

Christian counselling as participation in the Missio Dei amongst refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement in Limpopo, RSA

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PREFACE

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ABSTRACT

The current global escalation of refugees and involuntary migration, due to the effects of war and world disasters, necessitates revisiting to devise an effective approach to bring healing and providing care for refugees. The aim of the study proposes a paradigm for counselling refugees who suffered war trauma, from the perspective of the *missio Dei*. The case study particularly focused on a former Mozambican refugee community, which was forcibly uprooted from their country of origin as the result of the erstwhile civil war that devastated their home country between 1980 and 1992 and fled to South Africa in search of safety. A theoretical basis for the *missio Dei* to the refugees is traced from both the Old Testament and New Testament, by means of a revelation-historical exegesis. The research presents how God is actively involved in His creation in a particular way, providing protection to the vulnerable and people on the margins of society. Starting with individuals such as Adam, Lot, Naomi and Ruth, David and Elijah an investigation is made from the perspective of counselling and care for the refugees as part of God's on-going involvement with His creation and mission to heal. An empirical study forms part of the research and it concludes by proposing a paradigm that is holistic and useful in addressing the psycho-social needs of the refugees.

Key terms

Mission, Missions, *missio Dei*, "at risk group", Christian counselling, refugees, uprooted, migration, displaced, evangelisation, Limpopo, Rhulani

OPSOMMING

Christelike Berading as deelname in die Missio Dei onder Vlughtelinge in die Rhulani-vlughtelingkamp in Limpopo, RSA

Die huidige groei onder vlughtelinge en gedwonge migrasie, as gevolg van oorlog en rampe, het die ontwerp van 'n effektiewe metode om heling en sorg onder vlughtelinge te bewerkstellig genoodsaak. Hierdie studie beveel aan die hand dat die missio dinamika Dei as paradigma vir berading aan vlughtelinge gebruik word.

Die studie fokus spesifiek op 'n vlughtelinggemeenskap wat geweldig in Mosambiek ontwortel is, as gevolg van burgeroorlog wat dié land tussen 1980 en 1992 geteister het en en wat as gevolg daarvan in Suid-Afrika 'n heenkome gesoek het.

Die teoretiese begronding van die missio Dei word in die Ou en Nuwe Testament deur middel van 'n openbarings-histories-eksegetiese benadering, gesoek. Die studie toon aan hoe God aktief by Sy skepping betrokke is, deur beskerming aan kwesbare en gemarginaliseerde groepe in die samelewing te bied. Individue soos Adam, Lot, Naomi, Rut, Dawid en Elia word vanuit die perspektief van berading aan vlughtelinge ondersoek, as deel van God se voortgesette betrokkenheid by en genesing na die skepping. 'n Empiriese ondersoek maak deel van die navorsing uit.

Die studie stel 'n paradigma voor wat holisties van aard is, deurdat dit die psigo-sosiale en pastorale behoeftes van vlughtelinge aanspreek.

Sleutelterme

Sending, missio Dei, “risiko groep”, Christelike berading, vlughtelinge, ontworteldes, migrasie, uitgewekenes, evangelisasie, Limpopo, Rhulani.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1. INVOLUNTARY MIGRATION

Involuntary migration has become a major concern in the world. The growing numbers of populations and individuals migrating to new countries due to social threats poses a challenge to hosting countries around the world, such as developing strategies to aid newcomers with basic needs and finding a safe place to live. Civil unrest and wars are amongst the major triggers of people dislocation both internally and beyond borders. The challenges of refugees due to sociological unrest and war cruelties have both in the past and present become a noticeable phenomenon in various parts of the world. It is also a challenge that most parts of Africa and the Southern African Development Country (SADAC) in particular have to face and find plausible solution to the problem. In most cases refugees carry inner problems such as psychological effects of uprootedness, scars of brutality and abuses to personhood and loss of identity. In this chapter the researcher examined the causes of refugee influx from Mozambique to the Republic of South Africa from the early 80s due to the ended civil war in Mozambique.

A problem Statement is stated with particular focus on the psychosocial challenges faced by the refugees as they made their way to South Africa and settle in the Rhuani Refugee settlement which is the focus of this study. A research question and subsidiary individual problems for research are outlined. Aims and objective to guide the research are stated. The central theoretical argument, research chapters and methodology of the study are subsequently presented.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The situation of refugee is a social concern that deprives individuals from dignity and the privilege of enjoying God's gift of life to its fullest. Such mass movement due to cruelties of war and human rights abuse have exponentially increased at an alarming rate, reaching 51.2 million in 2013, and have comparatively exceeded the populations of countries such as South Africa, Spain or South Korea according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) report (Global Trends, 2009: 2; Global Trends, 2013: 2; Sherwood, 2014). Further statistics estimate the number of forcibly displaced people in the world at the end of 2009 at 43.3 million, where 143, 400 are from Southern Africa.

According to Dalton-Greyling (2008:1), there has been a notable increase in refugees in South Africa from 6, 619 in 1997 to almost 30,000 in 2006. Most recent statistic reveal that South

Africa continues to be a major destination for asylum seekers and refugees; the 2015 mid-year figures places the number of refugee population in South Africa at 912,592 (UNHCR Mid-Year Trends, 2015:18; UNHCR Global Appeal, 2015: 1).

Many displaced people suffer from psycho-social stress, due to the circumstances that forced them to relocate to a new environment. De Jongh (1994:233), who conducted a similar study amongst Mozambican refugees in a different refugee camp, points to two dimensional factors that often lead to psychological stress in the lives of refugees: 1) the experiences of the past, such as devastating wars in which they lost virtually all of their belongings and 2) the uncertainty of the future in the hosting country. According to Marx (1990:190-197), it is the disruption of the “social world” of the refugees that affects the individual’s social network and causes socio-cultural stress. In other words, the disruption of the social world causes the refugee to loose “social competence” in the new environment. The researcher should seek to understand the social world or social network of the refugee, in order to account for the social changes they undergo. Aside from refugee camps depriving the displaced of their freedom and connection with the outside world; they also have to cope with traumatic memories of lost family members and personal property. Depression and other mental problems become a challenging factor within this community (Biro, 2012). The emotional and mental wounds inflicted upon their lives last longer and are difficult to treat (Kanere, 2012). As in the case of the Mozambican refugees in Rhulani; most of them faced many dangers, such as lethal electric wires and wild animals, as they travelled on foot across the Kruger National Park into South Africa. Some have literally witnessed their companions and families being mauled by wild animals along the journey (Frump, 2003; Knight, 1990). Such painful experiences have certainly left psychological and emotional scars in their lives.

Yahushko and Chronister (2005:293-294), in a study on female migrants in the United States, indicate that immigrant populations should be provided with professional mental service to help them cope with the transition into the receiving country. In addition to the above, attention should be given to factors that promote acculturation that would contribute to their mental health. In a study conducted under relatively the same conditions in a Mozambican refugee camp in the Malawi area, Englund (1998:1166) found that employing non-discursive methods of trauma management were more effective than the verbalised therapeutic approach. He also notes that by offering assistance in times of loss of loved ones; death in particular, such as providing a coffin for the burial of a family member was of immense benefit to the mourning and healing process.

Furthermore, helping the families with some modes of communication also aided their dealing with trauma. A number of the approaches suggested in the research involve healing methods such as “spirit exorcism”, which appeases the spirit of the deceased relative killed during war or conflict that did not receive a proper burial, and contacting the spirit of the deceased through the mediation of a traditional healer. These therapeutic approaches are contradictory to Christian faith and principles. Englund’s research does, however, contain valuable insights that could serve as guidelines for a *diakonia* outreach to this population group (cf. Englund, 1998:1167, 1172).

The present research sought to provide a different perspective on the matter by studying a similar population group of displaced, with the aim of establishing a therapeutic approach that is founded in the *missio Dei* to become disciples of Jesus Christ and be healed through counselling.

This research related to the community of refugees at the Rhulani refugee settlement. The researcher has been closely involved in this community and has personally experienced the plight of the refugees, hence the interest in this topic. The researcher came to reside close to the settlement immediately after the end of the civil war in Mozambique and has been able to interact with this community of refugees from time to time. He has on numerous occasions visited the settlement, observed their challenges and interacted with some of the families of the refugees in and out of the settlement.

The Rhulani refugee settlement is situated in the Limpopo Province, approximately 40 kilometres from the Punda Maria Gate of the Kruger National Park, outside Malamulele town. It lies between Giyani and Thohoyandou on the east and west respectively, along the R81 road (Wikipedia, 2015). The settlement came about as a result of the influx of refugees escaping the devastating civil war in neighbouring Mozambique that started in 1975 and ended in 1992 with the official signing of the Rome Peace Accord (ONUMOZ, 1992).

This community of refugees was viewed from within the broader context of the Limpopo Province, previously known as the Gazankulu Homeland, which falls into the category of disadvantaged communities and poverty-stricken areas (Noble, Zembe & Wright, 2014:7-8). Poverty, from a psycho-social perspective, has devastating effects on the mental health of people worldwide (Zulu, 2005; WHO, 2007). Given the fact that a refugee population is also found in the context of economically disadvantaged communities, problems related to mental health cannot be overlooked. This may call on the church to intervene with an adequate counselling approach focussed on disadvantaged communities amongst the displaced and fulfil God’s mission to reach the lost amongst the uprooted, in other words the *missio Dei*.

The *missio Dei* comprises the involvement of the church in God's plan of building his kingdom and reconciling mankind to Himself. According to Kemper (2014:189), the *missio Dei* is the foundation for the church's mission as the body of Jesus Christ. Mission emanates from God himself; it is entrenched in his nature (Bosch 1991:390). The mission starts with the Triune God: God the Father, motivated by *agape* love, sets out on his salvation work of reaching people outside of his communion by sending God the Son on a mission to save the lost and in turn God the Father and God the Son sent God the Holy Spirit, the *parakletos*, Greek noun for Comforter or Consoler (John 16:7). Dodds (2011:211) states that in this area of mission, between the incarnation of Christ and the *Parousia*, the Holy Spirit occupies an important position as part of the Triune God in accomplishing the *missio Dei*. The return of Jesus Christ to the heavenly Father and the sending of the Holy Spirit ushered in the period of the Spirit's work, as Life Giver and Liberator from oppression in the world and sometimes uses man's suffering for the greater good of God's plan (Beck, 2009:199, 217). The Holy Spirit would come to bring wholeness or completeness to man, continuing the ministry of God the Son, which Jesus affirmed in saying that if He does not go to the Father the Spirit would not come (John 16:7). The Spirit speaks to the world about sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8). The presence of the Holy Spirit empowers the church, the body of Christ, through his omnipresent nature. Jesus Christ's physical form on earth limited him to one geographical point, but through the Spirit He would be everywhere and at all times in the body of Christ. He said whenever two or three gather in His name, He would be there (Matt. 18:20). The Spirit's presence is indispensable for the process of salvation, because people cannot believe and confess their sin without his work of conviction. He empowers the church to partake in the *missio Dei* and preach the Gospel to the lost, in obedience to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8). At the end of his ministry on earth, the Lord Jesus Christ tasked the disciples to continue the mission; saying "as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:20-21).

Bekele (2011:153), in his analysis of Bosch's missionary perspective maintains that every church has the responsibility to search deeply for a Biblical meaning of *mission Dei* in its generation and that Christians should reclaim the place of the New Testament as missionary document (cf. Bosch, 1989: 63). The church's call is theocentric and accounts for the needs of the society in which it exists (Hedlund, 1991:38; Jenkins, 1997:70). It has to embark on a *missio Dei* that is not confined to one single aspect of God's mission, but one which is broad in perspective encompassing both the spiritual and the social dimensions in pursuit of God's Kingdom motif. Hedlund (1991:74) adds that God's overarching purpose is seen in his call to the nation of Israel to live in society as a "colony of heaven" and model of God's Kingdom on Earth. The social dimension of the Kingdom confronts matters of poverty (Deut. 15:4), social

justice (Ex. 23:1), equality (Ex. 21:2) and concern for aliens (Deut. 14:29) (Hedlund, 1991:76-78).

