



Living water in Ezekiel 47: How eco-hermeneutics raise climate awareness among Christian youth

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This article examined the role of biblical interpretation amid the world's water crisis. It aimed to make biblical texts accessible to non-specialist readers by using several methods of interpretation. The methods used were a combination of biblical interpretation, revisionist ecological hermeneutics and empirical research in the form of interviews with young adults in the Anglican Church in South Africa. This combination was applied to the role of water in Ezekiel 47. It showed that while traditional biblical interpretation is important for understanding the biblical context, revisionist ecological hermeneutics can help in understanding the ecological aspect of the text. This combination fitted the interview results, in which interviewees shared how learning about ecological aspects helped to make the Bible more relevant in today's ecological crisis. A deeper biblical understanding, a combination of traditional interpretation and ecological hermeneutics, could lead to more awareness and responsibility among Christians to care for creation. This form of hermeneutics could be applied to other Bible texts to grow awareness.

Contribution: Interviewees argued that there is a lack of awareness in their environments about the causes and consequences of the ecological crisis. One of the main consequences of this crisis is related to water, with floods and droughts already becoming more severe. While this is often overlooked, the Bible could be of use in the water crisis in today's world. This article has made a beginning in showing how biblical interpretation can effectively create climate awareness among churchgoers by speaking to their spirituality.

Keywords: Ezekiel; ecological crisis; water; South African context; Anglican church; climate crisis; Christian spirituality; practical theology.

Introduction

In the Netherlands, where I am from, access to clean water is one of the most ordinary things of daily life. It is so normal that people forget to appreciate it. Dutch people take it for granted, use it on demand – day or night – and are not concerned about the costs or potential harm. In fact, 70% of people worldwide can nowadays count on access to running water, often without considering its actual price (Vox Media 2018). Nonetheless, it is important to remember that water comes at a cost, even when it has been made relatively cheap for us to be able to use it (Monserrat 2021; Vox Media 2018).

The Netherlands, a country situated almost entirely below sea level, has often faced threats of abundance rather than scarcity when it comes to water. Nevertheless, this reality is changing with the change of climate (Van Gaalen et al. 2024). In South Africa, the situation is quite different. While the incidence of floods is rising, it is considered that 'rain is a blessing' (Response from a participant in a Contextual Bible Study, October 2023). The world is facing a water crisis, and some parts of the globe are already experiencing its effects (Aerts 2021; Matza 2024; Rafizadeh 2024). It is predicted that most of the world will run out of access to daily water demand by 2040 (Vox Media 2018), and cities such as Cape Town have already had to take drastic measures to avoid 'day zero' (Allie 2018; CBS News 2018; Makgoba 2021; McKenzie & Swails 2018). Although water is the world's most valuable resource, people tend to forget it comes at a cost (Vox Media 2018).

Water in the Bible also comes in different forms: it can be a disaster, as with the flood, or it can be healing, at the Pool of Bethesda. It is a central aspect of baptism and is allegorically used for themes as salvation and providence (Kotzé 2023). While it is clear that water is important in the

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Bible, it is rarely part of church discussions – it is hardly ever preached about, although it plays a central role in many Bible stories (Kotzé 2023). Based on a sermon I held at a creation service at St Wilfrid's Anglican Church in Pretoria in November 2023, this article is concentrated on Ezekiel 47, in the context of the world's water crisis. Firstly, the article will focus on the historical context of Ezekiel, thereby focussing on the symbolic language found in Ezekiel 47 and its relation to the lived reality of the prophet during the Babylonian exile. Secondly, the interpretation of this text will be linked to contemporary ideas about Christianity and our surroundings in 2024, drawing from interviews conducted in 2023 with South African Anglican Christians regarding the connection between religious beliefs and ecological commitment. The discussion will explore the potential role of Ezekiel 47 in guiding current approaches to natural disasters and trauma. Finally, this will lead to a conclusion on the influence of biblical narratives on our ability to cope with ecological trauma.

