Prayer for protection: A comparative perspective on Psalms in relation to Lozi Prayer traditions

by

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DEDICATION

- To my dear wife Iñutu Mushumba Kamuwanga and our children Likando Kamuwanga and Lubasi Kamuwanga for your perseverance, patience, love and support during this period of study;

- To my parents the late Bagrey Nasilele Kamuwanga and Elizabeth Likando Kamuwanga; to my brothers and sisters and to my family–in-law for your love and support;

- To colleagues and companions in the work of God;

I dedicate this work.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work. It has not been previously submitted for any examination or any degree in any other university.

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Liswaniso Kamuwanga

September 2007

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ABSTRACT

Thematically, this research interrogates prayer for protection. Its title embodies two distinct religious traditions namely the biblical Psalms in the Old Testament and Lozi prayers grounded in a broad African religious cultural experience. The concept of prayer precipitates questions regarding functionality, structural and theological aspects. Further, this investigation problematizes a theoretical trajectory of closeness between biblical and African cultural experience proposed by some scholars.

This study makes a contribution towards a comparative approach in Biblical Studies. An integrated hermeneutical reading is applied to Psalms scholarship. The argumentation is based on a construct of cultic, literary, historical contexts and theological analyses of Psalms 28; 64; 77; 91 and 140. A contemporary reading of similar prayer traditions arising from Lozi people is then conducted.

From a perspective of both Psalm studies and African religious experience prayer for protection is seen as a petitioner's response to the Supreme Being during periods of danger and adversarial encounters. Such danger is imminent at the time of prayer. A victim places his/ her confidence in the salvific intervention of God or the gods. Through this standpoint selected psalms are considered not as songs of praise, but rather as prayers of protection from danger and enemy attacks.

A parallel is drawn to the Lozi suppliants' response to various cultural foes like tribal enemies, malicious neighbours and witchcraft. Other situations of danger are identified as mythological and natural calamities such as drought and crop failure. A comparative analysis of concepts like God, enemies, petitioners, elements of prayer, cultic and other related aspects has yielded similarities and differences. The results of this research contribute to a data bank on indigenous Lozi knowledge systems, hermeneutical and dialogical points of departure between the two traditions within the context of Biblical and Religious Studies.

ORTHOGRAPHICAL REMARKS

The adjusted Harvard reference system is followed in this research. In the same vein, abbreviations of books of the Bible will be listed according to rules in Kritzinger's[1] outline on research methodology.

Unless otherwise indicated the Bible translation of choice is the New International Version (NIV). For purposes of comparison, the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the New Amplified Version (NAV) and the Masoretic Text (MT) have been utilised.

Titles of source material in the bibliography conform to the way they actually appear on originals copies.

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[1] See Kritzinger (2001:20).

TERMINOLOGIES

Certain terms have been used in the content of this work to describe personalities, institutions and approaches such as:

African Independent Churches- these are churches originating in Africa by Africans and primarily for Africans (Phiri 2000:3).

African Traditional Religion- is the sum total of beliefs, wisdom ritual practices and institutions of predominantly black Africans south of the Sahara (Magesa 2000:4).

African Hermeneutics- is a contextual approach that foregrounds African culture as a point of departure for conducting hermeneutics.

God- in this study I have elected to address the Supreme Being in the male gender in congruity with biblical and Lozi traditions.

Living-dead-a term coined by Mbiti to define ancestors. It includes the aspects of continued existence and being part of the living family.

Mission churches- these are churches planted by missionaries originating from abroad and to an extent still maintaining links with the mother church.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been utilized in this research:

ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
AFR	The African Ecclesial Review
AS	African Studies
BTB	Biblical Theology Bulletin
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
DDD	Dictionary of Deities and Demons
ECB	Eerdmans Commentary of the Bible
ER	The Encyclopedia of Religion
ERTA	Evangelical Review of Theology
HLELOT	Hebrew Lexicon and English Lexicon of the Old Testament
HR	History of Religions
ISBE	International Standard Bible Encyclopedia
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JTSA	Journal of Theology for Southern Africa
MT	Masoretic Text
NAV	New American Version
NIDOTTE	New International Dictionary of the Old Testament Theology and Exegesis
NIV	New International Version
OTE	Old Testament Essays
RSV	Revised Standard Version
TD	Theology in Dialogue
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
TWOT	Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament
VG	Van Gorcum
VT	Vetus Testamentum

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Actuality

Generally, studies in African religion include scanty references to prayer. Furthermore, although prayer is a primary phenomenon of religion, it has received less attention compared to other aspects of African religion (Heiler 1958:xiii; Mbiti 1975:1; Shorter 1975:1; Opefeyitimi 1988:27; Lindon 1990:205). In particular, prayer for protection occurs far in between. Similarly, an in-depth inquiry into *Lozi* prayer is long overdue. Hence, this investigation is a contribution to studies on *Lozi* religious prayer traditions.

African prayer has been perceived in many different ways. It is sometimes indistinguishable from verbal magic, particularly when the protective is emphasized (Sangree 1966:206). Others see it as an extension of the hierarchical relationship when ancestors are included. In contradistinction, African prayer and ancestor veneration are said to be true examples of prayer (Shorter 1975:2; Lindon 1990:224).

Prayer for protection is common to both biblical and African religious traditions. The cries of the psalmists to Yahweh for protection evidently parallel similar responses by different people of the world when faced by challenging situations and difficulties. During crises, life threatening circumstances, and devastating effects of famine, drought, war and disease, the natural response of the Israelites[1] as well as the Africans[2], is to implore the Supreme Being for intervention and assistance.

Since this research is conducted in the field of Biblical and Religious Studies, it is expedient that biblical traditions are considered. The Book of Psalms provides a premise for this investigation. Psalms are a collection of various types of songs and prayers. These prayers were addressed to Yahweh in search of answers to needs in various life

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[1] See Mowinckel (1962:193); Crenshaw (2001:50); Bullock (2001:166).
[2] See Mainga (1972:96) and Mbiti (1990:14).

situations. In particular, the lament is a composition befitting such an attitude of requesting assistance from the high God, Yahweh. Amongst laments are certain prayers, which pertain to the aspect of seeking Yahweh's protection from imminent danger. This investigation focuses on protection as theme in the Psalms of trust and lament.

Psalm 91 as exemplary is the point of departure followed by Psalms 28, 64, 77, and 140 are examined exegetically. The preference of Psalm 91 is based on its theological themes, clear confidence motif and strong presence of the enemy resulting in danger. Subsequently the other Psalms are dealt with according to their sequential order. At the centre of this pursuit is an attempt to highlight prayer during crises. This investigation therefore broadly portrays a perspective on the role of protection prayer in the Old Testament world.

The relation between Yahweh and his people led them to trust him and implore him in times of need (Clifford 2003:17). He, in turn, promised to be with them and to deliver them (Ps 91:14-16). Obviously, the psalmists did not only seek God when they were in distress but in good times too. As an exemplar, Psalm 91 is set in a situation that appears to be challenging. The psalmist declares his confidence in Yahweh's protection. When linked to Psalm 90, "The prayer of Moses", by following the literary context, it is possible to tentatively postulate a theme of prayer for protection to Yahweh in the midst of marauding forces. It is possible that the psalmist was disillusioned after the failure of Yahweh's promise and subsequent collapse of the monarchy in Psalm 89. In Psalm 90, the psalmist laments the lack of longevity in life, and in the succeeding Psalm 92, thanksgiving and praise are given to Yahweh for his faithfulness and works. Thus by taking into consideration the literary historical context, a picture of protection appears regarding Psalm 91. A similar thematic motif has been observed in the other selected texts.

The comparative part of this research is on the Lozi people of western Zambia. Missionaries came to the hinterland in the 1800s and subsequently propagated the Christian faith (Zorn 2004:19). The growth of Christianity has resulted in the diminishing of African Traditional Religion in this area. Today practitioners of African Traditional Religion constitute a rather insignificant percentage of the population, which cannot be easily determined (Barrett *et al* 2001:239).

The encroachment of Christianity has led to the demise of the African Traditional Religion. While this may be the case, religion is deeply engraved in the people's culture. This is demonstrable by the co-existence of Christianity and Islam with African Traditional Religion for over 1300 years in Africa (Thorpe 1991:3). It is thus difficult to imagine that transfer of thought never occurred between the two religions. The question therefore is to what extent has the African Traditional Religion influenced the believing Christian community? It is imperative to mention that even the translation of the Bible into vernaculars utilised indigenous terms and concepts (Sanneh 1989:174). Thus, translation has led to deep theological meaning on the part of the recipients (Barrett 1968:109). Similarly, the dependence and enthusiasm that African Christians express in prayer is to an extent related to their traditional background. In African Traditional Religion the community prays for rain before the planting season (especially when there is a drought), before hunting trips, during child delivery, sickness and so forth. This practice has been carried over and is expressed by many African Christians who seek God for virtually everything (Mbiti 1986:84). Positively, people must employ their cultures, worldviews, hopes, fears and experiences in appropriating the unchangeable Christian message centred on Jesus Christ (Mbiti 1975:19).

In preliminary research, it has become apparent that some scholars have conducted groundbreaking work on the African religious terrain. Mainga (1972) in *A history of Lozi religion* discusses elements of Lozi religion at length. Similarly, Mbiti (1975) in *The Prayers of African Religion* has written extensively about prayer in Africa. My study is distinct from Mainga's work since it takes into account a biblical perspective. Mainga's history of Lozi religion is restricted to the single Lozi tradition. Mainga does not deal with protection prayers extensively and only relates to them in the context of the history of Lozi religion.

In *The Prayers of African Religion* (1975) Mbiti provides a collection and analyses of prayers from different African societies. However, his attempt differs from my investigation in terms of its context. Mbiti's study is broad based and inclusive of various prayer genres. In addition, his scope is not limited to a single tradition but rather is a documentation of prayers from various African people. The present investigation on the other hand makes a consideration of Lozi prayer traditions in relation to the Psalms. Mbiti's effort is exhaustive; it covers many African societies and phenomena making his collection inevitably broad. However, it fails to bring forward distinguishable aspects of the African Traditional Religion

(Ray 1973:75-89; Turner 1981:11-13). African Traditional Religion is tribal and not universal. Furthermore, Africans are not homogenous in customs, histories and ideas (Mugambi 1994:3-4). Therefore, sweeping generalizations by Mbiti arising from an over-emphasis on the commonalities of African Traditional Religion are stretched (Pato 1997:53). At any rate, the apparent heterogeneity of the religious customs set in ethnic diversity is paled by the shared essence of spirituality embedded in the African way of life (Zahan 1979:2).

1.2   Problem Statement

In the quest to convert the Africans, certain cultural practices were discouraged or ultimately prohibited by the early missionaries (Dryness 1990:11; Kwenda 2002:160)[3]. Traditional local customs and institutions such as veneration of ancestors, tribal ceremonies, authority systems and polygamy, among others, were opposed and denigrated (Bediako 1995:25). It was reckoned that such practices are steeped in evil religious experiences, thus, they must be repudiated (Hiebert 1994:55-57). The result of these restrictions included Westernisation of converts. In some of these cases, converts were ostracised by their own people. Obviously, this negative impact resulted in disorientation of the converts[4]. In other cases, due to the foreignness[5] of the new religion, some Africans resisted, as they were not ready to break away from their aged practices (Kwenda 2002:169). However, conversion to Christianity needs not imply rejection of traditional culture (La Roche 1968:289).

Another common phenomenon concerns the failure of Christian missionaries to address some of the cultural problems faced by their converts adequately. Equally, Western Hermeneutics lacks relevance specifically in addressing pressing problems in the African context (Adamo 2001:34). The official Church's mode of reading the Bible is faltered for failing to respond passably to the questions that African Christians are asking about their life in Christ and experience with the Bible (Ukpong 1995:4). It is common knowledge that

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[3] Robert Moffat is criticised for underestimating African religious traditions, introducing a Christianity cast in his background without considering adaptation. Such methods of the missionary enterprise caused cultural damage (Dryness 1990:11).

[4] Both the resultant schizophrenic behaviour in the individual converts and the polarisation of groups between Christians and non-Christians in society is amply defined by Achebe (1958) *Things fall apart* and Wa Thiong'o (1965) *The River between.*

[5] See Kraft (1979:308).

in certain instances some members of established churches go to consult with traditional medicine men and diviners secretly. This occurs largely due to the ineffectiveness of medical science and mission Christianity in diagnosing and prescribing remedies for some cultural psychological problems (Kraft 1979:305, 306; O'Donovan 1996:2).

As situations arise that force African people to seek assistance outside their abilities prayer offers an avenue to call on God and to request him for assistance. It is important to realise that African tribal people relate their experiences to the outer transcendent world. In the traditional African world-view, there is a close affinity between the living and the living dead (Mbiti 1975:75). Occurrences in life are not accidental. This means that there are forces beyond the natural realm, which constantly interfere in the different spheres of life (Ray 1987:68). There is a presence of spiritual beings potent with powers that are either malevolent or benevolent. This forces tribal people to search for answers from a Supreme Being and other intermediaries.

The choice of the Lozi people as the context for this research is **primarily** motivated by the fact that this researcher belongs to the same group. Given this reality, it is easy to appreciate and assess traditional views, customs and practices as an internal observer.

The **second** reason for choosing this topic relates to the researcher's past experience. It is not un-common to meet African Christians who revert to their indigenous remedies when faced with difficulties. The belief is that modern Western Science cannot cure certain ailments (Onunwa 1991:278-280). The weakness in Western solutions, for example in the face of psychological disorders, epidemics and natural calamities is the catalyst for seeking spiritual redress among new African religious movements (Jules-Rosette 1987:82). Equally, continued practice of African Traditional Religion, issues from the fact that it is deeply ingrained in their cultural fabric (Musasiwa 1993:65).

This study is **thirdly,** motivated by a need to collect and document some traditional prayers of the Lozi people. The result of this undertaking will be a contribution that could be utilised by posterity. By using indigenous knowledge systems, like the Lozi culture a data bank could be built for future scientific research.

Contextual issues are presently coming to the fore as Africans rediscover their own identity, cultural heritage coupled with resurgence of African Traditional Religion in this

ever-changing African and world community (Dryness 1990:39; Olowola 1993:7; Theron 1996:28). The positive results of the need to rediscover identity include the contribution of a wealth of knowledge to the field of Biblical and Religious Studies. Those cultural practices that were ignored could be carefully examined and utilised to enrich the African religious communities. To this end, the extent of inculturation in Africa has been minimal (Mbiti 1986:7). It follows that Biblical and Religious Studies ought to be relevant to the cultural and religious context of the community (Ukpong 2000:48). African people(s) must fill their own faith. Such an undertaking should consider both the past and the future aspects of Africans (Appiah 2003:55). However romanticising traditional values could overlook the unacceptable and oppressive elements in the culture (Ela 1986:126). This provides a **fourth** reason for the study.

The proliferation of African Independent Churches and their prevailing practice of seeking aid and guidance from the spiritual through designated church prophets is the **fifth** reason. Members of Independent Churches seek guidance and solutions to their pressing needs from such functionaries (Mbiti 1986:124). Although a consideration of African Independent Churches is out of the scope of this investigation, it is argued that the foregone experience is continued from African Traditional Religion. In African Traditional Religion, the diviner or healer is implored to assist in revealing the source of the problem in any given situation (Reynolds 1963:95). In this way spiritual, psychological, physical and material problems are resolved. The need to contact the spiritual arena and manipulate the future is a motivating factor for communicating with the ancestors either directly or indirectly by acquiring the services of a diviner (Mitchell 1977:30). By considering the prayer-practices in African Traditional Religion, this research endeavours to explore this practice further.

This investigation attempts to analyse prayer texts through a synchronic, diachronic and theological approach in conjunction with comparison of the two traditions under consideration. The model is a contribution to Biblical Studies. The development of various liberationist contextual epistemologies for hermeneutical purposes by African scholars necessitates this study. Thus, the application of the proposed methodology is the **sixth** reason for conducting this investigation.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

The following are the aims of this study:

❑ to apply a comparative model through analysis between biblical and Lozi traditions regarding prayer for protection;

❑ to examine the different aspects of prayer namely function, motivation and settings with regard to protection in:

(i)   Psalms 28; 64; 77; 91 and 140 and

(ii)   Lozi religious traditions.

In each of the above references:

▪ to identify and examine the various elements of prayer for protection;
▪ to reflect on the place of the Supreme Being in the given texts;
▪ to examine the influence of the adversary and situations of danger necessitating prayer for protection;
▪ to demonstrate the place of prayer for protection in both individual and corporate practices;
▪ to highlight the role of intermediaries and cult officials;

❑ and in tandem reflect the results thereof as a starting point for dialogue between the aforesaid traditions and further research;

❑ to contribute towards a data bank on Lozi prayer traditions and enrich understanding regarding prayer for protection in the two traditions;

❑ to test the thesis that there is religious proximity between Old Testament and African beliefs and practices;

❑ to provide aspects of Lozi historical background for the analysis of elements in selected prayers for protection.

1.4 Research methodology

1.4.1 Background

This research will primarily be a **literature study**.

Interpretation methods form a pertinent issue concerning theology in Africa. For a long time Biblical Studies was the domain of Western approaches to conducting exegesis. In the course of time contributions by African scholars such as Adamo, Ukpong and Mugambi have become invaluable. The major methods of performing exegesis, which have been utilised by some African scholars, are traditional Western approaches and contextual methods (Holter 2000:10, 18). Thus in Africa, Biblical Studies has benefited from various theories, contexts and praxis. These influences can be traced historically to three junctures, at which the Bible reached Africa - namely, precolonial, colonial and postcolonial periods. The precolonial era is identical with precritical reading. In the first centuries, North Africa was dominated by rhetorical and typological methods synonymous with elitist and ordinary readers respectively (Sugirtharajah 2001:31).

The colonial period witnessed the emergence of different approaches. In most cases, colonialists employed the Bible to inculcate their ideologies, encroach on indigenous cultures and displace native religious and cultural beliefs. In contra-distinction, indigenous people utilised the colonizers' paradigm subversively. They established cultural differences and affirmations of identity within the discursive territory of the imperialists (Sugirtharajah 2001:36). During the liberation struggle, for instance, **Liberationist approaches** were employed for protestation against political oppression (Frostin 1988:17). In South Africa, proponents of this method include Tutu and Boesak (West 1995:64). Similarly, African Independent Churches engage contextual methods in their endeavour to interpret biblical texts.

The postcolonial era is synonymous with indigenization, inculturation, vernacularization and contextualization. Postcolonial theory has impacted Biblical Studies in Africa. It is premised by the recovery of indigenous cultures and, it is attended by the renunciation of hegemonic Western approaches in favour of the elevation of the indigenous. Like Liberation Theology, it is fore-grounded in the marginalised poor. However, Postcolonial theory differs from Liberation Theology in its pluralistic view (Sugirtharajah 1991:3;

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2001:250). On the other hand Liberation Theology is premised by a commitment to the Bible (Bosch 1991:439). Yet classical Liberation Theology with its commitment to eradication of poverty and privileging of the poor is a resource for African contextual models too.

1.4.2 Contextual approaches

Contextualization has played an important role in the formation of Third World and African approaches in particular (Fabella 2003:59). Modifications to the contextual method have been developed and proposed by various scholars. The contextual nature of African readings informed by differences in social, cultural, economic, political and religious conditions on the continent, have resulted in the development of various reading approaches (Asante 2001:366; Ukpong 2002:17). To demonstrate the point, four models are considered cursorily.

West (1999:9-19) provides **a variant of Liberation Theology** grounded in the South African context. It draws heavily from the inequalities caused by the political past. The experience of oppression is fundamental to the approach (Gutierrez 1974:9). The interlocutors of the method are primarily ordinary people defined as poor and marginalised sectors of society (West 1999:124).

There are two classes of readers in the model. The term reader signifies the shift in hermeneutics to the reader (Barton 1984:201-207; Lategan 1984:1-17; McKnight 1985:2, 3; Eagleton 1989:119-127). The first group comprises mostly of those who are illiterate and semi literate (West 1999:8). The second group is the socially engaged biblical scholar who reads critically. Indeed ordinary readers are comprised of the illiterate, unionised workers (Cochrane 1991:177-89), rural women who may not be directly affected by racial oppression, class and gender inequalities but carry the bulk of productive and reproductive responsibilities (Paton 1996:199-210) and the youth who dropped out of formal education to join the liberation struggle but since find themselves jobless.

West (1991:173) draws from Wimbush's African American analysis of the development of their methods of interpretation. Thus, he proposes a model for conducting Bible study that takes the reader's context seriously as a point of departure. Ordinary readers do not follow conventional rules (Moore 1989:85-93). Their reading is precritical. In many cases

they hear and remember the accounts without reading (Draper 1996:59-77; Mosala 1996:43-57). Thus, reading involves a communal process (Nthamburi & Waruta 1997:40-57). Their reading strategy, (although sometimes resembling certain processes), is unstructured and is not controlled by the literal, which makes their reading to resemble rewriting (Banana 1993:17-32). Therefore, their manner of reading involves looseness (Wimbush 1991:88, 89). The text is recreated, almost as though sabotaging dominant readings (Hendricks 1995:79; Fulkerson 1994:152, 153). At any rate, the Bible is highly valued as the 'Word of God' significant for life and survival. It follows that the Bible is symbolical almost magical (Ndungu 1997:62, 63; Yorke 1997:149-152).

Secondarily, the model is complimented through resources of biblical scholarship (West 1999:119). In this way, scholars and critical readers can be engaged in the process. In order to achieve these objectives, probing is conducted, highlighting the socio-historical, linguistic and literary contexts (West 1999:141) and, the suggested Bible study interface is further assisted through the aid of trained facilitators. In this way, the method enables trained readers to read the Bible with the untrained marginalised groups (West 1991:176; 1999:155).

Mugambi (1994:9-16) also proposes a model for **conducting theology** in Africa which is foregrounded in culture and traditional religious experience. This scheme is necessitated by the call for tackling interpretation through the employment of indigenous thought forms (Agbeti 1972:6-7). Coupled with a desire to break from imitating Western norms and the relevance of the church in modern Africa, Mugambi proposes that Africans must set the agenda for their own theologising. This model is underpinned by a methodical collection of data by different African societies to facilitate the interpretation.

In view of African history, liberation is the key objective for contemporary African theology. The term, liberation is specifically addressed to contextual issues in a way that in pre-independent Africa it meant political emancipation whereas in post-independent Africa it has varied references such as economical freedom. Other applications are dictated by historical manifestations. In addition, some fundamental concepts pertinent to the model include the idea of righteousness[6], man[7] and eschatology[8].

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[6] Righteousness refers to the quality of right relationships flowing from God, the arbiter. The concept is valuable for the sake of liberation of the total man, recovery of African identity and the right to determine their own destiny (Mugambi 1994:13).

The employment of indigenous forms has already been taken up by African independent churches and has enjoyed much attention from scholars as witnessed by the many hermeneutical models. Equally, because the process of collection of traditions is ongoing, theologising in Africa must be dealt with simultaneously. Moreover, enough resources are available for the executing of indigenous forms of interpretation.

In *Rereading the Bible with African eyes* Ukpong (1995:3-13) furnishes a model of **inculturation hermeneutics**. Citing the gap between academic readings of the Bible and the needs of ordinary African Christians, it is pointed out that alternatives ought to be developed. Already certain hermeneutic models have sprung out focusing on African social and cultural contexts. Ukpong cites ramifications for the approach as firstly to appraise the cultural-human dimension of the Bible in relation to other cultures. Secondly, the approach seeks to appropriate the message of the Bible to the contemporary context (Ukpong 2002:18). The proposed model is grounded in the readings of ordinary people in Africa generally, but specifically in Nigeria.

Inculturation hermeneutics[9] is developed from the following components: firstly, the reading focuses on the reader and his/her context (Barton 1984:20-23, Ukpong 1995:50). This brings to the fore the community's worldview, historical, social, economic, political and religious experiences. Secondly, the biblical text is crucial to this method. This involves the inner logic of the text, literary context, historical context and the contemporary context (Wimbush 1985:19; Martin 1987:381; McDonald 1989:545-548). The exegetical framework of the reader plays a key role. Inculturation hermeneutics is borne out of African culture. It is further argued that inculturation hermeneutics like any other hermeneutics is contextual (Tracy 1987:79; Hierbert 1994:61). The following elements are embedded therein: the unitive view of reality, divine origin of the universe and its interconnectedness between God, humanity and the cosmos (Anyawu 1981:93), the sense of community, and the emphasis on the concrete rather than the abstract (Pobee 1979:49).

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[7] This concept is defined as body, mind and spirit. Therefore it infers that liberation must impact on the whole person in the different spheres of political, spiritual and economical (Mugambi 1994:14).

[8] Eschatology is perceived from an African point of view. It is grounded historically not futuristically. The future is temporal and should not be seen in terms of transmigration to another world (Mugambi 1994:14-15).

[9] Inculturation hermeneutics takes its cue from the methodology of Third World theology (Torres and Fabella 1987:269-271).

The sacredness of the Bible and its worth for Christians is presupposed (Stendahl 1984:4). Thus, the objective of exegesis is the actualisation of meaning in the contemporary context. Since the Bible is ancient, its historical aspects must be attended to via historical-critical tools. However, historical tools should function as servant and not as master (Stuhlmacher 1979:86-88). In addition, it is argued that the biblical text is plurivalent, capable of bearing diverse meanings (Croatto 1987:19).

Ukpong's procedure for conducting inculturation hermeneutics demands an awareness and commitment to the aspects of African and other cultures as a pre-requisite. Thereafter the interpreter's context is identified and approximated to the text. Then the context of interpretation is analysed bearing in mind the phenomenological, socio-anthropological, historical, and social aspects. The historical context of the text is then examined and followed by its relation to the contemporary context. Lastly, the results of the process so far are synthesized with a view to actualize the message in the real life situation.

Adamo (2001:3-4) proposes a similar method of Hermeneutics as a vantagepoint for theologising. Adamo's **African Cultural Hermeneutics** is contextual in approach. It is estimated to the African social cultural context (Ukpong 1995:5). In addition, the method is also a protestation against the hegemony of Western approaches. It seeks reappraisal of both ancient biblical and African worldview, culture and life experience (Yorke 1995:145-158). The method is synonymous to Inculturation Hermeneutics, Contextual Hermeneutics (Ukpong 1995:6), Afrocentric Hermeneutics (Yorke 1995:142-158) and Vernacular Hermeneutics (Sugirtharajah 2001:175-202).

African Cultural Hermeneutics presupposes adherence to the Bible as God's Word. The Bible is alleged to possess potent words that are effectual resembling similar words in African traditions (Adamo 2004:29). In order to perform African Cultural Hermeneutics the subject must be an African or someone living in Africa. This matter of fact ensures that the subject has experienced African culture. It is also fundamental that the subject exhibit personal faith in the Bible. Belief in God and his ability to perform miracles, protect, heal and provide success is vital to the process of African Cultural Hermeneutics. Yet another requirement is the subject's ability to memorise Scriptures.

The above models are foregrounded in varied contexts even though they are products of a similar liberationist paradigm (Frostin 1988:2-26; Sugirtharajah 2001:177-186). In relation

to this study, the interface between ordinary and professional readers in West is an invaluable contribution to Biblical Studies. Equally, the reappraisal of both biblical and African cultures coupled with the paradigmatic departure with Western approaches in Adamo is essential. Ukpong's historical and contemporary contribution is similarly lauded. Prior to presenting the proposed approach in this research, it is worthwhile to observe approaches related to the study of prayer in Africa.

The premise for conducting contextual hermeneutics in Africa is the socio-cultural structure. It is prudent, though, to integrate historical questions given the ancient nature of biblical texts (Mosala 1989:34). The assumption by some proponents of African contextual epistemologies, namely that there is closeness between African and biblical worldviews, is problematic (Barret 1968:165)[10]. This assertion brings about conceptual difficulties related to the term "African". Such an all-encompassing statement bears definitive and ontological weaknesses. For example, to embark on a journey to find African primal traditions in their pristine state could be a futile venture (Buthelezi 1969:178; Theron 1996:27). The current African environment is a result of the process of transformation over a long period. The African background is greatly broken up (Mbiti 1975:90). Simultaneously change has not taken effect in all African societies at the same pace. For instance, rural Africa is slow in the process of transformation. In certain instances, the rural area continues to resist change (Theron 1996:28). Beside profound mutations in culture, it is evident that there is diversity and complexity across Africa (Penoukou 1991:29). Culture must be critically evaluated in order to filter out oppressive elements (Kanyoro 2001:167). Nevertheless, there remain certain features in both African Traditional Religion and the biblical world, which are similar. While contextual reading has the benefit of making interpretation relevant, if unstructured, it can lead to violation of cultural particularity (Smith 2000:25-26). Hence, biblical exegesis must place the text in its literary-historical context without which there is no hope for correct interpretation (Nthamburi & Waruta 1997:48).

From the onset it is important to indicate that cultural practices from both Western and indigenous religions have become part of Christianity in Africa. It is apparent that there are two schools of thought on the relevance of traditional cultural practices in African

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[10] Scholars have suggested that there are many similarities between beliefs and practices described in the Old Testament and the African way of life (O'Donovan 1996:25). This point is informed by the following arguments: firstly, those ideas filtered through the encounter between the Jews of the Diaspora (721 BC and 586 BC) and the Africans. Secondly based on contemporary archaeology both Jews and Africans share a common descent hence the Old Testament grew out of African roots. Thirdly, that there was continued interaction between the two is indisputable (Schaaf 1994:4, 5; Amanze 2001:276-386).

Christianity. The first one simply shows the inadequacy of traditional beliefs, hence, rejecting them from Christian experience (Musasiwa 1993:65). The second approach blends traditional practices with Western Christian trends. Proponents of the first method deem the foregoing approach as syncretistic. Thus, African religious practices are rendered incompatible with biblical ideas (Kato 1985:20). In defence of the integrative approach, it is argued that an assessment of the Judeo- Christian texts portrays a product of the writers' culture (Adamo 2001:3, Mbiti 1986:19). At any rate, syncretism is not easy to eradicate completely (Yorke 1997:149). Further discussion on approaches in African hermeneutics is dealt with simultaneously.

1.4.3 Research approaches on prayer

Typical models, which are linked directly or indirectly to prayer, are now considered. These approaches are generally classified under two study categories namely: comparative and particularistic studies. Comparative studies are broad based and cover multicultural groups. Particularistic studies on the other hand, focus on single cultural groups. Mbiti, King and Thorpe have undertaken examples of comparative studies. On the other hand, McKenzie's approach is an example of particularistic studies.

1.4.3.1   Comparative studies

Comparative studies have been conducted at different junctures in Africa. However, critique of such studies led to a general wane of use. Early African scholars inclined to comparative studies. Motivated by a search for an underlying unity in African society they were compelled to collect data from different groups and analyze it under the hypothesis of unity.

Mbiti for example has utilized **theological approaches** when considering prayer and other aspects of African Traditional Religion. His approach in *African Prayers* (1975) is attended by the hypothesis of unity in African society (Shorter 1975:6; Turner 1981:5-6). Mbiti's motivation is a quest for African authenticity (Musopelo 1994:18-21). In *The Bible and Theology in Africa* Mbiti (1986:80, 84) argues for commonality between the biblical and African Traditional Religious prayer experiences. This investigation is pursued from an inclusivistic point of view. Mbiti does not differentiate between the Israelite and African Gods. Thus, Africans pray to the God of the Bible howbeit differently.

There are positive and negative results from such an all-encompassing approach. Its tendency to harmonize cultures is problematic in that valuable cultural differences are easily glossed-over (Ray 1973:75-89; Shorter 1975:6; Paden 2000:184-185). At the turn of the 20th Century, there was indeed urgent need to collect data from different societies that has become critical for later studies (Turner 1981:12). Notwithstanding differences, there are commonalities in African religious and philosophical experience. At any rate, it is evident that there is a variety of views on African Traditional Religion.

Recent comparative studies in African Traditional Religion are not as general as earlier works. They are restricted to close cultural contexts. Exemplary Thorpe (1991) has investigated the San, Zulu, Shona, Mbuti and Yoruba religious experiences. His approach is based on **historical and cultural review**. Similarly King (1986:2-4) has utilized an **anthropocentric comparative approach**. He compares societies in close contexts. King's phenomenological description focuses on West Africa's Yoruba and Akan, Dinka and Acholi (river and lake people) and Ganda and Swahili (Bantu). This study takes linguistic connections and historical roots of the societal pairs into account. King investigates communication with the divine through prayer and sacrifices among the groups of people.

King's limited comparative analysis is commended for its strength in juxtaposing phenomena that is related through geographical proximity. This approach allows for ease of analyzing concepts between close cultures. Unfortunately, King schemes over prayer and only highlights a few aspects. King's endnotes on prayer bear no significant variations. This is either a consequence of cultural closeness between the considered societies or his failure to consider elements of prayer contextually prior to reaching a composite reformulation of prayer.

Other earlier limited comparative studies include Evans-Pritchard (1956) in his *Nuer Religion*, employed in the study of the Nuer tribe of Sudan. Shorter's (1975) *Prayer in the religious traditions of Africa* is also a limited comparative study using a **multi-dimensional approach**. His approach is not limited to elucidating similarities but also explicates demonstrable diversity (Shorter 1975:6). He analyses prayer from various African societies cognizant of different historical and cultural religious schema. Shorter simultaneously analyses prayer functionally, correlating social situations with dominant

themes and theological issues (Shorter 1975:14-15). In this way, Shorter distinguishes his study from early African comparative studies. Shorter's approach is not devoid of critiques for ultimately it is reducible to social anthropology (Turner 1981:10).

1.4.3.2 Particularistic studies

Besides comparative studies, individual African, ethnic groups have been studied as entities. Proponents for particularistic studies argue for the relevance of in-depth investigations as pre-requisite to comparisons (Shorter 1975:6). For example, McKenzie (1997) in his *Hail Orisha* has conducted a study of African Traditional Religion among Yoruba people of Nigeria. This investigation is designed by broad-based African historical studies. McKenzie has conducted an ethnological study of prayer. His **approach is phenomenological**. His key chapter on prayer (The sacred word to the deity) is developed under genres and forms of prayer. Firstly, McKenzie analyzes primordial sounds, greetings and salutations. Secondly, he identifies blessings and curses (McKenzie 1997:334-338). Thirdly, he considers oaths, vows and compulsive prayers (McKenzie 1997:341-344). Fourthly, he examines other forms of prayer such as invocation (McKenzie 1997:344), thanksgiving and praise (McKenzie 1997:347) and supplication and intercession (McKenzie 1997:353).

1.4.4 Integrated approach

A comparative model is applied in this research. This model employs an integrated exegetical approach. It is informed by the preceding approaches but also departs at certain points in order to execute the purpose of this study.

This study differs from the mentioned frameworks firstly in terms of context. Although the model is grounded in African cultural context, each approach has a particular context attended by different political, economic and religious factors (Mugambi 1994:9-17; Ukpong 2002:17). Secondly, this methodology draws on integration of synchronic, diachronic and theological theories and comparative aspects (Gorman 2001:23; Neuman 1997:402). Although comparative studies have been conducted in Old Testament and Africa for example Ukpong (1990) *Ibibio and Biblical sacrifices* this research is unique both in terms of context and theme. Similarly, it is distinct from the aforementioned comparative

studies on prayer. This is noticeable from the matrix of the approach and the people group examined.

To achieve the purpose of this study, Psalms 28, 64, 77, 91 and 140 are examined exegetically by applying synchronic, diachronic and theological perspectives. An integrated, literary-historical approach is proposed for this investigation.[11] It follows that an analysis taking into account literary elements such as genre, structure and literary context is done. Additionally, cultic and historical contexts of the texts are provided with background studies to particular concepts and phenomena. Detailed analysis of the text is conducted, highlighting theological aspects and is followed by a synthesis of the whole text. A similar approach is followed when examining Lozi prayers. Exegetical results are herein thereafter compared.

In proposing a model that utilizes comparative aspects, one is aware of the charges against it. Substantial challenges have been raised, such as intellectual imperialism and anti-contextualism (Patton & Ray 2000:1). Relating religious concepts from different cultural groups is problematic, as they are conditioned by their original contexts. However, through careful investigation and experience, it is possible to adequately describe phenomena that would otherwise be foreign (Ray 2000:101). Further, a comparative approach has been equated to magic as very often superficial similarities are drawn (Smith 2000:23-26).

It is vital for purposes of this study to underline the contextual element. Firstly, its comparative aspect is fore grounded in Lozi religious culture. Secondly, religious traditions construe a totalized worldview. They transcend the local thereby creating possibilities for meaningful analysis (Patton 2000:168). Intellectual imperialism found in previous comparative studies, was motivated by Bourgeoisie tendencies. On the other hand, there is great potential of decentring approaches through opening marginalised cultures for examination (Ray 2000:101). The present examination is a consideration of texts within their contexts (Paden 2000:184). This research focus, prayer for protection elucidates similarities and differences from the aforementioned traditions thereby avoiding superficial equating of concepts. Thus, comparison is vital to the very acts of knowing and perceiving (Neuman 1997:402).

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[11] An integrated method uses synchronic, diachronic and existential elements (Human 1999:354-368; Gorman 2001:23).

It is therefore proposed that an in-depth study be conducted on the theme of prayer for protection. This research is an endeavour to investigate both the Bible and African religious experience in particular that of the Lozi people of Zambia. This model presupposes that a combination of literary, cultic and historical analyses of texts on the one hand and comparison on the other will enrich understanding of the theme. It is argued that comparing cultures of primal people with the Bible adds value to Biblical Studies (Schapera 1982:26-42; Steiner 1982:21-25). Although the two cultures are distanced historically, it is argued that through examination of contemporary systems it is possible to comprehend ancient cultures (Fabian 1988:215). Consequently, the results of this study will contribute to the process of dialogue between biblical and African traditions.

1.5   Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this research could be formulated as follows:

> *A comparative analysis of African Traditional Religion and the Old Testament detects proximity and distance amid the two traditions. Microcosmic similarities in prayer for protection between biblical psalms and Lozi prayer traditions confirm closeness in religious experience during times of danger between ancient Israelite society and contemporary African tribal societies. Further, these similarities provide concrete points for dialogue between African Traditional Religion and biblical studies. Inversely differences underscore the uniqueness of prayer for protection in each of the biblical and African traditions.*

1.6 Chapter Division

The scheme of this investigation is developed as follows:

Chapter 1 constitutes the introduction. It outlines the study by stating the actuality, problem statement, objectives, the research methodology and hypothesis of this study.

Chapter 2 is a literature review. It consists of three key sections namely overview of Lozi historical background, overview of prayer in Africa and research review of prayer in the Old

Testament and representative approaches of studying the Psalms. Equally representative contributions on aspects of prayer in African to are examined.

Chapter 3 describes an investigation into biblical accounts of the theme of prayer. Since the study is conducted in a Department of Biblical and Religious Studies, the mentioned texts will form a point of departure in this endeavour. An exegetical method focusing on genres, literary, cultic and historical contexts, as well as a theological perspective are employed to analyse the selected texts. Other matters of discussion include the function of Yahweh, the response of the psalmist to imminent danger, the nature of the adversary, and circumstances motivating the prayers.

Chapter 4 considers prayer in the Lozi tradition. This portrayal includes a number of issues from the Lozi tradition: worship of a Supreme Being, response to the spiritual world with sacrifices and offerings, libations, blessings and salutations. Another vital aspect concerns intermediaries like diviners, elders and ancestral veneration - also, the occasion, time and place of prayer are addressed: these include temples, altars and trees. Other means of acquiring protection such as medicine and charms are discussed simultaneously. Importantly prayer texts are analysed by considering genre, literary, cultic and historical contexts. In addition, elements of danger, nature of the enemy, the victim's response and God's role towards the petitioner are examined.

Chapter 5 comprises of a comparative analysis on the two traditions. Similarities and differences between Lozi and biblical prayers are considered for the sake of building trajectories, which could be of assistance to the believing community. The findings could be used as entry points when conducting dialogue.

Chapter 6 is the final conclusion. Following the analyses and comparisons a summary of the results is provided. Outcomes include similarities and differences, implications of research, motivation for further research and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2
OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

The title of this thesis embodies two key aspects namely Lozi prayer traditions and prayer for protection in the Psalms. Lozi prayer traditions are analytically situated in the larger African cultural context. On the other hand, selected psalms are part of the Old Testament and are related to the Ancient Near East. Therefore this chapter broadly addresses three aspects namely overview of Lozi historical background, review of prayer in Africa and research review on approaches of studying the book of Psalms.

The purpose of the first section is to set the tone for the entire investigation by providing a historical framework and cultural context utilized in the description and analysis of Lozi prayer traditions. Further, the larger cultural context assists in the interpretation of Lozi prayer traditions.   It is provided through an overview of prayer in African Traditional Religion (ATR) in the second section.

The third major section is a review of approaches employed in Psalms studies. It encompasses key representative approaches of prayer in the Old Testament and perspectives on Psalms studies. In this way, the investigation is oriented in the light of previous research.

The validity of prayers for protection in ancient Israel is evident from biblical commentaries and monographs. To the contrary this review indicates that the bulk of literature on Lozi religious traditions lacks specific attention to prayer(s). Lozi prayer texts are scanty and

littered in a few ethnographical studies and missionary historiographies[12]. Equally very little to none has been written on the comparative aspects of the two traditions.

2.2 Lozi background- a historical review

2.2.1 Origins

2.2.1.1 Mythological history

Lozi people narrate legends regarding their origins (Jalla 1954:8; Giles 1997:60; Brown 1998:22). According to mythological history in the beginning God created different kinds of wives for himself. With them, He procreated different nations. One of the wives Mwambwa, the Lozi ancestress, bore Mbuywamwambwa. Mbuywamwambwa also bore children by God. She later made journeys to the north ending up in the Lunda country. However, she was not happy there and she decided to return to Bulozi flood plains. Lozi mythological history lacks historical evidence. It appears to be a fusion of oral traditions belonging to the earlier tribes and fabrications aimed at placing royalty above scrutiny (Caplan 1970:2).

2.2.1.2 Historical theories

There are divergent oral traditions regarding the origin of Lozi people. Firstly, the Lozi are said to have originated from the Rozwi of the Great Zimbabwe (Mainga 1973:13). According to this theory subsequent to the disintegration of the Rozwi kingdom in the seventeenth century a group led by a woman went north and founded the Lozi kingdom. In support of this theory, linguistic conjectures have been made. For example, similarities between Lozi and Hurutshe the root language for Rozwi, a dominant Shona language have been deduced (Coillard 1902:224). However there is little evidence for this version. Moreover, linguistic connections with the suggested group are unfounded.

Another Lozi tradition points to a Congolese origin (Gluckman 1968:1). Lozi people claim to have descended from the great Lunda king Mwata-Yamvo. This theory conforms to historical traditions of some other tribes in the North-western and north-eastern Zambia, which migrated from the Lunda kingdom in the present day Democratic Republic of Congo

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[12] This point is illustrated by the Lozi prayers under discussion in this study extracted from the following: Lozi cursing prayer during the Illa war (Coillard 1902:212, sowing prayer (Di Nola 1962:38), morning prayer (Jalla 1954:3), cursing prayer during the Andonyi war (Jalla 1954:9), prayer for protection at the rapids (Coillard 1902:169-170) and prayer for deliverance from execution (Holub 1976:320).

(Fagan 1966:17; Mainga 1966:122).   Hence, the Luba/Lunda source appears to be the most credible.

There is a section of Kaonde people which claims to have been forced out of the Barotse flood plains by the Luyi (proto Lozi).   But the Lozi do not attest to this tradition.   Instead, Lozi mythology conveys information about related people who were produced by *Nyambe* at the same time as they from different wives.   Accordingly, Lozi people are descendants of Mbuyamwambwa daughter and wife of *Nyambe* (Jalla 1954:80).

2.2.2   Migration and settlement

The combination of variant oral traditions from different tribal groups impinges on any attempt at reconstructing the history of Lozi people. Thus, historical and ethnographic investigations have borne different results.

Turner (1952:9), for instance, proposes that the original people in Barotseland, (Lozi), are known as Aluyi or Aluyana.   Through a process of assimilation, the group came to be known as Lozi consisting of twenty-five Bantu speaking people groups (Gluckman 1968:3). The Luyana group comprises the Kwandi, Kwangwa, Muenyi and Mbowe peoples. Kwangwa people are believed to have descended from Mbuyamwambwa through her daughter Noleya.   They established their home in the surrounding area of Mongu. Subsequently, Kwangwa people were conquered by Ngalama and relocated to the highland to work iron (Jalla 1954:10-12).   Muenyi people originated from the Lunda and Luyi. The Kwandi's connectedness is illustrated linguistically for they speak a Luyi dialect.

In time the following tribes were assimilated into the Lozi tribe: Nyengo, Makoma, Ndundulu, Simaa, Mashi, Mishulundu, Yei and Old Mbunda. These tribes have unknown origins but it is proposed that they are Luba speaking. The Nkoya cluster comprising Nkoya, Mashasha and Lukolwe and Lushange was also incorporated.   Another group which was absorbed is made up of Ila, Tonga, We, Totela, Toka, Subiya, Shanjo, Leya, Lenje and Sala. These groups spoke Tonga related dialects. Two other Luba speaking groups arrived late in Bulozi.   The first, *Mawiko* (westerners) embraces the Lubale, Mbunda, Luchazi and Chokwe. The second Luba speaking class consists of the Lunda, Ndembu and Mbwela (Turner 1952:9).

In contradistinction to Turner's proposed settlement process Mainga (1973) has suggested that a rather complex pattern occurred in Barotseland. First, and foremost, the early people in the Bulozi flood plains must have been Stone Age in conformity with settlement patterns in the rest of Zambia. These groups of people resemble the Bushmen of the Kalahari (Fagan 1966:33). The existence of Bushmen-type people is further established by tales about small people in Bantu traditions (Mainga 1973:8). In recent times, Bushmen-type of people are found in the Mashi and Chobe areas in the southern extremities of Bulozi.

Iron Age settlers later displaced the Stone Age people. Archaeological finds in Western Zambia point to contemporaneous patterns to those occurring elsewhere in Zambia. Early Luyana people could have settled in Bulozi between 200 and 500 AD according to evidence adduced from pottery finds (Brown 1998:25). Founders of the Lozi dynasty seem to have incorporated at least two distinct groups, one found in the north[13] and another in the south[14]. The earlier groups could have lived in small groups under local chiefs. These groups are identifiable to this day while most of them are known by the same names (Mainga 1973:9; O'Sullivan 1993:v).

The following tribes lived in the north near Kalabo either in the 16th or 17th centuries[15]: the Muenyi, Imilangu, Ndundulu, Mbowe, Liuwa, Simaa, Makoma and Nyengo. In the south were the Subiya, Mbukushu, Toka, Totela, Shanjo, and Fwe (Mainga 1973:11; O'Sullivan 1993:v). The two groups were not only geographically divided, but linguistically as well. The Southerners were related to the Tonga groups occurring in the Southern province of Zambia (Mainga 1973:11). However Mainga's categorization of the Southern tribes as having Tonga origins is doubtful in certain cases. The reason being, apart from Subiya, Toka and Leya the other groups demonstrate different descent (Fagan 1967:17). For instance, Mbukushu history does not trace their origins from Tonga but from further east. They later traveled down following the Kabompo River to its confluence with the Zambezi. Under pressure from Lozi people they settled on an island called Mubeta and subsequently farther, south in the Okavango (Van Tonder 1966:37). The Mbukushu in the

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[13] The northern area of Barosteland lies in the environs of present day Kalabo district (Zambia).
[14] This is the area from Senanga district stretching further down to Livingstone (Zambia).
[15] The actual date is unknown. Yet it is postulated to 16th or 17th centuries depending on the date for the Luba-Lunda merger. The date for the merger lies anywhere between late 15th to late 16th centuries (Mainga 1973:19). Another factor worth noting is the similarity between the earlier language groups with Luba. Thus it is postulated that the earlier people were of Luba descent. After the Luba-Lunda merger bands of people migrated from the center. The monarchical lineage is traced to these late migrations (White 1962:14; Fagan 1967:17; Mainga 1973:11; Malan 1995:56).

west of the Kwando River speak a Luyana dialect indicating influence arising from early contacts (Pretorius 1975:17). Equally, it is suggested that the Fwe originated in the west and are properly grouped with the Okavango tribes. The Yeyi are perhaps close to the Tswana in Southern Africa (Pretorius 1975:24). Today the Subiya, Mbukushu, Yeyi and Fwe live in the Okavango region of the Caprivi Zipfel predominantly speaking Silozi and their respective languages.

The Northerners, on the other hand, are linguistically linked to Siluyana, which is a Luba language. It appears that the two groups- northern and southern, have been conquered by a later group of Lunda people, thus, fitting the Luba-Lunda Diaspora (Mainga 1973:17; Brown 1998:24). If this proposal is correct then Lunda conquerors arrived in the north around the sixteenth century.

Around 1800 (Mainga 1973:16) or 1820 (White 1962:12), other people arrived from the west seeking refuge. The two groups were Mbalangwe under Mwenekandala and Mbunda under Mwenechiengele. They were both welcomed and settled east of the flood plain in the environs of Mongu[16] by the Lozi chief Mulambwa (O'Sullivan 1993:v; Brown 1998:28). The area was previously inhabited by Nkoya people who had been brought from their eastern homeland. The Nkoya were moved to the west to create a buffer against immigrants from the west. Legend has it that Nkoya people belong to the Lunda group that founded the Lozi dynasty (Mainga 1973:16). This hypothesis is supported by the permanent presence of Nkoya music repertoire and instruments at the Lozi royal court. In addition, there is linguistic closeness between Nkoya and some of the earlier language groups which, has not been adequately accounted for.

After the death of the tenth ruler, Mulambwa, around 1830[17] the kingdom fell into chaos due to a succession dispute between Mubukwanu and his brother Silumelume. Subsequently Silumelume was murdered however, before Mubukwanu could take over chieftainship, Kololo conquerors invaded the land (Mainga 1966:126; Yukawa 1987:73).

The Kololo, a horde with a Basuto nucleus, conquered Aluyana people in the middle of the nineteenth century. Kololo tribe belonged to the Bafokeng of Patsa who lived on the Kurutlele Mountain on the bank of Vet River (Ellenberger 1912:306; Gluckman 1968:1;

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[16] Headquarter of Zambia's Western Province.
[17] The Kololo invasion is placed at either a late date 1840 or earlier dates 1830 and 1820 (White 1962:12; Mainga 1973:215; Isichei 1995:142).

O'Sullivan 1993:vi). During their northward travel the original group swelled through alliances and assimilation of conquered people. Sebitwane was their leader. It is around this period that the name of the Luyana people was changed to the name Rotse. When Kololo warriors entered Barotseland at Sesheke they found a tribe of Subiya who paid tribute to the Luyi. The Subiya pronounced the name of their pillagers Luizi. In turn, the Kololo corrupted the name further to Ba-rozi (Turner 1952:9). Missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society who were well conversant in Sesotho language elected to spell the name of the people Barotse.

Luyana people later liberated their country but retained Kololo language. Following their defeat in 1838 by the Kololo a group of Luyana princes fled north and lived in exile at Lukwakwa (White 1962:11, 18). Kololo's hegemony was weakened after the death of Sebitwane's son, Sekeletu, in 1863 (Smith 1956:74; Giles 1997:17). In 1864 the Lozi to the north and Toka in the south simultaneously rebelled and cast off their yoke of subjection. Led by Sipopa the princes in the north regrouped, descended on the Kololo and annihilated the men leaving only women and children (Yukawa 1987:73; O'Sullivan 1993:vii; Zorn 2004:7).

Sipopa ascended to the throne, but was ousted from power in 1878. He was succeeded by Mwanawina whose reign was short-lived for less than two years. His successor Lewanika was instrumental in expanding the kingdom conquering part of the Luvale to the north and gave protection to Ishinde's Lunda. Moreover, across the border raids were done on the Kaonde to the north and Illa and Tonga to the south. The conquered people were forced to pay tribute.

In the nineteenth Century, other people visited the Lozi kingdom. Among them are Portuguese, Ovimbundu, half-caste slave traders and Arabs from the west coast. Griqua traders were the first to reach the Kololo from the south. Missionaries from Paris Evangelical Missionary Society based in Basutoland pioneered their work among the Lozi in 1883-7 (Mainga 1973:216; O'Sullivan 1993:vii). In 1890 and 1900 under advice from Paris Evangelical missionaries, Lewanika signed treaties accepting British protection under the auspices of the British South African Company (Zorn 2004:24).

2.2.2.1   Missionary efforts

In 1878, the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society tried to establish mission work in Bulozi through Francois Coillard. However due to political instability in the kingdom king Lewanika prohibited commencement of any work. Coillard left the Lozi kingdom in 1879 and only returned in 1885. During his absence, two other missionary attempts were made. Firstly, some Jesuits tried to found a mission in Bulozi. Mupatu (1959:29) fixes the coming of the Jesuits in 1833. To the contrary, the date is approximated to 1883 between Coillard's first visit (1879) and his return in 1885 (Arnot's 1889:71, 81-82; Mainga 1973:235). After visiting Lewanika the Jesuits' efforts were rejected due to misunderstandings with the king (Arnot 1889:71). Differences were essentially inflared by Lozi people's propensity to begging which were exacerbated by the Catholics' miserliness, a matter construed for dishonesty (Arnot 1889:71-72; Mupatu 1959:29).

2.2.3   Kingship and expansion

Early settlement patterns followed original conquest of the small tribes in Kalabo area by Mboo Mwanasilundu Muyunda credited as the first king of Lozi people. The following tribes were conquered; Mishulundu, Namale, Imilangu, Upangoma, Liuwa, Muenyi and Mbowe (Jalla 1954:9). Mboo's kingdom at this early stage was neither large nor highly centralized. With the passage of time small bands of royalties drifted southwards from the Kalabo settlement perhaps after succession feuds.

Mwanambinyi set up his chiefdom in the Senanga area. His people are known as Akwandi (Mainga 1973:28; Brown 1998:27). Later Mange left the Kalabo settlement journeying southward and settled in the vicinity of present day Mongu. The northern remnant group led by Ngombala, the sixth king, consolidated the kingdom by conquering the dissident chiefdoms as well as the remaining southern tribes. Mange's group was known as Akwangwa after his assassination because they deserted their ruler (Jalla 1954:10-12; Turner 1952:9).

The institution of Lozi kingship therefore developed through a process of borrowing and conquest. Sources of this growth lie in the environment and ambitions of the rulers as well as the neighbouring groups. Exemplarily Lozi tradition point out that Isimwaa a leader of

the Ndundulu impressed the idea of kingship on the aboriginal tribal leaders (Mainga 1973:33). Ndundulu tradition on the other hand indicates that Lozi people made an alliance with Isimwaa but later took over his chieftainship and forced his people, Ndundulu, into subjection.

Another case of borrowing is illustrated by the acquisition of *Maoma* drums. These royal and war drums feature prominently in installation rituals. Installation rites come to a peak when the elected king sits on one of the drums. Maoma drums, though, were captured from Mwanambinyi who in turn had confiscated them from the Mbukushu. Similarly, the royal ensemble features Nkoya xylophones and music (Mainga 1973:13). It appears that the early Luyana did not have a centralized monarchical system. Luyana was ruled by chiefs who claimed to have magical powers. They prayed to Nyambe and their ancestors for healing, fertility and successful hunting trips (Brown 1998:25).

