by morning there had not been left to Nabal so much as one male."

1 Samuel 25: 39-44 David's Wives HBS

וַיִּשְׁמַ֣ע דָּוִד֮ כִּ֣י מֵ֣ת נָבָל֒ וַיֹּ֜אמֶר בָּר֣וּךְ יְהוָ֗ה אֲשֶׁ֣ר רָב֩ אֶת־רִ֨יב חֶרְפָּתִ֜י מִיַּ֣ד נָבָ֗ל וְאֶת־39
עַבְדּ֨ו חָשַׂ֜ךְ מֵרָעָ֗ה וְאֵת֙ רָעַ֣ת נָבָ֔ל הֵשִׁ֥יב יְהוָ֖ה בְּרֹאשׁ֑ו וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח דָּוִד֙ וַיְדַבֵּ֣ר בַּאֲבִיגַ֔יִל לְקַחְתֶּ֥הּ לֹ֖ו לְאִשָּֽׁה׃

וַיָּבֹ֜אוּ עַבְדֵ֥י דָוִ֛ד אֶל־אֲבִיגַ֖יִל הַכַּרְמֶ֑לָה וַיְדַבְּר֤וּ אֵלֶ֙יהָ֙ לֵאמֹ֔ר דָּוִד֙ שְׁלָחָ֣נוּ אֵלַ֔יִךְ לְקַחְתֵּ֥ךְ לֹ֖ו לְאִשָּֽׁה׃40

וַתָּ֕קָם וַתִּשְׁתַּ֥חוּ אַפַּ֖יִם אָ֑רְצָה וַתֹּ֗אמֶר הִנֵּ֤ה אֲמָתְךָ֙ לְשִׁפְחָ֔ה לִרְח֕ץ רַגְלֵ֖י עַבְדֵ֥י אֲדֹנִֽי׃41

וַתְּמַהֵ֞ר וַתָּ֣קָם אֲבִיגַ֗יִל וַתִּרְכַּב֙ עַל־42
הַחֲמֹ֔ור וְחָמֵשׁ֙ נַעֲרֹתֶ֔יהָ הַהֹלְכֹ֖ות לְרַגְלָ֑הּ וַתֵּ֗לֶךְ אַחֲרֵי֙ מַלְאֲכֵ֣י דָוִ֔ד וַתְּהִי־לֹ֖ו לְאִשָּֽׁה׃

וְאֶת־אֲחִינֹ֥עַם לָקַ֖ח דָּוִ֑ד מִיִּזְרְעֶ֑אל וַתִּהְיֶ֛ין גַּ֣ם־שְׁתֵּיהֶ֥ן לֹ֖ו לְנָשִֽׁים׃ o43

וְשָׁא֗וּל נָתַ֛ן אֶת־מִיכַ֥ל בִּתּ֖ו אֵ֣שֶׁת דָּוִ֑ד לְפַלְטִ֥י בֶן־לַ֖יִשׁ אֲשֶׁ֥ר מִגַּלִּֽים׃44

1 Samuel 25:39 -44 English Standard Version

39When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, blessed be the Lord who has avenged the insult I received at the hand of Nabal, and has kept back his servant from wrongdoing. The Lord has returned the evil of Nabal on his own head." Then David sent and spoke to Abigail, to take her as his wife.40When the servants of David came to Abigail at Carmel, they said to her, "David has sent us to you to take you to him as his wife."41And she rose and bowed with her face to the ground and said, "Behold, your handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord."42And Abigail hurried and rose and mounted a donkey, and her five young women attended her. She followed the messengers of David and became his wife.43David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, sand both of them became his wives.44Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who was of Gallim.

a) Why this scene?

This scene was selected in the greater frame because of the special focus on the character Nabal and Abigail. The hypothesis of this research was that masculinities can only be understood when we watch how David relates to different people. In this story we watch how David relates to Nabal and how David relates to Abigail. I find it significant how David relates to Abigail because considering the dating of the text of 1st and 2nd Samuel, it is irregular that Abigail engages in this way with David. The last section focuses on David and his other wives and this was important to observe, especially within the scope of understanding of coming of age and masculinity construction.

b) Summary of Episode in my own words

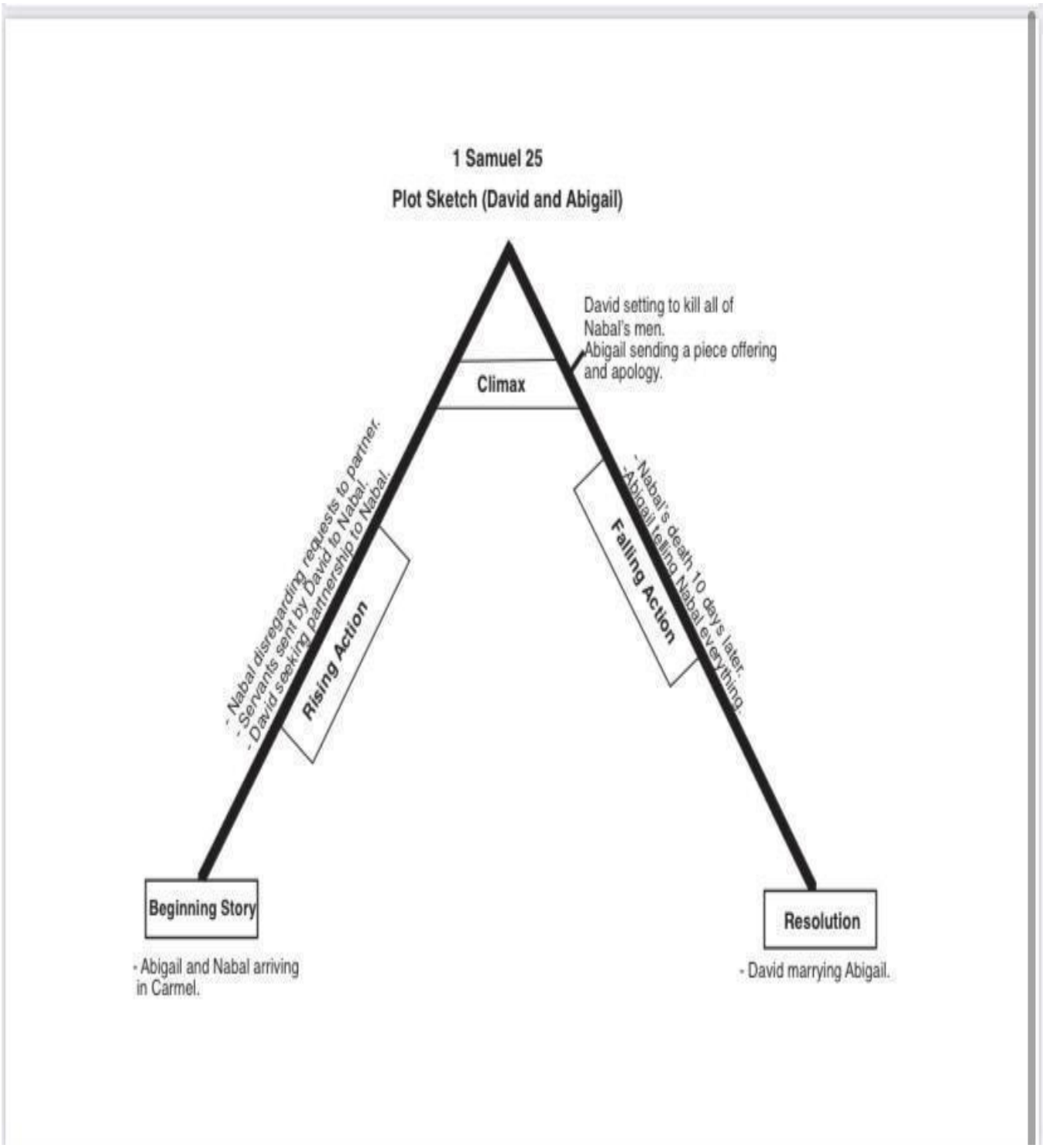
The episode begins by being introduced to Nabal and his wife Abigail who were rich and had just settled in a place called Carmel. David as courtesy offered acknowledgement of Nabal and a partnership but instead, Nabal received the servants of David badly. The servants passed this report back to David and he was livid and he prepared to go and destroy all of the men of Nabal immediately. David prepared 400 men to go out to attack Nabal's men.

From the camp of Abigail one of the servants went to tell Abigail what Nabal had done to offend David. Abigail prepared a peace offering to take to King David as an apology but she did not consult or get permission from Nabal. As the team carrying the peace offering approached David, Abigail fell on her knees apologizing. He asked David to forgive her foolish husband. David accepted Abigail's apology and thanked her for her advice, confessing that her apology had just stopped a great deal of bloodshed. On return Abigail waited for Nabal to stop being drunk to inform him of what she had done. Ten days later Nabal died and on hearing about Nabal's death, he proposed to Abigail to become his wife.

c) Narrative analysis

(i) Plot Sketch

Figure 3



(ii) Character

David, according to the work of Forster (1981), can be considered a round character because "the rest of what happens, (Nabal disregarding him), happens because he made a first step to interact with Nabal" (Forster 1981,81). David is the initiator of conversation to Nabal which is disregarded, provoking his manhood and identity as Nabal questions the authority of David and his position. Referring to an earlier point, which focused on masculinity construction and identity as needing a public space; one cannot but wonder how much of David's anger was attached to Nabal disregarding him in front of his servants in a public space. Nabal can be considered a flat and round character in that, his passive thoughtless response to David causes David to act and mobilize men to go to war. Furthermore, Abigail has to act because of Nabal, yet Nabal becomes a flat character when he does not act for the greater part of the selected scene until his death.

David is a key character in this episode again, because of his willingness to listen to Abigail and this is also noteworthy because of my cultural positionality. Nabal is a protagonist also because had he responded differently to the offer by David the story would not have taken the turn that it did. Abigail is also pivotal because she saves David from killing all of the men of Nabal. Abigail also represents an interesting masculinity: a masculinity whereby David is willing to work with women as equal partners. David also embodies a masculinity that acknowledges the strength of women independent of males. Abigail represents a 'good' woman, one who does not cry but simply moves on at the time of the death of her husband Nabal. The narrator has no place for Abigail's grief and subsequently she is rushed into a marriage with David. The rush that is shown by the narrator insinuates that even though Abigail sought to cry and grieve, there was no such room for her because these stories continue to focus on David and his progressive masculine identity shifts to heteronormative again as the marriage to Abigail appears as a mere satisfaction of his sexual desires.

According to the work of Forster, "Abigail can be considered as a round character, because she is the one acting to resolve the issues of her husband. Abigail is a round character also because she does not consult her husband and acts solely making many decisions that would impact them both. On the other hand, and unlike in many stories there is more than one round character and there appears to be less focus on the flat character" (Forster 1981,82). David is to be considered a round character here because he is the one who makes an initiative to contact Nabal. David is also the same one who needs to correct the actions of Nabal and is prepared to

wipe out all of Nabal's people. Everything that Abigail does is in response to the threats and assumed action to be taken by David to resolve their issues. Nabal can be considered a flat character because he is only mentioned once as saying the wrong thing to David and he is mentioned as drunk and non-engaged and the next time he is dead. Nabal's name appears to force him to behave in this way – which is as a foolish man. Furthermore, Levenson (1978, 13) states, "the characterization of Nabal begins with his very name, which is, in fact, a form of character assassination. The Hebrew *word Nabal, often* translated as "fool," designates not a harmless simpleton, but rather a vicious, materialistic, and egocentric misfit. Other passages present the nābāl as an embarrassment to his father (Prov 17:21), a glutton (Prov 30:22), a hoarder (Jer 17:11), and even an atheist (Ps 14:1 = 53:1). Most significant for our purposes is Isa 32:6, in which the refusal to feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty, precisely the sin of Nabal in 1 Samuel 25:6, is listed among the characteristics of a nābāl" (Levenson 1978,13).

I commiserate with Nabal for multiple reasons and I am interested in why the narrator presents Nabal in this manner. Firstly, the narrator presents Nabal in vs.17 as a scoundrel and it is uncommon for a servant to speak ill of the master to the master's wife without rebuke. Yet, in this particular story the servant of Nabal, feels free to engage and call Nabal in disrespectful terms while conversing with Abigail the wife. This in my research suggests that Nabal is not complying to the heteronormative conceptualized identity and as such is pushed to the periphery for embodying the subordinate masculinity. Secondly, the narrator in vs.19 has Abigail plan and execute the peace-offering to David without consulting or telling Nabal. Juliana Claassen in, *An Abigail Optic: Reading the Old Testament at Intersections* (2015), begins by saying, "Abigail could quite easily disappear amid the battles among men, her story relegated to a mere footnote in the rise of David or the decline of Saul, depending on one's point of view. Actually, some literary interpretations of 1 Samuel 25 end up making her story about something else. So, it has been argued that the story of Abigail and Nabal really is symbolic of David's conflicted relationship with Saul" (Classens 2015, 7).

Subsequently, "reading the story of Abigail in terms of a feminist framework helps one to identify a remarkable portrait of female agency. In Abigail's hurried activity, the narrator informs us that Abigail did not tell her husband anything (v 19). Abigail is portrayed in this narrative as a woman in control; a woman who acts independently, resisting the patriarchal strongholds of her society" (Classens 2015,8). Furthermore, "Abigail's speech to David contributes to this portrayal of female agency. Abigail's speech, which is quite lengthy (the longest single prose speech by a woman in all of the Old Testament), speaks of David as the

future king and thus can rightly be described as prophetic. In this regard Ellen von Wolde argues that, in the absence of the prophet Samuel, Abigail acts as the spokesperson of God who shows in her speech remarkable insight, emerging as a model of wisdom and discernment. At this point in the narrative, David is running for his life; a homeless, landless fugitive who is easily dismissed by Nabal. And yet Abigail recognizes him as the future king…" (Claassen 2015,9).

In my understanding not only is Abigail a great leader and woman but she appears to play a prophetic role and conveys the message of God post the death of Samuel. In the work, *A Leader Led by a Lady: David and Abigail in I Samuel 25,* by Ellen Wolde 2002, she argues that, *"When* Abigail tells David that he will be appointed nagîd by YHWH, her words function in the context of the YHWH- prophet" (Wolde 2002,18). In the prophetic vein at day break Abigail gives an account of everything and the narrator remarks on how his heart died inside. Prophesying and being a prophetic voice, contemplatively the role of Abigail could have been what killed Nabal and the death of Nabal could have been a challenge and a deeper cry for the death of the patriarchal systems and what could also be symbolically dying the male dominance over women.

(iii) Place

Carmel the place will hold sentimental value as it is the norm for many who fall in love, which in that place becomes symbolic. If I was David speaking of Carmel I would say, it is the place where I met a woman who saved me from bloodshed and later that woman became my wife. Yet, if I was Abigail, it could hold a whole lot of mixed, difficult emotions for me to process. The narrator is not explicit in stating if Abigail was pleased to marry David or if for David the marriage to Abigail was another trophy and sign of conquest.

(iv)Time

The narrative time generally feels very rushed because it's just a quick sequence of consequential actions such as:

(a) The arrival of Nabal and Abigail in Carmel

(b) David offering Nabal partnership

(c) Nabal declining the offer of David

(d) David preparing for war to destroy all of Nabal's men

(e) Young servant of Nabal warning Abigail of Nabal's mistake

(f) Abigail instantly preparing and sending off a peace offering

(g) Abigail meeting David and apologizing and apology accepted and separation

(h) Death of Nabal in 10 days

(i) David married Abigail.

However quick this is being presented by the narrator, the most important time for me was the split second that the servant of Nabal went to update Abigail of Nabal's mistake. Also, it seems scary that the life of Abigail changed within a space of 14 days, although we are not told specifically how long she had after the death of Nabal before she became the wife of David.

(v) Repetition of keywords

The repeated words in this episode are: foolish/fool, as seen in vs. 25 and vs 36. Apparently as we learn also in the text the name Nabal means fool. I also want to notice how the servant in vs.17 calls Nabal a scoundrel and how in vs. 37 it says his heart died within him and then he died. There appear to be no key words repeated except fool, which also means Nabal. Nabal is one of the key characters and so his name is mentioned countless times. The work of Sue Rakoczy titled *In Her Name: Women Doing Theology* comes to mind. According to Fiorenza, "Feminist interpretation is about scrutinizing and interrogating the biblical writings to uncover their crimes of silencing and marginalization" (Fiorenza 1994,4). This particular section of the reading of the story of David and Abigail presents a complex understanding of the place of women in the source text and what would be deemed problematic if the text is read within a feminist worldview.

(vi) Conclusion

Based on *Scene 3 (David and Abigail),* some of the key observations in so far as how one comes of age and how masculinities are constructed are: firstly, the narrator introduces the readers to the character Abigail who overrides and brings into question everything that up to this time has been understood as manly, masculine and as forming manhood or what I call the 'true man'. Abigail defies the solid masculine structure and decides without her husband and she goes to seek a peace treaty outside the knowledge of her husband. David was determined to fight Nabal

and his men for disregarding him, because in so far as coming of age-David's identity is rattled because his masculine identity is questioned, yet David is open to forgiving Nabal. Abigail performs what is manly and performs masculinities which bring into question what is a 'true man'? Unheard of also until this time, David listens to Abigail and accepts the apology-hindering David from going to war with Nabal and his men. David defies what is masculine and listens to counsel from a woman, Abigail. This shows that David is willing to see and work with women as equal partners in leadership. David here embodies a masculine identity that acknowledges the strength of women who are independent of the male. Lastly, David is seen as regressing in his masculine identity because he marries Abigail while she was still grieving and appears to be acting out of self-pleasuring.

4.8 Scene 4: 2 Samuel 11: 1-17 and 26-27, David and Bathsheba

2 Samuel 11:1-17 HBS

1 וַיְהִי֙ לִתְשׁוּבַ֣ת הַשָּׁנָ֔ה לְעֵ֖ת צֵ֣את הַמַּלְאָכִ֑ים וַיִּשְׁלַ֞ח דָּוִ֣ד אֶת־יוֹאָ֗ב וְאֶת־עֲבָדָיו֙ עִמּ֔וֹ וְאֶת־כָּל־
יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל וַיַּשְׁחִ֣תוּ אֶת־בְּנֵ֣י עַמּ֑וֹן וַיָּצֻ֥רוּ עַל־רַבָּ֖ה וְדָוִ֥ד יוֹשֵׁ֖ב בִּירוּשָׁלָ֥ם ס

2 וַיְהִי֙ לְעֵ֣ת הָעֶ֔רֶב וַיָּ֥קָם דָּוִ֖ד מֵעַ֣ל מִשְׁכָּב֑וֹ וַיִּתְהַלֵּךְ֙ עַל־גַּ֣ג בֵּית־
הַמֶּ֔לֶךְ וַיַּ֗רְא אִשָּׁה֙ רֹחֶ֣צֶת מֵעַ֣ל הַגָּ֔ג וְהָאִשָּׁ֥ה טוֹבַ֛ת מַרְאֶ֖ה מְאֹֽד׃

3 וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח דָּוִד֙ וַיִּדְרֹ֣שׁ לָאִשָּׁ֔ה וַיֹּ֕אמֶר הֲלוֹא־זֹ֥את בַּת־שֶׁ֛בַע בַּת־אֱלִיעָ֖ם אֵ֣שֶׁת אוּרִיָּ֥ה הַחִתִּֽי׃

4 וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח דָּוִד֙ מַלְאָכִ֔ים וַיִּקָּחֶ֖הָ וַתָּבֹ֣וא אֵלָ֑יו וַיִּשְׁכַּ֤ב עִמָּהּ֙ וְהִ֣יא מִתְקַדֶּ֔שֶׁת מִטֻּמְאָתָ֖הּ וַתָּ֥שָׁב אֶל־בֵּיתָֽהּ׃

5 וַתַּ֖הַר הָאִשָּׁ֑ה וַתִּשְׁלַ֣ח וַתַּגֶּ֔ד לְדָוִ֖ד וַתֹּ֣אמֶר הָרָ֥ה אָנֹֽכִי׃

6 וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח דָּוִד֙ אֶל־יוֹאָ֔ב שְׁלַ֖ח אֵלַ֣י אֶת־אוּרִיָּ֣ה הַחִתִּ֑י וַיִּשְׁלַ֥ח יוֹאָ֖ב אֶת־אוּרִיָּ֥ה אֶל־דָּוִֽד׃

7 וַיָּבֹ֥א אוּרִיָּ֖ה אֵלָ֑יו וַיִּשְׁאַ֣ל דָּוִ֗ד לִשְׁל֤וֹם יוֹאָב֙ וְלִשְׁל֣וֹם הָעָ֔ם וְלִשְׁל֖וֹם הַמִּלְחָמָֽה׃

8 וַיֹּ֤אמֶר דָּוִד֙ לְאוּרִיָּ֔ה רֵ֖ד לְבֵיתְךָ֑ וּרְחַ֥ץ רַגְלֶ֖יךָ וְיֵצֵ֥א אוּרִיָּ֛ה מִבֵּ֥ית הַמֶּ֖לֶךְ וַתֵּצֵ֥א אַחֲרָ֛יו מַשְׂאַ֥ת הַמֶּֽלֶךְ׃

9 וַיִּשְׁכַּ֤ב אוּרִיָּה֙ פֶּ֣תַח בֵּית֔ הַמֶּ֖לֶךְ אֶת כָּל־עַבְדֵ֣י אֲדֹנָ֑יו וְלֹ֥א יָרַ֖ד אֶל־בֵּיתֽוֹ׃

10 וַיַּגִּ֥דוּ לְדָוִ֖ד לֵאמֹ֑ר לֹא־יָרַ֣ד אוּרִיָּ֔ה אֶל־בֵּיתֹ֔ו וַיֹּ֤אמֶר דָּוִד֙ אֶל־אוּרִיָּ֔ה הֲלֹ֥וא מִדֶּ֖רֶךְ אַתָּ֣ה בָ֑א מַדּ֥וּעַ לֹא־
יָרַ֖דְתָּ אֶל־בֵּיתֶֽךָ׃

11 וַיֹּ֤אמֶר אוּרִיָּה֙ אֶל־דָּוִ֔ד הָאָרֹ֣ון וְיִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל וִיהוּדָ֖ה יֹשְׁבִ֣ים בַּסֻּכֹּ֑ות וַאדֹנִ֤י יוֹאָב֙ וְעַבְדֵ֣י אֲדֹנִ֔י עַל־
פְּנֵ֥י הַשָּׂדֶ֖ה חֹנִ֑ים וַאֲנִ֞י אָבֹ֣וא אֶל־בֵּיתִ֗י לֶאֱכֹ֤ל וְלִשְׁתֹּות֙ וְלִשְׁכַּ֣ב עִם־אִשְׁתִּ֔י חַיֶּ֣יךָ וְחֵ֔י נַפְשְׁךָ֖ אִם־אֶעֱשֶׂ֣ה אֶת־
הַדָּבָ֥ר הַזֶּֽה׃

12 וַיֹּ֤אמֶר דָּוִד֙ אֶל־אוּרִיָּ֔ה שֵׁ֥ב בָּזֶ֖ה גַּם־הַיֹּ֑ום וּמָחָ֗ר אֲשַׁלְּחֶ֣ךָּ וַיֵּ֤שֶׁב אוּרִיָּה֙ בִּירוּשָׁלַ֔ם בַּיֹּ֥ום הַה֖וּא וּמִמָּחֳרָֽת׃

וַיִּקְרָא־לוֹ דָּוִד וַיֹּאכַל לְפָנָיו וַיִּשְׁתְּ וַיְשַׂכְּרֵהוּ וַיֵּצֵא בָעֶרֶב לִשְׁכַּב בְּמִשְׁכָּבוֹ עִם־עַבְדֵי אֲדֹנָיו וְאֶל־ 13
בֵּיתוֹ לֹא יָרֵד׃

וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַיִּכְתֹּב דָּוִד סֵפֶר אֶל־יוֹאָב וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּיַד אוּרִיָּה׃ 14

וַיִּכְתֹּב בַּסֵּפֶר לֵאמֹר הָבוּ אֶת־אוּרִיָּה אֶל־מוּל ׀ פְּנֵי הַמִּלְחָמָה הֶחָזָקָה וְשַׁבְתֶּם מֵאַחֲרָיו וְנִכָּה וָמֵת׃ ס 15

וַיְהִי בְּשָׁמְר יוֹאָב אֶל־הָעִיר וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־אוּרִיָּה אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יָדַע כִּי אַנְשֵׁי־חַיִל שָׁם׃ 16

וַיֵּצְאוּ אַנְשֵׁי הָעִיר ׀ וַיִּלָּחֲמוּ אֶת־יוֹאָב וַיִּפֹּל מִן־הָעָם מֵעַבְדֵי דָוִד וַיָּמָת גַּם אוּרִיָּה הַחִתִּי׃ 17

2 Samuel 11:1-17 English Standard Version

11 **1** In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. **2** It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. **3** And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" **4** So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. **5** And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant." **6** So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. **7** When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab was doing and how the people were doing and how the war was going. **8** Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. **9** But Uriah slept at the door of the kings house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. **10** When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" **11** Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing." **12** Then David said to Uriah, "Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back." So, Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. **13** And David invited him, and he ate in his presence and drank, so that he made him drunk. And in the evening, he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house. **14** In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. **15** In the letter he wrote, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, that he may be struck down, and die." **16** And as Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant men. **17** And the men of the city came out and fought with Joab, and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite also died.

2 Samuel 11: 26-27 HBS

26 וַתִּשְׁמַע֙ אֵ֣שֶׁת אֽוּרִיָּ֔ה כִּי־מֵ֥ת אוּרִיָּ֖ה אִישָׁ֑הּ וַתִּסְפֹּ֥ד עַל־בַּעְלָֽהּ׃

27 וַיַּעֲבֹ֤ר הָאֵ֙בֶל֙ וַיִּשְׁלַ֣ח דָּוִ֔ד וַיַּאַסְפָ֖הּ אֶל־בֵּיתֹ֑ו וַתְּהִי־לֹ֤ו לְאִשָּׁה֙ וַתֵּ֣לֶד לֹ֔ו בֵּ֖ן וַיֵּ֣רַע הַדָּבָ֔ר אֲשֶׁר־ עָשָׂ֥ה דָוִ֖ד בְּעֵינֵ֥י יְהוָֽה׃ פ

2 Samuel 11:26-27 English Standard Version

26When the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented over her husband.27And when the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord

a) Why this scene?

This scene was selected to view how David engages women when he is now in authority. David begins as the boy who is willing to fight and fix the problem of Goliath and ends in these limited scenes as now willing to delegate and assign Joab while he sits and basks in the joy of his achievements. It is a significant complacency on the part of David and it was mandatory in the time of the writing of the text that Kings led their troops to war which David found as obviously now somewhat assumptively cumbersome. This change also makes me as the reader wonder, could the fight for Goliath not have been patriotic and about the love for his people but rather an opportunity to be transitioned from boyhood to manhood. Moreover, this scene was selected as it allows for reflection of leaders and men in society and how they handle their power. Lastly, in understanding masculinities we used relations, culture and society and I make use of the role of Bathsheba to reflect on how some men deflect and exonerate themselves from responsibility of possessing the other person they are in relationship to. The narrator silences Bathsheba and it is some of this silence that I seek to reflect on.

b) Summary of Episode in my own words

David and Bathsheba. It was time for war and David sent all his men to fight with Joab leading the army in the war against the Ammonites and the city of Rabbah. He remained at the palace in Jerusalem and one afternoon he noticed Bathsheba bathing. He felt drawn to her so he sent his servants to go and take her and when she arrived, he slept with her. Bathsheba was the

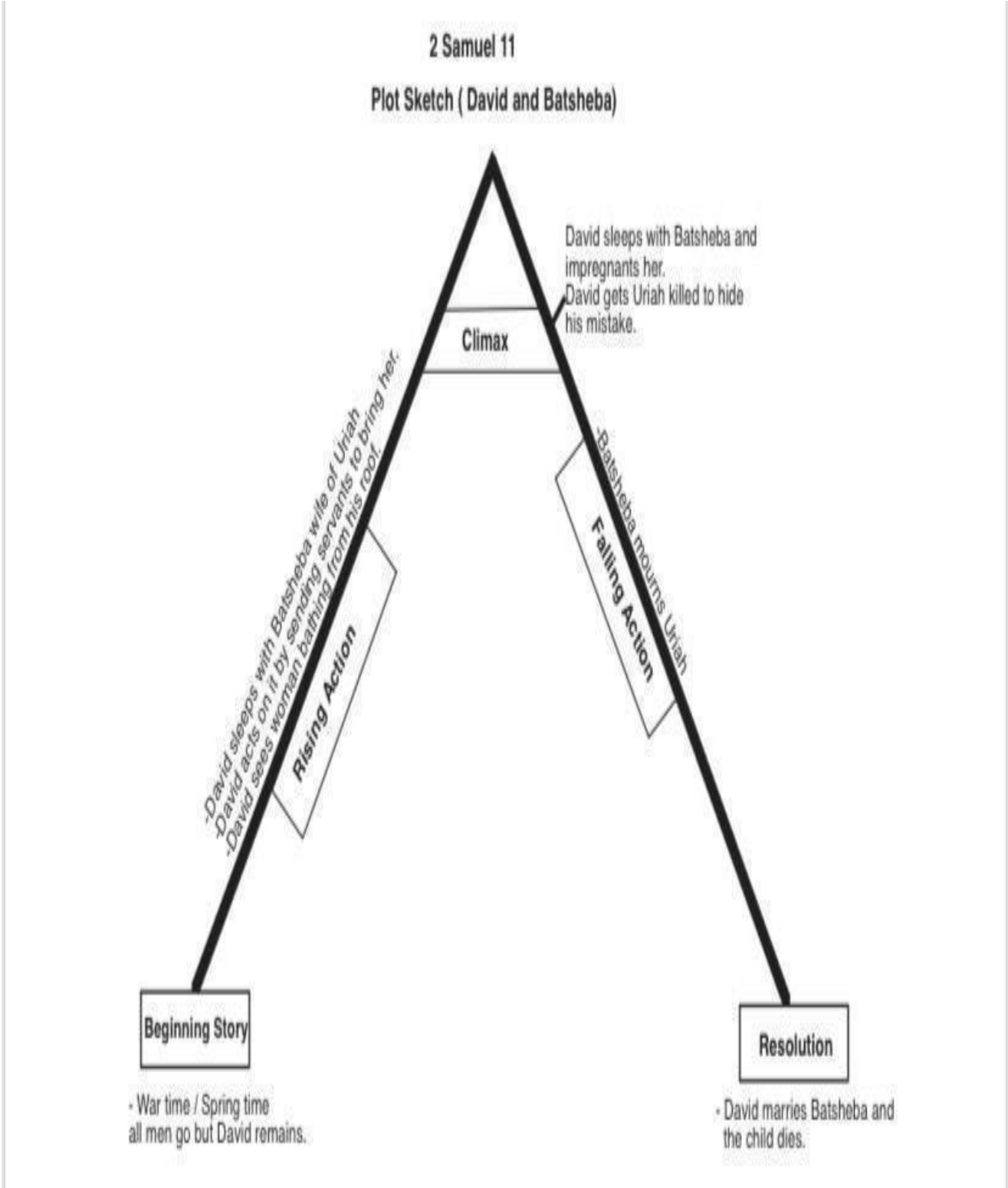
daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Bathsheba after this encounter was pregnant with the seed of David and sent word to David about this.