Methodology

McEntire (2014) suggests that a combination of interpretative methods is needed to read prophetic literature. He acknowledges, however, that it remains a challenge to 'develop a way of reading prophetic literature that is manageable for non-specialist readers' (McEntire 2014:330). As I am not a biblical scholar but a practical theologian, I consider myself among the non-specialist readers. A practical theological framework enhances biblical interpretation by integrating the lived experiences of Christians, making the interpretation more relevant. This approach encourages reflection among laypersons, facilitating a more dynamic understanding of biblical texts (De Roest 2020). I will, therefore, use the work of biblical scholars and connect them to the biblical understandings of non-specialist readers. To do so, this article combines two different hermeneutical approaches. Firstly, a classical interpretation of Ezekiel 47 will show how the text is most often understood in the Christian tradition. A classical interpretation focusses on anthropocentric aspects in the text, and interprets natural realities in a metaphorical, spiritual way (Copeland 2019; Kavusa 2019). Secondly, the article includes a revisionist ecological interpretation of the text. Revisionist ecological hermeneutics do not seek to reject the traditional interpretation, but rather to reinterpret the traditional interpretation in light of ecological issues, thereby giving space to the ecological context of the narrative, while still recognising the role of divine providence in biblical texts (Copeland 2019; Kavusa 2019). While acknowledging that it is challenging to coherently combine different interpretations, McEntire (2014) argues that such a combination can make biblical texts valuable and manageable for a wider audience, which is also the aim of this article.

I combine this biblical interpretation with empirical research findings. This will lead to a discussion on the implications of biblical interpretation for today's world (Kavusa 2019). The empirical research consists of semi-structured interviews

with young adults in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. The interviews form part of doctoral research on the relationship between Christian convictions and ecological commitment within the ongoing South African-German Research Hub on Religion and Sustainability (SAGRaS) project. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Pretoria. Quotes from four interviewees are presented as examples of how biblical interpretation influences the understanding of ecological trauma and climate change. The interview quotes that are presented here specifically relate to biblical interpretation or African traditional religious practices. The interviews focussed on questions such as: What theological considerations prompt ecological action? Under what circumstances does ecological theological preaching or interpretation of Scripture translate into action by the communities' adherents? Additionally, it also asked respondents to reflect on the link between nature and spirituality. The next section will be a discussion of the classical interpretation of Ezekiel 47.

Classical interpretation of Ezekiel 47:1–12

Cook (2018) gives insight into the world in which Ezekiel was living by presenting his readers with context on the Book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel combines familiar ideas of the world's reality with mythological ideas of his time. He is a well-educated priest of Jerusalem, which shows in his visionary writings. The Book of Ezekiel is a piece of literature with a remarkable combination of historical accuracy and transcendent influences (Cook 2018; Poser 2012). I will first describe some of the symbolic aspects of the water in Ezekiel 47 before going into the immanent understanding of the water.

In chapter 47, Ezekiel takes the reader through the temple. The temple complex itself bears a lot of holiness in all its symbolism. This symbolism can be traced back to ancient Near Eastern texts and mythological ideas (Bodi 2015; Cook 2018). The square geometry of the temple building resembles holiness. Additionally, the use of sacrificial blood and flesh throughout the Book of Ezekiel shows how the temple is meant to integrate this holiness. In Ezekiel 47, God's sacred river spreads this holiness beyond the temple. The river flows throughout all of Israel, spreading the holiness beyond the temple's boundaries (Cook 2018).

One of the most significant aspects of this river, which gets lost in translation, is the connotation of a double river in 47:9. In the original text, it is plural and reads as 'double rivers' or 'paired rivers' (Bodi 2015; Cook 2018). This refers to a Mesopotamian idea of a sacred river. It was a well-known symbol in Ezekiel's time, and Ezekiel included it as part of the beginning of the Messianic time (Bodi 2015). The double river, seen as one twin river rather than two separate rivers, reminds the reader that it is not just any water flowing through the temple, it is holy water (Bodi 2015).

This holy water resembles Mesopotamian ideas of water flowing from a bottleneck opening. The bottleneck opening

ensured the water could also be stopped, and the gods could decide to put a cork in it. The water in Ezekiel, flowing from a cosmic centre, could thus also be stopped from that centre. Ezekiel's vision shows an impressive, untamed flow that makes the temple an anchor for earthly holiness. The idea of the flowing water not being hindered by God implies that Ezekiel envisions fertility and an abundance of life coming with the Messianic age. The sacred river, resembling all the holiness in Ezekiel's literary piece, describes a utopian temple vision. The double river, in combination with the healing tree, resembles the renewal of nature and life because of the Messianic age (Bodi 2015; Poser 2012).

