

Editorial

HULISANI RAMANTSWANA (UNISA)

In the past two years, we have had to battle and learn to live with the COVID-19 pandemic. The disruption in the global system resultant from COVID-19 did not spare *OTE*. Some of our subscribers are still not receiving print copies of the journal even after several attempts to send them. We hope that the print copies will ultimately reach all our clients as things return to normal.

The current issue comes out when the world is reeling from the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. The devastation in Ukraine has turned over six million Ukrainians into refugees and millions of others displaced in that country. This war is deplorable for the suffering it has brought on the Ukrainians and for all the negative effects that are felt across the world, worsening the plight of the poor. We call for an end to the war, hoping it will end sooner than later. As the Tanzanian Proverb states, “*For the sake of peace, hard decisions must be made*”. The hard decision that needs to be made is to stop the war and strive for peaceful coexistence.

The current issue contains seven articles. Bellmann and Wünc’s article compares the biblical flood narrative and other Mesopotamian flood narratives, the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Atramḥasīs myth. It argues that the biblical flood narrative is more of a polemic against Mesopotamian theology. Van der Walt and Davids read the Genesis 37 narrative in light of the life-denying realities faced by the LGBTIQ+ (*Izitabane*) using the Contextual Bible Study approach. In so doing, the Genesis 37 text is read as a resource of resistance for the *Izitabane* in their struggle against normalisation, correction, and annihilation. Campi reads Deuteronomy 13 as text that functioned as a marker of collective identity centred on the belief in YHWH. In Campi’s view, such a marker was triggered by the need to establish Israel’s identity in the face of the threat from the Assyrian empire during the seventh century. Rembold’s article analyses 1 Samuel 1, utilising “narrative space” as an analytical tool. In this analysis, Hannah’s experience of space or place is the determining factor in understanding the story.

Michal’s article focuses on the reception of the Book of Psalms in classical rabbinic thought. Michal highlights the diverging views among the rabbis concerning issues such as authorship and use of the Book of Psalms. Widder investigates the theme of “speech” within the Book of Proverbs, focusing on how speech functions in chapters 1–9. In Widder’s view, the theme of “speech” in these chapters functions as a vehicle for instruction that requires a

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discerning listener (*peti*). So, Prov 1–9 sets an idea of a discerning listener as a requirement for the rest of the instructions in the book. Finally, Retief’s article is a continuation of his earlier article published in 2021 entitled, “The Anti-Yahweh Label *laššāw’* in Jeremiah (Part 1)”. In the current article, Retief further argues why the *laššāw’* in Jeremiah 18:15 and 46:11 should refer to worthless idols rather than the god Baal.

Enjoy reading the issue!

General Editor: Prof Hulisani Ramantswana, Department of Biblical and Ancient Studies, University of South Africa, P.O. Box 392, UNISA, 0003; Email: ramanh@unisa.ac.za; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6629-9194>.