

CHAPTER 3

3.1 TRUE STORIES

3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on three interrelated true stories that the author will share in order to expose the degradation of females by males and to highlight church dogmas which are patriarchally inclined, with the aim of pinning females down and rendering them powerless, on the pretext of advocating the law of God. The author has given titles to the stories in relation to their contents.

3.1.2 TREPIDATION OF AN ELDERLY CLERGY MAN

An elderly clergy man from the author's denomination raised his trepidation about the leadership of females; especially the ones that Pastor churches. He demanded that the Levitical code be visited regarding the issues of purity and defilement. While the author was going through the book of Leviticus, the old man interjected and said that How can you support the ordination of females, yet knowing that they menstruate every month, and some of them take more than a week menstruating. How do you expect them to ascend the pulpit in that impure state? I have been thinking that you understand that bible you cherish so much; I now see that I have been very wrong. The implication is that they defile the church, let alone the pulpit.

The remarks of the elderly clergy man startled the author, because of his biasness, since the first 18 verses of chapter 15 of Leviticus which he based his argument on addresses defilement of men. Verses 19 to 30 address females, and 31 to 33 combined both female and male. This attitude of reading the scripture out of context to attain one's desire is misleading and destructive to the church, especially when it is done by people who are perceived to be leaders and enlightened.

According to the above chapter its author spoke more about the defilement of males than of females, and that of those who will touch defiled people and their belongings. The author then said to the elderly clergy man What about men because this chapter speaks about both men and women? He then said that Where have you seen a man menstruating? The author then said that fine but do you ask women before you shake hands and hug them whether they are not in their monthly period, because if you don't you might have been touching the defiled ones, and that makes you equally defiled. Can't we read Leviticus 21, Numbers 5 and 19, on defilement of ministers like us before we can make any conclusion on this issue? Instead of reasoning that out he became angry and left fuming. In other words, his conservative theology prevented him from exploring this issue further.

This is a stressing experience, because most males who complain about the leadership of females refuse to openly and fairly debate about this issue in the light of the entire Bible as a guide, but resort to few selected portions of Scripture to archive their objective, as the cleric above had reacted.

The author of the book of Leviticus and Numbers does not only speak about the impurity of ordinary people, he also speaks about Priests and High Priests as well, and speaks as follows:

“A Priest must not make himself ceremonially unclean for any of his people who die ... The high priest must not enter a place where there is a dead body. He must not make himself unclean, even for his father or mother, nor leave the sanctuary of his God or desecrate it,” (Leviticus 21: 1- 12)

He continued to elaborate this as follows:

“Whoever touches the dead body of anyone will be unclean for seven days.... Whoever touches the dead body of anyone and fails to purify himself defiles the LORD’s tabernacle. That person must be cut off from Israel.” (Numbers 19: 1- 13)

A Priest is a man who administers the sacraments in accordance with the religious rights of his religion. The world book dictionary defines the Priest, as follows:

“A clergyman or minister of a Christian church authorised to administer the sacraments and pronounce absolution.”
(Barnhart & Barnhart, 1990: 1653)

Regarding, the High Priest the author of Hebrews articulates:

“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the son of God... For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, ...” (Hebrews 4: 14- 15)

This Hebraic statement sums up everything that Jesus believed in and did, albeit his sympathetic acts were seen as violation to the Hebrew religion

and culture. For example; healing the bent down woman on Sabbath, allowing the sinful woman to touch him and wipe his feet with her hair, and being touched by the woman with the issue of blood. The most insolent act of Jesus was that of going inside a room with a dead girl, whom he held by the hand and said:

“Talitha koum”, which means ‘little girl, get up!’ (Mark 5:41)

In the light of Leviticus chapter 21 and Numbers chapter 5, as indicated above, Jesus the Most High Priest, committed a double violation by not observing the two rules that governs the purity of Priests as recorded in Mark 5:41. Because after going into the room with a dead person whom he touched by the hand, Jesus did not suspend his ministry for seven days, nor undergo the processes of cleansing before resuming his priestly duties, because to him liberation and healing of the oppressed was paramount, and that superseded the Mosaic Law of purity. This is the legacy shepherds must follow.