Then David sent word for Uriah and when he arrived, he asked for a progress report on the war and after that released him to go home and relax, enticing him with a gift. However, Uriah was not comfortable with going to relax while his fellow men were at war so he slept at the entrance of David's palace. Then David attempted to get him drunk so as to convince him to go sleep with his wife but he refused again. The next morning, he wrote a letter to Joab that he gave to Uriah saying that Joab must put Uriah on the front lines where the battle is raging so that he can die on the frontlines. Uriah was killed with other soldiers and news was sent back to David. When David received this news, he encouraged them to fight harder next time. When Bathsheba heard about her husband she mourned and as the mourning period was over, she became one of the wives of David. What David had done displeased the Lord and we see the prophet Nathan sent to address this situation.

c) Narrative analysis

(i) Plot Sketch

Figure 4



(ii) Characters

David is a round character because he is the one who sees Bathsheba. Also, while Bathsheba is a character being acted on, she becomes central to the narrative and so becomes a round character. David sends his servants to bring Bathsheba to the palace. Before bringing Bathsheba to the palace it is explained to King David that Bathsheba is married to Uriah, so we are introduced to Uriah, though as a flat character. On failing to convince Uriah to go sleep with his wife to conceal the actions of King David, David authenticates Joab to kill Uriah so by acting Joab is a round character but Uriah up until the time of his death remains a flat character.

Bathsheba is most often blamed for strategically positioning herself to be seen by the king but her beauty and being in the 'wrong' place got her in the difficult situation. Garland and Garland (2007) argue, "It is not clear from the text whether David being at the rooftop at the same time Bathsheba was bathing was accidental or he was there "trolling, so to speak, for sexual conquests" (Garland and Garland 2007,3). Placing the blame and focusing on Bathsheba shifts the responsibility from David who seeks to fulfil his own sexual needs at the expense of Bathsheba and Uriah. According to Ademiluka, "the narrative from the perspective of David as a king, lay(s) emphasis on his powers against which Bathsheba might have been helpless" (Ademiluka 2021,1). The narrator says nothing about Bathsheba agreeing, just Bathsheba receiving instructions from a king that seem undisputable. The work of Ademiluka, points out that Bathsheba was in a hopeless situation and found herself abused. Graybill (2019) "situates the David Bathsheba narrative in the HB or OT rape culture, which constitutes an aspect of the 'domestic abuse [which] is a significant …behaviour in Jewish communities in Israel and the Diaspora' (Graetz 2002)" as seen in (Ademiluka 2019, 3). Some interpreters have argued to the contrary that "Bathsheba's encounter with David was not a rape. For example, Koenig (2011) maintains that there are no words to indicate force or humiliation in 2 Samuel 11:4, as in the cases of Dinah and Tamar (cited in Andruska 2017:107) (as seen in Ademiluka 2021,4). I argue that the fact that we are telling Bathsheba what to feel about her body is already abuse. However, I agree with Garland and Garland (2007) who maintain that "since consent was impossible, given her powerless position, David in essence raped her. Rape means to have sex against the will, without the consent, of another – and she did not have the power to consent. Even if there was no physical struggle, even if she gave in to him, it was rape" (Garland and Garland 2007,4).

Similarly, Uriah's loyalty got him killed because he refused to go and sleep at home and enjoy the warmth of his wife while other men were at war. However, I continue to wonder that had Uriah gone to sleep at his house and encountered his wife intimately, would David had continued to feel a fear and a need to conceal his sin. Moreover, in an effort to conceal his mistake David assigns Joab to place Uriah in the heat of battle, yet he was not prepared for this type of battle and he died. David is very pretentious because when he receives the news of the passing of Uriah, he comforts the people as though also taken aback by the loss of Uriah, yet it was engineered by him. In an earlier work, Ludwig and Longenecker (1993), argued, "David's failings as a leader were dramatic even by today's standards and included an affair, the corruption of other leaders, deception, drunkenness, murder, the loss of innocent lives, and a 'we beat the system' attitude when he thought he had managed to cover-up his crimes" (Ludwig and Longenecker 1993, 265). They further argued, "David was nearly destroyed because he could not control his desire to have something that he knew it was wrong for him to have, Bathsheba" (Ludwig and Longenecker 1993, 266). Actually, instead of the blame of guilt given to Bathsheba that she strategically positioned herself they free her by saying, "The story of David and Bathsheba begins by noting that David is not where he is supposed to be, doing what he is supposed to be doing. His recent successes in battle have apparently left David complacent that his overall strategy did not need revision for the time being and complacent that his subordinates were capable of executing the current strategy on their own. Instead of leading his troops into battle as was his role as king, he stayed home, leaving the direction of his troops during critical battles to his right-hand man, Joab" (Ludwig and Longenecker 1993, 268).

(iii) Place

The roof place is a place mentioned in this episode that plunges David into a very difficult situation. In vs.2. it says David saw Bathsheba from this viewpoint as he was just walking at sunset. The architectural structuring of buildings at this time laid out property in the buildings in the following way. One wonders had the layout not been this way would David had found himself in a similar position that sought him to make a sounder decision.

(iv) Time

In so far as time is concerned, the narrator mentioned time definitely when he says it was *wartime* and also when he says it was springtime in so far as the season was concerned. The implications of the two times offer the following meaning, namely: wartime suggests a time of

battling and possibility of casualties is very high. Because Uriah dies at this time it appears incidental unless to those close to all the action. The implication of springtime talks to the type of weather that justifies and explains the walk on the roof as well as the open-air bathing as it must have been supposedly breezy and relaxing. Yet in the all-natural situations allowed by the weather, the two find themselves in a difficult situation.

(v) Repetition of keywords

The most repeated word in the passage of this episode is wife, as can be seen in the following places: vs. 3 wives (Bathsheba identified as Uriah's wife)

vs.11 wife (Uriah is refusing to have sex with his wife)

vs.26 wife (when the wife of Uriah heard of his death she cried)

vs.27 wife (She became David's wife.)

All four references repeat the term wife, although it is used in various ways such as the following: firstly – the word used as wife is the identity of a person desired by David. Bathsheba is the wife of Uriah who is of the army of David. The second use of wife is spoken of regarding sex as part of the marriage rite. Uriah refusing to dishonor his fellow warriors by joining in sexual relations with his wife while other men were at war provides a different fiber of what true masculinity is. Uriah does not prioritize his sexual selfish desire but instead he seeks to honor his manhood. The case of Uriah provides a conflict in that a true man prioritizes sexual expression as well as a true man must prioritize fighting and protecting the nation. Here Uriah chose the greater and selfish manhood expression which was to refuse to express himself sexually and find relief in his wife, yet he chooses to disregard this and sleep outside. Had Uriah acted on either fulfilling his sexual desires or had he chosen to honor his role as an army man; his masculinity would never be questioned but it remained to his own discretion to prioritize. Subsequently, the term wife is shifted to Bathsheba but now wife here is used as a new identity as Bathsheba was until this time now a widow after the death of Uriah her husband. It seems paramount to ponder on what this new identity entails for Bathsheba as the new wife of King David and this reflection is important in so far as the text has mentioned that David already had wives such as Michal and Abigail. Bathsheba moves from being *wife – widow - wife* and how these impact on her individually.

(vi) Conclusion

Based on *Scene 4 (David and Bathsheba*) these are some of the key observations in so far as to how one comes of age and how masculinities are constructed: firstly, David appears to be regressing again, because we see David demanding Bathsheba to be brought to him for his sexual selfish pleasure. This stage is the liminal stage, where you know what is appropriate to do but would rather not, because of selfish desires. David also brings his integrity into question as full man because he sleeps with the wife of his army man Uriah and instead of apologizing and facing the consequences thereof. Furthermore, David, failing to conceal his actions of sleeping with Bathsheba, a wife to Uriah, further regresses and brings his masculinity to question when he asks Joab to place him on the forefront of the battle so his death may appear as a mistake. David 'suddenly' has come of age again as we see him making Bathsheba wide. David in relation to Abigail is celebrated for not expressing himself sexually and later at an appropriate time marrying Abigail. Yet in the scene of David and Bathsheba, David sleeps with her using her authority.

4.9 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the selected episodes as well as the existing arguments and arguments that the scholarly work have produced regarding the various episodes. The book of 1st and 2nd Samuel are attributed to the prophet and the book itself falls within the Deuteronomistic History. In the larger frame of the history of the people of Israel a focus on David seems essential because David falls within the time of the establishment of kings in Israel. Like Auld, I agree that this book is about David and all the other personalities help us understand David and know him because one of the ways we can know people is looking at how they relate to other people. Generally, masculinity has set a standard for men and this usually guides the life of the males as they desire so much to be welcomed and acknowledged as men. This places masculinities in the frame of performativity. Moreover, through these scenes, this research attempted to understand what coming of age comprises.

I argue overall that coming of age and construction of masculinities are somewhat intertwined and one is a mirror of the other. Through coming of age, masculinity construction is defined and framed more clearly. In each section I focused on what themes came out from a narrative analysis about masculinity insight and coming of age insights. Chapter 5 will focus on zooming in on each scene and what can best be understood through this limited narrative research about

the coming of age process and constructions on masculinity for those who seek to use excerpts of 1st and 2nd Samuel as a reflective surface. This chapter will be preparatory of the ideo-theological resources that can be developed and used by those who seek this type of reflective surface in the context of parts of South Africa.

Chapter 5

Exploring Constructions of Masculinity and Coming of Age

5.0 Introduction

C*hapter (4)* focused on a small-scale narrative analysis of selected episodes of the David Narrative Text. The four selected scenes for this research were: (a) *David and Goliath*, (b) *David and Jonathan*, (c) *David and Abigail* and lastly (d) *David and Bathsheba*. This research is focusing on David, and thus all scenes are David in relation to a particular character who helps us learn more about his coming of age process and his construction of masculinity. It is my observation through this research that both masculinity understanding and coming of age negotiations happen within the frame of relationships.

This *Chapter (5)* will be divided into three parts. Firstly, as a build up from the narrative analysis chapter, I will use the insights that I distilled as a foundation and I will proceed to reflect on the thematic notions of masculinity construction and coming of age. Secondly, I will use the foundational scholarship of Clines and Wilson to frame my argument and I will draw on the insights from scholars in the field. I will have as the third section a mention of words that are crucial in construction of masculinity and coming of age. I will discuss all four scenes under contemplations of masculinity and alike I will discuss coming of age insights in the second sections. The work of Clines and Wilson will be augmented with insights from other scholars and my own voice minimally.

The frame of *Clines on masculinity* - lists these three as categories for analyzing biblical masculinities which are: (i) Strength/Violence, Wisdom/Persuasive speech and (iii) Beauty. In the *second section I will be using Wilson as a frame for discussing coming of age insights*. I will use the following: (i) Noticing terminology as a key indicator of a character's status, (ii) Noticing that coming of age narrative will feature a boy acquiring/displaying quality associated with manhood, (iii) Noticing the presence of a rite of passage and noting how the character changes signify a boy's coming of age and (iv) Noticing in the characters changes that signify a boy's coming-of-age that must happen within the defined borders of an individual narrative for it to be considered a coming-of-age story. While Wilson provides the pointers of what coming of age could entail, the comments made under each section were more my general

comments and observation of the particular scenes and they are not amplified with scholarly input.

5.1. Scene 1: David and Goliath

Summary of Basic Issues Distilled from the Narrative Analysis of David and Goliath

At the end of the David and Goliath narrative analysis the section found the following. Firstly, that there is a need for risk taking. For a boy to be recognized as a boy, one needs to take part in something that demonstrates risk taking and also to maintain the masculine identity a man who has successfully transitioned from boyhood to manhood must also still be open to situations that include risk taking. The risk taking on its own appears insufficient, because we as the readers are told that David killed a bear and a lion while taking care of the sheep; but this does not qualify him to transition from boyhood to manhood. David takes a risk to fight Goliath and save the people of Israel, but it also seems that as he is taking the stage he is including the second next important thing after risk taking, which is an audience. Masculinities are performed and it appears for one to be admitted and acknowledged as a man, they must take risks but in front of an audience that will affirm the action as risky and masculine enough. The next few activities show that for one to be a man, violence and strength are to be included.

Focus on Masculinity Construction

(i) Strength/Violence

David the shepherd boy applies to qualify as a man when he tells King Saul that while he was taking care of the sheep, to protect them he had to kill a bear and lion with his own hands. David killing the lion and bear to save the sheep was a private victory. David asking to encounter Goliath in public would have been a qualifying factor into being accepted as a full man.

In my view and use of the frame of Clines, *strength* in my view was fighting Goliath and fighting a bear and a lion. The *violence* is in that after he had killed Goliath in vs.51, David stands on Goliath and took his sword and cut off his head and raised it up for everyone to see and the text also says he took Goliath's head back to Jerusalem as a trophy. In my view *strength*

was killing the two hundred Philistines and violence was taking off their foreskins. The *foreskin* is the skin covering the penis. This means after killing the two hundred men, David still took time to cut this skin from these men who were dead. I view this as a form of violence. It is noteworthy that on his return from this fight, David brings the foreskin as confirmation of not only killing them but emasculating them, leading to him being handed over his trophy wife Michal. Stone says, "When biblical characters refer to the uncircumcised state of Philistine men, they nearly always do so with disdain or in a context of hostility. It is likely that these scornful references presuppose a conflict interpreted in terms of gender symbolism" (Stone 2012,275).

According to Scheff, "David's act of violence, and the cutting of the foreskins is a part of the shaming culture which is instrumental in the construction of masculinity. Shame is particularly important for understanding men's violence. Shame is a taboo for men since they are often socialized to repress all signs of weakness. Rather than recognizing and accepting shame through withdrawal, men tend to respond to status loss by defending themselves and resorting to aggression and violence" (Scheff 2003,2). In the case of David, he sought to establish his identity and reinforce his role as the king's newly qualified son-in-law by exercising complete dominion and control of the manhood of the 200 dead men.

The exposing or touching of genitals carries the message of shame in that nudity is abnormal. Moreover, according to Aneta Stepien in *Understanding Male Shame* argues, "Shame, nevertheless appears a suitable perspective to approach the subject of masculinity for it can indeed reveal something about the experience of being a man; on the other hand, reading male strategies of acknowledging, experiencing and dealing with the emotion enables us to see in what ways gender is constructed primarily as a symbol of power and, on the other hand how admitting shame by men is viewed as a symptom of weakness" (Stepien 2011,16). Furthermore, "The polemical use of the rhetoric of sex and gender to construct ethnic difference is not limited, in the Bible, to Israelite representations of the Philistines" (Stone 2021,277) Again, Stepien would concur that the cutting of the foreskin shames those men and confirms and reinforced David's masculinity. This then circles back to an earlier description of masculinity as found in Chapter 3 where Connell argued, hegemonic masculinity includes, "…hard work, risk-taking, responsibility absorbing and an ability to be aggressive" (Connell 2005,12). David fulfils this type of masculinity defined by Connell by doing the following; firstly, being the youngest person present and deciding to arise and fight Goliath. Secondly, David conforms to the hegemonic masculinity as he is seen risking by refusing to put on the

armor and not using war weaponry except a sling and five stones. His ability to be aggressive can be seen when he kills Goliath and stands on him to cut off his head. More aggression can be seen when he kills the 200 men and goes a step further to cut off their foreskins. The act of killing Goliath seems to transition David from being called boy to being called a man. This shows how to come of age ironically is not about the *years* and numbers but rather age is immaterial. Once a boy meets the standards and goes through the necessary rites one changes identity despite the physical years.

I am of the opinion that a man is only a man or man enough in so far as he stands out in performing better amongst other males. Alongside the daring, risk-taking David is the King Saul who is presented by the narrator as fearful. In *(1 Sam.17*) the narrator explains King Saul as dismayed and *exceedingly fearful,* shaken at the threats made by Goliath. The narrator is preparing us readers for a shift in power by setting up the two individuals in this manner. David fulfils the stereotypical expectations of men as risk takers and this can be seen when he refuses to wear any armour as he goes to fight with a trained and armed Goliath. In my society again, there is such pressure for young men to take risks and behave in a risky manner to fulfil the coming of age transition process so as to be acknowledged ultimately as a full man. Without *intentionally* weakening the image of King Saul, the narrator *undermines* King Saul's masculine identity. In referring to the gift of Michal (Saul's daughter) Stone says, "Other biblical texts, inside and outside the books of Samuel, may also question Philistine manhood by associating the Philistines with women. Saul offers to give his daughter to any man who can bring him one hundred Philistine foreskins as a bride price. Thus, women and foreskins are literally exchanged (1Sam. 18.25, 27)" (Stone 2021, 276).

Using simple negation, if Clines posits that a *true* man is one who shows strength and violence, any man not being violent is to be considered as not man enough. In my context, any emotion from a man makes the men be teased and viewed *as not manly.* This is because emotions are 'more accepted' in my context when associated with women. I argue that the *name calling* is a type of violence from one man to another man. Women also perpetuate such patriarchal stereotypes in that in those contexts where women continue to be at the centre of the raising of a child; women raise their boy children to be tough and non-emotive. More so, at times the women join in teasing the emotive men and I argue that this is a type of violence. Koenig argues, "Women also uphold hegemonic masculinity. They may do so without conscious recognition because hegemonic masculinity is a social construct, to the extent that it may be experienced as "the common norm" within society. A recurring process is there, it is

experienced as a norm in the society, and is normalized and maintained within the society by all members of the society" (Koenig 2015,494).

More contextually and in work done by masculinity scholars, they argue that this expectation of risk taking happens with a penial focus; alluding to post rites of passage, most boys become sexually reckless which presents a health hazard in my context of the HIV struggle. Chitando and Klagaba (2013) argue that "As boys come of age sex is at the centre of their socialisation. Joseph is presented as a model of a man who can control himself sexually thereby defusing the myth that men have no control sexually and he is ostracized for not conforming to the mundane sexual norms or expected conduct from a man" (Chitando and Klagaba 2013,32). Either way, David or Joseph or the men presented as having been killed and had their foreskin cut off draws focus to masculinity, prioritizing focus on the penis.

This scene also shows how masculine identity is constructed within community and overall; there are set standards of what a complete man should look like. Butler's works (2006) reiterate the performativity involved in construction of masculinity. Moore refers to "Judith Butler (2006) who understands gender to be performative. This means that gender should be recognised as a configuration of repeated actions, rather than some sort of identity behindthe actor. Butler says, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts … as a constituted social temporality" (Moore 2021,71). Moore (2021) argues "against the cultural construction of binary gender and sex, stating that we have built up limitations to gender and sex when their possibilities are much more expansive" (Moore 2021,72). These actions that form a masculine identity are done repeatedly in front of a community of men, who notice and acknowledge a boy into manhood. This means that manhood needs a community to recognize you, for an example: the brothers, the king's advisors, King Saul's acknowledgement and the whole audience that watched, had to accept David as a true, complete man for him to be admitted as one.

When the narrative begins, David is keen to fight Goliath and acquire his masculine recognition. In the same narrative, David is seen to be pursued by King Saul almost immediately since the time of David's victory over Goliath. David appears to be sought after by King Saul to be killed multiple times but when David is presented with the opportunity to be very close to King Saul and kill him, he does not kill him. David does not fall under the pressure of the need to kill King Saul to affirm his masculinity. His strength in this situation is

unconventional because he is confident in himself and does not seek validation from the community to an extent of killing King Saul prematurely.

David flees Saul and refuses to kill him despite multiple opportunities to act on it. Masculinity as explained in Clines would show that he failed as a man as he did not use violence to conclude the conflict between him and Saul. Yet some of Clines' work would acknowledge part of his manhood and some aspects of Clines' work would not. This example helps me ask the question, what do we do when there are conflicting expectations of what it entails to be a real man? The conflict could be expectations from culture, religion or the work sector, to mention but a few. The bigger work is how do we reconcile these masculinities and understand their construction and all the various sections continue to inform and become part of the masculine identity of men.

(ii) Wisdom/persuasive speech

David had the wisdom and sense to grab an opportunity in vs.26 when he knew to ask for an opportunity to showcase his preparedness to transition from boyhood to manhood. Wisdom is defined as taking an opportunity and within a calculated appropriate time. David's wisdom can be seen in vs.27 when his brothers discredit him and make him lose focus. David in vs.29 refuses to enter into a justification with his siblings of what he should or should not do. Rather David waits and pleads his case with King Saul who actually had a say in the matter concerned. He saw the chance, and observed protocol and found ways of presenting himself to ensure he is heard. David is referred to in two other places such as Ch 18. vs.14 where it says David behaved wisely and also Ch 18 vs.30 it says again that David behaved more wisely than all servants of Saul and his name became highly esteemed.

David uses persuasive speech in vs.34 when he states how he has killed a bear and a lion to protect the lamb. While his statement could not be verified, as no one was there to witness him actually do what he is claiming, his speech is persuasive because through this he is given an opportunity to go and fight with Goliath, which is a symbolic rite of passage transitioning him from boyhood to manhood. David again uses persuasive speech in vs.39 when David justifies why he as a young boy, who was already unfit for war in terms of stature, and if he a male not trained for war with only information of his private prowess is allowed to go into a war up against a fully armed person, he must have used persuasive speech and possessed boldness.

Clines (2018) and Haddox (2013) agree on what masculinity within the Hebrew context encompasses. As such, within this episode. David is able to tick the following from their list, such as: primarily, he has the ability to protect and provide for one's family, especially women and children; secondly, the power to engage in war and a power to lead. I place this as secondary only in the context that I read the text because to engage in war is not a daily expectation for men; while in the source text it was very crucial for a man to be able to go to war and instinctively lead. One of the overarching components of manhood and construction of masculinity, is ability to possess wisdom and show good judgement. However, while David has skills and has successfully come of age, in the rest of the narrative we find David fighting to preserve his life and fleeing, still trying to prove his manhood. This insinuates that coming of age is continuous and not linear.

(iii) Beauty

In using Clines' frame of beauty, I comment on vs27. Here Saul gives Michal his daughter as a wife. David's daughter is noted in the narrative as loving David. The union was beautiful and the graduation to married life speaks volumes. Saul giving her daughter Michal to marry, means that he is confident of his readiness to transition from boyhood to manhood. The beauty in this part of the episode is the reciprocal love offered by Michal.

The discussion of the reward wife Michal, in my research raises questions to the place of women in Israel. In the work of Connell 2013, this type of masculinity falls under the normative masculinity which encompasses elements of what stereotypically a man ought to be with focus on sex roles as expected religiously and culturally. The work of Connell here suggests that "women are automatically subordinate to their male counterparts" (Connell 2013,12). Also, Connell, confirms that this would be part of what constitutes hegemonic masculinity in that in themselves, "hegemonic masculinities continue to reinforce the position of men and subordination of women using institutional and cultural power" (Connell 2013,14). Similarly, to what is espoused in the work of Gennrich (2013) who posits that, "masculinity construction and maintenance of the status quo is highly dependant on the reward system" (Gennrich 2013,24). For Gennrich, she would interpret David as playing into the reward system because he had accomplished what is deemed as normatively masculine and the wife is received as a reward to his manly achievements. Thus, this research acknowledges that systems can perpetuate skewed constructions of masculinity and lived out expectations for men.

With regards to the continued need to demonstrate strength and perform violence as part of masculinity construction and rites of coming of age, there needs to be a change. Within South Africa, in my Ndebele context, becoming a man and coming of age still includes rites of passage such as sleeping with many women, being able to fight physically and not having time for house chores and childcare if you are a male. These type of expectations on the male's masculine identity and acceptance into manhood places a lot of pressure on how the boys act in the process of coming of age. The type of violence that I speak of under the emotive male is the price that a boy who seeks to change will have to expect and pay. Again, this violence does not come from the 'macho-men' only but some women as well, which suggests that for change to happen, a conversation needs to be had with both men and women. Moreover, I argue that violence and fighting should not constitute and form true manhood, and it should not be an expectation of a complete coming of age process. Rather, men should fight or engage in violent physical fights or wars where there is a rightful cause, like David had. David capitalized on the opportunity to showcase his preparedness to transition from boyhood to manhood but the rightful cause of the fight was that the Philistines were endangering the lives of the Israelites and this feud had to be cleared. The motive of David in availing himself could have been to come of age and to confirm his masculine identity which if it was the reality presents his motive as not pure; however, his act to perform violence was noble and resourceful to the Israelites.

5.2 Scene 2: David and Jonathan

Summary of Basic Issues Distilled from the Narrative Analysis

In the scene of David and Jonathan at the center there remains a big need for understanding what triggered Jonathan into such a detailed expression of love towards David. This scene dealt a lot with male to male closeness, male bonding, friendship, covenant and the breakage of the Saul dynasty. David without doubt finds himself in a quandary when he receives loves from Michal the trophy wife, as well as from Jonathan - Michal's brother, as well as David's now brother-in-law. Lastly, David also finds himself at the center of a father and son relationship where Jonathan declares and appears to love David more than his father to the detriment of the kingship. David's diplomatic acceptance of the love from Jonathan suggests a new-found masculine identity in that David is confident and not worried about what people will think about his closeness to Jonathan.

Focus on Masculinity Constructions

(i) *Strength*

In this scene strength is seen in that Jonathan automatically submits to the leadership and personhood of David without military fight or competition. Jonathan first declares his love to David but subsequent to this, he stripped his clothes and he submits his armor to David. In my view this is strength because it means David is an undoubted leader in that another man sees it normal to submit all his authority to David. This case is very different because Jonathan was the rightful heir to his father's kingdom, but despite this finds no difficultly in submission to David as the one who is now going to take the throne. Jonathan overlooks all of this. Some of the previous work that has been done focused on David's preservation of Jonathan's son Mephibaal/ Mephibosheth and the focus was on the special relationship that the fathers had. David Jobbling argues that "the subject of heredity is key to the book of Samuel which revolves around the question of kingship" (Jobling 2004,12).

Furthermore, it is interesting to ponder on why this is a short unit. Brueggemann (1993) argues that, "In considering the narrative intentionality of the larger unit, it is of course important to determine the extent of the passage. I regard *(1 Sam. 18:1)* as the proper beginning of our unit of study, and *(1 Sam. 18:1-5)* as the first episode in that larger unit. There is an established critical opinion that treats *(1 Sam. 18:1-5)* as the conclusion of (*1 Sam. 17:7).* The introduction of Jonathan into the narrative at the end of chap. 17, however, makes little dramatic sense from that viewpoint" (Brueggemann 1993,35). Brueggemann further posits that, "the first judgment which emerges from the narrative is that David is loved. He is loved by Jonathan (v 1), by Israel and Judah (v 15), by Michal (vs20, 28, 34) and apparently by Saul's servants (v 22). The word Dāhēb is powerful and persistent in the narrative. In (v35) David evokes loyalty and affection from every quarter. This judgment seems to stay very close to the transactions of the narrative" (Brueggemann 1993,36). In my own reading of Bruggeman, I understand true masculinity to provoke love, honor, and respect without force, which is what David experiences without having to apply violence, as Clines explains manhood.

(ii) *Wisdom/persuasive speech*

David is wise by agreeing to enter into a covenant with Jonathan as he probably would not have made it to sit on his throne as king. Jonathan is a wise connection that preserved him.

