

## Editorial

**HULISANI RAMANTSWANA (UNISA)**

Due to lockdown restrictions in relation to COVID-19, we were not able to send out the print copies of *OTE* 33 (1) to our subscribers. The current issue together with the previous one will be sent out in due course; however, there may be further delays due to circumstances beyond our control when restrictions are lifted, and so we plead for patience with our subscribers.

To our readership, the journal is freely accessible in our journal site (<https://ote-journal.otwsa-otssa.org.za/index.php/journal>) and other online platforms. We hope that you will enjoy reading the current issue.

This issue contains nine articles. The first two articles are focused on the book of Exodus. Dihi's article reviews Jewish interpretations of the Manna Pericope (Exod 16:14–15) with special reference to biblical Hebrew philology. He argues for modern interpreters to take into consideration the interpretations of medieval exegetes and grammarians, who, although they did not have the technical resources available today, were still able to arrive at convincing and reliable interpretations. Amzallag's article is focused on the Golden Calf story in Exodus 32 and posits that the use of metals such as gold in the construction of the golden calf and the use of copper in the construction of the tabernacle are symbolic of two opposing views of the man-god relationship: the golden calf is symbolic of the indirect worship of YHWH, whereas the mainly copper made tabernacle is symbolic of the closeness of YHWH.

Friedl's article deals with the concept of "state" as used by modern readers to express biblical ideas of a people of God as a political entity. For her, the concept of state is at best anachronistic and may cloud the theological understanding of the relationship between people, land, kingship, and law as projected in the pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic periods. Kang explores the positive value of shame during the post-exilic period among the returnees in Ezra-Nehemiah. This is in contrast to the negative view of shame in modern times, where it is often given a negative connotation. For Kang, shame motivated them towards good behaviour, rebuilding the temple, and keeping their purity as a holy seed. In his article, Häner deals with the intertextual links between Job 3 and Genesis 1:1–2:4a to show how Job's dark view of creation is ironically challenged within the Job text as a way of reversing Job's negative perceptions of it as shown in his curses and laments.

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\* To cite: Hulisani Ramantswana "Editorial," *Old Testament Essays* 33 no. 2 (2020): 187-188. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17159/2312-3621/2020/v33n2a2>.

Ademiluka’s article deals with the issue of the tithe as projected in Malachi 3:8–12, considering the continuing practice in some churches in Nigeria. He concludes that the tradition of tithing in Malachi is no longer applicable to today’s Christians. Wessels explores the interconnectedness of YHWH, people, and land in Jeremiah 23:10, 15, and argues that the worldview projected in this text makes a distinction between holy and common and between pure and impure. Drawing from the interconnectedness, He also highlights the relevance of the text in the ecological debate, noting that the environment is negatively affected through careless and unethical behaviour on the part of humans. Retief deals with the concept of *laššāw*’ (“to the vanity”) in the book of Jeremiah, considering the use of the definite article and arguing that the use of the definite in this case should be understood as a proper noun in the light of similar usage in *hašše<sub>q</sub>er*, *habbošet*, and *hahebel*. He further argues that *laššāw*’ should be considered to be referring to the deity Ba’al.

Finally, Masenya’s article pays homage to Professor David Tuesday Adamo for his contribution to Old Testament scholarship in Africa, especially considering his works on the African presence in the Old Testament. Masenya reflects on Adamo’s works, probing whether he also gave due attention to (African) women in the Old Testament and in what ways he dealt with texts pertaining to women.

It is therefore my pleasure to present to our readers the current issue. As the Vhavenda saying goes, *Ndevhe ya tsini i a di pfela* (“An ear that is close by listens for itself”). Therefore, listen for yourself what our authors in this issue have to say.

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