The Lozi king is not only a political figure. He is also a religious leader. A king is endowed with royalty through his ancestry from the union of Nyambe and Mbuyuwamwambwa. This matter of fact makes him divine (Coillard 1902:224; Mainga 1972:95; Brown 1998:16). This status is accentuated through the royal cult in death. During national crises, prayers are offered at royal gravesites (Coillard 1902:215; Muuka 1966:258).

2.2.4 Lozi people

The Barotse nation consists of many different tribes (O'Sullivan1993:v; Brown 1998:19). These tribes have intermarried considerably. In fact, even seized people that were uprooted forcibly from their homelands, are today indistinguishable from their conquerors. Although Lozi people will readily point without shame to their original tribal ancestry, there is practically no Lozi who is a pure Aluyana (Gluckman 1968:8). In spite of national identity and acceptance of each other's custom each group is conscious of its uniqueness.

With such complexity therefore, the endeavor to reconstruct Lozi religious traditions is enormous and challenging. A broad investigation into different traditions is equally astronomical. Therefore, a deliberate limitation will be imposed in the areas of this examination to obvious Lozi traditions. Although in its broadest sense Malozi describes all

subjects of the king, only the Aluyi of the Zambezi flood plain with the related tribes of Kwandi, Mbowe and Kwangwa belong to the proto Lozi[18].

2.2.5 Geography

Today Barotseland is smaller than its historical geographical limits and it exists within western province in the Republic of Zambia. Historically Lozi people lived on the great flood plain, which stretches along the Upper Zambezi for 120 miles (Gluckman 1968:1; Brown 1998:9). At its widest, the plain is about 25 miles wide. Thus the Zambezi flood plain - Loziland proper, is also called *Bulozi* or *Ngulu* by Lozi people (Turner 1952:9; Hudson & Prescot 1964:138).

The Lozi Empire expanded over a long period. It is estimated that the Barotse kingdom at the height of the reign of king Lewanika (1884-1916) was approximately 150, 000 square miles in area. Through conquest the Lozi extended their kingdom all the way down the Kwito River, across to the Kwando-Mashi (Linyanti-Chobe) River and as far south as Wankie (Hwange-Zimbabwe). Their dominion stretched further south below the Victoria Falls in the land inhabited by the *We* (Gluckman 1968:1). The northern boundaries extended to Balovale (Zambezi district) all the way to Lake Lukanga and Kasempa.

However, the fluidity of geographical boundaries due to various factors has led to contestation of the extent of the kingdom. For instance, the lack of permanent presence by Lozi government in some of the claimed territories demonstrates this point. Indeed, some of the regions were not necessarily under direct Lozi rule but rather formed occupied locales inhabited by oppressed people who were pillaged for resources. It is also vital to highlight the role played by the early missionaries and business people (White 1962:24-25). Motivated by the desire to establish Crown Dominion (British colony) in order to secure their interests on the eve of the scramble for Africa, the Europeans could have easily exaggerated Lozi control.

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[18] Gluckman 1968:19-20 proposes that the true Lozi conquerors are distinguished from other people by the following criteria: they have a Lozi descent name (mushiku), can point to an ancestral mound in the plain, file a reverse V between their upper incisors, tattoo a certain pattern on their cheeks and have certain burns and holes in their ear lobes, which guarantee passage to Nyambe for men and Nasilele for women after death.

2.2.6 Lozi literature review

2.2.6.1   Introduction

It must be noted that an investigation of Lozi religious traditions prior to the middle of the nineteenth century can only be undertaken through oral sources.   There is no firsthand written work for this period available.   In addition, the bulk of later written sources regarding Lozi history is modern and records similar accounts of oral history (Mainga 1973:217).

In this research, it has become apparent that no study focusing primarily on Lozi traditional prayer has been conducted. However, data related to Lozi prayer can be accessed from certain historical and bibliographical material. Early written records on Lozi people were performed by missionaries, traders and explorers. For example, Mupatu (1959:28) and others indicate that David Livingstone was the first white man to visit Barotseland. To the contrary prior to Livingstone's arrival the upper Zambezi was visited by the Portuguese Silver Porto in 1847, 1852 and 1858. In any case Livingstone's records received wider publicity and became better known (Mainga 1973:231). During the course of investigating Lozi traditional prayer, a number of contributions have been reviewed.   The following literatures illustrate the research history:

2.2.6.2   Contributions on early Lozi history

In his article, *The ethno-history of the upper Zambezi* White (1962) reviews data relating to the region adjacent to Angola and western Katanga (White 1962:11). By bringing to light Kazembe-Lunda and Ishinde-Lunda traditions White reconstructs Lozi origins (White 1962:25-27). Both Lunda traditions though similar indicate variations to the Lozi account. According to Kazembe-Lunda traditions, Mutanda Yembeyembe a contemporary of the first Kazembe[19] fled south from western Katanga to found the Lozi dynasty. On the other hand in Ishinde-Lunda version, Kakoma Mangandi fled south from western Katanga with his daughter. Mangandi established the Lozi royal dynasty (White 1962:11, 15). On the basis of the two traditions, White suggests that Mwimbwa in Lunda traditions may be the

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[19] Founder of the Lunda dynasty in Luapula province from the Luba/Lunda empire in Congo.

same as Mwambwa, the Mother of Mbuywamwambwa in Jalla's Lozi history (White 1962:11). White proceeds to analyze Jalla's history of the Lozi critically. He discounts the prevalence of mythological themes such as the birth of the first chief Mboo to Mbuywamwambwa and *Nyambe* (God). White considers parallel Ishindi and Kazembe traditions to be more dependable. In addition, He examines Luvale, Nkoya and contributions by emissaries of the British South African Company (White 1962:26). White further corroborates his study with the work of Silva Porto, who visited the northern fringes of Barotseland in the mid-nineteenth century. The article unfolds Lozi history beyond the Kololo invasion to the time of the British administration.

Mainga (1973, 1972; 1966) unfolds the history and religion of Lozi people. In *The Lozi kingdom* Mainga (1966:238-243) examines conflicting theories about the origins of the Lozi. Firstly, one theory indicates that Lozi people originated from the Rozwi/Karanga Kingdom (Mainga 1966:240-243). Secondly, the Lozi originated from the Luba/Lunda center in Congo. Mainga analyses the historical validity and weaknesses of both theories. Ultimately, evidence is weighted in favour of Congo origins (Mainga 1966:246). She criticizes Muuka (1966) for his failure to adequately account for differences and similarities between Lozi and Lunda people (Mainga 1966:243).

Mainga's works are invaluable contributions on Lozi history. But, her broad categorization of the two early groups of people in Barotseland overstretches the classification of two of the southern tribes namely Mbukushu and Fwe. It is unlikely that they originated from Tonga people.

Van Tonder's (1966) dissertation on *The Hambukushu of Okavangoland* touches on early Lozi history. Van Tonder affirms that the establishment of the Lozi dynasty occurred in eighteenth century and states its historical influence in the Caprivi (Van Tonder 1966:43). Its extent impinged on the Hambukushu and other settlers in Okavangoland by the second part of the eighteenth century (Van Tonder 1966:42; Malan 1995:36). Importantly, in relation to Lozi people, Van Tonder echoes the works of White (1962) and Jalla (1954).

Pretorius' dissertation (1975) on *The Fwe of the eastern Caprivi zipfel* has relevancy to this study in so far as the early history of the local tribes is concerned (Pretorius 1975:18-24). In a brief account, Pretorius provides information concerning the Aluyi (Lozi) and their subject tribes, namely, Subiya, Hambukushu, Yeyi and Fwe. Oral traditions from the local

area corroborate and illuminate accounts about Lozi political hegemony particularly in the nineteenth century (Pretorius 1975:10, 26; Malan 1995:55-56). However, Pretorius relates the Fwe to Tswana people against Mainga who associates them with the Tonga of southern Zambia.

2.2.6.3 Contributions on religious experience

Holub (1976) a Czech medical doctor, visited the Lozi kingdom in the period from 1875 to 1888. He subsequently wrote about Lozi people in two volumes. During the expedition, Holub never went up to the Zambezi valley. Nevertheless, he met Sipopa, Lozi king, at the time. Sipopa was residing at Sesheke in the southern fringes of the kingdom. Information collected at that time illuminates episodes at the royal capital during this tyrannical ruler. Executions were conducted with impunity (Holub 1976:319-324). Opposition to the monarch was branded treason and the guilty party executed at the king's directive. In the king's court was an executioner, Mashoku, whose job was to carry out killings. There were also wizards in the kings' employ. Mashoku performed human sacrifices in the attendance of the king's wizards (Holub 1976:331-332).

Lozi people believe in good and bad spirits. Holub indicates that Lozi people exorcise bad spirits by means of charms made from bones of men or beasts among others (Holub 1976:302). Lozi people also believe in life after death. Calamities are attributed to the operation of evil spirits. Some of the marauding spirits are associated with displeased dead royals. When a member of the royal family is sick, the king may intercede for him. Prayers of this nature are conducted at the nearest royal grave. Holub's allusion to the general use of the poison test for settling varied disputes is doubtful. It appears from the records of contemporary writers that the poison ordeal was essentially connected to witch finding among the Lozi (Arnot 1889:66, 92, 94; Gluckman 1955:97-98). Equally,accounts from some African societies confirm the employment of the poison ordeal in witch finding (Hopkins 1980:63; Grabner-Haider 2005:459; Westerlund 2006:176).

2.2.6.3.1 Witchcraft poison ordeal, human sacrifice, trust in kings

Fredrick Stanley Arnot of the Plymouth Brethren was the second missionary during this period. His intention was originally to institute a mission station among Tonga people, but his efforts were frustrated by Lewanika. As a result, Arnot remained at Lealui, Lozi royal

capital for two years. Thereafter he left due to ill health and brewing rumors of a rebellion against the king. King Lewanika was later toppled in 1884. In his work *Garengaze* (1889) Arnot describes events among the Lozi from 1882 to 1884.

Arnot's *Garengaze* (1889) is useful regarding Lozi political history during the second half of the 19th century. But religious information particularly on prayer is scanty. Nonetheless, he has provided glimpses at some practices such as the boiling pot ordeal and drinking of poison employed in witchcraft trials (Arnot 1889:66). Upon confirmation of their crime, witches were burnt at stakes. In addition, Arnot (1889:75) writes about human sacrifice. We are also supplied with accounts concerning Lozi trust in kings and their medicines. For example, during storms, dwellers at the royal capital sought refuge at the king's compound (Arnot 1889:78).

2.2.6.3.2   Ancestor worship, divinity of kings, prayer

In 1885, Coillard and his entourage arrived to establish the first permanent mission in Bulozi. Writing about Lozi people Coillard confirms some of the information already mentioned by Arnot. For instance, trust in kings is elaborated upon when Coillard is denied an audience with king Lewanika prior to making an offering at a royal grave (Coillard 1902:217). Despite his protests Coillard was ultimately persuaded to provide items for offering to the divinities of the subterranean consisting of white calico. Lewanika then proceeded to make an offering and prayers on Coillard's behalf.

Coillard elaborated on the divine descent of the Lozi royalties (Coillard 1902:224). It is upon this belief that the royal cult is established. The deceased kings are venerated and their graves converted into sanctuaries. The graves are carefully tended and villages are set up. At the time of writing, he estimated the number of royal graves at twenty-five. Coillard (1902:170, 211-212) has confirmed customs surrounding witchcraft practices, preparation rituals for battle and invocation of the Deity when confronted by danger.

2.2.6.3.3   Myth, sacrifice, prayer

In his book *Litaba za sicaba sa Malozi* Jalla (1954) has written a history of the Lozi. The book sets out by legendary descriptions about early man with God. Jalla relied greatly on oral history to record the origins of the Lozi. The difficulty with these accounts is obvious

as most of the history is mythological. Royal lineage is traced to Mbuywamwambwa, daughter of Mwambwa and *Nyambe*. Mbuywamwambwa later procreated with *Nyambe* (Jalla 1954:1-10). Jalla also reports on the beginning of animal sacrifice. In time past a king's son ascended to heaven. While in heaven, *Nyambe* provided him with cattle. Upon his return some of the animals were sacrificed. Jalla indicates the vitality of prayer among Lozi people. He demonstrates the point by providing background information on prayer during sickness, prior to hunting trips and before planting.

His work has many echoes in that of Coillard and Arnot particularly with regard to royal descent. Jalla's Lozi legends are been criticized as a poor record of history (White 1962:11-12) but, it is valuable because the mythological history portrays the religious understanding of Lozi people. Thus, myths convey their conception of activities that occurred outside their historical time particularly with reference to origin narratives (Ricoueur 1986:273-274).

2.2.6.3.4   Tribal history, settlement

Gluckman (1968) has written on *The Lozi of Barotseland in North Western Rhodesia.* He has attempted to provide information about these people with regard to their history, tribal origins, economy, land and kingship. Information on Royal graves is given in a sketchy manner. Its ethnographical content is valuable; however, its religious input is minimal. Hence, this book is beneficial for reconstructing early history, providing a cultural context and corroborating information concerning the royal grave cult.

2.2.6.3.5   Tribal history, prayer, charms, ancestor veneration, sorcery

The Lozi people of Northern Rhodesia is an ethnographic survey written by Turner (1952). In this publication, Turner discusses different aspects of Lozi people including their history and religious beliefs. He comments on belief in *Nyambe* (God), royal and commoner ancestors, sorcery, divination, exorcism and charms (Turner 1952:50-51, 53-54). He also briefly writes on prayer (Turner 1952:51). Turner's account is reminiscent of the rites accompanying both sowing and morning prayers. Reference is made to the preparation of an altar and the elements which are placed there-upon. He further points out the role of prayer for healing. Turner's assertion that Lozi people had a priest is either a

misrepresentation of royal grave custodians or a case of misinformation since this aspect is unattested in contemporaneous literature.

2.2.6.3.6   Royal descent, diviners, Nyambe and ancestral worship

Mupatu's (1959) book *Bulozi sapili* (Barotseland in the past) focused on early life and history of Lozi people. He sets out by alluding to the divine origin of Luyana (Lozi) kingship (Mupatu 1959:1). Mupatu relays concise information concerning worship of God, *Nyambe*, and ancestors. For example, during sickness, prayers are offered to ancestors.

Mupatu elucidates the role of diviners and witchdoctor in early Lozi history citing Mbuywana a witchdoctor of repute from the highland. Mbuywana's father, Muenda, was a renowned diviner (Mupatu 1959:26). Certain historical objections arise from Mupatu's history. Firstly, he postulates that the first westerner in Barotseland was Livingstone (Mupatu 1959:28). Evidence in fact indicates that Silva Porto visited the kingdom earlier (White 1962:26; Mainga 1973:231). Secondly, he locates the origin of Luyana (Lozi) royalty from God. This argument is premised by uncritical dependence on Lozi mythological history. Lozi kingship in fact developed gradually from the ancestress Mbuywamwambwa who hails from the Lunda/Luba Empire.

2.2.6.3.7   Religious experience

Mainga's article (1972) *A history of Lozi religion is* rich in religious history. Lozi dynasty is founded on claims of mythological origins. Further Lozi traditional religion has marked distinctions. It is segregated into three streams of; *Nyambe* worship, royal grave cult and ancestral veneration (Mainga 1972:98-99). In all three religious strands, prayer is fundamental whether addressed to dead royals, ordinary ancestors or the Deity.

2.2.6.4   Witchcraft

In *Magic, divination and witchcraft among the Barotse of Northern Rhodesia* Reynolds (1963) discusses extensively aspects of Lozi religio-magico traditions. This book is based on research conducted between January 1957 and February 1958. It was written at the height of witch-hunting in Barotseland.

Reynolds details methods of witchcraft practiced by Lozi people at the time. He writes at length concerning diviners, rainmakers and witchdoctors including their activities. The period examined does not illuminate earlier periods. But, he lends support to theories about origins of some witchcraft forms. He achieves this by considering some of the neighbouring and assimilated people (Luvale and Mbunda). Reynolds provides a cursory perspective on Lozi heterogeneity. Thus, a general picture emerges concerning the process of transfer and fusion of practices. However, other works ought to be examined on specific tribal people within and on the fringes of the Lozi kingdom in order to achieve a balanced historical cultural view.

When evaluating early missionary and Western accounts it is vital to make the following observations. Firstly, missionaries, traders and explorers settled in the kingdom at the invitation of the king. They had access to the grandees at their own terms and for most of the time resided at the capital (Zorn 2004:35). This close association to the royalties was bound to affect their assessment of events. Information might have been filtered by the grandees and was ultimately concerned with activities at the royal capital and the elite. Equally, it is difficult for residents of the royal capital to criticize their monarch, particularly under unstable political conditions of the late 1800s. Secondly, missionaries' beliefs regarding Christianity and paganism coloured their conception and interpretation of events without due consideration of local forces (Mainga 1973:237). Thirdly, writing later than the actual occurrence of certain events may be another factor influencing the manner in which reporting was conducted. Jalla, for example was writing in the 1900s about events that had taken place much earlier. Fourthly, it is crucial to bear in mind that the disruption caused by the Kololo invasion could have led to loss of certain information or at least influenced people's understanding of events and belief systems in the aftermath (White 1962:12). Therefore, missionary reports should be tested since in certain cases they are subject to exaggerations and misinformation to suit their ideological and political agendas.

2.3　African traditional prayer

2.3.1　Introduction

African people are notoriously religious (Mbiti 1969:1; Uzor 2003:190). Religion pervades their entire societies. Nowhere is religiosity expressed more vividly than in prayer. Thus prayer is a key phenomenon of African Traditional Religion (Heiler 1958:xiii; Shorter 1975:1; Opefeyitimi 1988:27).

At the outset, it should be noted that Lozi religion is classified under African Traditional Religion. However, like in any tribal religion it has observable distinctions. At any rate in African Traditional Religion prayer, sacrifice, and offering feature prominently (Magesa 1997:195). Prayer is the most common rite of worship in Africa (Adeyemo 1979:35; Nyirongo 1997:39). It is considered one of the most ancient riches of African spirituality (Mbiti 1975:2).

In African religious experience rarely does a day pass without an expression or recollection of God's power. Occurrences in life motivate prayer whether it is an accident or a gift, good or bad news, morning or evening and health or sickness (Magesa 1997:135).

African people direct their prayers to the Supreme Being who is called differently in diverse societies. Simultaneously, in many societies prayers are addressed to ancestors, spirits and divinities (Mbiti 1975:58; Kalu 2000:54). For that reason some scholars argue that God is hardly addressed directly in prayer. To the contrary, approaching the Supreme Being indirectly is attended by belief that God is too great to be approached directly. Therefore, like a traditional ruler, God can only be addressed through an intermediary (Mbiti 1969:177-178; Zuese 1979:7; Theron 1996:7). Addressing ancestors in prayer is premised by their attained qualities that qualify them to act as guardians and protective spirits to their earthly families (Kalu 2000:54). In any case, even when prayers are offered to ancestors, spirits and divinities, these entities act as intermediaries (Zuesse 1991:175; Mulago 1991:123; Theron 1996:7).

2.3.2 Prayer in African context

Prayer in African Traditional Religion encompasses the core of the rite accompanied by verbal expressions. It is more than an incantatory formula. Prayer derives its efficacy from the oral formation of imprecation, request and wish (Zahan 2000:20). Thus, words and the accompanying acts and gestures directed towards the invisible are effectual. Prayer in African Traditional Religion does not always go together with sacrifices and offerings. Consequently, in African societies prayer is the universal way of devotion (Nyirongo 1997:39). Generally, African religiosity is the province of men. Nevertheless,

women, particularly those who are past menopause, are actively involved (Mbiti 1991:68-71; Zahan 2000:19-20).

2.3.3 Functions of prayer

In African societies, prayer is conducted for various kinds of situations for example, during crises, when life is weakened, prayer is abundant. The exemplar Maasai of Kenya seeks God for healing. When epidemics devastate large areas, communities are involved in prayers and several animals sacrificed to the Supreme Being (Westerlund 2000:163).

Equally in times of festivity praise and thanksgiving are offered to either the Deity or ancestors. Thus, prayer in Africa is a resource for restoring health and life, both private and public. Prayer removes the bad and anti-life from society (Magesa 1997:135). Prayer is also offered for success. Such prayers are offered when embarking on an enterprise like a hunting trip, farming, and for a neonate's future.

Prayer emphasizes the interdependence of the visible on the invisible. When life experiences overwhelm an individual or community, dependence is cast on the Deity or ancestor. Therefore, prayer exemplifies the dependence of humans on the spiritual being. In this way people try to appease the gods or solicit their assistance. Various individual and community needs are directed to the invisible: Supreme Being, divinities and ancestors in prayer. Accordingly, requests are made when people are burdened by barrenness, childbirth, rain, war and death to mention a few (Mbiti 1991:69-71). The presence of various factors that can diminish the quality of life such as sorcerers and inherent evil motivate requests for vitality (Mulago 1991:123). Hence, prayer for protection from different dangers is paramount in Africa (Magesa 1997:197).

2.3.4 Elements of prayer
2.3.4.1 Invocation

Through prayer, the African supplicant addresses God, ancestors and spirits (Niangoran-Bouah 1991:92). Among the Akan of Ghana, when a meeting is convened before the king, proceedings may not resume prior to conducting prayers. Ancestors are welcomed and God is shown the alcoholic libation, but not offered a drink, instead, it is poured to the ground. The supplicant requests the ancestors to bless, prosper and protect the community

as well as to grant success for a specific endeavor. Akan prayers are offered simultaneously with pouring out libations (Donkor 1997:46, 121).

2.3.4.2   Petition

Africans pray mostly for concrete things. Petition is one of the most important motivations for prayer in Africa (Magesa 1997:197). Africans request for things in line with their perception of life. Thus, protection from harm is a prominent item for prayer, but it is not presented as a single ultimate purpose of prayer (Shorter 1975:19).

2.3.4.3   Description of danger

African people seek protection from danger and evil through different means (Berg-Schlossler 1984:215; Abimbola 1991:56). The major causes of misfortune are spirits, witches and all ill wishers. In most African societies there is belief that evil occurrences do not occur by chance. African worldview is pregnant with malignant spirits that wreck havoc on individuals and communities at large. These spirits may be neglected ancestors executing punishment on their descendants. Royal ancestors on the other hand mete out judgment on the entire society. They may withdraw rain, cause plagues to devastate the land, property and communities (Mainga 1972:97; Ukpong 1990:68; Maboea 2002:15).

In some African societies spirits of people who died tragically and did not receive proper burial may also cause problems for people living in the vicinity (Van Breugel 2001:94). Another common cause of danger in African society is witchcraft (Schiltz 2002:34:47; Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005:459; Westerlund 2006:173). Witchcraft generally arises from jealousy. Witches may attack their victims and cause grievous harm to occur in order to get even. In certain instances, witches attack to satisfy their insatiable cannibalistic appetite.

2.3.4.4   Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving may be offered together with petitions or separately (Magesa 1997:197). At harvest-time, people in certain communities jointly bring part of their fruit for celebrations and thanksgiving but, even at such settings it is not uncommon for a prayer of thanksgiving to include petitions for protection and longevity of life.

2.3.5 Other aspects of prayer

2.3.5.1 Expression of humility

Since prayer is an acknowledgement of one's need for assistance from a superior, African prayer is characterized by humility. It is common for supplicants to refer to themselves as worms or ants (Mbiti 1975:13, 16-21). In certain societies the supplicant may remove his sandal and adjust his garment as a symbol of humility (Donkor 1997:122). This is precisely because Africans understand that in prayer they are casting themselves before a greater invisible power (Magesa 1997:196).

2.3.5.2 Expression of honesty

Another expression of African prayer is the honesty of the petitioner. It is incumbent on the one praying to approach God or ancestor with complete honesty. During prayer, a petitioner is forthright with God. The petitioner has freedom of expression without inhibitions (Mbiti 1975:18). Underlying this element of honesty is belief in the intimacy between the petitioner and ancestor or God. The answer to the request hinges on this aspect. Failure to be honest could result in serious repercussions as it indicates a breach in trust (Magesa 1997:197).

2.3.5.3 Expression of confidence

African people approach the invisible characters in humility and confidence. The reason for such confidence arises from a firm belief that ancestors and deities assume a parental role. This relationship gives legitimacy to the suppliant's request. The addressee, on the other hand, is bound to make provision for the offspring (Magesa 1997:196).

Confidence in prayer enables the petitioners to articulate themselves fully. Similarly, the suppliant's emotions are expressed freely. The context of prayer sets the petitioner's tone. Thus, emotions of frustration, anger, fear, doubt sorrow and joy are freely expressed in African prayer.

Petitioners are been known to register their anger without inhibitions, particularly in prayers addressed to ancestors. Confidence in certain cases reaches its limit, such that ancestors

are scolded for their neglect or selfishness. Insults are also levelled at ancestors in extreme circumstances. This matter of fact illustrates an important difference between prayers to God from prayers to ancestors (Eiselen & Schapera 1962:260; Theron 1996:47).

2.3.5.4 Places and times

Prayer is offered at all times (Magesa 1997:194). In many African societies prayers are made in the morning and evening. However, the mention of God is constantly on the lips of the African. Thus, prayer ejaculations are uttered during the course of the day. Prayers are also held prior to projects or when people are faced by a difficulty (Mbiti 1975:2; Zahan 2000:16).

Among many African people, prayers are conducted in open spaces. This means that prayer is uttered while the petitioner is walking or undertaking a task. But, specific places are also designated for prayer. Such places include the area outside the hut, graves, shrines, mountains, forests and many more (Zahan 2000:15).

Lozi people, for example, may contact the Supreme Being privately in the compound at an altar, village square or royal graves when plagued by a wide scale epidemic (Turner 1952:49; Mainga 1972:95, 99). Mbuti people who live in open grasslands hurry back to the Rain Forest during calamities to perform the *molimo* rituals. When misfortunes strike, the male San conduct a ritual dance at night on behalf of the sick in the attendance of singing females. Maasai people believe that trees are a point of communicating with the gods. They perform their rituals at groves (Westerlund 2006:47). Chewa people of Malawi construct a hut (*Kachisi*) which serves the functions of a temple at which prayers are offered (Van Breugel 2003:43). Similarly, Dogon priests of Mali have communal altars while the Ashanti of Ghana worship at temples which were previously part of the palace (Parrinder 1976:38). Other places of worship include caves, rocks hills, mountains and trees (Parrinder 1976:89; Mbiti 1975:19; Westerlund 2006:70). Thus, different societies have devised variant approaches of communicating with the invisible (Parrinder 1976:89; Zahan 2000:14-19; Westerlund 2006:70).

2.3.5.5 Prayer gestures

Prayer in Africa is accompanied by multiple gestures and postures. These prayer acts vary from one society to another. The common postures taken by different petitioners are kneeling, sitting, bowing, prostrating, standing and walking (Mbiti 1975:98; Zahan 2000:15). Exemplarily it is common for Tonga elders to approach Leza (God) while sitting. Kikuyu people of Kenya prostrate on the ground at Fir groves (Westerlund 2006:47). The Lozi elder on the other hand kneels and bows down when requesting Nyambe for a good crop (Jalla 1954:3-5).

The different postures are complimented by gestures. These gestures include lifting hands, clapping, crossing hands and spitting and facing a particular direction (Mbiti 1970:27-31). For instance, Kikuyu people face Mount Kenya when praying. The Akan petitioner stands and pours libation while opening a meeting in prayer at the royal court (Donkor 1997:46). An Igbo elder sits and breaks a Kola nut at the morning and evening prayer (Uzor 2003:356-358). During sowing prayers, the Lozi village headman kneels at an altar facing the east towards the rising sun. He stretches out his arms and claps intermittently while praying (Jalla 1954:3-5; Mainga 1972:96). As illustrated by the exemplar cultures suppliants employ different postures and gestures when praying in Africa. These serve various purposes such as conveying dependence, humility, reverence (kneeling, prostrating), praise (clapping) and confidence in the provision ability of the Deity or ancestor (outstretched arms).

2.3.5.6 Material elements of prayer (sacrifices, offerings and libations)

The rites that accompany primordial utterances are defined as materialized forms of prayer. Material prayer therefore includes libations, offerings and sacrifices (Shorter 1975:21-22). Libations provide a means of exploring the disposition and provoking the intervention of ancestors. Usually libations are constituted of water, water mixed with millet flour and millet beer. Accordingly, water is symbolic of an emollient. When water is mixed with millet, it refers to involuntary digestion whereas beer is perceived to be a stimulant. For that reason, beer intoxicates the ancestors, making them to lose control

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and act in accordance to the petitioner's desires. Thus, beer is not offered to God (Zahan 2000:13). To the contrary, it appears that in some societies the opposite is true. For instance the Akan (Ghana) pour alcoholic libations while invoking Nyankopon, the Supreme Being (Opong 2002:169). During a prayer ritual the supplicant drinks some alcohol and pours part of it to the ground before proceeding with prayer. Libations are poured out simultaneously with the utterance of prayer (Donkor 1997:122).

Sacrifices accompany the major rites in the ancestral cult. Blood signifies life. Hence, it is offered as the ultimate call for intervention. The most common animals sacrificed are chickens, goats, cattle, horses and humans in certain cases (Zahan 2000:13). Although offerings and sacrifices are done before ancestors and spirits, ultimately, they are directed to God (Mulago 1991:123; Niangoran-Bouah 1991:92). This understanding is informed by the belief that ancestors and spirits are intermediaries between God and men (Mbiti 1975:58; Zuese 1991:175).

2.3.5.7 Intermediaries

Generally, there are two categories of mediators in African Traditional Religion. I will classify the first group as human and the second ancestor and spirit intermediaries. Human mediators include family heads, village heads, chiefs and religious specialists such as diviners, medicine men, and priests (Mbiti 1975:167). Religious specialists are found in some parts of Africa. In such cases these functionaries engage themselves in leading roles at community prayers (Mbiti 1970:320). Where such officiants exist, they are selected through family lineage. Commonly, the function of a religious specialist is occupied by men however, women, particularly those who are past menopause, also perform religious duties (Zahan 2000:19). Qualifications of a religious specialist include moral uprightness; not given to alcohol abuse and other vices. This leader is expected to adhere to custom and observe tribal taboos. Among the Meru of Kenya for example the religious specialist must be kind even to his enemies (Magesa 1997:200).

In the vertical relational structure between the Supreme Being and human beings, ancestors occupy an intermediate position. Ancestors are capable of communicating to both God and humans. In many African societies, God is approached by the whole community of the living and the dead but, ancestors also relay messages to and from the Supreme Being. Due to their position, ancestors constitute the largest group of

intermediaries (Mbiti 1970:230). Yet in other societies, spirits and divinities feature in the religious schema. The lesser divinities also convey messages to the Supreme Being (Mbiti 1970:232). Therefore, in Africa, prayers are offered to God either directly or indirectly, through divinities and ancestors and with the assistance of human mediums.

2.3.5.8   Medicine

Prior to the advent of scientific remedies African people relied on traditional medicine which was frowned upon by the missionaries and anthropologists (Adamo 2001:12). African traditional medicines fall into two broad classes of herbal and ritual remedies. Herbal remedies have intrinsic medicinal properties outside the conjuring of magic. Ritual medicine on the other hand draws its efficacy from magical aspects.

Adamo (2001:18) disputes magical elements in the use of such medicine. However tension is noted in his line of argument. For example Adamo alludes to the employment of cursing words to affect a divorcee. It is indisputable that certain medicines work through magic (Imasogie 1985:75-78; Gehman 1989:67; Theron 1996:12). Based on the divinatory input in diagnosis and prescription, it is improbable that magical elements are avoided in certain medicines. Equally, some remedies are only effective when specific taboos are adhered to. Thus denying magical elements in some ritual medicines is an understatement of the facts.

In addition, charms for example, require the pronouncement of certain words to make them effective (Nyirongo 1997:29). Charms are usually prepared by witchdoctors who have mastered the secrete arts. At the same time, not all prescribed traditional medicines require magic to be effectual. Medicine may accompany prayers. In this case medicine function as a channel of actualizing answers to the prayers offered to the Deity.

2.3.6 Contributions to prayer in African Traditional Religion
2.3.6.1   Introduction

Numerous studies had been done on African Traditional Religion (ATR). These studies focus on either single, ethnic groups, or broad encompassing regional cultural groups or the entire continent. However, few of these investigations are exclusively on prayer. Many of them gloss over the subject or refer to it under general discussions on God,

divinities and ancestors. At any rate, prayer is an important phenomenon of African Traditional Religion. In the following review contributions are arranged contextually, namely, single cultures, regional or continental.

2.3.6.2 Prayer in single ethnic groups

Evans-Pritchard's (1956) *Nuer Religion* is a study of the Nuer tribe of Sudan. In his chapter 1 focused on God, Evans-Pritchard assesses Nuer prayers to God. The Nuer petition God for deliverance and peace when misfortune falls on them (Evans-Pritchard 1956:21, 27). They believe suffering results from wrongdoing, neglected duties to spirits, natural causes, evil magic and unknown causes (Evans-Pritchard 1956:21-22). Nuer people pray in public and private. During formal occasions prayers are commonly made to God. These prayers are generally offered in connection with sacrifices (Evans-Pritchard 1956:22). Usually public prayers are long invocations interspaced with short petitions. Petitions are also made privately for individual problems and anxieties. When praying the Nuer household head may pace up and down brandishing a spear, squatting with eyes turned towards heaven and arms outstretched while moving hands and palms up and down (Evans-Pritchard 1956:22).

McKenzie (1997) in his book *Hail Orisha* examines African Traditional Religion among the Yoruba of Nigeria. His key chapter on prayer (*The sacred word to the deity*) is developed under genres and forms of prayer. His discussion of sacred words to the deity comprises firstly of primordial sounds, greetings and salutations. Included under primordial sounds are hissing, screaming and ululation. Secondly, McKenzie observes the presence of blessing and cursing for protection and evil intent respectively (McKenzie 1997:334-338). In addition, the blessing is used to counter a curse (McKenzie 1997:336). These words are effectual when uttered by certain people who are believed to hold power in society, such as king, priest and beggars.

Thirdly, McKenzie (1997:341-344) considers the oath, vow and compulsive prayer. He notes the similarity between blessing and cursing on one hand and oath and vow on the other. Compulsive prayer to the deity is utilized during rain-making or rain prevention. Equally, prayer is employed in divinatory protection and healing.

Fourthly, numerous forms of prayer to the deity are examined (McKenzie 1997:345-358). Invocation serves as the beginning of the traditional prayer and often goes together with an offering (McKenzie 1997:344). Although confession of sin is not a common element in the traditional prayer, it appears occasionally in a few prayers. Thanksgiving and praise are expressed in songs to divinities and sacred rulers (McKenzie 1997:347). The songs are usually accompanied by drumming. Yet other elements of traditional prayer are supplication and intercession (McKenzie 1997:353). Supplications and intercessions are made to specific divinities, generally addressed and to certain divinities requesting them to mediate with another deity (McKenzie1997:353). Prayers are offered to deities for various needs, including, protection from evil, fertility and healing. Some intercessions are uttered before the charm. Supplications are generally accompanied by the following prayer acts: kneeling, smearing a mixture of spittle and dust on the forehead. These prayer acts are symbolic of humility before the deity (McKenzie 1997:354).

Fifthly, McKenzie deals with sacred silence and Ifa divination system. Modernization has impacted cultic life among Yoruba people. He observes that in contemporary cities, silence is difficult to be adhered to. However, there are certain guilds that enforce silence in urban places at given times (McKenzie 1997:356). Equally, the advent of literacy has brought transformation to the indigenous cult by reducing dependence on oral traditions to preference for written texts. The Ifa divination system, for example, depends on memorizing hundreds and thousands of verses. Whereas previously Yoruba tribal people relied on memory and residual memory, literacy has enabled the writing of certain words exemplarily on medicine bottles (McKenzie 1997:358).

2.3.6.3   Prayer in multi African societies

Mbiti has written several books and articles on African Traditional Religion (ATR). Relevant works to the present study are examined hereafter. *"The prayers of African religion"* (1975) is a work cataloguing various prayer texts from different societies in Africa. Mbiti (1975:1) demonstrates the importance of prayer in African religion. He further classifies prayers according to their generic functions. This book, although helpful in terms of the amount of information, is very general. Mbiti's point of departure is the similarity of various societies of the African religion. This aspect can be a weakness as it reduces on the depth gained from a study focused on one society.

In *African religions and philosophy,* Mbiti (1975) discusses prayer in the larger context of worship. He examines concepts of: Supreme-Being, ancestors, divinities, spirits and human intermediaries. The *Bible and Theology in African Christianity* (1986) recounts the history of Christianity in Africa. Mbiti considers common elements between African religion(s) and Christianity. He demonstrates this point by referring to indigenous African believers' fervency at prayer as a continuation from African Traditional Religion (Mbiti 1986:80, 84). The book is an invaluable source for ongoing research. However, the underlying theory of unity in African religion(s) ought to be examined critically when conducting ethnological research (Mbiti 1969; Shorter 1975:6). Certain ethnic variations may impact on group appreciation of given concepts.

Shorter (1975:1) in *Prayer in the religious traditions of Africa* emphasizes the centrality of prayer in religion. He discusses different aspects of prayer including definitions, functions and approaches for studying the concept in Africa. There are distinct schematic dimensions of prayer involving God, intermediaries and petitioner from different African societies (Shorter 1975:8-13). In Africa, prayer serves numerous social situations such as childbirth, rites of passage, weddings, hunting, famine and war. Shorter (1975:14-15) also classifies prayers functionally. Thus he includes petition, intercession, thanksgiving, praise confession, purification, Blessing, cursing, commemoration, vows, forgiveness, divination and lament. Shorter affirms the universality of prayer for protection but cautions against regarding it as a single ultimate explanation for every prayer.

There are different forms of prayer such as material, corporal and verbal (Shorter 1975:21-22). Prayer-texts are grouped in terms of functional issues such as protection from evil. Although Shorter set out with a view to analyze prayer multi-dimensionally, his results are predominantly social functional (Turner 1981:10).

King's (1986) African cosmos: an Introduction to religion in Africa covers aspects of prayer from geographically related societies. His phenomenological description focuses on West Africa's Yoruba and Akan, Dinka and Acholi (river and lake people) and Ganda and Swahili (Bantu). He investigates communication with the divine through prayer and sacrifices among aforementioned groups of people.

Prayer is communication between the divine and the human. It is therefore a basic tenet of African Traditional Religion (King 1986:59). An African family representative usually

rises in the morning to salute spirits of the cosmos and ancestors. Maternal petitioners invoke both their husbands' ancestors and their own. Communication with the Deity and ancestors is achieved verbally and materially. Material forms of prayer as sacrifices are a major component of communication with the divine (King 1986:65). Other material media of prayer are dancing, drumming and art.

Archetypal Ganda people offer prayers to dead kings. Prayers to Mukasa are offered at a shrine. Rituals surrounding prayers are presided by a chief medium and are accompanied by drums, xylophones and stringed instruments. Akan petitioners pour out libations amidst ancestral invocations (Kings 1986:63).

King's limited comparative analysis is commended for its strength in juxtaposing phenomena that is related through geographical proximity. This approach allows for ease of analyzing concepts between close cultures. Unfortunately, King schemes over prayer and only highlights a few aspects. King's notes on prayer bear no significant variations. This is either a consequence of cultural closeness between the considered societies or his failure to consider elements of prayer contextually prior to reaching a composite reformulation of prayer.

2.3.6.4 Contextual African Psalm studies

At the dawn of independent Africa in 1960, the religious landscape of sub-Saharan Africa prided only in six universities (Holter 2004:2). By the year 2000, more than one thousand theological institutions had been established. Most of them are church related. During the period from 1967 to 2000, sub-Saharan Africa produced eighty seven doctoral graduates in the Old Testament. Seventy graduated from European and American Universities.

In the same period, six dissertations were written on the Psalms. The following theses illustrate the point (Holter 2004:4-11); Boniface-Malle (2000), *Interpreting the Lament Psalms from the Tanzanian Context: Problems and Prospects;* Grantson (1991) *Death in the individual psalms of lament: An exegetical study with implications for theology and mission*; Kafang (1993) *A semantic and theological investigation of the concept of "poor" in the Psalms*; Nelumbu (1994) *Analytical study of the theme of liberation in the Psalms*; Ogunkunle (2000) *Imprecatory psalms: Their forms and uses in ancient Israel and some selected churches in Nigeria* and Zinkuratire (1987) *The kingship of Yahweh in Israel's*

history, cult and eschatology: A study of Psalm 47.   None of the above theses were conducted on the present investigation of prayer for protection.

In 1974, Welshman contributed an article entitled *Psalm 91 in relation to a Malawian cultural background*. This is a result of contextual studies by Malawian students on Psalm 91 (Welshman 1974:24).   Culturally relevant concepts are directly related to their counterparts in Psalm 91. For example, the names of God appearing in the psalm are compared to traditional Malawian names for God (Welshman 1974:24-25). Metaphors of protection are correlated with Malawian terms.   Similarly, aspects of danger from both contexts are juxtaposed.   This study bears weaknesses arising from a tendency to harmonize and find similarities between Psalm 91 and Malawian traditions.   Although some elements are related to corresponding cultural context(s), differences are not forthcoming from the investigation.   The approach is based on exaggerated religious closeness between African and Israelite traditions. A historico-cultural distance is lacking in the assessment.   There is no demonstrable proximity evident between the two traditions.   Thus, Welshman's failure to explicate the elements within their different religious and cultural contexts has led to superficial similarities.

Adamo (2001) in *Reading and interpreting the Bible in African Indigenous Churches* examines prayer and the use of the Bible for protection, healing and success in African Indigenous Churches. This contextual study is conducted in Yoruba societies of Nigeria. The reality of witches, sorcerers and evil spirits in Africa and Nigeria specifically forces people to seek protection from the enemy's terror (Adamo 2004:26).   Verbal pronouncements are employed in Africa to ward off evil (Adamo 2004:68-69). Adamo proposes that African potent words resemble imprecations in the Book of Psalms. This is attended by the notion that white missionaries had hidden powers drawn from the Bible. Thus various texts, particularly in the Psalms, are explicated for protective purposes (Adamo 2001:68-69). Adamo cites texts imbedded with imprecations which are employed in African Indigenous Churches.   Members of these churches (AIC) like in African Traditional Religions employ psalm imprecations as amulets and in conjunction with herbal medicines (Adamo 2001:73-84; Adamo 2004:28).   Similarly, certain names of God are uttered in order to invoke God's protection.

Adamo's African cultural hermeneutics is problematic.   On a positive note, it is an appraisal of both biblical and African traditions.   However, Adamo fails to demonstrate the

historical and cultural distance between the Bible and African religious experience. His analysis of protection prayer can be equated to reading African cultural elements into the Biblical text. Performative words in African invocations are related to imprecations in the Psalms. In this way, Adamo fails to acknowledge the differences arising from the role of Yahweh as the subject of the psalmist's imprecations and the disavowing of magic in the Psalms.

2.4 Review of prayer in the Old Testament and approaches to the Psalms

2.4.1 Introduction

Research into Old Testament prayer has a long but insurmountable history. However the aim of this section is not to provide a detailed all-encompassing list of works but rather an overview of some important contributions to the subject of prayer in the Old Testament. Furthermore, this discussion prepares the ground for a consideration of the theme of protection in the Psalms.

2.4.2 Prayer in the Old Testament

In *Theology of the Old Testament*, Eichrodt (1961) propounds both on prayer and the acts of prayer. He observes that sacrifice and prayer go extremely together in the Old Testament. It follows that certain requests such as prebattle prayers were attended by sacrifices. The prebattle prayer of Psalm 20 is exemplar of this fact. Eichrodt further states that words typical to prayer are found in numerous Old Testament prose prayers. The common phrases for praying are "to call and cry aloud."

Similarly prayer acts such as stretching hands are common not only in the Old Testament but in ancient Near Eastern cultures (De Vaux 1978:459; Keel 1978:308, 311, 314, 322). Herein are rudiments of primitive religion. At any rate acts of lifting hands, bending knees and bowing during prayer correspond to actions performed by a vassal before a great king. Ultimately, in Israelite religion these acts symbolize submission (Eichrodt 1961:173; 1967:191).

Eichrodt reckons a relatedness of curse and blessing to magic particularly at an early stage. This is illustrated by the development of the same from a point in time when its

efficacy lay outside God's intervention. It was superseded with the understanding that the power to curse lies in God. However, this theology particularly the practice of employing God's name maliciously when uttering curses was forbidden. Consequently, the curse gave way to prayer of vengeance (Eichrodt 1961:174-175). Importantly the prayers of Israel are absent of hollow flattery. In contradistinction to Heiler's 1958:176-177 categories of mystical prayer[20], Israelite prayers are infused with simplicity, sincerity and confidence of being heard (Eichrodt 1961:175; 1967:164, 189). There is no marked disparity between individualistic and communal cultic prayers. Later formalization of prayer developed into duty demonstrated by set times of prayer, prescribed apparel, and forms (Eichrodt 1961:176).

Greenberg (1983) made a contribution on biblical prose prayer. He commences by delineating prose prayer from psalms. Psalms are situated in formalized cultic expression. The cult leaves little room for spontaneous prayer. For this reason, institution of the sanctuary including rites and celebrations are described in the finest detail (Greenberg 1983:4). In official religion, sacrifice was central. Sacrifices were performed by the hands of priests. In this way, the laity had no practical role in worship. Moreover, not even priests prayed in accompaniment of sacrifice. Greenberg (1983:6) argues that psalms lack real life setting. Therefore, life setting is conjectured as it lacks biblical attestation. Consequently, psalms fail to depict spontaneous piety in biblical Israel. This translates to a deficiency in terms of reflecting the commoners' religion. Psalms are prescriptions of the schooled centralized in temple rituals.

Whereas psalms are mediated and refined through the priestly institution prose prayer obtaining in narrative is unmediated. Non-psalmic prayer is marked by the following elements: this prayer is addressed to God (Greenberg 1983:7). It is less often about God, rather it is an expression of dependence and subjection to God. Prose prayer includes the genres of petition, confession, benediction and curse. This form of prayer is freely composed in particular life settings, by specific authors and for given functions. However, the setting is bound by the literary context (Greenberg 1983:8). This context serves a particular narrative function. Greenberg argues for verisimilar as against veridicality of prose prayer. Although it is difficult to prove that prose prayer represents the actual utterances of a petitioner it may well be close to the person's original words.

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[20] Heiler (1958:172-177) understood the aim mystical prayer as achieving a state of losing oneself in the divine.

Greenberg (1983:48) argues that this type of prayer is not re-used. At any rate, in Israel there was a diversity of petitioners ranging from lay people to kings represented in prose prayer. The fact that everyone could pray spontaneously marks biblical prayer from magic and incantation (Greenberg 1983:48). Prayer in narrative yields a minimum contribution to the description of biblical religion. Conversely, there is a common structure depicted by elements of address, petition and motivation. As a norm, this structure is represented with some additions in the longer prayers. The invocation of God by name YHWH establishes contact with the invisible presence (Greenberg 1983:11). Sincerity is a condition of worshiping and praying (Greenberg 1983:49). Greenberg (1983:39-40) concludes his study by discounting the dichotomy caused by proponents of spontaneity on one hand and set prayer on the other. Exemplarily Heiler (1958:xviii, 66) postulated that extemporaneous prayer is true and original prayer, while Mowinckel (1962:1,2) saw set prayer as key in religion. By arguing that spontaneous and set prayers occurred contemporaneously Greenberg (1983:46) counters the evolutionary principle concerning prayer.

The prayers of the Bible by Clements (1985) is an extended study on the subject of prose prayer. Clements sets off by distinguishing prose prayer from psalms and biblical prayer from other traditions. He suggests that the Bible does not promote a priestly monopolistic tendency regarding prayer (Clements 1985:1). Everyone can pray. Prayer is an open privilege to be enjoyed by all. It is spontaneous and free. Similarly, biblical prayer lacks semi-magical aspects; it does not require mysterious words, names and formulas privy to select professionals (Clements 1985:8-9).

Psalmic prayer, on the other hand, is a product of professionals. Although its original composers were predominantly ordinary men the original setting is difficult to explicate (Clements 1985:3). This point makes psalms applicable to new contexts. Since prayer is universal, men and women resort to calling on God when they are in need. Non-psalmic prayers are heard resonating with deep theological insight.

The question of authenticity of prose prayer is cursorily addressed. Clements (1985:5) disputes the relevance of the historical setting of prose prayer. Instead, he resolves the matter by appealing to God's personality and the nature of relationships from which the words of prayer are drawn. Auxiliary in prose prayer the disclosure of the petitioner is

indicated. Faith is a key component of biblical prayer. The centrality of prayer in the Bible and religion in its entirety, is underscored.

Prayer is a universal religious act and it contains common language (Clements 1985:6). Hence, it is easy to approach the Bible through contrasting its revealed ideas and institutions with other religions. Prayer is a typical human activity, which is influenced by the petitioner's understanding of God. In many ancient traditions, prayer contained a magical element. To the contrary, Israelite religion censured the practice of magic. Biblical prayer is therefore God-ward in character (Clements 1985:8-9). Behind the themes of biblical prayer is the creator God. Prayer, is therefore offered to God for various reasons. The different forms of prose prayer are petition, intercession and praise. These forms of prayer are underpinned by confidence in a responsive God (Clements 1985:10-13).

Balentine's (1993) *Prayer in the Hebrew Bible* concentrates exclusively on prose prayers. Prayer is dialogue with God (Balentine 1981:331; 1993:33). The petitioner sometimes has certainty and at other times uncertainty. This results in praise and lament respectively (Heiler 1958:3; Balentine 1993:33). Confidence in prayer hails from God's relatedness to humanity (Greenberg 1983:32). As distinguished from psalms the narrative context enhances theological interpretation of prayer. Balentine (1981:334) follows Westermann and Brueggemann in stating the essential witness to both God and humanity in prayers. Prophets in ancient Israel prayed for others and spoke on behalf of God. Nonetheless, prayer was not the prophet's province since ordinary people prayed directly to God (Balentine 1984:161).

Balentine demonstrates that prayer traverses beyond being a gesture of worship and a link to the transcendent. Accordingly, prayer has aspects of engagement and securing God's active involvement in religious and social realms. In this way Balentine departs from earlier studies that concentrated on form-critical orientations of prayer, such as lament, praise, petition and thanksgiving. In its place, he delves in literary functional approaches. Therefore, he addresses the study to characterization of God and petitioner elucidating themes of divine justice, penitence and contrition.

In *They cried to the Lord* Miller (1994:1) asserts that no other practice adds more clarity to a religion than the exploit of praying. He postulates that prayer is contacting a higher

power who is in touch with human life. Prayer encompasses both painful reluctant stuttering and careful formal disciplined utterance to God. It embodies an element of trust in God. Miller contrasts Old Testament prayer from both Egyptian and Mesopotamian prayer on account of intermediaries. Israel's neighbours at certain occasions relied on the assistance of divinities who mediated between people and the deity. There are cases where High Gods were enlisted to carry out mediatory functions (Miller 1994:31). The center of Miller's book hinges on Chapters 3-5 where he meticulously discusses the movement from human cry for help to divine response. Subsequently, divine response evokes praise and thanksgiving from the petitioner. Miller (1994:3) isolates the following elements as common to prayer: address, lament, petition, motivation, confidence and trust.

2.4.3 Approaches in Psalm studies

In his seminal work on the Psalms *An introduction to the Psalms* (a translation of *Einleitung in die Psalmen: die Gattungen der religiösen Lyrik Israels* [1933] by Nogalski) Gunkel (1998) has made an enormous contribution to Psalm studies. He affirms that biblical psalms are mostly, though not all, prayers. Gunkel traces the development of lament to situations of threat, famines and pestilence at which the community gathered at holy places to fast and call on God. He proposed genre classification as foundational and nonnegotiable upon which everything stands. Gunkel's categories are hymns, communal complaint, individual complaint, Yahweh's enthronement, royal psalms, individual thanksgiving, and minor forms.

Gunkel (1998:1ff) employed a **form-critical approach** to conducting Psalm studies. His form-critical hermeneutic comprises genre analysis, form analysis and setting. Gunkel observes that delineation of genre is a paramount starting point. Accordingly, chief genres grew out of recurring events in history. As a result, the collections of elements of various psalms which contain the same motif form genres. The analysis of form demands careful attention to linguistic form, elements and motifs. These motifs include introductory and conclusive devices.

From Gunkel Psalm study has predominantly utilized *form criticism*. Different scholars have emphasized certain aspects of the method. Cultic setting, which is a part of Gunkel's form-critical approach, has been applied differently by successive scholars (Mays *et al* 1995:149).

Gunkel's student Mowinkel's **cultic approach** tended to place the Psalms at the annual festival similar to the Babylonian New Year celebrations. Besides the major shift in cultic analysis, he followed Gunkel in similar *genre* classification but added individual praise for instance. Mowinckel (1962:219) also promoted the *Gattung* of the Protective Psalm. Mowinckel qualified the group by identifying the presence of imminent danger in the psalms (Miller 1994:105). In this way these psalms reflect danger threats prior to the actual occurrence. Since these psalms contain a tone of confidence they are therefore brighter than other laments. His opinion on the communal aspect of the prayers was influenced in part by his student Birkeland. Birkeland (1955) argued that the enemies in the psalms of protection are always foreign. Accordingly these lament psalms are seen as national. In which case the "I" is seen as representing the nation through the person of the king. This hypothesis is not without critique. Different scholars argue that the psalmists' enemies must be considered on a case by case basis as they are not always national (Anderson 1983:82-86; Croft 1987:33-34, 48; Brueggemann 1995:12, 13; Gunkel 1998:1; Bullock 2001:147). Equally, other scholars have found different cultic settings to Mowinkel.

While Mowinckel locates the *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalms in the New Year festival Weiser proposed a **covenant festival** (Weiser 1962:35). Weiser builds his theory based on the understanding from the Targum and a similar festival in the Qumran community. Although conceding the lack of documented evidence of the festival in the Old Testament Weiser conjectured support from various passages. He argued that Psalm 50 is an extant part from the order of the covenant festival. Similarly, Psalm 81 is a recollection of a call to sons of Joseph to the festival.

Kraus (1988) explicates a cultic setting of the Yahweh is King-Psalms at the **enthronement festival** (Kraus 1988:86). His syntactical analysis of the Yahweh is King (ûlm hwhy) Psalms led him to the conclusion that the phrase contrary to Mowinckel's assertion does not translate to Yahweh has become king. As a consequence, the phrase is not an enthronement cry, but a statement concerning the kingship of Yahweh. This interpretation led Kraus to the conclusion that the phrase is related to the enactment of Yahweh's kingship patterned after the election of Zion and Davidic kingship (Kraus 1988:88). In post-exilic interpretation, the monarchy was no more. Hence, Yahweh was

the reigning king. Kraus (1988:86-89) suggested that the enthronement festival occurred on the first day of feast of Tabernacles.

Westermann, shifted Psalm study from concentrating on the setting in life to genre. Among his works are *The Psalms, structure, content and message* (1980), *Praise and lament in the Psalms* (1981) and *The living Psalms* (1989). Psalms are poems and lyrics that are extant from ancient civilizations, religions and languages. Inspite of their long history they are still vital. Psalms are addressed to God. They are truly prayers and appeals to God (Westermann 1989:1).