It is interesting to read that after raising Jairus’ daughter, Jesus went to his hometown, where he continued with his ministry, on Sabbath he went to the synagogue; and began to teach. The point here is that Jesus went into the very place he was not supposed to; people even commented about the wisdom given to him and the miracles he performed. See Mark 6:1- 2. The repercussion thereof, was supposed to be excommunication from Israel, or even death which did not take place. Priests (Pastors) are mostly involved in conducting funerals, and for the fact that most of them are men; nothing is being said about their uncleanness. They don’t even condemn themselves for their repeated violation to the sacred pulpit. If Jesus’ action broke the yoke that was inculcated in the laws of purity

according to Leviticus and Numbers, then both females and males are supposed to be redeemed from such laws.

The old man who complained about the fact that female Pastors menstruate and therefore defile the pulpit, is also a Pastor and always administer funeral services. Amazingly to him, there is no defilement to the pulpit, even though the very book he quoted is very explicit on that matter. That is why he did not wait to hear what the passage said about Priests and High Priests. This is a clear indication of how some males elevate themselves beyond the word of God.

This superiority and holier than thou mentality, portrayed by these males has consumed them so much that the word of God is no longer addressing them, but other people, especially females. Therefore, females perceive the word of God as bias and oppressive, hence some developed a negative attitude towards it, God, the Church and males. This reaction is seen in Ruether R. R, Daly M, and Soelle D, who demonstrated this by dismissing the believe that the Bible is an inspired word of God, because of having been influenced by patriarchal culture, hence its biasness. See Foh, 1980:3 &7. While on the other hand, Fiorenza is heard saying:

“The pain and anguish that patriarchal liturgies and androcentric God-language inflicted on women can only be understood when theologians and ministers realize the patriarchal dehumanization of women in our society and church.” (Fiorenza, 1996: 9)

She furthermore, quoted some females who see the Bible as a useless resource for women seeking liberation from sexism. See Fiorenza, 1996: 41.

In relation to the above indicated attitudes, that some males elevate themselves above the word of God, or that the word of God is in their favour, Fiorenza quoted Carmody saying:

“The rule of men which has prevailed in most of the Christian churches in most historical periods has worked to the neglect of women’s rights, freedoms and joys,” (Fiorenza, 1996: XXXI)

The author concurs with Carmody because females are still not liberated from oppressive laws such as those indicated above. As a result, some find no joy in the church, while the executors of those laws (males) enjoy the liberation they found through overriding them, because of being males and leaders.

The author of Leviticus and Numbers is very clear, because he gave a directive regarding how Priests and High Priests should conduct their lives. If observance of indicated books is still applicable, then Priests are supposed to be clean on issues of purity and contamination, in order to qualify to perform ceremonies, and absolutions. But most importantly, they must learn from Jesus the High Priest and model His legacy of lightening the yokes of the burdened and liberating the captives; which in this case are women.

If males become unclean just like females either by bodily discharge or through touching the defiled or dead people as stipulated in Leviticus 15, 21 and Numbers 5; Jesus Christ said it well:

“If any one of you is without sin let him be the first to throw a stone at her.” (John 8: 7b)

Jesus' response does not imply that people should live immoral lives, by doing as they please, but should live honourably, and respecting one another not based on gender, but on humanistic bases, guided by love and justice. One of Jesus' profound teaching that is justice inclined is known as the golden rule, and it says:

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the law and the prophets.” (Matthew 7: 12)

The elderly clergy man, just like many other males, fails to study fairly all parts of scripture that deal with the elements of defilement and in/capability of females to be in leadership roles because of the patriarchal wrong concept about females and leadership. He capitalized on menstruation as a fact that can bar females from becoming Pastors.

The story of Jesus Christ and the woman with the issue of blood, according to Mark 5:25- 34, is a good example of how Jesus as God, Priest and Pastor responded to such matters. Jesus Christ did not fume because of being defiled, or having lost power by being touched by a defiled woman, nor did he call for her death in accordance to Leviticus 15: 31, instead he blessed and liberated her from twelve years' experience of oppression by the sickness that causes defilement and seclusion. He said to her:

“Daughter your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.” (Mark 5: 34)

Jesus Christ explicates his mission statement as follows:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim

freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour ... Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:18-21)

Regarding this issue, both chapter 53 and 61 of the book of Isaiah, the Prophet, are fully fulfilled in Jesus Christ. In chapter 53, Isaiah articulates:

“Surely he took our infirmities and carried our sorrows... the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 53: 4- 5)

The author feels that chapter 4 of Luke left out some of the key sentences as according to Isaiah 61, which are as follows:

“To comfort all who mourn, and to provide for those who grieve in Zion- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness, instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.... Instead of their shame my people will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance; and so they will inherit a double portion in their land, and everlasting joy will be theirs.” (Isaiah 61:2- 7)

It is befitting to say that the New Testament is the testament of God's grace, through Jesus Christ, the prince of peace, because grace is seen overshadowing passages such as Leviticus 15, 21 and Numbers 5; by granting liberation, comfort and peace instead of condemnation and

excommunication. The hope of the woman with the issue of blood was revitalized when she realised that Jesus Christ was the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecies about the Prince of peace who takes away our infirmities. The words 'our, us, their' are pluralistic, and all inclusive; therefore she was also included in the redemptive plan of God as a human being and a female.