Ezekiel thus fitted into his time and place of the Babylonian exile with his symbolic text of flowing sacred waters and healing trees. The resemblance with other religious ideas of that time often gets lost in translation, but it is essential to understand where Ezekiel is coming from. He probably witnessed healing rituals in Babylon (Cook 2018). The double river iconography should also have been around Ezekiel in different temples. It becomes apparent that the underlying ideas of the symbolism reflect those of Babylon: renewal of life, health, fertility and abundance of food (Bodi 2015). In this Babylonian environment, water was associated with the presence of the deity. The idea of streams originating in the temple represents that the sacredness usually enclosed for most people is now within reach for humankind. The water stream brings sacredness to humanity. In a time when the Judean people were living in exile and feeling let down by God, the vision of the stream running down from the temple offered hope that God would return and be among the Judean people forever (Bodi 2015; Ganzel 2021). Understanding this context can help us understand that the text is not a mere utopian vision but is based on stories of real people living in exile.

The story's reality becomes even more apparent when one looks at the ecological characteristics in Ezekiel 47, as described by Copeland (2019). Ezekiel 47 is often viewed through a singular lens, as transcendent, apocalyptic, symbolic literature, as a utopian vision (Poser 2012). However, it is crucial to recognise that it is a unique blend of symbolism and reality, offering a rich tapestry of interpretations. As argued precedingly, the symbolism gets lost to today's readers, who are unaware of the Babylonian influences. At the same time, without much understanding of the Babylonian exile, the actual trauma in the story is also easily overlooked. A thorough interpretation is thus necessary for the text to be relevant today. Copeland (2019) writes about the reality of trauma in the text of Ezekiel 47 without overlooking the symbolism.

McEntire (2014) argues that the focus on reading Bible books as complete works of literature overlooks many aspects of the shorter stories within the books. Such a way of reading focusses on punishment for the whole of Israel's bad behaviour instead of blaming the empires for their harsh reign. It does, furthermore, not answer the question of the suffering of individual victims. Copeland (2019) and

McEntire (2014) thus support reading the text within the historical context and as a literary piece. McEntire states that historical-critical reading reminds one that the authors 'saw real injustice and idolatry in the world and spoke against it, warning of the consequences of a failure to repent' (2014:331).

Revisionist ecological interpretation of Ezekiel 47:1–12

The lived reality in the Ezekiel's writings often gets lost in the prophetic interpretation, the symbolism of the water and the temple measurements. Copeland (2019), therefore, reads Ezekiel 47 through an ecological lens, arguing that the text is not only utopian but also reflects the reality of trauma. Ezekiel 47 is about traumatised people in a traumatised land. The stream in Ezekiel 47:1–12 depicts a miraculous stream flowing from the temple, or a double stream as we know by now. This stream restores the environment from a degraded state to a fruitful, fertile state. The text emphasises restoration and renewal (Copeland 2019).

Traditional interpretations of the text emphasise divine intervention in the ecological well-being of the land. The salt symbolism in the text shows 'the permanence of God's indwelling of the ideal temple' (Cook 2018:197). However, Copeland (2019) recognises that the text speaks of the actual salinisation of the land. She notes that an unsustainable agricultural regime might have caused the traumatised land and people. The focus on ecological trauma brings the relationship between the traumatising of the ecological community and human trauma to the forefront. In the story of Ezekiel, for example, soil salinisation can be seen as a cause for trauma. The agricultural habit of humankind replaces the natural vegetation indigenous to the land. Planting shallow-rooted crops and adding more water than the natural rainfall to the region allows the water to infiltrate the soil deeper. While not going into detail here on the works of salinisation, Copeland (2019) argues that salinisation creates dead zones where most plants cannot survive, which leads to crop failure and the killing of the natural vegetation. The trauma of the land is thus caused by human processes but, consequently, also causes human trauma as crop failure leads to famine. Often, as can also be seen in interpretations of Ezekiel, humankind will believe that the gods might have reasons to punish them. In this interpretation, ecological trauma is not related to human actions but is seen as God's punishment (Copeland 2019). Up until today, this is, for some people, an explanation for natural disasters, crop failure, among others.