According to Bosch (1991:32-34), Jesus' message regarding the Kingdom includes God's power that attacks the evils of society in whatever form they manifest: pain, disease, demon possession, brokenness in human relations and so forth. He expressed the love of God to those on the margins of society and presented them with the possibility of new life in God's Kingdom. The Gospels portray the saving of individuals in a holistic way, where the word "to save" (Greek: *sozein*) is more than a religious term; it goes beyond the salvation of the soul to refer to the healing of physical ailments, touching both the spiritual and the social. Furthermore, the word "forgiveness" (Greek: *aphesis*) has a range of meanings, such as freedom from bondage, debt cancellation, forgiveness of sins and points to eschatological liberation of believers. God's reign can, therefore, be understood as the caring for the "whole life". Taking this into account; the church of Jesus Christ cannot neglect works of compassion as part of proclaiming God's message in its totality. This validates the necessity of counselling as part and parcel of the *missio Dei* to acknowledge the marginalised as equal in value in God's plan of reaching all people.

This *missio Dei* may not be realised without taking into account the psycho-social context of refugees and the marginalised. Efforts have to be made to eradicate those psycho-social factors that could impede enjoying the fullness of life found in the Gospel (John 10:10). Graham (1991:4) states that the world is experiencing a common feeling of "pain" and despite all technological achievements there is a "malaise which affects civilization" to an extent that man alone cannot change the course of things. The church has to partake in God's mission to transform society and mankind. It should fully adhere to God's directives for the *missio Dei*, which does not confine itself to "evangelism" alone but relates to all spheres of life for individuals and communities. Bosch (1991:405) explains that the *missio Dei* implies more than evangelistic work, it calls for believers to become involved in social responsibility. It is the proactive involvement with the marginalised in society, such as the poor and the sick, because their plight inhibits God's intended purpose of healthy communion with him (Bosch, 1991:28; Holloway, 2009:138). The church's task of serving society, as "salt" and "light", cannot be realised if it neglects total inclusiveness in the lives of people. As in the analogy of salt, failure to serve society with the Good News of Jesus Christ will render it useless to fulfil its purpose in the world (Matt. 5:13). Scripture shows that God created a world which was "good", yet the introduction of sin set in motion the degradation of the universe. The church's task in the *missio Dei* needs to involve partnering with God in the social mandate of easing the suffering of people, in personification of God's kindness and compassion for his creation (1 Cor. 3:9).

Bearing in mind the significant task of the *missio Dei*, it is essential to establish counselling principles aimed at addressing the psycho-social needs amongst refugees. The body of Christ has a great responsibility to take care of the spiritual and psycho-social needs of the poor and the marginalised. Smith (2009) relates that the role of Christian counselling and psychology in serving the poor and the undeserved in Jesus remains “understudied” and “undeveloped” in a world where suffering is increasing. In terms of refugees, such suffering may manifest as stigmatisation and discrimination that could hinder them from meeting their basic needs. They often lack the resources to fulfil their needs or information about the availability of such resources and this could give rise to depression, anxiety and sadness (Gorman, 2012).

Christian counselling has occupied a key position in healing and rebuilding broken lives, throughout the history of the Christian church. There is a well-established recorded tradition of care for the well-being of individuals since the early ages of the church (Barber, 2014:271), a tradition founded in the Judaic care of lives that predates the Greek civilisation. Benner (1998:26, 29-30) explains that Christian counselling can be traced to the Jewish Scriptures, where care for people’s lives took the form of instruction of the law by four classes of leaders: priests, scribes, prophets and wise men. The Biblical image of the “shepherd” was an important concept, being someone who nourished and cared for his sheep. The immergence of the Desert Father in Egypt, Syria and Palestine in the 5th century was instrumental in providing spiritual guidance and holiness in the 15th century in Russia, where a *Startsy* (old man) assumed the role of Christ as Good Shepherd taking care of the well-being of others to the point of sacrificing for their lives. The pre-Reformation monks and later the laity were involved in caring for the soul, while in the Celtic church women provided spiritual formation and guidance. Though this practice faded during the Reformation period, the caring for souls was revitalised during the monastic age (Nica, 2009:175, 177, 179; Figueras, 2014:244, 226; De Smet & Trio, 2006:1, 163).

Service to God in the monastic age was characterised by the denial of material benefits and full commitment to God. Although this austerity has been interpreted as negative by some (Cairns 1981:154), this period had its share of positive achievements such as the provision of education to people (Hastings, 1999:139). Places were also established where the disoriented could find guidance and the proclaiming of the Word of God. Monasteries provided care for the sick, the wounded, orphans and the elderly (Nica, 2009:169, 175; Cairns, 1981:155).

The “care for souls” or *cura animarum* was an effort of the early church fathers to bring spiritual guidance to believers by church leaders around 690 AD (Deansly, 1965; Cairns, 1981:168). Benner (1998:21) defines the term as activities that serve to support or restore the well-being of something. The church embraced this premise and became engaged in the necessary task of

nurturing and support, to heal and restore the individual to his/her rightful state. Furthermore, an examination of the word soul (Hebrew: *nepesh*; Greek: *psyche*) presents some similarities in addressing a person as a whole, where his well-being is dependent on the integrity of all parts (Benner, 1998:21-22). There are numerous passages in both the New and the Old Testament that speak of the counselling of people. In the Old Testament texts God is portrayed as being close to the broken-hearted and the crushed in spirit (Ps. 34:18), binding up the wounds of those who are hurt (Ps. 147:3). Counselling has played a role in the spiritual life of believers since the apostolic era (MacArthur, 2005:3). In the New Testament believers are instructed to “admonish one another” (Rom. 15:14) and the strong are to bear the “weakness” of others (Rom. 15:1). God does not only provide the model for counselling, but also teaches throughout his Word to do so in aid of others (Babler, Penley & Bizell, 2007:114). Christians are also to confess their sin to one another in order to bring “healing” (Jas. 5:16).

There is a need to deepen the understanding of the role of Christian counselling as way to fulfil the missiological mandate of making disciples of all nations and teaching them to obey Jesus (Matt. 28:19-20). One of the roles of discipleship concerns caring and nurturing people for service in the body of Christ; for there is no true evangelism without caring for the wounded sheep. Jesus Christ’s command to Simon Peter paints a vivid picture of what God wants the church to do with regard to his people. The seriousness of the task is clear in how Jesus instructs Peter three times to “take care of my sheep”. The basis of fulfilling such a responsibility is a love for the Lord Jesus (John 21:15-17). He also wants the church to go beyond the church boundaries to search for other “sheep” not yet part of his flock (John 10:16).

Barber (2014:273, 275) points out that counselling has to be Christocentric. The church is to develop a vision for caring for the lives of people, guided by the Spirit, and then take it to the world. He refers to four “mountaintops” of caring for people, viz.: soul care should encourage the growth of the individual within the church (Heb. 5:12-13); sin must be taken seriously (1 John 3:5); care for the soul should be done in the beauty of worship (Matt. 6:29); and lastly, the church should extend soul care to the suffering and marginalised (Luke 4). Jesus came to preach the Gospel to the marginalised after all, as revealed in Luke (Barber, 2014:273, 275).

There are at least two predominant views regarding Christian counselling: The view that confines Christian counselling within the church (Penley, 2007) and the broader approach which extends it to people outside the church, in the form of a “community-based ministry” or “extension ministries” (Patton, 1981:230-231). The researcher seeks to determine, in terms of the latter, how Christian counselling outside church boundaries can serve as a tool to aid people towards healing and wholeness.

Christian counselling, as part of *missio Dei*, is key to the propagation of God's missionary programme within marginalised communities. It restores wholeness and dignity as individuals are brought to act as God's children and as they learn to establish healthy relationships within the community they live. The church, therefore, has a missiological mandate to assist people in restoring their relationship with God (John 16:8). In this regard, this research is particularly focused on the uprooted community of the Rhulani refugee settlement.

1.3. THE RHULANI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

The Rhulani refugee settlement came about as a result of the erstwhile civil war in Mozambique. Thousands of refugees abandoned their homes and fled to South Africa in search of protection. In the early 1980s the number of Mozambican refugees in South Africa was estimated between 250,000 and 350,000 (Steinberg, 2005:1). During 1996, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) amnesty allowed Mozambican refugees to apply for permanent residency in South Africa (Clark *et al.*, 2004:1272). In response to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the South African Cabinet approved that Mozambican refugees who chose to remain in South Africa would be conceded permanent residency (Steinberg, 2005:15). Although many took advantage of this, the standard of living within the refugee settlement remained low. Many who were repatriated returned to South Africa, due to poor infrastructure in their country of origin. In recent years the Rhulani Refugee settlement has also become the arrival and connection point for refugees from Zimbabwe, who crossed the border through the Beit-Bridge into South Africa, due to the political and economic upheaval in that country (Idemudia, Williams & Wyatt, 2013:19). These groups also needed the intervention of the Christian church to help overcome their psycho-social distress by exposing them to the love of God.

The church's evangelistic approach should consider the most vulnerable and neglected people outside its boundaries, according to Claydon (2005:9), following the example of Jesus Christ who dedicated most of his time and effort to these kinds of people during his earthly ministry. Reaching this group of society also entails addressing their context in a holistic way. Jesus Christ is the example for a Christian life (Collins, 2007:16): He spent time with the needy at a group and individual level; sometimes meeting their physical, spiritual and psychological needs. The post-modern counsellor should follow in the footsteps of Jesus and bring healing, by touching the lives of the marginalised and the economically disadvantaged, thus fulfilling the role of being the "salt" and "light" of the world (Matt. 5:13-14). Dodson (2009) asserts that "if we do not counsel while we are on mission, we will fail in planting missional *churches*".

The purpose of this research is to formulate a paradigm embedded in the *missio Dei* for counselling refugees; a group falling into the category of “at risk groups” in society (Claydon, 2005:10,12). This research, however, particularly focuses on the refugees at the Rhulani refugee settlement.

The overarching research question is: *How may counselling be used as part of the missio Dei to help refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement to rebuild their lives?*

The individual problems researched are outlined in the following research questions:

- (1) What are the characteristics of the *missio Trinitatis Dei* and what are the implications thereof for a ministry amongst strangers?
- (2) What identifiable psycho-social factors contribute to stress within the context of the refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement?
- (3) How can counselling founded in the *missio Dei* contribute to the well-being of the refugees in Rhulani refugee settlement?
- (4) What are the characteristics of a counselling paradigm founded in the *missio Trinitatis Dei*? What are the implications of these characteristics for the well-being of the refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement?

1.4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the study are:

- to establish the characteristics of the *missio Trinitatis Dei* and the implications of these characteristics for a ministry amongst strangers;
- to identify psycho-social factors that lead to stress within the context of the refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement;
- to establish how counselling embedded in the *missio Dei* contributes to the well-being of the refugees in Rhulani refugee settlement; and
- to formulate characteristics of a counselling paradigm as participation in the *missio Dei* to contribute to the well-being of the refugees.

1.5. CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The central theoretical argument is that Christian counselling is indispensable to the *missio Dei* for evangelising refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement.

1.6. METHODOLOGY

This study is according to the Reformed tradition, which is founded on the *sola scriptura* (by scripture alone). Scripture alone is the cornerstone for faith and salvation, achieved through justification by faith in the finished works of Jesus Christ on the cross (Hastings, 1999:245). McGonigle and Quigley (1988:195) state, in reference to Calvin, God in his absolute sovereignty created all things for his glory. The Bible is the progressive and sufficient revelation of God's authority and will for man (Bearsdslee III, 1977:15-16). The research has partly been conducted according to the grounded theory method, which Strauss and Corbin (1990:275) calls a general methodology. It is a set of procedures for analysing data toward the formulation of a theory relevant to the subject matter being researched. The methodology of this research served to achieve the following:

1. The Biblical perspective of *missio Dei* to reach the refugees was established by means of a literature review; the revelation-historical exegesis of selected relevant passages; and the categorisation, analysis, interpretation and synthesis of Scripture.
2. Qualitative methods have been employed to identify factors that lead to mental distress within the context of the refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement. Interviews were conducted, up to saturation point, on a sample of both male and female persons who experienced the early arrival of refugees, of 18 years and older. The results were organised and analysed, in reference to a literature.
3. The Biblical perspective on counselling for refugees embedded in the *missio Dei*, was established by means of a literature review; the revelation-historical exegesis of selected relevant passages; and the categorisation, analysis, interpretation and synthesis of Scripture.
4. A counselling paradigm, as part of the *missio Dei*, was formulated in terms of the results collected.