3.1.3 MENSTRUATING FEMALES BARRED FROM WATER BAPTISM AND ATTENDING CHURCH

Females have been extremely hurt, and discriminated against by some male church leaders and church regulations and policies that deny menstruating females the right to identify themselves with God through water baptism and attending church, as if they are not created in the image of God, to mention the few, ZCC, IPCC etc. The authors' church (Pentecostal Holiness) used to suspend the baptism of females, when they were found to be on their monthly period on the day of water baptism. On that day few elderly females in leadership will be tasked to check the female baptismal candidates, whether none were on their menstrual period, and if they were found menstruating, they would be declared unworthy for that particular ceremony.

Regarding menstruation Machaffie has this to say:

“Menstruation is detailed as an unclean condition, thus ensuring that women would be regularly excluded from ritual life.”

(Machaffie, 1992: 2)

The author had an opportunity to discuss that issue with one of the females who used to verify whether female candidates were worthy for water baptism or not. Her response was that I suppose that was being done for the good of all candidates, because it was solely on health reasons, since baptisms were taking place in a pool. The author then requested her to deliberate on why the pattern was exercised even on areas that baptised in streams and not in pools? She raised her shoulders, meaning ‘I don’t know’. I assume the leadership wanted a uniform in all congregations in order to avoid confrontation. It was the law and we did not want to be seen as disobedient people, especially as women, and I saw nothing wrong then, even though candidates used to cry bitterly because of pain and embarrassment. We thank God about the changes, because now any person who professes Christ as saviour and sought baptism is legible to be baptised, as in accordance with Acts 8: 36- 38 & 16: 31- 33, even though at an immediate appropriate date.

The author presumes that the motivating factor to the above issue was not health hazards as indicated but, mosaic. The reason is that, such exercises were traditional, and in place even long before pools were erected in church buildings.

There was never a fear that candidates might become sick by contacting germs or bacterium during water baptism, instead some sick people will come for baptism because miraculous healing and infilling of the Holy Spirit, exorcism and spiritual manifestation used to take place during the ceremony.

The reader can just imagine the pain and disappointment of a young female adult, who has gone to the church conference with the hope of being baptised, and suddenly disqualified because of being found menstruating. Baptism was like a passage to adulthood, and a right to the full membership of the church, and the beginning of partaking of the Holy Communion, which typifies the body of Christ, which signify unity.

Baptismal ceremony is regarded as one of the important ordinances of the church and is celebrated in a special way. Parents normally buy new clothes for their children who are going to be baptised and a banquet is also prepared, for that big day. Therefore, the pain and embarrassment becomes enormous to both the disqualified candidate and the family. To some female candidates, the baptismal ceremony was terrifying because of such embarrassing actions that may befall them.

One middle-age female from one of the above-mentioned churches shared her story and said that their church fully observes the law of purity as stipulated in the book of Leviticus. It becomes very painful sometimes, when a female is dealt with in accordance with that law which is rough. But in their church they don't question the law, but they submit to it. Before you become a member elders teach you the dos and the don'ts and if you want to become a member you'll have to adhere to the church laws, if not, get out. But the truth is how can one be against the Bible because these things are written in it?

The most painful moment is when you thirst for church, but could not go because of being on a monthly period, and afraid to violate this law, because if you do, you will be in big trouble. The other painful experience

is of being barred from touching certain utensils in your very home, to a point where tension erupts between partners in marriage.

One wonders as how and where did the Prophetess Anna lived, for the Scriptures claims that she spent her whole life in the temple enclosure worshipping night and day with fasting and prayer. How was it possible for her to come before the Holy God during her menstruation, and was never slain? Isn't she one of the first people to see the Christ of God, and to bless Him? How does God honour such people to the point of allowing them to dwell in His sanctuary, and to touch His anointed? If God does honour them, who are we to dishonour them? See Luke 2:34- 38. The author of the letter to the Romans has said it well, by saying:

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set, me free from the law of sin and death. If God is for us who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all- how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus ... and is also interceding for us.” (Romans 8: 1- 2 &31- 34)

This is an emancipative kind of scripture to all that God has called; and those that He has called, He commissions. Jesus gave the message of His resurrection to a female, to take to His male disciples, not to spite them, but to capacitate females. And through that message their lost hope was revived. This message of Jesus' resurrection is the message of hope to the whole world; this is the gospel.