Wisdom was also displayed in David not killing Saul and waiting for the natural succession plan.

More recent scholarship has interpreted most of his interactions with Jonathan as insinuating a homosexual/queer relationship. *Harding* argues that, "The sexual nature of the relationship between Jonathan and David has dominated scholarly exegesis on the narrative in 1st and 2nd Samuel during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries" (Harding et.al 2013,2) There have been many commentaries and connections to the love of David and Jonathan as a premise for same-sex relations. Without doubt the love of David and Jonathan forces the reader to wrestle with ideological assumptions. In my view, the kind of openness and lack of titles to their relation causes a lot of discomfort to those afraid of what this flexibility could potentially embody within a cultural-public lived space. However, this does not change David and his ability to bond with Jonathan who is of the same sex as he is.

Tyson, (2010) concurs with me that, "more than mere repetition of words, the theme underlying is one that is within the framework of intimacy and closeness" (Tyson 2010,2). Like Tyson, I agree that "while the terms such as soul knit together are not sexual or that there is no blood relationship between the two, the selection and choice of words by the narrator force the reader to think of the closeness that David and Jonathan shared. This reinforces the theme of love as fluid and the face of what constitutes a family as changing constantly" (Tyson 2010,4). The work of Macelaru (2014) focuses textually on 1 Samuel 9-15 (which focuses on Saul) and 1 Samuel 16 – 2 Samuel 5 (which focuses on David). Macelaru's work is interested in male to male relationships in the Bible. Macelaru says, "Male bonding is seen in one's capacity to attract and maintain relationships with other males and male beauty as a recurring component in the portrayal of masculinity in the Hebrew Bible" (Macelaru 2014,55).

Stansell in *(2011)* argues that "The narrative of the David and Jonathan friendship in 1 Samuel continues to fascinate modern readers as a tale of an enduring friendship under strong political and family pressures. Modern readers are apt to read the story through a lens somewhat beclouded by romanticism and anachronism" (Stansell 2011,112). Furthermore, Stansell posits that, "interest has often focused on these two figures, but their story is often read according to the norms of modern, western culture, heavily romanticized, or in terms of homoerotic components (Jobling 1998; Stone)" (Stansell 2011,113). Exum thinks of the David-Jonathan friendship as a kind of "male-bonding", an understanding that hardly resists the charge of anachronism" (Stansell 2011,116). It employs "a social-scientific, cross-cultural model of

friendship in order to gain a broader, culturally attuned perspective on the David Jonathan relationship" (Stansell 2011,117). In the focus on the text, Stansell draws on the following: "1Sam.18 Jonathan meets David and takes him as an intimate friend (Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David," *1Sam.18:1,* Jonathan makes a covenant with David and symbolizes the bond with a gift of his clothing, armor, etc. (*1Sam.18:2-4).* David becomes Jonathan's brother-in-law, thus his kin. Yet the so-called "queer" reading of the David-Jonathan narratives finds in their love and friendship a homosexual or erotic component" (Stansell 2011,14).

Firstly, Stone when *commenting on the relationship of David and Jonathan* says, "This comparison has stimulated much reflection on the possibility of a homoerotic relationship between David and Jonathan. Biblical scholars have often noted, correctly, that the language of 'love' was sometimes used in the ancient Near East to describe political relationships between kings and their subordinates. Thus, quite plausible arguments can be made that texts referring to the 'love' of Saul for David, of Jonathan for David, or of David for Jonathan had in the ancient Near East primarily political rather than sexual or romantic connotations, notwithstanding the fact that such texts may also indicate 'great affection' between the individuals in question" (Stone 2021,278). Secondly, "Readers who recognize that 'love' between persons of the same sex has meant so many different things, and has taken so many different forms in the past, may be better prepared than other readers to imagine a wider range of meanings and forms for 'love' between persons of the same sex in the present and in the future" (Stone 2021, 278). The story allows a fluidity and openness when attempting to understand the relation of David and Jonathan. Stone says, "On the other hand, the specific comparison that David makes between Jonathan's 'love' and 'the love of women' ('your love was more extraordinary to me than the love of women' (2 Sam. 1.26)) is somewhat unusual even within the framework of those ancient Near Eastern political 'love' relations to which biblical scholars frequently appeal" (Stone 2021,278). The three things, that are viewed as crossing the boundaries of a close political relationship are: (i) Jonathan comparing the love of David to his own life, (ii) Jonathan delighting himself in David and (iii) At a later stage David sparing the like of Mephibosheth because of how serious he took the covenant between him and Jonathan. Stone then argues, "David and Jonathan are clearly represented, then, as having been closer than a simple political alliance. For these reasons and others, some readers of the Bible argue that a more intimate, and possibly even sexual, understanding of Jonathan's love for David is less forced than the political meaning and would be assigned more frequently to the texts that deal with relations between the two men were it not for the fact that biblical

interpretation so often takes place in contexts where sexual relations between men are automatically deemed unacceptable" (Stone 2021, 279). Moreover, Stone says, "Careful literary analysis of 1 and 2 Samuel has led some scholars to conclude that Jonathan is, in his relationship to David, characterized in ways that one would more likely expect from one of David's wives" (Stone 2021, 279). More importantly in looking at the many scholars who remark on the nuances of the relationship, Stone posits that, "As different as these interpretations are, they rest upon a shared recognition that Jonathan's literary characterization seems to involve a certain amount of gender reversal or transgression" (Stone 2021, 279)

"The fact that both David and Jonathan marry women and father children tells us nothing at all about the possibility that they may have had some sort of sexual relationship with one another as well. Inversely, it may also be anachronistic, however, to assume that the deep affection Jonathan and David clearly have for one another in the text would automatically signify a sexual relationship in the ancient world" (Stone 2021, 280). Stone appears to be an essential read as he points us to an awareness of our biases and motif in opting for either narrative to be correct. I, much like Stone, in this research am not interested in what the nature of their relationship was but rather I am interested in the conversation that their relationship (David and Jonathan) allows us to have about male closeness and possible male intimacy.

(iii) ***Beauty***

The beauty of the relationship of David and Jonathan is that there are no explanations, just expressions and actions to second the named feelings of love and an explicit verbalized need to be close. While David benefits from Jonathan, there is also beauty in that a few years later, in stability David is able to keep his covenant of loyalty not only to Jonathan but to his descendants. Mephibosheth, who was a man born disabled and a social outcast, finds a place at the king's table because of the covenant that Jonathan made to David.

In the following scenes, David expresses how he is grounded in his masculinity and this can be seen in the following actions, (i) firstly, he allows an unexplained closeness between him and Jonathan. In the work by Dean titled *David and Jonathan or Considerations relating to friendship: In A Series of Letters from A Father to His Son, (1845),* Dean would differ with me in my observations because he says by Jonathan giving his robe and giving it to David and his armor was to show his great regard for him and to honor him. Jonathan must have been struck with admiration of David's courage. Another thing that awakened the admiration and love of Jonathan for David was the fact that he was influenced by lofty motives in undertaking to fight

the Philistines. Most persons in Jonathan's place would have been a little envious. But not so with Jonathan. He was the first to do full justice to David's merits and to give him his heart (Dean 1845,9).

I acknowledge that male closeness, male intimacy and male bonding as termed by Macelaru, is the various ways of creating conversations about male closeness as inadvertently *gay* or *homosexual*. I also note that much work in Biblical Queer Scholarship place David and Jonathan under similar scrutiny, arguing that David and Jonathan had an *'unnatural'* love for each other and that it was sexually charged; although there is not much textual evidence to this nature except for nakedness in front of each other and the declaration of love from Jonathan and David's loyalty to Mephibosheth in honor of his relationship to Jonathan. I agree with scholarship that frames this within queer understanding of male closeness because the term queer is inclusive and allows for fluidity, especially that the text itself remains ambiguous about what type of relationship David and Jonathan had precisely. However, in a large frame of the text one can capitalize on the ambiguity offered in the text and the queer reflections of the text in that the ambiguity provides a platform for those who do not conform to the heteronormative-masculinities - who for one reason or another form part of the subordinate masculine identity. In ambiguity, there is flexibility and an openness that leaves room for growth and space in the Christian religion for those who identify as queer.

In my view, David's flexibility and absent fear of such male closeness becomes a model for understanding the process of coming of age and how it frames his masculine identity. It is noteworthy that his recent marriage to Michal, who was Jonathan's sister, could have helped him feel at ease, even with the way male closeness is frowned upon. The narrator giving little narrative time to their expression of love could suggest how this male closeness is frowned upon at least in the immediate context that gave birth to the text.

Many interpret the relationship between David and Jonathan as more romantic than friendship. Subsequently, in society David and Jonathan if read as a romantic would be interpreted as living in a gay relationship. In Africa these connections, led to HIV, because many in Africa believe that it is how homosexuality arrived in Africa. Nyambura Njoroge and Ezra Chitando in *Recognising Diverse Male Sexualities and Challenging Gender Based Violence (Judges 19:1-30)* focus on HIV in Africa as well as the need to talk to men who have sex with other men in African churches, largely because they are also sleeping with women. The key argument is that "homosexuality is un-African and un-biblical and Western. The two in their study argue

for redemption for non-heterosexual men and distinguishes homosexual violence/rape from consensual homosexual relations. The method employed is dependent on the contextual Bible model which depends on a close reading of the text as ordinary readers of the Bible and allowing it to speak for itself" (Njoroge and Chitando 2016).

Furthermore, Van Klinken makes mention of scholars like Tinyiko Maluleke, Fulata Moyo, Gerald West and Ezra Chitando with African women theologians as issues concerning gender masculinities and HIV and AIDS as key conversational partners who work with the Bible and the church on negotiations of formulations of masculinities and sexuality establishments. Van Klinken makes special mention that "for the church in Africa sexuality as a topic remains a taboo therefore there is no free flow of information and communication on the subject until more recent years. He also points out that, this means sexuality as it is lived out and expressed remains at the mercy of those who have the power to make decisions and, in this case, it is the men and predominantly heterosexual males" (Van Klinken 2012,16).

Liubov Ben-Nun, in *The Family and Diseases of King David: Medical Research in Biblical Times from the Viewpoint of Contemporary Perspective* (2015), makes a comment on the various narratives found in 1st and 2 Samuel such as the following cases. In the case of David and his relationship with Jonathan, David appears to see their covenant as everlasting. In life Jonathan loved David so much and gave him his clothes and in death David honours Mephibosheth and this presents him as honourable and he is seen as a reliable partner. Ben-Nun also makes the example of the affair between David and Bathsheba. Bathsheba falls in the hands of a king who will do anything to ensure his name is cleared, including killing Uriah. The author also makes an example of how Bathsheba and David were both married and yet had unprotected sex and the author questions what problems that could create in terms of health. In their case, health diseases were not an issue however, but Uriah had to die and a baby is born and dies subsequent to the birth which many have connected to the initial sin. The health aspects of each or most of the narratives in Samuel are accessed and questioned with contemporary issues and what can be learnt.

When analyzing the relationship between David and Jonathan some of the coming of age themes that are coming up in this analysis include firstly, an in-depth understanding of male to male submission. Jonathan submits his authority and right to kingship to David without a fight. This type of submission insinuates great leadership skills in the life of David. Secondly, when Jonathan makes a declarative statement of his love for David, David accepts this endorsing and

normalizing openness to male closeness. Furthermore, Jonathan and David's relationship presents many aspects of male closeness and male intimacy. This can be seen when David and Jonathan change in front of each other and it can also be seen when Jonathan chooses David over his position as the son of King Saul. The openness to male intimacy and closeness suggests a flexibility within a patriarchal Israel society, showing that if one is to be progressive, they should not be scared to break the societal norms and expectations. In my reading of the societal norms and expectations of male-to-male relations, this had no precedent at this time and context. Yet, the concept of love and families are redefined by David and Jonathan in their close relationship. Jonathan as the rightful heir of King Saul at his death is not seeing David as a rival and prioritizes his love for David over his love for his father and family heritage.

From this scene of David and Jonathan, I can further learn that: (i) The concept of love and families can be redefined if we broaden our understanding of the process of coming of age and the constructions of masculine identity and that (ii) The relationship between David and Jonathan can be essential in reframing masculinities to embody the following qualities: compassion, kindness, warmth and loving. This normalizes male emotional expression and does not consider it a failed or a weak masculinity.

5.3 Scene 3: David and Abigail

5.3.1 Summary of Basic Issues Distilled from the Narrative Analysis of David and Abigail

Based on *Scene 3 (David and Abigail)*, these are some of the key observations in so far as how one comes of age and how masculinities are constructed: firstly, the narrator introduces the readers to the character Abigail who overrides and brings into question, everything that up to this time has been understood as manly, masculine and as forming manhood or what I call the 'true man'. Abigail defies the solid masculine structure and decides without her husband and he goes to seek a peace treaty outside the knowledge of her husband. David was determined to fight Nabal and his men for disregarding him, as coming-of age David's identity is rattled because his masculine identity is questioned, yet David is open to forgiving Nabal. Abigail performs what is manly and performs masculinities which bring into question what a 'true man' is. Unheard of also until this time, David listens to Abigail and accepts the apology - hindering David from going to war with Nabal and his men. David defies what is masculine and listens

to counsel from a woman, Abigail. This shows that David is willing to see and work with women as equal partners in leadership. David here embodies a masculine identity that acknowledges the strength of women who are independent of the male. Lastly, David is seen as regressing in his masculine identity because he marries Abigail while she was still grieving and appears to be acting out of self-pleasing.

5.3.2 Focus on Constructions of Masculinity

i.) Violence/strength

David confesses twice in the text what he sought to do to Nabal and his men, which was to kill everyone. In vs.13 he informs his army to prepare for war and is ready and travelling in vs.14 with 400 men to fight Nabal for disrespecting his polite invitation to partnership. David for a second time, in vs.34, when in conversation with Abigail, confesses that his plan was to end all of Nabal's men as he says, 'if you had not rushed to meet me surely by morning light no males would have been left of Nabal.' Violence seemed as the standard way to respond after his identity and masculinity had been undermined by Nabal. I see strength in David in his ability to take advice from Abigail and to stop any plans, including bloodshed. While in the normative sense strength can only be measured and seen physically by conquering and killing Nabal's men, David's ability to stop and listen becomes a much more needed strength. However, regarding strength as defined in Clines, David would have been seen as falling outside the expected margins.

ii) Wisdom/persuasive speech

In this episode I see two different kinds of persuasive speeches. One can be seen through David and the other through David's engagement with Abigail. David being able to persuade 400 men to go to war and leave 200 men at home guarding their material and belongings shows that David was a good orator and had great leadership skills. The ability to bring 400 men and persuade them that going after Nabal's men was the next perfect course of action shows that he was persuasive.

While until this time the focus has been on David and how he conforms/forms and informs manhood or masculinity, Abigail is used here to show the possibility of a shifting frame of what constitutes manhood and masculinity. David's honor allows this type of focus into her personhood and role in masculinity construction within the world of the Old Testament text.

The kind of persuasive speech is the one offered by Abigail. Abigail saved the people of Nabal because on hearing what her husband had done, she rolled out a peace-offering plan. It must have taken a persuasive speech for an army to listen to her speech and implement all her instructions. Also, her persuasive speech convinced David to change his course of planning to destroy all of Nabal's men. Her role in this narrative bid the question, 'What happens to women who can do everything that a man can do?' Madipoane Masenya in *Without A Voice, with a Violated Body - Re-reading Judges 19 to Challenge Gender Violence in Sacred Text,* writes with the concern that, women in South Africa remain on the margins of society and are in most cases voiceless. Not only are their voices silenced or taken away but they continue to face violence in its varying degrees. She argues that the real problem she attempts to address can be attributed to South Africa being a country that is highly patriarchal and as such female voicelessness becomes a theme which is sustained by dangerous conceptualisations of masculinities as well as violent biblical hermeneutics (Masenya 2012,45). Masenya would celebrate Abigail and her ability to stand up for herself. Through the work of the narrator and the positioning of Abigail, what Masenya desired would be accomplished in that she, Masenya, uses the Hebrew Bible with a *bosadi* (womanist) approach which says; (i) the ideal readers should be the local South African woman - pointing out the oppressive elements of the African culture, (ii) a critique by the South African women of the oppressive elements of the Christian Bible, though she does argue that the Bible does contain liberative elements if read in a gendered manner.

This raises a methodological concern in that Masenya's method with the *bosadi* suggests that for the Bible to be liberative it should be read by the women, only women can speak authentically on women's issues and their lived experiences become central to the whole narrative re-reading. Masenya also challenges women to rise against patriarchy in the church and in society and in so doing they regain their voices. The limitation in this approach is that the systems of patriarchy could be so tied up that it is impossible to have an actual stage to begin critiquing the existing systems. Abigail is redemptive to women and redemptive to those men who seek to create a more conducive atmosphere for women within a dominantly patriarchal society, which remains the case especially in South Africa, where this research is written from. Furthermore, Sarojini Nadar in *Changing the World: The Task of Feminist Biblical Scholars* (2009) begins by showing that, "reading the Bible not only is context and literary reading of the text. The historical critical methods are essential in contextual methods and understandings" (Nadar 2009,51). Nadar draws on the work of *Cheryl Exum* (1993) who

argues that *literary critical* approaches are to be viewed as complementary when working with the biblical text. She, unlike Masenya (2012), 'permits' or acknowledges the work that has been done by males as they work on feminist biblical studies focusing on *liberation and enculturation and the epistemological category*. This method in many cases excludes experiences of women on culture and subjection to patriarchy. Scholars such as Musimbi Kanyoro (2002) introduce methods in feminist cultural hermeneutics. However, Masenya (2012) is critical of the method of reading the Bible as she argues that feminist hermeneutics demonize the African culture holistically. Lastly, in order to benefit from the character Abigail, I want to consider the work of Susanne Scholz in *Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Retrospect* which says in terms of method some work has focused on the method of 'Behind the Text – Within the Text and In-front of the Text' – as she suggests that, "in existing questionable practices, it is important to establish liberative ways of reading and understanding the Bible for women" (Scholz 2017,3).

Unlike Masenya who in her method places much importance on the role of the narrator, Scholz suggests a focus on interpretations of female characters and possible liberation themes. Scholz concludes that it is further important to see the intersectional locatedness of women. She posits that, "the awareness of social location not simply in terms of gender but also in terms of race, ethnicity, class and socio-political setting grew" (Scholz 2017,23). Dube et. al in, *(2002)* has produced instrumental work in feminist gendered readings of the Bible with a postcolonial context also encompassing African Biblical Interpretation. More recently, she has focused on queer and ethnic hermeneutics and what they reveal on social constructions of biblical meaning. Dube primarily recognises how a western reading of the Bible is potentially oppressive and patriarchal. In her work with the book of Matthew she attempts to offer a more local, relevant and insightful reading which honours the needs of women in two-thirds of the world. *Dube (2002)* and *Scholz (2017)* both agree that social location is important because it allows for very specific and particular contextual reality understanding.

The narrator's projection of Abigail in this context and social-settings sets up the reader to be inquisitive and wonder what the author sought the contemporary readers not to miss. Charlene van der Walt in her work *Hearing Tamar's Voice: How the Margin Hears Differently Contextual Readings of 2nd Samuel 13:1-22*, offers the tool of intercultural Bible reading space. She explains that "it was developed out of the combined hermeneutical framework of feminism and African hermeneutics. Feminism argues for the importance of the contextually embedded voice of the individual while African hermeneutics theoretically offers a communal

space where the voice offers transformation from a situation to multiculturality to interculturality" (Van der Walt 2012,183). The praxis of the intercultural Bible reading process as explained by Van der Walt, implies the coming together of diverse individuals from different cultural backgrounds within a safe space that allows for the interaction between individuals and culturally diverse biblical texts. The intercultural Bible reading allows me to read the story of Abigail and be able to make sense of my cultural place as a woman and the continued gendered negotiations.

iii) Beauty

In vs3 Abigail is defined in the following way: as (i) the wife of Nabal, (ii) intelligent and (iii) beautiful woman. I have observed that it is very rare that a woman is referred to as all the three at once, usually you are either married, beautiful and married or intelligent. The narrator could have been teaching the readers something important. The important thing could be that Abigail makes nation-saving decisions. For example, when Nabal has annoyed David, Abigail is able to apologize and speak to David as a woman and be heard. The intelligence component, which is mostly attributed to the male gender, surfaces in the life of Abigail when she is able to act wisely without consulting Nabal and yet still makes commendable contributions to the situation of David and Nabal. In a similar work, Nelly Njeru and Pauline Njiru (2013) acknowledge the "power and authority that men have especially in leadership. The king under the influence of alcohol asked Vashti to parade her beauty in front of his guests and the queen refused" (Njeru and Njiru 2013,23). For the authors, "African women are called using this narrative to challenge male authority and power over their bodies like Vashti and be prepared for whatever the price is of challenging masculinities" (Njeru and Njiru 2013,24). I argue that Abigail is in control of her beauty and balances this out by taking charge in other areas of her life, such as the running of day to day life when she resolves Nabal's problems.

In the David and Abigail scene, David does something that is atypical, which is to listen to counsel from Abigail a woman who is asking her not to express himself in a way that would show his strength and ability to be violent against Nabal. As though having similar contemplations as my own, Boyle concurs with my wonderings when she says, "Abigail's greatest achievement was that she calls David back to himself, his real self and helps David recover his identity. She is able to neutralize the volatile situation through her hearty persuasion" (Boyle 2001,35). Abigail accomplishing this as a woman speaks of the continued role that women have in the formation of identity of both their own male children and overall

male or female human interaction. Abigail could have remained timid and under the shadow of her husband, honoring the patriarchal system. However, her defiance of this system provided a platform for the preservation of Nabal's men and prevention of a lot of bloodshed.

In relating to the emotive self that I spoke of in an earlier scene, we learn about the different places of grieving, as shown by how quickly David rushed to take Abigail as his wife after the death of Nabal. I argue that because of the continued perpetuation of the true men as the non-emotive men, there appears to be an insensitivity in the rushed approach of David in that he does not allow time for Abigail to grieve the loss of Nabal. Similarly, as a lesson, I would argue that successful coming of age could include an awareness amongst the male figures on their position of privilege when making advances at women to prove their masculine identity as full and complete. David could have respectfully allowed Abigail to mourn the loss of her husband and when the time was appropriate to share his heart and desire to marry Abigail.

Moreover, while Abigail's boldness and brilliance are celebrated the conquest of Abigail as a wife seems expected by some of the scholars. Nicol (1998) argues that, "Whether David is swayed by Abigail's prophetic argument, her substantial gift, her beauty or a combination of all three it is not stated by the text. Yet David is honorable in that, despite Abigail's great beauty and intelligence David does not so much as contemplate an adulterous relationship with her" (Nicol 1998,136). The work of Nicol perpetuates a form of skewed masculinities that is clapping and celebrating what is simply expected of David. For an example, why should we celebrate that David does not contemplate an adulterous relationship with Abigail? Also, as an example, why do we celebrate that David sees and converses with Abigail as an equal human being? In my view, many constructions of masculinity still pre-dominantly celebrate men who have emphatic male dominance over the woman and because Abigail changes and destabilizes this norm, Abigail can be seen as undesirable to such individuals in society.

In my overall observation Abigail represents a liberation from the patriarchal system or rather she could be an embodiment of a changing frame of what masculinity constitutes. Again, the death of Nabal bids the question of was the death physical or symbolic of the unprogressive masculinity frame and manhood? Abigail survives punishment by the system and she does not seem to receive any judgement for speaking ill of her husband as well as taking decisions without his knowledge. In further contemplation, is it possible that David marrying Abigail shows that while systems are changing it is possible that not all systems will be liberating immediately? Based on all these assumptions and contemplations one may conclude that

masculinity construction and framing is a very engaging and complex process similar to the process of coming of age.

In framing masculinities, it is essential that David listen to a female figure, because now one can argue that one of the rites of coming of age and a sign of complete masculine identity could include learning to converse with women in a respectful manner. However, in relation to Abigail again, as Nabal's wife, going behind the back of Nabal and serving and prostrating before David was inappropriate at face value. In my context such behaviour continues to be reflected in that within religious settings, the wife honours the leadership of the church and has no regard for the husband whatsoever, leading to conflict and ego friction as the husband watches the wife honour other men and yet does not even respect her at home. Respect for women should be partnered with women respecting men likewise as a complete sign of coming of age and transitioning to adulthood.

5.4 Scene 4: David and Bathsheba

Summary of Basic Issues Distilled in the Narrative Analysis of David and Bathsheba

Based on *Scene 4 (David and Bathsheba*) some of the key observations in so far as to how one comes of age and how masculinities are constructed: firstly, David appears to be regressing again because we see David demanding Bathsheba to be brought to him for his sexual selfish pleasure. This stage is the liminal stage, where you know what is appropriate to do but would rather not because of selfish desires. David also brings his integrity into question as a full man because he sleeps with the wife of his army man Uriah and instead of apologizing and facing the consequences thereof. Furthermore, David, failing to conceal his actions of sleeping with Bathsheba, a wife to David, further regresses and brings his masculinity to question when he asks Joab to place him on the forefront of the battle so his death may appear as a mistake. David, 'suddenly', has come of age again as we see him making Bathsheba his wife. David in relation to Abigail is celebrated for not expressing himself sexually and later at an appropriate time marrying Abigail. Yet in the scene of David and Bathsheba, David sleeps with her using her authority. Stone says, "The ability of powerful men to 'take' women is not, however, unlimited in the books of Samuel or elsewhere in the Bible. This fact is apparent in the story of David, Bathsheba and Uriah that begins in 2 Samuel 11" (Stone 2021,286).

i) Violence/strength

In my view violence can be seen in the following instances. Firstly, by David taking Bathsheba a married woman to have sex with her to his pleasure. This is violent in a sense that it is against the will of Bathsheba or at least the narrator does not engage us in that space to know if Bathsheba willingly participated in the sexual encounter. Secondly, David is seen exercising violence when he sends Joab to put Uriah on the frontline so he is killed and his mistakes are 'concealed'. David does not physically kill Uriah but he sends out a command not to be questioned that led Uriah to be killed. Subsequently, David marries Bathsheba almost immediately after the loss of Uriah. The narrator is not clear in so far as the time frame involved, yet, if we follow the logic of the rising action and resolution within the plot, information provided would suggest that there was a short time frame in between the loss of the husband Uriah (widowed Bathsheba) and marriage to the newly wed (wife to David). In my own assessment, the violent act that David performs is that he marries Bathsheba amidst the grieving season. While marrying someone you have impregnated in most cases is seen as a redemptive action and perfect cleansing rite of passage, in the scene of Bathsheba, I argue it is a form of violence. David moving on and 'ending' grieving was violent as it did not allow Bathsheba enough time to grasp the loss of the husband and the child of adultery who had been conceived. The time frame is a difference of one verse from when Bathsheba receives the news of the passing of Uriah *(2 Sam 11:26)* and Bathsheba becoming the new wife of David *(2 Sam 11:27)*. Bathsheba, having to mourn Uriah while having the guilt of breaking their marriage vows, and after all this still having to marry the man who complicated her life, shows David expressing his strength and violence over Bathsheba. In my own assessment, the violent act that David performs is that he marries Bathsheba amidst the grieving season. While marrying someone you have impregnated in most cases is seen as a redemptive action and perfect cleansing rite of passage, in the scene of Bathsheba, I argue it is a form of violence. David moving on and 'ending' grieving was violent as it did not allow Bathsheba enough time to grasp the loss of the husband. Sadly, also, Bathsheba loses the child she reported in *(2 Sam 11:5)*, as seen in *(2 Sam 12:18).*

ii) Persuasive speech

David uses persuasive speech in this scene when he convinces the servants as well as Joab to go and bring Bathsheba a married woman so that he may enjoy himself for his sexual

satisfaction. Secondly, assumptively David used persuasive speech to win Bathsheba over to have sexual relations with him as well as to eventually marry him. While the narrator does not detail these portions of the scene, one can assume the latter or David must have used his power to make Bathsheba marry her after the type of mess and loss he had plunged her into.

When the narrator introduces Bathsheba there appears to be double identification. According to Stone, "It is very unusual in the Hebrew Bible to find a woman identified in the same verse as both the daughter of one man and the wife of another. Normally, one of these descriptors will be found but not the other, since in ancient Israel a woman was understood to move at the point of marriage from a position under the authority of her father to a position under the authority of her husband" (Stone 2021,286). Furthermore, "Commentators have scratched their heads over this double identification, of Bathsheba as both a wife and a daughter may actually serve the literary function of emphasizing the fact that David does not have automatic sexual access to her" (Stone 2021,286). In attempting to understand this double identification Stone says, "Within Israel's system of marriage, the acquisition of another man's daughter normally required negotiations with her father. By specifying that Bathsheba was both a 'wife' and a 'daughter', then, the text underscores the existence of obstacles in the way of David's sexual desire for her" (Stone 2021,287).

iii) Beauty

In this scene, we are quickly introduced to Bathsheba in vs 2 and 3 where she is explained in the following way: (i) bathing on the roof, (ii) a very beautiful woman, (iii) the daughter of Eliam and (iv) the wife of Uriah the Hittite. In my view, her showering on the roof opened her beauty up to be revealed and focused upon. Moreover, her beauty militates against her because she has drawn the attention of King David. Her relationship from this time forward is complex in that she has sex and is pregnant. Having sex as a married woman, the wife of Uriah, was the beginning of a complex life for both Uriah and Bathsheba.