Psalms arose out of Israel's worship and were sung and prayed prior to writing (Westermann 1980:13). Unlike Gunkel's main genres, Westermann categorizes psalm types broadly into lament and praise. Great national crises such as drought, threat of attack, defeat and plague led to the development of community lament. On the other hand, victory at war and bumper harvest led to community praise. Similarly, individual difficulties and blessings grew into individual lament and praise respectively. According to Westermann, the lament developed through three distinct phases. The early prayer, lament, is actually a complaint against God (Westermann 1981:17). Thereafter petition developed bringing balance between complaint and calling on God. Later the emancipation of the lament from prayer occurred. Ultimately, the complaint against God was mellowed by the development of judgment and sin theology. Yet the lament could not be silenced as evidenced by the questions to God in later prayers (Westermann 1981:172). Praise is divided into declarative and descriptive praise. Descriptive praise is not focused on a particular situation rather, it is a historical reckoning of God's deeds in the past. Declarative praise however is in response to present situations (Westermann 1989:2).

Westermann (1980:14) indicates that the great festivals were not the exclusive times of worship. Rather they represent special times. Sick people prayed on their beds and in their tents. Later at a specific time and place they were integrated and focused into a centralized cultic setting for the fullness of worship. Historical collections were later brought together. This is noticeable in the five books of the Hebrew Bible. Other identifiable collections are Davidic, Elohistic and smaller Asaphite and Korahite collections (Westermann 1980:17). Similarly different genres are distinguishable while lament and praise are the dominant genres (Westermann 1980:24). Even though their cultic setting is

worship, they are still genuinely lament and praise. There is no clarity in assigning the psalms to one great festival (Westermann 1980:28).

Scholars from the American school have utilized **text immanent approaches**, which focus on the analysis of the final form and literary structure of the text. Proponents of text immanent approaches include Craigie (1983), Allen (1989), Tate (1990) and Limburg (1992), Prinsloo (2003) and Terrien (2003). Craigie (1983:47) indicates that his approach is informed by broad principles of form criticism. Although reconstructing the historical context is vital, dealing with the present form of the poetic text is preferred (Limburg 1992:527; Prinsloo 2003:365; Terrien 2003:37). Text immanent approaches do not predicate reading texts ahistorically or disavowing of cultic contexts. Rather, focus is shifted to content, function, poetic strategies and meaning of a psalm. Thus, the final form of the text becomes the point of departure.

Although form-analysis is invaluable, occasionally it has limitations when delineating *Gattungen* (Terrien 2003:14). Accordingly, *Gattungen* are not considered to be ready made schemes into which every psalm is fitted (Limburg 1992:525). Failure to note this matter may inadvertently result in forcing individual psalms into particular cultic context (Prinsloo 2003:365). Hence, varying ways are utilized in psalm classification such as considering functional aspects (Craigie 1983:47) and structural analysis (Limburg 1992:525; Terrien 2003:14). In the absence of functional terms literary evaluation does not illuminate classical genres (Allen 1989:xxii). To the contrary Terrien (2003:14, 37) argues that structural analysis is a key factor in clarifying classification.

Life setting is a departure from Mowinckel's invaluable New Year Festival and Weiser's Covenant Festival. The two settings are regarded as elusive and exaggerated respectively (Craigie 1983:48). To this end a broader social or cultic setting is considered and illustrated existentially (Tate 1990:xxiv-xxv). Consequently form critical heterogeneity is realized through human experience in the form of crisis or calm and excitement or ordinariness (Allen 1989:xxiv). To this end community laments functioned in cultic services of prayer and fasting. They were motivated by situations of national emergency and disasters. Similarly, individual laments were utilized at family and individual levels (Limburg 1992:525).

Literary setting is elaborated through the observation of macro and micro literary settings. The large literary context is delineated through identifying terminal points such as doxologies, royal and Torah psalms placed by editors at the beginning of the five books (Allen 1989:xxii). Literary units are linked internally by thematic and social historical motifs (Tate1990:xxiv). Furthermore coherence of the Psalter is underpinned by theological and ethical trajectories (Allen 1989:xxii). However, the psalmists' faith is not expressed in discursive language (Terrien 2003:37).

Another approach in the study of Psalms is **colometry**. Important proponents of this approach include and Loretz and Kottsieper (1987). Freedman (1980) has proposed a similar approach, however, he emphasizes on metrical analysis unlike the foregoing colon analytical approach. Prosaic and poetic texts are distinguished by their artistic and literary form (Loretz & Kottsieper 1987:16). Hence, there is need for specialized approaches for analyzing the texts. Form and style, words and their arrangements are critical to elucidating content, meaning and feeling (Freedman 1980:2-3). The following compositional features are imbedded in poetry: parallelism, rhythm, sound and length of line. Hebrew parallelism must be conducted within its large context due to transfer of ideas that occurred in the ancient Near East (Loretz & Kottsieper 1987:14). Colometry involves delineating colon and verse. It depends on structural analysis of a text (Fokkelman 2000:12).

There is no universal method for metrical analysis and poetic structure in biblical psalms (Freedman 1980:2-3). Hebrew poetry is divided into two basic identifiable structural types. The first consists of poems with regular metrical and symmetrical stanza structure. The second category is constituted from complex strophic structure with unequal length (Freedman 1980:9). To the contrary, metrical analysis of Hebrew psalms is unconvincing due to its tendency to structure lines superficially into equal length (Loretz & Kottsieper 1987:18).

Following Ugaritic poetry, which is decoded through cola, bicola and tricola a similar analytical method for biblical texts, is proposed (Loretz & Kottsieper 1987:18; Loretz 2002:1-2, 4). Loretz's colometric analysis employs a consonant counting technique. This technique is particularly criticized because it is not adaptable (Connor 1980:150). Freedman on the other hand, employs syllable counting (Freedman 1980:7). Syllable counting is used to determine the length of cola and not to support metrical analysis

(Fokkelman 2000:12). Ugaritic cola structure does not fit entirely due to stages in textual development. Biblical texts had been reformulated by latter communities. For this reason, the end text may yield textual disturbances and expansions (Loretz & Kottsieper 1987:18). In addition, the nature of the Hebrew language has an effect (Freedman 1980:10). The object of colometric analysis is to isolate and study the smallest poetic units and their interrelationships (Freedman 1980:2; Loretz & Kottsieper 1987:22, 24, 52). Thus, a colon is identified and related to large units of strophes and stanzas. The connectedness of units is examined with reference to parallelism. Parallellism is imbedded in a greater literary structure which includes rhythm, basic units (cola, bicola and tricola) and whole text (Watson 1986:66; Loretz 2002:3). Unlike Gunkel's meter and *Sitz im Leben* analysis which reduced texts to specific life settings colometric analysis is appropriate considering the fact that texts were re-used (Loretz & Kottsieper 1987:53; Loretz 2002:7).

Brueggemann's works are influential in the use and interpretation of the Psalms. In his 1995 monograph, *The Psalms the life of faith* Brueggemann's **functional classification** and **hermeneutical approach** cannot go unnoticed. His decisive article *Psalms and the life of faith: A suggested typology of function* also the lead essay in the book provides a significant alternative to Gunkel's kind of psalms. Building on Gunkel's pioneering work Brueggemann suggests functional categories realized as songs of *orientation, disorientation and reorientation*. Brueggemann also draws from Ricouer's hermeneutic of suspicion and retrieval to highlight life's dialectic movement from lament to praise.

Brueggemann's chapter on *The Psalms as prayer* is an elaboration on the topic. Psalms are identified as both acts of prayer and invitations to other prayers outside the Psalter (Brueggemann 1995:33). Prayer goes beyond thoughts to utterances of those who live close to deep hurts. Brueggemann offers seven elements of psalmic prayer namely: address to an identifiable "You", this "You" performs wonders, Yahweh's character self disclosure is marked by covenantal loyalty and companionship, as well as praise, lament, absence of embarrassment and honesty and justice Brueggemann 1995:35-41). Brueggemann (1984:1) also suggests that the psalms are not only addressed to God, but they are sometimes directed at the believing community. As speeches, psalms exhibit emotions of praise, anger and doubt. Therefore, Brueggemann classified psalms in a threefold manner as **disorientation, orientation and reorientation** (Brueggemann 1984:24).

Gerstenberger (1998; 2001) also wrote commentaries on the Psalms. The two volumes utilize form-critical analysis of the Psalms. Gerstenberger conducts an exegetical study working with genres and formulas. While undertaking to probe further the matter of *Sitz im Leben* Gerstenberger focuses on **sociological settings**. He affirms a multilayered spirituality of generations of psalmists and psalm users reflected in the Psalms. He also argues that the views of the psalmists and users finally converge at the point of collection and redactional activities in the worship ceremonies of early Jewish communities of 6th and 7th Centuries BCE. Through the process of use and re-use, both oral and scribal traditions have shaped individual texts, intermediate collections and the *Psalter* as a whole. Gerstenberger confirms that form critical and socio-historical analysis is beneficial in identifying the background of psalmody in different types of human organization and ritual practice.

Hossfeld and Zenger (2005) in a *Critical and historical commentary on the Bible Psalms 2, 51-100* present their **redaction historical criticism**. This approach is an integration of historical-critical, philological-tools, textual-critique, history of tradition, *genre* and prosodic analysis, history of religion, ancient Semitic and classical languages (Hossfeld & Zenger 2005:ix). Equally origins, structure and theology of smaller genres are explicated. Links between psalms derive from linguistic connections, common motifs and thematic unity (Zenger 2000:162, 167). Thereafter detailed analysis and exegesis are performed in consideration of both the Old and New Testament contexts (Hossfeld & Zenger 2005:xi).

This approach is informed by a close examination of historical developments of cluster of psalms. Exemplarily Psalms 51-64 are cited as individual prayers of lament and petition (Hossfeld & Zenger 2005:2). Superscriptions are examined redactionally. Equally, psalmic frames are investigated synchronically and diachronically. Such analyses point to intentional construction in certain cases (Zenger 2000:163). Simultaneously, individual and contextual aspects related to historical development are explicated. The larger context provides depth and acuity to the analysis.

From the above studies this investigation has drawn various principles. An integrated approach focusing on literary, cultic, historical contexts and theological aspects of individual texts is employed.

3

DEVELOPMENTAL FACTORS WHEN WORKING WITH MIDDLE CHILDHOOD CHILDREN IN THE FIELD OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In the course of development, children change physically, emotionally and cognitively as they progress through different stages. From the researcher's point of view, child development is a progression through generally accepted milestones. In order to determine a child's ability to supply information about events which they have witnessed or experienced, it is necessary to know what the developmental milestones are, and to understand the general characteristics of each age period.

This chapter will provide an overview of the following areas of development of the child: physical, cognitive, memory, language, socio-emotional, moral and sexual. Emphasis will also be placed on memory, repression and dissociation. Due to the fact that many children are referred for forensic assessment due to sexual reactive behaviour, the researcher will also address normal and abnormal sexual behaviour.

3.2   PHASES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Development refers to the change over time in body and in behaviour due to both biology and experience (Craig & Baucum, 2002:4). It is further described by (Schoeman, 2006:74) as the pattern of change that human beings undergo during their lifetime; beginning at conception and continuing through the life cycle until the person's death. For the purpose of organisation and understanding, development is frequently described in terms of phases (Berk, 2003:5; Smith, Dockrell & Tomlinson, 1998:202). The development of children is divided in four phases namely: the toddler phase (birth to 2 years), early childhood (2 to 6 years), middle childhood (6 to 11/12 years) and adolescence (12 to 18 years) (Berk, 2003:5; Cole

& Cole, 2001:468; Louw, Van Ede & Ferns, 1998:321). Each of these phases is described in terms of physical, cognitive, socio-emotional and moral development (Newman & Newman, 2003:254).

In order to work with children, all professionals should have a comprehensive working knowledge and clear understanding of the phases and issues of the child's development in a number of areas. This research will focus on the allegedly sexually abused child in the middle childhood and therefore it is imperative that middle childhood should be defined.

3.3   THE MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

The period from approximately 6 to 12 years of life is generally known as middle childhood (Louw *et al.,* 1998:321; Cole & Cole, 2001:468; Newman & Newman, 2003:254) and the onset thereof is recognised in cultures around the world.

The period between 6/7 and 11 years is referred to by Berger (2003:299) as the "school years" where children are mastering new concepts, new vocabulary and new skills. According to Piaget (Shaffer, 1996:266), the ages 6 to 7 is "precisely the time when children are decentring from perceptual illusions while in the process of acquiring the cognitive operations that will enable them, among other things, to classify animals, people, objects and events, and to understand the relations between upper and lower case letters".

In South Africa, school attendance is compulsory and according to Section 3(1) of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996), a learner must attend school from the first day of the year in which he/she reaches the age of 7 years until the last school day of the year in which he/she reaches the age of 15 years, or the Grade 9, whichever occurs first. However, according to the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996) parents may enrol their child if the child turns 6 before June of the school year. The primary school system accommodates the middle childhood child in three phases, namely the foundation phase (Grades 1 – 3: age 6 to 9/10); intermediate phase (Grades 4 – 6: age 9/10

to 12); senior phase (Grade 7: age 12/13) (The South African Schools Act, 1996). This study focuses on children in the middle childhood, involving children who may be in Grade 1 to Grade 7.

The researcher experienced that when a child enters Grade 1, new expectations arise regarding the child's behaviour (Berger, 2003:299) as they spend less time under the parents' supervision. More emphasis is placed on responsibilities and tasks away from home, e.g. attending formal school, homework and participating in extra-mural activities. In South Africa many children stay at after school facilities and use public transport to travel to and from their homes. Often both parents work and therefore many children are left with older siblings who must take care of them. From the researcher's working experience with victims of sexual abuse, it became evident that these children spend less time under direct supervision from parents, which may result in the child falling at risk for possible sexual abuse.

3.4   PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOTOR SKILLS

As children move out of the home to be introduced to the outer world on their own, they need more motor skills. Genetic contribution to size can be seen in the height and rate of growth typical of different populations and families (Louw *et al.,* 1998:321).

3.4.1   General physical development

Like all aspects of development, children's growth depends on the interaction of environmental (Craig & Baucum, 2002:318) and genetic factors (Berger, 2003:309). Inherited differences may influence children's ability in sports activities and many other physical activities (Berger, 2003:309) and it may occur that a child will not necessarily perform on the same level as children who inherited advanced

motor skills from their parents. Environmental factors that moderate growth potential are nutrition and health (Cole & Cole, 2001:472).

Size and strength increase significantly in the years from age 6 to 12, but slower than during early childhood (Newman & Newman, 2003:255). Outstanding characteristics of the physical development during middle childhood are, according to Louw *et al.* (1998:323), the rapid growth of the arms and legs in comparison with the body, and a slower growth rate in comparison with the earlier pre-school period. The average annual growth in the middle childhood is approximately 6 cm in height and 2 kg in weight (Cole & Cole, 2001:473), and height increased from approximately 120 cm at age 6 to 150 cm at age 12. Weight increased from 20 kg to 40 kg in this same period (Newman & Newman, 2003:255; Louw *et al.,* 1998:323).

The most common problem during this stage is children who are overweight or obese, affecting them physically and emotionally (Berger, 2003:302). The researcher found that many victims of sexual abuse are overweight due to overeating (Craig & Baucum, 2002:321). In practice the researcher experienced that girls of 11 years look more mature and older for their age in comparison with boys of the same age. For this reason interviewers must be careful during formal interviews not to have higher expectations from girls, but to keep to guidelines for the specific age group.

As discussed, children in the middle childhood have to cope with a body that is getting bigger, taller and stronger and the growth thereof may look out of proportion. Other physical changes according to Louw *et al.* (1998:323) include the following:

- Milk teeth are replaced by permanent teeth.
- The circulatory system develops at a slower rate.
- The brain reaches 90% of its adult size (Craig & Baucum, 2002:318).
- The respiratory system functions more economically.

Table 3.1:   Physical development during middle childhood

AGE	DEVELOPMENT
7 to 8 years old	• Steady increase in height and weight. • Steady increase in strength for both boys and girls. • Increased use of all body parts. • Refinement of gross motor skills. • Improvement in fine motor skills. • Increasing variability in motor skills performance.
9 to 10 years old	• Beginning of growth spurt for girls. • Increase in strength for girls accompanied by loss of flexibility. • Awareness and development of all body parts and systems. • Ability to combine motor skills more fluidly. • Balance improvement.
11 years old	• Girls generally taller and heavier than boys. • Beginning of growth spurt for boys. • Accurate judgements in intercepting moving objects. • Continued combination of more fluid motor skills. • Continued improvement of fine motor skills • Continued increasing variability in motor skill performance.

Adapted from Craig and Baucum (2002:320); Berger (2003:303); Newman and Newman (2003:254) and Woolfolk (2001:90).

From experience with child victims of sexual abuse, the researcher found that children in the middle childhood, who are sexually abused, may think that their bodies are damaged (Finkelhor & Brown, 1985:530; Wieland, 1997:15). They may also blame the sexual abuse for physical changes or delayed growth. The researcher found that a female victim would for example blame the sexual abuse if

her breasts are developing quicker than her friend's, or if she has not started with her menstrual period at the same time as her peers did. The forensic interviewer needs to be sensitive regarding these aspects, as it is vital to be reminded that the child sitting in front of the professional is challenged with a lot of physical changes, which are not necessarily experienced in the same way as non-victims. If questions regarding physical development arise during the interview, the interviewer needs to normalise it in a neutral way.

3.4.2   Motor skills

Children of school age become better at performing controlled, purposeful movements (Woolfolk, 2001:90) and their newly acquired physical abilities are reflected in their interest in sports and other adventurous stunts.

3.4.2.1   Gross motor skills

It is highlighted by Cole and Cole (2001:499) that compared to girls, boys are superior in many motor skills during middle childhood. Muscles become stronger and therefore the average 10-year-old boy would throw a ball twice as far as the average 6-year-old boy (Berger, 2003:301) and can run faster and exercise longer. Although girls make similar progress in throwing and catching, at each age their throwing distance is on average shorter than that of boys (Craig & Baucum, 2002:319; Newman & Newman, 2003:254).

During interviews with children in the middle childhood, the researcher has experienced that children like to run, jump, skip, cycle, skate, swim, kick a ball, do ballet and participate in a variety of other sports (Cole & Cole, 2001:498). Talking about these activities is a good contact point to facilitate discussion and assessing their ability to communicate. It is the researcher's experience that due to increased exposure to television, Playstation and television games, modern children are less mobile and consequently their motor skills are limited.

During interviews boys tend to get bored easily when faced with tasks where they have to sit still. It is observed that they would move their bodies more than girls during interviews. They also tend to ask for physical activities during the interviewing process. Girls, however, tend more to be able to sit still and talk about feelings and happenings at school.

It is thus imperative for the forensic interviewer to be prepared to adapt their interviewing process to accommodate children's different needs. Boys may need more breaks and may need to move around during the interview. Girls, on the other hand, tend to be more responsive than boys (Louw *et al.,* 1998:323).

3.4.2.2   *Fine motor skills*

Most of the fine motor skills required for writing develop between the ages of 6 and 7 (Craig & Baucum, 2002:319; Cole & Cole, 2001:499) and therefore it can be expected from the child to make pictures during interviewing, write his/her name and names of family members, with assistance with spelling where necessary. Between the ages of 6 and 7 some quite normal children cannot draw a diamond or make many letter shapes until they are 8 years old (Craig & Baucum, 2002:319) and it is therefore important for interviewer not to make an assessment that a child is developmentally behind based only on his/her fine motor skills. Some children naturally write more neatly than others (Berger, 2003:309) and left-handed children, for whom writing a right-handed language such as English runs against the natural direction of their body, and poorly co-ordinated children, may also be left out of group activities due to the fact that their work is not neat. It is the opinion of the researcher that during a forensic interview with the child, the professional should never comment on handwriting that is not neat, or on any inability that the child is displaying, but should rather comment on the child's willingness to try. If a child does not want to make a drawing or write something, he/she must never be forced, as there will be a valid reason why the child does not want to draw. By forcing a child to make a picture, his/her level of anxiety may increase, which will inhibit the facilitation of information about the alleged offence.

3.5 COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Although the child in middle childhood is capable of operational thinking, such thinking is still concrete and not abstract (Sutherland, 1992:16). Piaget and Vygotsky (Newman & Newman, 2003:69) developed two main theories on cognitive development respectively; however, the focus of these two theories differs. Piaget's theory (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:77) focuses on individuals in interaction with their environment. Vygotsky (Newman & Newman, 2003:73; Smith *et al.,*1998:36) proposed that development could only be understood within a social framework where thinking develops through the learning process.

Table 3.2:   Concepts from the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky

PIAGET	VYGOTSKY
• Active learning: The child's own search for understanding, motivated by the child's inborn curiosity.	• Guided participation: The adults or other mentors aid in guiding the next step of learning, motivated by the learner's need for social interaction.
• Egocentrism: The pre-schooler's tendency to perceive everything from his/her own perspective and to be limited by that viewpoint.	• Apprenticeship in thinking: The pre-schooler's tendency to look to others for insight and guidance, particularly in the cognitive area.
• Structure: The mental assumptions and modalities the child creates to help him/her organise his/her understanding of the world. Structures are torn down and rebuilt when disequilibrium makes new structures necessary.	• Scaffold: The building blocks for learning put in place by a teacher or a culture. Learners use scaffolds, and then discard them when they are no longer needed.
• Symbolic thought: The ability to think using symbols, including language. The ability emerges spontaneously at about age 2 and continues throughout the child's life.	• Proximal development: The next step in cognition, the ideas and skills a child can grasp with assistance, but not alone. It is influenced not only by the child's own abilities and interests, but also by the social context.

(Berger, 2003:251.)

The researcher concludes that both theories emphasise that learning is not passive, but is affected by the learner. Although both theories share concepts and terminology, they differ in the emphasis which is put on the learner, other individuals and the social environment.

Some authors identified limitations to Piaget's theory (Kuehnle, 1996:50; Sutherland, 1992:64), due to arguments that all developmental changes occur from a small number of reorganisations of the cognitive system as a whole. However, the researcher is of the opinion that it offers a useful framework (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2006) for understanding children's vulnerability to sexual exploitation and therefore it will be discussed.

3.5.1   Piaget's cognitive-developmental theory

The cognitive-developmental theory according to Piaget (Woolfolk, 2001:28) motivates that children move through four stages of development, namely: sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete operational, and formal operational. During these phases the exploratory behaviours of infants transform into the abstract, logical intelligence of adolescence and adulthood (Berk, 2003:219).

Table 3.3:   Piaget's cognitive-developmental theory

Sensorimotor (birth – 2 years)	• Formulation of complex sentences. • Increased motor schemes which allow infants to organise and exercise some control over their environment.
Pre-operational (2 – 7 years)	• Develop tools for representing schemes symbolically through language, imitation, imagery, symbolic play and symbolic drawing. • Knowledge is still very much tied to own perceptions.
Concrete operational (7 – 11/12 years)	• Appreciate the logical necessity of certain causal relationships. • Can manipulate categories, classifications systems and hierarchies in groups.

	• More successful at solving problems that are clearly tied to physical reality than at generating hypotheses.
Formal operational (11/12 years and older)	• Level of thinking permits a person to conceptualise about many simultaneously interacting variables. • Creation of a system of laws or rules that can be used for problem-solving.

Adapted from Newman and Newman (2003:71) and Daven and Van Staden (2004:51).

This study focuses on the middle childhood and the researcher will therefore discuss the concrete operational stage.

3.5.2   The concrete operational stage

The concrete operational stage, which spans the years from ages 6 to 12, is viewed as a major turning point in cognitive development. Reasoning in this stage is far more logical, flexible and organised than cognition during the pre-school years (Newman & Newman, 2003:71). The thoughts of the child in the concrete operational stage are (Craig & Baucum, 2002:324):

:

- flexible;

- reversible;

- not limited to the here and now;

- multidimensional;

- less egocentric;

- marked by the use of logical inferences; and

- marked by the search for cause-and-effect relationships.

3.5.2.1 Tasks achieved during the concrete operational stage

According to Piaget (Shaffer, 1996:264; Woolfolk, 2001:29; Matlin, 2002:8; Berk, 2003:241; Cole & Cole, 2001:477; Van Dyk, 2005:151; Louw, Van Ede & Louw, 1998:329) the following tasks are achieved during this stage:

- **Conservation**

  The most famous versions of Piaget's conservation task (Berk, 2003:241) involve presenting children with two identical glass beakers containing the same amounts of liquid to see if they understand conservation of quantity. The experimenter begins by pouring the contents of one of the beakers into a third beaker which is taller and narrower. Pre-school children would say that the taller beaker has more liquid than the other beakers. At the age of 8 years, children seem to fully understand that the new beaker is both taller and narrower, but that a change in one dimension of the beaker is offset by a change in the other (Woolfolk, 2001:32). The child co-ordinates several aspects of the task rather than centring on only one. The older child engages in decentration, recognising that a change in one aspect of the water (its height) is compensated for by a change in another aspect its width (Smith *et al.,* 1998:63). This explanation also illustrates reversibility – the capacity to imagine the water being returned to the original container as proof of conservation (Cole & Cole, 2001:477). This implicates that the child in the middle childhood would, for example, be able to notice that the perpetrator's penis was not the same after he/she started stroking it. The researcher experienced that this also is the reason why a child would also be able to draw a picture of the happenings, illustrating what happened and also depict emotions experienced at that stage.

- **Seriation**

  Seriation is the ability to arrange objects systematically in a series from small to large or from large to small (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:80). The child will thus be able to say that the alleged perpetrator (for instance another child) was bigger, taller than him/her, indicating that it was an older child. The child

would also be able to argue that the alleged perpetrator is shorter and thinner than his/her father and therefore be scared of his/her father.

- **Spational reasoning**

  Children of school age children have a more accurate understanding of space than pre-schoolers (Louw *et al.,*1998:330). The child in the concrete operational stage has a more accurate understanding of distance, direction and cognitive maps than the child in the pre-operational stage (Berk, 2003:242). The child would, for example, indicate that the grandfather, who allegedly abused her, is the one who stays far; indicating it is not the person staying in the same town (Cole & Cole, 2001:477). The child would also be able to tell that the perpetrator was close to him/her when the abuse happened. School-aged children's more advanced understanding of space can also be seen in their ability to give directions. Between the ages of 7 and 8 years, children start to perform mental rotations (Cole & Cole, 2001:477). As a result, they can identify left and right for positions they do not occupy (Berk, 2003:241). From the age of 8 to 10 years, children can give clear, well-organised directions for how to get from one place to another (Van Dyk, 2005:151). Six-year-olds give more organised directions after they walk the route themselves or are specially prompted; otherwise, they focus on the end point without describing exactly how to get there. It is thus within the middle childhood child's ability to direct the police or interviewer to the venue of the abuse, if the area is known to the child, or to give an indication of close to which prominent marker the alleged sexual abuse happened.

- **Cognitive maps**

  Children's drawings of familiar large-scale spaces, such as their neighbourhood or school, also change from early to middle childhood. These cognitive maps require considerable perspective-talking skill, since the entire space cannot be seen at once (Matlin, 2002:8). In the early school grades, children's maps become more organised. They draw landmarks along an organised route of travel, such as the path they walk from home to school – an accomplishment which resembles improvement in their ability to give direction (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:83). It can therefore be expected from a

child to make a drawing of the house or neighbourhood where the alleged sexual abuse took place.

- **Decentration**

    The child in the concrete operational stage can ignore misleading appearances and focus on more than one aspect of a situation when seeking answers to a problem (Louw *et al.,* 1998:71). This means that the interviewer could ask for more detail when interviewing the child in this age group than he/she would expect from a younger child. The child would be able not only to give detail regarding the sexual behaviour that took place, but also give information regarding the context in which it took place, as well as the reactions of the alleged perpetrator and of the child self (Woolfolk, 2001:32).

- **Declining egocentrism**

    Children can now communicate more effectively about objects they cannot see (Berger, 2003:334) and is in the process mastering the ability to see things from someone else's point of view. The researcher experienced during forensic interviewing that children would often tell that when the alleged perpetrator called them, they knew "it" is going to happen again. They also sometimes mention that the perpetrator would close the curtains so that nobody could see from the outside, illustrating their thoughts are not that egocentric anymore.

- **Decreasing animism**

    Children in the middle childhood are more aware of the biological bases for life and do not attribute lifelike qualities to inanimate objects as pre-schoolers do (Shaffer, 1996:264). They would, for example, know that Father Christmas, the tooth fairy and the Easter bunny are not real, but still play along for the fun. The interviewer would, for example, not use techniques like: "Tell the bunny what makes you sad"

It is thus imperative that interviewers are aware of the above-mentioned concepts as they may lead to ineffective interviewing techniques and wrong deductions, should they not be accommodated.

3.5.2.2 Limitations of concrete operational thought

Children in the middle childhood can reason logically only about concrete information that they can perceive directly (Cole & Cole, 2001:478) like objects, situations, or events that are real or imaginable. Their mental operations work poorly with abstract ideas (Berk, 2003:241) and 7- to 11-year-old children cannot yet apply this relational logic to abstract signifiers such as the X, Y and Z which are used in algebra (Shaffer, 1996:26). In South Africa algebraic concepts are introduced in the Grade 7 curriculum (children aged 12/13). Even though children in this age group have the ability to perform the mental actions such as reversibility and are less egocentric, which enable them to understand the perceptions of others, they still have great difficulty answering abstract and hypothetical questions (Müller, 2002:43).

The researcher has experienced that due to the more advanced cognitive development in the middle childhood, it is easier to interview these children and to get more accurate and detailed information as they tend to be more talkative, have learnt to adjust to new situations (new teachers and classmates every year), and learnt how to get along with adults as they spend most of their day under the supervision of adults outside their homes.

In table 3.4 the relationship between Piaget's stages of cognitive development and the child's interpretation of sexual abuse is highlighted.

Table 3.4: The relationship between Piaget's stages of cognitive development and the child's interpretation of sexual abuse

AGE RANGE	THE CHILD VICTIM'S INTERPRETATION OF THE SEXUAL ABUSE
18 months to 8 years	• Child does not understand "intention" and would not necessarily identify the perpetrator as "bad". • Child can easily be manipulated through curiosity or fear. • Child will believe that the perpetrator has supernatural powers if told so by perpetrator.

8 years to 12 years	• Child understands sexual behaviour is wrong and may think he/she is bad because he/she is engaged in "bad" behaviour. • The child can be manipulated into worrying about the consequences to the perpetrator without having insight into consequences for him-/herself.
12 years to 15 years	• Child may now begin to understand the concept of exploitation and think about the consequences of the sexual abuse to him-/herself. • Child may be capable of independently initiating a false allegation for reasons of attention, revenge, or to escape an emotionally/physically abusive family.

Adapted from Kuehnle (1996:51).

The researcher is of the opinion that children in the middle childhood is not only vulnerable to fall prey of sexual offenders, but the possibility of not telling because they feel it is their fault, or want to protect the offender could cause many children to be left in an abusive situation. It is the opinion of the researcher that when sexual abuse victims are interviewed, it is imperative to understand how they would interpret sexual abuse when it happened to them. From experience it was evident that children do not see victimisation in the same way as adults do. They tend to think the sexual abuse is their fault or blame themselves for not stopping it or telling someone sooner.

3.6   MEMORY

Cognition, known as "mental activity" describes the acquisition, storage, transformation and use of knowledge (Meyer, 1998:10; Matlin, 2002:2). It includes a wide range of mental processes such as perception, memory, imagery, language, problem-solving, reasoning and decision-making. In this study attention will be given to memory and how it works.

3.6.1 Information-processing system

The information-processing system (Berger, 2003:328) is explained in terms of the sensory register, the working memory and the long-term memory. The sensory register stores incoming stimulus information for a split second after it is received, to allow it to be processed (Lyon & Saywitch, 2006:850). Information comes in through our position and via our five senses namely sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Based on the individual's beliefs, expectations and feelings and on past experiences, the individual begins to have a present experience of the event (Müller, 2002:56). The individual then starts to process the experience. The most important factor influencing it, is rehearsal (thinking, talking or writing about it). Most sensations that come into the sensory register are lost or discarded, but meaningful information is transferred to the working memory (short-term memory).

It is in the working memory that a person's current, conscious mental activity occurs (Botha, Van Ede, Louw, Louw & Ferns, 1998:241). The working memory includes: what is going on at the moment; a person's understanding of reading a text at the specific moment; any previous knowledge recalled that is related to it; (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1998:498); and also perhaps distracting thoughts, e.g. weekend plans, or the interesting person next to you. In the absence of rehearsal, information in the short-term memory remains for about 15 to 30 seconds (Craig & Baucum, 2002:258). Some thoughts are discarded, while a few are transferred to long-term memory (Berger, 2003:328).

The long-term memory stores information for minutes, hours, days, months or years (Matlin, 2002:457). This capacity of how much information can be stored, is limitless.

Memory thus involves the acquisition (or encoding), storing and retrieving of the stored information (Lyon & Saywitz, 2006:850; Müller, 2002:56; Kuehnle, 1996:78).

It is the experience of the researcher that investigation of allegations of sexual abuse is complicated where the eyewitness or victim is a child. Not only does the

dominant partner in the crime not often admit guilt, but due to among other factors such as the cognition of the child witness, he/she is regarded as unreliable. The researcher has experienced that it is very important for a professional to have a good understanding of children's working memory and therefore it will be discussed.

3.6.2   Encoding or acquisition

Encoding is the process of how a person would lay down a memory trace into his/her recorded consciousness. Therefore, simply using open-ended questions to ask children to recall an event again and again does not necessarily have a detrimental effect on memory (Lyon & Saywitz, 2006:850) and may even help children consolidate memory over short delays.

During the acquisition of information, the child must perceive and attend to the event (Kuehnle, 1996:78). Perception is a process that uses previous knowledge to gather and interpret the stimuli that the senses register (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1998:285; Matlin, 2002:2). A trace of an experience becomes registered in memory (Müller, 2002:57; Woolfolk, 2001:244). There is selectivity as to what gets encoded in the storage system at the initial stage, since in most cases attention is given to certain aspects of an event, while other aspects are ignored.

3.6.2.1   *Factors which influence children's acquisition of information*

The researcher became aware of the gap between what adults want and what children think is important in sexual abuse situations. Children are trained what to do when someone violates their boundaries, but in most cases they are still not able to assert themselves. They are furthermore not prepared for what would be expected from them in a forensic interview, i.e. explicit detail and elaboration on context detail. It is the experience of the researcher that children in the middle childhood are more likely to encode some central actions during the abuse event. They also encode information which makes the biggest impact on them and not

necessarily what the interviewer thinks is important. They are less likely to encode details about the location or person(s) involved, despite the fact that these details are usually necessary for the successful prosecution of a case.

Factors which influence the information that enters the child's memory system are: knowledge, interest value of stimuli, duration and repetition of the original event, stress level, the distinctiveness of the experience and the traumatic nature of the happenings at the time when encoding takes place (Ceci & Bruck, 1995:41-42; Ney, 1995:103; Bruck, Ceci & Principe, 2006:805).

- **Prior knowledge**

  Prior knowledge influences how an individual monitors the world, interprets events, and selectively attends to certain types of stimuli while excluding other types (Bruck *et al.,* 2006:807). A child's prior knowledge regarding the experience in which he/she is interacting or observing appears to influence how events are interpreted, coded and put in memory (Keuhnle, 1996:79). This child's understanding of the sexually abusive events which he/she has experienced may have an important impact on what enters into memory storage and how it is organised (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1998:285). The researcher experienced that children who had to report an incident which only happened once, a long time after the event, were not as clear about details as those who reported several incidents about sexual abuse.

- **Interest value of stimuli**

  Details about persons, actions, or objects in which a child is interested are more likely to be encoded than less salient stimuli. The more a child knows about something, the more likely he/she is to be interested in it, and therefore better motivated to remember it (Greenhoot, Ornstein, Gordon & Baker-Ward, 2000:363). Children are aware of societal taboos regarding sexuality, and therefore sexually abusive behaviour may cause the child to be embarrassed. Although the behaviour may be well remembered, the child may not report it (Ceci & Bruck, 1995:42). A marked improvement in memory occurs between the ages of 7 and 11 years (Berger, 2003:329; Craig & Baucum, 2002:259). Despite this, the researcher experienced that school-

going children are more likely to remember information about activities and objects than details concerning people or locations. This may have a detrimental impact on the details regarding the alleged offence which is facilitated as children may not be able to give accurate information on the crime as requested by the legal system.

- **Duration and repetition of the original event**

  Memories of children who are abused repeatedly will be stronger than those of children who experience just one incident (Ceci & Bruck, 1995:42). It is the opinion of Kuehnle (1996:78) that if one event is not repeated within a specific time period, the memory of that event could be deleted. When a child is an active participant in an event, greater attention may be directed to the details of the event than when the child is simply an observer (Kuehnle, 1996:82). After multiple occurrences of an event, details which are generally experienced in the same way during each occurrence, are strengthened in memory (Bruck *et al.,* 2006:806) and consequently, with repeated experience, children's reports become increasingly general or script-like, focussing on what usually happened (Ney, 1995:104). The more frequently events are experienced, the longer the time delay between the event and the interview and the greater the similarity between events, the more difficult it is for children to keep track of which details were included in a particular occurrence (Bruck *et al.,* 2006:807). It may thus result in children being confused about details when asked about specific happenings during a specific incident. It is the experience of the researcher that many children only disclose months and even years after the victimisation, which have an impact on the details they may reveal. In the South African criminal courts it is expected of a child to give detailed information, irrespective of how long ago the abuse occurred (Venter, 2006). It is also expected of the child to distinguish between the different incidents, resulting in children contradicting themselves and subsequently the perpetrator may walk free.

- **Stress level**

  Stress experienced during an event may strengthen a child's ability to focus and facilitate the encoding of information (Fivush, 1998:715). However, it

was found that high levels of stress may slow down memory (Merrit, Ornstein & Spicker, 1994:20). Stress alone may not impair memory processes, but stress that results from intimidation may lead to either impairment in encoding or problems in recalling or reporting memories (Ceci & Bruck, 1995:42). Confrontational stress has a negative effect on school-age children's reports of their memories (Müller, 2002:56). It is the opinion of the researcher that the amount of stress experienced by the child is not necessarily determined by the number of times the event occurred, but by the child's personality, resilience, support and faith in life, the nature of the offence and relationship with the perpetrator. The researcher is also of the opinion that the child must not be interviewed in the presence of the perpetrator and the interviewer should make sure that the child feels safe in the interview environment. If the child needs to be taken back to the crime scene, precautions must be taken in order to prevent further traumatisation.

- **Distinctiveness of the experience**

  A factor which may have an effect on the ability to remember the trauma is the distinctiveness or uniqueness of the event against the background of the particular child's past experiences (Bruck *et al.,* 2006:805). However, studies by Howe, Courage and Peterson (1995:131) showed that previously distinctive experiences may lose their uniqueness and their memorability with additional experience. It is thus important for interviewers to always take note of the fact that the child could have gained experiences after the alleged abuse took place, which are now enmeshed or incorporated with his/her memory of what happened. In order to address these issues, as part of the proposed protocol, the interviewer should ask the child after the interview if there is any of the information that he/she is not sure about, and if he/she heard any of it from someone else.

- **Traumatic nature**

  Just like ordinary memories, traumatic memories also become less accessible as time passes by. According to Bruck *et al.* (2006:204) children's trauma memories are not repressed or hidden from consciousness, "rather the core of the events tends to be well remembered over time… and it seems

that traumatic memories are not of a unique nature, nor do they require special principles to explain their operation". It is the opinion of the researcher that the interviewer plays an instrumental role in helping the child to access these traumatic memories. This can be achieved by creating a calm and child-friendly atmosphere; the interviewer self must be open, respectful and have good rapport with children; and no pressure should be put on children to disclose.

3.6.3 Storage

Three memory-storage strategies, namely rehearsal, memory organisation and elaboration will be discussed.

3.6.3.1 *Rehearsal*

Rehearsal is the process of repeating to oneself the material that one is trying to memorise, such as a word list, a song, or a telephone number. Studies show that children that rehearse tend to recall more than children who do not (Cole & Cole, 2001:485; Woolfolk, 2001:247).

3.6.3.2 *Memory organisation*

Memory organisation is a memory strategy in which children mentally group the materials to be remembered in meaningful clusters of closely associated items so that they have to remember only one part of a cluster to gain access to the rest (Ney, 1995:104; Starks & Samuel, 2002a:24). In the middle childhood years children are more likely to link words according to categories such as animals, foods or geometric figures (Cole & Cole, 2001:485). The consequence of these changes is an enhanced ability to store and retrieve information deliberately and systematically.

3.6.3.3 *Elaboration*

Elaboration is a process in which children identify or make up connections between two or more things which they have to remember (Cole & Cole, 2001:485).

3.6.4 Retrieval

Whenever the individual may need it or when something else may trigger it, information can be retrieved. Retrieval is thus how we activate our memory of the experience when triggered or required (Berger, 2003:328; Craig & Baucum, 2002:258). Factors such as speed and accuracy of pronunciation help to explain why older children can recall a greater number of words (Matlin, 2002:457).

The final phase of the memory process involves retrieval of the stored information. Yet, not everything can be retrieved at all times. Many factors, both social and cognitive, influence the child's ability to gain access to previously acquired information (Müller, 2002:58). According to Greenhoot *et al.* (2000:363) a child's language skills and understanding of an interviewer's questions may influence his/her ability to recall and to describe events.

In the context of interviews with child sexual abuse victims, Starks and Samuel (2002:24) identified three types of memory techniques to be used by professionals:

- Recall memory which requires thought and then a long descriptive answer, e.g.: "Tell me everything about the naughty things?", "Tell me more about what happened when he came into the bathroom", or "And then what happened…and…?"
- Recognition memory, which requires a person "pick one" or "confirm/deny" the answer, e.g.: "Were your clothes on or off?" or "Did he say anything about telling?" The researcher is of the opinion that interviewers should use this technique with caution as it could be regarded as leading (Carstens,

2006). Should the interviewer utilise these techniques, he/she should clarify the child's answer in order to determine whether the child is giving information which he/she really experienced, e.g.: "You said your clothes were off. How do you know that?" It is the opinion of the researcher that recognitions should never be used to facilitate a disclosure or determine the identity of the perpetrator.

- Memory/questions interrelation always attempt to "pair" recognition memory questions with a recall memory question, e.g.: "Tell me everything about how your clothes got off" and "Tell me everything he said about telling" (Starks & Samuel, 2002a:24).

According to Bruck *et al.* (2006:801) "if a child's indicting statements are made in the absence of any previous suggestive interviewing and in the absence of any motivation on the part of the child or adults to make incriminating statements, then the risk that the statement is inaccurate is quite low". A study by Loftus (2006) found that misinformation posed to eyewitnesses resulted in people claiming that they saw the misinformation details in the original event. In another study of children between the ages of 3 and 8 years (Poole & Lindsay, 2001:27) it was found that children are vulnerable to misinformation from especially parents. This is applicable when parents and interviewers use leading and suggestive questions, resulting in contamination of information. The researcher is of the opinion that it is thus important that interviewers must not use leading questions or suggest to the child what has happened, as it has serious consequences not only for the accused person, but also for his relationship with the child, his family and other relevant parties.

3.6.5 Suppression

Suppression means that an individual has consciously elected not to dwell on information, because it is too unpleasant, embarrassing or threatening (Ceci & Bruck, 1995:194). After a while such an individual will lose contact with the memory as a result of not thinking about it. However, this memory can resurface if a hint or reminder is given. The term "denial" is used by Whitfield (1995:89) to

describe the avoidance of an individual's awareness of the reality of traumatic experiences. The researcher uses play-related communication techniques where certain cues are used to bring suppressed memory to the foreground.

3.6.6 Repression

In contrast with suppression, repression is an automatic and unconscious process. A repressed memory is not easily elicited by a cue or hint (Ceci & Bruck, 1995:196) and often repressed primarily when there have been multiple traumatic experiences. Repression is defined by Whitfield (1995:90) as "an automatic psychological defence against unbearable emotional pain wherein we forget a painful experience and store it in our unconscious mind". The researcher is of the opinion that interviewers who only manage to access one memory of sexual abuse from a child, but evidence show multiple occurrences, must keep in mind that the child may have repressed the memory of the others.

After experiencing trauma, memory blocks are common and they tend to occur most frequently in the rehearsal and in retrieval. The person is thus somehow inhibited or prohibited from completely processing and expressing their experience (Whitfield, 1995:92). In the management of child sexual abuse cases, professionals who interview child witnesses are concerned with the retrieval of details related to the events which the children have experienced. Children also recall less information as the delay between the event to be remembered and the interview increases (Lamb *et al.,* 2000:1586).

3.6.7 Dissociation

Dissociation refers to a disconnection between one form of memory and another. According to Whitfield (1995:93) the degree of dissociation may be mild, moderate or extreme. Various types of information in memory (feelings, thoughts, and actions) may not be integrated and as a result the individual may express out-of-body feelings, self-induced trance states and inappropriate emotions (Ceci &

Bruck, 1995:196; Walters, 2001:4). In other words, the memory of a thought is split from the memory of its emotional content, resulting in robot-like enactments of events. It is claimed that dissociation results most commonly from trauma, and particularly trauma related to sexual abuse.

In a study of adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, McNally, Ristuccia and Perlman (2005) reported that those who were molested by their caretakers are especially likely to dissociate their memories of abuse. Another study conducted by Goodman, Ghetti, Quas, Edelstein, Alexander, Redlich, Cordon and Jones (2003:114) with 175 individuals with documented child sexual abuse histories, 81% reported the documented abuse, concluding that the forgetting of child sexual abuse may not be a common experience. The researcher has not observed dissociation as a common phenomenon and in all her years of dealing with child sexual abuse could only identify one child out of approximately 500 who positively dissociated herself from the sexual abuse.

3.6.8   Suggestibility

According to several studies conducted over the years (Clarke-Stewart, Malloy & Allhusen, 2004:1043) generalisations were formed regarding children's suggestibility. It is stated that younger children, children from low-socio economic families, children with lower levels of intelligence, girls, children with inferior memory abilities, children with less inhibitory control and children who received less parental support are more vulnerable to suggestion (Alexander, Goodman, Schaaf, Edelstein, Quas & Shaver, 2002:282; McFarlane, Powell & Dudgeon, 2002:227). However, it was found that vulnerability to suggestion is also highly common in middle childhood and not restricted only to the abovementioned groups (Bruck & Ceci, 2004:231).

The misconceptions among professionals that it is very difficult to implant memories and that false reports occur only when multiple suggestions are repeated over time, were challenged when research showed that children can incorporate suggestions about significant events after a single suggestive

interview (Bruck & Ceci, 2004:231). It is stated by Bruck *et al.* (2006:809) that a child may incorporate a suggestion because he/she forgets the original event or is confused as to whether he/she saw the original event or the suggestion.

In research by Bruck and Melnyk (2004:956) the researchers reviewed and synthesised the results of 69 studies examining the relationship between children's suggestibility and demographic factors, psycho-social factors and cognitive factors. The highest correlations with suggestibility were obtained for measures of self-concepts, maternal attachment style and parent-child relationships. This imply that children with a poor self-concept, poor supportive relationships with fathers or mothers, and with mothers who were insecurely attached in their romantic relationships were at risk for being suggestible when asked misleading questions (Bruck & Melnyk, 2004:988). It is the opinion of the researcher that it must be a golden rule for a forensic interviewer to guard against any leading questions, irrespective whether the above-mentioned factors are present.

Two studies were conducted in the United States of America and in Brazil respectively involving 193 children (Saltzstein, Dias & Millery, 2004:1082) where children heard hypothetical dilemmas about whether to keep a promise or tell the truth. An adult interviewer suggested the alternative to the child's initial choice. It was found that younger children (5 to 8 years) were more suggestible than older children (10 to 12 years). They also found in the study in the United States of America that suggestibility was greater when the interviewer was an adult than when the interviewer was a teenager.

The researcher is of the opinion that interviewers should adapt their use of language when working with smaller children and also continuously be aware that children may not resist suggestions and leading questions. One of the rules in the proposed interview protocol is that no suggestions or leading questions should be posed the child.

It was found by Loftus (2006) that after studying numerous research studies, it could be concluded that people who were given misinformation about events and also about an event that never occurred, definitely sometimes report to remember

seeing or experiencing things that were merely suggested to them. These studies were conducted with adults, but the researcher is of the opinion that it is also applicable to children. It is thus imperative that the forensic interviewer does not suggest any behaviour or context information to the child, and more so not suggest any names of perpetrators.

3.6.9   Parental factors influencing children's memory recall

It was found by Bruck *et al.* (2006:798) that when adults are asked to recall conversations, most adults recall the core content and not the exact words used, nor the sequence of interactions between speakers. This implies that the interviewer cannot rely on the feedback from the parent to assess whether leading questions were used when talking to the child after the initial disclosure. This could lead to false allegations or implanting misinformation. In a study by Alexander *et al.* (2002:263) memory and suggestibility were examined in 51 children between the ages of 3 and 7 years old. The children received an immunisation (as part of their standard medical care) and later answered questions about the event. Their parents were also subjected to questionnaires evaluating parental avoidance (discomfort with close relationships) and parental anxiety levels (fear of abandonment and rejection in the context of close relationships). The following potential sources of individual difference in the relation between children's stress and memory were found (Alexander *et al.,* 2002:282):

- As children's age increased, so did memory accuracy and resistance to suggestion. Older children were more accurate than younger children.
- Parental avoidance was associated with more stress in children. More avoidant parents may have been less supportive during the event and their children were less trusting of others, thus experiencing more arousal in stressful situations, involving adults impacting on memory retrieval later on. It means that parents who were less avoidant may have prepared their children better for the event. By knowing what to expect these children had

basic trust in adults and may have been better able to regulate their emotions during the event.

- Children of parents who had a high score on anxiety tended to give more information on response to free recall prompts and resisted leading questions. It thus suggests that children of anxious parents appeared to talk more, but still gave less accurate and more inaccurate information.

The researchers (Alexander *et al.,* 2002:282) argued that parents who scored low in both avoidance and anxiety were more secure; explaining why children of more secure parents had greater general cognitive abilities and may have performed better during memory interviews. They also emphasised that children who have a low score on avoidance may be more likely to talk to children about the experience, providing a narrative structure for children's memories, as well as opportunities for rehearsal, which are known to enhance memory.

Another study by Clarke-Stewart *et al.* (2004:1037) with 70 children aged 5 years old found that children with supportive and psychological healthy parents were better able to resist the interviewer's suggestive questions and persuasive attempts.

The above-mentioned findings were confirmed in practice by the researcher. It was found that children whose parents were secure (also implicating coping skills, support to the child and behaving in the presence of the child) tended to feel more secure and could access their memory of the abuse to give an understandable version of the alleged abuse.

It is the opinion of the researcher that it is important that forensic interviewers be aware that if a child cannot recall all the detail, it could be due to above-mentioned factors and the development level of the child (Kuehnle, 1996:78), and does not necessary implicate that the child is lying.

3.6.10 Personality characteristics as influence on memory recall

Individual differences among children in such areas as language, temperament, memory and intelligence can influence the reporting of information during an interview (Müller, 2002:56).

Because of children's increasing appearance in courtrooms as sole witnesses, there is a growing interest in whether children can give a reliable testimony of an observed or experienced event. A study was conducted by Roebers and Schneider (2001:9) where a sample of 217 children in the age groups 6, 8 and 10 years were included in the study. The researchers showed a video where a child was a victim of a robbery whereafter interviews with the children were conducted. An intelligence test was also conducted. The children were subjected to three interviews about the happenings in the video – an interview on the same day and then three weeks and four weeks after watching the video. The following findings were concluded by Roebers and Schneider (2001:18):

- Extremely shy children under the age of 8 years talked significantly less in unfamiliar situations and would give only a very brief description of the event, because they felt uncomfortable in the presence of a stranger.
- Extremely shy 10-year-olds reported more information from the film in their free narratives than did their peers who were not shy. It thus appears that older children cope better with pressure in the interview situation and have better verbal skills than younger children.
- In all three age groups children with a higher intelligence tended to give a more accurate report of events than did their peers with a lower intelligence.

The researcher found in practice that although shy children appear to have less to tell, they are attentive in situations and sometimes reveal more detail than extrovert children. However, due to language abilities in young children, shy children reveal less than they can really remember. Partial disclosure (Sorenson & Snow, 1991:15) also tends to be common. It is important for interviewers to make a greater effort to familiarise the child with the interviewer before the questioning starts. Therefore the researcher prefers to utilise play-related

communication techniques (see paragraph 4.6.6) where, to a certain extent, the playing field is levelled. Children are interviewed with material which they are familiar with, e.g. drawings, play dough and paint. The researcher is also of the opinion that when working with children with a lower intelligence, the interviewer should adapt to a slower process, simplify instructions and repeat questions if the child takes long to respond, as children are often too shy to tell that they do not understand the instruction or question.

3.7 ASKING A CHILD TO DRAW

Adults go to work everyday, use cell phones, the Internet and adult conversation to express themselves and make sense of our world. Many children use among other things, drawings as their way of expressing and communicate what they feel towards the world.

In the beginning young children scribble and around the age of 3 their drawings are marked with lines (Cole & Cole, 2001:364) and between the ages of 6 and 11 to 12 years of age, children increasingly draw how they actually see an object. At the same time their drawings begin to represent the perspective from which the object is seen (DeLoache, Pierroutsakos & Uttal, 2003:115). Eventually children begin to combine representations of people and things to make scenes depicting a variety of experiences (Cole & Cole, 2001:364).

A study by Bruck *et al.,* 2000:170) was conducted where pre-school children (ages 3 to 6 years) participated in a magic show. Later the children were given true and false reminders about the show. Half of the children were asked to draw the true and false reminders. The other half of the children were only asked questions about the reminders. It was found that children who drew pictures had better recall of true reminders, but also recalled more false reminders than the other group. Both groups reported that the false reminders actually happened (Bruck *et al.,* 2000:194). The researcher is of the opinion that an important factor challenging in the result as given above is that children in this age group were found by Saltzstein *et al.* (2004:1082) to be more suggestible than other children.

It can therefore be assumed that drawings must be conducted with care with children under the age of 6 years. However, for older children it is different and it is stated by (DeLoache *et al.,* 2003:115) that "full pictorial competence involves both perceptual abilities and conceptual knowledge" and children in the middle childhood with the concrete operational cognitive abilities (Berk, 2003:242) are able to make representations of happenings. Drawings may be used as a tool to clarify all or some of the child's verbal disclosure.

To ask a child to draw a picture about a specific event in combination with non-leading verbal prompts can enhance the verbal reports of children over the age of 4 years (Salmon, 2001:270). A study by Bruck, *et al.* (2000:170) found that when drawings are accompanied by misleading questions, it is associated with very high error rates in children's subsequent reports. It is thus imperative for forensic interviewers not to use any misleading or suggestive interviewing techniques.