1.7. CHAPTER TITLES

1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY
2. CHAPTER TWO: *MISSIO DEI*: A MISSION TO STRANGERS AND REFUGEES
3. CHAPTER THREE: REFUGEES: THE LOCAL SITUATION
4. CHAPTER FOUR: COUNSELLING AS PARTAKING IN THE *MISSIO DEI*
5. CHAPTER FIVE: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH
6. CHAPTER SIX: FORMULATION OF AN APPLICABLE PARADIGM
7. CHAPTER SEVEN: OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

1.8. SUMMARY

This chapter made salient matters of involuntary migration as a global concern. The challenge of refugees due to sociological unrest and war cruelties has become a noticeable phenomenon in various parts of the world. Such challenge also affects most parts of Africa and the Southern African Development Country (SADAC) in particular. In most cases involuntary migration disrupts individual's psycho-social world and deprives them from living normal and productive lives thus making it imperative to find plausible solutions to the problem.

This research gives a particular focus on the Mozambican refugees due to the ended civil war which resulted in massive influx into South Africa where thousands of refugees abandoned their homes and fled to South Africa in search for protection. It also examines the impact of the ended civil war in the refugees' social lives. Attention is given to their settlement in the Rhulani refugee settlement in the Limpopo Province as place of refugee. A problem statement was formulated to identify psychosocial challenges faced by the refugees as they made their way into South Africa in the Rhuani Refugee settlement and the situation faced in the settlement. A research question was proposed and its subsidiary individual problems for research were outlined. The aims and objective of the study were stated. The central theoretical argument, methodology for the study and chapters were outlined.

CHAPTER 2 MISSIO DEI: A MISSION TO STRANGERS AND REFUGEES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Displacement can be traced back to the primordial narrative of creation in the Bible. It is a global concern and is rooted in man's disconnection with the Creator, due to sin. This chapter sets out the Biblical basis to the problem and God's involvement with those who have become refugees. A number of passages are studied, as part of the revelation-historical exegesis on the phenomenon of refugees, in order to establish God's provision and guidelines for protecting this segment of society within the context of the elect nation. The following section elucidates the concept of *missio Dei*.

2.2. THE MISSIO DEI: DEFINITION AND BACKGROUND

The term *missio Dei* is a Latin phrase that means "the sending of God". It is traced back to Saint Augustine's Trinitarian theology, in which he describes God's work in restoring the world with the participation of the church. The term also features in Karl Hartenstein's missiology who incorporated it into his synthesis of Karl Barth's lecture on the doctrine of the Trinity, in terms of mission, presented in 1928 (Wright, 2006:62-63). However, the term has a closer connection to the 1952 International Missionary Council, held in Willingen in West Germany, and a subsequent conference held in 1947 in Whitby, Ontario on changing trends in mission in the church and society prior to World War II (Kemper, 2014:4-5). In Willingen the *missio Dei* came to be understood as the work of the triune God – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Mission was viewed in terms of Barth's missiological theology of God at work and the church in a participatory role.

It was in the twentieth century that the *missio Dei* has gained greater attention and where the term was established as the foundation of God's missionary programme on earth. Mission belongs to God and the church is given the privilege to participate in the process of re-creation (Hoffmeyer, 2001:108). The God of creation in Genesis remains involved in his on-going acts of creating and re-creating, in contrast to deism that denies God's continuous interaction with the affairs of his creation (Wainwright, 1991:124-125; Dulles, 2005:28). Jesus Christ states that as the Father is still at work, so is He (John 5:17). Wolters (2001:13) maintains that God continuously sustains all He has created by *inter alia* preserving, directing and ruling his world.

He further states that:

“God’s work of preserving and governing the world cannot be separated from his act of calling the world into existence. ‘To make’ and ‘to rule’ are all of a piece in God’s vocabulary. From day to day every detail of our creaturely existence (the very hairs on our head) continues to be constituted by the ‘Let there be’s’ of the sovereign will of the Creator” (Wolters, 2001:12-13).

Bosch (1991:389) explains that initially the *missio Dei* concept was understood in terms of salvific acts of God, which consist of preaching the gospel of repentance to prevent individuals from eternal damnation. Mission was also viewed from a cultural perspective, where people of other faiths were introduced to the Christian world of the West; and also as the ecclesiastical basis for the expansion of the church to new frontiers. It was an effort conducted within a particular denomination in its missionary endeavour. There has been a decisive shift in understanding the *missio Dei* since the middle of the past century up to the present. The development of systematic theology, after World War II, led to the articulation of mission as “an activity of God himself”.

Bosch (1991:10, 391) distinguishes *missio Dei* and *missiones ecclesiae*, where *missio Dei* is God’s revelation of himself to the world as the One who takes the initiative to love the world and who is involved in the affairs of the world. *Missiones ecclesiae* or missions refer to the church’s participation in obedience to *missio Dei*, which may be conducted in different forms and times in response to the particular needs of God’s people in the world.

The primary goal of *missiones ecclesiae* or church’s missionary enterprise in response to God’s love goes beyond the planting of churches and the saving of souls; it is rather the church’s task of being at service to God’s mission, to be his ambassadors and to give testimony about the Son of God and the good news of his mighty power over the reign of evil (Bosch, 1991:391).

This view concurs with Wolters (2009:22-24) position that the *missio Dei* is a “predicate” of God and that God in his missionary activities involves both the church and the world to fulfil his purpose. In such partnership, God uses any situation to fulfil his mission in the world. In the case of Job, for instance, God used catastrophic events to fulfil the *missio Dei*. Job’s experiences served as vehicle for revealing God to his contemporaries (Wolters 2009:22-24). Man can actively participate in God’s missionary work by entering into a relationship with Him.

Mission goes beyond the notion of being sent; it is rather an invitation to participate in God’s programme of redeeming humanity. The church thus exists for the sake of mission and not the other way around (Galgalo, 2012:37). Wright (2006:62) states that in *missio Dei* the emphasis is not so much on the fact that God tasks the church for mission, but that He has the church for His mission to reach the world. Moreover, the church should avoid the danger of transforming

the *missio Dei* into *missio homo* (mission of man) and neither should the church act as if it has invited God to participate in the *missio Dei* or push its own agenda in the name of God's agenda (Galgalo, 2012:37-38). Bosch (1991:390) states that:

"The classical doctrine on the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another 'movement': Father, Son and Holy Spirit sending the church in the world."

Mission has always been regarded as an activity where a particular group of people feel called to go to receiving nations to preach the Gospel to the lost. Africa has been for many centuries one of the major destinations of missionary work. As indicated above, Bosch and other authorities on missiology provide a much broader definition of *missio Dei* that transcends cultural and physical boundaries. The church is challenged to critically rethink its understanding of mission so that its focus may exceed the soteriological and ecclesiastical goal of expansion. Mission has to be understood in terms of the *missio Dei* where God is in action, providing direction as He wills (Bosch, 1991:398). Mission is the very nature of God, where God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are involved in the act of reaching man and the church is instrumental towards the fulfilment of such mission (Bosch, 1991:390).

Mission seeks to address the pain and the distress caused by man's disobedience to God's commands. It's a mission that includes social responsibility as part and parcel of evangelistic endeavour (Bosch, 1991:405). Starting from Adam to the present age, people need God's missiological intervention to restore and heal them from the upheavals to man and his environment. God's mission involves restoring man to enjoy abundant life now and in the life to come. God wants man to enjoy fullness of life now, which will culminate in the future Kingdom. Monroe (2004:125) explains that man lost his relationship with God, due to the fall; God is in the process of restoring this fellowship with man now and not in the remote future.

Man's spiritual predicament has affected his living environment as well. His environment is marred by wars, greed, pain, sorrows and many other misfortunes. The Bible describes the whole of creation as "groaning", waiting to be rescued by the Creator (Rom. 8:22). According to Steyne (1999:305), God is in agony because of man's alienation from the initial fellowship and He "spares no means" to reconcile with man, the head of all creation. He has acted in a "costly way" to restore the Eden experience, giving His Son Jesus Christ to die a vicarious death on the shameful cross of Calvary to pay for man's transgression of His law. Christ's death, as the second Adam, makes sinning man righteous before God (Rom. 4:5; 5:8). Obedience to the second Adam, Jesus Christ, makes man righteous before God through the righteous works of Christ and thus finding reconciliation with God through Him (Rom. 5:12-21; Col. 1:20-23).

However, there are viewpoints that contrast the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of mankind.

2.3. A UNIQUE MISSION

Religion, in a general way, may shed light of man's need for God. The word derives from the Latin *religio*, possibly from the root *lig* (to bind) and *leg* (take up or gather). Religion gives the person the unique opportunity of reconnecting with the supreme power and establishing a vital relationship with it (God) (McDowell & Stewart, 1992:12-13). Biblical missiology proposes a *missio Dei* that stands in opposition to a pluralistic approach to salvation, which encompasses all types of religious practices as salvation. Rakhmat (2006:3) advocates a "pluralist" approach to salvation, in which all religions are regarded as a way to salvation and that no religion is superior to others. This view negates the exclusiveness of a founder of religion regarded as the only "saviour." He maintains a view of salvation that is obtained through a Christology "from below", stating the following:

"The clear logical consequence of adopting Christology 'from below' is that we can no longer consider the founder of any religion as the one and only unique figure of the past sent by God either to give law, peace and grace to humanity and the world, or to save the whole world and humanity through his pain and agony, or to spiritually enlighten every human being and creature. A pluralist missiology rejects the idea of exclusive uniqueness of the founder of any religion. 'Exclusive distinctiveness' means that the founder of 'my' religion is the one and only unique figure of the past, none is of the same rank with him/her, so that only this figure can spiritually be meaningful for the salvation and wholeness of human beings." (Rakhmat, 2006:3)

Awad (2011:269), who holds the same view, asserts from a Trinitarian perspective that Christ is not the only way to salvation. The Holy Spirit, who was responsible in the creation and the "life breath of the *imago Dei*", is the agent sustaining all religions in accordance with the Father's will. The new developments of scholarship in the twentieth century have increasingly emphasised the new reality about the work of the Holy Spirit in the world (Schwarz, 1981: 200, 201; Merntz, 2008: 58—60). The Spirit is therefore the assurance of God's presence beyond the boundaries of Christian faith to the world and He presents Himself as Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer and liberator. The Spirit "could" also bring the whole creation to salvation regardless of religion, sect, culture or ethnic group. This stance may seem appealing, but it disregards the Biblical revelation emphasising Jesus Christ as the only way to know the Father (Luke 10:22). It is a fact that the Spirit challenges Christians to work with non-Christians and people from other religions (Bergen, 2012:90), but the salvation of individuals is through Jesus Christ.

The researcher agrees with Gallagher (2006:27, 31) that argues that the role of the Spirit in other religions may persuade individuals of the salvific acts of Jesus Christ, accomplished through the cross of Calvary. Although God can use other religious faiths to point man to the necessity of salvation through general revelation, the means to salvation is exclusively put forth in the missiology of God's special revelation in the Bible (Heb. 1:1-3). While all religions are in essence man's effort to please God through meritorious works, none of these can satisfy the demands of a righteous God (Rom. 3:24-26; Heb. 9:22). Man's good works are equated to a "filthy rug" in God's eyes (Is. 64:6). Jesus Christ claims to be the way, the truth and the life; the bridge between man and God (John 14:6). The emphatic Greek pronoun, *ego eimi* (I, and no one else) excludes any other means or person by which anyone can be saved, apart from Jesus Christ. Therefore, from the Christian point of view salvation is only found in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). The Christian mission is a unique mandate, because it proclaims salvation from the effect of sin at an individual level. In Christ, man realises the detrimental effect of sin. Lloyd-Jones (1992:154) states that "there are many people today who see nothing in the Christian salvation, who are not amazed at it...because they are ignorant of sin, and know nothing about the wrath of God".

The primary purpose of *missio Dei* is thus to restore man's relationship with God, compromised by the effects of sin. God created man in His image, to live in relationship with Him. The lost world has to be reconciled with the Creator, from the alienation of sin, through the salvific work of Jesus Christ by the teaching of God's message and the renunciation of sin. Steyne (1999:16) explains:

"The Bible claims that man is accountable and responsible for his sin. Furthermore, all sin is essentially against God. Sin is not merely a social inconvenience; it is a transgression of God's laws, deserving His judgment and eternal separation from Him; each person is accountable for his actions."

It is, therefore, imperative to understand the Trinitarian involvement in the quest to reach lost humanity, which has also affected his environment.