Jake Aguas in *An Exposition of 1and 2 Samuel on Decision Making and Power*, 2019, puts into focus the life of king David and his decision-making skills into interrogation. Aguas uses French and Raven's bases of power to analyse the effectiveness of his leadership skills, as well as attempting to assess how modern-day leaders could engage and learn from the leadership of David as presented in 1 and 2 Samuel. An introduction to how Saul came into power and how power was transferred to David forms a critical point of analysis in their leadership skills.

David's victory and power are closely tied with his personal devotion to God and in contemporary situations the narrative application has been used to inspire sports teams, corporate employees and developing leaders. The story in Samuel separates power into positional and personal power. While positional power comes with advantages such as systematic unquestioned power, personal power comes into effect without the use of force or formal authority. Aguas seems to imply that both could be essential to modern day leadership and that holistic information seems to be crucial in formulating a 'great decision'.

Similar to the next episode, David does not give Bathsheba enough time to grieve Uriah and the loss of their child who died. Instead, most emphasis is placed on the grief of David. Not much attention is given to how Bathsheba moves from being the wife of Uriah, to having David sleep with her and impregnate her, to hearing about the death of her husband Uriah and to having to marry David and then to lose a child. In my context all these incidents put together would see a woman unable to bounce back even from one of them like the loss of a husband but we see Bathsheba pressured to keep moving amidst the various losses and changes. I argue that the emotive male should be brought to the centre of all relations for a successful coming of age process.

However, the last scene in this research project of David and Bathsheba, presents masculinity as progressive and having room for regression. This I argue because from the perspective of the progressive, confident David who does not need to prove his identity, David is acting irrationally as a small boy, making his servants act violently to a people that he is meant to be shepherding. In expressing himself in this way, he seeks to self-satisfy himself sexually, yet not only is he married but Bathsheba is also married. The web of complexity begins when he cannot control his urge for Bathsheba, which led to the unwarranted death of Uriah.

David as a leader stayed behind and did not go to war while other men did. David saw Bathsheba as he was walking on the roof of the house; whether this was his routine or not is not the focus of this analysis. What interests me as the researcher is that David inquired who this woman was and got full details, including that she was a wife to Uriah, one of the soldiers out in the war. I categorize the desire as natural and the notion of marrying multiple wives as also natural. Within the context of the text, however, David could have practiced self-control by not acting on a married woman. The lack of self-control was to be the beginning of a flood of problems disturbing his process of coming of age and his construction of the male identity. An ideal reframing of masculinity could suggest that men should know their limits and reduce

exposure to situations where they can get triggered sexually and compromised in so far as their conduct is concerned.

David shows the following in this episode. Firstly, he abuses the power entrusted to him. He chooses to feed his sexual desires rather than the wellness and respect of the people he was assigned to lead. Secondly, David involves the leaders in a difficult position as he asks them to be complicit and helpers in killing Uriah. To the readers, all these question his manhood, as at the end of this text I as a reader was now questioning his integrity and his masculine identity. Thirdly, David not only disregards the marriage bed, but he has no regard for Bathsheba. This is because after doing something hurtful to her, which was sleeping with her and killing her husband Uriah, David attempts to conceal the pregnancy, rushed marrying Bathsheba, making everything about himself and his identity (or trying to safeguard how people see him). Lastly, David's sexual lusting and acting on the lust he had for Bathsheba makes me as the reader consider his maturation and his coming of age process.

Garsiel 1993 argues that, "Bathsheba is a tragic figure, involved without deliberate will in adultery and murder and is forced to marry in haste to escape the consequences. David is aware that he has done her a serious wrong…" (Garsiel 1993,256). Nicol (1998) is not sympathetic to Bathsheba but discusses both their roles in the whole situation and parallels it to the David and Abigail story as he says, "In the first story, even if David and Abigail may have felt a physical attraction from the beginning, they do not consummate that attraction until after the death of the husband. In the second story, David and the woman not only become quickly involved in an adulterous relationship, but there is a sense in which both are responsible for precipitating the husband's death by their adultery. Bathsheba, in reporting the pregnancy to David, cannot be supposed to be entirely innocent of Uriah's fate; whether implicitly or explicitly, that report demands some action of the king" (Nicol 1998,139).

David loses strategic focus in success. According to Longenecker, "the story of David and Bathsheba begins by noting that David is not where he is supposed to be, doing what he is supposed to be doing. His recent successes in battle have apparently left David complacent that his overall strategy did not need revision for the time being and complacent that his subordinates were capable of executing the current strategy on their own" (Longenecker 1993,267). In *Masculinity and Male Mortality in South Africa*, Ratele posits that "hegemonic masculinities are many things done by males that perpetuate the subordination of females to males and these include living dangerously, using illegal drugs, alcohol, unsafe driving, sexual

promiscuity and engaging in violence and conflict" (Ratele 2008,18). What David did endangered and cost Bathsheba in as much as all he does is celebrated as manly.

Longenecker and Ludwig, in *the Bathsheba Syndrome: The Ethical Failure of Successful Leaders,* posit that, "many ethical violations by upper managers are the by-product of success not of competitive pressures. Our research suggests that many managers are poorly prepared to deal with success. First, success often allows managers to become complacent and to lose focus, diverting attention to things other than the management of their business. Second, success, whether personal or organizational, often leads to privileged access to information, people or objects. Third, with success usually comes increasingly unrestrained control of organizational resources. And fourth, success can inflate a manager's belief in his or her personal ability to manipulate outcomes. Even individuals with a highly developed moral sense can be challenged (tempted?) by the 'opportunities' resulting from the convergence of these dynamics. We label the inability to cope with and respond to the by-products of success 'the Bathsheba Syndrome', based on the account of the good King David" (Ludwig and Longenecker 1993,265).

Furthermore, Longenecker and Ludwig argues that, "These accounts describe a leader with a humble past, a dramatic and rapid rise to power, strong organizational skills, a charismatic personality, an eclectic approach to problem solving, a strategic vision for his people, and a man of high moral character. In his day, he was a man who had it all. He had power, influence, wealth, physical comforts, loyal servants, a strong army and a growing prosperous country. He was a king. Yet despite both the quality of his life and his moral character, King David was a leader who got caught up in a downward spiral of unethical decisions that had grave consequences for both his personal life and the organization that he was called upon to lead and protect. David's failings as a leader were dramatic and included an affair dramatic even by today's standards, the corruption of other leaders, deception, drunkenness, murder, the loss of innocent lives, and a "we beat the system" attitude when he thought he had managed to cover-up his crimes. The good, bright, successful, popular, visionary king, David, was nearly destroyed because he could not control his desire to have something that he knew was wrong" (Ludwig and Longenecker 1993,266).

"This ethical failure cost David dearly: the death of the child he bore with Bathsheba; the loss of his commander, Joab, who would later betray him; internal strife and conflict in his household for years to come; the loss of respect in his kingdom that led to future leadership

problems; the loss of valuable fighting men and morale among his troops; and extreme personal guilt that he was continually forced to live with. All of these dynamics created even less balance in David's life. David was finally confronted with his ethical failure by the prophet Nathan (who was in this case the spiritual equivalent of a secular modern-day whistle-blower) who led David to realize that his cover-up had been a failure" (Ludwig and Longenecker 1993,143).

In having sex with Bathsheba, David experienced a moment of weakness and he was human, like some of the leaders in my context; however, his refusal to own up to the consequences that come from a fallen stance shows what true men should not do. David puts himself in a harder position by refusing to admit his shortcomings and instead continues to kill Uriah, a man who was serving him and the people of Israel diligently. He now has bad blood on his hands. David was deceptive by asking Uriah to go home so as to conceal his mistake and Uriah died because of being honourable. Uriah refused to go home and be comfortable with his wife while his fellow men remained hard at war. In any context of leadership, it feels impossible not to make a mistake. However big the mistake, if done by a man who has come of age and has a pure masculine identity, he would have the integrity to own up to the mistake and meet the necessary repercussions rather than choosing further deception. David involved his leadership in attempting to conceal that which he had done against Bathsheba and a complete man would not involve his subordinates in any such thing as asking them to kill on his behalf. Here we see David resorting to violence to maintain his masculine identity.

Subsequently, in *Keeping David from Bathsheba: The Four-Star General's Staff* by Nathan Brett D. Weigel and Charles D. Allen 2017, they argue that "The 'Bathsheba syndrome' originates with the account in the Bible's book of 2 Samuel *(2 Sam. 11:1-6)* where King David abuses the power of his office to covet the wife of one of his officers who was away on campaign, a woman named Bathsheba. To prevent her husband from discovering David's affair, the king compounded his moral failing by arranging for the husband to be posted at the most dangerous point in a battle, where he was killed *(2 Sam.11:14-17).* David did not begin his career on the throne of Israel and Judah this way, but rather as a man renowned for his humility and moral character. However, his ethical judgment faltered as his success increased and David might have been corrupted wholly if not for the remonstrance of the prophet Nathan" (Weigel and Allen 2017,7).

Importantly "Although some commentators have blamed Bathsheba in part for this incident by suggesting that she bathed upon the roof in order to seduce David, it is important to note that

nothing is said in the text about Bathsheba's desire or consent. Indeed, the fact that her consent is nowhere recounted contributes to the argument made by some scholars that the story of David and Bathsheba can be read as something like a literary 'rape'" (Stone 2021, 287). In my view, the absence of consent from Bathsheba points to the powerlessness of Bathsheba and is very similar to the experiences of women in my context. In the work of Graybill, she says, "Sex and complications quickly ensue, leading to pregnancy, murder, and divine intervention. While often treated as either a royal intrigue or a compelling love story, the account is increasingly recognized as a narrative of rape" (Graybill 2021,58). Graybill notes how this is the shifting interpretation from the scholars as well as the general readers of the Bible using it in various forms of a reflective nature. Graybill presents that, "in reading and retelling Bathsheba's story, it is important— and important for specifically feminist reasons not to gloss over or minimize its fuzziness, messiness and sickness. Bathsheba's story resonates with so many contemporary stories of sexual violence because of its ambiguity, as much as because of its violence" (Graybill 2021,59). Furthermore, Stone strongly argues, "David's sexual contact with Bathsheba amounts to a kind of theft. The victim of this theft is apparently understood by the text to be, not Bathsheba (in spite of the fact that her own consent to David's sexual advances is never narrated), but rather Uriah, the man who has certain 'rights' to Bathsheba's sexuality" (Stone 2021, 289). The shift to focus on Uriah as the one 'who' is victim again further demonstrates the difficulty of the life of women. I see Bathsheba as needing to name her pain and fight for her victimhood status which is granted to Uriah freely. Graybill's work differs with my positionality when she says, "In reading the Bathsheba story, replacing a model of David as sexual predator with one of Bathsheba as perempted lets us explore female embodiment and subjectivity, as well as the forms of harm Bathsheba experiences, without collapsing these into an essentializing and flattening narrative of victimization" (Graybill 2021,59). In explaining her choice of work perempted Graybill says, "She is first and foremost "*perempted by narrative*' that is, the pull of the story, and the compulsory forms of narration and identification with the ostensible protagonist, David. In addition, she is perempted by masculinity in this case, by *Texts after Terror* the performance of masculinity that David exerts throughout the narrative. Even as the David story opens space for alternative imaginings of *masculinity and of how to inhabit a masculine body and self*, it perempts its women, Bathsheba first among them" (Graybill 2021,60).

Drinking and Males

Stone says, "David's apparent belief that Uriah is more likely to have sexual intercourse with Bathsheba when Uriah is drunk reflects a link found elsewhere in biblical literature between male drunkenness[7] and sexual activity" (Stone 2021,288). The connections have roots also in my context where most men blame their sexual rapes on others because of their drunken state refusing to be held accountable due to alcohol. This can be seen in *Gender-based Violence, Alcohol Use, and Sexual Risk Among Female Patrons of Drinking Venues in Cape Town, South Africa* where Pitpitan et al argues, "Alcohol use is associated with both gender-based violence and sexual risk behaviour… Consumption of alcohol increases risk via a number of mechanisms, including reducing social and sexual inhibitions, risky expectations, and the psychogenic effects of alcohol on decision-making" (Pitpitan et al 2012,3).

"Since most readers of the Bible today are, presumably, troubled by the treatment of women as goods that circulate for the benefit or detriment of men, it is unsettling to find that biblical literature represents the God of Israel as participating in this very treatment, at least on certain occasions" (Stone 2021,289). In the choice of words by Stone, when he says unsettling he distinctly appears to be aware of how most readers such as myself in this research are very sympathetic to Bathsheba and her victimhood that ended in incomplete grief. On the other hand, Graybill says, "The Bathsheba story is also messy. There is the messiness, both figurative and literal, of the murder of Uriah, killed in cold blood. There is the messy narrative of the birth and death of David and Bathsheba's child, followed by a second replacement child" (Graybill 2021,62).

Second Section: A Focus on Coming of Age Insights

5.5 Scene 1: David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17)

5.5.1 Coming of age insights, as discussed by Wilson

(i) *Noticing terminology as a key indicator of a character's status as a boy/man*

Boyhood in the context of the text seems to focus on role distribution. David's duties remained as taking care of the father's sheep and being sent to bring supplies for the older brothers, as

[7] Genesis 19: 30 Lot and his daughters.

seen in vs.15 (father's sheep) and in vs.22 (he is sent to bring supplies). The brother Eliab's questioning why he is at the mountain instead of taking care of the sheep in the wilderness shows that at his age this was what was his relegated duty.

(ii) *Noticing that a coming-of-age narrative will feature a boy acquiring and/or displaying qualities associated with manhood*

David is fighting for his shift in merely being viewed as a boy to being seen as a man. In vs.34, when he explains to King Saul that he has done not only sheep keeping but that he has killed both a lion and a bear with his bare hands it qualifies David as displaying features associated with manhood. The work of Clines would qualify him to transition as he has displayed qualities such as killing and violence that Clines says has characteristics of what real men do. However, because he did his 'wondrous manly acts in private' the situation of Goliath is providing him an arena to display qualities associated with being a full man.

(iii) *Noticing the presence of a rite-of-passage schema can help to identify a narrative as a coming-of-age story*

David fighting Goliath without dressing in armor does not help him qualify to be a man, however it points to his strength and gives him a proven record of manly skills. For the purposes of explaining coming of age within this research, *the rite of passage* could be killing or entering into a fight with Goliath. For entering into manhood there appears to be a need for a community to recognize and acknowledge the transition and this episode provides a place for David to showcase his transition and get the necessary acknowledgement. This positions masculinity in the world of performativity.

(iv) *Noticing in the characters changes that signify a boy's coming-of-age that must happen within the defined borders of an individual narrative for it to be considered a coming-of-age story*

David as the story ends is not only the shepherd boy or the boy who is trying to reach for things beyond him but he is now a full man. He has come of age because suddenly he firstly persuaded Saul to allow him to enter a fight with Goliath. Secondly, David had wisdom not to cause a scene with his brothers but rather to seek and honor the system by speaking directly to King Saul. Had David spent time quarrelling with his brothers, he potentially would have got into an altercation with them and if a senior had assessed the situation David could have been seen as immature and unfit to fight Goliath. Thirdly, David killed Goliath and as per the promise of

King Saul his reward was his daughter Michal. The huge transition is that David begins as a boy too young to fight at first and ends as a man 'ready' to have a wife. This short story then in my understanding serves as a coming of age rite of passage as he moves and changes identity within this one story from boy to husband. Lastly, David has come of age because from a small shepherd boy he goes home as the head of the men of war and also to be a husband of Michal.

5.6 Scene 2: David and Jonathan

Coming of age insights – as discussed by Wilson

(i) *Noticing terminology as a key indicator of a character's status as a boy/man*

The relationship between Jonathan and David allows a fluidity and an openness to male closeness that is David receiving both verbal love declaration and clothing of Jonathan that shows an openness to relating to male intimacy. Entering into covenant solidified their connection and it was essential because in the period that the text arises from covenant was irrevocable and unbreakable.

(ii) Noticing that a coming-of-age narrative will feature a boy acquiring and/or displaying qualities associated with manhood

Some of the qualities that David in this episode appears to be acquiring include an openness to experiment and experience as he was young and had just come of age and he is at the highest point of his identity formation and character formation. David here appears to have acquired the quality of remaining integral in a very difficult situation with special reference to the new conflict between him and soul. David appears to also have great resilience and strength to face reality which are key tools in the coming of age process. Lastly, in not resorting to fight Saul for his survival, David shows that part of the process of coming of age entails seeking internal strength.

(iii) *Noticing the presence of a rite-of-passage schema can help to identify a narrative as a coming-of-age story, although it is not necessary*

David accepts the gift of the following as named in *(1Sam.18:4)*:

- Taking of the robe that was on him
- Giving David his armor

- Giving David his sword
- Giving David his bow and his belt.

(iv) *Noticing in the characters changes that signify a boy's coming-of-age that must happen within the defined borders of an individual narrative for it to be considered a coming-of-age story*

Stripping in most stories of coming of age talks to change of status. It involves leaving the old self and meeting the new self. Here Jonathan has shared his nakedness with David which is a special bond. Also, a sword defined one's manhood and so the question is what was Jonathan giving David by handing over the sword?

5.7 Scene 3: David and Abigail

Coming of age insights - as discussed by Wilson

(i) *Noticing terminology as a key indicator of a character's status as a boy/man*

David begins this particular episode with normal traits such as firstly attempting to form partnerships, secondly promising to protect Nabal, his people and their wealth. Third and lastly, David's short temperedness as his ego is smashed by Nabal refusing to acknowledge his identity and manhood and societal position.

(ii) *Noticing that a coming-of-age narrative will feature a boy acquiring and/or displaying qualities associated with manhood*

I notice that David continues to display his manhood and acquire more for his manhood because as a response to what Nabal did in responding in a 'rudely/ nonchalant way David seeks to straighten the record by using a physical fight. This suggests that continually David needs to affirm his masculine identity and his manhood and this means one can lose status as a man anytime. Instead to avoid this, David seeks to kill all of Nabal's men by morning which is a typical response to a man seeking to prove his 'discredited or questioned manhood'. This insinuates that masculine identity is constructed continually and the status of one's manhood could change potentially anytime. This poses a high complexity in my view because it means that coming of age and becoming is never final and instead the identity can be withdrawn as and when you are deemed as less than expected.

(iii) *Noticing the presence of a rite-of-passage schema can help to identify a narrative as a coming-of-age story, although it is not necessary*

In this particular episode I argue that David's encounter with Abigail was a form of a rite of passage and he comes of age at this encounter. He comes of age because he is able to take counsel from a woman and change a structural, cultural view that men are in charge and in control and they give instructions and do not take instructions, especially from a woman. This shift in David's outlook on life suggests that he is comfortable as his own man and is not interested in affirmation from society. Secondly, David's proven ability to listen, receive an apology and not feel the need to act out and prove his manhood shows that he has come of age and has inner contentment in his manhood.

(iv) *Noticing in the characters changes that signify a boy's coming-of-age that must happen within the defined borders of an individual narrative for it to be considered a coming-of-age story*

In this particular episode I notice the change and transition in David as he verbalizes the role played by Abigail to save him from a tantrum. In feeling like his masculinity is undermined, David had set out to kill Nabal's men to establish his masculine identity. The marriage to Abigail is crucial to end this coming of age narrative.

5.8 Scene 4: David and Bathsheba

Coming of age insights – as discussed by Wilson

(i) *Noticing terminology as a key indicator of a character's status as a boy/man*

David here focuses on his sexuality and feelings of desire for a woman who he sees from his rooftop. The servants as shown in the text are clear that Bathsheba is a married woman but this does not stop David. This scene reveals David more as boy not yet come of age in that David is presented as having an uncontrollable edge and desire for Bathsheba. David on hearing that Bathsheba was married did not retract and use his rationale on the matter; instead he acts as a boy because he acts immaturely as a king by desiring and acting on his sexual desire for Uriah's wife. Secondly, David's desire to express himself sexually in Bathsheba, despite his status as king and as a married man, as well as Bathsheba being the wife of Uriah, one of his army men, shows that he is childish; yet in the case of Abigail, scholars applaud him restraining himself.

This brings into question what coming of age actually is and if it is a process that needs constant assessment and raises questions of what regression entails once someone has come of age. In the stage of coming of age, many are controlled by their emotions and act in any way that brings pleasure to their sexual desires and fulfillment. David appears trapped in his process, particularly in this episode.

(ii) *Noticing that a coming-of-age narrative will feature a boy acquiring and/or displaying qualities associated with manhood*

David in this episode demonstrates acquiring qualities associated with manhood according to Clines which are the violence and the persuasive speech. For David to ask the servants who assumedly respected him up until that time to go and bring Bathsheba, a married woman, shows that he capitalized on his power as king as well as persuasive speech. The narrator does not make time allowing the readers insight into the world of Bathsheba, however some persuasive speech is most likely to have been used to convince her to lie with him even though he was a married man. David assigning Joab to place Uriah on the front-line and ensure that he is at the heat of the battle also insinuates a degree of persuasive speech used by David to ease the conscience of Joab or to even ensure Joab takes his instructions as King. Lastly, David acquiring manhood qualities can be seen in the violence that he commits against Uriah. Instructing Uriah to be placed on the front-line that would advertently kill him was murder and violence.

(iii) *Noticing the presence of a rite-of-passage coming-of-age story*

The sleeping with Bathsheba could be considered a rite of passage within the coming of age conversation. Also, David impregnating Bathsheba could be symbolic of a rite of passage, further attesting to his manhood. For men the ability to have sex with the woman of their choice is a power issue and affirms his masculinity in the sight of other men. Fatherhood also plays a very significant role within most male narratives around the ability to make a woman conceive. David attaining both, outside the confines of his marriage, makes these regressive instead of progressive to his masculinity identity formation.

(iv) *Noticing in the characters changes that signify a boy's coming-of-age that must happen within the defined borders of an individual narrative for it to be considered a coming-of-age*

When looking at this particular narrative of David and his interactions with Bathsheba one can talk of regression and coming of age as non-linear. This is regressive compared to all that David had formed until this time, how he had come of age, been awarded a wife and chosen to be the head of the army. The assignment of big responsibility and the new role as husband and father would suggest that his coming of age process was complete. However, this appears to be brought into questioning by suddenly regressing and desiring to experiment and express himself. We see him controlled by his sexual desires over rationale. This shows how coming of age seems to be a non-linear process and seems not constant.

Third Section

5.9 Summative comments on the process of coming of age and transition from boyhood to manhood

The standard maturation process of transitioning from boyhood to manhood as lived out by David, holds expectations of performing violence and actions to show strength against whomever is considered as the other. Secondly, at least as espoused through the life of David presented in 1st and 2nd Samuel, in so far as coming of age and transitioning from boyhood to manhood, there is a need for performance of masculine characteristics and ideals set by the community. Typically, when you do those things set apart for men specifically, a community observe and qualify and welcome the boy from boyhood to manhood. There is power in the community of observers who accepted one's actions as less of a boy and more of a man. Lastly, some other basic manly expectations are: risk-taking, ability to protect and provide for the family and an openness to be taught, prepared and guided by those who have successfully transitioned from boyhood to manhood.

As observed in the life of David, because of status and a newly acquired successful transition from boyhood to manhood, David begins to reformulate and reconceptualize what coming of age and transition from boyhood to manhood encompasses. This can be witnessed by David's reluctance in subsequent narratives to act violently or show his physical strength. Moreover, like most forms of coming of age and transitions from boyhood to manhood, the story of David has a sexual component to coming of age. The sexual component begins from the trophy wife Michal, to David's fluid assumed homo-relation to Jonathan, to David's special connection to

Abigail who he later marries and lastly Bathsheba who becomes pregnant and is still married to Uriah. David embodies aspects of sexual risk taking and much sexual expression throughout the selected scenes of 1st and 2nd Samuel.

5.10 Arising themes from this research

1) The first observation is that masculinity construction is deeply rooted and developed, culturally, contextually and temporally. All the three mentioned contributing factors continuously change over time.

2) The second observation is that there are rituals and/or tasks that men have to perform in the process of acquiring their masculine complete identity from boyhood to manhood. In the biblical world, within the story of David one ritual that seems important is the coming of age process of cultural circumcision. It was fairly easy for me as the researcher to draw on the rituals because, within South Africa, where this research is written, there is a similar expectation in the Xhosa culture, which stipulates that a man *is only a man after going through circumcision in the mountain during the process known as 'Ulwaluko'*. This ritual is one of many ritual expectations for men to transition from boyhood to manhood.

3) The third observation is that the male body is at the center of the navigation process of coming of age and owning and constructing the masculine identity. This also presents the qualification of one into manhood as very performative. What is performed as masculine falls within the expectations of what is culturally, contextually appropriate at the time of the need of transition from boyhood to manhood.

4) The fourth observation is that if one compares the biblical expectations of the time of 1st and 2nd Samuel masculinity, to the 'contextual' expectations of masculinity or manhood in South Africa at the time of my writing there are many similarities in both worlds, such as the following: (i) men are expected to be strong, violent and take control, (ii) men are expected to be open to risk taking and not be scared or emotive and lastly (iii) there is a high focus on the penis.

5) The first and last observation is that coming of age is intertwined with constructions of gender, in this case constructions of masculinity. I found it difficult to conceptualize and explain constructions of masculinity without referring to coming of age notions.

The transition from *boyhood to manhood* encompasses the *notion of coming of age – 'age' being finally being a full man.*

5.11 Conclusion

This chapter was divided into three parts. It firstly focused on constructions of masculinity discussed within the frame of Clines and engaged with other scholars on masculinity constructions. The second section focused on constructions of coming of age within the frame of Wilson. The third section is the arising themes from this project. These themes will be the building blocks for Chapter 6 which provides limited contemplations around masculinity construction and coming of age and what ideo-theological resources could be built.

I made summative comments on the process of coming of age and transition from boyhood to manhood as the researcher. There remains much more work to be done, if the project expanded and focused on many more scenes; however, in so far as combining the coming of age process and constructions of masculinity and a special focus on the life of David, this research has made necessary observations, that can be used as a broader reflective surface for future post-doctoral work. Chapter 6 will be two part in nature, in that it will distill the arising themes gained from a close reading of the David Narrative Cycle. This will be read alongside the work of contemporary masculine theorists. The second part will be thinking about how these insights gained can be essential to contemporary readers who use 1st and 2nd Samuel as a reflective surface for understanding the constructions of masculinity.

I posit that engaging the masculinity elements which are: questions of strength, violence, sexual expression, societal expectations of men and cultural detects, to mention but a few aspects, provide a limited approach as most factors focus on pleasing an outside world and over performing to be accepted and endorsed. Coming of age allows an entry and introspection into the personal life of the particular man's life. I argue that the first step is the identification of the real problem in that the research attempts to address the existing problem. However, the masculinity problem is more structural and systematic and without including the coming of age theory, men remain discussed within a problematic system and do not personally become involved in identifying their role in their masculine actions. Combining the two methods allows the researcher to hold both the society and the individual man as accountable for their actions. While much work has been done around masculinities, what will be unique here is the use of my combined method in reading the David Narrative Text.

Chapter 6

Possible Ideo-theological Resources

6.0 Introduction

This chapter will have three sections. In the first section *(6.1)* I will name and expand on the themes gained by bringing together masculinity studies and the coming of age theory from a close reading of the David Narrative Cycle. These themes will be read alongside the work of contemporary masculine theorists. The second section (*6.2)* will be three part in nature and these parts will be firstly, *(a)* that it details the potential applicable insights gained from the selected scenes, *(b)* the second will begin to lay out how the Bible could be a reflective surface for use by contemporary men and thirdly *(c*) focuses on explaining what Contextual Bible Study (CBS) is, then spelling out how it has been used. I show the model steps used in constructing a Contextual Bible Study which will be foundational for the third section *(6.3*). I argue that in this research, using the model of the Contextual Bible Study makes the Bible a reflective surface. In using the CBS model, one is hoping to give examples of possible ideo-theological resources that can be developed. The third and final section of this chapter will be creative examples of possible CBS's that are developed using the scenes used in this research project. These Contextual Bible Studies could assist contemporary men and Bible readers to engage the text and gain ideo-theological resources.

6.1 Dominant Themes within the Research Project (Expansion on the themes gained, combining masculinity and coming of age)

6.1.1 Masculinity as cultural, contextual and temporal

The first observation is that masculinity construction is deeply rooted and developed, culturally, contextually and temporally. All the three mentioned contributing factors continuously change over time. By this I refer to how the study has shown that the cultural setting a man is in influences the conduct of what is expected from the individual. A boy at David's age is expected to be a shepherd and this is what he is and he is expected to be open to receiving instructions and being sent. In the first scene, we see David adhering to these cultural expectations. Also, I observed that what is expected of David shifts over time and this is what

I refer to as a temporally notion. The incident that comes to mind from the study is that David begins the day as expected only to be a delivery boy to his brothers who are at war and he ends the day as a leader of the army and as a husband. The two tittles namely leader of the army and husband require a lot more than what is required from a boy, yet his age has not changed. This I recognize to mean that the cultural designation of what is expected it tied to a tittle such as son, husband and grandfather as examples. This also illustrates that culturally masculinities expect something different from each man's identity and once one moves either from son to husband or from husband to grandfather the masculinity expectations change, showing how masculinity is not only cultural and contextual but temporal. The context also suggests that if the socio-economic dynamics changed in the particular context, what is expected as part of the masculine identity will change.