Copeland (2019) argues that, although humankind might not take direct accountability for the traumatised land, they blame their morality. This allows people to recover from their trauma, but it does not accept responsibility for the trauma of the land. While a symbolic interpretation of Ezekiel 47 shows a river restoring life, reading the text through an ecological lens shows that that river distorts the ecosystem instead of restoring it (Habel 2009). If one keeps interpreting this as a divine cause rather than acknowledging human accountability, this can lead to ongoing traumatising of the

land (Copeland 2019). Humankind will then, believing that God punishes them, review their morals, not their practices on the land. In the end, this will lead to the destruction of the land. Instead of fulfilling Ezekiel's vision of the restoration of the land, this will thus only lead to more destruction of the land.

McEntire (2014) interprets the book of Ezekiel as a measurement of the distance between a vision of Jerusalem and the Jerusalem of reality. This shows a goal for the prophetic literature, which envisions a Jerusalem of freedom. Ezekiel brings hope to a traumatised people in a traumatised land. The vision gives people hope for a different interaction with God. The flowing water in Ezekiel shows, according to McEntire (2014), a vision of the Messianic age that is to come and the destruction of what is going on. These texts can be helpful in today's world, where ecological trauma is once again causing human trauma. The next section will therefore discuss the relevance of ecological trauma in the Bible in the current ecological crisis.

Understanding Ezekiel 47 amid a water crisis

As argued, Ezekiel's text can be helpful for today's world in which ecological trauma is once again causing human trauma. In this section, I will use empirical data to reflect on the various interpretations of Ezekiel discussed above. Drawing from the interviews with young adults in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA), it became clear that such texts can be relevant for today's readers in the context of the ecological crisis.

Several respondents made clear that they experience a lack of awareness among their fellow congregants regarding climate change and ecological trauma. They stressed the need to make a connection between the congregants' Christian convictions and their understanding of the climate crisis. Since this connection is currently missing, congregants do not take responsibility for the disasters they are witnessing. They look at it from a distance, see it as a punishment from God, but do not embody their role, as the next two responses show:

'I don't think [*people*] are even aware that the weather conditions are changing because of what is happening to the environment. They just think that it is the changing of seasons or, as they usually say, we have too many sins, so this is God punishing us.' (Participant 13, male, Free State and Gauteng)

'We are trying to remind the congregants that when we talk about doing righteousness, when we talk about following on Christ's footsteps. It's not mainly about me not stealing, me not committing adultery. You know all those things that you find in the Ten Commandments. But we are also trying to awaken that mentality, you would say. Everything that is here on earth, God was pleased with his creation. In fact, not everything, not the human acts, but the creation. So, we are trying to preach the gospel in a way that is more practical than just standing on the pulpit.' (Participant 6, female, KwaZulu-Natal)

These two quotes support Copeland's argument that a traditional interpretation of Ezekiel can lead to humankind

reflecting on their morality, but that the current crisis calls for more than changing our moral behaviour. The climate crisis is causing human trauma, as a participant shared when asked why he became more outspoken about the crisis in his church:

'And also, I think having examples or having people that I know being affected. Because I've seen what the floods do when I was in Free State and the KZN floods, we also lost a member to those floods. So knowing somebody at church and then you hear that this person has passed due to, you know.' (Participant 13, male, Free State and Gauteng)

For this participant, the reality of losing someone to the ecological crisis motivated him to become more outspoken and to raise awareness. For people who experience trauma from the climate crisis, when water has taken everything they had, including lives, a vision of a better world can give hope. However, it would be even more destructive if this vision of a better world excludes their accountability and sees it as collective punishment. The participant went on to describe how for him climate change became more critical when he learned about it in biblical terms:

'I think when something that is general is being explained thoroughly ... You know, climate change being explained in biblical terms. Because when we have been taught at school, it is just information that is there as textbook and whatsoever. But me being very invested in God and also wanting to grow spiritually, when they explain climate change or the injustice of environment. Being explained biblically, it was very interesting ... It was a new thing for me, and it was very interesting.' (Participant 13, male, Free State and Gauteng)

The new world that is promised by God will not come if humankind only improves their morality towards sex, hospitality, economics, among others. The land will still be hurt if humanity does not stop harming the environment. The participant shows how he learned about the Bible's ecological insights and the ecological injustice that can be found in the Bible. The river in Ezekiel is flowing because the land had been traumatised in the first place. It is a story about ecological trauma, a well-known way for indigenous and traditional communities to retell ecological trauma (Copeland 2019). Ezekiel functions as a passive observer in this story (Copeland 2019). He writes down his observations as they come, but he, like his readers, does not take responsibility for what is happening to the land. The quotes from the participants show the need for a spiritual connection to the climate crisis. For the participants, learning about this connection has helped them to grow spiritually and become spokespersons for climate justice in the church. They became more than passive observers.