2.4. THE TRINITARIAN MISSION

2.4.1. The Sending of the Son

God the Son is involved in the *Missio Dei* in an intricate joint venture with the other Persons of the *Trinitatis Dei* beyond human understanding. Gaventa (2012:14) points out the following:

"Contemplating all of these claims together is indeed perplexing: that God is one and that there is fellowship within God, a fellowship the NT names as Father, Son, and Holy

Spirit. Especially when articulation of the Trinity emerges in abstruse theological terminology, we may well be tempted to throw up our hands and join with Dorothy Sayers' imagined interlocutor in declaring the whole project incomprehensible and impractical."

John 3:16-17 declares the love of God the Father for the lost world, the price for which was paid by God the Son giving His life for the world. Hendriksen (1992:139) calls this passage a "golden text" that pleases all God's children. It summarises the core reason God initiated the *missio Dei* in the world. His action was centred on His *agape* love that led Him to send His "supreme gift," Jesus Christ, to the world and He waits for man to respond in return. God the Son, in obedience to the Father, complies with the sending willingly. Jesus first coming to the world was not to condemn, but to restore the lost relationship between man and God through God's love and grace (John 3:17-16; Eph. 2:8-9). Taking into account the message of verse 16, God's love is extended beyond the Jewish nations to include "fallen mankind in its global aspect: man from every tribe and nation" (Hendriksen, 1992:140).

The work of God the Son had the full approval of the other members of the Trinity. At the baptism, prior to Jesus' ministry, they authenticate Jesus' mission on earth. God the Spirit's approval of Jesus Christ manifested in a dove descending upon Him and God the Father expressed His delight in Jesus' mission in an audible voice: "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). These words were confirmed on the Mount of Configuration in Matthew 17:5 (Walvoord, 1993: 25). This event is not only recorded in the synoptic, but in all of the Gospels (Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; John 1:32). According to Gero (1978: 19, 29) the descent of the Spirit has an appeal to Isaiah 9: 2a and 11: 22 which in turn points to the event of the Spirit's resting upon Jesus Christ. However, Gero (1976:19, 21, 29) struggles with the significance of the dove and the voice as they are present in Jesus baptism; he presents several apocryphal records that associate the voice as coming from the dove instead of the Father. Yet Walvoord (1983:25) maintains that all the persons of the triune God were present. His view seems more credible as he holds that the Father speaks audibly of the Son, the Son is physically baptised and the Spirit descending on the Son. Therefore, God's Triune involvement establishes the *missio Dei*.

In the *missio Dei*, the God of history is continually involved in His creation despite its fallen state. Just consider the process of creation: God did not rest from His completed work out of exhaustion, but rested from completed work. God continues to sustain the work of His hands and propels it towards reaching its full potential and purpose (Steyne, 1992:25). The Bible demonstrates that God maintains His universe through His Son, the image and first born of all creation. Through Him, He holds all of creation together in Christ Jesus (Col. 1:12-17).

2.4.2. The Incarnation of God the Son

Jesus Christ is the true incarnation of deity - God and man - who came to dwell among the people to fulfil the *missio Dei*. Molnar (2014:55) points out that through incarnation, God condescends through the Son to take the role of servant: Jesus Christ was humiliated in order to identify with man's servile state; He "exercised his judgement by being the judge judged in our place" (Molnar, 2014:55). The Gospel of John 1:1 presents God the Son as actively involved in the *missio Dei*. Wolters (2001:61) and Wright (2006:58) maintain that the incarnation of Jesus Christ forms the basis of the history of redemption on its entirety and the guarantee of its completion. Saint John describes the Lord Jesus Christ, the third Person of the Trinity, as the Word who was there in the beginning with God (Jn 1:2). Although He was with God, He is distinctively revealed as having played the role in the creation process as the Word that creates. Jesus is the *ho logos*, the Word testified about in the written Word. He is God the Son who participated in the *missio Dei* during the creation of the universe. Scripture establishes Him as the key to all existence and without Him, nothing created came into existence (John 1:3); He is the source of life and light to men (John 1:4).

The Word existed in the eternity past, before anything had been created (Gen. 1:1). The message in Genesis 1:1 concurs with Psalm 33:6, which declares that the heavens were created by the word of Yahweh. God the Father created the world by the Son, who is the Word, and "the breath of his mouth", who is the Holy Spirit (Putney, 1991:612; Ma, 2007:224; Bevans, 2007:7). According to Michaels (1989:25), points that because Jesus Christ is God he reveals God the father known to us and now that he is seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven the presence of the Spirit continues to reveal God to the world. The Epistle of Hebrews expounds the God who made Himself known at different times in the past, through the prophets, and who has in the last days revealed Himself to the world through His Son by whom He created the World (Heb. 1:1-3). The Son reveals the brightness of God's glory and is the image of the nature of God (Heb. 1:3). Through Jesus Christ, the world can know the nature and attributes of God because Jesus lives in constant fellowship with the Father (1 Jn. 1:2); He lives "face to face with God" (Hendriksen, 1992:71). Wright (2006:57) asserts that "in Jesus we meet this God. The New Testament uniquely affirms...that Jesus of Nazareth shares the identity and character of YHWH and ultimately accomplishes what only YHWH could."

John's assertion of the Son clothed in flesh is an antidote to a gnostic teaching of John's world. This teaching essentially held a dualistic view of the body or matter as evil and the spirit as good, whereby man's life is to liberate the spirit from the prison of the evil body. It also denied Christ in human form, since the body is matter and thus evil. According to Lanzillotta (2013:73, 77, 83), the gnostic view had its influence in the Platonic philosophy of becoming like god or

“assimilation to god”. The body is regarded as the “prison” of the soul, which man is to reject and everything related to it. The *homeostasis theos* (likeness to god) is to get rid of everything that is mundane or of worldly passions in order to achieve the divine nature and allowing the intellect to focus on the divine. Gnosticism partly appealed to the people on the margin, such as women and the poor, who did not find acceptance in society and who felt that conventional forms of religion did not speak to their lives (Martin, 2006:21). It went on to develop into Docetism, a heresy teaching that Christ *seemed* to have a body (Barclay, 1976:7). John assures his readers that Christ was indeed the Word from God, who clothed Himself with the human body and came to dwell amongst His own and identify with human plight. The word “dwell” (*eskenosen*) implies “tabernacle” as living in a tent and thus corresponds to His temporary dwelling like that of a sojourner (Tasker, 1992:48). Jesus Christ the Word became “light” to the people who live in the darkness of sin, to reveal the glory and love of the Father. He affirmed in His own words that whoever sees the Son, sees the Father because of Their oneness (John 12:45). The Father is revealed in the Son and the Son is revealed in the Father (Matt. 11:27).

The Gospel according to Saint John indicates that the Word of God does not simply reveal the attributes of God, but it presents the Second Person of the Godhead as a distinct person (Tasker, 1992:42). He is the light that shines in the darkness, where man has lost his original state of innocence because of the original sin in the Garden of Eden, affecting the rest of creation (Tasker, 1992:42). Paul described the entire universe as groaning in pain and waiting on redemption, in an eschatological sense, when Christ comes to fulfil His plan of redemption (Rom. 8:19-22).

Christ is also the Redeemer of the universe. According to Ewell (2012:386), the Triune God is the author and source of the *missio Dei*. He comes to seek, save and restore creation to fullness of life through the incarnation of Jesus of Nazareth. On the other hand, Wolters (2001: 57) points out that Jesus’s Christ is the Redeemer of all creation, who through His life “buy(s) back” or “buy(s) free” the whole *cosmic* realm in that He restores the whole of creation; he further defines “redemption” as the return to the goodness of an originally unscathed creation and not merely the addition of something “supracreational”. Jesus Christ redeemed the cosmos to restore it to its previous glory. According to Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians, God is in the process of reconciling all creation in Christ Jesus (Col. 1:20).

Arguing from a *missio Dei* perspective, Coleson and Schwanz (2011:8) assert that “we can be confident the creation is involved and incorporated in God’s mission, because the creation is included in the *eschaton*”. Wright (2006:65) points out that God created humanity with a mission on planet earth, entrusting man already in the Garden of Eden with a cultural mandate

to take care of the Garden, to fill the earth and subdue creation (cf. Gen. 1:28). Even after the fall into sin, God is still working through fallen humanity to bring all into harmony with Him. He is working in His creation, “moving everything to full redemption and restoration” that will culminated in new heaven and the new earth (*telos*) (cf. Is. 65:17; 66:22; Rev. 21:1) (Coleson & Schwanz, 2011:38). He is bringing creation into harmony and peace, as the Creator initially planned, where “the wolf and the lamb shall graze as one” (Is. 65:25).

In His humiliating death on the cross, Jesus revealed His care for the oppressed by sin and the injustices of the world. His victory over death brought about victory over sin and fulfilment of the promise of God in Genesis 3:15 to crush the head of the serpent. Jesus revealed His oneness with the Trinity, in a *missio Dei*, in His prayer just prior to His death on the cross (John 17:11-22). He came to the world on a mission to glorify the Father (John 17:1; cf. 10:30). The same oneness is demonstrated at Lazarus’ tomb, where He asked the Father’s intervention that people may believe that Jesus Christ was sent by the Father (John 11:42), praying that “to glorify the Father as the Father glorifies Him”. This mutuality of purpose in *missio Dei* is evident in the sending out of His disciples. He explained to them the imperative of His return to the Father, so that the Holy Spirit may come and empower them to be part of the *missio Dei*, stating that “as the Father sent him he also sends his disciples” (John 20:21). The oneness is also seen in the Great Commission text, where those who would be made disciples are to be baptised in the three names of the Godhead (Matt. 28:19). The Matthean text illustrates the equality of the members of the Godhead as Creator of the world and in whose names all who believe are to be baptised (Meesters, 2012:396, 412). This marks the uniqueness of God the Creator. As Horrell (2014:128) states, “the shared glory, love, and communication of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit forever distinguish the Christian God from all other forms of theism”. Jesus’ coming and mission fulfils a particular purpose.

2.4.3. The Scope of Jesus Christ’s Mission

Jesus Christ’s mission was also directed to people on the margins of society. He interacted with publicans, entering the house of Zacchaeus and eating with sinners and the rejected of society (Luke 19:1-10). According to Chesters (2011:87-88), interaction with Jesus made Zacchaeus a changed man and freed him of the bondage of greed. His repentance is revealed by his intention to repay fourfold to those he defrauded. Jesus accepted the marginalised and the lost, seeking to bring them into a relationship with God. Talking from a counselling perspective, Anderson (2010:84) points out that the kingdom of God does not discriminate between believers and non-believers; care givers are to accept people as individuals created in God’s image.

Jesus Christ travelled the direct route through Samaria, a place any other Jew would never have dared to cross, to bring the Good News to a Samaritan woman marginalised by her community (John 4:1-30). Walvoord and Zuck (1983:285) explain that Jews normally travelled the eastern route to avoid contact with Samaritans, but Jesus went through Samaria “to reach the despised people of that region” and to save the “despised and outcasts” (cf. Luke 19:10). The Gospel of Luke describes Jesus praising a Samaritan, a member of a culturally marginalised group, for rescuing and caring for a man attacked by robbers and left dead by the road (Luke 10:30-37). In Luke’s Gospel Jesus is depicted as the Saviour of both the rich and the poor. He involved those with material abundance to take part in alleviating the hardships of the poor, as Goheen (2005:13) states: “Jesus announces a reversal of the dismal fate of the dispossessed, the oppressed, and the sick by calling on the wealthy and healthy to share with those who are victims of exploitation and tragic circumstances.” Jesus also healed people as part of the *missio Dei*. His message and acts of healing were beyond measure, yet they brought opposition from the leaders of His time and took Him to the cross and yet never limited His mission in the world (Bevans, 2007:8).

Taking into account the third world context of this research, the church is invited to look at salvation from a much broader perspective that includes the marginalised. The church’s message and action should avoid confining salvation to certain human beings, since Christ’s approach to salvation encompasses all creation. The *missio Dei* should, therefore, include all the ecological, political and social concerns of humanity, since God is at work in all areas of His creation (Gallagher, 2006:26).