At the beginning of this study, as I selected the episodes to focus us on, I recognized that what could be learnt about David and his masculinity, in a narrative study of David, could only be attained by watching how David interacts with other characters and this could be traced by his words – what is said to him or how he responds to others. This is what I mean by the relational dynamic of masculinity which can be seen when David is read alongside a particular character. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, masculinity has an expectation element to it which is linked to the masculine tittles given at different stages. David is then measured in his shifting title from scene to scene. Moore enhances my argument when he says, "This means masculinity is enacted within a web of social relations between those performing different masculinities, forming a hierarchy. In sum, the criteria of what is deemed masculine is changeable depending on which culture and context one is analyzing and what social relations exist within them. If masculinity is situationally and culturally defined, there is not a universally normative understanding of what it means to be an ideal or perfect man. So, if masculinity is circumstantially defined, lauded hegemonic masculinity or masculinities must be too. Within a society, only a few men will actually demonstrate a hegemonically masculine performativity.

Yet, this hegemonic masculinity becomes culturally normative in the sense that the majority of men who do not act according to this ideal must place themselves in relation to it. It is from idealized behavior that we can work out what is considered hegemonically masculine and what actions deviates from those expectations" (Moore 2021,73). Above and beyond this, Moore endorses a theme that ran through most of my research. I understand that what is expected from David as a man is defined by his tittle which bears a cultural weight and this tittle is to find expression and performance within a particular contextual setting. This means I need to leave

room for what is expected of men in various cultural and various social settings in life. Consequently, in my suggestion of ideo-theological resources and the limitations of my research I need to notice and leave room in the research for such contemplations in framing masculinities that are specific to a culture and contextual setting. However, this specificity does not cancel that within the specific culture and contextual setting, there are dominant constructions of masculinity which have been termed in the work of Connell as hegemonic masculinity.

Within the framework of gender work, the expected masculine conduct forms part of what is best understood as the hegemonic construction of masculinity. According to Hearn, "Hegemonic masculinity then, is the masculinity that represents the practices and qualities that legitimate the privileging of men and that result in the subordination of women. It is not a singular and fixed form of masculinity that exists universally. Rather, it has different expressions across time and within particular social, cultural and geographical contexts. Hegemonic masculinity is a component concept within a theoretical model of multiple masculinities or masculinities theory operating within the critical studies of men. Within masculinities theory the internal hierarchical system evident with respect to masculinities shows a hegemonic form with the criteria for construction of other masculinities, notably, complicit, subordinate and marginalized masculinities, always premised on the relations that exist between them" (Hearn 2016,6). In my observation, culture and patriarchy inform hegemonic masculinity and yet not all men can live up to this ideal. The other men who cannot live up to this ideal (hegemonic masculinity) fall under some of the categories presented in the work of Connell titled: *Hegemonic masculinity: rethinking the concept*, where there is much focus on, "subordination, complicity and marginalization" (Connell 2005,11).

The presence of competing masculinities suggests that hegemonic masculinities do not only impact women but also impact those men who fail to meet the expectations, as they suffer due to these expected constructions of masculinity. An example from within my project is how David is expected to be a man and fight and kill Saul and in him not doing it some of his people lost their confidence in him and his masculinity. Another example is from the shortness of the story of David and Jonathan, one may assume that the context that gave rise to the text was uncomfortable with a man close to another man and this led to the shortened focus on the two characters. David and Jonathan being close to each other suggests that they have defied the hegemonic masculinity expectation and a brief focus could have been the way the author is reprimanding them for not complying to the hegemonic masculine identity. As part of the ideo-

theological tools being articulated in my research, I would like to offer men to reflect on what they consider the dominant constructions of masculinity in their society and how they are impacted or influenced by such dominant constructions. I argue that this reflective work could be pivotal in remapping non-toxic models of masculinity.

6.1.2 Transition to masculinity as inclusive of tasks/rites of passage

The second observation is that there are tasks/rites of passage activities, that men have to perform in the process of acquiring their masculine complete identity from boyhood to manhood. This was a key insight of this project and the combination of masculinity theory and coming of age. In my reflections I consider the scene of David and Goliath and David's conquest fulfils the basic example of a rite of passage. It begins with David being a boy, he enters the liminal stage when he is isolated and standing on his own waiting to fight Goliath. He comes back a man with Goliath's death and Goliath's head in his hand as proof of his manhood. He is a full man and reintegrated back into society to become a husband, the head of the armies and to assume many more manly expectations. Karras argues, "Given the importance of warfare and the physical prowess needed to conduct it in medieval societies, David's masculinity is paradoxical. He was a renowned hero who was physically weak until a miracle assisted him. His most famous military deeds were either in single combat as a very young man or carried out by others. Yet he came to be an exemplar of martial success. For both Jews and Christians, although in different ways, David's military triumphs are a reward for his obedience and faith; the message to laymen was clear" (Karras 2021,26). While contemporary scholarly work positions David's military prowess as nothing more than a spiritual miracle, David appears risk-taking by volunteering himself without any overt assurance of his survival.

In talking of the scene of David and Goliath as fulfilling the requisites of a rite of passage, I envision the public act to fight Goliath as a public performance that confirms his identity; however, David appearing and being ready to war and confirm his manhood seems incomplete in understanding the process of coming of age. Coming of age is a process rather than a complete once-off incident. I argue that through looking at the selected scenes of the David Narrative, David appears to continue to struggle with what coming of age entails for him. For an example, he is man enough and takes a public risk to kill Goliath yet alongside this, the narrator places the narrative of him being a small boy who is somewhere private shepherding his father's sheep and taking instructions from him. In the next scene we see David being

pursued by Saul to kill him and David who publicly killed Goliath, and privately killed a bear and David who killed two hundred men publicly is placed alongside David who is failing to kill Saul, one man. Moreover, the narrator is good also by placing David who kills Goliath who can cut off a head proudly and cut off the foreskins of two hundred men alongside; a David who can be loved by both Michal and Jonathan and a David who feels committed to Jonathan to the point of keeping his promise long after his death. These images show the complexity of coming of age and the image that best describes the writing of the author is the game of the see-saw played by children. It would seem at every stage of his life David is proving himself and reconfirming his identity continually. Therefore, in my observation, a huge component of the masculinity construction as one comes of age includes risk taking and requires public performance for endorsement of masculine identities.

6.1.3 The Male-Body

The third observation is that the body of the men is at the centre of the navigation of masculinity construction and coming of age shaping the masculine identity within the David Narrative Cycle. This also presents the qualification of one into manhood as very performative. What is performed as masculine falls within the expectations of what is culturally, contextually appropriate at the time of the need of transition from boyhood to manhood. This can be seen in a two-fold manner. Firstly, David performing using his male-body can be seen in the fight with him and Goliath. Karras poses an important reflection when he says, “In the original story the imbalance is due to David’s size relative to the very large Goliath, as well as to his inexperience in battle. The emphasis on David’s small stature in medieval retellings bears on the understanding of his manhood: is he small because he is a child or because he is weak and able to triumph only with God’s assistance?” (Karras 2021,23).

With a shift David acts again on the body of the 200 men, which could have cleared him as being manly enough, yet he continued to cut off the foreskins of the 200 men. David acts on Nabal’s rejection as he mobilized men to go and attack Nabal and his people. The other variant of David acting within the male body is when he acts on Bathsheba sexually. The cutting of the foreskins is significant because in the biblical world, it was expected culturally that men are circumcised eight days after birth. The narrator uses the cutting of the foreskins differently in that the narrator uses those foreskins to endorse David’s coming of age process. Stone says, “It is of course striking that one feature of Philistine men which is frequently stressed in the

books of Samuel is the fact that they are uncircumcised. More literally, they are represented as those who have foreskins. Although circumcision came to be interpreted as a sign of the covenant between God and Israel at some point in the development of Israelite religion, many of Israel's neighbors (including Egypt and Syria) seem to have practiced some form of it at certain times and places. In its origins, circumcision may have been understood in this part of western Asia as contributing to male potency or fruitfulness" (Stone 2006, 275).

It was fairly easy for me as the researcher to draw on the focus on the penis and circumcision as this forms part of the ritual of coming of age for Xhosa boys to transition from boyhood to manhood. Within the Xhosa culture, a man *is only a man after going through circumcision in the mountain during the process known as 'Ulwaluko'*. The work of Nissen (2000) is a bridge when he argues, "Body is the site of the practice and performance of gender, and at the same time, it is the site of human fragility and vulnerability. Gender is social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do, it is not social practice reduced to the body, hence the male body is not simply biologically determined. The physical appearance of a man can place him differently within the network of relative masculinities depending on how he fulfils the expectations of whatever is considered to signify ideal masculinities" (Nissinen 2016,228).

David, because of his body and that it performed in an expected way, was promoted to be husband, army leader and he eventually sat on the throne. However, it is important to note that the body is neutral until a certain context stipulates that a certain gender culturally is accepted if they do the following. This means that masculinities are constructed culturally and contextually and when the two change masculinities change. In the same strand, Macelaru argues, "Masculinity is a socio-cultural construct: it consists of assumptions and beliefs, it is practiced in social interaction (relationships) and it finds expression in attitudes, behaviour, actions and speech. From these it follows that an inquiry which has 'masculinity' as its object will consider observable features such as one's appearance, the manifestation of assumptions in one's actions and relationships, and elements of self-definition revealed by one's speech" (Macelaru 2014,56). Within the limited scope of my observation I argue that coming of age is intertwined with constructions of gender, in this case constructions of masculinity. I found it difficult to conceptualize and explain constructions of masculinity without referring to coming of age notions. The transition from boyhood to manhood encompasses the notion of coming of age – 'age' being finally being a full man.

Within the scope of the selection of my Davidic Narrative scenes, three out of four include sex with someone. In the David and Goliath scene, David is awarded Michal as a reward wife for killing Goliath and sex is a part of their new relationship as was expected of a married couple in the context of the text. In the David and Abigail incident, while in the first interactions, sex is not at the fore, the narrator does explain Abigail as beautiful; later Abigail is taken to be the wife of David. In the David and Bathsheba scene, David yearns and lusts for Bathsheba to satisfy himself sexually and later takes Bathsheba as a wife. I left out the David and Jonathan scene although much debate continues over the nature of their relationship. A sexual allusion to this particular relationship can be seen when Jonathan strips and gives David his clothes. Not only is stripping part of the set up necessary for sex to happen, it seems highly difficult to comprehend why Jonathan was comfortable stripping and at some point, possibly naked in David's presence. Sex entails control over the other person; this means control is one of the things that one attains in affirming or keeping their masculine identity. On the other hand, the work of Stone would be opposed to my insinuations, because he argues "Biblical scholars have often noted, correctly, that the language of 'love' was sometimes used in the ancient Near East to describe political relationships between kings and their subordinates. Thus, quite plausible arguments can be made that texts referring to the 'love' of Saul for David, of Jonathan for David, or of David for Jonathan had in the ancient Near East primarily political rather than sexual or romantic connotations…" (Stone 2006, 278). In a later comment, Stone says, "the specific comparison that David makes between Jonathan's 'love' and 'the love of women' ('your love was more extraordinary to me than the love of women' (2 Sam. 1.26)) is somewhat unusual even within the framework of those ancient Near Eastern political 'love' relations to which biblical scholars frequently appeal" (Stone 2006, 279).

David's sexual desires find expression in his relations with the mentioned individuals, thereby asserting power and control over them. I claim that he has power and control over them, because in relating to all the above-mentioned characters David is in control over them in one or another submitting to him. In the case of Michal, we see the father volunteering her as a reward to any men who would kill Goliath. In the case of Abigail, it does not seem like Abigail grieved enough before she became the wife of David. In the case of Bathsheba, little is shared again about her own volition to enter into sexual relations with David and also when the narrator explains how Bathsheba became a wife to David, there is almost no break to grieve that Bathsheba takes to grieve Uriah her husband. This shows how men have control over men and women alike. In developing ideo-theological resources, it is crucial for men to be able to

objectively identify men's privilege, whether conscious or unconscious, so as to work on letting go of the power and control over women and men alike.

6.1.4 Hegemonic notions of masculinity

The fourth observation is that if one compares the biblical expectations of the time of 1st and 2nd Samuel masculinity, to the 'contextual' expectations of masculinity or manhood in South Africa at the time of my writing, there are many similarities from both worlds, such as the following: (i) men are expected to be strong, violent and take control, (ii) men are expected to be open to risk taking and to not be scared or emotive and lastly (iii) there is a high focus on the penis. Zsolnay says, "In the ancient patriarchal world, the empire was a male-dominated institution. As such, it was the stage for hegemonic and marginalized masculinities, marginalization being 'relative to the authorization of the hegemonic masculinity in the dominant group'. The hierarchy of masculinity emerged as a system of relations of hegemony authorization, and marginalization both in the ancient Near East in the Hebrew Bible. This system produced a spectrum of masculinities dependent on the social class, age, and the religious and political status" (Zsolnay 2016,23). A recognition that both the world of the text and my world are patriarchal is foundational to understand the concept as the hegemonic masculinity is predominantly macho.

To further elaborate, on understanding the macho, Karras says, "Strength, both physical and emotional, is a common feature of masculinities across societies. Physical strength allows the successful use of violence, or at least its threat. Emotional strength may lead to abstention from violence, but its use as a component of masculinity relies on a clear understanding that it is good judgement or superior power, not fear or inferiority, that allows the wielder to avoid violence. Thus, a man is able to avoid demonstrating his strength through using violence if he had already proven himself able to do so" (Karras 2021,24). "David's youth and slight stature also feature in his other introduction story in (1Sam.17) where he fights Goliath, but is unable to wear Saul's battle armor. Even in that story, however, he possesses one of the primary markers of masculinity: the ability to win in battle. Though his technique is not classical, his cleverness and skill help him defeat the enemy who had terrified everyone else. Later, he demonstrates continued success both in fighting and in leadership, winning many battles. He is a virile man, having several wives and concubines and numerous sons" (Haddox 2016,11).

In using negation, the man who is less inclined to fight or kill, a man who shows more emotion and tears, is in my context easily assumed as gay, which is a wing of homosexuality. In referring to the David Narrative Text, the closeness between David and Jonathan would make individuals who accept and expect a man to be macho to be very uncomfortable. I celebrate David for not feeling a pronounced need to clarify his relationship with Jonathan. In thinking about ideo-theological lessons drawn from the character David, the comfortability around men-to-men closeness and a shift from the macho man could be beneficial within my context in South Africa where hate crimes (homophobic crimes) continue to rise. This is despite the presence of acceptable legislation allowing homosexual persons to marry.

From these limited observations one can recognize the complexity of this narrative, even with the special focus of the four scenes. Enlisted above are some of my limited well-thought conceptualized understandings of constructions of masculinity and the process of coming of age. Koenig argues, "the manifold studies on David agree that he is a complex and multifaceted character, so even when those studies do not focus exclusively on David's masculinity, it is no surprise that people have seen different sometimes competing expressions of David's masculinity. This is particularly true when a specific aspect of David's story is considered: David is the musician and poet, the sensitive man. Or, David is the warrior, killing bears, lions, "tens of thousands" (1Sam.18:7), and even a giant. David is the quintessential potent man, in battle and in bed. Or, David is a man after God's heart (1Sam.13:14), obedient to YHWH to the point of accepting YHWH's punishments. Indeed, there are a number of ways to read David's masculinity" (Koenig 2015,490).

From the observation of the scenes it is impossible to conclusively say what David is offering to the discourse of masculinity and coming of age to those men that use 1st and 2nd Samuel as a reflective surface. However, this does not mean we must not keep trying to make use of the wealth found in the Narrative Text which is part of the sacred texts. Sharp, in an earlier work, argued that, "Sacred texts deal with matters belonging to the gritty stuff of experience and matters belonging to the soaring heights of the spiritual imagination. They catalyze convergences and clashes of culture within and among communities. Sacred texts invite their readers to interpret suffering, to seek healing and enlightenment, and to make sense of the intersections between holy and profane. Discerning appropriate language to mediate between holy and profane is no easy task for any writer, ancient or contemporary. Deciphering meaning in Israel's sacred texts is no easier for the reader" (Sharp 2004,7). I posit that though the findings from reflecting carefully on the selected pieces of the life of David can be limited,

they are still beneficial within the resource building world of tools of understanding constructions of masculinity and coming of age for contemporary men.

As an observation of all four scenes, what I recognize is that the coming of age and construction of the masculine identity continue to be unstable and nonlinear. In some cases, David appears to have come of age and possess a great masculine identity; however, this seems to change, at least in the selected scenes of this research. This I then argue means that construction of identity and masculinity is continuous and this gives an opportunity to contemporary men who are willing to change and adapt to more constructive masculine identities and more life-giving processes of coming of age. In the next section I will discuss some of the very general insights for contemporary men to consider that I gain from an overview of the selected scenes in this research. The points contained in the next section are essential in that it is things that men have already been doing such as risk taking, but I am asking them to have different governing rules of what one can take a risk for. Working on building ideo-theological resources from frames that already exist is important, because I argue that this allows for slow but intentional change. Contemporary men could feel that the methods are still the same and we are not going to be looked at as less manly as we live out our masculinities.

6.2 The Bible as a frame of reference: contextual bible study applied

(a) Potential applicable insights from the scenes

In a close reading of the selected scenes of the David Narrative Cycle, I tried to understand the process of coming of age and constructing masculinities. I thereby came to recognize that even in refining the process of masculinity construction, not all things were inappropriate and I did not need to throw out the container but to find ways of bettering the existing tools within the scope of coming of age and masculinity constructions. Working within familiar parameters is also essential because the contemporary men could continue operating in the masculinity frame that they are familiar with and alter small things to get better results from lived out masculinities. I argue that the following could inform contemporary men on how they can go forward:

- In the selected scenes, risk-taking is already expected of men and here I suggest that men should still be willing to be risk-takers, stepping out of the bounds of what is normative. However, the risk-taking could have its primary purpose to change or save

a life and to work to be bold enough to take the risk of standing up against existing toxic masculinity expressions. This means the risk taking should not be about enforcing their manhood and affirming their selfish desire but rather to reinforce life-giving ways of being a man in society.

- In the selected scenes I recognized that manhood appears somehow associated with physical stature and that a boy is a boy if he is this age. The ability of David to move in a day from being just the shepherd boy to being a husband, meaning a man, suggests that we can learn that age is not important in the coming-of-age process. Age should not be the only determinant of if someone is a man or not but rather focus could be turned on to how responsible one is. The measure of if one is a man could be assessed by the ability to be consistently responsible to the daily demands of life and showing up with a willingness to tackle tasks.

- In the scene of David and Jonathan, David receives the love declaration of Jonathan and in as much as this men-to-men closeness appears as abnormal, David is open to this closeness. Similarly, in the scene of David and Abigail, David is open to take counsel from Abigail as a woman and again this is not the norm in the selected scenes. It is not the norm in these scenes in that we have not heard women speak, or be a part of the conversation but rather the women have been silenced and say as little as possible. This did not stop David from listening to Abigail, making him not enter war and commit violent actions to prove his manhood. This I then suggest in learning contemporary men can promote an openness to conversations with people outside the realms of what they perceived as ‘right or normal’. This would entail men shifting from focusing on the shaming element of masculinity, the men ego and the competitive nature of proving their manhood to endorsing that the only competition that is appropriate is one against the yesterday version of oneself.

- In closing all scenes, as one looks at all scenes, the missing element is the ability of being humane and seeing the humanity in others has been lost. This can be seen firstly in the scene of David and Goliath. While a fight between the two could be normal, David killing Goliath means he has stopped seeing the other person as a human being. The ability of David to cut Goliath’s head off and carry it away showing it off to people to show that he is a man is very animalistic rather than humane. In that same scene we see that David has killed the two-hundred men and him finding it acceptable to cut off

their foreskins after their death seems like a high commitment to his masculine identity and it is very inhumane. The second example is that, the approach of Nabal to David is wrong because fundamentally, he fails to see David as human and this triggers him into wanting to kill to clearly show that he is a man. Also, for David to just marry Abigail after the loss of her husband in the spur-of-the-moment shows how David fails to see Abigail as human and needing time to process this loss. The third example is that, in the scene of David and Bathsheba, David fails to see Bathsheba as human, but I argue that he sees Bathsheba as an object to satisfy his sexual urges. Subsequent to this, he is not human as he fails to see that Uriah is the husband of Bathsheba and is at war fighting for his people. Reducing a human life to a sexual moment and sex leading to the loss of the life of Uriah is very inhumane. Furthermore, the confidence of David to marry Bathsheba, a woman whose husband he just killed, appears fundamentally callous and inhumane. I therefore argue that contemporary men need to make the conscious decision to see others as human and to not do an inhumane action in a desperate desire to be seen as a 'true man'. Therefore, I argue that in going forward contemporary men, could make a commitment to honor all of humanity broadly and restore what we call 'ubuntu' at the center of every fiber of exploring the coming of age process and living out one's masculine identity.

Except for the above examples of possible ideo-theological resources that can be gained from a close reading of 1st and 2nd Samuel, in understanding coming of age and constructions of masculinity, again I argue that there is still more that can be drawn from the text. In employing a similar strategy of introducing less new things when asking for change in the construction of masculinity processes, I posit that we could capitalize on men who are already readers of the Bible and who are comfortable to use it as a resource. This would mean that we go to men who are comfortable in using the Bible as a reflective surface. It would mean that the men are, (i) either just attending church following their wives, (ii) it would mean that these men are personally accepting of the concept of religion being central to their lives and (iii) as still is the case in many religious sectors, men continue to be the leaders and so the men are here with that authority of a deity backing them or themselves as miniature versions of the deity. The big observation I made at the beginning of this study which formed part of the research problem was that, the media has been populated with scandals within the religious sector, for an example a priest raping young boys or pastors grooming girls and women in the church for their sexual pleasure. This is a big shift because initially, the church or religious spaces were a safe haven

and a place for recovery for those raped, or who experienced trauma in its various forms. At the core of this problem was a wondering to say are contemporary men really using the text as a reflective surface? If they are, could they be misunderstanding some popular characters like David. It has been my observation that in some cases, those using the text (Bible) as a reflective surface have not worked well because some 'contemporary men' with an agenda to propagate patriarchy and maintain the status quo of power and control will select portions of the Bible that favor them most of the time. For an example, out of the above-mentioned possible group of men who use the Bible as a reflective surface the third group which is the leaders and clergy, in their preaching they would co-opt only texts that promote a submission of the people to them in all ways, including sexually giving examples from within the Bible. Alongside these perverted clergy are also untrained readers of the Bible making them understand so little of the Biblical text. More than focusing on the agenda of the selective readers of the Bible, this acknowledges that some contemporary men are open to using the Bible as a reflective surface. In the next section, I will focus on attempting to understand what the Bible as a reflective surface could offer contemporary men.

(b) The Bible as a resource to be used by contemporary men

In this section, I will focus on what reading the Bible as a reflective surface could mean for contemporary men. In an earlier work, Alter says, "The Bible is a well-known and often discussed piece of literature that functions in believing as well as non-believing communities. Participants would be able to engage with Biblical text from their unique reading positions whether believing or secular. Narrative text is more approachable for modern readers, in the sense that readers approach characters in stories as they do people in everyday life" (Alter 1992,12). Ackerman further argued that, "Narrative has a further function. Apart from claiming identity and naming the evil, narrative has a sense-making function. The very act of telling the story is an act of making sense of an often-incomprehensible situation, of a suffering and chaotic world in which people wrestle with understanding and in so doing seek to experience relief" (Ackerman 2005,18). In this particular research, the narrative will be texts from 1st and 2nd Samuel.

In a later work, Van der Walt says, "By using the Bible as a reflective surface in the process of intercultural Bible reading, the dominant or final nature of biblical text is countered in that it is welcomed as one conversation partner amongst others. It is put on an equal level with the

socially embedded narratives of the women and men taking part in the Bible reading exercise. Modern readers can be encouraged, within these reading communities, to ask critical questions of the Bible text and to read against the grain in order to unmask patriarchal ideas and practices" (Van der Walt 2017,19). In considering the Bible as a reflective surface, the contemporary men are faced with the reality of a context that they read the Bible from and a genuine desire to understand the context that gave rise to the particular text and therein lies their intercultural Bible reading. Jonker explains that, "The praxis of the intercultural Bible reading process therefore implies the coming together of diverse individuals from different cultural backgrounds within a safe space that allows for the interaction between these individuals and the culturally diverse Biblical text" (Jonker 2010,53). The value of the safe space, will allow the readers to be open and share their own understanding of the text as they use it as a reflective surface. Jonker further says, "In order to allow for this diversity of contexts to come into play in the interpretation process, an intercontextual model should be pursued. What we should be looking for is not in the first-place contextual authenticity, but rather contextual integrity, that is, an approach to biblical interpretation that brings into interaction all those dimensions of contextuality that inform our life interests as well as our interpretative interests" (Jonker 2005,642). In what Jonker suggests, there would be an openness to different layers of context and contemporary men can remain true to themselves in their cultural and contextual reality whilst embracing the Bible as a reflective surface.

Similar to Jonker, Van der Walt says, "By allowing for the interaction among culturally diverse individuals, the intercultural Bible reading process theoretically becomes a safe space that promotes human dignity and facilitates social transformation. The primary potential contribution that the intercultural Bible reading space could make is the creation of a safe space where both women and men can engage with complex cultural realities and the ramifications thereof, from within the confines of a caring and supportive environment" (Van der Walt 2016,11). In trying to understand Van der Walt one is aware that, the space needs to be the same and inviting for all persons, because the choice to reflect on the Bible is usually connected to a real social problem and therefore the work done in a safe space will usually become a response to what the social problem that existed before the Bible was used as a reflective surface resulting in the rolling out of a form of the social transformation process. Like Ackermann I want to emphasize that, "The ultimate aim of this creative intertextual reading is not to come to a final or correct analysis of the intent of the individual narratives, but rather to

allow these narratives to dynamically inform the creative process of meaning-making" (Ackermann 2001,24).

Lapsley is critical of the method I used in *Chapter 4,* of the *Narrative Analysis* in that he says, "For the most part I want to move away from asking which characters are worth emulating or not, and which text is 'good' or 'bad'. As a rule, the kind of ethical reflection I propose here is to ask the reader to allow herself to be drawn into a complex moral world evoked by the narrative" (Lapsley 2005,11). Central to my work was asking about the close focus on the character David and his interactions with others that he is in relation to. Lapsley, in thinking about the use of narrative, I believe as stated above would rather allow the participants a special role of owning the whole process of reading and finding whatever they found; however, I argue that Lapsley by saying this suggests that people who use the Bible as a reflective surface are neutral readers of the narrative. I differ with Lapsley in that, in the very selection of the Bible as a reflective surface, you are appealing to a particular sect of people who adhere to the ideological views drawn from the Bible as a world view. West, in explaining what I mean by worldview says, "A Contextual Bible Study is an act of faith. So Contextual Bible Study is always immersed and saturated with prayer and singing; nothing happens among African Christians without spontaneous prayer and singing! Not only does every Bible study begin with prayer and singing, but nobody takes a position in the front of the group without being 'escorted' to the front with singing. Ordinary African Christians believe that God is with them, always, and that the Bible is a resource through which God speaks into their lives and contexts" (West 2011,434). This means that those contemporary men who contemplate using this method embody beliefs of an answer to society found in sacred text. I posit that the use of the Bible as a reflective surface thus is an intentional application method; allowing participants some autonomy in this reading could be the only neutrality present in that, the readers can overtly say if the hidden connections seen by the one facilitating are far-fetched for the social transformation desired.