The following advantages of the use of drawings during forensic interviews are highlighted by Hiltz and Bauer (2003):

- Establishing comfort and reducing intensity – Drawings may be used initially to build rapport and throughout the interview to establish comfort for the child. During the first interview with a child, the interviewer requests the child to make a picture about anything which will then be put on the wall, next to other children's pictures.
- Clarification – Drawings may be used to clarify all or some of a child's verbal disclosure, which may promote understanding between the child and the interviewer.
- Enhancing recall of detail – There is evidence that children who have the opportunity to draw in conjunction with verbalising their experiences, report significantly more information.
- Prodding memory – Drawings may help to facilitate disclosure of sexual abuse by helping a child to move closer to the abusive event. Drawing one aspect of a particular event may remind a child about other aspects of the same event.

- Documentation and evidence – Drawings made by the child during the investigation may be submitted as evidence during the trial. The researcher once testified in a criminal case where the picture made by the child during the assessment was submitted as evidence to prove that over time she stayed consistent regarding the allegations.

- Context-specific drawings – The child may be asked to draw the genitals of the alleged perpetrator if she mentioned that she saw them, draw the place where the abuse happened, as well as anything that the interviewer wishes to clarify. The researcher found it very useful to ask children to draw the place where the abuse happened, as the researcher experienced that more context detail comes out. The researcher also experienced that those children who make up the allegation struggle to draw the alleged abuse accurately, leave out detail and cannot manage to draw the alleged perpetrator in close relationship to him/her. Children also tend to draw an unhappy face on the figure representing themselves. The researcher found with children who admitted that they were lying about the allegation, that when they drew the picture about the sexual abuse, they drew a happy face on the figure representing themselves.

During ten years of practice in the forensic field, the researcher has grown to rely a lot on the child's portrait of the alleged offence committed. Although young children under 6 years may experience difficulties to draw explicit accounts (DeLoache *et al.,* 2003:115), it was found that they are able to at least draw the context in which it occurred. It is found by the researcher that when asked to draw the sexual abuse, children are very reluctant as if they try to avoid the visual stimuli of a horrible nightmare. After a child has completed a picture, it is imperative for an interviewer to, in a non-leading way, clarify what the child has made and if necessary ask for elaborative drawings. No interpretations should be allowed as this may be regarded as leading. Neutral encouragement is necessary.

3.8   LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Language consists of a system of symbols (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1998: 360) which people use to make sense of things in ways that make sense to others. Children develop language skills in "layers" (Starks & Samuel, 2002a:18). Fully developed language concepts do not emerge until the child reaches his/her teens. In order for a person to understand another person's verbal messages and make intelligible verbal messages, at least three related skills (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1998: 360) must be learnt, namely:

- to link speech sounds with their meanings;

- to link words with the things, ideas and events which they symbolise; and

- to master the rules according to which words are combined to communicate intelligibly in a particular language.

In order to communicate and participate with family, friends and especially participate in school activities, a child must have the ability to communicate in a manner which is understood by the listeners (Louw, 2005:19). Language abilities continue to improve during middle childhood (Berger, 2003:352) as children successfully learn code-switching (when a person switch from one language register to another, e.g. from formal language to slang) and the ability to change from one form of speech to another (e.g. language with adults would differ from the slang, drama and gestures used with peers).

The researcher is of opinion that the forensic interviewer should be aware of the form of speech children use with their peers and accommodate that during their interviews in order to establish rapport. The researcher learnt through practice to use a few of these slang words when building a rapport, e.g. "I heard it is not cool to wear those pink bangles." From experience the researcher has found that most of the children in the middle childhood have the ability to make a sensible conversation. Even those who appeared to have learning difficulties can express themselves and follow instructions. Depending on the child's cognitive ability, the researcher has experienced difficulties to understand mentally retarded children who have a chronological age in the range 7 to 12 years. An understanding of

language development of children is imperative for conducting successful interviews with children.

The three theories that are currently dominating explanations of language acquisition are according to Cole and Cole (2001:332):

- The learning theories, claiming that words and patterns of words are learnt through imitation and through classical and operant conditioning.
- Nativist theories claim that children are born with a language acquisition device that is automatically activated by the environment when the child has matured sufficiently.
- Interactionist theories emphasise the cognitive preconditions for language acquisition and the role of the social environment in providing a language acquisition support system.

The researcher is of the opinion that factors like gender, social class and intelligence may have an influence on language development. Language development in girls tends to develop faster than boys (Louw *et al.,* 1998:189) due to more rapid physiological maturation and environmental factors like greater stimulation between mother and daughter (Newman & Newman, 2003:188). Children from lower socio-economical classes may show poorer language development due to less talking time with parents and a lack of a "pure" form of the mother tongue (Louw *et al.,* 1998:189).

A factor that needs to be treated with caution is the one where it is presumed that early talkers have a high IQ score (Louw *et al.,* 1998:189). However, it is commonly believed that a child who talks at a very early age is exceptionally intelligent. It is important that the forensic interviewer adapts his/her protocol according to the language development of the child. The researcher has experienced that very often children from lower socio-economical classes have a better language development regarding day to day happenings and are "streetwise". This may be due to more exposure to adult conversations, lack of supervision during social gatherings and exposure to situations where bigger families stay together, resulting in more conversation time.

3.8.1   Semantics

Semantics refer to the meaning of a word or a piece of writing (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*: 2003:1294). If a child uses a particular word, it does not necessarily mean the child attached the same meaning to it as the adult (Louw, 2005:19; Müller, 2002:84). Starks and Samuel (2002a:18) are of the opinion that most miscommunication between adults and children occur when adults assume that a child has mastered a particular skill, when in fact the child has not. The researcher found through her experience with children in the middle childhood that they have a tendency to interpret words literally (Starks & Samuel, 2002a:18) or use words of which they do not know the meaning. An 8-year-old child overheard his brother saying that he has made his girlfriend pregnant and then saw him giving the girlfriend a chocolate. The 8-year-old boy also then told his friend at school that he has made his girlfriend pregnant (because he gave her a chocolate) without knowing what it means. It also happens that when a child does not understand a word (Müller, 2002:84), he/she may give that word the meaning of a similar word. If a child uses a symbol, concept or word it does not mean the child comprehends it, e.g. days of the week or numbers (Amacher, 2000). Studies conducted by Saywitz (1990:346) and Müller and Tait (1997:600) indicated that children under the age of 11 made mistakes regarding the following concepts:

- The word "jury" was frequently mistaken for "jewellery".
- A "case" was something books were carried in.
- A "court" was a place where basketball was played.
- A "judge" was described by children as a person who keeps score in a rugby match.

A 7-year-old child told the researcher that he is scared he will get "oats" after the abuse, meaning "Aids". The researcher is of the opinion that although the meaning some children attach to words are humoristic, it is important not to laugh at the child, pull a face or reprimand the child. The researcher is also of the opinion that the interviewer should only give the correct word to the child after the

meaning for the word has been clarified, otherwise this could lead to misinformation.

It is thus imperative for interviewers to clarify whether the child understands the instruction or question, and to clarify words that may be misinterpreted or confused by the child for some other word which is familiar to the child.

3.8.1.1 Developmental issues to consider regarding semantics

The following developmental issues with regard to semantics should be considered when forensic interviews with children in the middle childhood are conducted:

- **Words describing touch**

  Children may believe that only a hand can touch, and even if they did not see what touched their private parts, they will assume it was a hand (Poole & Lamb, 1998:161-177). Children in the middle childhood do not necessarily understand concepts like "in" in the context of whether the penis or finger was placed in the private part or bottom (Müller, 2002:84). Elaborating questions must be used to clarify uncertainties by asking the child to demonstrate on dolls what exactly happened, or ask the child to illustrate by means of drawings. The researcher experienced that many children will make a mistake when telling with what their private parts were hurt – often they would say with a knife, a belt and even a piece of hot coal, as they believe it is only a knife, belt or coal that can hurt you. This, however, causes problems in the court case as the defence's lawyer uses this inconsistency to discredit the child's testimony (Venter, 2006).

- **Words describing sexual acts**

  Children find it difficult to verbalise the sexual acts which happened to them due to two reasons (Louw, 2005:22): firstly because they do not understand or have the ability to interpret the sexual act accurately and secondly because they do not have the necessary vocabulary to describe the sexual

abuse. The researcher experienced that children would also describe the happenings in terms of the parts of the body during the abuse according the normal function they know for the body part, e.g. a child would say: "His willy became large and then he wee-weed all over me." During exploration the child would even say the "wee-wee" was red or orange as they know that is the colour of urine. Many children are scared to say the "wee-wee" was white, as it does not make sense in their frame of reference and they are scared that they would be accused of lying. It is thus very important that forensic interviewers must not take what the child says literally, but put it in the context of the child's developmental level. Interviewers must clarify words which the child is using at all times. It is also very useful when a child answered to a "when" question, to follow it up with a clarifying question (Starks & Samuel, 2002a:20), e.g. "What makes you think it was winter?"

- "**Remember**"

  It is normal for an adult to ask a child: "Can you remember what happened?" It is stated by Poole and Lamb (1998:166) that a child may think that he/she must first have forgotten an event before he/she can remember it. The researcher would rather recommend that a question be asked like: "Tell me what happened." The child will in any case only tell what he/she remembered or what he/she wants to reveal.

- **Identification**

  It is important to explore names and nicknames and particular relationship terms (Müller, 2002:89). It is stated by Poole and Lamb (1998:89) that children under 10 years may use these terms without fully comprehending the meaning. The researcher is of opinion that interviewers should use interviewing techniques which would identify significant people before the disclosure of sexual abuse. The interviewer should then ask the child to identify all the places where the alleged abuse took place and explore from there whether the abuse happened more than once at specific places. The researcher found it also useful to ask the child to describe the house where they lived at the time of the abuse as he/she would describe it to his/her brother or parent. It is also useful if the child is asked to describe the

happenings of the day as if he/she would tell it to a brother, sister or peer. The researcher found that children have a different view on telling when they retell something to a sibling or peer.

- **Chronological order**

  According to Massengale (2001) the ability to think abstractly only develops at age 10 to 11 and therefore it is not until adolescence that children tend to be able to recall sequential information accurately (Lyon & Saywitz, 2006:852). The researcher experienced that children tend to give the core happenings and it is imperative to inform them that the interviewer was not present and do not know what happened. It is also important to request the child to tell everything from the beginning.

- **Definite and indefinite articles**

  Children under the age of 9 struggle to make a distinction between the indefinite article (a) and the definite article (the) (Poole & Lamb, 1998:166), e.g.: "I don't like *a* dog" and "I don't like *the* dog".

- **Shifters**

  A shifter is a word of which the meaning depends on the location of the speaker (Müller, 2002:89) and includes words like "this/that" and "come/go". It is the opinion of Poole and Lamb (1998:167) that young children struggle to master the contrasts. When they identify the perpetrator, type of abuse that happened and location of the abuse it is extremely important to be specific. The researcher experienced that children from 7 years and older do not have a problem with shifters.

- **Legal terminology**

  Legal terminology used in the legal system and forensic interviewing process may fall outside the normal language of adults and even more so of children (Brennan & Brennan, 1988:31). Phrases like: "You have to tell the absolute truth" and "You told the court" may be confusing for children. The researcher is of opinion that the interviewer should clarify at all times whether the child understands what is meant with "truth" and "lie".

- **Auditory discrimination**

  The ability to distinguish between words which sound the same but have different meanings is only developed by the age of 8 years (Louw, 2005:21). The researcher experienced that a 6-year-old asked: "Am I now *grey* because of the naughty things I have done with my brother?" In this case the child is aware that persons of the same sex engaging in sexual acts are referred to as "gay", but due to auditory discrimination referred to it as "grey". The interviewer should not assume that he/she understands what the child means, but rather clarify unfamiliar words used by the child.

3.8.2   Syntax

Syntax is according to the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2003:1465) "the rules of grammar that are used for ordering and connecting words to form phrases or sentences".

It is the researcher's experience after five years of training professionals all over South Africa in the interviewing of children and observing them during practical sessions, that professionals really struggle to adapt the sentence construction of their questions to the level of a child. Questions used are close-ended and sentences tend to be long and complex. The professional does not have any guarantee that the child understood the questions and that the answer given is accurate. It is thus imperative that professionals follow an interview protocol when interviewing children.

3.8.2.1   Developmental issues to consider regarding semantics

The following rules posed by Poole and Lamb (1998:168) need to be considered:

- **Word order**

  It is recommended that passives be avoided completely. All questions should be phrased in the active voice, specifying the subject of the sentence

first, e.g.: "Who asked you to do that?" and not "By whom were you asked to do that?"

- **Use of the negative**

    Questions containing unnecessary negative terms will only contribute to the child's confusion (Starks & Samuel, 2002a:20; Amacher, 2000) and reduce his/her level of confidence when relating his/her story (Massengale, 2001).

- **Tag questions**

    A tag question is one that transforms a statement into a question by adding on a request for confirmation, e.g.: "You were trying to tell your mom, weren't you?" Although children copy adults and use tag questions, research shows (Poole & Lamb, 1998:171) that children up to 14 years old experience difficulties understanding tag questions.

- **Multiple questions**

    Multiple questions involve the use of several questions at once (Massengale, 2001) and may result in children making mistakes in responding to the questions (Hershkowitz, 2001:50). Thus type of question should be avoided during interviews with children in the middle childhood (Massengale, 2001). An example of a multiple question is: "Did anyone ever come to your house and asked you if something bad happened to you and if you told your mom about it?"

- **Use of pronouns**

    According to Poole and Lamb (1998:171) pronouns have meanings apart from the specific context in which they occur, and it is stated by Massengale (2001) that the mastery of pronouns does not occur until the ages 9 to 10 years.   To avoid confusion it is recommended by Starks and Samuel (2002:18) to limit the use of pronouns. The sentence: "When he came home, did he talk to you?" will have no meaning unless the listener knows to whom "he" refers. The question can be rephrased as follows: "When your dad came home, did he talk to you?" The researcher is of the opinion that it is of utmost importance that the interviewer clarifies pronouns used by the child so

that it is clear to whom the "he" or "she" refers before starting to use that label. The interviewer should also use the same label which the child is using, e.g. the interviewer should not use "your *father*" if the child uses the label "my *dad*".

- **Type of questions**

  Children in the middle childhood are able to answer "who", "what", "where" and "when" questions (Schoeman, 2006:113), but may still have problems with "why" questions (Bull, 2003a:18).

3.8.3   Pragmatic and social competence

Pragmatics refers to the study of language in social context (Müller, 1999:93). Children must not only develop linguistic competence, but must also learn to adapt their language to the demands of the social situation. The forensic context is more demanding, and children with no reference of what is expected, use the same rules in the forensic interview as in their social conversation (Louw, 2005:26).

As children depend on adults for providing context when asking questions and they are used to it at school, it is imperative that interviewers also provide a clear context for the subject questioning by reframing (Massengale, 2001). Reframing assists children in successfully making the transition from one topic to another (Starks & Samuel, 2002a:21). The questioner also needs to signal when he/she is switching topics, or if he/she is going into more specific detail about something the child already said: e.g.: "You told me uncle Thabo called you into his room, and that it was after school when it was hot. I want us to talk more about that day when it happened." The researcher finds it useful to make a brief summary of what was said to check whether she got a clear understanding of what the child has told her before the new topic is introduced. However, it is important that the interviewer does not suggest new information to the child.

Children also fail to detect when a speaker's comment or statement is ambiguous and even when they do realise this, they will generally not tell the speaker that they are confused (Massengale, 2001). Many children will, even though they are

empowered to ask if they do not understand, still answer a question if they do not understand it. After the initial disclosure, the researcher does a role-play with the child on neutral topics like happenings of the previous Christmas, things that happened on a known television programme, etc. She would then ask the child questions which she knows the child does not know and then teach the child how he/she must resist questions of which he/she does not know the answer.

During forensic interviewing it is important that the interviewer and the child have the same understanding of words, concepts, symbols and expressions (Louw, 2005:26). From experience the researcher found that even when children have mastered the basics of simple sentences, certain concepts still give rise to problems in communication. Even when a child uses a difficult concept or word in conversation, it does not necessary mean that the child understands the word, or connects the same meaning to it as an adult. The researcher has experienced that the interviewer therefore needs to clarify any word, phrase, concept and label that may cause any misunderstanding. If a child says: "He hurt my leg", the interviewer would not clarify it, but since "leg" is a common word, say: "Show me where on your leg he hurt you." However, if the child says: "He hurt my poenoenoe", the interviewer firstly needs to clarify what a "poenoenoe" is and thereafter clarify where on the child's body his/her "poenoenoe" is. Interviewers must be developmentally sensitive when interviewing children.

When interviewing a child about alleged sexual abuse, it is imperative that the interviewer must determine when the abuse took place, as the alleged perpetrator must be linked to the crime and has the right to defend whether he has been there at the time or not (Carstens, 2006). Legal practitioners often assume that children should be capable of dating events with respect to personal time intervals, such as the child's age or the child's teacher at the time of the event (Venter, 2006). However, according to Lyon and Saywitz (2006:860) little research exists to support such assumptions, and they argue that children up to 12 years of age have difficulty in dating relatively recent events with respect to such landmarks. The researcher has experienced that if the interviewer would ask the child in the middle childhood about the date when the alleged abuse happened, some children may give any date just to answer the question. The researcher always aims to

determine in which school year it took place, whether it happened when it was hot or cold outside, during a holiday or school term, where the other people were at the time, as well as where the child or the perpetrator came from directly before the alleged abuse took place. This technique has many times assisted the researcher to determine by means of corroborating evidence of when the alleged abuse could have happened. Some children may give an accurate description, e.g. the night Shrek 2 was showing on SABC 2. It is important that the interviewer must clarify how the child can remember so clearly, as children in the middle childhood tend to draw their own conclusions (Massengale, 2001; Amacher, 2000).

It is important for presiding officers during the child's testimony to observe the child's emotional state while talking about the alleged abuse (Carstens, 2006). However, children with post-traumatic stress disorder display a restricted range of emotions and numbing of general responsiveness (James & Gilland, 2005:175). It is important to ask children to describe their emotional reactions during and following the abuse (Lyon & Saywitz, 2006:861) as it may be one of the components of evaluating the child's statement. It is, however, important that interviewers realise that those children who have been repeating the narrative about the abuse may appear neutral, but that it is not necessarily an indication of lying.

3.8.4 Content expected during the forensic interview

When a child has been a victim of sexual abuse, specific information is necessary in order to prosecute the offender. The skill to give explicit details about events are mostly progressively mastered over the middle childhood period and mastered during adolescence (Louw, 2005:24). If the forensic interviewer is not sensitive to these developmental issues, it may influence the credibility of the child's statement, resulting in false allegations.

3.8.4.1 Number of times the abuse occurred

The number of times that the alleged abuse happened is a very crucial part of the statement as this will determine the charge against the alleged perpetrator (Venter, 2006). It must not be assumed that if a child can count, he/she understands number concepts. Although children can count from one to ten and even make calculations, it does not mean that they can count happenings abstractly (Louw, 2005:24). When the child is interviewed and he/she testifies, this aspect often causes a problem, often resulting in perpetrators getting off the hook (Venter, 2006; Carstens, 2006). It is recommended by Starks and Samuel (2002:21) and Orbach *et al.* (2000:751) to explore by asking a child "if something happened one time or more than one time". The researcher found it useful to ask the child whether the abuse happened once or more than once and thereafter let the child name the different places where it happened, write the venue on different papers and ask the child to draw it. The researcher also determined that it is easier for children to start with either the last or the first happening.

3.8.4.2 Time and place of the abuse

According to Louw (2005:24) a child learns to tell time from a watch at the age of 7. At the age of 8 years they can name the days of the week and name the names of seasons accurately (Louw, 2005:24). At this stage they are able to argue, e.g.: "I had a winter school uniform on so it must have been during a school term in winter." However, children under 10 years still find it difficult to recall happenings in chronological order (Kuehnle, 1996:131). Research by Saywitz, Goodman, Nicholas and Moan (1991:682) proved that children's responses regarding dates and times are more accurate when alternative methods are used. Children under the age of 10 have a very limited cognitive ability to understand concepts of time and will not be able to provide accurate information regarding dates and times (Müller, 2002:86). It is the opinion of Massengale (2001) and Lyon and Saywitz (2006:852) that children do not fully comprehend concepts related to space, time and distance until their early teens. Temporal words like "yesterday", "today" and "tomorrow" also create difficulties (Starks & Samuel, 2002a:21). A study by

Harner as reported by Poole and Lamb (1998:164) found that at the age of 5, children are beginning to distinguish between "yesterday" and "tomorrow". The researcher experienced that children up to the age of 8 years may experience difficulties referring correctly to "tomorrow" and "yesterday". Concepts like whether something happened a long time ago or short time ago are also difficult for children younger than 8 years old (Amacher, 2000).

Depending on the facts of the individual case, the questions determining the following information may assist the interviewer to determine when the alleged abuse happened (Starks & Samuel, 2002a:20; Amacher, 2000; Morgan, 1995:45):

- Where the child stayed at the time.

- Which school the child attended and the name of the teacher.

- With whom the child was living at the time.

- If anything special happened around that time.

- Whether it was near a big day e.g. birthday or Christmas.

- What happened on a specific television programme.

The researcher experienced in practice not to ask the child on which day or at what time something happened, but rather whether the abuse happened during school or holiday, weekend or during the week, night or day, when it was hot or cold. The interviewer should also explore where other people were and what the child was doing before and after the abuse. During corroborating interviews with the parents or caregivers the time and date could be determined. It is the opinion of the researcher that children in the middle childhood can accurately describe where the abuse happened.

3.8.4.3   Length, age and weight

Most of the sexually abused children in the Vaalrand area of the Gauteng province in South Africa are abused by a person whom they know (South African Police, 2001). However, it does happen that children are sometimes asked to identify the

alleged perpetrator and give a description of his age, length and weight. Young children (Louw, 2005:25) only focus on one aspect at a time and will not be able to focus on the length and age of a person, and if asked about it will give an answer which is not reliable. Since this is a skill that develops over time, it is important for the forensic interviewer to remember that whatever the child in the middle childhood answers to these questions, must be clarified as children make their own interpretations. The researcher experienced through practice that if a child says that the alleged perpetrator is tall, the interviewer would ask clarifying questions, e.g.: "Tall like who?" or "How do you know he is old?" or "If you say he is fat, who else is as fat as he is?"

3.8.4.4   Intentions, perspective and feelings

During forensic interviews and court testimony children are often asked about deductions they made during the abuse, as well as about the intentions of others involved (Louw, 2005:25). Although pre-school children are able to interpret emotional expressions correctly, the skill to see the world from the perspective of others is only mastered at the ages of 6 to 7 years. (Botha *et al.,* 1998:36). Research conducted by Aldridge and Wood (1998:114) found that children younger than 8 years old respond poorly to questions about how the alleged perpetrator felt at the time of the abuse. Although abstract thinking generally starts between the ages of 8 and 12 years, the child is still developing this method of reasoning and is still not able to hypothetically infer a motive or reason (Massengale, 2001). The researcher found that later in middle childhood, at the age of 11 and older, children are better capable to answer questions about the perpetrator's intentions. The researcher also found through practice to explore the feelings during and after the event. A question about what the child was thinking when the abuse happened, or what he/she thinks is going to happen, often facilitate the verbalisation of the child's fears.

3.8.4.5 Logical arguments

Many forensic interviewers expect children to give answers to questions where the skill of hypothesising is expected. Pre-school children tend to make the wrong deductions of happenings (Louw, 2005:26). Most children in the early middle childhood phase (6 to 8 years) have acquired the basic cognitive and linguistic concepts necessary to sufficiently communicate an abusive event and can imitate adult speech patterns. It is therefore easy to forget that the child in the early middle childhood is still not fully cognitively, emotionally and linguistically developed (Massengale, 2001).

Children in the middle childhood also tend to make their own conclusions, which are not always logical and accurate (Berger, 2003:352). It often happens that a case is closed due to the statement of the child that does not make sense. The researcher found that even children in early middle childhood sometimes provide a narrative that does not make sense, especially when the alleged abuse happened over a longer period.

3.8.4.6 Understanding and responding to questions

It is imperative that children would signal to the interviewer when they do not understand a question, or do not know the answer, or cannot remember (Louw, 2005:26). However, it is found that children often do not alert the adult that they do not understand a question, and answer it irrespective of whether they know the answer (Craig & Baucum, 2002:3329). Furthermore it is found that younger children tend to answer only the part of the question which they think they understand (Louw, 2005:26). It is thus important that interviewers prepare children before commencement of the interview to indicate when they do not understand the questions and emphasise to them that they must not guess the answer. The researcher found it useful to practise this on neutral topics before abuse-focused interviewing starts.

3.9 SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Although children in the middle childhood spend more time with their peers, their lives are still shaped by family structures and community values. The emotional development of school-age children depends on their understanding of the social world they interact in (Berger, 2003:356).

3.9.1 Emotional development

Just as it is natural for a human being to become hungry and thirsty, it is unavoidable to experience emotions. Children do not have the natural ability which many adults have to express their emotions verbally, but manage to act it out through play (Botha *et al.,* 1998:304; Oaklander, 1988:22). Emotional development is closely related to social development and refers to young children's feelings about themselves and others and the environment in which they play and live (Schoeman, 2006:124). When they are playing, they have the opportunity to experiment with coping behaviour in a non-threatening situation.

Research by Berger (2003:357) reports that children in the middle childhood mastered the following elements with regard to emotional development:

- They understand the motivation and origin of various behaviours.
- They can analyse the future impact of whatever actions a person might take.
- They recognise personality traits and use them to predict a person's future reactions.

Because children are aware of their parents' coping and problem-solving skills, (Fouché, 2006:211), it results in them predicting what would happen if they should disclose the sexual abuse. It is recommended by Lyon and Saywitch (2006:854) that interviewers must ask children to describe their emotional reactions during and following the abuse as this is imperative for the evaluation of the child's statement. Children in the middle childhood are more competent than children in

the early childhood years to express emotions due to their increasing language skills (Craig & Baucum, 2002:282).

The researcher is of opinion that the expression of emotions like sadness and joy can bring people together. Children need to be taught that expression of anger and disgust may increase the distance between people and that each person must take responsibility of his/her own expression of emotions.

Continuous healthy emotional development is especially important in the middle childhood as children are more confronted with peer groups and activities outside the safe supervised environment of the home. Between the ages of 6 and 12 years, children typically spend more than 40% of their waking hours in the company of peers – children of their own age and status (Cole & Cole, 2001:554). The opportunity to interact with peers without adult supervision affects children's behaviour in two important ways: firstly, the content of peer activity is usually different from when adults preside over the children's activities, as the interaction with adults usually includes some form of instruction or work (Newman & Newman, 2003:158.); secondly, the forms of social control in unsupervised peer activity are different (Cole & Cole, 2001:554). Adults will keep the peace and maintain social order, but when children are on their own in peer groups, they must establish authority and responsibility themselves. There is a change from helplessness to independence and self-sufficiency (Newman & Newman, 2003:303). Gender-role stereotyping influences the nature and quality of emotional expression (Louw *et al.,* 1998:345) as boys are often taught not to cry and not to show fear, and girls are often criticised if they become aggressive.

Children in the middle childhood also become capable to identifying emotional labels such as anger, fear and happiness; and of attributing inner feelings to them (Durkin, 1995:145). They are better able to control their emotions and to hide their feelings. They learn to read facial expressions and learn that emotional states can be changed psychologically.   They also realise that people can experience different emotions simultaneously (Louw *et al.,* 1998:346).

Children from all cultures can express a variety of emotions (Van Dyk, 2005:151), which will be discussed next.

3.9.1.1 Love

The child learns about love from birth and this is shown by his attachment to his caregiver (Schoeman, 2006:126). During the middle childhood children leave behind an egocentric point of view and develop sensitivity towards others as their expression of love gradually mature. (Louw *et al.,* 1998:348). It is the opinion of the researcher that by having their needs met, young children feel loved and although they cannot express their love towards the parents or caregivers, they give hugs and share sweets to express their feeling of affection.

3.9.1.2 Happiness and humour

Humour offers the possibility of taking the sting out of a situation and lightens the spirit and creates a more cheerful atmosphere (Schoeman & Van der Merwe, 1996:92; Craig & Baucum, 2002:375). The researcher is of the opinion that a wide variety of situations elicit happiness, including feelings of acceptance, the pleasures of accomplishment, the satisfaction of curiosity, or the development of new abilities. From experience the researcher found that children who are happy tend to use humour more. The researcher especially uses jokes with children in the middle childhood, as they appear to have the cognitive abilities to appreciate the punch line of a story.

3.9.1.3 Anger and aggression

It is the opinion of Oaklander (1988:22) that anger is the "… most feared, resisted, suppressed, and threatening emotion, because it is so often the most important and the deepest hidden block to one's sense of wholeness and well-being". As a child tries to satisfy his/her basic psychological needs through behaviour, he/she

will use angry behaviour to gain what he/she wants (Schoeman & Van der Merwe, 1996:172; Berger, 2003:278).   Some children also learn from their environment that anger can also be buried and expressed through passive and sullen means, such as pouting or hateful stares (Louw *et al.,* 1998:348).

It is the experience of the researcher that outbursts such as kicking, shoving and hitting are common among young and older children.   From experience the researcher learnt that children learn from parents and other role players in their lives that anger can be channelled in other ways, e.g. verbally express it through insults, arguing, or swearing.

3.9.1.4   *Fear*

During middle childhood there is a decline in fears related to body safety (such as sickness and injury) and in the fear of dogs, noises, darkness and storms. Most of the new fears that emerge at this time are related to school and family, in accordance with children's expanding social boundaries (Van Dyk, 2005:151). Children in the age group 6 to 8 years experience an increase in fear of imaginary and abstract things, monsters, darkness, lightning, burglars, physical injury, death and being alone at home (Craig & Baucum, 2002:282). Older children between the ages of 9 to 12 years are often afraid of tests and examinations at school, school performance, physical injury, thunder and lightning, death and the dark (Botha *et al.,* 1998:271). The researcher experienced that children with whom she works have great fears for burglars, that their parents will die in a robbery and even to be kidnapped, as there have been a few prominent cases of kidnapped children in South Africa.   A rumour is also going around that a network of paedophiles are kidnapping children in order to have enough child prostitutes for the Soccer World Cup in South Africa in 2010. Whether this is true is unknown, but what is true is that children experience fear when hearing about these type of things.

3.9.1.5   Anxiety

The *New Dictionary of Social Work* (1995:4) defines anxiety as "complex emotional condition characterised by acute tension and physiological reactions, such as accelerated heartbeat and sweating".   It is the opinion of Schoeman and Van der Merwe (1996:74) that a fearful, anxious child will depict the sad, while an unafraid child will depict the pleasure in his/her life. The researcher experienced that children who are still anxious after an icebreaker in the interview room, are either scared, experience performance anxiety, or are coached by parents what to say and are scared that they will not say the right things.

3.9.1.6   Jealousy

It appears as if children are more able to withhold themselves from reacting on feelings of jealousy at school and during social gatherings with friends (Berger, 2003:356). However, in a household it is very common to find fights, blaming and hurtful behaviour towards older and younger siblings. This can be explained by the argument of Louw *et al. (*1998:348) that children develop sensitivity towards other people during middle childhood; they take other's needs and feelings into account and show a need to help other people. They thus become more altruistic. However, the researcher is of the opinion that this altruistic attitude is mostly only practised outside the home, as jealousy resulting in fighting with siblings is universally found among children of all ages.   Experience as a mother and professional, proved to the researcher that the existence of jealousy in the middle childhood is commonly found over racial and cultural boundaries. It appears that jealousy among siblings are more prominent than between friends and school pupils.

3.9.2   The emotional development of children from birth to adolescence

During children's lifespan, they have certain emotional developmental tasks which they need to address for optimal growth and functioning. This lifespan is divided

into eight stages by Erickson (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:51-54). Each stage is characterised by a crisis, i.e. a situation in which the individual must orientate him-/herself according to two opposing poles. Each crisis is brought about by a specific way of interaction between the individual and the society (Cole & Cole, 2001:399). The solution to each crisis lies in a synthesis of the two poles. This results in a new life situation from which the two opposing poles of the next stage arise. The five stages relating to a child's emotional development are as follows:

3.9.2.1 Infancy – Age 0 to 1 year
Crisis: Basic trust versus mistrust (Develop: hope)

During this stage, which coincides with the first year of life, the child must develop a feeling of basic trust (Cole & Cole, 2001:399). At the same time, he/she must overcome a feeling of basic mistrust. The quality of a child's relationship with his/her mother is of prime importance in the development of trust (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:51). If the infant's needs are met consistently and responsively by the parents, the infant will not only develop a secure attachment for the parents, but will also learn to trust his/her environment in general (Craig & Baucum, 2002:47). A healthy synthesis between basic trust and mistrust thus will equip children well in dealing courageously, but carefully with new situations. However, when badly handled, children become insecure and mistrustful believing that life is unpredictable.

It is the opinion of the researcher that within the interview situation, the establishment of an emotionally safe relationship in a non-threatening environment provides the child with an opportunity to once again experience trust and to handle any issues regarding mistrust and anxiety caused by the trauma which he/she has experienced.

3.9.2.2 Toddler – Age 1 to 3 years
Crisis: Autonomy versus shame and guilt (Develop: will-power)

During this stage a child has the task of developing a sense of autonomy (independence) and, at the same time, overcoming feelings of shame and doubt (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:52). Physical maturation allows children to have greater autonomy and to follow their own will. They learn to walk, talk, master bowel and urinary control and do things for themselves (Schoeman, 2006:134), but greater autonomy and freedom bring the child into contact with rules. This in turn leads to the possibility of failure and consequently to shame and doubt about their own abilities (Cole & Cole, 2001:400). If the child is punished or labelled as messy, sloppy, inadequate or bad, he/she learns to feel shame and self-doubt (Craig & Baucum, 2002:47).

The researcher is of opinion that it is very important to give children opportunities to make choices during the interviewing process. This gives them the opportunity to experience a sense of control and independence, and also to gain awareness of the effect of their actions. When children make choices and experience the effect thereof, it makes it easier for them to take responsibility for their behaviour.

3.9.2.3 Early childhood – Age 3 to 6 years
Crisis: Initiative versus guilt (Develop: purpose)

This stage, which lasts from approximately ages 3 to 6 years, is characterised by the task of learning to show initiative, while at the same time overcoming a feeling of guilt (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:52). Children's greater freedom of movement and autonomy enable them to act more independently than before so that they can now begin to explore their world with a new sense of purpose (Cole & Cole, 2001:401). If their explorations and activities are generally effective, they learn to deal with things and people in a constructive way and gain a sense of initiative (Craig & Baucum, 2002:47). However, if they are severely criticised or over-punished, they instead learn to feel guilty for many of their own actions.

By establishing boundaries in the interviewing situation and providing fun, creative mediums to work with, children are encouraged to take initiative and experience purpose. The therapist can help children to work within the set boundaries and experience guilt-free fun.

3.9.2.4 Middle childhood – Age 6 to12 years
Crisis: Industry versus inferiority (Develop: competence)

This stage, which lasts form the age of 6 until the beginning of puberty, more or less covers the primary school years. Children learn to make things, use tools and acquire the skills to be workers and potential providers (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:53). Children aim at mastering certain skills required for adult life and society helps them by providing schooling. Children develop numerous skills and competencies in school, at home and in the outside world (Craig & Baucum, 2002:47) and comparison with peers is increasingly significant. A negative self-evaluation of being inferior to others is especially disruptive at this time.

The researcher is of the opinion that, within the interviewing setting, children can be exposed to activities which enhance their sense of self-worth and pride.   It is important to provide age-appropriate mediums, which will challenge them to achieve mastery and success and to compete against themselves, and in the process strengthen their value of their own abilities.

Adolescents who have experienced trauma can have great difficulty in establishing a realistic and healthy identity and can be troubled by negative internalisations. Internalisations like: "I am damaged", "I am powerless", "I am bad/guilty/an object to be used", "I am responsible" and "I feel chaotic" are found in victims of sexual abuse. Wieland (1997:10) differentiates between internalisations resulting from:

- all abuse experiences where the abuse experiences consist of intrusions, self-related threats and acts of abuse and non-protection;
- sexual abuse by someone close where the abuse experiences of entanglement, juxtaposition and distorted family boundaries lead to the internalisations; and

- extreme sexual abuse where the messages during the abuse experience were perceived by the child as that sexualised behaviour brings attention and sensual pleasure or negative experience, distorted messages and distortion of reality.

It is essential that all aspects of a child's emotional development need to be taken into consideration to provide the child with opportunities to handle his/her trauma and also to understand the way he/she experienced the abuse.

3.9.2.5   Adolescence – Age 12 to 18 years
Crisis: Identity versus role confusion (Develop: reliability)

The adolescent's identity crisis is the central problem of this stage. Adolescents have the task of acquiring a feeling of identity (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:51). This feeling consists of three components which can be summarised by the following questions (Meyer & Van Ede, 1998:51):

- "Who am I?"
- "To which group(s) do I belong?"
- "What do I wish to achieve?"

Adolescents seek basic values and attitudes that cut across their various roles. If they fail to form a central identity or cannot resolve a major conflict between major roles, the result is called ego diffusion (Craig & Baucum, 2002:47). However, if the adolescent does not solve this conflict, he/she will sink into confusion and become unable to make decisions and choices, especially about vocation, sexual orientation and his/her role in life in general (Schoeman, 2006:137).

Within the interviewing process, the normal emotional development of children needs to be taken into account. Children who experience trauma often regress (Fouché & Yssel, 2006:242) and it is imperative that a forensic interviewer is aware of the normal progressive developmental milestones in order to assess whether the child reveals any regressive behaviour; not to misinterpret it as a

difficult child, or a child that is lying, but a child that regresses due to possible trauma experienced.

3.9.3   Self-concept

The most influential system for developing the self-concept is the peer group (Berger, 2003:357) and it is a crucial social skill during middle childhood to get along with peers. Children's increased time spent among peers is accompanied by a changing sense of self.

A study of 212 children by Salmivalli and Isaacs (2005:1116) showed that a negative self-perception was a risk factor for the development of all forms of peer adversities. A child cannot discriminate between things that are said to him/her and will believe everything that is said about and to him/her. Many of these messages are wrong and not the truth and result in the disturbed development of the child's self-esteem (Wieland, 1997:38).

By the age of 6 to 7 years, the child has formed at least four self-esteems, namely academic, social, physical competence and physical appearance (Berk, 2003:448). By the age of 10 the child's self-esteem becomes hierarchically organised and separate self-evaluations are integrated into one, overall self-image. By the age of 12 the child's self-esteem will continue to rise or fall (Schoeman, 2006:131).

The researcher experienced that children who have been sexually abused asked the questions: "Why me?", "What is wrong with me?", "What about me attracted the abuser?" The answer that they come up with is: "I was abused because of something in me." This results in them thinking less about themselves. Messages like "I am not good enough" and "There is something wrong with me" have been evaluated with children in practice. Forensic interviewers should therefore be sensitive to children with a low self-esteem.

3.9.4 Peer group and friends

Generally children see their parents as very important and parents are the primary contributors to their children's development. However, parents' influence, compared with the influence of peers, decreases as children enter middle childhood and adolescence (Salmivalli & Isaacs, 2005:1161). In the middle childhood acceptance in the peer group is very important and personal friendship is even more important (Durkin, 1995:140), and by the age of 10 years children often have one "best" friend. Boys tend to emphasise group identity and loyalty, while they jockey for position within the group. In contrast girls form smaller, more intimate networks and are more concerned about being excluded from the small circle (Berger, 2003:360). By the end of middle childhood, many girls have one best friend whom they depend on. It is imperative that interviewers are aware of these differences so that they do not make the wrong conclusions that there is something wrong with a girl due to the fact that she only has one friend.

Middle childhood children describe close friends as people who like the same activities, share common interests, enjoy each other's company and can count on each other for help (Newman & Newman, 2003:255). The researcher is of the opinion that it is very important for a child in the middle childhood to be able to participate in positive peer friendship and to function in an intellectually and socially stimulating environment. Children learn three lessons from interaction with peers:

- Children are not forced to accept one another's ideas in quite the same way as they are with adults. They argue, bargain and eventually compromise in order to maintain friendships (Newman & Newman, 2003:256; Van Dyk, 2005:151).
- Children learn to be sensitive to the social norms and pressures of their peer group. The peer group evolves norms for acceptance and rejection, and as the children become aware of these norms and conform to the peer group, adults lose some of their power to influence children's behaviour (Louw *et al.,* 1998:368). The need for approval becomes a powerful force towards

conformity and children learn to dress, talk and joke in ways that are acceptable to their peers (Newman & Newman, 2003:257).

- Closeness to a same-sex peer occurs. They share private jokes, develop secret codes, tell family secrets, set out on "dangerous" adventures and help each other in times of trouble. They also fight, threaten, break up and reunite.

With the increased emphasis on friendship and peer acceptance comes the risk of peer rejection and feelings of loneliness. The researcher is of the opinion that perpetrators abuse this developmental task by identifying children who do not have friends. Perpetrators use age-appropriate language and toys to gain these children's trust, become their friend and then sexually abuse them.

In a study conducted by Salmivalli and Isaacs (2005:1116) 212 children in the age group 11 to 13 years were interviewed to investigate links between peer adversities and children's perception of themselves. They found that a negative self-perception influenced the children's social experiences with peers and these experiences had effects on their later perceptions. It is thus important that children must have a positive self-concept in order to maintain good relationships with their peers.

The researcher experienced that child victims of sexual abuse often feel lonely and stigmatised, which impact on their relationships with peers. Children who are withdrawn, quiet, or have outbursts of aggression tend to be rejected by peers (Cole & Cole, 2001:573; Craig & Baucum, 2002:358) resulting in more isolation and withdrawal. Many victimised children reported to the researcher that they struggle to trust peers, expect betrayal every moment, or are jealous to share a friend. Therefore the researcher recommends that during forensic interviewing the professional needs to be sensitive regarding the child's fear of rejection and also be careful not to give the impression to the child that other children did something better or were more co-operative. Other children's experiences should rather be used to encourage the child, e.g. tell the child those other children his/her age also experienced rejection from peers or were also treated badly. By doing this, the child's feelings are normalised.

3.9.5 Acquisition of skills

The middle childhood child is according to Piaget in the concrete operational thought. The concrete operational thought refers to an outlook, a way of understanding and solving problems (Newman & Newman, 2003:264). Middle childhood is the phase in which children learn to read and write and during which they also become ready and willing to learn and assume their share of household tasks (Van Dyk, 2005:153). Children do not only need to learn to read and write, but they must also master numerical concepts, learn to participate in sport activities and group activities and engage in projects.

3.10   MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Moral development refers to the process by which children learn the principles that enable them to judge behaviour as "good" or "bad" and as "right" or "wrong" (Van Dyk, 2005:151). Moral development is according to Thomas (2000:476) "usually viewed as one aspect of socialisation, meaning the process by which children learn to conform to the expectations of the culture in which they grow up". Moral development describes children's ability to distinguish between what they perceive as what is right and what is wrong, good or bad, as well as changes in the way they make moral judgements (Schoeman, 2006:114). Children thus not only learn to conform, but also to internalise these standards and thereby accept the standards as correct and as representing their own personal values (Thomas, 2000:476; Woolfolk, 2001:78).

Moral learning occurs according to the principles of both operant and cognitive learning (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1998:490):

- Operant approach – A person learns socially acceptable moral behaviour through appropriate positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement and punishment.

- Cognitive moral learning – In addition to external control of moral behaviour though reinforcement, people also display inner control of moral behaviour based on the development of moral thought, concepts and insight.

Different theories of moral development exist (Louw *et al.,* 1998:372):

- Psychoanalytic theory – Moral development is sometimes referred to as the development of a conscience, or superego.
- Social learning theory – Moral behaviour is learnt like any other behaviour. The social situation, as the context wherein behaviour takes place, is of great significance in the moral development of children.
- Cognitive development perspective – Moral development is based on the individual's cognition or understanding of a situation.

Cognitive developmental theories of psychologists Piaget and Kohlberg are widely accepted (Cole & Cole, 2001:560; Jordaan & Jordaan, 1998: 491).

Piaget's theory (Louw *et al.,* 1998:374) maintains that the child's moral development takes place in a particular sequence and that there is an interaction between moral and cognitive development. Children younger than 5 years are pre-moral, meaning they do not understand rules and are unable to judge whether or not a rule has been broken (Van Dyk, 2005:151). Between the ages of 5 and 10, moral realism takes place and children develop an enormous respect for rules and believe that rules must be obeyed at all times (Cole & Cole, 2001:560).

According to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2006) the most influential attempt to build on to Piaget's approach, is Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

For the purpose of this study Kohlberg's stages of moral development (Kohlberg, 1971) will be discussed in depth.

3.10.1 Kohlberg's stages of moral development

A large number of American children from different age groups, were interviewed by Kohlberg (1963:19) where their responses on moral dilemmas were evaluated and categorised into three broad levels of moral reasoning, namely: pre-conventional level, conventional level and post-conventional level. According to Kohlberg's stages, the pre-conventional level (level 1) of moral development is characteristic of middle childhood in particular (Louw *et al.,* 1998:377), but it is important that all three levels are discussed.

3.10.1.1 *Level 1: Pre-conventional level*

This is a self-centred level as emphasis is placed on getting rewards and avoiding punishments (Berger, 2003:336). A person follows society's rules of right and wrong. These rules are followed in terms of the consequences (e.g. to avoid punishment, get rewards and exchange favours) and in view of the power of the authority who imposes the rules (Thomas, 2000:479). The researcher has experienced in her practice that many children in the middle childhood would rather obey rules imposed by their fathers than their mothers. This was because they are scared of the fathers and know what kind of punishment he will give if rules are not obeyed, while the mothers may not be that authoritative and tend not to be so strict in punishment methods.

The fact that children in the middle childhood will obey rules at school and during games if there is some kind of reward involved, links with this level. The researcher experienced that children in the middle childhood could be convinced to behave themselves by offering a reward for good behaviour, while the reward could not "convince" children in high school (older children) to behave.

This level is divided into the following three stages:

- Stage 0: Egocentric judgement – The child makes judgements of "good" on the basis of what he/she likes and wants or what helps him/her, and "bad" on

the basis of what he/she does not like or what hurts him/her. The child has no concept of rules or of obligation to obey or conform independent of his/her wishes (Kohlberg, 1971).

- Stage 1: The punishment and obedience orientation – Whether an action is good or bad depends on whether it results in punishment or reward (Berger, 2003:336). If the individual is going to get punished for it, it is bad so he/she should not do it. If he/she will not get punished, he/she can do it, regardless of the human meaning or value of the act (Thomas, 2000:479). Avoidance of punishment and absolute respect for power are values in their own right, but not in terms of respect for an underlying moral order supported by punishment and authority (Kohlberg, 1963:19). According to Kohlberg children in the age group 6 to 9 years are in this phase of pre-conventional moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1971). The researcher is of opinion that this implies that if children are alone and they think that they will not be caught, they may do things which are against the societal values.

- Stage 2: Naive instrumental orientation – In this phase of moral reasoning, which starts at approximately the age of 10 years, children think that moral action comprises of making fair deals and trades (Clarke-Stewart & Friedman, 1987:439). Proper action satisfies the individuals' needs and occasionally the needs of others (Thomas, 2000:479). Human relations are viewed in terms of the market place; getting a fair return for one's investment (Berger, 2003:336). Reciprocity of fairness involves "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours", but this does not happen out of gratitude, loyalty, or justice (Kohlberg, 1971). The researcher is of the opinion that in the context of forensic assessment, this may cause children to be tricked into making a false allegation initiated by a significant person in his/her life, due to rewards given. It also makes children vulnerable who are groomed and rewarded for participating and keeping the sexual abuse a secret. This then may also cause severe feelings of guilt later as the child internalised wrongly that he/she has given co-operation in order to gain something.

3.10.1.2 Level 2: Conventional level

At this level, emphasis is placed on social rules. A person conforms to the expectations of his/her family, group, or nation and actively supports and justifies the existing social order (Thomas, 2000:479; Kohlberg, 1971).

- Stage 3: "Good boy, nice girl" orientation (Berger, 2003:336). – Good behaviour is what pleases or helps others and is approved by them and therefore a person acts in ways that please or help others (Thomas, 2000:479). Approval is thus earned by being "nice" (Kohlberg, 1963:20).

- Stage 4: The "law and order" orientation (Berger, 2003:336). – The individual is oriented toward authority, fixed rules and the maintenance of the social order. The person is doing the right thing for its own sake (Kohlberg, 1963:19).

3.10.1.3 Level 3: Post-conventional, autonomous or principled level

A person tries to identify universal moral values which are valid, regardless of what authority or groups stand for (Kohlberg, 1971). The level has the two following stages:

- Stage 5: "Social contract" orientation (Berger, 2003:336). – The "right" action tends to be defined in terms of general individual rights and standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society (Kohlberg, 1971). Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, right action is a matter of personal values and opinions.

- Stage 6: "Universal ethical principles" (Berger, 2003:336). – A person's moral judgements are based on universal principles of justice, on the equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of other human beings. "Right" is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles that appeal to logic, comprehensiveness, universality and

consistency (Kohlberg, 1971). These principles are abstract and ethical. At heart these are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of the human rights and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons (Thomas, 2000:479).

It was claimed by Kohlberg (Durkin, 1995:474) that moral development involves sequential, stage-by-stage progress, and that not everyone reaches the highest stages, but all individuals' progress in the same logical order. It would thus be possible that the forensic interviewer would be faced with a child whose moral development may be more advanced than that of the parent who is putting pressure on him/her to lie about the alleged abuse.

3.10.2 Impact of sexual abuse on a child's moral development

When working with victims of child sexual abuse it is important for professionals to understand the child victim's interpretation of sexual abuse.

Table 3.5: **The relationship between Kohlberg's stages of moral development and the child's interpretation of sexual abuse**

STAGE	CHILD'S INTERPRETATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE
Stage 1 (4 – 8 years)	• Child conforms without understanding it is wrong. • Child can be tricked that it is normal, special or fun. • Child may not disclose due to obedience to authority. • Child's vulnerability to do what he/she is told, influences him/her to lie that sexual abuse did or did not happen.
Stage 2 (8 – 10 years)	• Child may understand wrongfulness, but conforms to instructions to please or to avoid punishment. • If the relationship with perpetrator is the strongest relationship, child will most likely not disclose. • If the relationship with the non-offending parent is supportive, likelihood of disclosure is greater. • Child is vulnerable to do what he/she is told, including lying about the absence or presence of involvement in sexual abuse.

Stage 3 (10 – 12 years)	• Child understands wrongfulness and may disclose the abuse.
	• If supportive relationships exist apart from the perpetrator, and these relationships become more significant than the relationship with the perpetrator, the child may disclose.
	• Child whose emotional needs are not met by caregivers could make a false allegation in order to gain nurture from others.
Stage 4 (12 – 13 years)	• Child understands the wrongfulness and understands the consequences of disclosure to the perpetrator and others.
Stage 5 (early adolescence and older)	• Child understands the wrongfulness and may disclose to prevent the perpetrator to hurt others.
Stage 6 (middle adolescence and older	• Child assesses the exploitation and does what he/she thinks is right.

(Kuehnle, 1996:54-55).

The researcher is of the opinion that every professional that works with allegedly sexually abused children must know how children interpret sexual abuse. If a child who still stays in his/her family home and adores his/her father denies the abuse, it does not necessarily mean that it did not happen, or that he/she is coached or difficult – it is typical of a child in the middle childhood to react in that way. The interviewer would also be more supportive of an adolescent that comes to the office alone and disclose abuse. Typical of her moral reasoning the teenager can make a conscious decision due to her developmental stage. It is also important that the interviewers must be alert that adolescents can make up false allegations independently.

It is the opinion of the researcher that it is vital for interviewers to understand the moral development of children in the middle childhood as it has an impact on the understanding of the child's responses and reactions.

3.11 SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

According to Van Dyk (2005:152) children in Grade 4 and Grade 5 (aged 10/11) are often aware of their own sexual feelings and desires and often feel confused and conflicted about these feelings. Children in the middle childhood are curios about sex and often engage in various forms of simple sexual play (Van Dyk, 2005:152). The researcher has experienced that when working with victims of child sexual abuse, it is imperative to have a thorough understanding of normal sexual development. The researcher experienced that children become increasingly inquisitive about body parts.

3.11.1 Normal and abnormal sexual behaviours in middle childhood children

Children are curious about sex and therefore sexual play in middle childhood is usually experimental and it has nothing to do with love or sexual urges (Van Dyk, 2005:152). Due to adults reacting with anger or disgust to the sexual exploration in which children engage, children's main source of information will usually be their peer group. This information is often incorrect or distorted, causing anxiety in children. Children involved in natural and expected sex play are of similar age, size and developmental status. They participate on a voluntarily basis and are children who have an ongoing, mutually enjoyable play and/or school friendship (Kubik & Hecker, 2005:43; Ney, 1995:57). Natural and expected sexual exploration may result in embarrassment, but do not usually leave children with deep feelings of anger, shame, fear, or anxiety and if they are discovered and instructed to stop, the behaviour generally diminishes (Cavanah,1995: 4). The attitude of the children towards the sexual behaviour is generally light-hearted and spontaneous.

Children's natural and expected sexual behaviour, as well as their level of comfort with sexuality, will be affected by the amount of exposure they have had to adult sexuality, nudity and explicit television, videos and pictures, as well as their level of sexual interest (Kubik & Hecker, 2005:43; Ney, 1995:58). While sexualised

behaviour and post-traumatic stress syndrome (James & Gilland, 2005:175) are the only two symptoms that occur more frequently in sexually abused children than in clinical comparison groups of non-abused children, less than half of sexually abused children manifest sexual behaviours of concern (Ney, 1995:51).

In a study of 1017 black and white adolescents, it was determined that exposure to sexual content in music, movies, television and magazines caused increasing risk of engaging in early sexual intercourse (Brown, L'Engle, Pardun, Guo, Kenneavy & Jackson, 2007:24). According to Kuehnle (1996:56) masturbation and exposure are the most common types of sexual behaviour among pre-school and primary school children.

A developmental continuum has been classified by Sgroi (1988:57-58) where children's normal and abnormal sexual behaviour were classified into three categories:

- Touching oneself.
- Looking at others.
- Touching others.

Table: 3.6: Sexual behaviour in children: normal versus sexual reactive behaviour

AGE 7 – 10 YEARS	NORMAL BEHAVIOUR	SEXUAL REACTIVE BEHAVIOUR
Touching oneself	• Masturbate in private.	• Excessive masturbation that interferes in play behaviour and daily activities.
Looking at others	• Engage in games involving sexual exposure (playing doctor). • Engage in competitions (who can urinate the furthest). • Engage in dares that have a sexual component (game-like atmosphere).	• Excessive attempts to observe other's nudity which violates other's privacy.

Touching others	• Touching within context of game or play. • Stroking genitals rather than penetration. • Absence of force or coercion. • Engagement due to peer pressure and not out of fear.	• Excessive sex play which interferes in other social activities. • Initiates sexual activities with adults. • Forces sexual involvement of peers or younger children with themselves.

Adapted from Sgroi (1988:2-8) and Kubik and Hecker (2005:43).

3.11.2 Impact of television on children's sexual interest

There are plenty of sexual content on television containing scenes of kissing and a modest frequency of implied or depicted intercourse. Children aged 2 to 11 years, who have access to television, spend an average of 21 hours and 49 minutes per week watching television, and teenagers aged 12 to 17 years old spend on average 17 hours and 16 minutes per week watching television (Comstock & Scharrer, 2006:823).