The Gospel conveys the good news of God’s love and liberation in Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18-19). The incarnated Jesus is the perfect expression of God’s love to the world. His birth, death and resurrection fulfil in a nutshell the message of the Gospel in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 1:20-26). Jesus encapsulated these commandments in a single key word, “love”. Any person who would love God with every part of his being and love his neighbour as himself, ushered in a new era of man’s relationship with God and with fellow man (Matt. 22:39). This golden rule encompasses all that may be stated in any human rights bill. Jesus’ resurrection introduced the good news of hope to the deprived in all spheres of life and marked the birth of His church universal. Christ multiplies the implementation of man’s total well-being through the church that serves as a living hand to touch and heal all communities, wherever they may be located. As the church expresses the unconditional love of Christ, through words and deeds, it ensures that the rights of people are realised. All the families of the world are provided with the opportunity to live life in its fullness, both spiritually and physically (John 10:10). According to Newland

(2006:107) Christ's resurrection is an expression of love that enacts the well-being of all humans; he states that:

Christ's resurrection from the dead ushers a new message of hope for the spiritually lost and the defenceless. His crucifixion serves as condemnation and strong negation against all sorts of human abuse.

Newlands (2006:84) also avers:

But the resurrection is an affirmation of the hope of love, a hope that, through solidarity in suffering, God may nevertheless bring light out of darkness. This vision of effective outcomes of love out of weakness has sustained the lives of millions of oppressed human beings and will no doubt continue to do so. Christian faith experiences the spirit of Christlikeness as a power which facilitates persistence in the face of unpromising circumstances.

Jesus Christ identified with the masses through His incarnation, including the hardships and the weakness of this life. Through His death, He conquered the powers of evil and in His resurrection He ushered in the dispensation of hope to humanity. This is the good news that has to reach people from all social backgrounds and the oppressed, marginalised and refugees in particular. God the Son's ministry was supported by the ministry of God the Spirit in *missio Dei*.

2.4.4. The Holy Spirit in the *Missio Dei*

The Holy Spirit plays the important role in *missio Dei* of creating and recreating. He was present at the creation of the universe (Gen. 1:2). He is the *ruach*, the "Spirit of God" and the "breath of God" who creates life in the Yahwistic narratives of the creation of man and woman (Gen. 2:4bff) (Bandstra, 2008:43, 45-49). Hamilton (1990:114) is careful not to "superimpose" the presence of the Trinity in Genesis 1:2 and leaves the reader to decide whether the word *ruach* should be translated *Spirit* or *spirit*, given the ambiguity in the Hebrews text on lower and upper case. (However, judging from the recreation of dry bones in Ezekiel 37, where the word is employed in a similar fashion - first matter being created and the Spirit bringing life - it seems safe to assume that *ruach* in Genesis 2 refers to the Holy Spirit.) Scripture paints a gloomy picture of the nature of things during the creation process. The world was empty, without form and full of darkness. The Spirit of God moved upon the waters (Gen. 1:2) and transformed chaotic matter into an end product God confirmed to be good (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). Scripture passages also bear testimony that God created the world by His Spirit (Ps. 33:6; Job 26:13). Williams (2014:4) states that,

“Just as the role of the Spirit in Genesis 2 is the production of the dynamic interrelating of the matter of the clay figure, so giving it life, the Spirit may be understood to give the relationship between the elements of matter, so giving form and therefore existence. Although the Spirit is only referred to once in Genesis 1, this does suggest a role for the Spirit in creation. The Spirit is then present at the very start of creation, as this aspect is essential for the existence of anything at all; the Spirit provides the interaction necessary for existence and the life of plants and animals.”

The prophet Ezekiel shared in the recreation work of the Spirit, as He brought to life the dead bones in Ezekiel 37. Genesis 2 and Ezekiel 37 speak of lifeless matter being brought to life through the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit (Williams, 2014:2-3). Ezekiel presents a dramatic picture of the Spirit in the *missio Dei* as Giver of life. The Spirit is at work in both the message and as well as in the bones. As the prophet preached the Word to the bones, they were brought back to life (Ezek. 37:1-14). Ma (2007:225) notes that recreation in the Ezekiel account takes place in two stages: 1) the body was recreated and 2) the Spirit as “breath” was given, as with the events of creation in Genesis 2. This prophetic event pointed to the return of Israel from the grace of exile, but the message was much deeper in meaning: The nation would be redeemed from spiritual death to life (Ma, 2007:225).

The Spirit of God breathes life into creation and unites creation with the Triune God by sustaining, renewing and giving direction that it may fulfil its purpose (Bergen, 2012:86). The Holy Spirit is also indispensable to the preservation of nature. He controls the seasons on earth (Ps. 104:29-30; cf. Gen. 1:2). As Giver of life, the Spirit is present in all things and “searches all things, even the deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:10). He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things (Gabriel, 2012:370).

The Spirit continues His activities in the world, working in ways that Christians may not fully grasp (Bergen, 2012:85-86). Putney (1991:612-613) maintains that the Spirit is recreating and sustaining creation, preparing people out of God’s communion to be part of God’s family – the church. The Christian faith is based on the God of Creation and the Spirit working at renewing every individual and society as a whole. This is the motivation for reborn Christians to fight for justice, peace and the well-being of creation (Putney, 1991:612-613). The next section explains the Spirit’s role in Jesus Christ coming to the world in the flesh.

2.4.5. The Spirit’s Role in Christ’s Incarnation

God the Son coming to identify with lost humanity required Him to become flesh. According to Moritz (2013:438-439), Jesus Christ came to restore the *imago Dei* to represent Israel and

humanity as the final Adam and restore all relationships marred by sin. Jesus' conception was a miraculous act of the Holy Spirit and made it possible for Him to relate to human nature. The Gospel of John describes how Jesus Christ, the Word from God, became flesh (Greek: *sarx*) and came to dwell amongst humans. Although He was God, He humbled Himself and took the position of servant (Phil. 2:6-7). It is significant that God has a particular interest in the poor or people on the margins of society to the extent that He identifies with their lowly circumstances. He accepted that He would be conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, who was from a low social class despite being from the royal bloodline of David (cf. Luke 3; Luke 23:23-38). God's focus on the poor and unimportant signals the reversal of status in His Kingdom and He expects His people to be part of this change (Chester, 2011:84-85).

The Holy Spirit was instrumental in Jesus' preparation for His earthly ministry. The Gospel of Matthew relates how Jesus was "led up off" into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted (Matt. 4:1). The Greek word *peirazo* may mean to "try" and "test". Jesus was tested or examined in all respects, as the incarnate God, to prove Himself worthy of His mission (Mounce, 1991:28). The Epistle of Hebrews points to Jesus the Son of God as a High Priest sent from heaven to man. He can sympathise with human "infirmities". The Greek *astheiah* can also be translated as all feebleness of body and mind such as moral weakness, disease and sickness. As God incarnate, Jesus was tested in all aspects that He may identify with human nature and challenges, yet without sinning (Heb. 4:14-15). The Spirit, the Third Person of the triune God, enabled Jesus to undergo this testing that He might prove fit to confront evil and sympathise with human frailty. The Spirit's part in the *missio Dei* is also visible at the baptism of Jesus.

2.4.6. The Spirit at Jesus' Baptism

It seems somewhat strange that Jesus had to be baptised, given that He was indeed God and sinless in nature and yet He underwent John's baptism of repentance. The answer to this proposition is that it was not a baptism, but one of identification with the sin of man. It was a baptism of induction (Van der Walt, 2007:153), in which He identified with the nation of Israel and lost humanity as a whole. His baptism reflects the important trait of humility, He personifies as He sides with those He came to save (Bockmuehl, 2012:87-88). His baptism points to His mission to rectify the law misused by the leaders of the day (Adam, 2013:127-128). Bockmuehl (2012:8) states that Jesus' baptism aimed to fulfil "all righteousness" recorded in the Torah (Matt. 3:15); the term "righteousness" is Kingdom terminology related to Jesus' teaching, ministry and identity.

The baptism of Jesus culminates in the revelation of the Trinity's involvement in the *missio Dei*, through the descending of the Spirit upon Him and the Father's voice from heaven declaring His

pleasure in the Son's obedience (Matt. 3:16). Jesus had to be empowered for service through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, about which Gabriel (2012:374) notes that the Spirit descended upon Jesus prior to His ministry to anoint and empower Him for mission (Matt. 3:16; Luke 4:14). The same Spirit that made it possible for Jesus to be incarnated, also anointed Him at the baptism in the Jordan River to enable him to preach the good news to the poor, heal the sick, give sight to the blind and proclaim forgiveness to sinners in the year of the Lord (Matt. 11:2-5; Luke 4:18). His mission provided humanity a way to enjoy fullness of life (John 10:10) (Bevans, 2014:31). Having laid the foundation of God's involvement with His alienated creation to recreate and restore fellowship with it, the following section explains the Biblical provision for the care of refugees as part of the *missio Dei*.

2.5. MISSIO DEI: PROVISION FOR REFUGEES

The problem of human displacement was not a foreign concept to the Jewish nation of the Bible. The Israelites at one time lived a semi-nomadic existence and experienced the various social challenges, typical of the tribes around them, as they grew into a nation (Petit, 2012:203; McDermott, 2003:82-83). The difficulties of mass movement continued even after they had settled as a nation.

The Bible records incidents of displacement of the Israelites, due to a range of factors. As in the words of Elliott (2011: 198) the Bible is an inspiring record of "dispossessed identity" and people who claim their identity and home in God. Since the Bible is inspired and was written by refugees, it would make sense to read it from that perspective. The Bible contains a range of passages speaking of individuals and groups seeking refuge with the Transcendent Being; God becomes their sanctuary in times of trouble. The Lord also cares for the oppressed and offers comfort in times of spiritual need (Ps. 9:9; Ps. 46:1; Ps. 142:5). God became a place of refuge to Israel in both the physical and spiritual sense, reflected in references to God such as "fortress" and "rock" to describe His protection (2 Sam. 22:2; Ps. 18:2). God also taught His people character through the Torah, such as embracing whoever seeks refuge, as described below.

2.6. THE MISSIO DEI AND DISPLACEMENT

Displacement can be both physical and spiritual, but it is rooted in the spiritual. The fall of man in the Garden of Eden described in Genesis 3, for instance, was primarily the cause of spiritual

disobedience. It was also a spiritual struggle between God and Satan, yet it manifested in man's forced expulsion (which will be explored further on in this chapter under 2.10). There is therefore, a relationship between the spiritual and the physical displacement of people. The following section is a historical exegesis of displacement to create an understanding of the key factors that led to displacement in selected instances and to establish God's provision for refugees in the passages examined.

2.6.1. Forced Displacement of Adam and Eve

Genesis is a book of "beginnings" (Harrison, 1969:542). It presents *inter alia* creation, the beginning of life and nations and man's fall (Gen. 1-5). Adam and Eve is the first case of human spiritual and geographical displacement described in Scripture. It was a vertical displacement in the separation between God and man, but also a horizontal one in their expulsion from the Garden God had prepared for them and entrusted to their care. The Garden of Eden was an idyllic home for man to work and in which to grow, as instructed by God (Gen. 1:22, 28). Right from the beginning God made man His co-worker to "rule" over creation and enabled him to make the tools to do so (Wolters, 2001:14).

Man was driven from the Garden by God for making the sinful choice of believing the serpent's deceitful words and rebelling against God's instruction (Gen. 3:1-7). This disobedience had several consequences. First, they were unprotected and naked (Gen. 3:7), hiding from God with whom they had always been in fellowship (Gen. 3:8-10). Adam and Eve had distanced themselves from God even before He shunned them from the Garden (Gen. 3:24). It deeply affected their relationship with the Creator, shifting from one of love and openness to one of fear and separation. God physically removed them from the tree of life that would see them living forever in their sinful state (Gen. 3:22).

This narrative demonstrates how sin affects various levels of relationship in man's life. The effects on man's vertical relationship with God consequently affected his horizontal relationship, in a cycle of recrimination, for disobeying God's instruction. Adam's blaming of Eve also had a further implication for his relationship with God in that he blamed God for giving him a companion who had led him to disobedience (Gen. 3:12). In turn, Eve shifted the blame to the serpent. Man's fall did, therefore, create spiritual death and the fellowship with and each other had been damaged (Gen. 3:8; Rom. 1:1-23). It, furthermore, had a detrimental impact on man's relationship with nature in the sense that man would only enjoy the fruit of the land through hardship (Gen. 3:17-18). Man's disobedience also resulted in physical death that meant the ending of relationship between people (Gen. 3:19). God did not leave man in his fallen state, but showed His love and grace in the form of a promise.