Nadar says, "Change and transformation must be a constant goal. Transformation happens on various levels. On the one hand, the ways in which we read the Bible is transformed; we learn how to read the Bible not only in a way that is liberating and inclusive but also in a way that stays faithful to who we are in our contexts. On the other hand, it is also transformative in that it is hoped that the Bible study can transform us to such an extent that it spurs us into action for change and justice, in a world that is often unjust and not willing to change" (Nadar 2009,399). In understanding Nadar, I think to desire change and transformation one needs to

admit primarily that in the context that we are using the Bible as a reflective surface there is a problem for an example in this research, I argued that there is a problem with constructions of masculinity and expressions of masculinity. The second problem I see is who is then qualified to have a conversation on the problematic constructions of masculinity and the process of coming of age. I perceive this as a problem because if a man comes up and says there is a problem with the construction of masculinity, not only would he be a possible candidate to be shamed, the question is does he have the critical distance needed to see the problematic nature of masculinity while it still 'serves' him. If a woman rises and problematizes constructions of masculinity, it would appear that she lacks the embodied resources and understanding of what is necessary for one to be a 'true man'. This also points to earlier feminist work between the first and second wave (*Hurbetine Auclert (1987), Mary Daly (1968)),* where women fought against sexually based discrimination. However, later the argument changed in that while all women need liberation from patriarchy, a woman in America could not understand the plight of the women in Africa completely. This led to work by African women theologians like *Musimbi Kanyoro (2001), Isabel Phiri (2004) and Musa Dube (2011)*), to mention but a few examples. The argument that ran alongside this was can men write authentically on women's issues and importantly in the case of my research one may ask as a woman can I write authentically on men and go to the extent of offering ideo-theological resources. I firstly want to say that I have considered this potential bias in my work but I want to affirmatively say my work has gone through the scientific rigours process of ensuring that who I am does not negatively affect the research output. Secondly, I found Contextual Bible Study as important in that its tenets work with people in the community. The CBS being community-based means that all the resources are coming from the participants, the men will be talking about the issues and they will be developing the ideo-theological resources. It will be working with the people and involving the people, allowing them to take charge and being open enough to allow the CBS to take its own shape. The role of the facilitator is to create a neutral space where participants (contemporary men in my case) can deliberate on a text, with questions which can deal with one of many problems in constructions of masculinity and coming of age. The answer does not come from the facilitator but rather the participants in the CBS would themselves offer ideo-theological resources. What is important about my research and the connection to the Contextual Bible Study is that, my research and possible post-doctoral work will work to bridge the gap between academia and community. Like in the model of the Contextual Bible Study my work began with *a community consciousness (SEE)* where I recognized there is a problem when it comes to lived out masculinities and potentially with the foundations in the

constructions of masculinity being skewed. I then used 1st and 2nd Samuel as focus text leading to *critical consciousness* (*JUDGE),* and now in attempting to think about what ideo-theological theological resources can be developed after the discoveries found in the text, my research goes back to the *community consciousness* (ACT) process where I am asking how this research can be helpful. The contemplation of the use of the Contextual Bible Study, is based on my need to think of ideo-theological resources that are not prescriptive in nature, but that involve contemporary men in bringing about the necessary change. The value of the Contextual Bible Study as a frame for possible ideo-theological resource construction is not only that the men are working together to bring a consciousness about who they are as men, but these men are immersed in the community and this means that the issues dealt with will not be hypothetical, but rather true to the particular contexts in which the Contextual Bible Studies will be conducted. Also, contemporary men who choose the Bible as a reflective surface become open to change and transformation because at the core, they have acknowledged that there is a contextual issue amongst them as men. This also means it is not an outsider coming to judge and problematize their way of living; in actual fact, it is them observing and problematizing their conduct and whatever they gain from the CBS is their own resources that can be used by them and transferred to communities with similar contextual realities. I think using the Contextual Bible Study will bring these discussions around construction of masculinities and coming of age to the mainstream, leading to social action.

(c) The Contextual Bible Study Explained and Reflected on as a Methodology

Having established in the last section that the Bible can in application become a reflective surface is when a Contextual Bible Study is done. This can be seen when Wit, Jonker and Schipani argue that, "Within the process of Contextual Bible reading, complex biblical narratives are often used as a so called 'reflective surface'" (Wit, Jonker and Schipani 2004,452). As such this section will focus on grounding definitions of what a Contextual Bible Study is. Then I will reflect on this method of reading the Bible and what it entails. This will be a preparatory section for the last section (*6.4)* which will contain ideo-theological resources that could be useful for contemporary me.

Ukpong says, "African biblical hermeneutics was characterized as a comparative, or bipolar, project. Analysis was done of both the Biblical text and the African context, and the two sets of analyses were then 'compared', in a range of different ways (Ukpong 2000). What has

become more evident on closer scrutiny (West 2009a), however, argues that, "the comparison of text and context is a mediated process, involving a third pole, that of appropriation, hence the coining of the term 'tripolar' approach (Draper 1991). This description of African biblical hermeneutics is relatively new, and so various attempts are being made at analytical clarity" (West 2013,1). More importantly also in understanding context, West says "African biblical scholarship, as in other 'contextual' forms of biblical interpretation, the other pole, that of 'context', has also developed a critical discourse, though not a discourse specific to biblical studies. With respect to 'context', African biblical scholarship has drawn on the social sciences to analyze, critically, African contexts. Whilst we have not always been as meticulous and rigorous in our use of social scientific forms of analysis with respect to context as we have with the textual forms of analysis, we aspire to a careful and critical analysis of context, moving beyond the anecdotal" (West 2013,6).

At the center of this method is the ordinary readers of the Bible. West explains that, "Part of the substantive claim I am making in differentiating between the scholar and nonscholar/ordinary reader is that there is a difference in the way each of these sectors read biblical texts. This difference is significant, and recognition of this difference can lead to creative and socially transformative collaboration between different sets of interpretive resources these different sectors bring to a collaborative reading project. So, in the general sense I am focusing on the kind of interpretive training different sectors have received. The ordinary reader has been 'trained' by his or her primary (for example, the family) and secondary (for example, the church and school) communities, whereas the scholarly reader has been trained by a tertiary community, the academy" (West 2007,2).

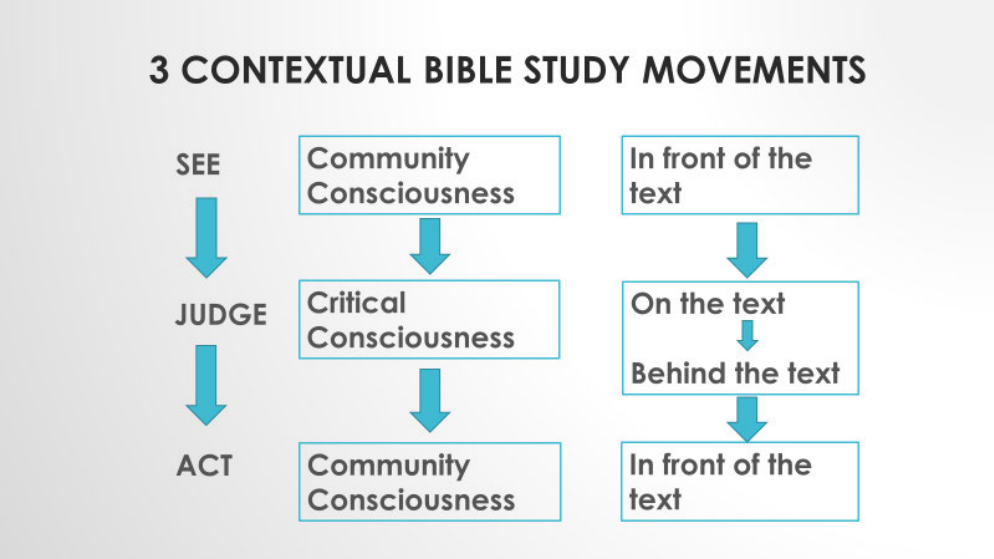


Figure 1[8]

(ii) Explanation of the image

This image is explained in the previous section by West (2011). I have taken a resource from the Ujamaa Center to explain it in my own words. In my understanding, the *See* means that the people are aware of the community issues in the context that they are reading the text from. *The Judge* section allows for intentional resources and questions planned by the facilitator to move the readers from a familiar interpretation to a more detailed explanation and introduce ways of tackling the themes arising from the context. *The Act* section returns the readers to the context in which they are reading from and this stage shifts them to say with the 'new found' interpretation of the text how it can be used to address the issues in the context of the readers for the social transformation process. Nadar presents more clear details on what is tabulated above when she says, "The Contextual Bible Study is an interactive study of particular texts in the Bible, which brings the perspectives of both the context of the reader and the context of the Bible into critical dialogue, for the purpose of raising awareness and promoting transformation. The five key words which correspond to the five C's in the above definition are interactive (*Community)*, context of the reader (*Context)*, context of the Bible (*Criticality*), critical dialogue and raising awareness (*Conscientisatio*n) and transformation (*Change*)" (Nadar 3009,391). In the next sections, I detail the steps used for formulating a Contextual Bible Study as presented by West.

[8] http://ujamaa.ukzn.ac.za

(iii) The steps

1. *Listen to the text being read aloud. What is the text about*? This step is crucial on two levels, which are to demystify the idea that this is a church sermon whereby the preacher is here to tell us what God says and primarily as an ice-breaker getting everyone involved. West tells us, "Many ordinary Christians do not believe that the facilitator really wants to know what they think about the Bible, and so they are often silent, waiting for the authority figure to tell them what the Bible says! But we out-wait them, and eventually someone responds" (West 2011,446).

2. *Question 2 and 3 focus on a re-reading of the text* and a mention of certain verses that the facilitator connected during preparations. This channeling in the form of problem pausing, allows the audience to contemplatively think and discuss in small groups if they are not missing anything. West says, "Most 'ordinary' biblical interpretation is quick; biblical interpretation within Contextual Bible Study is slow. So, enough time is needed to maintain a slow pace to the interpretive process. Questions 2 and 3 offer the participants forms of what we call 'critical consciousness' with respect to the Scriptures" (West 2001,447).

3. *Question 4* usually requires the participants to shift from verbal presentations to explained drawn pictures and in some cases, it could be ideal to ask participants to act out a skit which immerses them into the world of the text and allows them to embody the various situations.

4. *Question 5* invites the group to contemplations about the socio-historic reality of the context that gave birth to the text. West argues, "For many ordinary Christians 'what really happened' in the time of Jesus is important. They want to know to what extent the world of Jesus is like their world" (West 2004,127).

5. Question 6 requires the participants to summatively point out their shifting understanding of the meaning of the text, measuring it from what they understood at the beginning of the reading to this point of the contextual Bible study.

6. Questions 7 and 8, West says, "shifts the Contextual Bible Study from 'judging' to 'acting,' and from 'critical consciousness' back to 'community consciousness.' The Contextual Bible Study belongs to the local community, and so this component is crucial, for the participants are asked to appropriate and act on what they have discerned from their re-reading of Scripture" (West 2011,448).

West, in an earlier work says, “The Bible study itself begins and ends with what we have called ‘community consciousness’ questions (questions 1,5,6,7). These questions tie the Bible study into the contexts of the participants, drawing on both their local knowledge and analysis and their interpretive resources. While Questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 each return participants to the text, again and again” (West 2006,142). He further says, “The text is given a literary dimension by these questions. The resources of literary biblical scholarship focus on narrative point of view, character, setting, narrative structure etc.…are offered to the participants in a form that requires no input or instruction. The socially engaged scholar and their resources are present in the form of these questions, but the actual interpretive product belongs to the participants” (West 2006,143).

(iv)The importance of method

According to West, “A Contextual Bible Study provides non-scholarly interpreters with additional sites of engagement with the biblical text in at least three ways. Firstly, it provides access to unfamiliar texts, that is texts which are neglected or suppressed by their church traditions but which are part of the normal interpretive task for biblical scholars. Secondly, it provides access to unfamiliar literary units. Thirdly, it provides ways of reading the familiar text in unfamiliar ways” (West 2006,145). This means that contemporary men who desire to use the model of the CBS as a reflective surface do not need any more tools or preparation but rather an openness and willingness to grapple with the text. Van der Walt argues, “For an intercultural Bible reading process to be authentic the starting point has to be an in-depth, embodied, contextual engagement with the biblical text in order to bring to the encounter with ‘the other’ a unique reading of the text in the specificity of the local. On the other hand, the intercultural dimension encourages local contextual readers to consider the possibility of a diversity of interpretations, the imperative for critical self-reflection and the possibility for a change in interpretation, understanding or position” (Van der Walt 2017,8). This means that the wealth is their embodied contextual reality that they bring to the text and if done within a group of people from various contexts, there is bound to be a diverse understanding of the text. Jonker and Holter concur by saying, “The praxis of the intercultural Bible reading process therefore implies the coming together of diverse contextually embedded individuals from different cultural backgrounds within a safe space that allows for the interaction between these individuals and the culturally diverse biblical text” (Jonker and Holter 2010,53).

The other important thing about this method, according to Nadar, is that, "A CBS takes its cue from liberation theology, and one of the central tenets of liberation theology is a focus on the community as opposed to the individual. The method of CBS takes community very seriously, rendering a CBS always inter-active and participatory in nature. It is not 'taught', CBS is facilitated. It requires the voices and opinions of all who participate in the study. This means that questions are engaged with and debated, not simply answered by the facilitator. This is not to downplay the role of the facilitator but to help participants draw conclusions through logical and critical argument, rather than a simple return to the all-powerful pastor or intellectual who says 'the Bible says; or worse still, God says'" (Nadar 3009,391). Clearly, while the facilitator needs to do some preparations, the facilitator does not arrive carrying solutions to a context. West argues, "The socially engaged Biblical scholar is called to read the Bible with them, 'ordinary readers', but not because they need to be conscientized and given interpretations relevant to their context. No, socially engaged Biblical scholars are called to collaborate with them because they bring with them additional interpretative resources which may be of use to the community group" (West 2000,601). In a similar work, Haddad argued, "I now recognize that my role is not to conscientize but to enter into mutual dialogue and collaborative work with those I work with... I am less bold or hasty than I used to be about what action I think should be taken against the many gendered injustices I see around me. I listen more, speak less and do not rush into any prescribed solutions to these evils" (Haddad 2000,49). This means that the facilitator claims no power and does not present themselves as all-knowing, but rather a successful facilitator would in all humility confess not knowing anything and genuinely respect the participants for the wealth of the embodied reality that they bring to the context. This can be seen when West says, "A Contextual Bible Study is a collaboration between ordinary Christians in local marginalized communities and socially engaged biblical scholars. It involves the sharing of resources and the sharing in a struggle for social transformation" (West 2011, 448). Like Van der Walt (2017), I agree that "By allowing for the interaction between culturally diverse contextually embedded individuals, the intercultural Bible reading process theoretically becomes a safe space that promotes human dignity and facilitates social transformation" (Van der Walt 2017,12).

(v) <u>Summary of the CBS Method</u>

The element of social transformation is best captured when Nadar says, "The fifth and final characteristic of CBS is its focus on change. *Change* is grounded in the 'Action Plan' which ends a CBS. This final stage is meant to ask the question 'so what?' After having done Bible

study – so what?" (Nadar 2009,12). It is usually at the end of a Contextual Bible Study that contemporary men can ask the question – so what? In answering this, again it remains the responsibility of the contemporary men who have used the text as a reflective surface to now turn to their context and ask, what could be done differently after finding these resources? Furthermore, "The CBS is the 'heterotopic location within which particular community-based voices engage with particular biblical text-based voices across time and space. CBS as a methodology is itself a heterotopic site within which, in the language of *The Kairos Document,* 'people's theology' becomes 'prophetic theology'" (West, Zwane and Van der Walt 2021,7).

This I understand to mean that the so what question and the prophetic theology ask what needs to change immediately and what could be the long-term goals of change reached through using the Bible as a reflective surface. West argues, "These additional areas of possible fusion between text and context opened up by the additional resources of biblical scholarship are significant in that they created a sacred theological and ideological space in which to articulate these potential moments of tensive fusion. Unfamiliar texts, unfamiliar literary units and familiar texts interpreted in unfamiliar ways all offer fresh theological vocabulary with which to articulate the historical consciousness of the community" (West 2006,146). As I reviewed the CBS method from when it was initially constructed, much has changed and this reminds me of an earlier work by West when he said, "A Contextual Bible study is a particular African manifestation of biblical interpretation. It is a regular part of the praxis of the Ujamaa Center and so its contours are not fixed. It is constantly evolving shaped by both the communities we work with and biblical scholarship" (West 2006,148). The method has continued to be used and developed, amending as necessary. Doing a CBS relating to 1st and 2nd Samuel, will not be a first of its own, "The first time the Tamar story was used for a contextual Bible study was in 1996 by the Institute for the Study of the Bible and Worker Ministry project, that would later become the Ujamaa Centre for Community Development and Research based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal" (Zondi-Mabizela and West 2004,103). As I understood, the Tamar CBS was used to raise an awareness on gender-based violence and incest in families, showing that it was a problem in the Bible and it is a problem in some societies.

6.3 Contemplative Examples of CBS that can form ideo-theological resources to help contemporary men understand masculinity constructions and coming of age

6.3.1 CBS questions for Scene of David and Goliath 1st Samuel 17:40-51 and 1st Samuel 18:27-28 (David Receiving the Reward Wife)

As a recap, from *Chapter 4: Section 4,5 Scene 1 (p20*), which was the *Conclusion of the Scenes*, I concluded the following: *masculinity needs a community to endorse and authenticate an individual*, that *masculinity is performative* in nature including *violent actions, risk taking* and these usually are within the campus of a *forms of rites of passage to transition from boyhood to manhood.* With this in mind I focus on possible contextual Bible questions that can work at the preliminary stages of trying out the suitability of this CBS. The first group that this can be tried on are the young men's group in the church that I pastor as they are already interested in using the Bible as a reflective surface and as they are the generation that could be instrumental in a wave of new non-toxic masculinities.

Possible Question for CBS on David and Goliath

(i) Question 1: Listen to 1st Samuel 17:40-51 and being read aloud. What is this text about? *(buzz answers allowing everyone to feel important, equal and validated)*

(ii) Question 2: Now read 1st Samuel 17:40-51 and the text that I choose which is 1st Samuel 18:27-28. Are there connections between the two texts and if so, what are they? *(small groups)*

(iii) Question 3: Now read 1st Samuel 17:40-51 and the text 1st Samuel 18:27-28. Are there connections and if so, what are they? Why did King Saul not hand over Michal to David because he had promised to give one of the daughters if David wins against Goliath?

(iv) Question 4: David asks to fight Goliath, from King Saul. The people around suggest that he is just a shepherd boy and not qualified to fight Goliath, yet he claims he has killed a lion and a bear with his bare hands (1st Samuel 17:36). What dynamics are at play and what can we understand about the public and private aspect of masculinity?

(v) Question 5: What was the process of coming of age and the transition from boyhood to manhood in the Near-East in the days of the text? *(socio-historical detail).*

(vi) Question 6: Summarize your key understandings of how1st Samuel 17:48-54 frame what we understand about boyhood and manhood. (Allusions to risk-taking and rites of passage.) *These questions give the group a chance to assess what they have learned in their re-reading of the text*.

(vii) Question 7: How does this text speak to who men and are how men are conducting themselves in your contexts?

(viii) Question 8: What actions will you plan as an individual after an unfamiliar interpretation of the text?

(ix) Question 9: What will you now do to help others in your church or community to understand that how we frame and conceptualize masculinities must change and adapt to more life-giving options?

(b) *CBS questions for (David and Jonathan) 1st Samuel 18:1-5 and David and Jonathan 2nd Samuel 9: 1-7 (David and Mephibosheth)*

As a recap, from *Chapter 4: Section 4,6, Scene 2 (p30*), which was the *Conclusion of the Scenes*, I concluded the following: an openness to men to men closeness, the importance of David being loved by both siblings except the father, the concept of men intimacy and the emotive men. The text does present changing David in that the David who killed Goliath, is now David who is not willing to kill King Saul to affirm his masculinity. The question of what has since changed, in David's masculine change and refusing to resort to violence makes me wonder if there isn't anything that contemporary men could not glean from this process. The target group for this study could be local church leaders and pastors and maybe have a group of twenty. I believe that by working with the local leaders and church pastors, in re-reading this text slowly, if they understand more clearly this text, not only will they develop great ideo-theological resources, their preaching will unconsciously provide clarity on the matters.

6.3.2 Possible Question for CBS on David and Jonathan

(i) Question 1: Listen to 1st Samuel 18:1-5 being read aloud. What is this text about? (*buzz answers allowing everyone to feel important, equal and validated).*

(ii) Question 2: Now read 1st Samuel 18:1-5 and the text that I choose which is 2nd Samuel 9:1-7. Are there connections between the two texts and if so, what are they? *(small groups)*

(iii) Question 3: Now read 1st Samuel 18:1-5 and the text 2nd Samuel 9:1-7. Are there connections and if so, what are they? What would you say about David and Jonathan? Who are they to each other? Who is the 'rightful heir' of the dynasty of King Saul?

(iv) Question 4: Jonathan poetically declares how close he feels to David and this poetry is similar to the declaration of the closeness Adam felt for Eve. How can you make sense of men to men closeness and intimacy? Could you make sense of 2nd Samuel 9:1? Who is Jonathan to David really?

(v) Question 5: What is the history of men to men closeness and what did it mean for Jonathan to sacrifice the dynasty of his family (King Saul)? *(socio-historical detail)*

(vi) Question 6: Summarize your key understandings of how 1st Samuel 18:1-5 frames what we understand about male intimacy? (*These questions give the group a chance to assess what they have learned in their re-reading of the text).*

(vii) Question 7: How does this text speak to the notion of the emotive man and men's ability to use emotions to express themselves and how can this be a resource in your context?

(viii) Question 8: What actions will you plan as an individual after a new understanding of the text?

(ix) Question 9: What will you now do to help others in your church or community to understand how we perceive men to men closeness and men intimacy?

6.3.3 CBS questions for David and Abigail: 1 Samuel 25:18-34 and 1st Samuel 25:39-42

As a recap, from *Chapter 4: Section 4,6 (p38)*, which was the Conclusion of the Scenes, I concluded the following. In this context, we see masculinities as we know them challenged, because firstly we see Nabal disregarding King David, forcing him to demonstrate that he is the man and needs to be respected. This leads David to prepare to war against Nabal and his people. We again see a servant who genuinely speaks badly of his master Nabal, calling him a fool. This servant rushes to report to the woman Abigail in the text. From this point on we see Abigail taking all the decisions and helping her husband fix his mistakes without him knowing. All the actions taken by Abigail are indicative of the changing face of masculinity. Abigail is successful but it as though the author makes Abigail's job easy by making King David listen

and engage Abigail. The death of Nabal could be symbolic of a changing masculinity, however, David marrying Abigail as the text closes seems to suggest that change in masculinity and patriarchal structures is possible but is a long way coming. Why couldn't the narrator allow Nabal to leave in a world that Abigail fixed as the wife? This scene left me feeling like we are running in circles. The target group for this CBS could be my grandfather who is a religious leader and his colleagues to see how they understand and can read into the text.

Possible Question for CBS

(i) Question 1: Listen to 1 Samuel 25:18-34 being read aloud. What is this text about? (*buzz answers allowing everyone to feel important, equal and validated)*

(ii) Question 2: Now read 1 Samuel 25:18-34 and the text that I choose, which is 1st Samuel 25:39-42. Are there connections between the two texts and if so, what are they? (small groups)

(iii) Question 3: Now read 1 Samuel 25:18-34 and the text 1st Samuel 25:39-42. What appears distinct about how Nabal is presented by the narrator and how his servant, wife and David relate to him?

(iv) Question 4: Nabal is hit by a pain that led to a stroke and ultimately death when he heard how his wife had saved him from his mistakes. What can you make of the death of Nabal and the role of Abigail in this text?

(v) Question 5: What is the history of men listening to women? Is the role that Abigail is playing normal? *(socio-historical detail)*

(vi) Question 6: Summarize your key understandings of 1 Samuel 25:18-34 (*These questions give the group a chance to assess what they have learned in their re-reading of the text).*

(vii) Question 7: How does this text speak to the notion of your manhood and how you relate to women in your context? Can this be a resource in your context?

(viii) Question 8: What actions will you plan as an individual after your new understanding of the text?

(ix) Question 9: What will you now do to help others in your church or community to understand the changing role and place of women alongside their men counterparts?

6.3.4 CBS questions for David and Bathsheba: 2 Samuel 11: 1-7 and 26-27

As a recap, from *Chapter 4: Section 4,7 (p47)* which was the Conclusion of the Scenes, I concluded the following: that David is unable to control his sexual impulses because despite that he has been informed that Bathsheba is the wife to Uriah he still demands that his servants bring her to him to release his sexual lust. This shows David as regressed to the childly before coming of age example in that, he is back to feeling the need to express and prove his manhood. This also presents a quandary because David includes his servants that he is meant to be leading by example for his fleshy sexual fulfilment. This talks to what model masculinities are people viewing from the other generation and modelling. David, in failing to stop his sexual cravings, ends up again using Joab to place Uriah in the front line, getting him killed. Subsequent to this, David refuses to be remorseful and spend time on that but rather is quick to marry Bathsheba, making her appear as one of his conquests. The narrator allowing Bathsheba to say nothing about her desire and volition makes the point that women are objectified and appear as only there to satisfy the men. The target audience for the CBS could be a group of charismatic leaders who have a rise of middle-aged men involved in the church leadership.

Possible Question for CBS

(i) Question 1: Listen to 2 Samuel 11: 1-7 and 26-27 being read aloud. What is this text about? (*buzz answers allowing everyone to feel important equal and validated)*

(ii) Question 2: Now read 2 Samuel 11: 1-7 and the text I choose 1st Samuel 18:26-27. Are there connections between the two texts and if so, what are they? *(small groups)*

(iii) Question 3: Now read 2 Samuel 11: 1-7 and 1st Samuel 18: 26-27. Who is David and who is Bathsheba? Taking note of who they are, is what David did understandable? Can you understand the weight and responsibility of being a leader?

(iv) Question 4: How many wives does David have up until this point? Could the action of David be avoided?

(v) Question 5: Why did King David remain behind while other men went to war? How does this action alter the image of David? *(socio-historical detail)*

(vi) Question 6: Summarize your key understandings of 2 Samuel 11: 1-7 and 26-27 (*These questions give the group a chance to assess what they have learned in their re-reading of the text)*.

(vii) Question 7: How does this text speak to the situation of religious leaders being found on media being perpetrators of evil than the glue of the society? How can this be a resource in your context?

(viii) Question 8: What actions will you plan as an individual after your new understanding of the text?

(ix) Question 9: What will you now do to help others in your church or community to build a structure of accountability among the leaders?

6.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, from a polished and tried and revised model of the CBS, a manual could be created for local church leaders to help contemporary men begin the difficult conversation about (i) male privilege, (ii) coming of age, (iii) finding oneself, (iv) questioning the dominant masculinities and asking questions around are they right or needing to be amended, (v) men closeness, to mention but a few. The sense of prayerfulness before the detailed deliberations could give the leaders a sense that whatever can be seen and learnt in the CBS is God-given and also prophetic.

This chapter focused on an expansion of the themes that are developed within this research. This chapter initially intended to build ideo-theological resources that could be utilised by contemporary men who use 1st and 2nd Samuel as a reflective surface. What I understood as I attempted to build ideo-theological resources is that the pole of (culture, context and time) would change with every man attempting to understand these processes. However, despite this issue, some tentative resources have been built based on the use of the Contextual Bible Study model. The resources offered are non-exhaustive and could be further developed in my future post-doctoral work and article publication.

Chapter 7

General Conclusion and Recommendations

This study developed from looking at the lived reality that all around me as a Christian young female clergy there are variants of toxic masculinities. Some of the examples included men in general, as in the case of Tshegofatso Pule.[9] Tshegofatso Pule was a girl aged twenty-eight who at eight months pregnant was found hanging on a tree with an open chest. This is an inhumane act conducted by possibly her significant other Ntuthuko Shoba. This case remains unresolved, as no one has been prosecuted. Alongside this case, there is the case of Tim Omotoso,[10] a televangelist who is the founder of a Pentecostal movement. Tim Omotoso alongside with his co-accused was charged for nighty-seven charges, including rape, human trafficking and extorting money from the members of the church. The case of Omotoso here in KwaZulu-Natal is unthinkable, in that he went so far as grooming young girls to satisfy his personal sexual desires. This is also the case in the mainline churches, as can be seen in the case of Adam O'Connor. Adam O'Connor[11] is a Catholic priest who aged 84 is only now apologizing to William Segodisho who is now 46, that he sexually abused while he was a boy. The confession appears as being done because of his impending death. This was disheartening because the church tends to claim itself as prophetic and as a solution to the problems in society.

According to Jewkes and Abraham, "it is important to take into consideration the gender power inequality and that sexual violence is the manifestation of men's power over women that patriarchy affords them" (Jewkes and Abraham 2000,12). In much recent research, with reference to violence in South Africa and gender-based violence, scholars have argued that, "masculinity in this context is shaped by race, culture, socio-economic status, power, gender politics, and patriarchy" (Morrell et. al 2012,18). These observations helped me to understand that there are close connections between gender-based violence and hegemonic masculinity. Masculinity is informed by context, culture and religion, and Morrell in the context of South Africa explains that most of these traits are patriarchal. Furthermore, scholars have argued that "the narrative of violence during the apartheid era was the only language that was used to bring

[9] https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/tshegofatso-pules-killer-lost-his-temper-and-killed-his-girlfrend-cellmate-tells-court-20210325

[10] https://www news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/omotoso-trial-witness-details-escaping-pastors-clutches-after-he-asked-her-to-take-off-her-pants-20210210

[11] https://www news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/catholic-priest-84-apologises-after-three-decades-to-man-who-shared-sexual-abuse-story-20181012

social order and also for the marginalized to express their frustration with the government. The violent history of the country has emphasized the use of aggression and violence has shaped constructions of masculinity. These characteristics of masculinity are not only shaped by culture and religion but also through changes and shifts in gender roles. The expectation for men to display physical strength may include the use of violence to control others" (Graaff and Heinecken 2017,35). This means men are laden with cultural expectations, religious expectations and the gender-designated role expectations, some of which are toxic when lived out.

I still sought to explore what elements of the constructions of masculinity and coming of age shapes men, and what in this process causes some men to be part of toxic masculinities. I was fearful that the conduct of men within the church appeared the same as the conduct of men outside the institution of the church and I wondered is this foundationally presented a challenge. For research validity, although limited, I immediately thought of King David who is acknowledged in at least three Abrahamic religions. David was not expected to model the perfect masculinities, but he was meant to be a reflective surface used to begin to question what is fundamentally wrong with constructions of masculinity and what happens in the process of coming of age. This question led to my deep-seated belief that constructions of masculinity could be assumedly skewed from the foundation, affecting how men come of age.