As stated precedingly, resorting to higher causes is one of the more common ways of dealing with collective trauma. This helps to understand trauma and to be able to deal with the trauma. One interviewee shared how people in his community react to ecological trauma:

'When there was a drought, you'll find that the community leaders, the elders of the society of the community, they will go

on top of the mountain and pray on behalf of the community and then eventually it will rain. So, I think, the thinking, it comes from there and also the story of the Noah's Ark in the Bible. Some people take it in that sense, yeah. Yeah, that's their perspective, yeah.' (Participant 13, male, Free State and Gauteng)

The participant shows how up until today, communities turn to higher deities when things happen that they do not understand. God punished them for their wrongdoings, and now they must deal with the consequences. But, as we see in Ezekiel, God will also restore the land, hence the prayer ritual, as mentioned by the participant. Although the text is apocalyptic, God will not destroy the earth, but restore it (Pretorius 2023). When we want to understand the healing of the land to the fullest, we must understand the suffering and the healing together. The combination of suffering and healing tells us something about the resilience of the land. If the land can heal, if the water can share its healing power, then we humans can heal as well. In one of the interviews, this exact story of Ezekiel was mentioned to describe that intertwined aspect of the restoration of the land and humankind:

'I've always been able to use the picture of Ezekiel where he speaks of the river coming from the temple, you know, so the calling of the temple to say we need to bring restoration to all of God's creation. So when you start with them, you speak to people's hearts.' (Participant 12, male, Western Cape)

The human responsibility for the restoration of God's creation becomes clear in this quote. Rather than asking God to restore the land, it is argued that this text calls for humans to restore the land. The text contains knowledge that can help us deal with ecological trauma and healing, even today. This shows us we can hope in God because God will restore life. But it is up to us to trust in God and not look away. God asks for spiritual healing as much as physical healing, and the beauty of water reminds us that God is with us (Kotzé 2023). Ezekiel leads us into spiritual practice as we move with him through the temple, a labyrinth. Readers have 'been imaginatively inhabiting and traversing the matrix of humility and relationality ...' (Cook 2018:267). This spiritual practice leads to reflection and action. As summarised by a respondent:

'I pray on my own to God, and it feels like I have the power to tell everyone to plant trees. Prayer encourages me.' (Participant 3, male, Free State)

Yet, another interviewee shared that nowadays people seem to have lost the relationship between the spiritual aspect and the practical aspect:

'There would be times here when there would be no rain, you know? Well, during those drought and dry seasons, our people and even the traditional council, women would dress up like in a decent manner and men also and then they would go to the river and pray for rain. You know, so that is what is happening here in the rurals. They no longer do those things. They would clean, go there and clean by the river. Like take out anything that does not belong to them, the plastics there, they clean the bottles and stuff and take them away from there or dispose them in a way as supposed to be, and then they would pray and it would rain, like it would rain. But now it's no longer happening.' (Participant 6, female, KwaZulu-Natal)

The water that Ezekiel is talking about is restoring what was lost. The water destroyed, and the water healed. Ezekiel lived in exile, in Babylon, and he was talking about a land he could not see, a temple he had never seen. If his vision is read more literally, the ecological trauma that preceded this vision becomes visible. It implies agricultural purposes that might have led to the deterioration of the environment. Irrigation of such agriculture leads to soil salinisation; there is an overflow of water, and the plants cannot take all of it in anymore. As a result, the land gets traumatised, filled with salt, and unable to be restored. Traumatized land leads to crop failure, which leads to traumatized people, caused by people (Copeland 2019). The symbolic signs of living water, a fountain of life, and eternal fruit-bearing trees, together with the harsh reality of a traumatized people and a traumatized land, can be relevant to our daily life today. The story of Ezekiel stresses the interconnectedness of all creation (Pretorius 2023).