2.6.2. God's Grace to the First Displaced People

The central plan of God in the *missio Dei* is revealed in prophesy made in form of a promise to Eve in Genesis 3:15. After man's fall and the indictment against him for his disobedience, God expressed His grace in the Good News that would restore man from his fallen state. According to Genesis 3:15, God's message brought hope to the whole of creation hence this passage has come to be regarded as the first proclamation of the Gospel or *protoevangelium* (Ronning, 1997:1, 4). In the midst of Adam and Eve's failure to keep God's commandment, God offered the hope of the redemption of man. Shepherd (2014) points to the fact that although it may sound "outrageous", the provision of a Saviour through childbearing is evident in Scripture and reflected in the hope of Eve's confession: "I have gotten a man from the LORD." (cf. Gen. 4:1)

God's utterance about enmity between the woman and the serpent, in Genesis 3:15, is prophetic pointing to the war between God's plan and the forces of evil (Eph. 1:13-14; 14:5, 16; 2:13; 6:12) that culminates with the victory of Jesus on the cross (Eph. 2:16). In Genesis 3:15, God promises to rescue man from his state of fall through the "seed" of the woman that would bruise the serpent's head that had been instrumental in leading man to disobedience.

According to Collins (1997:144-145), the syntax of the passage and the use of the singular pronoun (Hebrew: *hu*) suggest that the word seed is an individual who would be victorious over the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). The "seed" of the woman, traceable in the godly lineage in Scripture, would in a remote future destroy Satan and his evil forces in order to allow the progress of the *missio Dei* on earth. Furthermore, the Promise of the "seed" was not confined to Adam and Eve, but a prophecy encompassing all humanity alienated from God because of the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. The serpent is symbolic of Satan and his deceptive nature. The conflict in Genesis 3:15 foretold Christ's conflict between the evil forces and God's power, culminating in Satan's defeat on Calvary (1 Cor. 15:54-57; 2 Cor. 11:13; Rev. 12:9; 20:22). From His earthly ministry to His crucifixion, Jesus presents Himself as waging war against the forces of evil and destroying Satan's kingdom through the preaching of the Word, casting out of demons and His death and resurrection (Evans, 2003:168-169).

God, through Jesus Christ, disarmed the powers of evil and cancelled the debt that kept man captive and set him free from the bondage of sin (Col. 2:14-15). Through this resurrection and ascension, He set the captives free and gave spiritual gifts for the perfection and growth of the church (Gal. 4:8-12). Jesus Christ's resurrection on the third day proved that He destroyed the power of sin and Satan (Matt. 27:62-54; 28:1-10; 1 Cor. 15:3-5). His resurrection ushered in an era where many would be attracted to Him (John 17:2). Ronning (1997:378) explains that "in

the New Testament we see the realization of the expectations developed in the Old Testament concerning the defeat of the serpent, though his ultimate demise is still in the future”.

Although this prophetic utterance had both spiritual and eschatological implications, pointing to Jesus’ victory over Satan, there was an immediate effect that caused disharmony in all creation. Man’s sin would have negative ecological consequences; the description of the ground indicates the reversal of its original goodness (Barker & Kohlenberger III, 1994:11). The ground was cursed and would produce thorns (Gen. 3:17-18). Adam would endlessly labour to gain sustenance from the ground and man would eventually return to it in his physical death (Gen. 3:19).

In this first narrative of displacement in the Bible, God - in his grace - provided relief to man in his vulnerable state. He clothed Adam and Eve, in coats of skin (Gen. 3:21), to protect their dignity. Because God wanted man to fulfil his mission to develop the earth, Adam did not immediately die and lived over 900 years (Gen. 5:3).

Although it is a subject that will be explored in greater detail later in the chapter, it is noteworthy that man’s sin affected all aspects of creation and it cannot only be laid at his door. The apostle Paul states in the Epistle of Romans that the whole creation is in a state of hardship, “groaning”, as the result of man’s fall and is awaiting deliverance (Rom. 8:21-22). This has implications for the missiological view of salvation, whereby salvation has to be viewed from the much broader perspective that both man and the universe need redemption. The term “salvation” is translated in some instances as “health” and Christ is the physician who heals the debilitating effects of sin (Wolters, 2001:58). Both Scripture and nature are instrumental in the ultimate goal of the *missio Dei* to humanity to form what Coleson (2012:12) calls the “other” or a “call of creatures” that can commune with Him. This relationship is made eternal through Jesus Christ who became incarnate through the virgin birth. Lot and his family is another instance of displacement recorded in the Scripture, as explained below.

2.6.3. Lot and his family

The flight of Lot and his family, from Sodom and Gomorrah, presents another Biblical account of displacement of family. Gomorrah is said to mean “submersion” and is a word related to the Arabic *grammar*, meaning “to overflow, inundate” (Unger, 1983:419). There are two predominant views regarding the transgression that led to the divine punishment of these two cities. Some scholars have proposed that the sins of homosexuality triggered the judgement over it, as MacArthur (1997) indicates:

“They sought homosexual relations with the visitors. God’s attitude toward this vile behavior became clear when He destroyed the city (vv. 23–29). Cf. Lev. 18:22, 29; 20:13; Rom. 1:26; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10 where all homosexual behavior is prohibited and condemned by God. 19:6–8 Lot’s response betrayed tension in his ethics; his offer to gratify their sexual lust contradicted his plea not to act ‘so wickedly’. Such contradiction made clear also the vexation of spirit under which he lived in wicked Sodom (cf. 2 Pet. 2:6, 7).” (MacArthur, 1997)

Kidner (1967:136) presents Bailey¹ (1955) different view regarding the key sin that led to God’s punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah by arguing that the verb “to know” has a sexual connotation (Kidner, 1967:136). Morschauser (2003:483-484, 471) offers a more plausible explanation. He rules out the interpretation of “overt sexuality” as the cause for the divine punishment, by referring to Near Ancient East customs and the Hebrew text. The Sodomites requested “to know” Lot’s guests: This word may well be used as euphemism for sexual intercourse, but it has other meanings as well such as “comprehension” or “gaining experience”. The Sodomites demanded “to know” (Morschauser, 2003:462) the guests in the sense of interrogating them to determine whether they are friendly visitors or pose a danger to the city (Gen. 19:1-8). On the other hand, Lot proposes his daughters as hostage-exchange according to custom as pledge that the unknown guests would leave the city in the morning and not to expose them to sexual abuse. Morschauser (2003:475) explains as follows:

“The point of the exchange is not to mistreat those who are held but precisely the opposite: it is to ensure the execution of a prescribed duty; the value of the hostage is regarded as surety for an oath or obligation. The persons are to be redeemed – reclaimed - *hale and healthy* - at the satisfactory conclusion of the agreement.”

Some sins of Sodom and Gomorrah directly pertain to this research. Many in Sodom lived abundant and luxurious lives, while neglecting the poor and needy (Ezek. 16:48-49). They also ill-treated all strangers, refusing them hospitality (Gen. 19:9) (Bromiley, 1988:560).

The meaning of its land certainly mirrors the misfortunes that befell it. Sodom and Gomorrah was located in the valley of Jordan (Gen. 10:19; 13:10) and grew so wicked that the Lord God sent judgement and destruction upon it (Gen. 19:24-28). The people of Sodom were known for their economic crimes, blasphemy and bloodshed. The economically prosperous utterly disregarded the poor and needy (Ezek. 16:49-60). God then sent three angels in the appearance of men to exact judgement over the city, because of its vicious iniquity. Lot and his

¹, Bailey (1955) denies any sexual connotation to the verb “know” in Genesis 19:5 and Judges 19:22.

family were counted as righteous before God (cf. Gen. 18) and escaped God's judgement by forceful removal from the city by an angel (Gen. 19:15), through the Lord's mercy. As morning dawned and the angels were about to unleash judgement on the city, they urged Lot to flee immediately it. God granted Lot's request and he took refuge in the nearby city of Zoar. The Lord then rained fire and brimstone on the whole city, destroying all its inhabitants (Gen.19:18-25).

Many refugees would be able to identify with the emotions and actions of Lot's wife. She was faced with the reality of suddenly being wrenched from her life and the sorrow of leaving behind possessions and friends, while witnessing their destructing in a catastrophic fire (Gen. 19:25). In a split second she lost everything, except for her family. This is why she looked back and consequently turned into a pillar of salt (Gen. 19:26). Henry (2012) and Isfahani (2008) relate the trauma associated with the loss of belongings and everything of meaning of home, not to mention its negative psycho-social impact on the individual (Henry, 2012:585-595; Isfahani, 2008:79, 84).

This particular event was unprecedented in the history of displacement in the Bible and of God's dealing with evil. The fearful damage resulting from the effect of sin in Sodom and Gomorrah also presents another dimension of sin from a sociological and ecological perspective. A once productive region (Gen. 13:10) was made barren, due to the God's wrath over man's evil acts (Gen. 19:22). Henry (2012) points out that the damage was equated to their sin; they persecuted God's angel and God responded with terrible punishment (cf. Deut. 29:23; 1 Pet. 2:6). However, the narrative also shows God's mercy and care for a family of refugees by saving them from this catastrophic event. A famine turned Jacob and his family into refugees as they travelled to Egypt to survive.

2.6.4. Jacob and his Family in Egypt

Famine was not an unusual phenomenon in Biblical times. There are records of a worldwide famine during the patriarchal period that led to the displacement of Abraham into Egypt (Gen. 12:10). Years later Isaac, son of Abraham and heir to the promise God made to him, was forced to escape to Abimelech king of the Philistines in Gerar due to famine (Gen. 26:1). Jacob and his family, however, present a unique case of displacement as a result of famine, in the sense that it triggered the dislocation of an entire nation to Egypt (Gen. 41:46; 46:1-7). The Bible recounts how Joseph opened all his storehouses and sold it to the Egyptians, due to the severity of the famine (Gen. 41:56).

When Jacob learned of the grain in Egypt, he sent his sons to buy food and after a series of such journeys, Jacob and his sons eventually settled in Egypt to escape the famine and reunite with Joseph (Gen. 46:26-27). Jacob's dislocation saved him from famine, but would much later lead a period of terrible slavery at the hands of Pharaoh (Ex. 1:8-14). The Lord heard the cries of oppression of His people and led them out of Egypt under Moses (Ex. 3:9–10). A similar story of dislocation of people as a result of the prevailing conditions of famine is that of Elimelech and his family.

2.6.5. Elimelech and his Family

The book of Ruth presents a related story of displacement, due to famine, in the city of Bethlehem. The chaos in the Promised Land during this time, recounted in the book of Judges, may explain the cause of this famine. There was no law and order, allowing people to act any way they deem fit (cf. Judg. 17:6; 21:25). Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Kilion left Bethlehem ("the house of bread") due to difficult economic conditions to settle in the gentile country of Moab. While in Moab Elimelech, Mahlon and Kilion died. His wife, Naomi, humiliated by the misfortune in her family took the bold decision to return to Bethlehem with her daughter-in-law (cf. Ruth 1-4).

The Bible gives no real explanation as to the cause of the above three instances of famine in Israel, except for a few vague references to chaotic circumstances in the books of Ruth and Judges. Nevertheless, God worked behind the scenes to bring the *missio Dei* to fruition.

The *missio Dei* upheld by the preservation of the "seed", as God's hand of providence, was upon Naomi and Ruth as they returned to Bethlehem after the loss of their family. Ruth is redeemed by Boas the kinsman redeemer (Ruth 4:1, 8, 14) and miraculously played a key role in the *missio Dei*, by appearing in the Davidic genealogy leading to the birth of Jesus the Saviour (cf. Ruth 4:21; Matt. 1:5). This story of Ruth reflects God's love for all nations and His care for strangers by including Ruth, a Gentile woman, in the genealogy of the Saviour. Both Naomi and Ruth were strangers in the other's country and God showed His love and mercy through all they experienced. Having explored the experience of Elimelech and his family of becoming strangers, in the book of Ruth, the following section focuses on God's inclusion of strangers in the religious matters of Israel.

2.7. RELIGIOUS INCLUSION OF STRANGERS

Refugees played an important role in the *missio Dei* through their participation in the building of the temple. Solomon continued this project, entrusted to him by his father David. He came to an agreement with the Gentile King Hiram, the king of Tyre, and contracted his subjects to cut down cedars in Lebanon and other skilled men (1 Kings 5:1-18). The part of Gentiles are also mentioned in Solomon's prayer upon completion of this huge project (1 Kings 8:41-43). Any non-Israelites or foreigners were free to come and pray in the same fashion to the God of Israel (Auld, 1986:63).