In laying the ground of what this research is about and what it sought to do, at the beginning of the research I began by qualifying why I think David is a character worth studying. I argued that David becomes a person of interest because of his acknowledged role within the Abrahamic faiths. In his important status, David draws lots of attention to himself and this could make people desire to emulate his life, especially with the notion of being the chosen one. The research was built on the need that was observed that the religious circles, especially the religious leader, was becoming toxic with religious being involved in sexual atrocities. My concern with this shift is that religious spaces were moving from being a safe-haven to being the cause of much turmoil. The fear was if David because of his influential role, is being emulated, which means he is informing the constructions of masculinity, what in his life could be encouraging toxic masculinities? At the beginning of the research I was hesitant in the use of King David in fear that a re-reading of the David Narrative Text could normalize toxic constructions of masculinities if the readers who are contemporary men focused primarily on those episodes of David where his conduct aligns to toxic masculinities. However, I was

inclined to still use the Bible as a resource because I believed that if any change could happen amongst church leaders it would be better received with the Bible at the center of the solution.

In further framing the situation of toxic masculinities, the next three sections focused on assessing if this problem exists in other places. Therefore, the geographical grouping categories focused from global, to Sub-Saharan and lastly to the South African context which I was writing from. Within South Africa, I focused on the development of masculinity and in the literature review I examined where they stood at the beginning of the thesis writing. Some scholars such as Connell appeared throughout the research as frames of reference in formulation and re-formulation of masculinities. The last section in framing David focused on the process of coming of age.

In the process of selecting what scenes would be important I had to formulate questions that I thought could guide me in selecting scenes, such as:

a. Who is David as a man?

b. What are some of his values as postulated in the David Narrative Cycle?

c. How does he juggle authority and leadership?

These questions allowed me to access the following:

a. David as a son

b. David in intimate relationships – his sexuality as presented

c. David as king – kingship/reigning/power – focusing on men in leadership positions.

In this study's next section I focused on answering the question *what are the main issues and factors that impact the process of masculinity construction process for men*? The first part defined masculinity and it looked into the development within the field. The second part showed what work has been done in the context of South Africa pertaining to masculinity conversations and it ended with how masculinities can be used as an analytical tool. The third part focused on masculinities in the Hebrew Bible. The fourth part focused on coming of age and the definitions that will be essential in this research. Within this same section, I focused on *coming of age* Theorists such as Erikson and this was preparatory ground for working on coming of age and issues of identity and becoming. Bearing in mind that this research was on the sacred texts, I then focused on noting what work has been done on coming of age and

contemplations within the Bible. The fifth and last section assessed how the combining of masculinity theory and coming of age could be essential tools for re-reading the narrative cycle.

Within South Africa, the context from which I am writing, Raewyn Connell became one of the foundational theorists of masculinity definitions for this research. Robert and Kimmel situated masculinity definitions in the frame of social constructions allowing for an assessment with the hope for change as it is true for many constructs. This research observed that much work had already been done on masculinities in the frame of religion studies and here this was shown through some of the prominent work of scholars such as van Klinken, Ratele and Chitando.

I used the theoretical framework elements from the work of Ratele as one of the theorists in the frame and this was important in the critical reading of *David's Narrative Cycle* because:

i. The society that David's story was set in is within the patriarchal Israel context and it was important to see how the transition from boys to manhood typically looked.

ii. It was useful in that it allowed room for analyzing the place of women in David's life. Primarily it focused on David and how he dealt with women who he was in communication or relation with.

iii. The way David related to other men in this narrative and how he handled power and an influential position.

This chapter somewhat concluded that for the purposes of this research the David Narrative Cycle could in some sense be viewed as a coming of age narrative categorically which gave a platform for me to read David as a coming of age narrative focusing on constructions of masculinity.

I then decided on a method that I would use to read the Bible selected narrative. The narrative analysis is the method that was used to read the Bible. The first section within that chapter dealt with *Critical Biblical Hermeneutics* and what in actual fact hermeneutics is. As the research was conducted in an African setting, I moved on to understand *African Biblical Hermeneutics* and what issues need to be factored in to understand research of the Bible within the African context. While the two were more preparatory and foundational in understanding methods of reading the Bible in Africa, I then moved on and selected to do a *Narrative Analysis* of the selected episodes in 1st and 2nd Samuel. Within the confines of the method of Narrative Analysis, I then focused on the huge role of the narrator, the role of what is excluded or included

within the text. I then moved and understood the role of the plot, characters, structure of events and time, to mention but a few elements that informed the method in biblical studies that this research used.

In a limited manner I then brought in masculinity construction and coming of age, explaining how they would be essential as methodological-analytical tools of how the text would be engaged. With special reference to some of the selected scenes, especially the David and Jonathan scene, I found it essential to include a primary understanding of Queer Biblical Hermeneutics and some key theorists. I then allocated a section that dealt exhaustively with the rationale behind the selected scenes with the David Narrative Text as espoused in 1st and 2nd Samuel. The last section was a how-to step-by-step guide of how Chapter 4 would be structured. I argued that while much work has been done on David and masculinities, the uniqueness of the research was tied to the peculiarity of the analytical tools of reading the selected Davidic Narrative Text, using a combination of masculinity construction lenses and coming of age lenses.

After clearly establishing a method that I would use to read the text, the next chapter focused on the selected scenes of 1st and 2nd Samuel. I began by exploring the authorship of the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel. As this research was not focused on the historicity of 1st and 2nd Samuel, I did not spend a great amount of time exploring this aspect, but that section focused on naming the dominant conversations surrounding authorship of 1st and 2nd Samuel. The conversation around the authorship led this research to a brief conversation about the origins and the source text in its Hebrew text. Briefly, the chapter explored how other earlier scholars engaged 1st and 2nd Samuel. The greater portion of the chapter focused on placing the Hebrew parallel to the English translation. Under each scene there was a summary of the scene in my own words. Subsequent to this, there was a discussion of *character, place, time and the observation of the repeated words.* Each section was concluded with the key themes distilled from each scene through the narrative analysis. As stated, this section of the Narrative Analysis as a method, the Narrative Analysis of the selected David texts was not in any way exhaustive of the many issues, however this research attempted to include as many of those observations that were easily drawn out using the selected analytical tools of constructions of masculinities and coming of age.

When I was done doing a narrative analysis which informed the method to be used in this research, I then focused on specific insights that can be gained by focusing on Clines and

Wilson. Each scene began by summarizing the key issues distilled in the narrative analysis. The next section focused on elements from the frame offered by Clines and this segment was augmented with scholarly work which helped the research understand the notion of constructions of masculinity. This same layout was used for all four scenes. However, the second section focused on constructions of coming of age as framed in the work of Wilson. While Wilson provided the pointers of what coming of age could entail, the comments made under each section were more my general comments and observation of the particular scenes and they are not amplified with scholarly input. Again, while there is so much work that has been done around constructions of masculinity and coming of age, this research does not claim any conclusiveness of the findings and conceptualization on the topic. The uniqueness and focus were how David can be better understood using the combination of constructions of masculinity and coming of age as lenses. The third section provided summative comments on the process of coming of age and transition from boyhood to manhood. This section ended with a tabulation of the arising themes form this research.

7.1 Arising Themes

The Arising Themes were as follows:

1) The first observation was that masculinity construction is deeply rooted and developed, culturally, contextually and temporally. All the three mentioned contributing factors continuously change over time.

2) The second observation was that there are rituals and/or tasks that men have to perform in the process of acquiring their masculine complete identity from boyhood to manhood. In the biblical world, within the story of David one ritual that seems important is the coming of age process of cultural circumcision. It was fairly easy for me as the researcher to draw on the rituals because, within South Africa, where this research is written, there is a similar expectation in the Xhosa culture, which stipulates that a man *is only a man after going through circumcision in the mountain during the process known as 'Ulwaluko'*. This ritual is one of many ritual expectations for men to transition from boyhood to manhood.

3) The third observation was that the male body is at the center of the navigation process of coming of age and owning and constructing the masculine identity. This also presents

the qualification of one into manhood as very performative. What is performed as masculine falls within the expectations of what is culturally, contextually appropriate at the time of the need of transition from boyhood to manhood.

4) The fourth observation was that if one compares the biblical expectations of masculinity at the time of 1st and 2nd Samuel, to the 'contextual' expectations of masculinity or manhood in South Africa (at the time of my writing) there are many similarities from both worlds, such as the following: (i) men are expected to be strong, violent and take control, (ii) men are expected to be open to risk taking and not scared or emotive and lastly (iii) there is a high focus on the penis.

5) The first and last observation was that coming of age is intertwined with constructions of gender, in this case constructions of masculinity. I found it difficult to conceptualize and explain constructions of masculinity without referring to coming of age notions. The transition from *boyhood to manhood* encompasses the *notion of coming of age – 'age' being finally being a full man.*

This last chapter was built from the themes found in the previous chapter. I began to ask the *so-what question* which Nadar asks. I found myself with detailed insights about the process of coming of age and elements of constructions of masculinity and I was also aware that I had not answered the last question which had said: *What ideo-theological resources can be gained from a narrative reading of selected David Narrative scenes*? Firstly, I began by thinking of how not to make these findings a prescription and how to make sure everyone is not thrown out by contemporary men. I then discovered that not everything within the existing constructions of masculinity is completely bad. As such, I worked on preserving parts of the elements that I found important but put guidance around those elements. For an example, risk-taking would remain but the guidance would be to ensure that risk-taking is for the purposes of preserving life. This would mean that change being offered is gradual small steps but that are life-giving.

The second thing I worried about was my positionality. How would my work be received as women offering ideo-theological resources about men to men and how could the Bible continue to inform any ideo-theological resources formed. I was also concerned about my research merely remaining theoretical and I sought a solution that could make my work bridge the gap between the world of academia and the community. I also needed men to reflect on masculinity constructions, and I did not want to be talking about men without men as they are central to my

research problem. This led me to thinking of employing the *Contextual Bible Study* model as a foundational model for any ideo-theological resources to be formed.

The Contextual Bible Study model was crucial because it means that men would come together and talk about their issues and come up with possible solutions together at the pace they desire and since these would be done in a community, the community again together would come up with a plan of action. The ideo-theological resources gained from this study are the CBS questioned modelled against the four selected scenes in this research and in my post-doctoral work these will be tested to draw results for further reflection and attempts at change in the construction of masculinities and the process of coming of age. At the end of this research, I am confident that through a critical engagement with the selected David narratives in the form of the Contextual Bible Study questions, I could trace some of the foundational frames of masculinity construction and coming of age. These questions are important as they would allow my future post-doctoral work to listen to men deliberate on the state of men in my community and to listen to them challenge the existing masculine expressions and possibly to watch them develop and suggest what could be an ideal expression and lived out masculinities as part of the social action plan.

7.2 Possible Future/ Further Research

In concluding, I would like to begin by pointing out that what this research has primarily focused on, which was an attempt at understanding toxic masculinities which play out in forms of gender-based violence and yet characteristically falling within the scope of hegemonic masculinities is seen by many others as problematic. The nature of the research of unmasking toxic masculinities and attempting to understand what went wrong fundamentally is old research. However, the uniqueness of my project was my combination of the masculinity construction and coming of age as part of the methodological tool of narrative analysis. I have, however, observed that while the problem of toxic and systematic masculinities is old, not much has been done successfully to bring about the needed change. This is because much of the work is done outside the key stakeholders which are the men. In explaining what I mean, I mean in some cases men continue to hold positions of power and there is not space to call them into accountability as there is no match to their counterparts who fall victim of their acts of violence in its varied degrees. I have also observed that there is meticulous work and scholarly

research that has been done on the subject and the future work and possible solutions to the research remain largely theoretical.

The wealth of gold I give to this landscape is firstly an acknowledgement of the existing problem. Secondly, I argue that when the Bible is used as a reflective surface it allows men to bring the resource of their embodied experiences to the table. Thirdly, I argue that in doing the Contextual Bible Studies, based on these scenes discussed in my research, there could be productive ways for men to have complicated conversations about hegemonic masculinities and their toxicity. These conversations are not an option but rather are the future of the change that is desired when looking at the current contextual problems around masculinities. In my post-doctoral work, I want to develop these Contextual Bible Study resources and then develop a contemporary publication/manual that could help faith leaders help men to think about contemporary masculinity issues. As it stands, these difficult conversations are being held in corridors or not heard completely but with the boldness of a well-researched project, I will be bold enough to go knocking on important circles such as religious doors explaining the urgency and potency of these conversations. This process will include testing out the CBS's and openness to see the response and if necessary to go back to the drawing board, partnering with contemporary men on how best the CBS's can be better heard by the community. The value of my research is it being a bridge between community consciousness (community) and critical consciousness (academia).

Moreover, outside the constraints of time and the limitations of this particular scope of the research, I think that more detailed attention could be given to the background that gave rise to the actual life of David. While this would mean a shift towards the historical setting and a detailed study of the Israelite notions of boyhood to manhood processes, I am confident that after such a study one may be able comprehensively to make meaningful comments and conclusions about what the construction of masculinities entailed, as well as the coming-of-age process in the time of David. I would also like to explore how people outside the confines of Christianity have used, thought of and written about David. These reflections could also be essential in understanding the complex relationships of masculinities as communal in nature.

Bibliography

Ackerman, Susan. 2005. *When Heroes love: the ambiguity of eros in the stories of Gilgamesh and David* . 1st. Columbia: Columbia University Press.

Adamo, David Tuesday. 2015. “The task and distinctiveness of African biblical hermeneutics.” *Old Testament Essays* 28 (1): 31-52.

Adamo, David Tuesday. 2015. “What is African biblical hermenuetics?” *Journal of Black Theology* 13 (1): 59-72.

Adams, David. 2009. “Between Socoh and Azekah: The Role of the Elah Valley in Biblical History and the Identification of Khirbet Qeiyafa.” *Khirbet Qeiyafa : The 2007-2008 Excavation Seasons,* 1: 47-66.

Ademiluka, Olusola. 2018. “Patriarchy and women abuse: Perspectives from ancient Israel and Africa.” *Journal of Old Testament Essays* 31 (2): 339-362.

Allison, John. 1994. “Narrative and time: A phenomenological reconsideration.” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 14 (2): 108-125.

Althaus-Reid, Marcella. 2000. “Re-writing God by Cancelling the Sex Debt in Theology: A Response to Clare Herbert's' Who Is God for You?” *Journal of Femnist Theology* 8 (23): 31-35.

Anderson, Eric. 2011. *Inclusive Masculinity: The Changing Nature of Masculinities* . 1st. London: Routledge.

Anderson, Eric. 2005. “Orthodox and Inclusive Masculinity: Competing Masculinities among Heterosexual Men in a Feminized Terrain.” *Social Perspectives* 48 (3): 337-355.

Anderson, Kristin, and Debra Umberson. 2001. “Gendering Violence: Masculinity and Power in Men's Accounts of Domestic Violence .” *Gender and Society* 15: 358-380.

Arnett, Jensen. 2010. “Emerging adulthood: Bridging cultural and developmental approaches to pscychology.” *New syntheses in theory, research and policy* 1: 255-275.

Arsenio, William, and Elizabeth Lemerise. 2010. “Emotions, aggression, and morality in children: Bridging develepment and psychopathology.” *Journal of American Psychological Association* x-270.

Au, John. 2017. *The Bildungsroman Genre: Defining the Old, the New and the Same.* wordpress.

Auld, Graeme. 2011. *1st and 2nd Samuel A Commentary.* 1st. Westminister John : John Knox Press .

Auld, Graeme, and Craig Ho. 1992. “The Making of David and Goliath.” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 17 (56): 19-39.

Avioz, Michael. 2009. “The Motif of Beauty in the Books of Samuel and Kings .” *Vetus Testamentum* 59 (3): 341-359.

Bal, Mieke. 2017. *Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* . 4th. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Bar-Efrat, S. 1980. “Some observations on the analysis of structure in biblical narrative.” *Vetus Testamentum Volume 30, Issue 2* 154-173.

Barton, John. 2016. *The Old Testament Canon, Literature and Theology Collected Essays of John Barton.* 2nd. London: Routledge.

Beauvoir, Simone De. 1953 . *The Second Sex* . New York : Vintage Books .

Belcher, John, and Bruce Deforge. 2007. “Faith-based social services: The challenges of providing assistance.” *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought Volume 26 Issue 4* 1-19.

Ben-Nun, Liubov. 2019. “The Leadership of King David.” *Unpublished monograph*, January.

Bergh, Rena Van Den. 2002. *Summa Eloquentia : essays in honour of Margaret Hewett.* Pretoria: University of South Africa Press.

Berlin, Adele. 1982. “Characterization in Biblical Narrative: David's Wives.” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 7 (23): 69-85.

Beynon, John. 2001. *Masculinities and Culture* . New York City : McGraw-Hill Education Press.

Bhabha, Homi. 2012. *The location of culture* . London: Routledge.

Boyle, Marjorie O'Rourke. 2001. “The law of the heart: The death of a fool (1 Samuel 25).” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120 (3): 401.

Brettler, Marc. 2004. “Time in the Hebrew Bible .” *Time and Temporality in the Ancient World* 65 (1): 111.

Brezinska, Anna. 2012. “Postponed or delayed adulthood .” *Educating competencies for democracy* 135-157.

Brod, Harry, and Micahel Kaufman. 1994. *Men's Studies* . Calif : Sage Publications .

Bruce, Anne, Rossanne Beuthin, Laurene Sheilds, Anita Molzahn, and Kara Schick-Makaroff. 2016. “Narrative Research Evolving: Evolving through narrative research .” *Journal of International Qualitative Methods* 15 (1): 1-18.

Brueggemann, Walter. 1993. “Narrative Coherence and Theological Intentionality in 1 Samuel 18.” *The Catholic Biblical quarterly* 55 (2): 225-243.

—. 1993. *Texts under negotiation: The Bible and postmodern imagination.* . London: Fotress Press.

Bruner, Jerome. 1991. “The Narrative Construction of Reality.” *Critical Inquiry* 18 (1): 1-21.

Bundvad, Mette. 2014. “Defending the Concept of Time in the Hebrew Bible .” *Sacandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* (2): 278-295.

Burchardt, H, S Talbot, K Schmeling, and C Mukherjee. 2013. “Shear zones between rock units with no relative movement.” *Journal of Structural Geology Volume 50* 82-90.

Burchardt, Mrian. 2013. “Faith-based humanitarianism: Organizational change and everyday meanings in South Africa.” *Sociology of Religion Vol 74 Issue 1* 30-55.

Butler, Judith. 2006. Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. Abingdon: Routledge.

Campbell, Jan. 2000. *Arguing with the phallus—Feminist, queer and postcolonial theory: A psychoanalytic contribution.* 1st. Macmillan: St Martin's Press.

Chitando, Ezra. 2012. “Even when there is no rooster, the morning will start: men, HIV, and African theologies.” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28 (2): 141-145.

Chitando, Ezra, and Sophia Chirongoma. 2013. “Justice not silence: Churches facing sexual and gender-based violence. AFRICAN SUN MeDIA.” *Journal of AFRICAN SUN MeDIA.*

Chitando, Ezra, and Sophie Chirongoma. 2012. *Redemptive Masculinities: Men, HIV and religion* . Geneva: WCC Publication .

Chitando, Ezra, Molly Manyonganise, and Obert Mlambo. 2014. “Young, Male and Polished.” *Prophets, Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe* 12 (1): 153-170.

Chitando, Ezra, and Nyambura J. Njoroge. Abundant life: The churches and sexuality. World Council of Churches, 2016.

Claassens, Juliana. 2015. *An Abigail Optic: Reading the Old Testament at Intersections.* 1st. Cape Town : Stellenbosch University Press.

Clarke, Gerard. 2008. “Faith-Based Organizations and International Development: .” In *An Overview. In: Clarke G., Jennings M. (eds) Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations. International Political Economy Series*. London: Palgrave Macmillan .

Clines, David. 1995. “David the Man: The Construction of Masculinity in the Hebrew Bible.” In *Interested Parties: The Ideology of Writers and Readers of the Hebrew Bible* , 212-43. London: A&C Black Press.

—. 1995. *Interested Parties: The ideology of writers and readers of the Hebrew Bible* . 1st. London: A&C Black .

Clines, David. 2002. “What Remains of the Hebrew Bible? Its Text and Language in a Postmodern Age .” *Studia Theologia* 56 (1): 6-95.

Cloete, Norman. 2019. *IOL.* Accessed February 3, 2021. https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/protestors-force-closure-of-rape-accused-pastor-omotosos-church-in-pe/.

Coleman, Rachael. 2015. “Walter Brueggemann's Enduring Influence on Biblical Interpretation .” *The Asbury Journal* 70 (2): 1-7.

Connell, Raewyn. 2013. *Embodying serious power: Managerial Masculinities in the secuity sector: In Rethinking Transational Men* . 1st. London: Routledge.

Connell, Robert. 1998. “Masculinities and Globilization .” *Men and Masculinities* 1 (1): 3-23.

Connell, Robert, and James Messerchmidt. 2005. “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept.” *Journal of Gender and Society* 19 (6): 829-859.

Conradson, David. 2011. *Care and caring." A Companion to Social Geography* . Oxford : Wiley-Blackwell .

Constable, Thomas. 2021. “1st and 2nd Samuel .” *Journal of Studies* 1-12.

Cooke, Willem Ombelet: Ian, Silke Dyer, Gamal Serour, and Paul Devroey. 2008. “Infertility and the provision of infertility medical services in developing countries.” *Human Reproduction Update, Volume 14, Issue 6* 605-621.

Craig, Steve. 1992. *Men, masculinity and the media.* 1st . Vol. 2. London : Sage Publications.

Creanga, Ovidiu. 2014. *Biblical Masculinities foregrounded.* 10th. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press.

Davis, J., 2008. *A history of Israel.* 7th Edition 1st 1980 ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

Dean, James. 1845. “A Transit of Mercury.” *Journal of the Franklin Institute* 39 (6): 420.

Deem, Ariella. 1978. “... and the Stone Sank into His Forehead". A Note on 1 Samuel XVII 4.” *Vetus Testamentum* 28 (3): 349-351.

Dekker, John. 2016. “Characterization in the Hebrew Bible: Nabal as a Test Case.” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 26 (3): 311-324.

Demetriou, Dematrakis. 2001. “Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity: a critique a .” *Theory and society Volume 30 Issue No 3* 3 (2): 337-361.

DeVries, Simon. 1979. “A Reply to G. Gerleman on malkê ḥesed in 1 Kings XX 31.” *Vetus Testamentum* 1: 359-362.

Dillard, Raymond, and Tremper Longman. 1994. *An introduction to the Old Testament.* 1st. Grand Rapids : Zondervan Press .

Dlamini, Penwell, and Tankiso Makhetha. 2020. *Times Live South Africa* . Accessed September 12, 2020. https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/protestors-force-closure-of-rape-accused-pastor-omotosos-church-in-pe/.

Driver, Samuel. 1980. *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel; with an Introduction on Paleography and the Ancient Versions, and Facsimiles of Inscriptions.* 1st. Walton, Oxford : Clarendon Press.

Dube, Musa. 2004. “Mark's Healing Stories in an AIDS Context .” *Global Bible Commentary* 379-84.

Dube, Musa, Justin Upkong, Gerald West, Norman Gottwald, Jeremy Punt, Tinyiko Maluleke, and Vincent Wimbush. 2002. *Reading the Bible in the global village.* 1st. Cape Town: Brill Publications .

Dyer, S, N Abrahams, and Z van der Spuy N Mokoena. 2004. “You are a man because you have children’: experiences, reproductive health knowledge and treatment-seeking behaviour among men suffering from couple infertility in South Africa.” *Human Reproduction Vol.19, No.4* 960-967.

Dyk, J. 2004. “Living water: Wonderful words of life. In Through the Eyes of Another: .” In *Intercultural Reading of the Bible. ,* edited by 1st, 377-394. Amsterdam : Inst. of Mennonite Studies.

Earthy, Sarah, and Ann Cronin. 2008. “Narrative Analysis.” *Researching Social Life* 461-483.

Erikson, Erik. 1968. *Identity, youth and crisis* . New York : W. W. Norton Company Inc.

Erickson, Kelsley, Bacon, and Joan Kent. 2010. “Speciality in Lutheran Schools.” *Journal of Religion, Disability and Health Vol 14, Issue 4* 355-367.

Erikson, Erik. 1993. *Childhood and Society* . Manhattan: WW Norton & Company .

Exum, Cherly, and David Clines. 1993. *The new literary criticism and the Hebrew Bible.* 143. Bloomsbury: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Exum, Cheryl. 1996. *Plotted, shot and painted:cultural representations of biblical women* . 1st. Sheffield : Academic Press.

Farisani, Elelwani. 2010. “Black biblical hermeneutics and ideologically aware readings of texts.” *Scriptura : Journal for Contetxual Hermeneutics in Southern Africa* 105 (1): 507-518.

Figlio, Karl. 2001. *Psychoanalysis, science and masculinity* . 1st . Philadelphia : Bruner-Routledge .

Firth, David. 2008. “David and Uriah (with an occasional appearance by Uriah's wife)-Reading and re-reading 2 Samuel 11.” *Old Testament Essays* 21 (2): 310-328.

Fokkelman, J. 1981. “"David's Escape: How Hushai Wins and Ahithophel Loses (Scene 18= II Sam. 17: 15-23).” *European Judaism: A Journal for the New Europe* 15 (1): 15-23.

Forster, E. 1981. *Aspects of the Novel.* Britannica Press.

Fourie, Veronica. 2018. *SABC NEWS.* Accessed July 20, 2019. https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/protestors-force-closure-of-rape-accused-pastor-omotosos-church-in-pe/.

Fredman, David Noel, and Allen Myers. 2000. *Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible.* 1st. Amsterdam : Amsterdam University Press.

Fuchs, Esther. 2003. *Sexual politics in the biblical narrative: Reading the Hebrew Bible as a woman.* 310. A&C Black .

Gallyot, Edward. 2020. *Coming of Age.* academic.edu .

Goffman, Erving. 1979. *Gender Advertisements* . London: Macmillan International Higher Education Publishers .

Goldberg, Michael. 1982. *Theology and Narrative: A Critical Introdiuction* . 1st . Nashville: Nashville Press.

Gordon, Robert. 1999. *I & II Samuel: a commentary.* 1st. Grand Rapids : Zondervan .

Gottwald, Norman. 1987. “The hebrew bible: a social literay introduction.” *The Catholic Biblical Quartely, Vol 49, Issue 3* 42 (3): 473-475.

Graaff, Karen, and Lindy Heinecken. 2017. “Masculinities and gender-based violence in South Africa: A study of a masculinities-focused intervention programme." Development.” *Journal of Southern Africa* 34 (5): 622-634.

Graybill, Cristina. 2012. *Men in Travail: Masculinity and the Problems of the Body in the Hebrew Prophets.* Berkeley : University of California Press.

Graybill, Rhiannon. 2021. “A Grittier Daughter Zion: Lamentations and the Archive of Rape Stories.” In *Texts after Terror ,* edited by 1st, 113-144. New York : Oxford University Press .

—. 2016. *Are We Not Men? Unstable Masculinity in the Hebrew Prophets.* 1st . New York : Oxford University Press .

Graybill, Rhiannon. 2021. “Fuzzy, Messy, Icky : How to Read a Rape Story.” In *Texts after Terror,* edited by 1st, 8-22. New York: Oxford University Press.

Graybill, Rhiannon. 2015. “Masculinity, Materiality, and the Body of Moses.” *Biblical Interpretation* 23: 518-540.

Graybill, Rhiannon. 2021. “Narrating Harm in the Bathsheba Story: Predation Peremption and Silence.” In *Texts after Terror,* edited by 1st, 58-85. New York : Oxford University Press .

Graybill, Rhiannon, Begg Christopher, and Bodor Atilla. 2019. “The Prophets.” *Old Testament Abstracts* 42 (3): 803-806.

Greenrough, Christ. 2020. *The Bible and Sexual Violence Against Men. Routledge.* London : Routledge .

Gunn, David. 1988. “The Story of King David.” *Journal of the Study of the Old Testament* .

Haddad, Beverley. 2009. “ Poverty, gendered cultural sexual practices and HIV: ethical and theological implications.” *Journal of constructive theology* 15 (2): 5-22.

Haddox, Susan. 2016. “ Masculinity Studies of the Hebrew Bible The First Two Decades .” *Currents in Biblical Research* 14 (2): 176-206.

Haddox, Susan. 2013. “Masculinity Studies.” In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation,* edited by 1st, 533-541. Oxford : Oxford University Press .

Hans, Wit de, and JW Dyk. 2015. *Bible and transformation : the promise of intercultural Bible reading.* Atlanta: SBL Press.

Harding, G, L Pyke, C Derogatis, J McCormack, and J Hunter. 2013. “Female Sexual Distress Scale—Revised.” In *Handbook of sexualityrelated measures*, edited by 1st, 203-204.

Harding, James. 2016. *The love of David and Jonathan: ideology, text, reception* . 3rd. London : Routledge.

Hawley, John. 2001. *Postcolonial and Queer Theories: Intersections and Essays (Contributions to the Study of American Literature).* 1st. Praeger : Praeger Press House .

Haynes, Jeff. 2016. *Faith Based Organization in United Nations* . New York City: Springer Press .