Some females, who are members of denominations that observe the law of purity in accordance with the book of Leviticus, feel condemned and depressed every time they are in their monthly period. Especially at church when a menstruating female has to turn back when she can find herself, or by others that she is in that state. This is a painful, embarrassing and degrading act. This kind of discrimination has been exercised in the pretext of hygienic purposes, and of keeping the commandments of God the creator, by observing the Levitical code as indicated above.

It is shocking how some males or churches misunderstand such an explicit passage of scripture that is captured by Saint Mark regarding baptism; which is free for all who believe, and should be treated as a matter of urgency. He explicated:

“Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:15- 16)

In the same breath, Saint Matthew articulated this by saying:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11: 28- 30)

The invitation to baptism, which is a public declaration of belonging or of association, plus that of a light burden, easy yoke and rest is for all people

of the whole world. The above-mentioned words are bolded in order to show and to emphasise the non-discriminative love of God to His people regardless of race and gender, in the whole world. This invitation has an element of blessing to those who accept it, and that of condemnation to those who refuse it. However, females who advance to the invitation are barred by Church leaders and policies, therefore some feel condemned by God, because of things they don't have control upon; hence they go through such heartaches and pain.

The example is that of the woman who was dragged to Jesus for the approval of stoning her, because she was caught in the act of adultery. However, the question will always be: where was the other partner, whom the belief is that he was a man and that he was present and busy when the woman was dragged out of him, but was not dragged along with her to Jesus to be condemned.

This self-righteous mentality that is deduced from the story of the above adulterer's accusers is also found in both Judah, the son of Jacob, and King David. Judah had sex with Tamar, who posed as a prostitute to prove her innocence to the death of the sons of Judah, and as a result she became pregnant. When people saw that Tamar, the widow and daughter in-law of Judah was pregnant, which they purported to be due to prostitution, they told Judah, who then ordered that she be taken out and be burned to death for that crime (sin). Judah was not even concerned about who the other guilty party was. Until he was made aware by Tamar the condemned, that he 'Judah the Judge' was another guilty party to the pregnancy that resulted from the said prostitution. Instead of enforcing

the judgement to both sinners, being him and Tamar, Judah repealed judgement and said:

“She is more righteous than I.” (Genesis 38:26) See Genesis 38.

The Scriptures are not silent on these gruesome acts, and Saint Matthew captured the words of Jesus when He was rebuking people who turned themselves into barricades to heaven. The author believes that the rebuke of these ungodly acts is timely, and he quotes from a Setswana Bible version because of its gender sensitiveness particularly on this issue.

Jesus said:

“Ba bofaganya merwalo e e bokete, ba e bee mo magetleng a batho, mme bone ka bosi ga barate go e tshikinya, le fa ele ka monwana. Ijoo lona, lona Baitse-dikwalo le, Bafarasai, baitimokanyi ke lona! Gonne lo tswalela batho puso ya magodimo. Tota lona ga lo tsene, mme ba bareng ba a tsena, ga lo ba letlelele go tsena.” (Matthew 23: 4 & 13)

The Setswana and Afrikaans versions, particularly in these verses, are gender sensitive, because their language is all inclusive. Unlike English on the King James and the New International Versions that are written in a masculine language, The indicated English versions use the word ‘**men**’, while the Setswana version use the word ‘**batho**’, meaning people of all ages, colour, gender and race; not **men** which means male adults as the King James and the New International Versions refers.

In this case, it is females who are oppressed to a point of missing heaven, because some of them see God, the creator, as a biased God who is only in favour of males, since He is a male. This perception is brought by the

biblical language that is biased and destructive to females; hence the emergence of feminism as indicated in chapter 2.

The reader will agree with the author that justice delayed is justice denied that is why Jesus refused to delay His ministry of works of mercy and justice because of Sabbath, or any other reason. Females are wearied by heavy laws engineered by patriarchy. These invitations to water baptism and rest are a gift of God to His people, which is a right to all whom so desire. Therefore, no one has the authority to delay or to obstruct females from receiving God's gift of grace.