The temple was a focal point in the *missio Dei*, as place where both the Israelites and proselytes came to worship Yahweh. Israel was to be a light to the nations (Is. 49:6) and appeal to foreigners, because of its mighty deeds and renown. The Lord's house was intended to be the house of prayer "for all nations" (cf. Num. 15:14; Is. 56:7; Mark 11:17) (Wiseman, 1993:122). Solomon attracted nations with his unmatched wisdom and recognition of the greatness of the God of Israel; King Hiram and Queen Sheba are but two examples of this attraction to the Holy Land and to the temple (McConville, 1984:147-148). The temple, therefore, played an important role in God's *missio Dei* in both its centripetal and centrifugal movement. Jerusalem was the centre of worship and the temple the centre of worship for the Jews (Oliver & Madise, 2014:1, 4-5).

The centripetal movement of Israel's mission refers to the convergence or pilgrimage of the Gentile nations to Mount Zion to hear God's Law (cf. Is. 2:2-4) (Bosch, 1980:72). While the centrifugal movement was less proactive by awaiting the gentiles in the surrounding nations to come, the centrifugal approach entailed reaching out to other nations to teach them about Yahweh. Israel was more of a centrifugal nation, to which gentiles came to worship the Lord in Zion (with the exception of Jonah who disobeyed the *missio Dei*, as described in Jonah 1:1-3, when sent to Nineveh). The Israelites failed to reach out to their neighbours and proclaim God's message. God's exile of the Israelites (to be addressed elsewhere) should not only be viewed as punishment for idolatry, but also a way to compel them to share their faith with the Gentile world. Upon the destruction of the temple, circa 70 AD (Marx, 2013:61); the advent of the New Testament period; and the inception of the church, God's people returned to their self-centeredness approach to worship and at times the persecution of the church served to drive them to fulfil their duty of reaching out to those beyond the boundaries of Israel (Acts 1:8; 8:1) (Murphy, 2010:234-235; Bruce, 1988:162-163).

The inclusion of foreigners in the temple building speaks of how God values the marginalised. God has a plan for gentiles in His *missio Dei*; gentiles and foreigners shared in the worship of Yahweh at the temple.

Both the elect nation and the gentiles are deemed part of God's mission. Psalm 42:12 calls on the daughter of Tyre to a gift for this precious endeavour. David was so daunted by the task entrusted to him that he speaks as though a "foreigner", calling out "Who am I" and his subject to have the privilege of being offered the gift of undertaking the building of the temple (1 Chron. 29:14). He goes on to say that "we are strangers before thee, and sojourners", i.e. insignificant beings, just a short time on earth that passes away like a shadow (1 Chron. 29:15).

2.8. DISPLACEMENT IN THE POETIC LITERATURE

Psalms were intended to be recited or sang during worship, in glory to God (Waltner, 2006:117-18). In Psalm 105:13-45 the psalmist sings in remembrance and appreciation of God's people, Israel, for His providence and faithfulness during their life as sojourners in Egypt and as wanderers on their long journey to Canaan. They were strangers in the eyes of other nations, because of their faith (cf. 1 Pet. 4:4), as they travelled from one nation to the next and from one kingdom to the next. As sojourners they were few in number and of little account, yet the hand of Yahweh had mercy upon them (Ps. 105:13). God did not allow man or king to harm them (Ps. 105:14). They may have been refugees, but to God they were a special nation who vehemently commanded: "Touch not my anointed and do my prophets no harm" (Ps. 105:15). The book of Genesis relates how the terror of God was upon all the cities the nation of God passed through (Gen. 35:5). God foresees famine in the Promised Land and in His provision sent Joseph to Egypt to be sold as slave (Gen. 37:28). Genesis 35:23 tells of how Israel found refuge in Egypt through Joseph and this provision eventually turned them into a multitude, a force to be reckoned with by their enemies, in fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham to make his descendants as numerous as the sand along the shore (Gen. 22:17).

God ensured the care of the displaced community of Israel. God "watches over the strangers" (Ps. 146:9). Psalm 146 emphasises the importance of trust in Yahweh (Ps. 146:5) and God's provision for the vulnerable. He exacts judgement for the oppressed and gives food to the hungry (Ps. 146:7). He opens the eyes of the blind and raises those who are low (Ps. 146:8).

Israel had many experiences of living destitute in foreign lands, in which their exile in Babylonia and Assyria were the result of disobedience to the covenant to not worship other gods. Psalm 137:1-6 is a song in remembrance of captivity in Babylonia, of which the first verse describes their geographical location: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept when we

remembered Zion” (Ps. 137:1). They were prisoners of war suffering the abuse of their aggressors (Henry, M. 1991: 616).

Captivity, particularly because of war, in Old Testament times was brutal. Great indignity and cruelty were inflicted upon them. Whoever surrendered, were led with halters like animals to the slaughter (1 Kings 20:32). The capturers would step on their necks (Josh. 10:24) or cut off their thumbs and toes or ears (Judg. 1:7; 2 Sam. 4:12-31). The Assyrian treatment of captives or prisoners of war was just as cruel. Exile in Babylon was basically imprisonment, where captives were sometimes suspended by their hands (Lam. 5:12) or forced to lie down and trod on (Is. 51:23). Prisoners were at the mercy of their oppressor. Judah was captured at various times, leading to bitterness and humiliation and memory of defeat and bondage as they were subjected to scorn and derision (cf. Ps. 137:1-5) (Unger, 1983:181).

Psalms 137 speaks of the tears of the captives from Judah, as they remembered the Holy City and the glory of God they left behind in the mountain of Yahweh. They were reduced to shame in the land of the gentiles. Their melancholy hindered their worship of God, having become an object of scorn and abuse at the hands of their captors, demanding they sing one of the songs of Zion (Ps. 137:3). They were reluctant to sing God's song of worship in a gentile and hostile place (Ps. 137:4). Although they suffered greatly, God never forgot His *chesed*, His loving kindness and unchanging love for His people. God is gracious, full of compassion and slow to anger (Ps. 145:8). God showed mercy to Israel by restoring them to the land of promise, in the first year of Cyrus of Persia (cf. 2 Chron. 36:22-23, Ez. 1:1-4) and in fulfilment of His covenant, after seventy years of exile (Jer. 29:30) (Knowles, 2004:65-67).

2.9. DISPLACEMENT IN PROPHETIC LITERATURE

Jeremiah 7 describes how the prophet Jeremiah was sent by Yahweh to preach to Judah against injustice inflicted on the marginalised, in particular reference to foreigners (Jer. 7:1). The Lord instructed the prophet to stand in the gate of the Lord's house and proclaim this message (Jer. 7:2), directed at the men of Judah who came to worship God in the temple. God wanted them to change their ways and come to repentance (Jer. 7:3). Obedience to God's will would ensure peace in the land and keep Israel from being taken from the Promised Land (Jer. 7:3b). The message urged them to execute judgement on matters between affected individuals, impartially and according to the merit of the problem (justice should prevail in the land). Jeremiah preaches a message of justice to the poor, the alien, the fatherless and for Israel to turn back from worshiping other gods (Jer. 7:5-7). Bosch (1980:52) points out below how Israel's election came with the responsibility to serve and show compassion:

“Israel, who had been stranger in Egypt, had to have compassion on the stranger in her midst. The constitutive element here was neither the ethnic, nor the biological, nor the cultural; the stranger who lived in Israel had to be accepted completely and without reserve.”

Once again the Lord demonstrates His care for the marginalised and the vulnerable of society. According to Jeremiah 22:3-5, the Lord particularly emphasises the protection of the stranger in a strange land. They were not to do them wrong.

2.10. DISPLACEMENT IN THE GOSPELS

The gravity of caring for foreigners, refugees and the displaced is reflected in Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 25:31-46. Failing to heed God’s call to welcome strangers could jeopardise entry into God’s Kingdom. Those who enter the Kingdom are obliged to show *agape* love that is expressed in tending to the vulnerable, disadvantaged and stranger: “I was a stranger, and ye took me in” (Matt. 25:25). According to Jesus Christ, a righteous life in the Kingdom includes care for those who have been marginalised.

The Gospel of Matthew presents the refugee story of Jesus Christ and His parents, Mary and Joseph (Matt. 2:13-15). Herod was so beset by jealousy about the birth of a new king, Lord Jesus that he launched a brutal campaign of killing all boy children in his realm, to rid him of this rival for his kingdom. The persecution of the Davidic lineage, into which Jesus was to be born, dates back to Tajan (98-117 AD) in the Roman Empire. It continued beyond the Flavian dynasty to the Emperor Trajan. Eusebius records a report from Hegesippus that reported of people’s claims that a certain Symeon, son of Clopas, was descendent of David and a Christian. Members of the Flavian dynasty, including Vespasian and Titus who previously campaigned in Israel, always feared the prophecy foretelling the emergence of a world ruler from the line of David from Israel (Barnett, 1999:33-34). The arrival of the Romans dashed the Jewish hope for the coming of a long-awaited deliverer, a king that would be a descendent of David, the Messiah (Barnett, 1999:61). They expected deliverance from political rule and the rule of gentiles. Herod “the Great”, who ruled from 37-4 BC, was crowned as king by the senate in 40 BC, under which the Jews suffered repressive rule for approximately four decades (Barnett, 1999:68, 70). The search for the child Jesus forced his parents to flee with Him to Egypt (Matt. 2:13-15), after a visit by the Magi to Herod’s palace to enquire about His birth.

Marzouk (2003) reminds readers to look beyond Jesus’s escape from the massacre to find a safe haven in Egypt and think also of the infants killed at the cruel hand of Herod as well as the pain and trauma it caused to the parents and community where Jesus lived. The Gospel of

Matthew relates the inconsolable sorrow of Rachel. The prediction in Jeremiah 31:15 was fulfilled in King Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the Jerusalem temple and the killing of prisoners by the sword (Matt. 2:17-18; cf. Jer. 31:15; 40:1). He also relates the painful event of the killing of male babies in Egypt and the escape of Moses (Marzouk, 2003). Brown (1980) points out the conflicting view of ancient Israel as both a place of bondage and a place of safety. Despite the hardship encountered, it was also a haven in time of troubles.

2.11. DISPLACEMENT AND FOREIGNNESS

In his address to the gentile believers of the churches in Ephesian, Paul alludes to Old Testament Israel's foreignness to illustrate the state of gentile believers in the new community of believers. Paul describes their previous spiritual displacement with the term *xenos* meaning "stranger" i.e. a people spiritually displaced from the worship of God in relation to Israel (Eph. 2:12-14). Being a "stranger" was thus a battle Israel had to fight several times in its life as nation set apart by Yahweh, when Israel was exiled from the Promised Land upon disobedience to God's law (Unger 1988:211).

Foreignness is also understood and valued in social terms in the Pauline Epistles, along the same lines as other social constraints such as widowhood and poverty. Paul instructs Timothy on the care for widows, urging assistance to them by the church if they showed a credible Christian life that would *inter alia* include care for her children, fellow Christians, the afflicted and strangers (1 Tim.5:10).

Displacement comes both in a spiritual and social form, in which former sinners are strangers to God's *koinonia* and yet made part of His family by accepting Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:12). Paul states that gentiles were strangers (Greek: *xenodocheo*) to the people of Israel and from the covenant (Eph. 2:12), but were "no more foreigners and strangers" and now fellow citizens in God's house (Eph. 2:11-22, 19). The heroes of faith listed in Hebrews 11 are recognised for their trust in God, in their relationship and religious pilgrimage with God. They all died without fully reaching the ultimate goal of their faith and yet confidently walked the earth as "strangers", in hope of God's promise (Heb. 11:13).

The letters of 1 Peter 1 and 2 address the circumstances of foreigners during the diaspora. The Greek words in the introductory verses (*pare-didemoi*, *parokio* and *parokia*) refer to "temporary visitors" residing in the diaspora of the province of Asia Minor (1 Pet. 1:1; 2:11) (Elliott, 1998:178). Peter describes his audience as "residents" and "temporarily visitors", an expression used by Abraham to identify himself as a landless "resident alien and temporary visitor" among the Hittites. The epistle presents a "messianic sect" in Israel during the diaspora experiencing

social rejection, verbal abuse and oppression by their neighbours. Williams (2012:29) speaks of their suffering persecution at the hands of their pagan neighbours and needed pastoral guidance on how to live their new faith in Christ. They were Christians and referred to as the “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father”, saved by the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:1). Their faith in God must surely have been a threat to the local gods (Elliot, 1998:178). The writer of Leviticus applies the analogy of “sprinkling of the blood”, a practice conducted by the high priest in the temple for the atonement of sins (Lev. 1: 5, 11) and evidently points to the fact that the audience was familiar with such practices.