It is the experience of the researcher that children in the middle childhood often watch television during the afternoons and early evenings. In South Africa the soap operas (soaps) start at 16:30 in the afternoon, giving children access to scenes of kissing and implied sexual intercourse. The researcher has standard questions which she poses to children during interviews to assess their exposure to television. Questions relate to what happened in a specific soap, what kind of programmes they watch and what the rules are with regard to age restriction of programmes or movies. It is important to determine what happens if the child watched a movie during the weekend and his/her parents go to sleep. This is done to assess whether the child sometimes watches movies alone. In South Africa, pornographic movies are shown after midnight on the free channel e-TV. This type of movies may have a detrimental impact on children if they watch it. The interviewer should assess whether the child has watched these kinds of programmes.

The researcher concludes that due to the impact of media and advanced technology, the existence of explicit knowledge about sexual activities cannot be the only assessment guidelines to indicate that sexual abuse has occurred, but multiple hypotheses should be investigated.

3.12   SUMMARY

Due to the developmental changes children go through in the middle childhood, it is imperative that forensic interviewers be informed on what could be expected from the child's physical, cognitive, language, socio-emotional, sexual and moral development.

This study focuses on children in the middle childhood, therefore only the middle childhood period (from 6 to 12 years) was discussed. Reference to other developmental phases was made, where applicable, in order to give a more holistic picture of child development.

A child that has been sexually abused during the middle childhood does not only have to cope with changes in his/her body, but also with cognitions like "I am damaged", which may alter the way the child looks at the him-/herself.

It is also found by the researcher that it is more difficult for boys to sit still during an interview and they want more physical activities than girls. The fine motor skills are developing progressively and it could be expected from the child to draw pictures or write.

Piaget's concrete operational stage were discussed which span from ages 6 to 12 years. Tasks achieved during this stage include conversation, seriation, spational reasoning, cognitive maps, decentration, declining egocentrism, and decrease in animism. Limitations to the concrete operational stage are that children still have great difficulty answering abstract and hypothetical questions. The middle childhood child understands that sexual behaviour is wrong and may think he/she is bad because he/she is engaged in "bad" behaviour, and could also be

manipulated into worrying about the consequences to the perpetrator without having insight into consequences for him-/herself.

The encoding, storage and retrieval of memory were discussed and it was determined that various factors have an influence on whether the child would be able to retrieve memories of an event. The working memory of a child is very important to understand, as the professional must be sensitive that during sexual abuse children will not necessarily encode what would later be expected from them during formal interviews.

To ask a child to draw a picture about a specific event in combination with non-leading verbal prompts can enhance the verbal reports of children over the age of 4 years.

The middle childhood is a phase where the child masters various language and communication skills. However, miscommunication may occur when adults ask leading and suggestive questions.

Important semantics should be kept in mind when working with a middle childhood child. The importance of clarifying was highlighted, especially with regard to how many times an incident occurred, as well as the time it happened. Children in the middle childhood find it difficult to retell happenings in chronological order and also struggle with syntax like word order, tag questions, multiple questions and pronouns.

The importance of framing an event by summarising facts and introducing a new topic would assist the child to optimally remember happenings. Children in the middle childhood find it difficult to specify the number of times, the time and the place the abuse happened.

Emotional development of children were investigated and it was determined that, according to Erickson, children in the middle childhood (aged 6 to 12 years) experience the crisis of industry versus inferiority and they develop competence.

It was noted that victims of child sexual abuse in the middle childhood may co-operate during the sexual abuse in order to avoid punishment or to please the adult. If the child has a close relationship with the perpetrator he/she would most likely not disclose. The older the children, the more likely they are to disclose, especially if they have a supportive relationship apart from the relationship with the perpetrator. It was noted that false allegations could me made to gain nurture from others.

A natural curiosity about sex exists in the middle childhood and if sexual play occurs, it is experimental and has nothing to do with love or sexual urges. A differentiation between normal and abnormal sexual behaviour was made.

It was also found that the media has an important impact on children's sexual interest.

CHAPTER 4

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION-
PERSPECTIVE ON LOZI TRADITIONS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter comprises of an investigation into the prayer traditions of the Lozi people. The Lozi people of western Zambia belong on a macro level to the Bantu of Africa. Therefore, to a large extent their religious experience resembles that of other African people. It must be mentioned at the outset that a historical examination of Lozi prayer comparable to the major religions of the world, is problematic. Lozi traditional religion suffers a handicap since there are no extant texts prior to the 19th century. Nevertheless, the presence of retentive memory has enabled anthropological literary works to be

collected (Parrinder 1976:17). Thus, this examination is a consideration of specialized monographs on African Traditional Religion, Lozi prayer in particular.

African prayer depicts the core of African spirituality. An investigation into prayer, introduces a valuable dimension to the understanding of African religion (Mbiti 1975:1). The following aspects of African religious thought come to the fore: concept of God, man, the world and spirits. The present study will cover diverse aspects of Lozi religion. But, the central theme is focused on prayer for protection. Traditionally the Lozi, like many primal people of the world, consult a Supreme Being/power when they face challenging situations in life. When calamities strike individuals or the community the assistance of the supreme power is summoned (O'Donovan 1996:42).

Various elements of prayer for protection among the Lozi will be examined. This will lead to investigations of the following: the concept of God, situations of danger, the enemy, spiritual forces at work, the response of the victim and rituals which accompany such prayer. Ultimately, the purpose of this endeavor is to draw comparisons between Lozi traditions and its Psalms counterpart. In this way, the results thereof will contribute to appreciation of prayer for protection.

4.2   Religious life of the Lozi

4.2.1 Introduction

The matrix of the Lozi religion is composed of a threefold strain, namely: *Nyambe* cult, royal grave cult and ancestral worship (Mainga 1972:95; Isichei 1995:142). This religious schema includes communion with the Supreme Being. Worshippers achieve this through sacrifices and offerings to God and ancestors. Such gifts serve the purpose of appeasement. Rituals are accompanied by material aspects of praying such as singing and dancing.

When faced with calamities, people respond through prayer and sacrifices. Lozi people may approach God directly or indirectly. The services of a royal gravesite custodian, village headman and family elder are employed in mediating between the victim and the spiritual realm. At other times, diviners and witchdoctors are consulted, particularly when witchcraft is suspected. Witchdoctors prescribe both curative and preventative medicine. Similarly, rainmakers are called upon when there is a drought. Although the Lozi

traditional ruler is not a priest, he acts on behalf of the kingdom by presenting a sacrificial animal to the grave custodian when there is a national crisis.

In Lozi society, communal danger arises from alien nations and offended royal ancestors - even the Supreme Being. These may cause lack of rain and epidemics. Individual danger is caused by human and spiritual foes. Human enemies normally would be witches. Spiritual foes are malevolent spirits. These enemies may cause loss of property, accidents, sickness and death.

As in many other religious traditions, among the Lozi, prayer is an attempt to influence and manipulate the supernatural forces with a view of gaining positive outcomes. These supernatural forces are known to possess powers of control over different objectives of the communities and in individuals. Of necessity, the nature and character of prayer is influenced by the needs of society and individuals at given times in history.

4.2.2 Nyambe cult

In the Lozi religious experience, the cult of *Nyambe* appears to be predominant (Giles 1997:63). It follows that all prayers are addressed to *Nyambe* directly (Mainga 1972:95; Ocaya 1993:178). *Nyambe* is the name of the Supreme Being. He is accorded with a realization of having created all things. *Nyambe* is therefore superior to all spirits (Jalla 1928:143). Some of his attributes include omniscience and omnipotence as seen from various proverbs and myths (Mainga 1972:95; Ikenga-Metuh 1982:17).

Lozi legend has it that in the beginning, *Nyambe* lived on earth in consort with his wife, *Nasilele* (Jalla 1928: 144; Turner 1952:49; Mainga 1972:95). The aggressive tendency of man, *Kamunu*, compelled *Nyambe* to flee to heaven where he set up his village, *Litooma.* The myth of this episode recounts how *Nyambe* ascended to heaven riding on a spider. Upon his arrival, he poked the spider's eyes and sent it back to earth. The purpose of blinding the spider was to deter man from imitating him as he had done at different occasions.

With the departure of *Nyambe* to heaven, the sun was recognized as his proxy, while the moon represented *Nasilele* (Turner 1952:49). At other times, people thought *Nyambe* lived amongst the stars from where he influenced their lives and death (Arnot 1889:88).

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Further, prayers were made at sunrise perhaps, demonstrating associations with sun worship. Those who remember the ancient *Nyambe* worship, look up to the rising sun each morning for continued provision. With heads bowed to the ground, they clasp their hands in prayer (Jalla 1954:3; Rooke 2006:2).

The cult of *Nyambe* lacks the office of priest. However, this function was performed by the oldest member of the family whether male or female. Such a functionary was responsible for officiating on behalf of either the family or village (Mainga 1972:96). Rituals were carried out at an altar situated in the eastern fringes of the village. The altar was composed of white sand or a wooden structure or both.

It appears that *Nyambe* was worshipped only on special occasions and crises such as seedtime and harvest time, war, drought, sickness and death (Turner 1952:49; Jalla 1954:5; Mainga 1972:96).

For instance, before planting commences in September, the village headman sweeps and prepares a spot where an altar is erected. An altar is constructed from sticks and clay and it serves the purpose of holding a dish. Households then place a little of each seed they intend to plant. Garden utensils such as hoes, axes and assegais are also placed on the altar. Thereafter, the headman kneels before the people in front of the altar facing the rising sun. The headman joins his hands and bows down, and then he looks up raising his hands. He continues to stand up and kneel down repeatedly while turning to the right and the left. The villagers join in and follow the leadership of the headman (Turner 1952:49). After prayer, the head man blows the horn and the gathering gives a royal salute. This action precedes subsequent bowing and clapping gestures.

Similarly, when faced with sickness or prior to embarking on a hunting trip or after a nightmare, a person may pray to *Nyambe*. Abstaining from work that day and remaining in prayer to *Nyambe* the whole day until sunset, accompanies such periods of prayer.

During the new-moon prayers were made to *Nasilele* the wife of God (Jalla 1954:5). According to Coillard (1902:224), this celebration is similar to the Israelite Feast of the New Moon. The day of the New Moon was kept strictly as a day of rest. Celebrations were held with men without distinction, participating. Women applauded with shrill cries from a distance. At these feasts, oxen were slaughtered, cooked and eaten in public. The

New Moon was greeted immediately as its outline appeared. Although direct prayers to God are seldom except for serious problems, he is also addressed indirectly through ancestors (Westerlund 2006:97-100).

Excursus: God

Africans believe in a Supreme Being called by various names in different cultures (Mitchell 1977:23). God is pivotal in African Traditional Religion. The centrality of the belief in God is demonstrated by the presence of numerous names in basically every African language for God. Similarly Lozi people believe in a High God (Mulimu). His personal name is *Nyambe*. The Supreme God however is generally considered to be remote from petty human affairs (Reynolds 1963:10). Yet the African God is near to his people (Omari 1971:7). There is an apparent similarity in the use of some of the names across the continent of Africa (Mbiti 1975:43). This similarity owes to the fact that African people have a common origin. Equally belief in God predates the time of tribal separation. The following qualities are common amongst the Africans (Mitchell 1977:23): in African traditional religion God is believed to be the **creator** (Nyirongo 1997:11; Westerlund 2006:118). In this light various creative descriptive names are ascribed to God such as Begetter, Maker, Potter, Fashioner, Carpenter, Originator and many others (Mbiti 1975:44; Imasogie 1985:22). In some societies people believe that God created the universe out of nothing. Yet other cultures believe that he created in phases using the substance from the primary creatures for his later creation (Ikenga-Metuh 1982:18-19). Additionally, God continues to create; for example he moulds children in their mother's wombs (Parrinder 1968:35). There are some tribal groups that hold to the belief that some of the created beings were responsible for specific functions under God's direction. To the contrally others believe that God alone was responsible for all the creative work. The attribute of creator is further explicated from creation myths, which are prevalent across Africa (Mitchell 1977:24). Some of the myths recount a golden age when God lived with humans. At this stage humans were immortal until something occurred to disrupt this blissful existence. Lozi people believe that *Nyambe* is the creator and origin of all things. In Lozi mythology *Nyambe* is the creator of all things and lived on earth with his wife *Nasilele* (Mackintosh 1922:368). *Nyambe* was polygamous and lived like an African king. God had two chief counselors Sashisho the messenger and Kang'ombe the lechwe. The two served as intermediaries between God and man (Jalla 1928:144-145). *Nyambe* made the forests, river and the plain and all the animals, birds and fishes therein. He made man, *Kamunu* and his wife too. In time *Kamunu's* ways trouble God. By eavesdropping *Kamunu* learnt the carpenter and smith's crafts. Thereafter *Kamunu* proceeded to kill numerous animal species. Afraid that similar fate would fall on him *Nyambe* fled to an island however man followed him on a canoe. God worried about man's persistent pestering took *Nasilele* and *Sashisho* with him across the great river and went up to *Litooma* his heavenly village on a spider's web. The spider, which had acted as a guide, was blinded so as to deter man from following. Man tried to reach God by building a platform. Unfortunately it collapsed. Henceforth *Kamunu* has given up on his attempts to follow *Nyambe* (Jalla 1954:1, 2, Mainga 1972:96). There are numerous parallels between African creation myths and biblical ones. Firstly these myths establish the Supreme Being as the source of the world. Although it was thought previously that the African God is transcendent and remote it has been demonstrated that actually he is also immanent. This idea arose from the lack of worship order and the absence of visible communal worship structures (Mitchell

1977:25). Shrines and sacred places employed for conducting sacrifices and prayer are a rare occurrence. Another reason for the earlier dismissal was caused by the rejection of myths as they are not textually based but oral recollections. However myths are a good way of understanding traditional mentality (Omari 1971:6). Further it is common for petitioners to approach God indirectly. Lozi petitioners request their ancestors for solutions to their difficulties. However in many parts of Africa people request God directly particularly when a crisis persists (Gehman 1989:190). Thus the Supreme Being is actively involved in peoples' lives (Westerlund 2006:119). God is believed to be **all-powerful and almighty** (Nyirongo 1997:11; Westerlund 2006:119). He is the source of all power (Parrinder 1968:33; Imasogie 1985:23). The extent of this power is motivated by God's creative acts (Mbiti 1975:50). While Lozi believe that God is all-powerful there are some contradictions as can be seen from the creation myth. For example God was forced to flee from man's aggressive tendencies. In addition Nyambe relied on a spider to provide him with transport to heaven (Mainga 1972:100). To the contrary the following ancient praise illustrates *Nyambe's* power: *Kasamusimwa Kaloyangundu, minyamisimwaeyi. Uyu natumuka bakanwa natumuka ba kaluyango bali mwala. Tanyamaminyi unamanongwawina. Uiluteela bakimwa be lukulimbulula. Kawa maci, bo kawa nungu, to li ba munu* "True, there was none so powerful as to withstand his command when the hour came. Nor was it possible to foretell when his messenger, death, would visit, so that escape was vain" (Muuka 1966:250). African people believe that God **provides** life, sunshine, rain, water and good health for his creation (Imasogie 1985:22; Nyirongo 1997:11; Westerlund 2006:118). Therefore he is praised as giver, healer, helper, guard, and source. Since he is associated with benevolence prayers are made requesting him to supply their needs and rescue them from difficulties (Mbiti 1975:46). He also possesses the capacity to protect his creation (Omari 1971:8). The African God governs and directs his universe (Ikenga-Metuh 1982:20). Despite the presence of death the cycle of life continues through birth. *Nyambe* possesses ambivalent qualities. It has been suggested that he does not intervene in his creation (Turner 1952:49). However Turner misses the point as Lozi historical mythology alleges that Nyambe in fact intervenes on behalf of his creation as in this deluge legend: Prior to the time of Mboo, the first Lozi king the Bulozi flood plain was overwhelmed by the deluge (Meyi a lungwa ngwa). All animals died and farms were swept away. *Nyambe* instructed Nakambeka to build the first great canoe, Nalikwanda (for the people). The canoe was painted black and white stripes signifying black people and spirituality respectively. The canoe was then loaded with every known seed type and animal dung. When the water subsided the canoe landed and the survivors scattered seeds producing plants. Similarly animals sprang forth from animal dung (Jalla 1954:4, Rooke 2006:2). God's goodness does not come to an end. Africans rarely assigned calamities to the hand of God (Westerlund 2006:119). Other forces are held responsible such as ancestors, wicked spirits and witchcraft (Gehman 1989:191). But it is possible that Lozi people could have believed in a capricious God. The rationale behind this postulation being that ancestors had gone through life's experiences hence they were bound to be more sympathetic than God (Arnot 1889:74). Although *Nyambe* punishes offenders he is not malicious but merciful and giver of all things (Muuka 1966:250). In African Traditional Religion God is said to be **omniscient** (Nyirongo 1997:11). His understanding is unparalleled and nothing is hidden from him (Imasogie 1985:23). In Nigeria he is called the only wise God (Mbiti 1975:51). Men can appeal to him for justice, as he is able to reward the evildoers justly (Parrinder 1968:33). However some authors object to the attribute of omniscience (Gehman 1989:189). They argue that the concept is foreign hence incompatible to African Traditional Religion. To be sure various African people hold to the belief in the all-knowing God. Generally it is possible to deceive ancestors but not God. A careful examination of Lozi proverbs yields

limitations in *Nyambe*'s omniscience though. This is explicit in his surprise at man's ability to imitate him. As a result God came to fear man and ultimately fled to heaven. Further *Nyambe*, God resorted to the assistance of diviners in order to discern a place of refuge far from man's reach (Mainga 1972:99). All over Africa the belief in God's **omnipresence** is upheld (Imasogie 1985:23). This characteristic is expressed in different ways. In Cameroon some people say that God is everywhere at the same time. In the same way some people in Zambia say that God never comes to an end anywhere (Mbiti 1975:51). The Mende people of Sierra Leone believe that God fills the universe. Although he is not immanent his name is continuously on the people's lips through blessings, greetings and prayers (Parrinder 1968:33). God is at times assigned a place of abode and may visit specific places on earth. His presence is strongest at shrines and groves. Nevertheless, there is a distinction between holy places and God. Practically people are able to communicate with God wherever they may be (Gehman 1989:190). To portray this characteristic certain metaphors are employed such as wind and air. God is known to be **spirit, invisible** and **eternal** (Nyirongo 1997:11). The pygmies sing about God as follows: *In the beginning was God, today is God tomorrow will be God* (Mbiti 1975:52). God has no body (Imasogie 1985:22). Unlike people from different parts of the world Africans are not known to have practiced the kind of idolatry that leads into making objects representing God (Gehman 1989:190). Although God's cult is limited due to his distance from men and the existence of intermediaries he was addressed particularly when all else had failed (Omari 1971:7; Westerlund 2006:120).

4.2.3 Royal grave cult

The institution of the royal graves forms the second strain in Lozi traditional religion. In this case, prayers and sacrifices are directed to the spirits of the ancestor kings as against *Nyambe* the Supreme Being.

The institution of kingship and royal cult, lies at the center of Lozi society (Isichei 1995:142). In pre-colonial time the king was paramount in terms of the socio-economic and political structure of the kingdom. These functions have been taken up by the post-independence national government. Lozi people prescribe to a belief in the divine ancestry of the royal family. The royal family is said to have descended from *Nyambe* through the ancestress, Mbuyu (Coillard 1902:224; Mainga 1972:95; Brown 1998:25).

Through royal descent, an individual is eligible for kingship. At installation, the candidate undergoes a series of purification rites. After the performance of various rituals and investment of royal insignia, the king is presented to the populace. Henceforth, the king is shrouded in mystery, power and ritualism. The installation of an individual with kingship makes him distinct from ordinary people. The king's special powers and the performance of communal rituals to the gods, ensure the well-being of the kingdom (Mitchell 1977:30).

However Ocaya 1993:178 exaggerates the prominence the kings' divinity over *Nyambe*. In Lozi religious experience *Nyambe* is supreme.

Further, the king, in most parts of Africa possesses sacred attributes. Lewanika (the second Lozi king after the overthrow of the Kololo) for instance, had a high sense of his divinity. Under Lewanika, the tradition of divine kingship came to the fore (Mainga 1973:143). When confronted with the gospel by early missionaries, his Indunas insisted that their king was a son of the divinity, a god himself; hence the reason for paying tribute and homage to him. Due to beliefs in the divine status of kings therefore, royal ancestral worship figures greatly in certain quarters of African society. There is a transformation at coronation, such that all the blood lineage of ancestors invades his being, making him a synthesis of the ancestors and the living expression of the deity (Lemarchand 1977:3; Mulago 1991:122).

A closer examination of Lozi traditions, shows that the mythic origins of kingship are an attempt to cover up the historical aspects of the institution. Similarly, the institution did not appear fully centralized, but evolved with time. It is argued that the founders of the Lozi dynasty did not seize the aboriginal tribal groups suddenly, but gradually. They settled in the north where they established a ruling family. The northern origin theory is further motivated by the occurrence of place names around Kalabo, which are found in early traditions (Mainga 1973:24).

The royal grave cult can be traced back to Mboo (the first known Lozi king during the settlement period) (Giles 1997:60). It does not appear among the earlier groups. It is believed that Mboo's spirit transmigrated from his burial place, Ikatulamwa to his own chosen site at Imwambo (Jalla 1954:14-16). The ceremonial sacrifice at the royal grave is a late development only recorded during the reign of Ngombala the sixth king, contrary to legendary accounts referring the sacrificial rites to the beginning (Jalla 1954:12).

Lozi tradition regarding animal sacrifice at royal graves, narrates that Mbanga, the son of Ngombala, the second ruler in the Southern reaches of the kingdom, ascended to heaven where he acquired great wisdom from *Nyambe*. While in heaven, Ngombala requested animals. *Nyambe* gave him animals from which a herd was picked for sacrifice at the royal graves on his return (Jalla 1954:1-4). It is therefore apparent that the rulers developed the royal grave cult together with its mythical features in order to set kingship above scrutiny.

Indeed, the conquest of dissenters Mwanambinyi and Mange by Ngalama, was crucial as rival centers of supernatural and ritual power were destroyed. Importantly, the development process of kingship is not easy to unravel, as oral tradition does not provide sufficient evidence (Mainga 1973:35).

In many parts of Africa, the spirits of dead tribal leaders, heroes, clan founders and warriors continue to be honoured by some communities (Mbiti 1975:72). Dead leaders are offered respect through legends and ceremonies. In certain societies, the dead leaders are elevated to a status of divinities and may be referred to as being close to God. In such cases, people may approach them through prayer during crisis. They also could mention their names when inquiring from God. The departed are expected to relay the prayers to God. In particular societies, it is considered rude to approach God directly, unless, when it is absolutely necessary. Hence, mentioning the deceased in prayer is common.

The king continues to have special powers even after death. At any rate, the king is said to become more powerful in death than in life. At death, the king is buried at a place of his choice. The deceased king is believed to have the ability to influence the fate of both individuals and the nation. The departed king assumes a position of a mediator between the living and God (Mackintosh 1899:220). Therefore, during calamities, prayers are offered to the dead kings with an understanding that they will convey them to *Nyambe*, God (Muuka 1966:258).

The royal burial site is turned into a shrine, guarded by a number of people selected for this specific task (Mainga 1972:96). It follows then that the burial site is converted into a village. A special custodian of the grave also resides at the village. This official is charged with the responsibility of caring for the actual grave, tending to the needs of the deceased king and acting as an intermediary between the departed king and the living. The royal grave village is one of the many sanctuaries, others being Nalolo the Southern capital, the *Natamoyo*'s court (Minister of Mercy) as well as the king's court (Coillard 1902:224).

The grave official also known as *Ñomboti,* possesses special powers, which enable him to communicate with the dead king. His duties involve offering sacrifices to the departed king on behalf of individuals for various requests, ranging from good luck to health. He also performs sacrifices from the reigning king on behalf of the nation. National requests by

means of offerings are performed in cases of calamities such as drought, famine and war. Thus, chiefly ancestors influence their families and nation (Westerlund 2006:89).

In the event that rituals are performed, the reigning king presents an ox or whatever is necessary for sacrifice to the *Ñomboti*. After slaughtering the animal, suitable portions are presented to the spirit of the dead royalty at the grave opening (*Limbwata*). The spirit of the dead king is expected to receive the offering. The official then implores the departed king to intervene on behalf of the kingdom. When the rituals have been conducted and the requirements met, the *Ñomboti* proceeds to report back to the king the message from the spirit.

Before important decisions are made, the dead kings performe a key role through their custodians. They are consulted in order to elicit direction on key issues pertaining to the nation. It is said that Mboo, the first king, continues to preside over national councils and is briefed about the ongoing at his village *Ikatulamwa* (Coillard 1902:594). The verdict from the royal ancestor serves as a guide to the king and his advisors, and ultimately the nation at large (Mainga 1972:97).

The powers of the dead dignitaries are further shown by the fact that travelers are not allowed to bypass a royal grave village without paying homage and presenting offerings. The offerings include white calico and beads of the same colour. Failure to present offerings may evoke the wrath of the deceased king, causing misfortune. The reigning king alone, with his Prime Minister, have the right to enter the sacred enclosure. Libations are poured out in the form of milk, honey and beer. Visitors and travelers to the royal grave salute the dead king both upon arrival and departure (Coillard 1902:171). Homage is paid by crouching to the ground, clapping, loud cries and all the while bowing profoundly (Betrand 1899:164).

Equally, at the installation of a new king, special rites are performed on the candidate at the graves of the ancestress Mbuyu and Mboo, the first king at *Makono.* Thereafter, the new king is presented at other gravesites where sacrifices are performed and approval is sought (Mainga 1972:97). For case in point, the missionary Coillard, was refused a meeting with Lewanika who was paying homage, until he had agreed to send offerings to the royal graves (Coillard 1902:217).

It appears that the reigning king does not only approach his ancestors at the royal graves. Lewanika had a grove near his harem. The grove was carefully screened with mats. The king used to offer prayers, sacrifices and libations to his ancestors at the grove (Coillard 1902:224).

4.2.4 Ancestral cult

The spirits of non-royal ancestors are also venerated by their descendants. In contradistinction from the remote relationship between Lozi people and *Nyambe*, the ancestral spirits are closely concerned with the affairs and behaviour of their descendants (Reynolds 1963:10). In African Traditional Religion, it is difficult to appreciate ideas about God without acknowledging the place of ancestors (Parrinder 1968:87; Bujo 1992:41). Ancestors form the most prominent element of African Traditional Religion (Anderson 1991:79). In some areas ancestors are the most intimate gods of the people. Since they are considered part of the family, they are consulted on important issues. People may not eat or drink without dropping portions for the ancestors. When people invoke their ancestors, they invoke God as well (Westerlund 2006:89). Prayer therefore, is normally offered through the ancestors.

Like in many parts of Africa, ancestors have a vital role in the Lozi religious experience (Turaki 1999:34). They are venerated by surviving members of their families. Ancestral spirits are accorded respect in the form of beer and food at appropriate occasions. The belief in ancestral veneration is founded on the premise that the dead continue to exist after death (Imasogie 1985:37). It appears that the deceased do not change their status. For instance, kings continue in their status as kings in death while subjects also have a fixed status (Arnot 1889:73; Mitchell 1977:27). As a result of the belief in the continued existence of human spirits, their number is in myriads. Ideas regarding the abode of the ancestors are varied. Ultimately, ancestors are considered to be closely watching over their families (Parrinder 1968:58).

During family difficulties and catastrophes, prayers and libations are offered to ancestor spirits (Maboea 2002:15). Requests for blessings and good-will in the areas of health, prosperity and success in hunting, are also addressed to them. Ancestors can become malevolent when neglected, and can cause unprecedented harm on erring members

(Mainga 1972:97; Ukpong 1990:68; Maboea 2002:15). It is their prerogative to attack the living, unfortunately, they may be manipulated to molest innocent people (Parrinder 1968:59; Imasogie 1985:43). Punishment is sometimes manifested through possession of the victim. Their capricious acts include drought, barrenness, sleeplessness, sickness and death (Anderson 1991:82). Other reasons for chastisement, are naming and passing a trade or craft to a descendant (Reynolds 1963:10). In addition, among the Lozi, the husband's ancestors may affect his wife while the inverse does not occur (Turner 1952:50).

Ancestral spirits are considered truly members of the family (Largerwerf 1985:17). The distinguishing mark is noticed in their mode of existence. The deceased no longer share in fleshly existence and they have crossed over into the super-sensible world (Idowu 1973:177). The deceased have become free from human limitations and return to take their abode with human relatives. In this way, they can benefit or hinder them.

Sacrifices and libations may be offered to ancestors (Schiltz 2002:354). Libations include beer, water, milk or some other beverages (Maboea 2002:15). Adult family members commonly perform this practice. In many parts of Africa, there are shrines either in the homestead or behind the house where rituals are held. Among the Masai, veneration may be conducted at graveyards (Westerlund 2006:73). Rituals of this kind may be conducted daily or occasionally. The living dead may also visit through dreams (Anderson 1991:80). Unfortunately, ancestral spirits may be malevolent at times causing misfortune and disease. Through divination, the cause for hardship is determined. If ancestors are responsible, specific rituals are performed in order to appease them (Mbiti 1975:73; Imasogie 1985:43; Ukpong 1990:77). At other times, God is appealed to in order to get rid of the bad spirit (Mbiti 1975:73).

Ancestors are also benevolent. Thus, they are prayed to for crop success for they can send rain as well as fertility to the land. They are sought for procreation to ensure the perpetuation of the race (Parrinder 1968:61). Ancestors were also known to assist in time of war. Equally important is the fact that the ancestral cult does not require local foci. Commoner ancestors have no fixed homes. Rituals are not performed at the gravesite on regular intervals, but could be held at any of the posts near the hut (Gluckman 1968:29-30). Through the process of attacks and intervention by ancestral spirits, men get to obey them and social order is maintained (Parrinder 1968:59; Largerwerf 1985:17).

Since the living have no memory of people who died in the distant past, the related spirits are described in varying ways. They are thought of in terms of superhuman qualities, stupid and naivety. When the last surviving relative who remembered the deceased passes on, they are forgotten. Generally, such unknown spirits are held in suspicion and therefore hated. Thus, people associate such spirits with human possession, diseases - particularly mental illness, deafness and dumbness (Mbiti 1975:72; Anderson 1991:83).

4.2.5 Belief in spirits

The African view of the universe is governed by belief in the visible and invisible (Imasogie 1985:67). In the order of created beings then, there exists spirits between God and human beings. The idea of spirits and the concept of God are crucial to understanding African Traditional Religion; otherwise a rushed classification under animism can be arrived at (Mitchell 1977:30). Although Africans seem to relate to natural objects such as mountains and rivers in their worship, this forms but a segment of the religion. The spirits can be broadly classified in two categories namely, nature spirits and human spirits.

Nature spirits are associated with natural objects and forces. Therefore the first group under nature spirits is related to the sky. The spirits associated with the sky include: the sun, moon, stars, rainbow and rain, storms, wind and thunder (Anderson 1991:76). It is believed that these objects are spirits or are inhabited by spirits (Mbiti 1975:66). In some African societies there is a belief that stronger spirits such as divinities are responsible for the luminaries. Where this belief is prevalent, people may go ahead and offer sacrifices to the divinities in order to seek their assistance or act as intermediaries between the petitioners and God. At the same time, not all African people believe that there are natural spirits in the sky. These objects therefore are understood as simply heavenly objects or forces that are the direct work of God.

The second category of nature spirits is related to the earth. The following objects represent this class: the earth, hills and mountains, boulders and rocks, trees and forests, metals, water in various forms for instance lakes, rivers and waterfalls, certain animals and insects and specific diseases (Anderson 1991:76). As with sky spirits, here also some spirits are regarded as divinities hence, they are accorded high status. Spirits of the sea and forest may be examples of divinities in given societies. In societies where belief in

divinities associated with the sky elements is prevalent, earth divinities are likely to occur. The aspect of correlating earthy objects with divinities is not found everywhere in Africa (Mbiti 1975:70).

It is vital to indicate that people are not entirely bound to nature spirits. The ramification of the foregoing is that people could discard the idea of a particular spirit. It follows therefore that despite the fact that these nature spirits are invisible and appear to be very powerful, they are at the mercy of humans (Mbiti 1975:70). Another important characteristic regarding nature spirits, has to do with the fact that where they are associated with major geographical features, communal ritual is made central.

Spirit possession is common in many parts of Africa. Among the Maasai of Tanzania, women are the usual victims of such afflictions (Peterson 1985:175). Lozi people witness to similar maladies, which are caused by spirits of the bush. Some such complaints are related to forms of madness and fits. These illnesses are called *muba* and *kanono* respectively. *Muba* is relatively late in appearing in Bulozi. It is reported as having originated from the Totela (Gluckman 1968:85). Treatment is by exorcism. In addition, the use of a genet skin for treatment appears to be universal (Reynolds 1963:65). The reason for a common remedy is ascribed to a lack of enough developmental time which could have given rise to alternatives. Equally important is the fact that most *muba* patients become doctors perpetuating the same method of healing.

The spirits, which are considered responsible for *muba* attacks, are *mwenda-njangula* and *mwenda-lutaka* (Reynolds 1963:65; Gluckman 1968:85). These spirits are believed to appear as creatures in human form. They possess human limbs on one side of their bodies and reeds covered by bees wax on the other side. These demons of the dense bush are said to operate from the thick and do not come out in the light for fear of their wax melting (Gluckman 1968:85). When they desire a human being, whatever the sex, they will try to kidnap them. When one meets the spirit, a fight ensues. In the event that the spirit wins the human being dies but should the inverse be true, the victor is taught how to cure the ailment. This appears to be rationalization of a lunatic (Reynolds 1963:65).

4.2.6 Sacrifices and offerings

Sacrifices and offerings are prominent in all world religions. In African Traditional Religion they are means of achieving contact and communion between man and Deity (Adeyemo 1979:33). Material gifts are brought to the Deity for the sake of appeasement, restoration of health and warding off evil (Ukpong 1990:82, 89; Westerlund 2006:70). Sacrifices involve the act of shedding blood of animals, birds and in some cases human. Blood is synonymous with life in African Traditional Religion. On the other hand, offerings are gifts to the Deity devoid of blood. The following items may be included under offerings: foodstuffs, water, milk, honey and money (Mbiti 1975:59).

In cases of serious danger arising from drought, epidemics, war, raids, calamity, pests and destructive floods, sacrifices are done (Westerlund 2006:70). Hazards at the national scale required the people's response. Among Lozi people, sacrifices are conducted for various reasons, mainly for rain and serious petitions. These sacrifices in most cases involve the slaughter of animals. But in certain instances human sacrifices may have been performed (Arnot 1889:54, 75). Normally, selected animals are sacrificed on behalf of the nation. Domesticated animals may be sacrificed as long as they conform to the set standard. Some of the requirements would be that of color, which may be black, brown, white or red whatever the case may be. Equally, the owner of the animal has to be upright (Mbiti 1975:59; Imasogie 1985:43, 44).

Family-threatening adversities also call for sacrifices. These calamities are health issues, marital difficulties, remembering the deceased and matters of prosperity. While human beings were sacrificed in cases of national disasters, only domesticated animals are employed for family matters (Mbiti 1975:59). In contradistinction it is known that human sacrifices were conducted for the purpose of sanctifying boats, drums, houses and other pieces of property. Where they were conducted, children were the obvious victims although adults were also sacrificed. The macabre affair proceeded with the victim's toes and fingers being amputated. The blood was sprinkled on the object for sanctification. The victim was then killed, ripped apart and thrown into the river (Arnot 1889:54, 75; Holub 1976:318). At any rate, family sacrifices are performed by the family head or ritual leader. Elsewhere in Africa the following are some of the animals sacrificed on behalf of the family: sheep, goats, cattle, dogs and fowls. (Mbiti 1975:59; Westerlund 2006:70).

Similarly, offerings are made both for the community and individual needs. Individual or family offerings are given from whatever they could afford and it included expensive and

cheap substances. Family offerings are conducted in or around the home. In certain cases people have family shrines. Offerings made on behalf of the community are performed at sacred places. These places could be shrines, sacred groves or holy places such as hills, lakes, waterfalls and so on (Ukpong 1990:83).

It is important to underline the fact that prayers always accompany sacrifices and offerings. The reason for this is simply to make known the purpose for such undertakings (Adeyemo 1979:35). In much the same way, sacrifices and offerings are meant to convey the seriousness of the prevailing condition. African people understand that the gods do not feast on the elements, but rather sacrifices and offerings demonstrate their desperation. Presenting sacrifices and offerings show the need not to approach the deities empty-handed. Either the leaders or the assembly may eat these elements. In yet other cases, sacrifices and offerings are left for wild animals.

When the Lozi offer prayers, offerings are often made to the spirits of the forefathers. These offerings are performed under a tree or grove planted for this purpose. The quantity or size of the offering correlates with the measure of the request. In some instances, beer is poured out, at other times, a piece of cloth is offered. Usually, the piece of cloth is tied to a horn of an animal and stuck into the ground. If an ox is slaughtered its blood is then applied over the horn which serves as an altar (Arnot 1889:77).

The purpose of making sacrifices and offerings is to draw the attention of the deity (Ukpong 1990:83; Schiltz 2002:354). But, because there is an understanding that God does not necessarily need these offerings, they are in turn made before lesser spirits such as divinities or the ancestors. Thus, sacrifices are not intended to bend the will of the Deity, rather they serve the purpose of paying homage (Ukpong 1990:83). Further sacrificial meals portray the larger family of the living and the dead (Oosterhuizen 1991:41). The intermediaries do not only receive the sacrifices and offerings; they also relay the prayers to God. Ordinary people concern themselves with observing the correct procedure of the ritual. Ritual leaders, on the other hand, are fully aware of the intermediary role of ancestors (Mbiti 1975:60).

4.2.7 Singing and dancing

Occasions of communal prayers as well as sacrifices and offerings are usually graced with singing and dancing. At these events, people like to sing, dance, clap their hands and express joy. Some prayers have litanies or choruses, which require that the people join in response (Mbiti 1975:61). Witchdoctors also employ songs, dancing, prayers and other magical rites during their healing and protection provision sessions (Janzen 1978:73).

When it is necessary for the worshippers to move from one place to another it follows that they do this amidst the beating of drums, playing of music, dancing and rejoicing. Music and dancing provide an opportunity for the people to participate emotionally and physically in prayer and worship. It is said that music penetrates the being of the petitioners (Mbiti 1975:61). Such celebrations could last the whole day or more.

4.2.8 Medicine and security
4.2.8.1 Medicine

Life is not always smooth and hardships come in diverse forms. Africans are driven to seek answers outside themselves precisely because of the backdrop of ideas regarding the operation of the universe. It follows that usually blame is placed on the presence of witchcraft, sorcery and magic. The victim proceeds to search for remedies, protection against further attacks and ways of neutralizing and even counteracting against the operations of evil forces (Berg-Schlossler 1984:215; Abimbola 1991:56, 57).

Medicine therefore offers both curative and preventative measures against the powers of witchcraft (Largerwerf 1985:29). The functions of diagnosis and prescription of medical portions is the province of either the medicine man or diviner (Lartey 1986:75). In healing rituals, herbs are administered to the victim of witchcraft and sorcery. In addition, mystical medicine is packaged in the form of objects to carry around, bury in the yard or home. It may be necessary for the medicine man to visit the victim's home in order to apply the mystical medicine. By so doing, forces of evil are driven away and protection is guaranteed (Mbiti 1975:171; Abimbola 1991:57).

However, it is difficult to accurately substantiate the efficacy of some of the prescriptions. What is certain though, is the fact that confidence is generated by such medicine. The result of this hope inspires the sick, provides courage to the traveler and security is guaranteed to the person who senses the eerie presence of wicked forces.

Ultimately, God is the source of all medicine. Therefore it is common for people to side-step traditional healers and their potions and appeal to God. Traditional healers too may appeal to God for their potions to be effective (Westerlund 2006:117). When the situation turns desperate, the victim may turn to God in request for protection and assistance. Inversely, the victim may pray and seek the assistance of a medicine man as God's tangible outworking agent (Lartey 1986:75).

4.2.8.2 Protection objects

There are diverse objects that are used for religious purposes (Udvardy 1989:45). In particular, some of the charms serve the function of eliciting protection for the bearers (Galaty 1981:73; Lartey 1986:75). To be effective, the objects may be worn around the neck, arm and waist. Some are carried around in pockets and bags. They are also put on rooftops, buried at gates leading to homesteads, in house foundations and fields. In yet other cases such articles are swallowed. Furthermore, different kinds of objects can be found at shrines and sacred places.

In African Traditional Religion there is a fine line between magic and religion. This is demonstrated by the above use of objects in order to manipulate the spiritual for human ends (Mitchell 1977:59; Berg-Schlossler 1984:215). Although the use of charms and magical elements is widespread, it is believed that the upright do not require these elements for protection. Consequently, there is an encounter between humans and the divine apart from magic.

4.2.9 Role of evil

There are fundamental questions precipitated by the concept of evil and its origin. Equally perplexing to diverse, people of various religious backgrounds is a question regarding why people suffer? In African Traditional Religion the answer is three-pronged, namely: human mistakes, forces of chance and malicious forces (Peterson 1985:175).

By nature, African society is closely knit. This translates into the bounding together of every member of society into one whole. Thus individuals have obligations to the entire group. The group on the other hand is safeguarded by traditions. When these traditions

are ignored or deliberately disregarded, certain misfortunes are evoked. Conversely, when traditions are followed, balance occurs resulting in harmony and prosperity in the community. Usually a misfortune befalls individuals, but in certain cases, the entire community is affected (Mitchell 1977:64; Westerlund 2006:94).

Societies observe taboos which impinge on community life. Exemplarily taboos forbid disrespecting the elderly, immorality and neglecting the ancestors. Ignoring taboos results in misfortunes such as prolonged labour, persistent illness and failure. Consulting a diviner may provide a solution. Remedies include communicating with ancestors, performing prescribed rituals and confession of one's mistake as in the case of prolonged labour where a pregnant woman is required to mention the partner in adultery (Mitchell 1977:65).

In certain African societies people believe in the existence of a divinity that is characterized by misfortune and evil deeds (Janzen 1978:68; Arhem 1989:83). The Yoruba god, Eshu is an example of this type of divinity. He is associated with performing tricks on his victims. It is however vital to underscore the fact that he is not evil incarnate. Eshu is capable of benevolence and protecting those who honour him (Eades 1980:120).

Sorcery and witchcraft are key contributors to the presence of evil in African cultures (Westerlund 2006:173). However, not all African societies attest to witchcraft (Guenther 1992:84). Whereas divinities and people's mistakes lead to misfortune, chief among these factors is the work of witches and sorcerers. Sorcerers and witches are known to cause harm to people maliciously. The major difference between sorcerers and witches is in their manner of causing harm. Sorcerers are believed to employ material objects and manipulate them for their evil intentions. On the other hand, witches use their innate powers to bring harm to the victims. Overall, bad magic is feared across the African continent (Berg-Schlossler 1984:216).

Excursus: Sorcery, witchcraft and magic

Witchcraft is **defined** as the manifestation of mystical forces which may be inborn in a person, inherited, or acquired in various ways (Mbiti 1975:166; Hayes 1995:339). Forces of witchcraft may attach themselves to an innocent person who inevitably becomes a witch (Reynolds 1963:14; Mitchell 1977:65). Magic and witchcraft may be combined voluntarily or otherwise to cause harm on certain individuals (Hopkins 1980:60; Schiltz 2002:347). Sorcery on the other hand involves the casting of spells, poisoning, or other physical harm

done secretly (Hayes 1995:340). A sorcerer then causes harm to befall the victim's life, crops and animals (Reynolds 1963:14; Mitchell 1977:66). Witchcraft causes a lot of fear on people (Schiltz 2002:338). Among the Azande it is clear that witches possess inherent ability to cause harm to the victim. They perform no rite, utter no spell and do not use medicine. On the other hand sorcerers are capable of doing harm through the performance of magical rites and bad medicine (Evans-Pritchard 1937:21). Unlike the Azande Lozi people do not distinguish between a witch and sorcerer. Similarly other African people do not segregate witches from sorcerers (Hopkins 1980:58; Dillone-Malone 1986:374; Largerwerf 1985:5). There is an absence of the limiting definition of witchcraft as inherent power of evil. The *muloi* (witch) is conscious of his malevolent acts as he engages both observable substances and manipulation of spirits (Turner 1952:54). Sorcery, witchcraft and magic may not be described as a form of religion. But clearly there is a level of belief in the malevolent power residing in the practitioners of this dark art. Witchcraft may have been the ancient religion of Europe and possibly Africa (Melland 1923:60). In the historical study of Lozi religion it appears that sorcery, witchcraft and magic existed to the near exclusion of both the *Nyambe* and ancestor spirits cults (Mainga 1972:35). However, supporting data for these assertions is nebulous and unsatisfactory (Reynolds 1963:15). Yet witchcraft/ sorcery are widespread. These are forces to be reckoned with in Africa (Dillone-Malone 1986:374; Largerwerf 1985:5; Schiltz 2002:335). Witchcraft and sorcery offer an explanation to instances of illness, misfortune and death (Mbiti 1975:165; Largerwerf 1985:5; Guffler 1999:181). The common causes of witchcraft are domestic tensions and jealousies. For people living in closely knit communities opportunities for revenge abound as feuds and dissensions are common (Gluckman 1968:76; Mbiti 1975:167; Dillon-Malone 1986:378). Thus witchcraft normally is targeted against one's kin (Guffler 1999:186). Although witches are generally motivated by malice they may at times be subject to familiars beyond their control (Reynolds 1963:15). Further witches may kill for cannibalistic and strengthening aims (Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005:459; Westerlund 2006:173). Sorcerers and witches operate in ordinary human realms and not necessarily in the supernatural plane (Mainga 1972:35). It is said that sorcerers and witches possess powers to manipulate matter with the purpose of causing harm to the victim. By magic human beings are able to tap into the mystical forces and powers in the universe. Yamba people of Cameroon believe that God is the source of bad powers (Guffler 1999:182). While some may be aware of this inherent ability there are others who may not. Mystical forces are neither malevolent not benevolent in themselves. However, because they are at the disposal of humans they could be manipulated for certain harmful ends (Maboea 2002:19). Witches were hated and often put death (Berg-Schlossler 1984:216). The Lozi claim that they **originally** borrowed the art of sorcery and witchcraft from the Luvale and Mbunda people (Mainga 1972:35). The Luvale do not seem to accord much of their beliefs, rituals and ethics to *Kalunga* (God). Their corpus of beliefs leans towards medicine and witchdoctors (White 1962:35). They believe witchcraft is hereditary but can be intentionally acquired too (Hayes 1995:340; Maboea 2002:20). Women form the majority of witches. It follows that witchcraft is passed from mother to daughter (MacGaffey 1987:309). Witchcraft remains latent in a young girl until she reaches puberty. It has been suggested that witches are organized into companies. On the contrary there is insufficient proof to support proper organization serve for the feasts of necrophagers (Reynolds 1963:23; Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005:459). Since they are nocturnal they like to operate at night (Hopkins 1980:59; Dillone-Malone 1986:377). Witches may fly to their covens or to their victim's residence. It is uncertain whether they transport themselves physically or spiritually (Parrinder 1968:124, 125; Hopkins 1980:58, 59). In African Traditional Religion it is said that witchcraft and sorcery employs incantations, words, rituals, animals and magical objects to afflict

the victim (Guffler 1999:186). Among Lozi people **methods** of witchcraft are broadly classified as familiars, projection and direct attack (Reynold 1963:27; Guffler 1999:186). Firstly, familiars are agents or animated weapons, which have the ability to seek out the victim and execute the instructions assigned by the master. These agents are entitled to rewards that include an opportunity to kill from time to time. Familiars can take either human or non human form. The human familiars are acquired by killing and raising the victim or rather the victim's shade. In other cases a living human being is magically stolen and simulacrum is left behind only to sicken and die (Guffler 1999:186). Usually a carving is fashioned to represent the shade. This kind of familiar travels on foot and is capable of killing the victim with a knife (Melland 1923:214, 215). Non human familiars are made from animals such as *linkalankala* (small tortoise shell), *kalankata* (large snail shell) and *nkala* (crab). These shells are filled with medicines and believed to magically come alive for the purpose of carrying out assignments. Another common animal familiar *lilombamema* (snake like creature with a human body) is capable of killing at height of its growth (Melland 1923:207-209; Reynolds 1963:36; 38). The second class of witchcraft methods involves the projection of an invisible missile also known as *siposo* (Reynolds 1963:39; Hopkins 1980:60). This form of witchcraft occurs more frequently than familiars. The projectile is magically dispatched through a witchcraft gunshot *kaliloze*. Cases of sharp pains in the chest are commonly diagnosed as resulting from *kaliloze* shot. The problem develops when a patient actually suffers from severe pneumonia case. Another form of *siposo* is the manipulation of lightning for harmful purposes. Yet an intriguing example concerns a Luvale sorcerer who was found in possession of a padlock that was employed for the purpose of attacking his victims. By closing the padlock it is believed that the targets life is cut off (Reynolds 1963:40). Thirdly direct attack is also a form of witchcraft common among the Lozi (Hopkins 1980:59). Whereas *siposo* can be sent from a distance direct attack requires contact with the victim. The sorcerer may introduce *mabela* (poisonous substances) into the victim's stomach, skin or lungs with an attempt to destroy him. In many cases poison is administered to a victim orally by placing it into beer or food. Some sorcerers may sneak into the victim's hut at night and blow poison over his body with particular attention to the mouth area. Still other sorcerers introduce poison subcutaneously such as planting a poisoned piece of iron in the victim's path. The Yoruba believe in *magun*, sorcery infected to a woman to kill her partner in case of adultery (Schiltz 2002:339). Similarly a sorcerer can prick a patient with a necrophager's fork when commiserating (Reynolds 1963:42). **Protection** from witchcraft attacks is achieved by soliciting the service of a witchdoctor (Hopkins 1980: 63). Charms may be prescribed and worn on the client's person. In the quest to secure protection from magical missiles, for instance, people have been known to insert needles in their bodies. These needles are believed to function by sympathetic magic.

4.2.10 Human intermediaries

Besides diagnosing the root of a given crisis and offering remedies, human intermediaries may also assist in connecting the people with the spiritual realm. These religious leaders include diviners, mediums, seers, and witchdoctors/medicine men. Others are ritual leaders, rainmakers and traditional rulers.

These functionaries are the embodiment of traditional religions. They keep the traditions; carry out varying duties to insure the preservation and protection of not only the people but also the cultural values. Through sanctions and prohibitions traditions are maintained.

Excursus: Human intermediaries

Although under ordinary circumstances the intermediaries discussed in this study may not be easily separated for the sake of clarity, they will be considered individually. The **diviner** enables the witchdoctor to function by ascertaining underlying root causes of tragedies, sickness and death. He operates by manipulation of objects, inspiration, dreams and intoxication (Parrinder 1976:103; Galaty 1981:73). Without his work witches for example would cause havoc undetected rendering the witchdoctor impotent. In fact belief in magic and in the supernatural would lose much of its strength for he continually demonstrates its importance in human affairs (Reynolds 1963: 95). In addition they reveal malevolent spirits responsible for a given crisis (Anderson 1991:77). If indeed a spirit is involved the reason for its anger is uncovered and remedies prescribed (Mainga 1972:98). They are also able to warn people about future events (Schiltz 2002:347, 353). Diviners may be men and women who have acquired the skill passed down through generations. They may also contact the spirits directly or with the assistance of mediums. But sometimes diviners use common sense and imagination (Mbiti 1975:156). The prevalence of danger, sickness and misfortunes has led to the value accorded to these functionaries (Galaty 1981:73). **Mediums** are people who get in touch with the spirit world. To fall into a trance mediums require outside assistance from ritual drumming, dancing and singing. At the height of these ritual activities the medium may fall down and enter a trance. When the medium is under the state of possession, trance, she may lose control of her faculties. Possession could lead to strange feats such as jumping about, beating herself, banging her head and even walking on thorns or fire. During the trance the medium is able to communicate with the spiritual realm. Either one or numerous spirits may communicate through her. The medium may speak in strange languages, which need interpretation. In an instance a medicine man or diviner may render the meaning. In this way unknown things are revealed (Imasogie 1985:67). There is yet another class of people who fall under this category, namely, **seers**. Seers are distinguished from mediums by virtue of their mode of operation. While mediums fall into a trance and are possessed by a spirit seers rely on intuition. They at times foresee future events. In contrast to diviners they do not necessarily undergo training (Imasogie 1985:68). By their sharp foresight and insight they describe things yet to come. It is possible that in many cases they actually describe what they have seen before even if perhaps before completion. To be effective a diviner ought to possess enormous knowledge concerning people and events in his locale, considerable experience in related difficulties, and quick intuition. In addition the diviner must possess information regarding symptoms of various maladies affecting his client to enable him to diagnose adequately prior to meeting him. At any rate the diviner may acquire information about the patient through his informants. The diviner utilizes a number of **divination methods** in order to conduct diagnosis (Maboea 2002:87). One of the ways of performing divination is through patterning. In this case representative objects are cast to the ground and by the position of their fall answers can be deduced. Divining bones, seeds and nutshell for instance fall under this category (Parrinder 1976:113). The materials are symbols of predetermined answers and by throwing them an astute diviner is able to diagnose. Another method of divining is called pointing.