Ezekiel is just writing down what he sees and not writing about any responsibility for himself or his people. However, God also told humankind to let the land rest. God gave humankind the responsibility to take care of the creation and told them how to do so. It is not God's punishment for humankind for not being morally good people, but it simply means that humankind did not take good care of the land. Thus, humanity must deal with the consequences. We would rather look away and think of a higher deity that has caused the suffering and that will also restore it. We often think about these matters in an anthropocentric way, but Ezekiel's vision especially shows the interconnectedness of God's creation. The river not only heals humankind; it heals creation and gives life to other parts of creation (Kotzé 2023). Given the slow response of churches towards climate change (Davies 2015; Ostheimer & Blanc 2021), it is important to emphasise this aspect of the text. Humankind must understand that although God promises restoration, this does not mean they can sit and wait. The promise of God's redemptive work should encourage us to work on this redemption ourselves, especially when it is hard to imagine (Kotzé 2023).

In Ezekiel 47:6, the text reads: 'Are you seeing this?' Ezekiel is witnessing an unbelievable miracle. He has a utopian vision of God's presence, even though it is impossible to envision God's presence during that time of exile. Cook (2018) writes how the people of Israel could not imagine that God would ever be among them; they felt forsaken. And yet, Ezekiel has a vision of exactly that. This idea of a utopian vision can be related to cathedral thinking in climate movements (Van Vliet & Beukes 2023). In Ezekiel, we see the power of healing waters through a vision of God's provenance. While it seems impossible to think about the fulfilment of that vision at that time, one can work towards completing it step by step. It is like building a cathedral, where the people often could not envision the outcome, yet they kept building (Van Vliet et al. 2023). Just like that, one can take on the call to restore God's creation. Ezekiel's vision can be a reminder that one can work

on the restoration without knowing the outcome. However, as the interview quotes show, people need to gain an understanding of the crisis at hand.

Conclusion

The beauty of water, the beauty of how it can break or make the world, shows the deep connection between humanity and the rest of creation. Without water, the land is traumatised, and when the land is traumatised, humans are traumatised. However, Ezekiel also shows how resilient creation is. And if the land can heal, it means humankind can heal. Ezekiel wrote his prophecies down while he was living in exile. The flowing water shows his hope to heal and be restored while being aware of the trauma that has happened to the land. And so, it should be for humankind in 2024. Sometimes, people should take their distance. Humans should give the land time to heal and restore by taking a step back, not by looking away, but by taking responsibility. This can help to restore the sources in life, the living water as the very source of life.

The interview excerpts show that the Bible can inspire caring about God's creation. Nevertheless, the interviewees also share that people lack awareness on climate change and, therefore, do not act upon it. Revisionist ecological hermeneutics can help Christians understand God's call for humankind. Instead of waiting for God to fulfil a promise of restoration, the text can also be interpreted as a call to action and can create awareness among congregants. The symbolic healing power of water and the actual healing practices humankind can do themselves should form a connection.

Through the living water, humanity is healed. In the water, one can see God's presence and divine grace. Humans should not be seen as passive observers, as Ezekiel is often seen, but as people who recognise the power of water as a source of life and live up to it. Ezekiel used the Babylonian milieu where he was residing to envision a messianic age. These days, a thorough interpretation of Ezekiel 47 should be seen as a cry for help from the earth. It shows the damage to the land, and it should become clear that God wants humanity to do better. The excerpts from interviews show that it is essential to not only focus on the symbolic understanding of such visions. Including the literal aspects of texts, such as the ecological trauma that happens in Ezekiel 47, can make texts more relevant for people today. Then, people see the connection between their religious convictions and the necessary ecological commitment.

As said in the beginning, water is one of the world's most valuable resources, but humankind does not treat it as such. Water destroys and heals; it baptises people to become followers of Christ, and purifies and makes people church members. That living water should be a call to action because the Bible can speak to people's hearts. The Bible can convince people about the value of nature, and with the proper interpretation, it should be more than a call to prayer, it holds humankind accountable.

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The author declares that they have no financial or personal relationship(s) that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Author's contributions

G.v.V. declares that they are the sole author of this research article.

Ethical considerations

An application for full ethical approval was made to the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria. Ethics consent was received on 18 May 2023. All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments. Written informed consent was obtained from all individual participants involved in the study (T014/23).

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from G.v.V., the corresponding author.

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