Heacock, Anthony. 2007 “Wrongly Framed? The ‘David and Jonathan Narrative’and the Writing of Biblical Homosexuality .” *Journal of The Bible and Critical Theory* 3 (2): 2-27.

Hearn, Jeff. 2007. “From older men to boys: Masculinity theory and the life course (s.” *Norma* 2 (2): 79-84.

Hearn, Jeff, and Rchard Howson. 2019. “Hegemony, hegemonic masculinity, and beyond.” In *Routledge International Handbook of Masculinity Studies*, edited by 1st, 41-51. London : Routledge Press.

Heather, Fraser. 2004. “Doing Narrative Research: Analysing Personal Stories line by line.” *Qualitative Social Work* 3 (2): 179-201.

Hemman, Lue, and Bart Vervaeck. 2019. *Handbook of Narrative Analysis* . 1st. Nebraska : University of Nebraska Press.

Hicks, Robert. 1993. *Masculine Journey: Understanding Six Stages of Manhood* . Colorado Springs : NavPress Publishing Group .

Holter, K, and L Jonker. 2010. *Global Hermeneutics." Reflections and Consequences: International Voices in Biblical Studies* . 1st. Atlanta: SBL Press .

Holter, Knut. 2002. *Old Testament research for Africa:A critical analysis and annoted bibliography of African Old Testament dissertations,1967-2000.* Lang.

Hu, Wei. 2013. “Communities Inferred from the Books of Samuel in the Old Testament of the Bible .” *Advances in Historical Studies* 2: 70-80.

Jason, Heda. 1979. “The story of David and Goliath: a folk epic?” *Biblica* 60 (1): 36-70.

Jewkes, Rachel. 2002. “Intimate Partner Violence: Causes and Prevention .” *The Lancet* 359: 1423-1429.

Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morell, and Dunkle. 2011. “Gender Inequitable Masculinity and Sexual Entitlement in Rape Perpetration South Africa: Frindings of A Cross- Sectional Study.” *Plos One* 6 (12): e29590.

Jobbling, David. 1986. “The Sense of Biblical Narrative: Structural Analyses in the Hebrew Bible:.” *Structural Analyses in the Hebrew Bible* 39 (1): 1-22.

Jobling, David. 1998. *1Samuel.* Sweden: Liturgical Press .

Jobling, David. 1983. “Robert Alter's, the Art of Biblical Narrative.” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 8 (27): 87-99.

—. 2021. *What, if anything, is 1 Samuel? Reconsidering Israel and Judah.* 3rd. Pennyslavania : Penn State University Press.

Johnson, Elliott. 1990. *Expository hermeneutics: an introduction* . 1st. Grand Rapids : Academie Books .

Johnson, Timothy. 2015. “Sacramentality and Sacraments in Hebrews.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Sacramental Theology*, 109. Oxford : Oxford University Press.

Jonker, Louis. 2005. “'Contextuality'in (South) African exegesis: reflections on the communality of our exegetical methodologies.” *Old Testament Essays* 18 (3): 637-650.

Jonker, Louis, and Douglas Lawries. 2005. “Fishing for Jonah (anew): Various approaches to biblical interpretation.” *African Sun Media* 7 (1): 1-256.

Kanyoro, Musimbi. 2001. “Engendered communal theology: African women's contribution to theology in the twenty-first century.” *Feminist Theology* 9 (27): 36-56.

Kanyoro, Musimbi. 1999. “Reading the Bible from an African perspective .” *The Ecumenical Review* 51 (1): 1-18.

Karras, Ruth Mazo. 2021. *David His Tens of Thousands: Prowess and Piety." Thou Art the Man.* 1st. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Kasrawi, Omar. 2014. *United Nations Population Fund.* 19 September . “We, people of faith, call upon the United Nations system and Member States to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights be made central to the post-2015 sustainable development agenda…. NOT IN OUR NAME.

Keniston, Kenneth. 1968. “Psychoanalysis and theories of man: Identity Youth and crisis; childhood and society (1950).” *Science* 161 (3838): 257-258.

Kerrins, Liz. 2007. “Children's Research Centre.” *The Children's Research Centre'S Annual Lecture.*

Kessler, Gwynn. 2018. “The Male Coming-of-Age Theme in the Hebrew Bible, written by Stephen M. Wilson.” *Biblical Interpretation* 26 (2): 280-283.

Kessler, Martin. 1972. “Narrative Technique in 1 Sam 16:1-13.” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly JSTOR* 11: 543-554.

Kimmel, Michael. 2000. *The Gendered Society.* New York : Oxford University .

Klinken, Adriaan Van. 2012. “Men in the remaking: conversion narratives and born-again masculinity in Zambia.” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 42 (3): 215-239.

Klinken, Adriaan van. 2011. “The ongoing challenge of HIV and AIDS to African theology: a review article .” *Exchange* 40 (1): 89-107.

Klinken, Adriaan van. 2011. “Transforming masculinities towards gender justice in an era of HIV and AIDS: .” *Plotting the pathways* 275-296.

Klinken, Adriaan van, and Ezra Chitando. 2011. *Public Religion and Issues of Homosexuiality in Contemporary Africa.* Pennyslvania : University of Pennsylvania .

Knoppers, Gary. 2009. “The Synoptic Problem? An Old Testament Perspective.” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 19 (1): 11-34.

Koenig, A, B Constantino, A Halladay, J Daniels, and P Szatmari. 2015. “Sex and gender differences in autism spectrum disorder: summarizing evidence gaps and identifying emerging areas of priority.” *Molecular autism* 6 (1): 1-5.

Koenig, Leandra. 2011. “Gender representation in Christian book covers: A case study.” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 32 (1): 1-9.

Kulikovsky, Andrew. 2005. “Scripture and general revelation .” *Journal of Creation* 19 (2): 23-28.

Labov, William, and Joshua Waletzky. 1997. “Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience.” *Journal of Narrative and Life History* 7 (1): 3-38.

Lapsley, Daniel. 2005. *Character psychology and character education.* 1st . Notre Dame : Notre Dame Press.

Lemon, Marilynn. 1993. “Sexual counselling and spinal cord injury .” *Journal of Sexuality and Disability* 11 (1): 73-97.

Lenon, Suzzane. 2011. “'Why is our love an issue?': same-sex marriage and the racial politics of the ordinary.” *Social identities* 17 (3): 351-372.

Levenson, Jon. 1978. “I Samuel 25 as Literature and as History.” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly JSTOR* 40 (1): 11-28.

Lindsay, Lisa, and Stephen Miescher. 2003. *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa: Social History of Africa.* Portsmouth : Heinemann.

Lischer, Richard. 1984. “Book Review: Theology and Narrative: A Critical Introduction.” *Journals of Bible and Theology* 45 (2): 210-.

Liubov, Ben-Nun. 2015. “Medical Research in Biblical Times from the Viewpoint of Contemporary Perspective.” Publication House .

Loughlin, Gerard. 2005. “The Man Who Fell to Earth.” *he Blackwell Companion to Postmodern Theology* 24-47.

Louis, Herbert. 2019. *An introduction to applied semiotics; A tools for text and image analysis* . 1st. Florida: Taylor and Francis Group Publication .

Ludwig, D, and C Longnecker. 1993. “The Bathsheba syndrome.” *Journal of Business Ethics* 12: 265-273.

Macelaru, Marcel. 2014. “Theology encounters globilization.” *European Journal of Science and Theology* 10 (1): 67-78.

Magodyo, Tapiwa, Michelle Andipatin, and Kyle Jackson. 2017. “The Role of Xhosa Traditional Circumcision in Constructing Masculinity .” *South African Journal of Psychology* 47 (3): 344-355.

Marcia, James. 1966. “Development and validation of ego -identity .” *Journal of personality and social psychology* 3 (5): 551.

Marling, Raili. 2013. “Strong women and the masculinity crisis: Adulterous appropriations of the Old Testament .” *Neohelicon* 40 (10): 1-12.

Masenya, Madipoane. 2012. “Without A Voice, with a Violated Body-Re-reading Judges 19 to Challenge Gender Violence in Sacred Text.” *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Mission Studies* 40 (3): 205-216.

Masenya, Madipoane, and Hulisani Ramantswana. 2015. “Anything new under the sun of African Biblical Hermeneutics in South African Old Testament Scholarship? Incarnation, death and resurrection of the Word in Africa.” *Journal of Verbum et Ecclesia* 36 (1): 1-12.

Matthews, Shanaaz, Rachel Jewkes, and Naeemah Abrahamas. 2011. “I had a Hard Life: Exploring Childhood Adversity in the Shaping of Masculinities among Men who Killed an Intimate Partner in South Africa .” *The British Journal of Criminology* 51 (6): 960-977.

Mavundla, Thandisizwe, Fulufhelo Netswera, Ferenc Toth, Brian Bottoman, and Stembela Tenge. 2010. “How Boys Become Dogs: Stigmatization and Marginalization of Uninitiated Xhosa Males in East Londo, South Africa.” *Qualitative Health Research* 20 (7): 931-941.

McCarter, Kyle. 1984. *1 Samuel: A New Translation.* 3rd. Garden City: Doubleday.

Medlar, Tom. 1998. “The sexuality education program of the Massachusetts statewide head injury program.” *Sexuality and Disability* 16 (1): 11-19.

Merril, Eugene, Rooker Mark, and Grisanti Michael. 2011. *The world and the word: An introduction to the Old Testament.* 1st. Nashville : B&H Publishing Group.

Merrill, Eugene. 1991. *An Historical Survey of the Old Testament.* 1st. Ada, Michigan: Baker Academic Press.

Messerschmidt, James. 2018. *Hegemonic Masculinity; Formulation, Reformulation and Amplification.* London: Rowman& Littlefield .

Micahel, Matthew. 2020. “Is Saul the Second Goliath of 1 Samuel? The Rhetoric & Polemics of the David/Goliath Story in 1 Samuel.” *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 34 (2): 221-244.

Mishler, Elliot. 1991. *Research interviewing: Context and narrative.* 1st. Massachusetts: Havard University Press.

Mishler, Elliot. 1997. “The interactional construction of narratives in medical and life-history interviews.” *Journal of The construction of professional discourse* 223-244.

Moore, Will. 2021. “A Godly Man and a Manly God: Resolving the Tension of Divine Masculinities in the Bible.” *Journal for interdisciplinary biblical studies (JIBS)* 2 (2): 71-94.

Morrell, Robert, and Lahoucine Ouzgane. 2005. *African masculinities: An introduction.* New York : Palgrave Macmillian Press.

Morrell, Robert, Rachael Jewkes, Graham Lindegger, and Vijay Hamlall. 2013. “Hegemonic masculinity: reveiewing the gendered analysis of men's power in South African .” *South African Review of Sociology* 44 (1): 3-21.

Morrell, Robert, Sandra Swart, Michael Kimmel, Jeff Hearn, and Robert Connell. 2005. *Handbook of Studies on Men & Masculinities* . California: SAGE Publications .

Mosala, Itumeleng. 1989. *Black hermenutics and black theology in South Africa.* 1st. Grand Rapids : Grand Rapids Press.

Muilenburg, James. 1961. “The Biblical View of Time .” *Harvard Theological Review* 54 (4): 2225-252.

Musodza, Blessing, Barbra Mapuranga, and Oswald Dumba. 2015. *The church and the management of gender based violence in Mutoko, Zimbabwe.* Mutoko.

Mwaura, K, Philomena Njeri, and Elishiba Kimani. 2009. “Gender based violence: a pastoral challenge for the Church in Africa.” *Journal of Religious Studies Volume 41 Issue 1* 25-42.

Nadar, Sarojini. 2009. “"Changing the world: The task of feminist biblical scholars.” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 25 (2): 137-143.

Nicol, George. 1988. “Bathsheba, a Clever Woman?” *The Expository Times* 99 (12): 360-363.

Nicol, George. 1997. “The alleged rape of Bathsheba: Some observations on ambiguity in biblical narrative.” Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 22 (733): 43-54.

Nicol, George. 1998. "David, Abigail and Bathsheba, nab al and Uriah: Transformations within a triangle." Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament 12, no. 1: 130-145.

Nissen, Johannes. 2000. “Conformity, Nonconformity, and Critical Solidarity: The Church-State Issue and the Use of the Bible.” *Mission studies* 17 (1): 240-261.

Nissinen, Marti. 2016. “Relative Masculinities in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament .” *Being a Man: Negotiating Ancient Constructs of Masculinity* 221-247.

Njoroge, Nyambura. 2016. *Abundant life: The churches and sexuality.* 1st. Sweden: World Council of Churches Publications.

Noor, Asma, and Noor Nawi. 2016. “Faith-Based Organisations (FBO): A Review of Literature on their Nature and Contrasting Identities with NGO in Community Development Intervention.” *Europe Journal of Economics and Business Studies Vol 2 Issue 1* 15-28.

Norton, Sterrett, and Richard Schultz. 2010. *How to understand your Bible.* 1st. Downers Grove,IIIinois: InterVarsity Press.

Noth, Martin. 1981. “The deuteronomistic history.” *Heythrop Journal* 54 (2): 1-11.

Okure, Terresa, and Elisabeth Fiorenza. 1994. “Feminist interpretations in Africa." Searching the Scriptures.” In *A Feminist Introduction,,* 76-85. Chicago : Fotress Press.

Oliver, Jill, James Cochrane, Barbara Schmid, and Lauren Graham. 2006. “ARHAP Literature Review: Working in a bounded field of unknowing .” *African Religious Health Assets Programme* 169.

Owino, Kennedy. 2012. “The Mighty Men Conference as a 'Safe Space' for 'Born Again' Men to Express Conflicting Masculinities?” *Journal of Gender and Religion in Africa* 18 (2): 65-84.

Paris, Christopher. 2014. *Narrative obtrusion in the Hebrew Bible.* 1st. Augsburg : Fortress Publishers.

Paterson, Frances. 2021. *More couples facing infertility issues in SA.* 27 October . https://www.iol.co.za/mercury/news/more-couples-facing-infertility-issues-in-sa-42604058.

Payne, Frank. 1964. *Genesis One Reconsidered* . 19 . Chicago: Tyndale Press.

Pease, Bob. In Critical Ethics of Care in Social Work . *From uncaring masculinities to men’s caring practices in social work.* 186-196. London : Routledge Press.

Pease, Bob. 2000. “Researching profeminist men's narratives: Practice and Research in Social Work: Postmodern feminist Perspectives.” *Journal of* 138-161.

Peleg, Yaron. 2005. “Love at first sight? David, Jonathan, and the biblical politics of gender.".” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 30 (2): 171-189.

Peng, Chu-Yi. 2020. *New Masculinities in Online Discourse: A Text-Mining Approach." Mediatized Taiwanese Mandarin.* 1st. Singapore : Springer .

Phelan, James. 2005. *Living to tell about it: A rhetoric and ethics of character narration.* 1st. Philadelphia : Cornell University Press.

Phelan, James, and Peter Rabinowitz. 2008. *A companion to narrative theory.* 1st . Hoboken: New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Pipes, Paula, and Helen Ebaugh. 2002. “Faith-based coalitions, social services, and government funding.” *Sociology of Religion Volume 63 Issue 1* 49-68.

Poindexter, Cannon. 2003. “The ubiquity of ambiguity in research interviewing: an exempla.” *Journal of Qualitative Social Work* 2 (4): 383-409.

Powell, Mark. 1990. *What is narrative criticism.* 1st . Minneapolis: Fotress Press.

Poythress, S. 1984. *Adequacy of language and accommodation, in:Radmacher E.D. and Preus R.D Hermeneutics, Inerrancy andthe Bible.* Grand Rapids : Zondervan .

Punt, Jeremy. Neotestamentica. "Sex and gender, and liminality in biblical texts: venturing into Postcolonial, Queer biblical interpretation." *2007* 41 (2): 382-398.

Punt, Jeremy. 2007. "Sex and gender, and liminality in biblical texts: venturing into Postcolonial, Queer biblical interpretation." *Neotestamentica* 41 (2): 382-398.

Rakoczy, Susan. 2004. *In her name: Women doing theology.* 1st. Pietermaritzburg : Cluster Publications .

Rakoczy, Susan. 2004. "Religion and Violence: The Suffering of Women ." *Agenda: Empowering for Gender Equity* No. 61: 29-35.

Ratele, Kopano. 2008. "Analysing males in Africa: Certain useful elements in considering ruling masculinities." *African and Asian studies* 7 (4): 515-536.

Ratele, Kopano. 2014. "Hegemonic African Masculinities and men's heterosexual lives: Some uses for homophobia." *African Studies Review* 57 (2): 115-130.

Ratele, Kopano. 2008. "Masculinity and male mortality in South Africa." *African Safety Promotion* 6 (2): 19-41.

Ratele, Kopano. 2007. "Native chief and white headman: A critical African gender analysis of culture ." *Agenda* 21 (72): 65-76.

Ratele, Kopano, Tamara Shefrer, Anna Strebel, and Elron Fouten. 2010. "We do not cook we only assist them: Constructions of Hegemonic Masculinity through gendered activity." *Journal of Pscychology in Africa* 20 (4): 557-567.

Reinhartz, Adele. 1998. *Why ask my name?: Anonymity and identity in biblical narrative.* 2nd. Oxford: Oxford University Press on Demand.

Reissman, Kohler, and Quinney. 2005. "Narrative in social work: A critical review." *Journal of Qualitative social work* 4 (4): 391-412.

Robert, Alter. 2011. *The art of biblical narrative.* 1st. New York : Basics Books Press.

Robert, Alter. 1999. "The David story: A translation with contemporary of 1 and 2 Samuel ." *Journal of Literary Imagination* 1 (1): 10-24.

Römer, Thomas. 2015. "The Invention of History in Ancient Judah and the Formation of the Hebrew Bible." *Die Welt des Orients* 1: 255-272.

Römer, Thomas. 1997. "Transformations in Deuteronomistic and Biblical Historiography On» Book-Finding «and other Literary Strategies." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 109 (1): 1-11.

—. 1997. *Transformations in Deutoromistic and Biblical Historiography.* Chicago: Walter de Gryter Press.

Ross, H. 1997. "Stanley Lecture Series." *Toccoa Falls College* 19-20.

Rost, Leonard. 1962. “Succession Narrative.” *Interpretation* (Bwant) 35: 383-396.

Roux, Le, and Lizle Loots. 2017. “The unhealthy divide: How the secular-faith binary potentially limits GBV prevention and response." Development in Practice.” *Development in Practice Vol 27 Issue 5* 733-744.

Rushwan, Gerias. 1992. “Infertility in Africa .” *Population Science* 25-46.

Rust, Paula. 1993. “Coming out in the age of social constructionism: Sexual identity formation among lesbian and bisexual women.” *Gender& Society* 7 (1).

Scheff, Thomas. 2003. “Shame in self and societ.” *Journal of Symbolic interaction* 26 (2): 239-262.

Schippers, Mimi. 2007. “Recovering the feminie other: Masculinity, feminity and gender hegemony.” *Theory and Society* 36 (1): 5-102.

Schoenberg, Nancy. 2017. “Enhancing the role of faith-based organizations to improve health: a commentary.” *Translational Behavioral Medicine, Volume 7* 529-531.

Scholz, Susanne. 2017. *The Bible as Political Artifact: On the Feminist Study of the Hebrew Bible.* 1st. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Sedikides, Constantine, and Brewer Marilynn. 2015. *Individual self, rational self, collective self.* East Sussex: Psychology Press.

Serrano, Carlo. 2014. “Charismatic and servant leadership as seen in King Saul and young David: An inner texture analysis of 1 Samuel 17.” *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 6 (1): 27-40.

Sharp, Carolyn. 2004. “Ironic Representation, Authorial Voice, and Meaning in Qohelet.” *Biblical Interpretation* 121 (1): 37-68.

Shefer, Tamara, Kopano Ratele, and Anna Strebel. 2007. *From boys to men: Social Constructions of Masculinity in Contemporary Society.* 1st. Juta and Company Ltd.

Ska, Louis Jean. 1990. *Our Fathers have told us: Introduction to the analysis of Hebrew Narratives.* 1st. Rome: Gregorian Biblical Book Shop.

Snoek, Hans. 2008. “Chapter Four. Key Concepts In The Dialogue Between African And European Biblical Scholars.” *African and European readers of the Bible in dialogue. Brill* 1: 85-104.

Spivak, Gayatri. 2013. *The Spivak Reader: Selected Works of Gayatri* . London : Routledge .

Stansell, Gary. 2011. “Stansell, Gary. "David and his friends: Social-scientific perspectives on the david-jonathan friendship.” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 41 (3): 115-131.

Stepien, Aneta. 2014. “Understanding male shame." Masculinities.” *Journal of Identity and Culture* 1: 7-27.

Stone, Ken. 2021. “1 and 2 Samuel .” In *The Queer Bible Commentary* , edited by 2nd, 264. London : SCM-Canterbury Press.

Stone, Ken. 2006. “Burning Bush: Or, Queering Bush’s Bible. Postscripts.” *The Journal of Sacred Texts, Cultural Histories, and Contemporary Contexts* 2 (1): 99-108.

Sumerau, Edward. 2012. “That's what a Man is supposed to do: Compensatory Manhood Acts in an LGBT Christian Church .” *Journal of Gender and Society* 26 (3): 461-487.

Thaut, Laura. 2009. “The Role of Faith in Christian Faith-Based Humanitarian Agencies: Constructing the Taxonomy.” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, Vol 20, Issue 4* 319-350.

Thompson, John. 1974. “The significance of the verb love in the David-Jonathan narratives in 1 Samuel.” *Vetus Testamentum* 24 (3): 334-338.

Tiendrebego, Georges, Michael Buykx, and Nel van Beelen. 2004. “Faith-based responses and opportunities for a multisectoral approach.” *Sexual Health Exchange Volume 1 Issue 1* 1-3.

Tiendrebeogo, Georges. 2004. “ Faith-based responses and opportunities for a multisectoral approach.” *Sexual Health Exchange Volume 1 Issue 1* 1-3.

Togarasei, Lovemore. 2008. *Musa W Dube and the study of the Bible in Africa* . uir.unisa.ac.za .

Toit, Du, and Nadine Bowers. 2019. “"Does faith matter? Exploring the emerging value and tensions ascribed to faith identity in South African faith-based organisations.” *HTS: Theological Studies Volume 75 Issue 4* 1-7.

Tolson, Andrew. 1977. *The limits of masculinity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tongue, Samuel. 2012. “Scripted bodies: Reading the spectacle of Jacob Wrestling the angel.” *Men, Masculinities and Spirituality* 6 (1): 20-37.

Torres, Vasti, Jones Susan, and Renn Kristen. 2009. “Identity development theories and student affairs: Origins, current status, and new approaches .” *Journl of College Student Developmemt* 50 (6): 577-596.

Tsumura, David Toshio. 2007. *The First Book of Samuel.* Grand Rapids: Wm.B Eerdmans Publishing .

—. 2019. *The Second Book of Samuel* . Grand Rapids: Wm.B Eerdmans Publishing .

Tsumura, David Toshio. 2009. “Vertical Grammar of Parrallelism in Hebrew Poetry .” *Society of Biblical Literature* 128 (1): 167-181.

Turner, Victor. 1995. *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure* . 1st. New York : Aldine de Gruyter .

Tyson, Kevin. 2010. *A Cultural Study of the David and Jonathan Relationship through the Ritual in 1 Samuel 18: 1-5 (Doctoral Dissertation).* Durham : Durham University Press.

Ukpong, Justin. 2000. “"Developments in biblical interpretation in Africa: Historical and hermeneutical directions.” *Journal of Southern Africa* 108: 1-9.

Vilakati, Gcina, Derrick Dlamini, D Mamba, Mishra, Thwala, and J Li. 2020. “A critical review of selected membrane-and powder-based adsorbents for water treatment: Sustainability and effectiveness.” *ournal of Cleaner Production Volume 1 Issue 2* 123497.

Vincent, Louise. 2008. “Boys will be boys: traditional Xhosa male circumcision, HIV and sexual socialisation in contemporary South Africa.” *Culture, Health& Sexuality* 10 (5): 431-446.

Vorster, Willem. 1986. “Readings, readers and the succession narrative.” *An Essay on Reception* 1: 351-362.

Wailand, Christine. 2002. “A New David Preparing for a New Goliath: A Question of Corporate Competence.” *World Futures: The Journal of General Evolution* 58 (5-6): 433-440.

Walsh, J. 2015. “Masculinity and Irish Popular Culture: Tiger's Tales.” *Contemporary Theatre Review* 25 (3): 440-441.

Walt, Charlene van der. 2017. “"But He Refused to Listen to Her..." Developing a Safe Communal Space Where Marginal Voices can be Heard .” *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 159: 5-21.

Walt, Charlene Van der. 2012. “Hearing Tamar's voice : contextual readings of 2 Samuel 13:1-22.” *Journal of Old Testament Essays* 25 (1): 182-206.

Walt, Charlene Van der. 2017. “In the greater scheme of things. Creation and the human condition in Terrence Malick’s Tree of Life (2011.” *Scriptura: Journal for Contextual Hermeneutics in Southern Africa* 116 (2): 224-235.

Waltke, Bruce. 1991. “Historical Grammatical Problems.” *Hermeneutics, inerrancy, and the Bible* (4th): 71-129.

Ward, N, R Kader, and M Dankyau. 2004. “Bridging the gaps between religion and sexual and reproductive health and right.” *Sexual Health Exchange Volume 1, Issue 4-5* 120.

Wedgewood, Nikki. 2009. “Connell's Theory of Masculinity: Its Origins and Influences on the Study of Gender.” *Journla of Gender Studies* 18 (4): 329-339.

Weigle, Brett, and Charles Allen. 2017. “Keeping David From Bathsheba: The Four-Star General’s Staff as Nathan.” *Journal of Military Ethics* 16 (1-2): 94-113.

West, Gerald. 1993. “The interface between trained readers and ordinary readers in liberation hermeneutics: a case study: Mark 10: 17-22.” Neotestamentica 27 (1): 165-180.

West, Gerald, and Musa Dube. 2000. The Bible in Africa: transactions, trajectories, and trends. 1st. Leiden Boston: Brill.

—. 2000. The Bible in Africa: Transactions, trajectories, and trends. 1st. London: Brill Press.

West, Gerald, and Phumzile Zondi-Mabizela. 2004. “The Bible story that became a campaign: the Tamar Campaign in South Africa.” Ministerial formation Journal 103 (5).

West, Gerald. 2008. “African and European readers of the Bible in dialogue: in quest of a shared meaning.” In *Interrogating the comparative paradigm in African Biblical Scholarship ,* by Gerald West and Hans de Wit, 37-64. Leiden Boston: Brill.

West, Gerald. 2011. “Do two walk together? Walking with the other through Contextual Bible Study.” *Anglican Theological Review* 93 (3): 431.

West, Gerald. 2013a . “Exegesis seeking appropriation; appropriation seeking exegesis: Re-reading 2 Samuel 13: 1-22 in search of redemptive masculinities.” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 34 (2): 1-6.

West, Gerald. 2014. “Locating ‘Contextual Bible Study’ within biblical liberation hermeneutics and intercultural biblical hermeneutics .” *HTS Theological Studies* 70 (1): 1-10.

West, Gerald. 2013b. “Locating Contextual Bible Study within praxis.” *Diaconia* 4 (1): 43-48.

West, Gerald. 2015. “Reading the Bible with the marginalised: The value/s of contextual Bible reading.” *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 1 (2): 235-261.

West, Gerald, Sithembiso Zwane, and Charlene van der Walt. 2021. “From Homosexuality to Hospitality; from Exclusion to Inclusion; from Genesis 19 to Genesis 18.” *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 168: 5-23.

Widmer, Mariana, Ana Betran, Mario Merialdi, Jeniifer Requejo, and Ted Karpf. 2011. “The role of faith-based organizations in maternal and newborn health care in Africa.” *International Journal of Gynaecology and Obstetrics , Volume 114; Issue 3* 218-222.

Wilson, Stephen. 2013. *The Male Coming of Age Theme in the Hebrew Bible* . Durham: Duke University .

Wink, Walter. 1980. *Transforming Bible Study* . 1st. London: SCM Press.

Winterson, Jeanette. 1985. *Oranges are not the only fruit.* 1st. England : Pandora Press.

Wit, De. 2004. “Intercultural Bible reading and hermeneutics." Through the Eyes of Another.” In *Intercultural reading of the Bible. Institute of Mennonite Studies-Vrije Universiteit,* 477-492. Amsterdam: Institute of Mennonite Studies-Vrije Universiteit.

Wit, de, Louis Jonker, Marleen Kool, and Daniel Schipani. 2004. “Through the Eyes of Another: Intercultural Reading of the Bible.” In *Manual for facilitators and reporters,* 12. Amsterdam : Institute of Mennonite Studies.

Wolde, Ellen. 2002. “A Leader Led by a Lady David and Abigail in I Samuel 25.” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 114 (3): 355-375.

Young, Robert. 2016. *A Postcolonialism: An historical introduction.* 1st. New Jersey : 2016.

Zsolnay, IIona. 2016. *Being a Man: Negotiating Ancient Constructs of Masculinity.* 1st. London : Routledge.

Zwane, Sthembiso. 2020. “The Relevance of Black Liberation Theology in South Africa post 1994: A tribute to Vuyani Vellem .” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 76 (3).