Pointing is achieved by the use of materials such as a horn, stick creeping tortoise and small hand held mat. When divining questions are posed, answers are provided in relation to the movement by the object. It must be noted however that the diviner keeps contact with the implement and is able to apply downward pressure thereby manipulating the desired movement (Reynold 1963:110). Similarly other divining implements harness the magnetic force such as an axe, pestle, wooden spoon and pieces of wood. The axe is commonly used by Lozi, Tonga and Shona of Zimbabwe. The axe is laid on the ground and responses to questions are deduced from its ability to move or not. In different situations reflecting materials have been used for divination. The principal is the same as gazing into a crystal ball. A typical example is water. A diviner will gaze into a pot of water and claim to read the answer (Parrinder 1976:119). In some cases mirrors have been used. Where mirrors were not available other reflecting objects like polished stones and metal have been used. Mental divination is also used. Here communication is established between the diviner and the ancestral spirits. Diviners achieve this through dreams or fall under trance. They may sometimes employ material symbols of the spirit. It is believed that the diviner must have killed someone particularly a close relative the spirit of who is in the employ of the diviner (Turner 1952:54). Divining by ordeal, a rather unorthodox method, is found all over Africa (Parrinder 1976:121). Where witchcraft is suspected a stringent emetic is prepared and administered to each suspect (Hopkins 1980:63). It is expected that the innocent will vomit while the guilty party will sicken and die (Westerlund 2006:173). Lewanika, the Lozi king, banned the use of the poison ordeal, *mwafi*, in 1891 (Gluckman 1955:97-98). Prior to that date it was commonly used in the Lozi Empire. This is demonstrated by a report concerning an alleged sorcerer who was selected from a number of suspects by a diviner. He was taken to the *kuta* (royal court) where he was seated on a platform on a mound in the fringes of Lealui, the royal capital. He was then given *mwafi* to drink. If the concoction stupefied the accused and he fell into the fire the guilty verdict was passed and subsequently he was killed (Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005:459). If he vomited the *mwafi* he was innocent. In this manner many people were killed. In much the same as the poison ordeal boiling water was also a tool for testing sorcerers. Like the poison test Lewanika also banned this practice (Arnot 1889:66, 92, 94). Heated arguments between villagers led to a fire being lit and a pot of water place on it. The people involved in witchcraft accusations were then obliged to wash their hands in boiling water. If after twenty-four hours their skin began to peel they were considered guilty if not innocent. The convict amidst insults was dragged out of the compound for burning. At other times witches were killed by lynch mobs and their paraphernalia destroyed (Hayes 1995:339). During one episode involving the boiling water ordeal an old man dipped his hands in boiling water. Several hours later there was no effect on his hands whatsoever. This was met by shouts of triumph for the supporters of the method. But perhaps this could be attributed to his age and callousness of his skin. There are other miscellaneous methods such as making a suspect to stand on a stone while holding a charmed pot. If the suspect trembled it indicated that one was possessed by an evil spirit. The list to the methods is by no means exhaustive. Importantly most of the devices listed depend not on intrinsic power but that of the diviner (Turner 1952:73). This opens the devices to manipulation by the diviner (Reynold 1963:126). **Witchdoctors/Medicine men** were very powerful and wielded a lot of influence in Lozi society (Arnot 1889:58; Hopkins 1980:63). Their work involves providing remedies for the afflicted (Peterson 1985:176). They operate in different ways. Some are herbalists, who simply treat ailments without necessarily divining or engaging in battles against sorcery (Dillon-Malone 1986:378). The simplest of herbalists are ordinary individuals who have limited knowledge about diseases and remedies (Maboea 2002:21). On the other hand the witchdoctor engages in parrying, defeating and in

some cases killing the enemy (Reynold 1963:48; Hopkins 1980:63; Maboea 2002:3). The Lozi witchdoctor may be either male or female. It is however apparent that women restrict themselves to the office of herbalist. In this way the dangerous function of witchdoctor is the domain of men. This phenomenon is perhaps necessitated by the belief that women often gravitate to witchcraft (Reynold 1963:52; Hopkins 1980:58). If this is correct then a female witchdoctor would have difficulties establishing her practice. The witchdoctor is called on when the cause is mysterious and inexplicable to ordinary people. Through the administration of medicine the victim may recover. The ultimate source of power is the supernatural (Maboea 2002:25). People attain the profession of witchdoctor through the process of ailment and treatment. When a sick person is successfully cured of sickness he/she is permitted to go and administer medicine to people suffering from the same illness. If the healed person is intelligent and capable of learning the art soon he/she will be able to add more curatives to his/her repertoire. Success at the job soon establishes him/her as a witchdoctor. On the other hand continued failure would dent his reputation resulting in falling back into mediocrity. It is also possible for one to attain to the profession of witchdoctor through inheritance and apprenticeship (Parrinder 1976:107). It is said that certain individuals have been known to travel far and wide to go learn the art from renowned witchdoctors. Various factors form the background motivation for someone pursuing the career. Some of the ingredients are desire for wealth and power. In certain cases a sense of responsibility towards their relatives and fellows in terms of seeking to secure their protection from harm is high on the agenda. Conversely there are isolated instances of pretentious individuals who join the craft under the guise of seeking to render assistance to their fellowmen when in fact they are motivated by strong desire for self-gain and warped characters (Magesa 1997:242). Witchdoctors use similar magical forces to the ones employed by sorcerers. It is therefore, unknown how many witchdoctors combine sorcery with their craft since occasionally some witchdoctors are guilty of the evil act (Dillon-Malone 1986:378; MacGaffey 1987:309). Although the arrival of European doctors led to the waning of the practice they are still respected in African society (Reynold 1963:56, 59). There are diverse causes of misfortune ranging from spiritual influences to natural and witchcraft. Both ancestors and other malignant spirits are held responsible for causing harm. Since Lozi people lived in a world potent with different influences even accidents or carelessness such as poor handling of an axe leading to injury could easily be interpreted as having been influenced by ancestral spirits or witchcraft. Besides providing curative solutions to patients witchdoctors also administer protective charms (Maboea 2002:89). Charms are employed to defeat witchcraft attacks. These protective medicines are given in order to secure property or persons and to ward off current or futuristic attacks. Some of the charms prepared for this purpose are horns containing medicine to prevent spirits from entering the house. There are more sinister charms such as teeth of a puff-adder set to bite a bad spirit, parts of human body, and skull given to a patient as a protective charm (Reynold 1963:70; Hopkins 1980:63). By virtue of the fact that witchcraft is the chief cause of ailments and harm when a witchdoctor is contracted to provide protective remedies this signals the drawing of battle lines. The client therefore enters the magical field proper. Since securing protection involves parrying attacks the witchdoctor becomes the client's defense. It follows that unless one of the combatants withdraws or quickly wins, the battle may lead to a disastrous end with one winning or both if not all including the client being killed. When healing a person suffering from attacks by spirits of the bush for instance the doctor may use carvings of *mwenda-njangula* and *mwenda-lutaka* (bush spirits). The carving is dipped in a pot of hot medicine and then rubbed. At other times the patient is made to inhale steam from a pot of medicines. At the same time a stick is stuck into the ground next to him. A typical treatment involves the use of genet's

skin while the patient is covered with a blanket with a pot of steaming medicine beneath. The skin is placed on his head while he is inhaling the steam. The doctor dances to cast the spirit out (Reynolds 1963:66). Some medicine men are known to combine prayer for their patients, sacrifices and administration of medicines (Ukpong 1990:79; Janzen 1978:73). The people responsible for performing rituals and conducting prayers at village and family levels are referred to as **ritual elders**. Both men and women can attain this status. Ritual elders acquire their position by virtue of their age and experience. Equally some of them are descendants of ritual elders a status that would have availed them to the procedure and manner of conducting rituals. Religious activities on behalf of a community such as prayers cannot be held in the absence of a ritual elder. In a family the oldest member performs ritual functions. In some African societies priests play an important role. This is profound in societies where the belief in divinities is predominant. Priests are responsible for temples and cults associated with major divinities. Hence, priests are found amongst other places in Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda (Mbiti 1975:158, 159). Where priests are absent ritual elders perform the functions related to the priestly office. The following are some of the related duties: sacrificing, leading rituals, praying, blessing and acting as link between God and the people. Elsewhere the traditional ruler is the main priest of his community. Training of priests is undertaken at temples. Candidates to the profession may be children of parents who are grateful to the deity for a specific reason. Others also offer themselves to the service of a divinity. Where women are trained as priestesses they may in certain societies be required to stay single as they are married to the divinity. To become a priest one undergoes rigorous training involving various prayers, songs and dances, rituals, skills and crafts. All the other aspects of the religion are incorporated. Therefore the priest is knowledgeable in religious matters, myths, traditions, legends, proverbs and all practices of the people (Mbiti 1975:159). **Rainmakers** are found all over Africa particularly in the drier parts of the continent (Parrinder 1976:78). The profession of rainmaker is in most cases hereditary. The actual training for rainmaking is lengthy as it involves a careful study of weather patterns. Another point of focus is on the behavioral patterns of creatures. Exemplarily the migration of birds and movements of insects are interconnected with weather cycles. In addition close observation of plant life is a vital climactic indicator. These fundamentals go a long way in assisting professional rainmakers. While the title suggests the ability to produce rain Africans understand that God provides rain. Lozi people together with some of the surrounding tribes believe that the Supreme Being controlled weather (Reynolds 1963:128). Therefore these functionaries do not make rain even though they officiate at rain rituals. Suffice to say that their input, though, is highly regarded particularly in times of drought (Mbiti 1975:159). Being highly religious men, rainmakers spend a lot of time in prayer requesting for rain from the rain giver. For exemplar Kaonde people of North Western Zambia do not have rainmakers. Rain is considered a gift from the supreme God, *Lesa*. When rain is late Kaonde people pray to *Lesa* for intervention (Melland 1923:154-55). Tonga people of Southern Zambia equally pray to *Leza* requesting for rain. The rain cults of the plateau and valley Tonga as well as the annual ritual at rain shrine are an attempt to obtain favour from *Leza.* Lozi people believed in the supernatural powers of the chief and this necessitated a desire to shelter in the chief's yard for protection against lighting during a thunderstorm. This derives from belief that Lozi royals descended from the supreme God, Nyambe. Furthermore the king was regarded as a demi-god in the old beliefs. As a result it is possible to suggest that the people believed that the chief controlled the weather or could intercede to the supreme God on the subjects' behalf (Turner 1952:49). They occasionally entreated him with the view of eliciting his medicinal powers in order to cause rain to fall so as to water their gardens. However the chief acknowledged that he did not possess power

over rain (Arnot 1883:78). Later the Lozi rain cult receded and this development has ushered in rainmakers as primary custodians over affected villages. The rainmaker, *sitondo* as he is known, is required to control both lightning and rain. He is further expected to ward off an undesired storm. The rainmaker is equipped with charms employed for his craft. Some of the instruments are: fly switch (*muhata*), carved stick, a horn filled with medicines (*mushengo*), and python skin belt or arm band (*mulu*) (Reynold 1963:131). In the midst of a storm when everyone takes cover the rainmaker bravely walks into the open singing and shouting to the clouds. It is possible that the content of his incantations are a set formula. The rainmaker possesses both malevolent and benevolent powers. In many parts of Africa societies were governed by **traditional rulers**. Sometimes these rulers were kings, queens, rainmakers or priests. There are other societies that never had traditional rulers (Parrinder 1976:71). Where traditional rulers are found they are surrounded by religious ideas. In most cases their right to rule is associated to myth and legend with God. Lozi people believed in the divine descent of the king (Mainga 1972:96). For that reason the ruler has praise names like child of God, or son of God (Mbiti 1975:160). The Lozi king's powers were very wide but this ought to be interpreted against the backdrop of the national council, *Kuta*. In cases of tyrannical leaders the Prime Minister together with the national council assisted in ousting such a leader and installing another. This was the fate of Tatila Akufuna and Mwanawina (Coillard 1902:57). Unfortunately the influence of the national council sometimes was too strong for the king to allow change in the kingdom. He had powers of life and death in the entire kingdom. He was not only a royal but also a divine king sometimes referred to as the earthly God (Muuka 1966:258). The king's ascendancy to power is often shrouded in mystery. The king was installed to kingship by the grandees. At installation traditional rulers undergo various rituals to enhance their stature (Mbiti 1975:161). The Lozi king goes through purification rites as well as coronation rituals proceeding through the dead kings' gravesites (Mainga 1972:96). Because of the old belief in the king's divinity and the potency of his medicines subjects regarded him to be invincible. Even the king's servants purported to be powerful for they were servants of a god. For instance Sipopa claimed to be inviolable to a spear and bullet. But during the insurrection the poor fellow was shot in his flight and died (Arnot 1889:78). Although succession revolved within the royal family it was a fluid matter. In view of the flux state, the king was cautious not to antagonize the royalties (Muuka 1966:258). Coillard (1902:172) wrote, "Ours is a land of blood. Kings and chiefs succeed each other here like shadows. They are never allowed to grow old. If you come back in a few months, shall we still be in power?" Besides coronation rituals the following rituals are associated with their office: royal funeral rituals, movement of rulers to the extent that certain societies prohibit them from touching the ground, other activities would be hunting, and they are not to be seen eating (Mbiti 1975:161). They carry symbols relating to their position including scepters and drums representing their ability to communicate with the people (Parrinder 1976:72). These rulers are symbols of their dominions. When their health fails the nation goes through a crisis. They unite the people and are responsible for security. By exercising his rule the traditional ruler ensures protection and welfare for the people. Some rulers are also priests as they link their people with God. When the Lozi kingdom goes through the hazard of drought the king presents an animal on behalf of the kingdom to a royal grave priest, who prepares it and offers the prescribed parts to the ancestor king. In this way he mediates on behalf of his nation in order to pray and appeal for rain (Mainga 1972:96).

4.3   Prayer for protection

4.3.1 Introduction

Prayer in Africa is a demonstration of a person's religious life (Mijoga 1996:362). Sometimes it is an expression of gratitude for what has been provided by God. For that reason praise names are ascribed to the Supreme Being (Mbiti 1975:56).

African prayers vary in literary form and style. It appears that those that have a definite literary form could have originated several years ago. (Mbiti 1975:1) In addition, it is possible to postulate that they may have enjoyed repeated use. On the other hand, those that lack a literary form were created extemporaneously at certain occasions.

Another feature common to most African prayers is their brevity. These prayers are spontaneous and to the point. Obviously, other prayers are long and formal. In the majority of the prayers, God is the addressee. Yet, other prayers are addressed to the ancestors as well as other spiritual beings. In such cases, the other beings are recognized as intermediaries (Mbiti 1975:61). In Africa, naming is very important. Thus, invocation is more than a mere welcome since the named person is said to be present (Shorter 1975:15).

For Africans prayer is conducted for concrete intentions (Mijoga 1996:362). The backdrop for prayer is the knowledge concerning God's attributes. God is the source of providence, all-powerful, supplier of all good things, and merciful one. Consequently, his subjects request him for good health, healing, protection from danger, safety for traveling, safe delivery, long life, and for many children, rains during drought, and food in times of famine, cessation of epidemics, victory in war, security of the village, prosperity of the land and preservation of plant, animal and human life (Uka 1991:174; Westerlund 2006:44, 70).

Pre-scientific Africans in their traditional life had neither technological advancement nor scientific powers to rely on except for casting all their hopes on God. In other parts of Africa though God seems to be remote and is hardly prayed to. The relationship between the people and God in these places resembles that of a mighty chief and his subjects. Indeed the chief is considered too great and revered to be approached (Parrinder 1968:38). Where this is prevalent people pray to lesser gods and ancestors. *Leza*, the God of the Tonga of southern Zambia is one such example. He is too far away and fearful. The lesser gods are intermediaries and therefore are asked to pray to God on behalf of the people.

4.3.2 Aspects of prayer

4.3.2.1 Trust, posture and worship places

African people pray because they believe that God hears and answers them. Similarly they believe that he is near given the fact that he is everywhere with them simultaneously. When the Africans pray they take numerous postures. Thus people pray while sitting down, kneeling, prostrating themselves, and remain standing. They may also clap their hands or sing while praying (Mbiti 1975:98; Westerlund 2006:47).

There are many different worship places in African Traditional Religion. Some of them belong to families examples of these would be graves of the departed relatives, gates to the homestead, backyards, little shrines, sacred trees and piles of stones in the compound (Parrinder 1968:90). At these places the head of the family stands at dawn and mutters a prayer. At other times he turns to God at sunrise without any sacrifice, temple or priest.

Other places of worship are associated with communities. Some such places are groves, rocks, caves, hills, mountains and trees. Although the Masai for example do not have specific worship places they believe that God manifests in trees and mountains (Westerlund 2006:70). In other parts of Africa small shrines in the form of clay huts abound, particularly in West Africa (Parrinder 1968:89). Normally these appear neglected, but a priest crouches at the altar from time to time to make offerings.

Shrines or sacred places are revered. At these places sacrifices are offered. People may offer animals, birds, food, utensils and coinage (Mbiti 1975:19). Prayers are also conducted at shrines and sacred places. These places are regarded as holy. In certain cases shrines are considered to be sanctuaries where life may not be taken.

Places of worship are both man made and those occurring naturally. People build houses, for instance, and dedicate them for religious use. Equally natural places isolated from the compound are also utilized. In most cases communal places of worship are tended and cared for by a local priest. The priest apart from cleaning the shrine receives petitioners and acts as intermediary when offering sacrifices. Further it is the responsibility of the priest to protect the place from malcontents seeking to desecrate the place.

4.3.2.2   Functions of prayer

In Africa as anywhere else different prayers are offered at different times and for varying situations. Some prayers have been formalized through memorization and have taken a poetic pattern. Such prayers are passed from one generation to the next. On the other hand prayer can also be composed at the moment without prior memorization.

Prayer assists people to get close to God because they are able to commune with him directly. In communal prayer people are cemented together in one purpose. This feature figures prominently in prayers that are accompanied by choruses or litanies. In such cases the people are able to participate in a responsorial manner. The officiant leads and give directions to which the assembly responds thus allowing everyone to share in the need expressed by their prayer. Prayers also remove anxiety, fears, frustrations and worries. All the impending hardships are brought before God, hence, cultivating the people's dependence on God (Mbiti 1975:57).

On the other hand the general picture in Africa is that regular communal prayers to God are rare. But individual prayer is common particularly when the petitioner is in crisis. God is the resort to the desperate when all else has failed (Parrinder 1976:39).

Prayer is made to God requesting for protection from all possible dangers. Usually these prayers are short and focused on the requirement. In *African prayers* (1975) Mbiti organizes prayer genres thematically. Thus only prayers that are predominantly protective in character appear under prayers of protection (Mbiti 1975:56). However, an examination of other genres yields different results. African prayers are difficult to classify thematically. Prayer texts may be categorized in various ways (Shorter 1975:16). For instance prayers for sowing time, prayers for the day, month and year may have elements of protection. Therefore caution must be considered when defining prayer thematically.   The following prayers demonstrate the point:

4.3.3 Sowing prayer

4.3.3.1   Introduction

Lozi people approach God in September prior to the commencement of sowing. During such rituals different communities assemble in their locales to perform a number of acts

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and pray to *Nyambe*. Requests to the Deity for provision of increase in the fields, strength for the agricultural task, blessing and protection from hazards are presented (Mainga 1972:98).

4.3.3.2 Text and translation

Lozi sowing prayer	
O Nyambe, you are the creator of all. *Today we, your creatures, prostrate ourselves before you in supplication.* *We have no strength.* *You who have created us have all power.* *We bring you our seed and all our implements that you may bless them and bless us also so that we may make good use of them by the power which comes from you , our creator.* (Di Nola 1962:38)	*Nyambe, u mubupi wa linto kaufela* *Kachenu luna libupiwa za hao lwa* *I tahisa fapila hao ka kupo* *Haluna mata* *Wena ya lu bupile u nani mata kaufela* *Lu ku tiseza lipeu ni libelekiso za luna* *Ili kuli uli tonolofaze mi utonolofaze cwalo* *Ni luna kuli lu itusise zona ka mata a zwa* *Ku wena mubupi wa luna.*

4.3.3.3 Genre

This is a prayer for sowing time. Petitions are presented before *Nyambe* for strength and blessings. God's blessings guarantee favour and success. Further, blessings secure an individual or community from failure. A recipient of blessings possesses power of inviolability. The blessed person and property are immune from destruction. Therefore prosperity and protection from failure are embedded in the blessing.

4.3.3.4 Literary context

This prayer for sowing is classified together with similar African prayers of sowing and agriculture. Thematically these prayers from different African societies are dominated by requests for a good crop. A close examination of these prayers results in allusions to other attending motifs. Requests for, rain, protection from injury caused by thorns, snakes

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and beasts are simultaneously brought before the divinities (Di Nola 1962:38; Mbiti 1975:69).

Therefore based on its literary context the Lozi sowing prayer considers aspects of protection indirectly. The petitioner requests for the seed to yield plenty. There is an expectation that the seed will germinate and bear fruit in due season. Remotely included in the request is the aspect of protection of the seed from crop failure. In order to have good growth necessary pre-requisites are needed. For example in the most arid places of Africa drought could easily wreck the people's lives. Similarly other natural agents and pests can lead to crop failure and result in life threatening conditions. Hence blessings ensure healthy workers and a good crop.

4.3.3.5   Cultural context

Agricultural prayer rites are attested all over Africa (Theron 1996:13; 114). They are diversely observed from one society to another at the beginning of the planting season. At many of these rituals ancestral spirits and divinities are summoned to cause an abundant crop. For example Venda people of South Africa observe rituals which include tilling their chief's field. Thereafter a pot of grain is cooked. Then the chief's maternal aunt fills her mouth with water and spews it on the ground saying:

Here is food for you, all our spirits; we give you every kind of grain, which you may eat. Bring us also crops in plenty and prosperity in the coming season (Parrinder 1968: 83).

Although sowing prayers are addressed to the Deity or ancestors primarily for the crop they also include requests for rain, protection on the field from natural hazards and animal danger (Mbiti 1975:69). They are also aimed at restoring, maintaining and enhancing cosmic harmony (Theron 1996:13). Thus they represent protection from crop failure which may cause starvation and other dangerous elements.

4.3.3.6   Division

The Lozi sowing prayer is divided into two parts the invocation and praise followed by the petition and trust. The following structure demonstrates the point:

- **Invocation and praise- Strophe I**
- **Petition and trust- Strophe II**

4.3.3.7   Detailed analysis
4.3.3.7.1.   Invocation and praise

This prayer is addressed to *Nyambe*, the Lozi Supreme Being (line 1). It was probably uttered by those who held strongly to *Nyambe* worship. In the prayer the suppliant recognizes *Nyambe* as creator. In Lozi mythology *Nyambe* created all things in the beginning (Jalla 1954:1; Mainga 1972:98).

Nyambe is praised for the past creative activities. This is achieved by prostrating before the Supreme Being (line 2). The sowing prayer to *Nyambe* provides an exemplary of the posture undertaken in prayer. It is apparent that the suppliant may have bowed before god's proxy the sun. Like the people of northern Ghana, Lozi people do not practice sun worship. Petitioners stretch their hands towards the rising sun but the Supreme Being is distinct from the proxy (Parrinder 1976:34). Having humbled himself the petitioner acknowledges his weakness (line 3). His weakness must be considered in the light of *Nyambe*'s creative power. The fact that the legendary *Kamunu* was capable of imitating the creator in almost every project does not colour the petitioner's status in comparison to the creator (Jalla 1954:1). The suppliant praises and acknowledges that God is the creator, focus of prayer and reliable provider.

4.3.3.7.2   Petition and trust

The supplicant picks up the motif of creation again. *Nyambe* is not only creator but also the all-powerful one (line 4). He is able to sustain his creation and provide for them. *Nyambe* also makes the seed to grow.

The petitioner proceeds to present seed, implements and himself before *Nyambe* for blessings (line 5). The worshipper understood that he needed the Deity's blessings in

order to achieve the task of ploughing, sowing, and harvest. Blessings are a source of protection on the seed and crop too.

Prayers for man's work are attended by the unforeseen (Mbiti 1975:68). Pre-technological people understand that natural processes lie outside human manipulation. Prayer therefore is a desire to co-opt chance in order to harmonize the physical with the spiritual realm. In this way work is ritualized and sanctified. Therefore seeds, implements and laborers are dedicated to God for the sake of invoking the obscure powers. Consequently the suppliants hope that their labour will yield fruit.

Although the Lozi sowing prayer does not mention requests for rain directly it is assumed that such a request is part of the prayer ritual. It is inferred that requests for rain are made due to the time when this prayer was made. This prayer was offered in September at the beginning of the rain season. In addition it is hard to work in the gardens without the reward of rain. Rain is an answer from God signifying abundance (Mbiti 1975:62). Parallel prayers in the literary context include petitions for rain for example the prayer of Dogon people of Mali (Mbiti 1975:69). During drought this ritual would have included requests for prayer.

An exemplar of the rainmaking ritual is about the Bamangwato in South Africa. At one occasion a bull without blemish was selected. Such an animal had one colour like black. Thereafter it was given water and then slaughtered at the grave. Fires were lit and the meat roasted. The chief was the first to partake of it followed by the rest of the congregation by order of age. Then the assembly proceeded to worship under the direction of the chief. Intonations were addressed to dead chiefs (Parrinder 1968:62). Congregants made the welking noise and sang some rain songs on their way home. That same evening rain there was drenching rain (Willoughby 1928:208).

When the Lozi nation is facing a calamity such as drought prayers are offered to safe guard the people against the adverse effects of the hazard. At the national level and in the royal grave cult the prerogative of bringing requests to the royal ancestors rests with the reigning king. The king presents a sacrifice to the grave custodian, Ňomboti. Such a sacrifice is normally cattle which of necessity have to be black typifying the dark rain clouds.

The grave custodian then proceeds to bring the sacrificial animal before a dead king's grave. At the royal gravesite the animal is slaughtered. Then designated animal parts are removed and offered to the departed king. The rest of the animal is prepared and eaten by the assembled people. This done the gathering is led in song and prayer addressed to the royal ancestor spirit requesting for rain.

Amongst the Dogon of Mali altars for God (*Amma*) exist (Mbiti 1975:69). These altars are communal property. The chief is the officiant at the group altars. Similar to the Lozi custodians there are priests who provide service to *Amma*. These priests are possessed by a force and are commissioned by a diviner. A dedicated priest has the responsibility of offering regular sacrifices. Annually priests and priestesses officiate at these ceremonies (Parrinder 1968:37).

When drought is affecting only certain areas of the Lozi kingdom, prayers are conducted at the local royal burial site to the respective king. In cases when the drought is wrecking the whole nation, rituals are made in all regions.

At village level people in the affected area perform necessary rituals. This is achieved by appealing to *Nyambe* for intervention. At any rate it appears that prayers are conducted regularly in the *Nyambe* cult at the commencement of the sowing season. Village people gather for prayers in September prior to the rain season.

Similarly at one occasion a Lozi chief, Mahaha of Sesheke gathered close to fifty people for prayers to *Mulimu*, God. The name of God *Molimo* is associated with protection amongst the Basuto (Parrinder 1976:36). *Mulimu* was approached under a *Muzungula* tree. In front of the tree a little shed was made from grass and stakes. Next to the shed was an altar made out of wood. The chief placed a skin cloak and a wooden dish full of water as an offering when requesting for rain (Coillard 1902:535).

By turning to *Nyambe* prior to sowing the suppliant in our prayer expresses his confidence in the abilities of the Deity. Having prayed the worshipper trusts that the task of sowing will proceed smoothly and that the crop will be secured.

4.3.3.8   Setting and date
4.3.3.8.1   Historical setting

If *Nyambe* worship is older than the royal grave cult then this prayer presents early ideologies concerning the Deity. Although only a conjecture religious history indicates a development from family/communal setting to a later centralized national religion. Thus its form is antecedent to the establishing of the monarchical institution in the 16th Century. However, this particular prayer is a product of the 20th Century. Moreover *Nyambe* worship has not been completely overtaken by the royal cult.

4.3.3.8.2   Cultic setting

Prior to the commencement of the rain season in September the village headman prepares the place for prayer (Turner 1952:49). A sacred spot is swept and an altar is erected from sticks and clay. Then a dish is placed on the altar. This dish acts as a receptacle into which each household puts a little of each seed type they intend to plant. Hoes, axes and assegais are also placed therein. Proceedings are led by the headman who kneels down before the altar facing the rising sun. Simultaneously, the headman joins his hands, bows down and looks up with outstretched hands. He turns to the left and right while performing the actions repeatedly. The rest of the people join their leader in performing the gestures. In this case the headman then offered this sowing prayer to *Nyambe.*

Previously there were fields designated for *Nasilele*, the wife of *Nyambe* (Mainga 1972:98). Villagers would work in these demarcated fields while singing and praying to *Nyambe*. Prayers were offered requesting *Nyambe* to cause rain to fall and the seeds to germinate and yield a harvest. In time due to scarcity of land wasteland was used instead.

4.3.3.9   Synthesis

The above prayer is addressed to *Nyambe*. God is acknowledged as the creator. The community confesses humility for indeed, they are only creatures of God. All power is ascribed to God. The prayer shifts from praise and announcing God's attributes to supplication. Requests pertain to God's blessing not only on the implements and seeds but also on the people. The power of God is sought for the purpose of enhancing growth and a healthy yield.

Although this prayer lacks the obvious language of protection, it is possible to read it in. Tribal agricultural communities feared natural disasters such as drought and pests since they could easily lead to crop failure. Similarly, they relied on good health and strength for their manual labours. Failure of any of these conditions may threaten their livelihood. Hence, Lozi people depended on the gods to secure their crop and grant them increase.

In addition, the blessing is not only intended to provide a positive effect in terms of increase, but also to act as a deterrent against any adversity. In this case the blessing becomes a power of protection from any harm.

4.3.4 Morning prayer

4.3.4.1   Introduction

Traditionally Lozi people worship the Supreme God *Nyambe* (Mainga 1972:96). In their religious schema there are other intermediaries who are venerated (Muuka 1966:258). Deceased royalties and ordinary ancestors are venerated. Lozi mythology depicts the sun as *Nyambe*'s representative (Arnot 1889:88). Although some African societies worship before the sun it is difficult to equate the ritual to sun worship obtaining in ancient Egyptian religion (Parrinder 1976:44).

Those who remember the ancient ways rise in the morning, stretch their hands before the sun and welcome the High God as king (Rooke 2006:2-4). The Lozi morning prayer is addressed to God. It contains praise resembling homage paid to an earthly king. Beyond praise, its cultic and literary contexts predicate aspects of protection. Similarly, its mythological history supports a protection motif.

4.3.4.2   Text and translation

Lozi morning prayer	
Here is our king. He has come.	*Ki yo wa taha Mulena waluna. U tile*

Mangwe, Mangwe Molyetu!	*Mangwe, Mangwe Molyetu*
(Glory, glory glory to the one over us!)	*Kanya, kanya kanya ibe ku ya fahalimu*
(Jalla 1954:3; Rooke 2006:2)	*aluna*

4.3.4.3   Division and literary context

The above prayer exhibits welcome and praise, but its brevity makes it unnecessary to divide the prayer further.   It consists of three lines.

Originally this prayer is quoted in Jalla's *Litaba za sicaba sa Malozi* (legends myths and history). It conveys a rather difficult theology concerning the Deity. The approximation of the sun to God has led some to suggest that the sun was worshipped as the local God (Rooke 1990:3).   For example, Mackintosh (1922:370) suggests that every morning *Kamunu* (man) prays to the sun and to *Nasilele* at new moon. However, mythological beliefs of Lozi people indicate that subsequent to *Nyambe*' s ascension, the sun came to be recognized as his proxy (Scheub 2000:185).

While the prayer contains no direct mention of protection, the mere evocation and appeasement of the Deity opens the channel for his benevolence. In turn, prosperity and protection are ensured.   It is most likely that praise in the morning should have connotations with securing the Deity's guidance, blessing and protection during the day. By conjecture, this matter of fact is supported by the protection motif in the paralleled cultural Morning Prayers by the Vasu and Konde [33] of Tanzania (Omari 1971:8; Mbiti 1975:32).

4.3.4.4   Cultural context

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[33] *We rise up in the morning before the day,*

To betake ourselves to our labour,

To prepare our harvest.

Protect us from the dangerous animal

And from the serpent, from every stumbling block (Mbiti 1975:32).

Vasu protection prayer

Oh Izuva you are the greater, you are God. One who creates people, children, trees and grass. One who passes above us and sees anyone who has ill feelings towards me when you rise up in the morning, protect us today and judge among us who is right (Omari 1971:8).

Different African societies have legends regarding the Supreme Being. Some of these myths concern the golden age. It is common belief that the Deity lived on earth with man in primordial time. However, due to differences with man, God ascended to a remote abode.

Thus the absence of the Deity from the earth has led many African people to recognise the sun as his proxy. For that reason petitioners frequently offer their prayers at the break of dawn, as the sun appears. Other prayers are offered at dusk. Importantly, the sun is not worshipped but it symbolises the Deity. As it traverses across the sky, African people conceive this as a metaphor of God's omniscience. Equally its brilliance is figurative to his glory and majesty. Other sky symbols are lightining, rainbow and sky itself. Among tribal people who depend on nature these images signify benevolence (Shorter 1975:111).

4.3.4.5   Detailed analysis

The Lozi morning prayer is addressed to *Nyambe* through his proxy the sun (line 1). Traditionally in Africa, salutations were made to a person of high status or deity (McKenzie 1997:332). The Vasu of Tanzania also prayed to Izuva (Sun) everyday. Each morning the head of the Vasu family spits saliva four times in the direction of the rising sun (Omari 1971:8). Similarly, the Lozi and Konde elders face the east to the rising sun and offer praise and welcome (Mbiti 1975:32). After *Mrungu's* (God) ascension Izuva became his eye, watching over the earth. The sun fully risen, the suppliant acknowledges the coming of the God king (Omari 1971:8). Elsewhere in Africa, symbols of spirit worship include wooden or clay figurines. Such objects function not only as tools for worship, but means of protection (Olowola 1993:41). Lozi people on the other hand do not have man-made symbols of the Supreme Being.

The Lozi elder praises the God king and ascribes glory to him (Rooke 2006:2). Similarly, Izuva is acknowledged as great, creator of people, children, trees and grass (Omari 1971:8). Kuria people also acknowledge the sun as originator of all things (Ruel 1997:163). Izuva is omniscient; his overhead path from rising to setting is interpreted as watching over his people (Omari 1971:8). Further, the sun takes note of people's actions on its journey (Ruel 1997:164). This high regard for the sun precipitates an interpretative question. Although the Vasu may have worshipped the sun as a separate god, it appears that he was identified with the Supreme Being (Omari 1971:8). Thus the sun is not represented as a person. Importantly, its visible presence is evidence of its beneficent effects. The sun causes plants to grow, consequently providing life to animals. Inversely, the sun is capable of causing destruction (Ruel 1997:164).

There is a marked shift pertaining to petition. The Lozi prayer terminates with praise resembling that offered to an earthly king (line 3). Perhaps praise is the objective of the prayer. To the contrary the Vasu referred to protection from people with ill feelings (Omari 1971:8). Equally, the Konde include a different motivation for their prayer; the day's labour, harvest. In turn this leads to requests for protection from dangerous animals, serpents and stumbling blocks. The Kuria also requested for good in the morning. The Vasu and Kuria family head also uttered the prayer at dusk requesting protection from evil (Ruel 1997:164).

If the Lozi prayer was simply praise it would explain the exclusion of elaborate petitions. However, this point is difficult for various reasons. This morning prayer appears to be a daily prayer (Rooke 2006:2). Hence, it is postulated that the present text may have belonged to a larger text that included petitions for the day. Alternatively, additions were made to this praise and welcome address dependent on need. Moreover, the act of naming a person in Africa renders him present mysteriously. These magical overtones make the presence and availability of *Nyambe* a source of blessing, care and protection against harm (Tambiah 1968:186; Shorter 1975:15).

Although the glory of the sun may have evoked praise this response remains problematic on a continent which enjoys plenty of sunshine. In contradistinction to the more northerly people of Europe who anticipate the return of the sun in spring, the sun is more oppressive in parts of Africa (Parrinder 1976:44). Therefore, it is unlikely that an invocation could have been made for the sake of welcoming the sun. Notwithstanding Shorter's (1975:3)

assertion that thanksgiving is an expression of man's dependence on supernatural powers, most of the African prayers are rather materialistic, lacking in communion (Olowola 1993:39). Even though requests and sacrifices, offerings of thanksgiving and memorial are common features of prayer in Africa, the dominant motif remains petitions for protection and flourishing of life (Magesa 1997:199).

When gratitude is unaccompanied with petition it may incorporate faith in the continuance of the favour for which the worshipper is grateful (Shorter 1975:18). Upon this theory we proceed to read the daily requirements into the praise. Chief among daily needs would be shelter, food, ability to work and protection from harm. Traditional African prayers generally include elements of praise, thanksgiving, a declaration of state of affairs in which the prayer arises and requests. Concreteness is a central mark in these prayers. Some of the requests in prayer are: healing, protection from danger, safety in traveling, security, preservation of life and various matters pertaining to life (Mbiti 1975:56).

One of the basic elements in African Traditional Religion is harmony (Dryness 1990:43). There is a fundamental harmony between the world and living things. This is preserved by ritual and religion (Mbiti 1969:67). Although nature is basically positive, it can be precarious. The need to enhance harmony therefore requires certain observations. Taboos, rituals and prayers may serve the purpose of awakening the world (Zuese 1979:36, 43, 44). To this end, the pygmies of the Ituri forest observe some taboos and light fire in the morning. The Ibo morning prayer[34] illustrates the point (Okorocha 1986:199). Thus the means of fellowship with the gods goes beyond communion to enlisting their support for the community. By means of prayer and ritual, the African intends to manipulate the powers in the spirit world to his own advantage (Okorocha 1987:52).

Since evidence from parallel morning prayers points to a strong protection motif, it is inferred that the Lozi also anticipated God's protection for the day. Protection could have been posterior to the main praise element. Even if the extempore prayer is not part of a larger text by calling on the deity, it is plain that the supplicant expected his presence. His presence brings balance in life. Thus providence and protection are availed to the petitioner.

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[34] "Give us life,
worthwhile life".

4.3.4.6   Setting and date

4.3.4.6.1 Historical setting

The morning prayer has been associated with contemporary ceremonies and people who hold to ancient *Nyambe* beliefs. If Rooke is correct in linking the prayer to the mythological deluge, then the prayer may be ancient. This early date is further motivated by the fact that the sun became *Nyambe*'s proxy in mythical history after His ascension to *Litooma,* his heavenly village (Scheub 2000:185). An auxiliary argument is found in the similarity of the flood legend with other stories of cataclysmic events told in different parts of the world. Although in its current state, the prayer is a product of the early 20th Century. It contains archaic materials. The praise "Mangwe, Mangwe, Molyetu" is in ancient Luyana language spoken prior to Kololo invasion in 1830. Luyana is extant at the royal capital and in songs and proverbs.

4.3.4.6.2 Cultic setting

This Lozi morning prayer is offered at the rising of the sun. The worshipper accompanies the utterance of this prayer with symbolic action. This prayer is grounded in the *Nyambe* cult. It appears that it was conducted at the family level. On the other hand, this prayer may have been performed by an individual. At any rate, there is no real distinction in Africa between communal and individual prayer (Shorter 1975:22).

This prayer is also associated with daily devotions and ceremonies at special cyclic times of the year (Rooke 2006:2). One such ceremony is the *Kuomboka* when Lozi people sail from the flood plains to the highland. Lozi mythology point to the first *Kuomboka* necessitated by *meyi a lungwangwa*[35]. *Kuomboka* coincides with the waxing of the moon[36]. Prior to the ceremony royal ancestors are consulted. When their blessing is given, the ceremony may occur. It is also important that the plains are inundated in order

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[35] *Meyi a lungwangwa* refers the primordial water that swallowed everything. Legend has it that the deluge occurred before Mboo the first known male chief. During this great flood the Zambezi plains flooded animals died and plant life was swept away. The people were terrified to escape the flood in their dugout canoes. *Nyambe* responded by instructing a man, *Nakambela* to build a big boat *Nalikwanda*. The boat was built and painted in white and black stripes signifying spirituality and the black people. The boat carried the people who took with them every seed type and animal dung. On landing the seeds were planted becoming progenitors of plant life. Similarly animals sprung out of the dung.

[36] The moon is a symbol of *Nasilele* the wife of *Nyambe*. When the moon is waxing prayers are offered at royal gravesite to royal ancestors who in turn implore *Nasilele.* The goddess conveys requests to *Nyambe* for blessings.

for the royal barge, *Nalikwanda* to sail. If Rooke has correctly linked this prayer to the ceremony, then support for protection can be adduced from rituals surrounding securing blessings and safe passage from the Supreme Being.   In contemporary times the prayer is uttered by those who remember the ancient ways of *Nyambe*.

4.3.4.7   Synthesis

This prayer does not mention danger directly. It is inferred that the petitioner requests for protection through the welcome address. The text points to praise of the High God represented by the sun. However, for two reasons I will infer a protection motif in the prayer. It has been pointed out that when juxtaposed with similar prayers like the Vasu prayer elements of danger, provision and blessing are envisaged. I also argued that praise may have been part of a larger ritual. In any case, the coming of the Deity presupposes benevolence on the suppliant and community. Hence this particular prayer may have served the purpose of introduction or welcoming the deity.

Another way of conjecturing protection arises from the literary historical context. Jalla and Rooke make allusions to the mythical ascension of *Nyambe* and the occurrence of the deluge respectively. Given the destructive effect of the floods, a mythological force forms the background of the prayer. Thus, the prayer is interpreted against the backdrop of dangerous waters and *Nyambe*'s provision of the way of escape.   Its later use encompasses more than thanksgiving - it looks back to the protector who rises above them and protects them.

4.3.5 Blessing and cursing

4.3.5.1   Andonyi war prayer

4.3.5.1.1   Introduction

 Lozi people employed cursing as a weapon not only for protection, but also for aiding them in their desires to conquer the enemy. This extempore Andonyi war imprecation has no reference to God. Yet it was expected to be effectual.

The efficacy of performative words has been described variously. Firstly, such words operate under psychological dimensions like self-fulfilling prophecies. Secondly, they derive power from the shared vital force latent in both animate and inanimate objects. This

extension of personality is as real as its human counterpart. When a person has good force everything he does will prosper. The vitality can be put in human words, prayers curses and blessings (Abegunde 1991:242). Thirdly, their potentiality is attended by the Supreme Being (Westerlund 2006:157). This is true even when the name of the Deity is not called on (Gulliver 1963:286). The power from traditional medicine is the fourth reason. Ultimately the religious historical background of tribal people points to a belief in protector gods. Each tribe has a covenant with its own protector God. Thus the Deity leads them to battle and secures victory for them (Grabner-Haider & Marx 2005:417). In this way the ritual and words uttered find their realization through power from the Deity.

4.3.5.1.2 Text and translation

Text	Translation
Let them die like Mubako [37] *Let them die like Mubula*[38] (Jalla 1954:9).	*Ba shwe sina Mubako* *Ba shwe sina Mubula*

4.3.5.1.3   Genre

This short prayer is identified as cursing words. Further these portent words serve protective and destructive purposes. They were uttered with the intent of securing victory over the enemy subsequently resulting in safety for the fledgling kingdom.

4.3.5.1.4 Division and literary context

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[37] Mubako is a tree specie
[38] Mubula is also tree specie. The significance of pounding the herb mixture is likened to the death of the enemy.

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The brevity of this magical utterance provides only one strophe. Ritual formulas are usually short being accompanied with ritual action (Shorter 1975:20). This cursing prayer is imbedded in a historical mythological narrative (Jalla 1954:9). The author may have employed a piece that was reworked orally over a period of time. Hence a historical narrative has been infused with magical aspects.

At any rate, the legend depicts the function of verbal magic in securing victory over an enemy. Consequently these utterances resulted in security for the kingdom from the marauding horde. The fact that this prayer account goes back to the formative stage of the kingdom lends support to its historicity, however, reservedly given the vulnerability of the emerging state.

4.3.5.1.5 Cultural context

In African Traditional Religion, the desire for divine protection may be expressed negatively through cursing or exorcism (Shorter 1975:19). The operation of the curse is made explicit in the Arusha (Tanzania) belief system. A curse is pronounced to punish an alleged offender. In such cases Arusha people believe that Engai, the High God sends misfortune if the victim is an offender (Gulliver 1963:286). But protection can also be secured through the use of a positive form, blessing. Blessing and cursing are attempts to influence the direction of divine power (Mckenzie 1997:334). The negative form acts against the enemy while the positive encourages the idea of life (Shorter 1975:19). The Yoruba too believe that cursing is a powerful means of inflicting illness or even death (Westerlund 2006:186). Although a curse is usually a spoken word, the Yoruba believe it can be set in motion by a mere look. Blessings and curses are uttered with or without being accompanied by charms (Adamo 2004:28). The victim is cursed so as to bring destruction on him. Equally, a good person evokes a blessing from people who are pleased by his deeds.

A curse is employed in securing protection. For example, a prayer uttered in the morning could contain elements of cursing on any potential evil worker. By so doing, the curse becomes a prayer of protection against maliciousness or physical harm caused by an evil person. For example, the following curse by king of Biolorun Pellu:

If any man or woman, black or yellow, tall or short, or of whatsoever description, seek after my hurt by the interposition of Angels, old people, or my deceased father, confound that person, kick him to the ground, rub his lips to the ground, bore a hole through his lips and tie them to the roof of the house, give his head a good slapping, and make himself to become as a dog to which thou hast given tail, and class him among the dumb and senseless (McKenzie 1997335).

4.3.5.1.6 Detailed analysis

The Andonyi war curse has no addressee. Yet the victim was fully known. It appears from the curse that Lozi people believe in the destructive power of negative spoken words (lines 1-2). In many African societies, there is confidence that performative words spoken correctly in the right place at the specified time are effective (Adamo 2004:27). Certain people are said to have omens in their words. Among such people are medicine men, witches, elders and other people who for some reason have intrinsic power. Yet, in other African societies anyone can curse almost anyone else (Gulliver 1963:286).

In this occasion, the continued attacks from Andonyi left the Lozi people insecure. Traditionally, when an African identifies an enemy, certain remedies are sought for example, the use of medicines or curses. In the event that the victim lacks the ability to pronounce portent words, he summons the assistance of a medicine man (Adamo 2004:27). For that reason the vulnerable Lozi community contracted the services of a medicine man. The medicine man in turn, provided some herbs and instructed a damsel to pound the mixture. She pointed the pestle in the direction of the Andonyi country as she pounded. This action was accompanied by the curse. Generally, Africans believe that when words are uttered, they take a life of their own (Abegunde 1991:242). Spoken words are expected to be effectual. Among the Arusha, once a curse is pronounced, the High God sends misfortune unless it is revoked (Gulliver 1963:286). The presence and acts of the medicine man in the text indicate a relationship between sorcery medicines and curse (Westerlund 2006:186).

Dramatization is an aspect of material prayer (Shorter 1975:22). It is believed that through sympathetic magic the desired end can be realized. The actions of pounding symbolized the envisaged resounding defeat of the enemy. Through speech the nature of defeat, is specified as death. Words have power to bring destruction. Among the Yoruba and Masai a curse is uttered publicly in the presence of the victim. They also assert that curses are mostly effective between relations (Westerlund 2006:156,186). In the case of the Lozi, the opposite is true. It can be safely concluded that the Andoyi were neither present nor related to Lozi people and yet, the curse was expected to be effectual.

Tambiah (1966:194) has argued that words in themselves have no power. To suggest that primal people believe in the power of words is equating their beliefs to magic. The efficacy of words derives from symbolic acts associated with the utterances. This matter of fact provides an aura of operational reality. The case in point illustrates that confidence in the acts and pronouncements may have raised the morale of the Lozi warriors.

There are cases however, where the declaration of performative words is not accompanied by action and yet, the speaker expects their materialization (Ray 1973:26). The presence of medicine also attaches support to belief in the magical effect of the actions. Here, as in other parts of Africa, traditional medicine is said to be effectual through supernatural power (Abimbola 1991:57; Maboea 2002:26, 26). Hence Lozi tribesmen realised their desired results of protection and victory on the battlefield through a combination of cursing, ritual acts and traditional medicine. Ultimately, the agent for the curse is God since he is the final arbiter (Westerlund 2006:157).

4.3.5.1.7 Setting and date
4.3.5.1.7.1 Historical setting

Legend has it that the Andonyi had raided the Lozi persistently in the early settlement period. In the view of the historical data, Lozi people could have settled in the area in the 16th Century (Mainga 1973:19; Malan 1995:56). Lozi failure to repulse and defeat the marauding tribe, led the king to seek the service of a medicine man. Subsequent to the cursing and dramatization, tradition has it that Andonyi people were defeated. And the region was secured.

4.3.5.1.7.2   Cultic setting

The medicine man charged a damsel to pound a mixture of herbs in a mortar. This act involved pointing the pestle in the direction of the Andonyi country. Through the action of pounding and intentional pestle pointing, prayer was materialized. These acts were accompanied by cursing words. Since there was a national threat, the king was involved in securing the services of the medicine man/diviner. Moreover, this ritual was conducted at national level. Such rituals were performed as need arose.

4.3.5.1.8   Synthesis

The historical context of the curse points to danger arising from a tribal enemy. Andonyi raids on Lozi people were a threat to the young state. The scale of danger was national. This motivated the community to seek assistance. Representing the dominion, the king procured the assistance of a medicine man. Both the king and medicine man functioned as intermediaries. Through sympathetic and verbal magic, victory was secured. This was acted out in a counter offensive resulting in victory.

4.3.5.2   Ila/ Tonga war prayer
4.3.5.2.1   Introduction

During the last war made on Tonga and Ila people of southern Zambia, Lozi warriors uttered curses and blessings. The Blessing was aimed at providing the warriors with the enablement at war. Inversely, the curse was directed at the enemies. The purpose for such pronouncements was to cripple the enemy lines and rout them.   These pronouncements are effectual by magical forces.

4.3.5.2.2   Text and translation

Lozi blessing and curse	
May our countrymen live!	*Tu ka yoye bakwetu*
Fellow countrymen may we live long	*Tu ka yoye*
May our enemies perish!	
May our enemies perish!	*Ba ka fe!*

4.3.5.2.3   Genre

This prayer is classified under verbal magic or blessing and curse. Although it is not addressed to God, religious history indicates that it is prayer nonetheless. Perhaps, this was the earliest form of prayer bordering on beliefs in the power of words, operating on their own without direct aid from a deity. Thus the source of this power is problematic. It has been suggested that certain people in African society have the power to pronounce blessings and curses such as kings, priests, witchdoctors, elderly, poor, etc (McKenzie 1997:334). Other primal people believe that everyone posses this ability which resides in one's stomach (Ray 1973:28). Yet, others argue that tribal people do not necessarily believe in magic, rather the efficacy of the words derives from communal authority (Tambiah 1968:202). At any rate, there is ample evidence suggesting belief in the efficacy of spoken words (Shorter 1975:19).

Eventually, the power of the words emanates from the Supreme Being (Gulliver 1963:286; Theron 1996:50). The historical, cultural context suggests that in Africa, the awareness of the divine is taken for granted. African people have a holistic approach to life which ensures belief in the divine as the ultimate reality in all circumstances. This presents a hermeneutical key, however, by conjecture to conceiving the efficacy of such words. Hence, cursing and blessing may represent an early form of prayer and in this instance, it served as means to securing protection and triumph.

4.3.5.2.4   Literary context

The literary historical context of the prayer provides a narration of the political history and economic systems of the Lozi kingdom. Importantly, the evolution of a large state added economic pressure on the royal aristocracy. In order to maintain the colossal expenditure of the royal establishment, administration and military, the kingdom relied more and more on pillaging.

At war, the warriors depended on the power of the gods and magic. Hence, the pre-battle and war rites support the religious attempt to manipulate the Deity and royal divinities. Divine favour and royal ancestors' support was sought in order to secure victory at war and protection for the warriors.

4.3.5.2.5 Cultural context

Kithuri blessing and curse

May people be well, may they be well,
Male, female, male, female
May they multiply themselves
Bad luck go away from us
The (uncircumcised) man who hates another may he perish
The man who does wrong may he also perish
The man who curses another who says: 'may he perish'
He will die on the spot cursed by the curse of the back (Shorter 1975:54).

The foregoing blessing and curse by a Kithuri clan elder (among the Meru of Kenya) is an attempt to evoke the benevolence on the family and malevolence on the foes. African people believe that words have power to cause destruction and construction. This invocation calls down blessings on boys and girls and goats and cattle. The curse of the back involves the baring of women against the enemies (Shorter 1975:54). This ritual act signifies the ultimate curse of destruction. In this way prayer is materialized in accompaniment of speech.

4.3.5.2.6 Division

The cursing and blessing utterance on the Illa/Tonga people is logically divided in a two part structure below:

- **Blessings- Strophe I (lines 1-2)**
- **Cursing- Strophe II (lines 3-5)**

Even though the prayer is concise it embraces two distinct genres of blessing and curse.

4.3.5.2.7   Detailed analysis

4.3.5.2.7.1   Blessings (lines 1-2)

The prayer begins by pronouncements of blessings (lines 1-2). It appears as though this is a war slogan serving the purposes of uplifting warrior morale. However, at the centre of the belief system is an understanding that these utterances are powerful (Coillard 1902:212; Shorter 1975:53). To be blessed implies being healthy, bearing children, having provision and in this case protection (Oostehuizen 1991:41).

It is possible that ancient Lozi warriors had confidence in the outworking power of the blessing. The extent of the blessing is realized by securing protection for the blessed person. Bestowed with the blessing, the warrior was inviolable and his protection was guaranteed.   The prayer was uttered antiphonally.   The call was pronounced by a selected person then the warriors reiterated (Ray 1973:28, McKenzie 1997:334).   A damsel was specifically appointed for the task. In some cultures, the power to utter performative words does not lie only with specific mediators but with everyone. This is informed by the belief that everyone possesses a force in his stomach (Malinowski 1961:427).

Alternatively, since the blessing was pronounced on the warriors, these ritual words were only effective as self-fulfilling purpose.   The hearers' spirits were lifted up by their positiveness (Tambiah 1968:202).   It is difficult to stretch the foregoing to the Kithuri blessing above. It appears that the speakers believed in the efficacy of uttered words and their ability to bring the desired results (Shorter 1975:53).

4.3.5.2.7.2   Cursing

The second part of the prayer is a curse (lines 3-5). Portent words are directed at the enemy (Coillard 1902:212). It was hoped that these words would destroy the enemy. The curse operates inversely to the blessing. A cursed person cannot prosper. There seems to be a link between the efficacy of the curse and the enemy's acts. For that reason, the enemy is overpowered by magical words actualized in war.

The Lozi enemy forces were weakened and rendered defenseless by the outworking of the curse. This is paralleled by the battle against the Andonyi[39] where the working of magic and subsequent cursing led to the demise of the opponent. Due to its destructive nature, a curse is not uttered carelessly, rather it is employed in extreme cases (Gulliver 1963:286). The "curse of the back" in the Kithuri curse illustrates a vulgar action made by women who bare their behind to an enemy in contempt (Shorter 1975:53).

It must be underlined that prior to the Lozi war curse, certain rituals were performed. These rites aroused the power of the royal ancestors (Coillard 1902:211). Equally, the spears were imbued with power from the gods of the underworld. Hence, the imprecation must be seen from such a religio-cultural context.

4.3.5.2.8   Setting and date
4.3.5.2.8.1   Historical setting

The immediate historical context of the prayer is the 19th Century. This prayer was performed prior to the Ila/Tonga - Lozi war. However, the prayer contains remnants of ancient theological conceptions concerning the efficacy of words. Thus it must be understood as a continuation of this perception.

4.3.5.2.8.2   Cultic setting

Pre-battle rites included devotions by the king. The war drums were played all night. Offerings consisting of calico, beadwork, water, milk or honey were sent to each royal grave in the land. In addition a sheaf of spears remained lying at the designated royal grave for forty-eight hours. This act was supposed to invoke blessings from the dignitaries of the other world on the spears (Coillard 1902:211).

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[39] See above prayer.

When marching to war an old man headed the army with a young girl in front of him followed by the king, *Ngambela* (Prime Minister) and the troops. The young girl was a prophetess, elected for the task by the divining bones. She was the interpreter of the gods. Nothing could be done without her. She carried a horn filled with medicines and charms. The troops were not allowed to pass her and when she felt tired or ill the young men carried her.

Approaching the enemy, she fired the first shot. She did not sit, sleep, drink or eat as long as the battle lasted. She only put the horn down when the halt was called. At this point, the young men struck their spears into the ground. Through the manipulation of spears, prayer was materialized (Shorter 1975:22). She then sounded the above battle cry with refrains from the troops.

These pronouncements were uttered in a war situation. In this ritual action, the presence of the community, ancestors and divinities is summoned. Through communal actualization, cursing is therefore not only declared , but is also confirmed (Ray 1973:22). The corporate repetition of the words adds truth to the words. *Nyambe* does not have a central worship center. What is critical is not the sacred place, but the ability of the people to approach the Deity anywhere. However in this instance he is approached through royal ancestors. If indeed the cursing is an extension of the pre-battle rituals, then the blessing and cursing ought to be perceived as part of invocations at the royal gravesite.