The church is supposed to stand against any concept that delays, or oppose the liberation of oppressed people especially females. Regarding the expected rapid response to the invitation to God's rest, the author of the book of Hebrews says:

“Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.... Let us therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.” (Hebrews 4: 7 – 11)

If, indeed, people need to respond today as in accordance with the book of Hebrews, why does the patriarchal concept destruct the positive response of females within the church?

It is interesting to know that John the Baptist was refusing to baptise Jesus, until Jesus said to Him:

“Let it be so now, it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness.” (Matthew 3: 15)

The above quotation explicates the importance of water baptism and the right the candidate has. Therefore, females who aspire to be baptised are not supposed to be denied because of menstruation or any other reason apart from not believing in Christ Jesus as stipulated in the indicated portions of scripture above.

3.1.4 TRADITIONALISM: A STUMBLING BLOCK TO PROGRESS

The author will use pseudonyms as he relates this true story to show how destructive tradition can become.

Sister Max was an excellent lecturer at Ban Theological Institute, which rated her to be the best among the faculty members. Among her students was June who was from the same denomination as Sister Max. June was very proud about her; especially that they were from the same local church. He could not stop talking about how good Sister Max was in the lecture room and how most of the students understood and enjoyed her lessons. Also that her down-to-earth mentality made her approachable; which was one of the factors that helped them as students to understand better and to freely question whatever they did not understand.

After the completion of his studies, June went home, where he was ordained as a Pastor of the same local church where he and Sister Max are members. On the day of his ordination and installation, Sister Max was one of the key speakers, as she was speaking on behalf of the Ban

Theological Institute. It was the norm of the Institution not only to grace such occasions, but it was also an opportunity on its side to mark itself and to make churches aware of the need to study the scriptures. People were astounded and impressed by the wonderful words of encouragement she offered to both the local church and its new Pastor; especially that the words of encouragement were uttered by one of their very own and who is a female for that matter!

Three years down the line, Pastor June got elected as The Bishop of that denomination and few years later, his favourite lecturer Sister Max resigned from the Ban Theological Institute, and went back home where she sought for ordination.

Shockingly, the very student that sat at the feet of Sister Max, and applauded her excellent teaching skills rejected her application because of the church tradition that is exacerbated by the letter of the Apostle Paul to Timothy which bars females from leadership roles, regardless of how good they may be. Because of that action which was based on 1 Timothy 2:12 – 15 and that the church was traditionally influenced, the church was denied an opportunity of having an excellent teacher, who could have helped it to progress in maturity.

People who remembered the motivating words of Sister Max during the ordination and installation of the Bishop to ministry were shocked by that decision. That action did not make sense to them, especially the fact that Bishop June was her student during his theological training. The Bishop's argument was that, the two entities were different; therefore no one should try to run the church as a private entity. He stressed that the church

belongs to God and must be run by His rules, as indicated by Paul in the Bible.

In other words, the Bishop meant that the Ban Theological Institute was not of God, but if truly it was not of God, why did he study there? Or was it female lecturers like Sister Max who defiled it to that point. Sister Max felt exploited by her very own church leadership on the pretext that it was God's desire that females should not be allowed to lead His house (church). Her greatest worry was that the church was being misinformed on that issue and that, it was time to break that cycle of misinterpretation of the scripture, especially on such delicate and destructive issues.

Sister Max got very depressed as she was trying to figure out ways of challenging the decision made by her church leadership regarding her application for Ordination. Her action of rallying around the church members for support towards her endeavour to be ordained was used against her, as confirmation of the reason God rejects female leaders.

In substantiation to the above, Ohanneson articulates this as follows:

“Taken to its logical extreme, the argument of “tradition” as the basis for the church’s pattern of discrimination leads to absurdities... If women are unsuited to proclaim, preach, and teach the word of God, then why are women permitted to teach women and children? Does this mean we don’t care if women and children are led astray?... Why is it acceptable for women to teach men in universities, even Christian colleges, and yet not in the Church?... Most importantly, why was woman allowed the most intimate functions of bearing, nursing and

nurturing the Son of God, and yet not allowed, today, to consecrate his body and blood?” (Ohanneson, 1980: 166- 167)

The author thinks that over and above Ohanneson’s above articulations, he could have included another pivotal aspect about Mary, the mother of God, which is in the prayers of the Roman Catholic and is as follows:

“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death Amen.” (Miller, 2001: 33)

The lament of females concerning the manner in which they are being treated in the church has been going on for decades, as the reader will realise that some of the used materials are a bit old, and the most recent ones attest and explicate the same concern, with many “why” questions from females, and truly no satisfying answer has come from the side of males who are self declared to be the custodians of the church of God.