4.3.5.2.9   Synthesis

This prayer embodies two aspects of protection, namely: blessing and cursing. The cursing word was aimed at weakening the enemy. Although in Africa it is a grave offence to curse members of another group, in situations of extreme contumacy where a person or group is threatened, it may be employed (Gulliver 1963:286). The Illa and Tonga people are part of people who were pillaged by the Lozi. Such groups were attacked for supplies such as animals, food and women. In any case, war is dangerous business and the likelihood of death is certain. Hence the warriors sought triumph through the magical pronouncements.

Secondly, the blessing ensured protection and long life to the warriors. It is believed that the blessed man remains untouched in the face of danger. Even though many warriors fell at war it was commonly held that verbal magic was effectual.

Thirdly, the ultimate source of power for the curse and blessing is the High God. Even where charms are used, the power derives from the Deity. The ancestral gods act as intermediaries between the petitioners and the Supreme Being. Thus by making utterances, the protagonist is convinced in the efficacy of the words.

4.3.6 Prayer for protection from a mythic foe

4.3.6.1 Introduction

There are other hazards of nature from which the Lozi sought protection. For instance, the local people were scared of rapids and falls. They never ventured close to a falls without an offering to appease the divinity of the deep. It was believed that a monster inhabited the rapids of Matome at the junction of the river Lumbe. Only the king and other superior functionaries in the land knew the creature. People who knew the rites were employed in securing safe passage and guidance to the travelers. To appease the serpent, a snakeskin would be tossed towards where it was believed to reside (Coillard 1902:170).

During Coillard's travels on reaching the falls, his guides requested that he make an offering to the gods, which he refused. For fear of misfortune, one of the guides threw himself on a rock, clapping and praying to *Nyambe* as follows:

4.3.6.2 Text and translation

O Nyambe thou inhabitest these abysses, appease thy wrath!	*Nyambe wena ya ambakani libuba tokolomoha bunyemi bwa hao*
These white people are poor, and have nothing to offer thee.	*Makuwa ba ki ba botana, habana sebakona ku kufa*
If they had snuff and beads, we would know it and I would not	*Kambe ne banana kwai ni bufaha ne luka ziba*
Hide it from thee.	*Mi neni sike na kupatela sona*

O Nyambe, be not revengeful, do not swallow them up; appease *Thy wrath, Nyambe!* (Coillard 1902:169-170).	*Nyambe usi kutisi bumaswe, usike wa lumiza* *Tokolomoha bunyemi bwa hao, Nyambe*

4.3.6.3   Genre

This prayer exhibits a strong protection motif. It arises out of a situation of imminent danger from mythological creatures inhabiting the falls. Thus it is classified as a prayer for protection.

4.3.6.4   Literary context

The prayer is found in historical narrative regarding the background to the establishment of the missionary enterprise by Coillard of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. Its immediate context is an attempt at depicting the religion of the indigenous people of Barotseland. By alluding to their belief in mythological creatures inhabiting the gorges, the author portrays vividly the religious experience of the locals. Although the prayer account is written from an incredulous Christian perspective, the author depicts the religio-cultural milieu of the Lozi. Thus the petitioner is forced by this backdrop to pray to the Deity for protection. The presence of perceived danger in the rapids arising from belief in the mythological creature motivated this response.

4.3.6.5   Cultural context

Prayer for a safe journey
Gently! Smoothly! Isay so. Death does not come to him for whom prayer is made; death only comes to him who trusts in his own strength! Let misfortune depart, let it go to Shiburi, and Nkabelane. Let him travel safely; let him trample on his enemies; let thorns sleep, let lions sleep; let him drink water wherever he goes, and let that water make him happy, by the strength of this herb (Mbiti 1969:75).

This prayer is offered by a diviner on behalf of a traveller. Protection is sought from death, misfortune, enemies, thorns and lions. The intermediary washes the traveller in herbs. In

this way consolation is provided for the receipient and his family (Mbiti 1969:68). African people are threatened by many enemies in the fields and at home. Besides animal, and human caused danger people are under fear of nature. Lighting, rain and storms can easily cause harm to people (Shorter 1975:108). Thus prayers are made to secure protection from these elements and the powers behind them.

4.3.6.6   Division

This brief prayer has to two parts, the invocation and complaint and the petition. The following structure demonstrates the following:

> **Strophe I Invocation and complaint**
> **Strophe II Petition**

The opening phrase is repeated in closing forming an inclusio.

4.3.6.6   Detailed analysis
4.3.6.6.1 Invocation and complaint

This prayer is addressed to *Nyambe* who inhabits the falls (line 1a). The supplicant refers to *Nyambe*'s abode as the abyss either metaphorically or as an acknowledgement that he is omnipresent. It is most certain that the cause of fear is not *Nyambe,* but the mythological creatures of the deep. The local people believed that the rapids were inhabited by *Matome*   (Snake like mythic creature).

The worshipper immediately requests *Nyambe* to appease his wrath (line 1b). The awesomeness of the rapids evoked fear in the travelers. Alternatively, *Nyambe* may have been understood as controller of the creatures that caused danger. If this is true, the supplicant would be justified in requesting that *Nyambe*'s wrath be appeased.

The address is followed by complaint (line 2). The complaint is an exaggeration. Although the missionaries had money, the worshipper informs *Nyambe* of their lack. This matter of fact contradicts the omniscience of *Nyambe*. This theological understanding is also repeated in the failure of *Nyambe* to conceive the mind of *kamunu* in the creation myths.

However, the overall depiction is that *Nyambe* knows all. If indeed *Nyambe* is all knowing, then these may be cases of contradiction or anthropological expression.

At any rate, the absence of appeasements for *Nyambe* in this instance did not deter the suppliant from requesting for his intervention. The nature of offerings regularly brought before the Deity, is given as beads and snuff (line 3). Other material offerings commonly used among Lozi people include cloth, animals, oil and beer (Arnot 1889:54, 75-77). Gifts were not obstacles to the benevolence of God to his subjects in this instance.

4.3.6.6.2 Petition

The intercessor returns to the theme of appeasement stated earlier in the opening address (line 4). It appears from the phrase that the worshipper believed in a vengeful Deity. Whether this affirmation is a result of the failure by Coillard's party to offer gifts to *Nyambe,* or he believes in a malevolent God who acts arbitrarily, is not known. For some reason, the Deity is angry enough to want to swallow the wayfarer.

In spite of the causes for the Deity's anger, the suppliant trusted in his ability to withhold anger and render favour. Thus he requests for the appeasement of the Deity's wrath. There was another way of securing safe passage through the falls such as employing the services of local medicine men. These held the secret rituals involving tossing a skin of snake in the direction of the suspected mythical creature. However in this case the petitioner appealed directly to the tribal God for urgent vindication. *Nyambe* is capable of changing his predisposition of wrath to mercy.

4.3.6.7   Setting and date
4.3.6.7.1   Historical setting

 This prayer was uttered during Coillard of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society's enterprises in the 19th Century. The mythological, theological underpinnings of belief in mythical creatures inhabiting inanimate places such as the falls is common to people of many cultures predating this time.

4.3.6.7.2   Cultic setting

The above prayer is addressed to *Nyambe,* the Supreme God. It appears that the petitioner believed that *Nyambe* inhabited the rapids. The intercessor explains the inability to make an offering. What is not clear is whether the reason advanced for not presenting an offering is true or not. Given the reluctance and attitude of the missionaries towards the local gods and rituals, it is possible that the petitioner intentionally falsifies information. Requesting *Nyambe* to hold back his wrath and protect the travelers concludes the prayer.

4.3.6.8 Synthesis

There is a strong reference to danger in the prayer. From a glance it seems as though the traveler has an encounter with an angry Deity. Although remotely, this may be part of the larger theological framework of the local people - a more vivid enemy is in view. The mythological, historical context points to belief in a snake- like creature that indwelt the falls. The danger of attack was a reality to the paddlers such that the suppliant interceded for the missionaries.

The presence of danger motivated the response in prayer. Prayer in this case is a channel of communication with the Supreme Being in request for an answer to the potentially dangerous situation. In addition, this response exhibits the suppliant's confidence in the ability of *Nyambe* to intervene and rescue. This confidence is so strong that the worshiper believes that the deity will overlook the failure to bring offerings before hand.

Nyambe is recognized as the all powerful creator. He is triumphant over mythological creatures and capable of rescuing his subjects. He fills the universe, for indeed, he inhabits even the abyss.

4.3.7 Prayer for the accused
4.3.7.1 Introduction

Prayer was sometimes offered on behalf of an individual facing danger from human harm. Petty jealousies are common in closely knit societies. At times they lead to accusations of witchcraft. To that end the accused is forced to take a test to prove whether he is guilty or not. Failure to handle the ordeal signified death.

Chiefs also played a role in accusations and execution of suspects. Unfortunately, tyrannical rulers misused their powers and killed people mercilessly. In this context, Sipopa carried out executions either for magical purposes or as a way of purging individuals who were thought to be dangerous to his reign. The ordeal practice was later banned by king Lewanika.

4.3.7.2 Text and translation

Father, husband, brother, friend!	*Ndate, munaka, muhulwani, mulikani!*
Fear not you are innocent.	*Usi ke wa saba hauna mulatu*
Your foes were jealous;	*Lila za hao li nani muna*
They grudged on your mabele![40]	*Li nyemezi mabele ahao*
Nyambe knows you are a good man!	*Nyambe wa ziba kuli u muna yo munde*
Nyambe grant you to vomit the poison! (Holub 1976:320).	*Nyambe aku tazise mwabi*

4.3.7.3 Genre

This is a prayer for an accused person. The declaration may be classified as a wish. However, the utterances are more than a mere wish. They represent an ejaculation of prayer at the point of crisis. The victim's relatives desired his protection. Significantly, this prayer portrays a call to *Nyambe* for protection given the pervasion of justice during the reign of Sipopa.

4.3.7.4 Literary context

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[40] Mabele is the local word for millet.

The episode is part of the unstable political history of the Lozi people. Further it captures the tyrannical rule of Sipopa. Ruling after the overthrow of the Kololo conquerors, the land was under constant fear of rebellion. Driven by paranoia, the chief resorted to the use of charms and magic. He also employed the purging of treason suspects. At his instigation innocent people were executed.

Another prevailing danger arose from neighbour jealousies. Scores were settled through witchcraft accusations. In such cases the suspect was forced through the ordeal involving either drinking poison or placing one's hands in a boiling pot of water. Failure spelt death. Thus danger of being lynched even when guiltless was real. This led to this extemporaneous prayer.

4.3.7.5   Cultural context

God who created man!
My Life, the lives of my relatives.
Whoever wishes me to live,
Let him live also.
Whoever wishes me to die,
Let him die.
Whoever, wishes that I should have good things,
Let him have them.
Whoever says that I should not eat,
Let his mouth dry up (Shorter 1975:106).

This Ibo prayer from Nigeria is wish for retribution on the victim's enemies. The petitioner addresses God. It is offered in a ritual involving other prayers to lesser divinities. The wishes are aimed at the destruction of the advesaries.

4.3.7.6   Division

The prayer is divided into two parts, namely; encouragement to the victim and a protection wish:

- **Complaint and encouragement- Strophe I**

- **Protection wish- Strophe II**

4.3.7.6   Detailed analysis

4.3.7.6.1 Complaint and encouragement (lines 1-5)

The petition commences with words of encouragement set in a background of hysteria (line 1). Amidst panic, the group cried out mentioning their relationship to the victim. This is the typical cultural way mourners would address the deceased. The victim resembled the dying or dead.

Immediately the relatives called out words of encouragement (line 2). Their fortitude was the innocence of the victim. This signals belief that the innocent could survive the ordeal. For instance, it is said that an innocent person could dip his hands in a boiling pot of water and remain unscathed.

The cause of the murderous intent is identified as jealousy (line 3). The enemy was envious of the victim's millet produce (line 4). This aroused the adversary's invidious scheme to eradicate the victim. Thus, the plot involved witchcraft accusations. The perpetrator, although not mentioned in the text was Sipopa, the tribal chief (Holub 1976:320).

Again, the theme of innocence is repeated at the end of the section with the addition of *Nyambe*'s omniscience (line 5). This matter of fact introduces an underlying principle that the Deity is in control and would take care of the situation. Solicitation for protection is motivated by the victim's innocence.

4.3.7.6.2 Protection wish

The ejaculatory, "*Nyambe* grant you to vomit the poison" is more than a wish (line 6). It is a call upon *Nyambe* to give the victim the ability to overcome. In this case the relatives desired protection for the victim from the effects of the poison. At any rate to wish is to pray (Shorter 1975:3). It was customary to proceed with the execution if the accused failed to vomit and was over-powered by the emetic.

Witchcraft accusations are common among Lozi people. Not even the king is able to excuse an accused person. The ordeal therefore, served the purpose of exempting the guiltless. So strong was this belief that it was said that a baby could dip hands in a boiling pot of water and remain unharmed. The second method of conducting the test was by introducing a poisonous concoction to the suspect. On passing the test the accused was declared innocent.

However, during the tyrannical rule of Sipopa, there was no escape for the accused. The tests were conducted outside the village and execution was carried out swiftly by Mashoku, the royal executioner.

Against this background therefore, the relatives turned to *Nyambe* for justice and protection. They spontaneously implored the Deity. Their wish was under-girded by confidence in *Nyambe*'s omniscience and omnipotence.

4.3.7.7   Setting and date
4.3.7.7.1   Historical setting

During the tyrannical rule of Sipopa, killings were carried out at his order. There was open disregard for law. Individuals were killed for petty jealousies. Under the king's service was one Mashoku, an executioner. He was charged with performing hideous killings. The accused man's execution occurred while Holub was visiting at the royal capital in the 19th Century. The accused was forced to drink poison. While his accusers hailed insults at him, shook fists in his face and spat on him, his relatives encouraged him to vomit. The prayer was the cry by his relatives (Holub 1976:321-322).

4.3.7.7.2   Cultic setting

During Sipopa's rule similar episodes of accusations were conducted either at the king's court or privately elewhere. Although in this instance the relatives and the accusers were present during the ordeal, the political situation was pervaded with corruption and eerie murderous activities perpetuated by the chief.

It is possible that prayers may have been offered in like circumstances. However, there is no indication of patterned forms of prayer activities. In any case, the spontaneity of this

prayer indicates the belief that the Supreme Being could be called on without conventional forms. Thus, *Nyambe* can be approached without priest, temple and sacred place.

4.3.7.8   Synthesis

The prayer consists of aspects of enemy danger, confidence and petition in wish form to the Supreme Being. Additionally, it also conveys motifs of *Nyambe*'s omniscience and the accused man's innocence.

The enemy is represented by a horde of people who desired the execution of the accused. Danger was real as depicted by the literary narrative. The accusers hailed insults and spat in the face of the victim. The king's manic behaviour was the epitome of evil. Once the individual was tried and sentenced in the king's court, escape was a distant reality.

Amidst the certainty of the eerie affair, the relatives portrayed confidence in the Deity. This is depicted in their impulsive wish for the victim's safety. Indeed, they expected the accused to vomit the poison and escape death.

4.3.8 Prayer for the day

4.3.8.1   Introduction

This prayer for the day is offered in the morning. The petitioner approaches *Nyambe* at sunrise when God's proxy, the sun appears. It is uttered by a family representative. Thus it is a communal supplication. This prayer is comprised of invocation, praise and petition. Generally, *Nyambe* was invoked during major needs such as war, drought, sickness, death and sowing time (Turner 1952:49; Jalla 1954:5; Mainga 1972:96).

4.3.8.2   Text and translation

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Prayer for the day	
Yoo shoo! Yoo shoo! O great King! No man can compare to Thee. We come to Thee, because Thy favours are innumerable. Thou showest great compassion to Thy servants; We come to Thee, so as to receive Thy blessing and so As to be strengthened. Thou art a powerful King, O King Nyambe! Everything is possible for Thee. Thou canst call back to Thee all men and they cannot refuse compliance, as Thou reignest over all things. May Thy rains water our seeds so that they may grow, as Thou art all-powerful. Thou helpest the one who weakens and feedest the hungry one. We bring to thee our children so that Thou mayest educate them by Thy power. O Master, may Thou never be angry with us, as we are feeble creatures. (Junod 1938:137-138).	*Yoo shoo! Yoo shoo! O ho Mulena muhulu!* *Ha kuna mutu ya swana ni wena.* *Lu taha ku wena, kakuli linubu za hao ha li na palo.* *Batanga ba hao u ba bonisa mukekechima.* *Lu taha ku wena ili ku to amuhela limbuyoti za hao mane hape ni ku fiwa mata.* *U mulena ya mata! O ho mulena Nyambe!* *Ku wena linto kaufela za kona hala. Wa kona ku biza mutu kaufela mi ha kuna ya hana.* *U busa linto kufela.* *Pula yahao I kolobise litoze za luna kuli mele kakuli wena unani mata kaufela.* *U tusa ya fokola mi hape u fepa ya lapile.* *Lu tisa bana baluna ku wena kuli u ba lute ka mata ahao.* *O ho mulena u sike wa lunyemela kakuli lu libupiwa ze fokola.*

4.3.8.3   Genre

According to Junod (1938:137) this is a morning prayer. A closer examination of the elements indicates that the suppliant is concerned about family welfare. Desire for well-being transcends requests for the present. It encompasses futuristic aspects. This is demonstrated in the petitions for future protection from calamities proceeding from God's anger, progeny's well-being and provision of strength and good crops. Hence, the

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petitioner requests for protection from hazards of drought and crop failure and God-inflicted calamities. Further, the suppliant is concerned about family security.

4.3.8.4 Literary context

This prayer is embedded in a literary context which is predominantly on Bantu spirituality (Junod 1938:132-138). Broad similarities are drawn from different cultural societies concerning belief in the Supreme Being, frequency of prayer among Bantu tribes, and the permeation of prayer as a means of communicating with the Deity. Like many Bantu speaking people of Southern Africa, Lozi people share the belief in a request answering Deity (Mainga 1972:95).

4.3.8.5 Cultural context

Ila people from Zambia pray to the Supreme Being, Leza, in instances of sickness when their ancestors have failed to respond (Junod 1938:133). Prior to praying, the head of a household fills a plate with meal flour and water. Some of the mixture is poured to the ground and prayer is made in this manner:

Leza, I pray thee, if it be thou hast made our brother sick, leave him alone, that Thy slave may go about by himself. Was it not Thou who createdst him on earth and said he should walk and trust thee? Leave Thy child that he may trust Thee, Eternal One! We pray to Thee- Thou art the Great Chief!

After uttering the prayer, the supplicant fills his/her mouth with water and squirts some out as an offering. The above prayer has common features with the Lozi prayer for the day. For example, the Deity is metaphorically addressed as Chief. There is also a general belief that sometimes calamities emanate from the Deity (Soyinka 1990:19). When God is the cause of harm, prayers for redress are addressed to him.

4.3.8.6 Division

The Lozi prayer for the day is divided into the following two stanzas:

- **Invocation and praise (lines 1-4)- Stanza I**

- **Petition (lines 5-11)- Stanza II**

The first stanza is composed of invocation, praise and confession. Similarly, the second stanza consists of petitions and confessions.

4.3.8.7 Detailed analysis
4.3.8.7.1 Invocation and praise- (lines 1- 4)

An oldest member of a household addresses the Supreme Being in prayer (Mainga 1972:74-75). This practice is common in Africa. Typically, domestic and community prayers are offered by men and older women (Mbiti 1991:68-71; Zahan 2000:19-20). The Deity is referred to as great king. *Nyambe* is set apart from his creation. He is incomparable. God has no equal among men. This assertion discounts the attempt to equate the African Deity to aucthonous rulers. Lozi mythological history distinguishes between *Nyambe* and Kamunu. *Nyambe,* like other African Supreme Beings is the creator, giver of both plant and animal life (Jalla 1954:2; Mainga 1972:95; Westerlund 2006:118).

Approaching the Deity in praise serves the purpose of appeasing and welcoming him into the ritual. Praise, libation and offering prepare the way for the petition to be brought before the Deity. However, there is no indication that calling a Deity by name entails conjuring him into service. It is possible that the petitioners believed that praise was an emollient. Royal motif forms a common thread interwoven in the prayer fabric. In line 6 the great king is identified as *Nyambe*, the Lozi Deity. God is ascribed with rulership and he is called master (lines 9, 13).

Furthermore, the petitioner acknowledges God's provision of blessings. In Lozi cosmology, the Supreme Being is the giver of blessings. God provides directly through nature or indirectly through both visible and invisible agents. The worshipper is motivated to entreat the Deity due to the provision of numerous gifts in the past. The nature of blessings is not disclosed. In any case, these blessing may refer to health, provision of food and sustenance.

God's generosity is reiterated in line 5. He is compassionate. Herein lies a glimpse into *Nyambe*'s character. Based on earlier allusions to God's blessings, the present revelation

of God's character is given meaning. It follows that *Nyambe*'s compassion must be a reference to his blessings. God's gifts demonstrate his compassion.

4.3.8.7.2 Petition (lines 5-11)

In stanza 2 the suppliant requests for a variety of items. Petition is made for blessings (line 5a). Blessings have been mentioned earlier in connection with past occurrences. The suppliant focuses on requesting for blessings presently. Blessings are important in Lozi beliefs. They can be passed from one generation to the next. Different people in Lozi and other African societies have the ability to transfer blessings (Coillard 1902:212; McKenzie 1997:334). They include parents, the aged, leaders and mediums. Above all, God can endorse blessings on an individual.

Blessings guarantee success in different endeavours of life. A person who is enthused with blessings portrays material progress. Such an individual is successful in the field, hunting trips, and fishing and in all labour. Blessings also offer security against enemy vices. Blessings therefore have a double effect. Hence by requesting for blessings, the suppliant desires the ability to succeed, and acquire protection from destructive forces.

In this text the petitioner expects God's blessings and strengthening (line 5b). The nature of strength is not mentioned directly. It is possible that the worshipper or someone in the homestead is undergoing a difficulty. Equally, the suppliant may have embarked on a task that required God's strength. In many African societies, evil is active and manifested in different forms. Enemies abound in closely knit societies whether imagined or real (Gluckman 1955:76; Dillon-Malone 1986:378). Feuds erupt over petty jealousies. Unfortunately, such disputes easily degenerate into full scale animosity. And sinister plots are hatched to cause harm. Such an environment is a recipe for witchcraft and sorcery attacks. It is unclear whether there is an actual danger or not, yet the petitioner seeks the Deity's strengthening.

Petitions for blessings and strength are punctuated by praise. The worshipper is confident that God is able to supply the needs since he is powerful. According to Lozi mythology, *Nyambe* possesses creative power (Jalla 1954:2; Mainga 1972:95). For that reason, the inquirer trusts that God is capable of replenishing the needed strength. God's kingship,

which was first mentioned in Line 1, is repeated. Even though Lozi people believe in divine kingship, *Nyambe* transcends human kings.

Nothing is impossible with God (Muuka 1966:250). This assertion is made explicit in God's ability to give and take life (line 6). In fact God's messenger, death, is irresistible (line 7). To this end, God's ability to require life from anyone signifies his power. Then again this power to take life may be the reason for the petition. This is possible if the petitioner or a family member is overwhelmed by a debilitating crisis. Such a calamity has resulted in fear of death. Motivated by the crisis the suppliant requests for blessings and strength. The ejaculatory "you reign over all things" surmises the praise interjection (line 8). God is king unlike any human king. His rule is extensive. He governs the universe and every living thing.

Another round of petitions involves intercession for sustenance, welfare of the suppliant's descendants and protection from God's wrath (lines 9, 11-12). The worshipper requests for rain in order to water the gardens. Prayers for rain are common among agricultural tribes particularly those in arid areas (Mbiti 1975:52). Drought can easily reduce an individual or an entire community to starvation. Inversely, good rainfall ensures abundance and provision. Thus, rain is a critical blessing among sedentary communities. Besides prayers, Lozi people seek the assistance of rain-makers during droughts. At any rate even when such mediators are summoned for rain-making rituals, God is the final arbiter. The inquirer's request for rain guarantees protection from the hazards of drought, crop failure and starvation.

Requests for rain and good crop are motivated by statements of confidence. *Nyambe* is inundated with utterances of trust in his ability to uphold the weak and feed the hungry. The suppliant considers God's enablement in the task at hand. Perhaps, the worshipper was preparing for work in the gardens. In this case, prayer is made for strength for the agricultural task. Feeding the hungry entails either the Deity's continuous or future related provision. It is most likely that this reference is related to God's previous acts. *Nyambe*'s past dealings therefore, are the basis for the present request.

Similarly, supplication is done on behalf of the children within the homestead. In African society, children are important gifts. Through descendants one is remembered. A person's name and life is perpetuated through one's children. Barrenness is considered a

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curse. People who die childless do not qualify to the status of ancestors since the deceased are venerated by their children. Equally, bearing children who are delinquent and do not observe communal norms, is repugnant. In serious cases, breaking tradition is tantamount to excommunication. This is a state of being lost. To avoid such a situation, the petitioner requests the Deity to assist in the children's upbringing. Proper education secures an individual from bringing shame upon oneself and family. Therefore, education and observation of custom is a deterrent against being cut off from society.

Lastly, God is requested to withhold his wrath (line 11). Either the worshipper is concerned about a present situation or is generally seeking future assurance from God. If the worshipper was experiencing a child-related problem, it is possible that the request was aimed at seeking redress. But, it is equally possible that the supplicant is directing prayer toward future security. A futuristic aspect of the request is not a general insurance against chance attacks. Such petition is better understood from a broad religious cultural context. Although Lozi people believe in the benevolence of the Deity, they also understand that calamities may come from him. Failure to observe custom can evoke the wrath of God. Such wrath manifests in drought, extensive storms, natural hazards and epidemics (Coillard 1902:169-170). For fear of catastrophes, the worshipper prays to God for protection of the community from divine judgment. This matter of fact is reinforced by the literary and cultural context of the prayer. Exemplarily, Ila people believe in *Leza*'s (Deity) wrath which can cause sickness. Similarly, Tswana belief is illustrated by a case of lightning. When a woman was struck by lightning the Tswana people affirmed that the Deity had collected a wife for himself (Junod 1938:132-133).

4.3.8.8 Setting and date
4.3.8.8.1 Historical setting

Royal language and etiquette are involved in *Nyambe*'s praise. Common gestures exist between the modes of honouring the Deity and royalty. For instance, a loyal subject bows, kneels and claps when approaching the ruling king. Similarly, the supplicant employs approximate gestures at prayer. Furthermore, comparable language of praise is used in both instances (Yoo shoo!).

Evidently the founders of the monarchy borrowed from religious repertoire and manners. This is precisely because *Nyambe* worship predates the Lozi royal establishment. In

addition, *Nyambe* worship is independent of royal control. If this hypothesis is correct, then verisimilar prayers, language and gestures are antecedent to the establishment of the monarchy in the 16th Century.

The composition date of this prayer is the early 20th Century. Thus it is assumed that the presence of gestures and court-like language is an indication to the transmission of ancient, stylistic formulas through oral traditions.

4.3.8.8.2   Cultic setting

The Lozi family elder rises up in the morning to offer prayer before *Nyambe* (Junod 1938:137). Prayer is presented at an altar erected from pieces of wood. White sand is also heaped at the altar. A gift bearing receptacle is placed on the altar. Having prepared the offering the suppliant prays facing the east in the direction of the rising sun. After *Nyambe*'s primeval ascension to heaven (Litooma), accompanied by his entourage, the sun became his proxy (Arnot 1889:88; Turner 1952:49; Scheub 2000:185). Lozi people are not involved in sun worship. The prevalence of family prayers in Lozi traditions points to the familial ritual system of Lozi society. Although a tribal God, *Nyambe,* lacks a centralized cultic system.

4.3.8.9   Synthesis

In this prayer, the oldest member of the homestead addresses *Nyambe* in the morning. God is involved in the affairs of his people even though at times he appears to be distant (Junod 1938:137). *Nyambe* is powerful and able to do everything. Lozi people therefore depend upon *Nyambe*; they commune and appropriate his powers through prayer.

The petitioner seeks blessings, education for children, and protection from God's wrath. Due to the unpredictability of natural forces, the Lozi elder prays for protection. In Lozi belief system accidents and calamities do not occur by chance. Indeed the literary context of the prayer reinforces this matter of fact. An exemplar of *mbelele* rites in Mozambique attest to the tribal African's fear of nature. Baskets are hung on a tree to attract heaven's attention in order to break a drought, cause rain to fall and get a good crop (Junod 1938:137). Similarly, appeasing the Deity secures protection from harm caused by evil

forces and God's anger. The inclusion of a request to *Nyambe* to abate his anger indicates actual or feared danger of this God's malevolent acts.

In order to enlist divine aid, the petitioner calls on *Nyambe*. Prayer therefore is a vehicle for communicating with the Deity. Petitioners may also converse with their ancestors. The Lozi elder offers grain to *Nyambe* in order to appease the Deity.

4.4   Synthesis- Lozi prayers for protection

Early misconceptions about African Traditional Religion portrayed the Supreme Being as remote and disinterested (Turner 1981:7). Notwithstanding the fact that God is acknowledged as the creator, missionaries and explorers failed to identify an active Deity in African societies. It is presumed that having completed the task of creation, God withdrew. God's involvement in the continued maintenance and guidance of the affairs on earth ceased. To the contrary, a close examination of African Traditional Religion reveals the continued involvement of God in the operations of the world (Gehman 1989:192). African people recognize that God is both ruler and judge of the universe. It is apparent that God is called upon when people are faced with dire situations. In turn, the Deity reaches out and provides rain, sunshine, children, health and protection.

4.4.1 Prayer related protection

The aforementioned Lozi prayers can be surmised and illustrated as follows:

	Sowing prayer	Morning prayer	Andonyi war Prayer	Illa/Tonga war Prayer	Protection from natural dangers	Prayer of an accused person	Prayer for the day
Danger	Danger is conjectured	General enemies	Danger of the young	Danger of dying at	Danger arises from	Actual danger of	Danger is inferred from

	from rain and crop failure resulting in starvation	and an inferred mythic enemy	state being wiped out. The enemy identified as Andonyi people	war. The enemies are warriors of pillaged Illa/Tonga people	fear of drowning. The enemy is represented as a mythical snake which inhabited the rapids	failing the poison ordeal and being lynched. The enemy is the king and his cohorts.	crop failure and *Nyambe's* wrath
Petitioner	Elder seeks *Nyambe's* provision and blessing. These translate into inviolability and provision of necessities of life	Praises the appearance of *Nyambe's* proxy; possibly a guarantee to safety and provision	Curse is uttered by a young woman under the guidance of a medicine man. Rituals involving magic accompany the curse	Curse and blessing are spoken antiphonally led by a young woman	The supplicant cries out to *Nyambe* to provide safe passage to the travelers	In this case the wish is uttered by relatives of the accused person.	the elder petitions *Nyambe* for good crop and assurance of not becoming victims to *Nyambe's* wrath
God	Is the provider of strength fertility in the field and protection	Praised as king.			*Nyambe* is not differentiated from the danger. But He is requested to relent from wrath. *Nyambe* is lied to concerning offerings	The intercessors believe that *Nyambe* is all-knowing therefore the accused will be vindicated	*Nyambe* is the source of strength, fertility and life. He is incomparable.
Outcome					*Nyambe* is invoked to appease His wrath		Declaration of praise and trust demonstrate confidence in the God's answer.

Lozi cosmology is replete with varied forces of evil. These forces extend to natural phenomena encountered in the forest, mountains, rapids, rivers and lakes. Human enemies are present in Lozi society such as foreign enemies, witches and the spirits of deceased people. Spirits of the dead can be dangerous until they find rest or after required rituals are performed (Mitchell 1977:54). Danger also arises from contravention of custom. When this occurs, individuals and communities are vulnerable to ancestral afflictions. The Supreme Being may also unleash punishment on erring parties. In order to alleviate suffering, Lozi people employ different approaches.

Prayer is the commonest way of approaching God. The question about how far God is worshipped is therefore of utmost importance (Parrinder 1968:37). In African Traditional Religion, people pray either corporately or privately. Anybody can pray at any time or any place (Mbiti 1975:55). Then again certain people may pray on behalf of others. These officiants include chiefs, priests, rainmakers and medicine men. At the family level, the head or oldest member of the family conducts prayers but, occasionally, a ritual elder or local priest may pray when requested.

Lozi prayers like Traditional African prayers generally include elements of praise, thanksgiving, a declaration of state of affairs in which the prayer arises and requests. Concreteness is a central mark in these prayers. Some of the requests in prayer are: healing, protection from danger, safety in traveling, security, preservation of life and various matters pertaining to life (Mbiti 1975:56).

Community prayers are offered in request for rain, peace, cessation of epidemics and dangers to the nation, success at war and fertility of people, animals and crops. An appeal to divinities or intercession can be done directly to God. At times intercession is accompanied by sacrificial rituals to redress the prevailing calamity (Mitchell 1977:60). Similarly, ancestors are approached and requests for their assistance offered. By performing specified rituals, ancestral aid is solicited and curses are removed.

In contemporary Lozi society there is no marked distinction between the royal cult, ancestral veneration and *Nyambe* cult. Through ritual observations and practices any given request may be brought before the higher powers simultaneously. Nevertheless, each stream of religion has distinct characteristics (Mainga 1972:98).

When an individual is sick, or struck by calamity he/she prays to *Nyambe* requesting for protection and healing. An altar is erected from pieces of wood, a heap of river sand or reeds may be grown signifying a place for prayer. Oblations are offered to *Nyambe,* the supreme God in the morning at sunrise. These oblations are in the form of water in a dish. The Deity is solicited in prayer and the supplicant hopes to secure redress thereby (Coillard 1902:535). The role of traditional medicine ought to be underlined too. Although the victim approaches God in prayer, the answer is sometimes provided through magical-medical practices (Shorter 1975:18).

4.4.2 Other forms of protection

Verbal prayer is not the only way of personal or corporate expression. Varied language of symbolic action, expressed in ritual and dance is utilised (Shorter 1975:5). When the worshipper expresses himself/herself with the aid of corporeal objects, prayer is materialized. Examples of tangibles include certain styles of dressing and observing silence. Similarly, bodily actions are performed such as spitting, dancing and gesturing.

Protection against calamities, drought and epidemics are resolved through the aid of human agents. In the case of drought, for instance, affected people approach a medicine man or rainmaker to reverse the misfortunes. Through traditional, medicinal powers, the rainmaker manipulates the forces of nature to generate rain. The procedure is secretive and the rain doctor performs the required rituals behind closed doors. The rest of the people remain outside singing and waiting for the first sign of rain.

Other practices which accompany prayers are taboos placed on the victim in order to secure protection from harm. Protective amulets are worn on the victim's person. The sufferer is smeared with medicinal potions in addition to other varied observations (Parrinder 1968:93).

Another way of securing protection is by seeking foresight from the divinities through the help of diviners. Counsel is obtained regarding the future in order to avert danger through prescribed observances. The services of specialists in magic are sought for. These functionaries are critical particularly when witchcraft is suspected. Protective charms are acquired from medicine men to counter witchcraft and sorcery for instance.

CHAPTER 5

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

5.1   Introduction

To the Lozi prayer for protection is a religious reality. Prayer portrays religious traditions of any given people. There are three ways of conducting studies on prayer, namely, textual analysis, studies of rituals and an examination of the contents of prayers (Zahavy 1980:45; Gill 1987:489). In this study both Lozi and biblical prayer texts have been explicated with the intention of analyzing elements of protection. Rituals have been referred to summarily with the view of underlining the cultic setting. However, at this juncture the question remains whether there are similarities between the psalms and Lozi prayers for protection to the extent that parallels can be drawn and utilized as points of departure for the promotion of dialogue?

In order to embark on a cross-cultural comparative study certain remarks must be made. Some scholars have clearly demonstrated that it is possible to shed light on ancient cultures based on observations from present cultures (Fabian 1988:215). For example, in his *Enslavement and the early Hebrew lineage* Steiner (1982:21-25) has demonstrated that by comparing cultures of tribal people, such as Africans, it is possible to elaborate and broaden an understanding of the Joseph account. Similarly, Schapera (1982:26-42) in *The sin of Cain* uses cultures other than Near Eastern to illuminate the reason for allowing Cain to wander and not receive the death penalty. In this study a similar but variant approach is employed to compare prayer traditions from the said groups.

Prayer for protection plays an important role in Lozi and Israelite experiences. Between Lozi petitioners and the psalmists eliciting the aid of the Deity during calamities is common. When danger is looming and prior to embarking on projects the ancient peoples sought for assistance, favour and protection from the Supreme Being. Lozi people conduct prayers at many occasions with the aid of intermediaries such as family heads, priests and witchdoctors. Important among intermediaries are ancestors. Most African societies have belief systems and life styles comparable to those in ancient Israel. What cannot be demonstrated with certainty is whether African societies went through the same process of development as Israel (Fabian 1988:216).

Just as there are similarities, differences also exist between African, particularly Lozi and ancient Israelite cultures. The objective of this investigation has been to analyze the concept of protection prayer in the two traditions. Through comparison this study interrogates a hypothesis of cultural closeness between Israelite and Lozi people. Prayer

performs an important role in both cultures. The meaning of a concept is determined by its similarity and difference with other concepts like or unlike it (Paden 1988:2). By comparing similar units from distinct backgrounds meaning is achieved (Neuman 1997:440-456). New understanding is then created for the religious rituals of the current culture.

5.2   Comparative analysis

At the outset it is important to note that African Traditional Religion includes distinctive features compared to the Old Testament (Zahan 2000:3). Nonetheless this matter of fact does not take away the necessity of a comparative approach. Some scholars are skeptical about such an undertaking. For example, Coggins (1990:84) argues that ancient cultures existed over long periods and were written about from particular and various editorial points of view. African cultures may not have developed amidst similar conditions and time periods as ancient Israel. Valid comparisons may therefore be corrupted if a segment of the cultural sum total is studied in relation to another segment in a different cultural setting. As a result it is suggested that the comparative method can only be valid if the subjects are genuinely similar.

In addition, social institutions and customs that are studied ought to be understood in context as part of the people's whole way of life (Beattie 1966:10). This principle is only applicable to a society where the way of life is known. Given the long history of ancient Israel and its varied experiences it could be difficult to find a people with similar historical-cultural accounts (Fabian 1988:215-239). Even where cultures are from the same period methodological weaknesses are indicated. These principles make comparisons untenable.

At any rate it is instructional to consider the fact that comparison is implicit when an investigator speaks of cultures other than his/her own. In such a case the scholar assimilates new cultures into categories familiar to his/her own background (Beattie 1966:48). Anthropological methods involving primitive cultures are rare in the Old Testament and biblical studies, the reason being that these cultures appear to be at variance. Although a cross-cultural comparative undertaking is massive it is not insurmountable (Keasing 1958:140,141). In the past comparative studies have been conducted with the view of promoting opposition to indigenous religions (Fabian 1988:218). However, current epistemological theories such as postcolonial theory that

underpin the study of the Bible in Africa lean toward appraising previously marginalized cultures.

The premise for using ancient Near Eastern cultures as a paradigm for studying the Old Testament and African is comparable to using the unknown to study the known. Israel and her contemporaneous cultures are inaccessible through participant observations; they are only available through artifacts and literary material (Lang 1982:3, 7). Yet scholars have provided explanations for biblical concepts based on anachronistic societies. If biblical studies can be used to elucidate African Traditional Religion the inverse could also be true. Herein lies the key to using African culture as an aspect of the comparative process.

The gravity of this comparative method is exacerbated by the variances of culture, historical gap, geographical distance, linguistic differences and dissimilar religious schema between Lozi and Israelite societies. Notwithstanding the forgoing limitations, in the main the victims' response of turning to the Deity in search of reprieve from marauding adversaries provides a common denominator that must be exploited in this endeavor.

Below is the analysis of data from both Israelite and Lozi prayers. This analysis involves the following broad categories: parties involved, elements and other aspects of prayer. In this way analogous concepts are examined simultaneously resulting in similarities and differences. Theories are evaluated against their cultural contexts in order to avoid superficial resemblances and conclusions.

5.3   Involved parties in prayer
5.3.1 God(s)

God offers protection in both Israelite and Lozi religious experiences. In the presence of danger suppliants turn to their Supreme Being for protection and deliverance. There are similarities as well as differences concerning the concept of the Deity.

The presence of many lesser gods and spirits in African Traditional Religion is problematic. It precipitates the question whether African Traditional Religion is a reflection of monotheism or polytheism? Many African scholars have emphasized the monotheistic schema but it is perhaps prudent to point out that there are divergent elements obtaining therein (Ray 1976:50). Belief in the Supreme Being is predominant in African societies (Maimela 1985:63). The ancient Near East was permeated by belief in the plurality of gods (Jacobsen 1976:11). After an encounter with a god people normally sought, placed allegiance and subsequently worshipped the deity. At any rate African Traditional Religion cannot be equated with the major monotheistic religions of the world (Judaism, Islam and Christianity) due to the prevalence of either lesser gods or ancestral cults. In numerous ways the African God is similar to the biblical God but not identical (Amanze 2001:276).

5.3.1.1   God in the Psalms

Consistently the examined psalms have revealed the presence and action of Yahweh on behalf of the victim. The God of the psalmists is all-powerful (Pss 77:10, 14-19; 91:1), transcendent (Ps 91:1), all-knowing (Pss 64:5-7) and immanent (Pss 77:20; 91-14-20). Yahweh's characteristics are underscored by different epithets such as Most High, Almighty and the designation God (Pss 91:1-2). Besides divine epithets Yahweh is described metaphorically symbolizing the expected divine acts on behalf of the victim. These figurative terms are descriptive of Yahweh's protection attributes. For instance Yahweh is called "my rock" (Ps 28:1) and "my strong deliverer (Ps 140:7). Yahweh acts and provides protection to the victim. God shields the victim's head in battle (Ps 140:7), secures justice for the poor and upholds the needy (Ps 140:12). God is their strength and a fortress of salvation (Ps 28:8). Yahweh is the psalmists' shelter, shadow, refuge, fortress and dwelling (Ps 91:2, 9). Furthermore, Yahweh destroys the wicked thereby securing safety for the victim (Pss 28:4-5; 64:7-8; 91:8; 140:8-11).

Divine epithets and metaphorical terms are employed based on the covenant relationship between him and his people, Israel. Yahweh is not distant from Israel and the individual. Hence the victim exploits this relationship and Yahweh's dependability when calamities strike. To this end the employment of the possessive in conjunction with the titles Almighty, Most High, God and Yahweh illustrate this relationship (Ps 91:1-2).

5.3.1.2   *Nyambe:* God in Lozi prayers

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Nyambe has names that portray his divine attributes. For example he is the creator of all (Jalla 1954:2; Mainga 1972:95). *Nyambe* is all-powerful. Before him there is none too powerful to withstand his command (Junod 1938:137-138; Muuka 1966:250). This Lozi Deity is a glorious king (Jalla 1954:3; Rooke 2006:2). When struck by fear of the rapids the suppliant refers to God as the one who inhabits the abyss (Coillard 1902:169,170). These qualities signify *Nyambe's* awesomeness.

Lozi prayers indicate that *Nyambe* is not only transcendent and powerful but he is also a helpful source of strength, a compassionate provider and protector (Junod 1938:137-138; Coillard 1902:169-170; Holub 1976:320). Thus petitioners approach *Nyambe* fully confident of his ability to intervene. Although *Nyambe* is generally benevolent he causes calamities to befall his people especially for judicial purposes. Leprosy for example is called *mulilo wa Nyambe* (*Nyambe*'s fire)[41]

5.3.1.3 Similarities

Both Lozi and biblical prayer texts demonstrate ample evidence that *Nyambe* and Yahweh are approached directly during calamities and difficulties. Moreover, *Nyambe* like other African Deities has certain attributes resembling the God of the psalmists. This is attested to by the following acknowledged characteristics: omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, eternal, kind, merciful and good, transcendent and unique (Gehman 1989:189-190). Similarly *Nyambe*'s works could be likened to Yahweh in terms of creation.

The psalmists seek Yahweh's protection from their adversaries. Divine epithets and metaphorical terms are markers embedded in the texts, attesting to Yahweh's protective role. Similarly Lozi suppliants invoke *Nyambe* to intervene and provide protection from calamity and unforeseen danger.

God is immanent in the two traditions. Contrary to the belief that Africans believe in a remote and inactive Deity many societies recognize the Supreme Being's continued involvement in the maintenance and operation of the created world. Although there is an

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[41] The literal translation perhaps means god's curse or punishment as alternatively leprosy is referred to as a curse of the land.

apparent lack of visible shrines dedicated to the Supreme Being in Africa it is vital to point out that God is the underlying core of the religious system (Ray 1976:51; Gehman 1989:192; Uka 1991:44). *Nyambe*'s power and involvement is amplified through praises. Exemplarily, *Nyambe* does not speak to anything. When he does the world comes to an end (Jalla 1954:81). The foregoing embodies a dialectic understanding of *Nyambe*'s remoteness and aloofness on one hand and his approachability (yet exuding awesomeness) on the other hand. Similar reactions are borne by the Exodus texts where the Israelites feared to listen to Yahweh directly but rather listen through Moses (Ex 19).

God is the progenitor of human, animal and plant life. This premise is foundational in the relationship between God and man for he is not only creator but also sustainer. Based upon this relationship the victim approaches the Deity when facing difficulties in both Israelite and Lozi traditions.

5.3.1.4   Differences

When comparing concepts from distant cultures it is imperative that their historical and cultural contexts should be considered. This is precisely because ideas and concepts derive meaning from their cultural frameworks. Although belief in God is universal *Nyambe* is distinguished from Yahweh, since Lozi creation mythology reveals that he has a consort, *Nasilele*. In certain myths it appears that *Nyambe* did not create but procreated animals and man through *Nasilele* (Betrand 1899:277). Lozi royal myths indicate that *Nyambe* had wives such as *Mwambwa*, her daughter *Mbuywamwambwa* the royal ancestress and other unnamed wives who bore other tribal groups (Jalla 1954:1-2).

Nyambe is all-powerful and all-knowing yet there are tensions in his characteristics as noticed from creation myths. When vexed by *Kamunu*'s (man) evil ways *Nyambe* relied on counsel from diviners regarding a sanctuary removed from *Kamunu*'s (man) reach. Additionally, when *Nyambe* left for heaven he sought the assistance of a spider (Mainga 1972:100).

There is a distinction in the manner by which Yahweh and *Nyambe* metes out judgment. It appears that *Nyambe* has an ambivalent character and is capable of directly causing destruction and blessing.

The African belief system is informed by a Supreme Being who exercises power to punish. Epidemics are associated with the judicial character of the Deity. Ba-ila[42] believe that sickness is an affliction from the tribal God, Leza (McVeigh 1974:113). Lozi people believe that leprosy is an affliction from *Nyambe*. This aspect does not entail vindictiveness but is rather a correction to an erring member of the community. It is also thought that God allows afflictions to overtake his people (Uka 1991:44). Unlike evil spirits God cares for His people.

In contradistinction the psalmists believe in a benevolent God (Ps 91:14-16). Israel's neighbours held to a pervasive belief in personal gods. These personal gods were ambivalent bringing both good luck and pain. Protection was acquired through incantations and magical means from their malevolent activities. The Old Testament makes allusions to Yahweh's association with destruction (Ex 12:12, 29; Dt 35:35; Hab 3:5-6). However, this feature may not be Yahweh's direct act. Exemplarily the identity of the destroyer in Exodus 12 is problematical. The executor of judgment cannot be both Yahweh and an angel (Goldin 1968:412-424). Later literature leans towards an angel (Fossum 1985:225-226). Ultimately, Yahweh also employs harsh realities of calamities to punish Israel.

5.3.2 Enemies and dangers

Danger is a key militating circumstance in prayers of protection. Whether danger was imminent or ongoing the natural response of the psalmists and Lozi petitioner is to elicit the Deity's protection. Unlike Lozi prayers the psalms present danger figuratively. It is broadly difficult to establish who the enemies in the psalms are. Numerous suggestions have been put forward. But caution must be exercised due to the plurivalence of metaphoric language.

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[42] The Ba-ila lived to the northeastern fringes of Barotseland. For animals, wives and slaves Lozi people frequently raided them.

5.3.2.1 Enemies of the individual

5.3.2.1.1 Enemies of the psalmists

Psalm texts have yielded the following results in relation to the identity of the enemy. The enemy is referred to as the wicked, evil men, evil doers, and men of violence and wicked hands (Pss 28:3-4; 64:1-2; 91:8; 140:2, 3, 4).

These enemies sometimes masquerade as friends but their intentions are evil (Pss 28:3; 64:2). They slander and cause malicious harm to the victim (Ps 140:4). It is possible that in certain cases magic and witchcraft may have been involved. Methods of attack are metaphorically depicted through the use of hunting language such as "snares" and "nets" (Pss 91:3; 140:6); figurative beasts as in "sharpening tongues like serpents, venom and poison"; and war symbols illustrated by "words like swords" (Pss 28:3; 64:4; 140:2, 3, 4). Enemies are also depicted in dark terms which are reminiscent of evil spirits such as terror of night, pestilence and plague (Ps 91:5-6). Psalm 77:16-19 pictures an adversary who resembles historical mythical figures evocative of ancient Canaanite and Mesopotamian primordial episodes. Similarly allusions to mythical creatures appear in Psalm 91:13.

5.3.2.1.2 Lozi enemies

Lozi petitions depict danger emanating from drought and crop failure (Junod 1938:137-138; Di Nola 1962:38), tribal enemies (Jalla 1954:9), war (Coillard 1902:212), mythic enemies (Coillard 1902:169-170) or tyranny and jealousy (Holub 1976:321-322).

The victim is threatened with death. For example as a result of jealousy a man is accused of treason and subjected to a poison ordeal. Yet another case demonstrates a mythical enemy at Matome rapids. For fear of death at the abyss one of Coillard's paddlers calls on *Nyambe* for protection. In other prayers the suppliant is concerned about danger arising from future disasters such as crop failure and *Nyambe*'s wrath.

Although not directly mentioned in the studied prayers malignant spirits are greatly feared by Lozi people. These spirits are deceased victims of witchcraft and other malevolent spirits which are bent on revenge. Several evil spirits are found in Lozi beliefs. They may cause harm depending on their disposition. These spirits are unpredictable, dangerous. Evil spirits attack, molest, destroy and harm the living. Tragedies of illness, insanity or

epilepsy are caused by them. Unlike ancestors evil spirits are not held in affection (Gehman 1989:139).

5.3.2.1.3 Witchcraft

Besides danger arising from direct enemy attacks witchcraft may also be involved as a secrete danger. Although the Old Testament and Psalms in particular are unclear and reticent to the subject, various texts allude to witchcraft, particularly with the aim to censure the practice (Aune 1986:216). Thus the Old Testament has failed to detail a craft prevalent in Palestine (Mendelsohn 1962:213). It appears that witchcraft and religion do not co-exist in the Old Testament. Where they occur in tandem one inevitably makes the other redundant (Middleton & Winter 1969:8). Magic and witchcraft were common in Mesopotamia. Magic was esteemed since people in Mesopotamia lived under threat from demons and human sorcery. On the other hand sorcery was eschewed due to its antisocial characteristics (Black & Green 1992:124,125).

Old Testament witchcraft citations include where Saul banned the practice (1 Sm 28:3), consulted the witch at Endor (1 Sm 28:8-19), Mannaseh practiced divination and witchcraft (2 Ki 21:6, 2 Chr 33:6) and the activities of Jezebel are mentioned (2 Ki 9:22). Equally legal texts forbid the practice (Lv 19:26. 31; 20:6). In the Psalms malicious people may have used the curse and evil eye resulting in calumnies overtaking their victims (Mowinckel 1962:3). However, it is not clear how this occurred. If the allusion is correct victims may have requested for Yahweh's intervention to neutralize spells and curses through blessing (Pss 107:19; 109:22-24, 28).

In many African societies witchcraft is considered as real (Idowu 1973:195; Mpolo 1990:38). Misfortunes, illness and death are commonly attributed to the activities of spirits and witchcraft. To be accused of witchcraft is to be dishonoured, to be branded as antisocial, as a murderer, or to be associated with the occult and ritual cannibalism (Musopole 1993:348).

Among Lozi people witches are notoriously known to operate nocturnally. As elsewhere in Africa witches travel in spirit with the assistance of familiars (Parrinder 1968:125). Witches are associated with cannibalism, which results in increased spiritual powers. The causes

of witchcraft are numerous but the major ones are: inheritance disputes, malice (Reynolds 1963:25, 48), petty feuds and revenge (Gluckman 1955:76).

The purpose for bewitching a victim is to bring destruction to their property such as crops and livestock or ultimately to cause death (Mbiti 1975:166; Mitchell 1977:66). The desired end is sought in many ways, for example, through manipulation of spirits and natural materials (Turner 1952:54). This may include the use of familiars (Melland 1923:214,215), projection and direct attack like poisoning (Reynolds 1963:42).[43] Witches also express the ability to employ the spoken word in their evil activities. Mpolo (1990:41-42) suggests that the effects of witchcraft are the result of the power of thought, fascination and suggestibility of the victim.

Suspicion of witchcraft is often targeted on clan and family members with whom a victim has quarreled. This is noticeable from the fact that it is difficult to find a witch outside the clan and family structure. Witchcraft also thrives on the principle of collective culpability. In this case the guilt of an individual is borne by society. The sufferings of someone are embodied in an external enemy, namely the witch. Hence members of the family are made scapegoats.

5.3.2.1.4   Similarities

There is a strong resemblance in so far as the appearance of individual enemies is concerned. In addition, the enemy's mode of operation in a few cases is similar. The exemplar employment of slander and malice as a possible result of jealousy is common in both Lozi prayers and the psalms. Such enemies are known to the victim. However, they twist facts or disguise their attacks. While in the psalms they pose as friends of the victim in Lozi prayer they turn the accused into a villain.

Another similarity is the use of myth to depict a foe. Even though psalm texts are not very clear on this phenomenon traces of mythical language have been observed in Psalm 77:14-20 and Psalm 91:13. Lozi traditions are quite vivid in their belief and use of myth. Belief in such a described adversary is exemplified by prayer for protection at Matome Rapids (Coillard 1902:321-322).

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[43] See excursus on witchcraft.

5.3.2.1.5   Differences

Conjectures have been made concerning witchcraft in Israel based on prohibitive texts and socio-cultural parallels with contemporary cultures. However its presence in the examined psalms is unproven. Similarly witchcraft is not mentioned directly in the examined Lozi prayers. Its absence from Lozi prayers may arise from the fact that different forms of protection are used against it. Witchcraft is one of the main reasons for the presence of evil and calamities to individuals among Lozi people. Ailments and calamities from suspected witchcraft are countered through the assistance of diviners and medicine men. In any case these intermediaries ultimately depend on power from the Supreme Being.

5.3.2.2   Enemies of the nation

5.3.2.2.1   Communal enemies in the Psalms

Communal danger in the Psalms arises from natural phenomena like pestilence (Ps 91: 5, 6). Pestilence is one of the main causes of death on a wide scale in the Old Testament along with war and famine (Del Olmo Lete 1999:231). Occasionally pestilence is personified (Ps 91:5; Hos 13:14; Hab 3:5). Both in Mesopotamia and Canaan illnesses were sometimes represented as demons (Black & Green 1992:63; Del Olmo Lete 1999:232). Pestilence and destruction in Psalm 91 have an echo in Habakkuk 3 where pestilence can be paralleled with *Resheph*[44]. *Resheph* is also attested to in Ugaritic texts as a god of destruction. The picture in Habakkuk concerning *Resheph* and *Deber* marching at Yahweh's side resembles the Mesopotamian epic of Marduk accompanied by plague and pestilence. To the contrary Psalm 91 depicts Yahweh providing protection to the victim of pestilence and destruction.

Belief in destructive spirits was pervasive in ancient Near East. The exemplar myth of Atrahasis[45] demonstrates that Pashitu was created to keep the human population down (Riley 1999:236). These spirits were in most cases offspring of the great gods (Jacobsen

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[44] In Ugaritic ritual Resheph was an ambivalent deity and his cult was also found in Egypt. The Old Testament Resheph is a demonized version of an ancient Cannanite god now submitted to Yahweh (Xella 1999:701).

[45] Meier (1999:241) state, "When Enlil in council with the other gods in *Atrahasis*, wishes to thin the world's population with a plague, it is Namtar, the god of plague, who goes to work."

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1976:13).   Evil spirits caused afflictions at certain times like at night[46], windstorm[47], eclipse, midday[48] and childbirth[49] (Riley 1999:236).   They inhabited deserts, lonely places and byways.   These evil spirits took forms of animals and birds.   Generally they have frightful features.

Earlier Old Testament texts indicate that both good and evil spirits are from Yahweh[50].   At certain occasions evil spirits are sent (1 Sm 16:23; 16:14; 15, 16; 18:10).   They are responsible for judgment (Jdg 9:24, 56-57) and torment (1Sm 11:6; 16:16).   The foregoing cases do not personalize the evil spirit from Yahweh.   Hence this use may not refer to actual beings (McCarter 1999:318).   On the other hand there are cases of personified spirits under the control of Yahweh (1 Ki 22:19-22).   In Exodus 12:23 Yahweh sent the destroyer[51] to kill the Egyptian firstborn.   The destroyer also appears in the Davidic episode (2 Sm 24:15-16).

The identity of the destroyer, particularly in Exodus, is problematic.   Suggestions on the destroyer's identity are: a creature which is separate from Yahweh or one that is identical with him (Fossum 1985:225-226; Meier 1999:243).   However Psalm 91 desists from identifying destructive forces with Yahweh.   Instead Yahweh is the protector of the victim.

5.3.2.2.2   Communal enemies among the Lozi

In agricultural prayers allusions to fear of crop failure is pronounced.   Bad harvest can easily result from poor rain conditions and other eventualities.   For Lozi people to realize an abundant crop was imperative due to limited means of production and storage.   In the event of crop failure communities are threatened by starvation.   Therefore the powers of nature are revered.

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[46] Lilith a lascivious demon haunted men in dreams (Riley 1999:236).
[47] Pazuzu the Babylonian demon was known to bring disease through the wind (Riley 1999:236).
[48] Midday demon struck at the height of the sun (Riley 1999:236).
[49] Lamashtu threatened women during childbirth together with their babies (Riley 1999:236).
[50] See earlier allusions to a lying spirit from Yahweh (1 Ki 22:20-23), the spirit from Yahweh that oppressed Saul (1 Sm 16:14-16 23) and the Satan who was a member of the divine council (Job 1: 6-12; 2:1-7). On the other hand possible late accounts include Satan as a proper name (1 Chr 21:1) compare with the account in 2 Samuel 21:1.
[51] Unlike the deities of the neighbouring people who decimated populations out of their uncontrollable lust for death and destruction the destroyer was sent for specific situations. Another difference is seen in the extent of destruction while the foreign deities did not discriminate between the innocent and the wicked the destroyer passed over those covered by blood. In this vein Namtar stopped the killing due to shame after his people's cultic attention (Meier 1999:242).

Another area of danger affecting communities comes from tribal enemies such as Andonyi (Jalla 1954:9) and war with oppressed people (Coillard 1902:212). War is a costly affair in terms of lost life. Thus, rituals and prayers were conducted to provide victory to warriors and defeat to their enemies.

5.3.2.2.3 Similarities

Foreign enemies appear both in the psalms and in Lozi texts. While in Lozi texts it is possible to identify specific enemies it is with no doubt a difficult task to identify them in psalm texts. Furthermore it is difficult to conclude with certainty that references to war are literal and not metaphorical. Nonetheless the psalmists experienced danger from foreign enemies who foment wars (Pss 77; 91:7-8; 140:7). In the same way founders of the Lozi state suffered attacks from Andonyi foreign adversaries and Illa-Tonga warriors during cattle raids (Coillard 1902:212).

5.3.2.2.4 Differences

There is no mention of danger related to poor agricultural produce in the selected psalms. The fact that Israel believed that increase was a blessing from Yahweh is mentioned elsewhere (Ps 126). Lozi agricultural prayers have a strong emphasis on requests for a good crop from *Nyambe* (Junod 1938:321-322; Jalla 1954:3; Rooke 2006:3).

Psalm 91 mentions the danger of pestilence and destruction, terror of the night and midday havoc. Pestilence and destruction resemble evil spirits which were responsible for both individual and communal havoc. While in some texts these powers are agents of God the victim in Psalm 91 seeks protection from Yahweh from pestilence and destruction. Following the analysis on Lozi prayers and religious experience it seems that calamities which affect the entire community or sections thereof are conceived as afflictions from either dead royals or *Nyambe*. The development of sects associated with belief in spirits is limited to individual troubles they are not endemic. Therefore there is an element of similarity between Habbakkuk 3, the entourage of Yahweh and the Lozi belief. But the theology of Psalm 91 differs from Lozi belief.

5.3.3 Petitioners

The fact that the suppliant has a relationship with God is foundational to the prayers. This relationship, illustrated by the possessive determiner provides the victim with access to Yahweh (Pss 91:2, 140:6). Allusions to dwelling and sheltering under God's protection underline this relationship (Pss 91:1, 2, 9). Assurances of Yahweh's assistance also emphasize the relationship (Ps 91:14-16). The presence of an oracle in many of the laments assists to strengthen the victims' trust in the ability of Yahweh to protect and save.

Lozi petitioners are victims of forces beyond their control. They respond through prayer to the Deity and ancestors. It is apparent from Lozi prayers that victims' requests are premised by a vantage point of relationship with the God their creator. Moreover, *Nyambe*'s greatness and ability to provide is exploited in these prayers.

Thus psalmists and Lozi suppliants rely on God for protection from their adversaries. Prayer is undergirded by an element of trust in the Supreme Being.

5.3.3.1   Motivation of petitions

Psalmists motivate their petitions by appealing to Yahweh's loving kindness (Ps 77:9), acts in the past (Ps 77:10-20) and ability to protect. It follows that Yahweh is great and that only he could protect, rescue and perform mighty acts. Motivation is further hinged on the wickedness of the adversary, particularly with regard to their disregard of God. Enemies pride in their abilities and openly defy God (Ps 28:4-5; 64:5-10). Therefore the victim petitions Yahweh to destroy the wicked and defend his honour. Motivation is underpinned by an existing relationship between Yahweh and the victim. God is compassionate to the afflicted and just in recompensing the wicked.

Lozi petitioners motivate their requests by showering praises on the Deity and ancestors. Praise functions as a means to open channels of communication and perhaps to make God and ancestors predisposed to the victims' plight. Humility is coupled with praise. It is an attitude which demonstrates total dependence on the Supreme Being. Equally one's innocence is a resource for motivating *Nyambe* to act on his/her behalf.

Although petitioners similarly seek to motivate why the Deity should act on their behalf there appears to be a subtle attempt to manipulate either ancestors or the Supreme Being

among Lozi people. While such endeavours may be embedded in prayer the above function of praise and humility confirm the point. Moreover the use of libations, offerings and sacrifices to appease ancestors and *Nyambe* support this behaviour further.

5.3.4 Intermediaries

From both traditions, two broad types of intermediaries are divergently involved in the process of eliciting protection through prayer. The two can be categorized as otherworldly agents and natural entities.

5.3.4.1   Human intermediaries

5.3.4.1.1   Intermediaries in the Psalms

A cultic priest may have officiated at certain rituals where the psalmists sought Yahweh's protection. Although not directly mentioned the presence of a priest is conjectured from the appearance of God's promise to the victim (Ps 91:14-16). Liturgical prayer at the temple is offered in the midst of the cult community. Hence it is likely that a cultic official uttered words of assurance. Such officials served the purpose of making available the "word" of Yahweh in the given circumstance, or to teach the law or to pronounce judgment (Von Rad 1975:245). For example, before war kings might have sought the will of God through a cultic official (1 Ki 20:13ff). After offering sacrifices the officiating priest pronounced the blessing, which was hoped to bring triumph.

Individuals were also given a word from the Lord by the priest (1 Sm 1). Hannah, for instance, was sent home with a generic blessing from Eli (Berlin 2004:227-232). Thus a priest was an intermediary who acted both on behalf of the victim and as a messenger of the Deity. The presence of an oracle in a psalm may be assumed even where it is not indicated but there is a shift in the victim's mood from lament to praise (Mowinkel 1962:59).

Another official is the prophet. During the period of classical prophecy human messengers were commissioned to proclaim the will of the Yahweh (Hag 1:13). The prophet was more than just a messenger for he was a mouthpiece of Yahweh (Mullen 1980:215).

5.3.4.1.2   Lozi intermediaries

In Lozi religious experience there are officials who execute functions of intermediaries, namely, diviners, medicine men, and rain makers. When a problem arises a remedy may be obtained through the assistance of a diviner. Depending on the diviner's counsel further help is sought from either a medicine man or a rain maker. In certain cases where the cause of the difficulty is suspected to be from ancestral spirits such as restlessness in children and various aliments an elder performs rituals to appease and secure the ancestor's help. The alleged ancestor is requested to desist from malevolent activities and then welcomed to bring good fortune. During large scale disasters royal ancestors are approached by a royal grave custodian when requested by the reigning king on behalf of the community.

5.3.4.1.3   Similarities

Mediatory similarities of priests in the two traditions can be adduced such as sacrificial functions, communicating the will of the Deity and the preservation and transmission of tradition. It is contended that the role of the priest in the Old Testament resembles his/her African counterpart (Amanze 2001:277). There is no specific priesthood except for the royal gravesite custodian in the Lozi religious tradition. Both ancestral and *Nyambe* worship are conducted primarily at family level. An elderly member of the family leads in worship. At clan level the village headman assumes the responsibilities to approach *Nyambe* on behalf of the community. The royal ancestral cult attends to calamities or danger suspected to result from an angry deceased king. A grave custodian acts on behalf of the community in instances of epidemic proportions at the local royal gravesite (Mainga 1972:96). Similarly national disasters are resolved at a selected royal gravesite. The responsible custodian is provided with a sacrificial animal by the ruling king.

5.3.4.1.4   Differences

There is a major shift in the object of worship in Lozi royal ancestral cult. This is demonstrated in divergent foci where Lozi priests assist in the veneration of departed kings. In the biblical tradition priesthood is dedicated to Yahweh. Neither in *Nyambe* worship nor in ordinary ancestral cult is there any official priest.

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The strong emphasis of Yahwism on Yahweh has precluded the role of a medicine man in the Old Testament. Equally the function of a rain maker is absent in the Psalms. There are suggestions to the role played by a prophet praying for rain during drought (1 Ki 18:41-45). However it is important to underline the absence of magical elements in the Old Testament faith which are common in rain making rites in Africa and Lozi people.

Remote similarities have been adduced concerning the function of the priest. These similarities pertain to the aspect of an intermediary. However all Israelites had access to Yahweh through prayer apart from the assistance of a priest, unlike in the Lozi royal cult, where only the custodian is eligible. Medicine men and rain makers do not figure as intermediaries in the Psalms.

5.3.4.2 Spirit intermediaries

5.3.4.2.1 Angels in the Psalms

The psalmists may have believed in the existence of benevolent spirits or angelic agents who participate in the protection and dispensing of God's favour (Ps 91:11). The Hebrew word for angel (mal'ak) is sometimes used to designate a human messenger in the Old Testament (1 Sm 11:4, 1 Ki 19:2). But the term is also used in reference to supernatural beings. Angels are mighty in strength; they perform God's bidding and are at his disposal (Mullen 1980:214, 215). Their activities include: revealing mysteries; they are sent on various missions and they participate in eschatological wars (Newson 1985:23-38, 77-78). Psalm 91:11 is a promise to the victim concerning the aid of angels during tragedy. Elsewhere, angels are guardians (Gn 3:24), symbolizing God's presence (1 Sm 4:4) and divine judgment (Ps 18:10). They are dispatched by God to protect individuals on life's journey (Gn 24:7, 40; Ex 14:19; Ps 91:11).

There is an appearance and concentrated activity of angelic beings in late Old Testament and post canonical periods (Conrad 1997:79; Meier 1999:47; Gerstenberger 2001:166). Post Old Testament literature portrays angels as protectors and executors of judgment. Angels take a frightful form and assume a hierarchical structure, which cannot be easily identified in the Old Testament (Meier 1999:50). Already in the Maccabean period the patron God was involved in protecting the temple by causing natural phenomena and through the work of angels (Van Henten 1999:51).

Belief in angels was common in the ancient Near East. Outside Israel they were considered to be gods. In Ugaritic texts they are identified as a lesser order of gods serving El's council. Their responsibilities include running errands, interceding and executing divine judgment (Ringgren 1995:1289). High Gods communicated with each other by means of messengers. Gods were neither all-knowing nor capable of moving to different locations (Meier 1999:46). The High Gods had the authority to dispatch lesser gods on errands. Generally messengers traveled alone except when their mission was related to danger (Meier 1989:119,124-128). At Ugarit divine messengers appear in pairs (Mullen 1980: 211). Equally biblical angels appear alone when delivering messages. Angels rarely appear in accompaniment.

5.3.4.2.2   Lozi intermediaries

5.3.4.2.2.1   Ancestral spirits

There is a distinct absence of ancestral veneration in the Psalms and Old Testament. Neither is the practice of deifying kings found in Israel. At certain time kings were deified during their own lifetime in Mesopotamia (Black & Green 1992:62). Deified kings were identified as brothers or sons of the major gods. Consequently a cult was organized and rituals were performed to the deified kings in Mesopotamian temples.

Kings and heroes are an important feature of the tribal religion in many parts of Africa. At their death they become objects of veneration. Ordinary ancestral cults are minimal in societies where hero gods are central. Lozi people have both royal and ordinary ancestral cults. People who live in the environs of royal burial villages consult departed kings for protection and other requests. During large-scale catastrophes the reigning king approaches the ancestor king through the royal grave custodian on behalf of the kingdom. Ancestors play an important mediatorial function in African Traditional Religion (Shorter 1983:199).

During Iron Age I Israel's belief system may have included ancestor cults (Hackett 1998:208). Burial site excavations from this period indicate that food, drink, lamps, amulets and tools were placed with the deceased. This practice possibly signifies belief in the continued existence of the dead. Biblical texts, which censure the practice inadvertently, indicate the existence of ancestor cults (Dt 26:14; Ps 106:28; Jr 16:5-9). However, a parallel practice which exists among African and Lozi people in particular

cannot be substantiated in the Old Testament. Amanze (2001:276) exaggerates when he interprets the Old Testament address of Yahweh as God of the fathers as proof of the existence of an ancestral cult equivalent to the African religious experience. Correspondingly his argument regarding ancestral communication in Exodus 3:16 is untenable.

Living members of a traditional African society have a responsibility to their ancestors. Daily ancestors are venerated through acts of hospitality, like the offering of snuff, beer and food. Ancestors are also remembered periodically through rites at birth, marriage, sickness, death, planting time, hunting and fishing. At these occasions libations are poured out and offerings are made. Lozi people pray to ancestors for protection during labor, naming rites when the child is restless and when an adult is struck by an ancestor. Through offerings and invocations the responsible ancestor is appeased. Then healing and protection is secured. Unlike the Supreme Being it is common for victims to scold ancestors when they do not receive answers. This is a marked distinction between prayers to God and the ancestors.[52]

Although ancestors are recognized as part of the family occasionally they are vindictive particularly when they are ignored. Disasters such as drought or pestilence, sickness or death can be linked to ancestors. Ancestors can use crisis to punish the guilty. They are unpredictable and can be easily offended. Africans therefore continuously appease their ancestors in order to obtain favours as well as contain their anger (Taylor 1963:152; Parrinder 1968:59).

5.3.4.2.2.2 Messengers in mythical history

Lozi creation mythology provides glimpses at the belief system of the ancients. *Nyambe* had a counselor *Sasisho* and a messenger, *Kang'ombe* the lechwe (Jalla 1954:1, 2). *Nyambe* used these mythical creatures to transmit messages to *Kamunu* (man). Occassionally, other animals were directed to convey messages. When he was moved by the plight of man *Nyambe* sent a chameleon and hare to inform man that he would be immortal and mortal respectively. The chameleon left first but dawdled and was overtaken

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[52] A prayer to the ancestors with this feature goes as follows: "You are useless, you gods. You only give us trouble. For although we give you offerings you do not listen to us! You so-and-so are full of hatred. You do not enrich us" (Smith 1966:25).

by the agile hare. Legend has it that the arrival of the chameleon was not helpful, as man had already been sentenced to mortality by the hare's message. Yet, another messenger is death (Muuka 1966:250). Death is personalized as *Nyambe*'s messenger who comes to remove man from earth.

5.3.4.2.3 Similarities

Some African societies generally believe in lesser divinities (Mbiti 1975:66). It is apparent that this class of gods is lower in rank to the Supreme Being. This religious schema has echoes to the Ancient Near East. Belief in multiplicity of divinities prevailed in Mesopotamia, Ugarit and Egypt. However this class of gods is not well documented in Lozi religious experience.

The appearance of mythical animals in Lozi historical legends lends support to an order of messengers who function at the disposal of the Deity like in the Old Testament (Ps 91:13). *Sasisho* and *Kang'ombe* are messengers who perform the bidding of *Nyambe*. In terms of running errands there is a resemblance with the mention of biblical angels (Gn 24:7; Pss 34:8; 103:20). However in Lozi traditions these messengers are animals. And they do not appear anywhere as functionaries of protection.

5.3.4.2.4 Differences

Among the Bantu of southern and central Africa ancestral spirits are more common than lesser divinities. In the same way Lozi traditions have little, if any idea of lesser divinities. Lozi people venerate royal ancestors as well as ordinary ancestors. This feature marks a distinction between Lozi and Israelite religions. If Hackett (1998:208) is correct about a cult of the dead then early Israelites may have engaged in a form of ancestor cult. Her argument that they may not have worshiped ancestors does not altar the similarities with African practices. It is known that Africans do not worship their ancestors, but rather

venerate them. At any rate even if early Israelites had an ancestor cult the advent of absolute monotheism from the time of the Babylonian exile enhanced a break from it.

Although ancestors act as intermediaries who may be implored to convey requests to *Nyambe*, it is not known whether they also run his errands. Unlike angels who are primarily at the bidding of Yahweh (even as an arm of Yahweh) Lozi ancestors are first and fore most members of the earthly family. Thus their involvement with *Nyambe* emanates from their closeness to him through death. They are primarily engaged in the affairs of their families with whom they perform various tasks. Nonetheless, they are intermediaries. They are called divinities[53]; they possess superior knowledge and are more powerful than humans.

5.4 Elements of prayer

5.4.1 Address

The psalmists address God in prayer and praise (Pss 64:1; 77:1; 91:2), mentioning the personal name Yahweh (Pss 28:1; 91:2; 140:1), and the epithets Most High and Almighty (Ps 91:1). Thus psalmists pray directly to God trusting in his power to protect and save his people.

Lozi petitioners occasionally approach God, *Nyambe* directly (Di Nola 1962:38; Coillard 1902:169-170; Mainga 1972:95; Holub 1976:320). *Nyambe is* also called king, creator, and powerful one, source of help, strength and fertility in recognition of his attributes (Junod 1938:137-138; Jalla 1954:2; Rooke 2006:2). Although all the petitioners in the examined prayers address *Nyambe* it is not uncommon for ancestors to be the focus of prayer.

In both biblical psalms and Lozi prayers petitions and praises are directed to God. Yet, again Lozi people will most likely approach their ancestors and turn to *Nyambe* for certain calamities or dangers.

5.4.2 Petition

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[53] The Lozi term Balimu for ancestors comes from the same root as Mulimu God and Milimu Gods/divinities.

Whether it was in the midst of attack or under threat the psalmists respond by turning to Yahweh. They called upon Yahweh for divine protection and safety. The following petitions demonstrate this element: "to you I call" (Ps 28:1, "hear me" (Ps 64:1) and "rescue me" (Ps 140:1). Although Psalm 77:1 does not include an invocation in the present time it is given in past tense: "I cried". Additionally petitions in the psalms depict urgency for Yahweh's intervention. The following requests illustrate this matter: "hear my cry", "I call" (Ps 28:2), "protect me" Ps 140:1), and "keep me" (Ps 140:4).

Lozi petitions are directed at soliciting *Nyambe*'s answer to bless, strengthen, bring rain, education and relent in wrath (Di Nola 1962:38; Junod 1938:137-138). Spontaneous prayer is occasionally formulated as a wish as illustrated by relatives of a victim of injustice (Holub 1976:320).

Both psalmists and Lozi people petition their Supreme Being in prayer. This indicates their reliance on the Deity and trust in his abilities. Unlike psalms which have long redaction history Lozi petitions are concise, extemporaneous and focused on concrete material help.

5.4.3 Lament / complaint

Due to the overwhelming nature of calamities and distress, victims cry out in lament. Sometimes complaints about Yahweh's silence and hiddenness are strong. In Psalm 28 the supplicant complains about Yahweh's silence and deafness. Yahweh's failure to respond promptly causes insomnia and depression (Ps 77:4, 7-9). At its height the difficulty is almost unbearable. The victim's experience resembles one going down to the pit (Ps 28:2). Psalmists also lament their adversaries' malice and evil acts. Enemies sharpen their tongues, attack from ambush, set traps and do violence (Ps 64:3-4; 140:2-5). Prayer for protection is all encompassing with laments about enemy attacks, danger and in certain cases the absence of an answer from Yahweh.

Lozi prayers also reflect the element of lament. Laments are illustrated by graphic representations of impending grievous harm on the victim. At its worst enemy danger causes petitioners to be anxious about being lynched by their accusers (Holub 1976:320), being destroyed by a mythic adversary (Coillard 1902:169-170), and falling into the hand of *Nyambe*'s wrath (Junod 1938:137-138). When ancestors are the cause of hardships petitioners are strong on complaints to the extent of scolding their pursuant.

Lament is found in the Psalms and Lozi prayers. Petitioners respond by rehearsing the problem at hand. As a result of pressure from ongoing calamities victims' complain to the Supreme Being. Although the lament is missing in most of the Lozi prayers it is included in the prayer about injustice and the prayer for protection from the mythical creature in the rapids. Petitioners complain about the accusers' jealousy and the difficult situation at the rapids   (Coillard 1902:169-170; Holub 1976:320). Where the lament is not in the text, it is alluded to in the literary context.

The freedom to scold ancestors found in African prayers cannot be accounted for in the Psalms and Old Testament. Suppliants in Israel were honest and expressive regarding their experiences.

5.4.4 Apotropaic sayings

Imprecatory words function as a means of securing protection. Curses are pronounced on the enemy with the hope that they have power to wreak havoc. Words have either malevolent or benevolent power once they are uttered. One of the oldest apotropaic prayers is the priestly blessing in Numbers 6:24-26. The psalmists' imprecations are made effective through Yahweh's power. God metes out the same evil on the wicked as they had intended for their victims (Pss 28:4, 5; 64:8; 140:8-11). Therefore, while the wicked are overthrown the righteous are preserved (Prinsloo 2003:408). At other occasions destruction is set off by the adversaries' iniquities (Weiser 1962:610).

Apart from negative words, positive words are also employed for apotropaic functions such as the formulaic "You will not fear" in Psalm 91:5 (Gerstenberger 2001:166; Prinsloo 2003:408). It appears that these utterances are more than mere encouragement. They may have functioned as blessings which endowed the victim with protection from the enemy and the ability to succeed. In later traditions of from Qumran Psalm 91:11 functioned as a prayer requesting for God's protection through angels from harmful evil spirits (Eshel 2003:71). At any rate blessings and curses which are imbedded in laments are removed from magic since petitioners turn the power to revenge to God through prayer (Westermann 1978:22).

Lozi people like many primal people in Africa and elsewhere, believe in the power of spoken words (Adamo 2004:28). Tambiah (1968:176, 178) argues that words are only effective in the ritual. Words spoken in the right place and at the right time have effect (Adamo 2004:27). This implies that prayers, songs, spells, addresses and blessings are employed and effectual when they are pronounced in the ritual. For example, Ndembu[54] *ihamba* (spirits) rites consist of hunters' cult songs which are sung to please *ihamba* followed by confessions, grievances and reverent prayers made by a medicine man or elder. The attempt to locate words to the deity in a ritual context appears to be necessitated by Tambiah's desire to distinguish between magic and religion. Hence the power of words is reduced to a psychological dimension. But Tambiah's Melanesian people sometimes pronounce words over fields with the aim of enhancing their crop. This act negates a psychological interpretation (Ray 1973:28-29).

Performative speech need not be assigned to the area of magic. Rather this kind of language can be understood intelligibly (Ray 1973:17, 22, 29). Exertive words derive their power from the sacred and corporate authority of the ritual context. The ritual context comprises divinities, ancestors and the community. Thus a priest is authoritative given his/her position in the cult. This aspect makes cultural authority the center for performative words. Yet there is a mystical element as illustrated by the respect given to certain people in the community, whose words are believed to be weighty such as beggars, the elderly and kings (McKenzie 1997:335-340).

Among Lozi people it appears that the power of spoken words traverses restriction to ritual, cultural authority and linguistic dynamics as suggested by Ray (1973:17-29). Lozi cursing words over the Illa and Tonga and on their march to the southern reaches of their territory to plunder were imbued with magical power[55]. With the assistance of a medicine man potent words can be pronounced for the sake of causing harm (Adamo 2004:27). It is realistic to suggest that in that context words were understood to be potent, able to cause destruction and to bring victory.

Lozi people do not restrict cursing words to the religious ritual. They are usually uttered to individuals. Disobedience, malice and danger may be a motivation for cursing words. Cursing words can be uttered with or without charms and still be effective (Adamo

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[54] Ndembu are found in the Northwestern fringes of Zambia. They are neighbours of Lozi people. Their area lies on the northern edges of the Lozi territory.
[55] See cursing prayer for details to both accounts.

2004:28). The curse may counter evil, hence it leads to protection or can be used maliciously (McKenzie 1997:337)[56].

While imprecations are embedded in some psalm texts they appear as independent texts in Lozi traditions. The theological understanding of later Yawhism may have moved from a belief in the power of words apart from God's influence. Similarly Lozi people believe that all power rests with the Supreme Being. But the use of magic coupled with fear of certain individuals support the notion that words are powerful. In some cases these utterances derive their effect from the latent power of the speaker. Lozi imprecations are made antiphonally, whereas the psalmist does not use this liturgical device. Another profound difference is in the use of archaic language when uttering war curses and blessings among Lozi people. This phenomenon is shared by many tribal people (Tambiah 1968:180). There is a general agreement about the power of words and their protective role in both traditions.

5.4.5 Thanksgiving

The realization of protection through prayer is confirmed through thanksgiving and anticipated thanksgiving. Thereby a petitioner acknowledges salvation from God. In such instances the catastrophe may have passed or was showing signs of relenting. Given the certainty of answered prayer the psalmists burst forth in thanksgiving (Pss 28:6-9, 64:11; 77:10-20; 140:12, 13).

Thanksgiving is expressed by confidence arising from the declaration of God's promise to intervene in debilitating situations. God's word is the basis of such spontaneous outbursts. Other circumstances warrant this response, for example, after recalling the past acts of Yahweh (Ps 77:10-12).

Thanksgiving is missing from the examined Lozi prayers. However, this fact does not imply a lack of certainty on the suppliants' part. For the petitioner is fully, confident of the ability of the Deity to protect and intervene. It is not possible to deduce that thanksgiving does not appear in any Lozi prayers. Prayer and praise are constantly on the lips of the

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[56] Cursing words are recited many times targeting witches who are enemies with the result that they get lost and fail to find their way (Adamo 2004:9). It is also believed that for the words to be effective they must be uttered at a specific time, place and given times.

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African and Lozi faithful believer. Accordingly, although thanksgiving may not have been offered in the selected prayers, it was raised to *Nyambe* at a particular juncture most likely spontaneously with the answer.

5.4.6 Praise

The psalmists evoke divine epithets to praise God. God is called Most High and Almighty (Ps 91:1-2). Through metaphorical representation Yahweh is praised as rock, strength, fortress of salvation and shield (Ps 28:1, 6-8). Further Yahweh is praised for his past deeds, such as his creation and victory over Israel's enemies (Ps 77:14-20).

Lozi petitioners praise *Nyambe* by citing his attributes. *Nyambe* is creator and possessor of all power (Di Nola 1962:38). Cognizant of lurking snakes, beasts and natural hazards the suppliant acknowledges *Nyambe* as supreme over all. Lozi mythology articulates *Nyambe* the creator of every living thing (Mainga 1972:38). At the appearing of the sun *Nyambe* is praised as king over creation (Jalla 1954:3; Rooke 2006:2). *Nyambe* is the great king, incomparable, compassionate, provider, teacher with whom everything is possible (Junod 1938:137-138). Like an African tribal leader *Nyambe* is inundated with praise interspaced by ejaculations of petitions.

In both the psalms and the Lozi prayers, victims praise the Deity for the acts in the past. Praises are fore grounded in creation, previous demonstrations of power and salvation. Resulting from such praise is a confidence in the ability of the Supreme Being to perform and answer prayer at present and in future. There is an appearance of a salient belief or desire to manipulate the Deity in Lozi prayers. If a parallel is drawn from the acts of a subject before a chief, then the foregoing is plausible. A subject may not appear before a chief without tokens and due homage, which includes crawling and clapping.

5.5   Other aspects
5.5.1 Charms

It is likely that the use of phylacteries as well as tassels is a development from apotropaic functions of words in the Old Testament. Amulets were worn for protective purposes in Egypt. One such charm contains an image of a god stepping on the head of a lion (Weiser

1962:612).   During the neo-Assyrian and neo-Babylonian time period Mesopotamians erected monumental statues. Reliefs were placed in palaces and temples in order to gain protection from evil spirits. These were images of magically protective figurines; smaller ones were buried in the building foundations (Black & Green 1992:63).

Amulets might have been used for protective functions in the Old Testament (Wiseman 1980:46; Gaster 1987:245).   Jacob's ornaments buried at Shechem may have been amulets (Gn 35:41). Similarly the crescents that Gideon took off the camels' necks (Jdg 8:21) resemble those worn by men (Jdg 8:26) and women (Is 3:18) as decorative amulets (Yamauchi 1983:196).   In later Jewish periods amulets were used against evil eye, evil spirits, imprisonment and sword. Amulets served the purpose of intelligence to instruct people in the Torah. They also functioned against diseases and loss of property (Yamauchi 1983:197). Parchments containing scriptures which were worn on hands and foreheads may have been for protection from danger (Ellison 1980:1228).   Similarly mezuzahs have apotropaic use (Davies 1979:637; Harrison 1979:119). Through prayer the psalmists on the other hand placed their faith not in a charm but in Yahweh (Ps 91).

On the other hand Lozi people use charms to expel the work of an enemy. The victim consults a medicine man who proceeds to prepare an applicable charm against a particular enemy and danger. Charms are believed to protect people from witchcraft, snakebite, and dangerous animals, against misfortunes and lightning. In order to secure protection from their enemies, Lozi people carry amulets. They plant medicine in the spoor of dangerous animals and throw medicine on the water before fording a river with animals to ensure protection from crocodiles (Betrand 1899:277).   Such medicine is empowered magically through the repetition of certain words (Gehman 1989:71).

Unlike the Old Testament, in Africa good magic is publicly practiced without fear. It is widely employed for both protection as well as manipulation of weather conditions such as rain and influencing the future. Protection for individuals and property is achieved through the use of charms, amulets, herbs, seeds, powder, skins, feathers, tattoos, and chanting magical formulas (Gehman 1989:69).

5.5.2   Sacrifices, offerings and libations

Old Testament Levitical sacrifices consist of domestic animals and birds. These animals are either bulls or sheep (Lv 1:2; 5:7, 11). Fowls include pigeons and turtle doves. Israelites offered from their harvest products composed of barley and wheat (Lv 23:10-14). Israelite libations generally are cereal offerings. They are accompanied with a generous amount of wine poured on the flour. In ancient Near East libations were poured to gods and the dead. Mesopotamian libations to the dead were funneled through a clay tube stuck into the ground. Babylonian rituals are accompanied by libations of water, and sometimes beer and wine. Other elements are milk, honey, oil and cream (Black & Green 1992:117). Levitical sacrifices and libations on the other hand are presented to God. Old Testament view of God precludes worshipping the dead and other gods (Engelhard 1979:122).

Correspondingly Lozi people pour libations to God and ancestors. Libations are poured out at royal burial sites and at set places for ordinary ancestors. Types of libations comprise water, milk and honey (Arnot 1889:71; Coillard 1902:217-224; Mbiti 1975:59). The Lozi believe that appeasing ancestors elicits their assistance during periods of danger. Offerings and sacrifices are constituted of domestic animals, seeds, cloth, honey and foodstuff. Seeds are offered to *Nyambe* at the start of the agricultural season. It is difficult to determine whether other elaborate sacrifices are presented to God. Lozi royal cult sacrifices are domestic animals, mainly cattle. Ordinary ancestors are generally offered foodstuff, snuff, and libations.

There are similarities in sacrificial material. Both Lozi and Levitical systems use domestic animals. Similarly the use of wine in biblical traditions resembles alcoholic libations among Lozi people.

Unlike the Israelite sacrificial system Lozi sacrifices and offerings are devoid of bird offerings. Another area of dissimilarity concerns harvest products. Lozi people do not have elaborate harvest thanksgiving offerings from their crops. Instead, Lozi people offer foodstuffs to their ancestors. According to Arnot (1889:71) Lozi people may have performed human sacrifices in certain cases. This practice is prohibited in the Israelite sacrificial system.

Fundamentally there is a marked distinction between Lozi religious experience and Israel's religion based on ancestral veneration. This aspect of Lozi religion has to a large extent

overshadowed *Nyambe* worship. For example in *Nyambe* worship evidence points to the use of water and seeds and other libations. Animal sacrifices only appear in Lozi royal cult.

5.5.3 Metaphor and myth

There are allusions to mythical elements with regard to the psalmists' adversaries (Pss 77:14-20; 91:13). The psalmists may have borrowed these representations from their neighbours. Exemplarily Psalm 77 reflects the primordial battle between order and chaos in contemporaneous cultures (Pitard 1998:69-70; Stolz 1999:708). Similarly there are legendary representations in Psalm 91:13 regarding the serpent also rendered dragon by the LXX. This is a reflection of shared belief in dragons common in the ancient Near East. For example, Mesopotamian art indicates dragon like creatures which are either malevolent or beneficent (Black & Green 1992:71).

Although there are underlying similarities between Ugaritic and Mesopotamian mythological history and depictions of fear stricken waters in Psalm 77, caution must be applied when cross-cultural information is used for hermeneutical purposes (Pitard 1998:73). The Exodus 15:1-18 Song of the Sea is ostensibly related to Israel's passage from Egypt across the Reed Sea. It is a depiction of Yahweh's triumph over the Egyptian enemy. Thus Yahweh has demonstrated his power over nature, the sea and other powers of death (Hackett 1998:212).

Metaphorical language is used extensively in the Psalms. For this reason hunting images, war symbols and animal figures describe aspects of the adversary. In certain cases the human enemy who attacks maliciously, deceitfully and through war is described metaphorically. Likewise evil spirits may be envisaged through imagery in view of the victim's cultural milieu. In ancient Mesopotamia evil spirits are mentioned by their names in magical incantations. Evil spirits are agents and executors of the purposes of the gods (Black & Green 1992:63). They manifest as weather spirits and caused diseases even though not all diseases were associated with them.

Lozi petitioners allude to mythical creatures that cause danger. The fear of the rapids by Coillard's party was based on their belief in the existence of fearful mythological creatures in the abyss (Coillard 1902:169-170). Lozi people's belief system is permeated by the existence of places which are inhabited by divinities and the existence of apparitions which

possess semi human forms namely, *Mwendanjangula*[57]. There are also magical creatures like mystic snakes (*Lilombamema)*, tortoises (*Nkalankala*) and many other witchcraft related objects. Lozi people also believe in transformations[58].

The use of metaphor and myth is common in both traditions. However the occurrence of mythic language in Israelite traditions is veiled and appears to be to be either a recollection of ancient legends or an incidence of borrowed traditions. The Lozi belief system on the other hand is permeated by mythic representations. The pronouncement of myth among Lozi people may be alluded to their strong relation with magic and witchcraft practices. The censuring of witchcraft in Israel and the promotion of monotheism may have led to a break with the prevalence of magic and in turn a regression of mythical beliefs.

5.5.4 Expression of confidence

Psalmists placed their confidence in Yahweh during periods of danger. Prayer is underpinned by trust in God's ability to answer. Perpetually the psalmists explicate their trust metaphorically. For example war terminology such as the shield conveys an assurance of protection (Pss 28:7; 91:4). Yahweh is figuratively represented as a shield from the enemies. By requesting Yahweh to act as a shield the imagery conveys a motif of confidence that God will protect the endangered (Keel 1978:222-224). At war a shield protects a warrior against missiles coming from all directions.

Lozi people place their confidence in *Nyambe* through prayer. From given examples it is apparent that the victim's motivation to seek God is hinged on an expectation to receive a positive answer. Although *Nyambe* appears to be remote he is implored with confidence since the victim believes that the Deity participates in human affairs.

While assistance may be sought from ancestors and not necessarily from the Supreme Being the request is posed with the understanding that ancestors convey requests to *Nyambe* (Muuka 1966:xx). Another difference lies in the outworking of the answer. Lozi people, like many African societies, actively participate in securing favourable responses.

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[57] These creatures which are part man and part clay or reeds are said to inhabit the dense forests when met a fight ensues death follows should the victim lose and secrets of prosperity or medicine are disclosed if the victim triumphs.
[58] This is a belief that certain people are able to transform themselves into animals either in life for destructive purposes or at death.

They solicit the aid of a medicine man by acquiring charms and medicine. These remedies are believed to derive their efficacy from the gods.

5.5.5 Expression of humility

Humility characterizes the psalmists' prayers to God. This characteristic is noticeable in the psalmists' dependence upon God. God fights on their behalf and rescues the victim from the adversaries. Sentiments about being lowly, although embedded in Israel's theology, are concentrated in texts which address sin. This quality must be considered in relation to confidence in God's grace and loving-kindness. The psalmists are bold and free to express their fears and doubts. In Psalm 77:4-9 the victim charges Yahweh who has failed to act in defense of his people.

Lozi petitioners like their counterparts in many African societies offer their requests in humility. The deity is acknowledged as greater, powerful and wholly other, while the suppliant is a lowly creature comparable with a worm or an ant (Di Nola 1962:38; Coillard 1902:169-170; Mbiti 1975:16-21).

Like the psalmists Lozi victims pray to an almighty God. They are humble in prayer. Psalmists do not necessarily condescend themselves except in texts that dwell on sin and repentance. At any rate the fact that African and Lozi victims employ a language of humility does not imply that they are not bold in their prayers to God. In certain African prayers the petitioner accuses God of being the cause of the problem.

5.5.6 Gestures

Old Testament petitioners employed prayer gestures during prayers. Lifting hands to God while praying may have been commonly practiced in the ancient Near East (Pss 28:2; 77:2). It signified a posture of receiving, urgency, candor and persistence (Keel 1978:319; Hossfeld & Zenger 2005:275). Petitioners in ancient Near East stretched their hands before a sovereign or God as a symbol of aversion or veneration (Keel 1978:313). Babylonians threw kisses to their deities as an offering of their life. Assyrians may have stretched hands for apotropaic reasons. Egyptians stretched hands for exorcism and protection. Other gestures are bowing, kneeling and prostrating.

When approaching *Nyambe* an elder usually rises early in the morning. He then sweeps a designated spot, erects an altar from sticks and prepares a heap of white river sand. The suppliant proceeds to bow, kneel, stretch arms and clap while uttering the requests (Jalla 1954:3-5; Mainga 1972:96). Similarly, prayers to ancestors are offered at an altar or elected place at the homestead. An elder kneels and faces the west. The rest of the group faces the east. Prayers to ancestors requesting that they withhold their wrath and to remove evil may include spitting water to the ground in the western direction. This gesture is symbolic to casting evil into the direction of the setting sun where evil goes. In addition good is invoked from the east where the sun rises.

Psalmists and Lozi people engage in lifting hands as gestures when they are praying. Stretching hands signifies surrendering to the superior and expecting to receive. This gesture accompanies prayers for protection when the victim urgently seeks respite. Relief is realized through the assistance of God. Equally postures like bowing, kneeling and prostrating are accounted for in both religious systems.

5.5.7 Places and times of prayer

Psalms are inter alia a product of the temple worship system. Even where psalms originated at an earlier date and were transmitted orally they were fixed in the postexilic period. Therefore they are a feature of the temple cultic system. It is however unnecessary to attach different psalms to centralized single annual festivals such as Mowinkel's (1962:219) New Year festival, Weiser's (1962:35) covenant festival and Kraus's (1988:88) enthronement festival. The tendency to approach psalm setting from one single festival is elusive (Craigie 1983:48; Tate 1990:25). Based on the suggested cultic, historical and literary settings the selected prayers may have risen at different times motivated by the need for protection from danger. These prayers were offered to Yahweh at the temple. Moreover, they were used during celebrations and festivals in later periods. But their original setting, even though difficult to determine, could have been influenced by imminent danger as documented in the discussion.

Among Lozi people prayers to *Nyambe* and ordinary ancestors are often offered at the homestead. When village people participate prayers may be conducted at the village square by the headman. In the royal ancestral cult prayers are offered at a royal burial site by a grave custodian. More importantly, African people pray anywhere since God is

constantly on their minds (Turner 1952:49; Zahan 2000:16). Usually prayers are directed to *Nyambe* and ancestors in the morning. Yet again prayers can be offered at any time. Prayer is constantly on their lips (Mainga 1972:95, 99; Mbiti 1975:2).

Prayers for protection by the psalmists and Lozi petitioners were necessitated by prevailing situations of danger. Therefore, the frequency and time of prayer is an outflow of the request at hand.

In Israel, a place of worship is distinguished by the presence of a centralized system. The Lozi religious system is not centralized. Even in the royal cult where national cohesion is experienced, royal burial sites are multiple. There are designated places for both *Nyambe* and ancestral worship at family and village level. Nevertheless, each family unit or village determines such space.

CHAPTER 6
FINAL CONCLUSIONS

6.1   Introduction

Prayer for protection plays an important role in both the Old Testament and Lozi traditions. The presence of individual and communal enemies leads victims to implore the Supreme

Being (Mainga 1972:96; Mbiti 1990:14; Crenshaw 2001:50; Bullock 2001:166). In many instances danger has resulted from malignant attacks on a victim. Tribal people in Africa are perpetually in danger from natural hazards like drought, famine and crop failure. They are exposed to debilitating diseases and chance calamities. Furthermore, they are victims of beasts and human beings. Human enemies attack through divergent methods. Malice and slander are common ways employed by cunning enemies. Ancient Israelites and Lozi people were aware of the existence of evil spirits which cause harm to individuals. Among the Lozi these malevolent spirits may operate through humans such as witches or independently. Prayer serves a purpose of communicating with the Supreme Being and eliciting his protection from the aforesaid dangers and enemies.

6.1.1 Actuality

Prayer in African Traditional Religion has been examined by several scholars like Di Nola (1962), Mbiti (1975), Shorter (1975) and McKenzie (1997). However this study is different from the earlier works of Mbiti, Di Nola and Shorter in scope. The aforesaid comparative studies encompass a broad African spectrum. McKenzie's approach is particularistic and his focus is on the Yoruba people of Nigeria.

Different investigations have been conducted on the religion and culture of Lozi people, yet no comparative study with biblical texts on prayer has been done. Furthermore, prayer is not fundamental to previous research on Lozi people. Notwithstanding the centrality of prayer to religion the works of Coillard (1902), Turner (1952), Jalla (1954), Mupatu (1954), Mainga (1966; 1967; 1972), and Holub (1976) deal with similar religious, political, social, economic and cultural aspects of Lozi society and only make reference to prayer. In these works prayer is not discussed extensively. However, the vitality of prayer in Lozi religious experience is illustrated by its function, in this case in the area of protection. It is used to secure victory at war, safety from enemies and numerous instances of danger.

6.1.2 Problem statement

Historical factors about the early missiological hermeneutics have led to reticence of African culture in the past. This means that African converts responded to a Christianity which was equivalent to Westernization. As a result tribal cultural practices were shunned.

However, a contemporary trend to revitalize indigenous knowledge systems and appraise discourses of the previously marginalized has informed this study. For that reason this research interrogates the religious closeness between the Old Testament and African Traditional Religion. In addition, this study has been precipitated by questions about functionality and vitality of prayer for protection during time of danger in both biblical and Lozi traditions.

This study is motivated primarily by the researcher's cultural background. Being a Lozi he is able to interact with data as an internal observer. Secondly the investigator's experience with African worshipper's who gravitate towards traditional remedies during crises has informed this study. The third reason is owed to this study's contribution to a data bank for indigenous Lozi knowledge systems. A contemporary trend to appraise discourses of the subaltern and the cultures of the marginalized as they rediscover themselves is the fourth reason. Fifthly the proliferation of African Independent Churches and their attempts to manipulate the future through prophets may be paralleled to the role of diviners in African traditional Religion. These activities of intermediaries are important to this study. The development of liberationist contextual models in Africa as protestation against the hegemony of Western hermeneutical approaches warrants the contribution of a comparative model this is the sixth reason.

6.2   Aims and objectives

Through a comparative model and analysis of the various aspects of prayer for protection in biblical and Lozi religious contexts this investigation has yielded both similarities and differences between the aforementioned traditions.

The aims of this study were:

❑ to apply a comparative model through analysis between biblical and Lozi traditions regarding prayer for protection;
❑ to examine the different aspects of prayer namely function, motivation and settings with regard to protection in:

(iii)   Psalms 28; 64; 77; 91 and 140 and

(iv)   Lozi religious traditions.

In each of the above references:

- to identify and examine the various elements of prayer for protection;
- to reflect on the place of the Supreme Being in the given texts;
- to examine the influence of the adversary and situations of danger necessitating prayer for protection;
- to demonstrate the place of prayer for protection in both individual and corporate practices;
- to highlight the role of intermediaries and cult officials;

- and in tandem reflect the results thereof as a starting point for dialogue between the aforesaid traditions and further research;
- to contribute towards a data bank on Lozi prayer traditions and enrich understanding regarding prayer for protection in the two traditions;
- to test the thesis that there is religious proximity between Old Testament and African beliefs and practices;
- to provide aspects of Lozi historical background for the analysis of elements in prayer for protection.

6.3   Comparative analysis

Early comparative studies have been conducted for the purpose of denigrating tribal religions and cultures (Fabian 1998:218; Paden 2000:184; Patton & Ray 2000:1; Ray 2000:101). Consequently the approach has received less attention particularly in the light of pluralistic theory. In this study a comparative model has been utilized as a construct of diachronic, synchronic and theological aspects. Through an integrated approach this investigation has interrogated the issue of cultural closeness between Old Testament and African societies with regard to prayer. Thereafter results from the distinct groups have been analyzed comparatively. This process has focused broadly on the following

schemes: parties involved in prayer, elements, and some other aspects of prayer. Resulting from this approach are lists of similarities and differences between biblical psalms and Lozi prayers. These findings confirm that concepts from different traditions, although exhibiting resemblances, ought to be interpreted in their contexts in order to explicate their meaning. At any rate in both traditions petitioners revert to God in search for answers to the dire situations which surround them.

6.4   Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study is as follows:

> *A comparative analysis of African Traditional Religion and the Old Testament detects proximity and distance amid the two traditions. Microcosmic similarities in prayer for protection between biblical psalms and Lozi prayer traditions confirm closeness in religious experience during times of danger between ancient Israelite society and contemporary African tribal societies. Further, these similarities provide concrete points for dialogue between African Traditional Religion and biblical studies. Inversely differences underscore the uniqueness of prayer for protection in each of the biblical and African traditions.*

6.5   Outcomes

Resulting from the study parameters indicated in the above aims and objectives are the following results:

These similarities were explicated:
- During calamities prayers have been directly addressed to the Supreme Being namely *Nyambe* and Yahweh in Lozi and Israelite religious experience respectively;
- The Supreme Being possesses power and knowledge these qualities are reflected through praise in both traditions;

- Metaphors are used to describe the Supreme Being. Exemplarily Yahweh is symbolically called my rock and *Nyambe* my king;

- Individual enemies utilize similar attack methods like slander and malice; they also disguise their desires to destroy the victim in the mentioned traditions;

- Foreign enemies of the community who attack through war are common in both traditions;

- In both traditions human intermediaries such as priests and elders and spirit intermediaries represented by angels in Israelite beliefs and mythical creatures in Lozi religious system are found;

- These elements of prayer: petition, lament, curse, thanks and praise are common in both traditions;

- Victims express confidence in the Supreme Being in both Israelite and Lozi traditions;

- Prayer gestures such as bowing, kneeling, prostrating, clapping and raising hands are found in the Old Testament and Lozi religious experience.

To the contrary these differences have been elucidated:

- *Nyambe* the Lozi Deity has a wife *Nasilele* and other wives such as Mwambwa with whom he procreated while the selected biblical texts have not indicated any spouse for Yahweh ;

- Fear of witchcraft is prevalent among Lozi people and is a key cause of danger on the other hand magic seems to have been overcome in the Old Testament tradition;

- The personification of pestilence and destruction in Psalm 91 which appears to be an allusion to certain evil spirits that wreak havoc at community level is absent in Lozi prayers;

- The office of a priest is lacking in *Nyambe* and ordinary ancestral cults;

- These human intermediaries: diviners, medicine men and rain makers are not attested to in the selected psalms;

- Lozi ancestral cult is unparalleled in the Old Testament;

- In selected Lozi prayers there are no mediated sayings which appear in certain psalm texts (P 91:16-20). This is a result of the dichotomy between divination and invocations in *Nyambe* and ordinary ancestral cults;

- While imprecations are embedded in psalm texts they exist as independent utterances in Lozi traditions like the Ila-Tonga and Andonyi curses. This difference

indicates the reliance of the psalmists on Yahweh to effect revenge. On the other hand Lozi people appear to believe in the potency of words and the speaker;

- There are allusions to apotropaic objects such as fragments of scripture and *mezuzahs* particularly in late post canonical literature. Similarly, there is a prevalence of charms in Lozi traditions. However Lozi apotropaic objects do not have a direct connection to the Supreme Being;

- Post-exilic use of psalms leans toward centralized worship at the second temple while the selected Lozi prayers are not a product of a centralized cultic system.

6.6   Implications of this study

Arising from this research are the following implications:

A comparative approach for conducting hermeneutics has a place in biblical studies. It enhances the explication of data from different cultural contexts. This process should consider the historical, cultural and religious gap between the case studies prior to assigning meaning and reformulating phenomena. For that reason Lozi prayers are fore-grounded in their historical and broad cultural contexts. However, Lozi historical theories must be considered tentative at many points since certain oral traditions remain untested archaeologically and have not been corroborated with close cultural information.

This research has illustrated that victims generally petition the Supreme Being for protection from enemies and dangers. But a shift has been observed in Lozi religious experience since prayer may be addressed to ancestors. Further various aspects form the rubric on which prayer for protection is built in the two contexts namely: participants-Deity, petitioners, intermediaries and enemies/danger; genre; literary, historical and cultic contexts and functionality. Through comparison meaning of the concept of prayer for protection is broadened since it ceases to be restricted to a monolithic definition. After the process of meticulous analysis the study has yielded similarities and differences between the Old Testament and Lozi traditions. These similarities contribute towards dialogue between biblical and African Traditional Religion.

Through systematic analysis this study has contributed to Lozi knowledge systems and data bank. In addition the presence of many resemblances is a demonstration of cultural

closeness between the Old Testament and African belief systems and practices. However caution must be applied because no matter how similar concepts are, the mere fact that they obtain from distinct traditions separated by time and culture means that they can not be exactly the same.

6.7   Further research

The results of this investigation are a contribution to African studies and Lozi religious traditions in particular. However the immensity of the task and the vastness of the scope imply that further clarification and in depth studies must be conducted on certain matters. The following are some of the areas that remain untapped for research which, through further examination, will illuminate our perception of Lozi religious experience:

- A phenomenological study of the rituals, prayers and significance of royal gravesites in Lozi tradition;

- A contextual comparative study of Lozi royal praises in the light of the divinity of the monarch with reference to the annual migration ceremony;

- Further examination of Lozi historical legends in relation to other related African tribal groups;

- The impact of Lozi religious system on the social economic life of Lozi people with a focus on the role of the Deity in providing success, prayer as a means of sourcing blessings and protection from destructive enemies such as witches who are motivated by jealousy;

- Inquiry into the historical dynamics and relatedness of the three religious streams namely *Nyambe* cult, royal ancestor cult and ordinary ancestor cult.

The above mentioned matters, and perhaps more, ought to be examined and recorded in order to capture the disappearing and unrecorded traditional knowledge systems of the Lozi people.

6.8   Final remarks

Following the analysis and implications of this thesis the following conclusions have been reached:

- In spite of reticence by some scholars regarding the validity of a comparative approach about phenomena that arise from distinct geographical and cultural areas, this study has demonstrated that such a task has a place in biblical and religious studies. Its contribution to research in the wake of a quest for authenticity and rediscovery is crucial;

- After interrogating the hypothesis it is concluded that prayer for protection is important in both examined traditions. These results do not infer an equilibrium of biblical and Lozi traditions. Nonetheless, based on the diverse contexts and functions from the two traditions prayer for protection is a key vehicle for resolving situations of calamity, disaster and difficulty by requesting for redress and assistance from the Deity.

- Aspects of prayer for protection in this contribution can be further investigated and utilized as a contribution towards the promotion of dialogue between African Traditional Religion and biblical studies.

- In view of the differences resulting from this study rushed conclusions concerning resemblance and applicability of ancient Israelite beliefs without due consideration of historical setting should be employed sparingly. The closeness of African culture and Israelite culture arising from a simplistic reading that glosses over differences of compared texts is problematic. The meaning of religious beliefs must be explicated in their contexts in order to realize a fuller understanding. At any rate after careful analysis this study confirms the hypothesis that there is cultural closeness between ancient and contemporary societies.

- This investigation has made a contribution to Biblical and Religious Studies through the application of comparative model which is a construct of synchronic, diachronic and theological aspects to selected biblical psalms and Lozi prayer traditions.

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