Regarding the negation of female leaders, Fiorenza quoted Tertullian as follows:

“Tertullian is outraged about the insolence of those women who dared to “teach, to participate in theological disputes, to exorcise, to promise healings and to baptize.” He argues that it is not permitted for a woman “to speak in the church ... to fulfil any other male function, or to claim any priestly function. (Fiorenza”, 1990: 55)

This Tertullianism concept is not healthy for the church of Christ because it propagates division and subjugation of females, therefore it must be rejected by all means in order to create a community of believers with equal rights as heirs of God, not based on gender, but on humanity.

It is frightening to realise that in other denominations the Bible is not the liberating word of God as it supposed to, but it is oppressive and destructive. Since it is used as an oppressive and enslaving tool, how can the oppressed look to it in hope of finding liberation, as Jesus articulated above. How do the oppressed, because of the sin they did not commit, but inherited by the virtue of being females, look at the church as a place of emancipation and solace? No wonder the shocking reaction of a young boy regarding being a girl was as follows:

“If I can find myself being a girl I’ll kill myself.” (Wilson, 2000:105)

It is like being a female is a curse. This remark proves how females are perceived; they are of a very low class, sinful and evil. Fiorenza continued to quote Tertullian as follows:

“Woman is the devil’s gateway” and root of all sin.” (Fiorenza, 1990: 55)

If what Tertullian taught is right then, no person in the right mind can enjoy being a female, because there is nobody who wants to be called a gateway of the devil and the root of all sin.

It is clear that if negative and degrading comments and teachings are made against women, then the next generation will perceive them as such, because we become what our mould is. The church is one of the moulds;

hence its teachings should be constructive and liberating, not destructive and enslaving as indicated above. These degrading concepts made against females will ultimately result in males hating themselves because they are from females; as Paul indicated in the scriptures.

In relation to this issue of female Pastors, Ohanneson report as follows:

“(Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Morden World, #16), the Declaration on the role of women indicated that women could not be ordained to the priesthood primarily because they do not bear a “natural resemblance” to Christ and it would therefore be difficult to see in the [woman] minister the image of Christ (Declaration on the Question of the admission of women to the Ministerial Priesthood, #5)”

(Ohanneson, 1980: 5 & 16)

The author is quoting from Gundry’s book called ‘WOMAN BE FREE’ because of its relevance, not in terms of time, but of facts, concerning the destructive acts of males demonstrated on female leaders and being motivated by the patriarchal concept and some biblical passages. She said that there were so many conflicting rules and regulations for women in their churches. Most of these regulations are supported by appeals to supposedly biblical principles or commandments and may consist of any one or more of the following:

- 1) A woman may not
 - pastor a church;
 - speak in the morning worship service (although she may speak on Wednesday evening, or sing or present special music at any service, including the Sunday morning

- worship service);
- serve in any capacity of authority in the church that involves a woman directing men.

2) A woman must

- wear a hat in the church;
- obey her husband or father regardless of the command;
- consider her husband's will for her life to be God's will for her life;
- not leave her husband regardless of the treatment she receives.... It seems to many women that either they actually are inferior and justly kept down, or they are treated unjustly by the church (Gundry, 1977: 10 - 11)

This closing statement by Gundry is true because some females have lost their self esteem due to believing that the Scriptures approves them being treated as the second class members; hence some don't even think of challenging this status quo. The reader will remember the story mentioned earlier of a middle-aged female, when she said that in their church they don't question the law, but they obey. If churches teach females to be submissive to oppressive and abusive laws, husbands and fathers, as Gundry alluded, then the church is turning females into slaves than free people. By so doing, it negates the teaching of liberation as propagated by Jesus Christ.

3.2 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

In this chapter, true stories of shocking acts portrayed by males to females on the pretext of executing the law of God have been shared.

Menstruation as defilement in accordance with Mosaic code and the Pauline letters that bar females from leadership roles; especially over males, have been used as the base of their argument. The holier than thou mentality of males that is influenced by the masculine language of the Bible has been unmasked. Females raised their dismay because of oppressive laws that are coined against them, to a point of being denied the right of baptism and attending church. This patriarchal concept is destructive not only to females, but to the entire church and society at large.

The following chapter will focus on the divinity, power, authority and function of God the Holy Spirit. His empowering work on female leaders and three different views (religious, cultural and political) on female leadership as compared to that of males plus a preliminary conclusion.