Peter urges this dispersed community to live exemplary lives, despite the hostile community around them. As spiritual and physical strangers away from home, they were to be the salt and light of the world by refraining from fleshly desires to keep the hostile world from any reason to accuse them and instead, they should glorify God in their good works (1 Pet. 2:11-12).

Like the Jewish nation which was called to be the light to the pagan world, the church of the New Testament inherited the same task. Most of them had suffered displacement, due to the evil forces resisting their proclaiming of the Good News of hope as strangers in a hostile world. Evil emperors attacked the church for its message, forcing them to scatter or take refuge elsewhere. This is the experience of the church described in the book of Acts, relating the persecution of the disciples by the imperial powers of Rome and their forcible removal to different part of the Roman Empire. The church did not give in to external forces, however, but continued to expand in pursuit of the *missio Dei* (Figueiras, 2014:51,100).

God has reminded His people throughout the history of faith to learn from the experience of being foreigners in new cultural contexts and open their hands to whoever suffers the same misfortune. Elliot (1998:138) asserts that the church, as counterculture to the world, should become a home to the homeless and a sanctuary for refugees. The Epistle of Hebrews reminds the church to show hospitality to strangers, because in doing so some have received messengers from the Lord (Heb. 13:2). Chester (2011:89) explains as follows:

“Hospitality has always been integral to the story of God’s people. Abraham set the agenda when he offered three strangers water for their feet and food for their bodies. In so doing he entertained God himself and received afresh the promise (Gen. 18:1-18). God was Israel’s host in the Promised Land (Ps. 39:12; Lev. 25:23), and that would later shape Israel’s behavior. A welcome to strangers and provision for the needy were written into the law of Moses.”

Genesis 18 describes how Abraham welcomed a stranger, unaware that He was the Son of God, like Lot in Genesis 19 and were both blessed for their action. Jesus reminds children of God that whoever welcomes a stranger in obedience to Him will be rewarded for such hospitality (Matt. 25:35). The church, as counterculture, has the responsibility to treat people impartially and embrace the displaced and destitute. Displacement often leads to vulnerability, caused by the loss of belongings and identity upon entering a new environment (see 2.24). The epistle of James 2:5 reminds believers of God's regard for the poor in the world. The poor are not saved because of their social circumstances, but showing impartial love to them fulfils the Christian responsibility that may make them receptive to the message of the Gospel.

2.12. BIBLICAL LAWS PROTECTING REFUGEE AND DISPLACED

Scripture contains various examples of God's concern for the well-being of the foreigner, viz.: provision for rest on the Sabbath (Ex. 20:10; 23:12; Deut. 5:14); ensuring justice in court (Deut. 1:16); access to cities of refuge (Num. 35:15; Josh. 20:9); participation in religious festivities (Deut. 16:1, 11; Lev. 16:29; Num. 9:14;); provision of sustenance (Lev. 23:22); and financial aid through triennial tithe (Deut. 26:11ff) (Bromiley, 1988:569). The Lord's concern for strangers is reflected in the laws given to Moses on the protection of the displaced who settled within the borders of the Promised Land. These laws illustrate the value of displaced people in the eyes of the Lord God and made it possible for them to live as normal members of society as well as allowing them fellowship with God in the temple, together with the elect nation of Israel.

Hospitality in the ancient world had a number of similarities with that of the nation of Israel. However there are notable exceptions of transgression of good ethics and love for the stranger found in certain pagan communities surrounding Israel that led to the abuse of strangers. The guest was deemed sacred. Strangers could enjoy hospitality for three days and the right to protection for a specific period of time. According to tradition, a stranger could stay for as long as the salt he has eaten has been excreted from the guest's stomach (De Vaux, 1973:10). Gower (1987:244-245) explains that eating salt symbolised being at peace with the guest and speculates that Jesus may have used the salt metaphor in Matthew to remind His disciples to be examples of peace to their neighbours (Matt. 5:13).

In Arabic communities a member who was expelled from his tribe, due to a grave offence, could seek asylum or protection from another tribe and such an individual was known as *dahil* (he who come in). The tribe would fight for his protection to the point of sacrificing their lives. This attitude is notorious in the Biblical narratives of Lot (Gen. 19:1-8) and Gibeah (Judg. 19:16-24),

where in two instances hosts sacrificed the honour of their loved ones (daughters) to protect the stranger under their roof (De Vaux, 1973:10).

Despite the displays of hospitality towards strangers, they were at times vulnerable to assault and exploitation within their host communities. The Lord God sought to ensure the safety of strangers and aliens in the land of Israel (Ex. 20:10; Lev. 25:6; Lev. 19:10; 23:22) (Bromiley, 1988:561). They were to remember that they were once sojourners in the Land of Egypt and not perpetuate the servitude and abuse they had experienced.

2.12.1. Equity

Prior to entering the Promised Land, the Lord God established a single law to govern both Israel and “strangers”. According to Numbers 15:16, God commanded the nation of Israel to treat foreigners the same as the people of the promise. The “stranger” did not refer to a temporary traveller, but someone who came to settle in the community of Israel. The root word used here means “to settle”, mainly pertaining to people who settled in the community of Israel. God’s law towards the foreigners ensured that they received the same protection as the people of God and were not to be discrimination against because of their nationality. Israel had the social obligation to treat anyone who sought protection on its home soil equally, regardless of ethnicity (Riggans, 1983:120). This passage presents the missiological role that Israel played amongst the people around them and the encompassing plan of salvation that God has for the lost world.

Roy (2009) argues that social justice is best understood from the light of the Word of God, because the God of the Bible is a just God who loves justice and hates injustice. He expects His people to act likewise and sought to involve the people of the Covenant people in creating an environment of justice that would enable the blessings promised to Abraham to reach the whole world (Roy, 2009:5, 8). Acting unjustly would be fighting against God’s nature. Judges had to act justly to every individual, including the foreigner, knowing that judgement belonged to God (Deut. 1:17b). The ideals of equality and non-discrimination among people gained its full manifestation in Christ Jesus. Paul reminded the Galatians, in his letter to them, about the equal status enjoyed in Christ: “There is neither Jew nor Greek...all are one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28).

2.12.2. No Oppressive Acts

The law of God forbade Israel to engage in oppressive acts against foreigners. There may have been a real temptation to oppress especially aliens, because they there was no one to defend their cause. The Torah, however, prohibited Israel from committing such sin: “Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were stranger in the land

of Egypt (Ex. 23:9). It is apparent that Israel oppression in the land of Egypt served as a valuable lesson to develop compassion for those who would come to take refuge in their Land. The phrase “heart of a stranger” indicates the recognition of a shared experience of displacement that had to invoke empathy with a stranger, having also been strangers in Egypt.

Cole (1973:177) clarifies that “love for the resident alien is not based on mere humanitarianism, but on a fellow-feeling which comes from a deep personal experience of God’s saving grace, when in a like situation”. This verse is in a way a repetition of Exodus 22:21, whereby the Lord was emphasising the importance of justice toward the foreigner (Ex. 23:9). The Bible depicts God as the Father to the oppressed, who listened to the cry of “children in Egypt and came to his rescue” (Ex. 3:9). He promises swift judgment to those who commit such sin (Mal. 3:5). It is, therefore, the duty of a child of God to show sympathy to the oppressed.

2.12.3. Place of Refuge

In this post-modern society the term “asylum” refers to people who go to another country seeking protection – “a secure place of refuge, shelter or retreat” and “inviolable shelter; refuge, protection”.² Historically, asylum also describes an institution for the mentally ill or destitute. Although the Bible does not condone criminality, it does make provision for the protection of anyone unintentionally commits a crime. God made a provision for asylum seekers, reflected in passages like Numbers 35:6 that states “among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites there shall be six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and to them ye shall add forty and two cities”. Welcoming asylum seekers was common practice in the tribal society in Biblical times. The passage in the book of Numbers makes mention of forty-two cities of refuge for anyone who may commit such crime (Num. 35:6; Josh. 20). These places were built among the cities of the Levites. People who committed manslaughter, regardless of the circumstances leading thereto, could take refuge in the nearest of these cities. This law applied to both the inhabitants of the land and strangers living in Israel.

2.12.4. Food Security

The Israelites were instructed to bring a tithe for their total harvest at the end of every three years. This would be used to help relief the plight of the Levite, the stranger and the disadvantaged. It was a duty that bore the blessing of the Lord in all the work of their hands (Deut. 14:28-29), demonstrating once again how the interests of the poor and the needy are close to God’s heart (cf. Deut. 24:15; Prov. 22:23), as was also clear from Jesus Christ’s ministry on earth. He did not only teach with words, but also with deeds. He lived among the

² Oxford English Dictionary 2015

people and provided sustenance to those in need. While doing so, by e.g. multiplying bread to feed the five thousand, He involved them in the process of aiding the needy (Luke 9:13, 16). As Yahannan (2004:117-118) states:

The example of ministry carries all throughout the Bible. Look back through the Old Testament and you will see a strong emphasis placed on compassion towards the needy and social justice for the downtrodden and poor. God demanded the care and protection of all those who were oppressed...and some of the most terrible judgment fell upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for the way that they exploited the poor and needy.

This premise is also part of the Lord's Prayer after all, viz.: "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt. 6:11). From the divine perspective, food for the body is as important as spiritual nourishment. Man has the responsibility to look after the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. In this the church of God often tends to ignore this basic need and focuses more on the needs of the soul. Christians have the responsibility to support the hungry and thus the Bible provides harvesting guidelines to support the defenceless, the poor and the displaced that they may not go hungry. One such example is Deuteronomy 24:19: "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, though shalt not go again to fetch it". This way the poor could collect the leftover sheaves in the field, ensuring that no one would die of hunger. Deuteronomy 24:20 repeats the same guidelines for the harvest of the olive tree and refers to the same disadvantaged members of society as earlier in the passage – the stranger, the fatherless and the widow – the farmer is forbidden from going over the boughs again.

The church has the responsibility to develop a theology that provides for the hungry, thus following the footsteps of Jesus. A ministry that neglects the physical needs is incomplete. Jesus speaks of the reward to whoever would give a cup of water to the defenceless, the "little ones" (Matt. 10:42). Another theory is that these "little ones" refer to disciples of Jesus who do not hold any position (Mounce, 1991:99). Jesus deems hospitality to needy proclaimers of the Words equal to hospitality to Jesus and God Himself. Such hospitality also needs to be shown to the oppressed and marginalised in society, as victims of persecution (cf. Matt. 25:31-40) (Mounce, 1991:99; Vena, 2006:144-145).

2.12.5. Fair Labour Practices

Work was an important activity that God gave Adam as part of the cultural mandate. He was to work and look after the land the Lord gave man. Work was not instituted as a result of the curse, but as part of the command to subdue creation that God entrusted to him as the crown of creation. However, with the fall into sin man's life work became an exercise in toil and labour.

Man has to struggle to earn a living. The nation of Israel experienced oppressive labour in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh's endeavour to break down the elect nation of Israel with harsh labour conditions. In Deuteronomy 24:14 God's Word reminds the employee not to oppress a poor servant, the needy and the strangers living in the country.

In many developing countries labour has become a means of exploitation to feed man's greed, in which the rights and dignity of the defenceless are abused. Man's skills are exchanged for a meagre salary that is not enough to make a living. Increasingly adverse economic conditions are among the key factors leading to displacement in the developing nations. A considerable number of people illegally migrate to other countries, in search for employment, to provide for families left behind in their country of origin. This reality is not foreign to communities living in the SADAC region (Makhema, 2009:34; Rutherford, 2011:1303-1319; Muanamoha *et al.*, 2010:888-889).

Employment has another important dimension, besides provision for self and the meaningful other, it helps restore human dignity. It enables individuals to contribute to the community and also become the fruitful being God designed man to be. Having been made in the image of God, man is also to follow the example of his Creator in his work. Tlhagale (1993:10) points out that "it is through work that God's image lights up the faces of human beings and engraves itself on the nature of human beings..."

2.12.6. Peace and Justice

God's law also made provision for creating an environment of peace and justice for the vulnerable. God sent the prophet Jeremiah to deliver a message of rebuke to the king of Judah, because of the social injustices taking place in his realm (cf. Jer. 22:1-5). The social system was abusing the rights of the vulnerable, namely the stranger, the fatherless and the widow by allowing violence and oppression to occur. The message offered two conditional promises: The Lord would bring prosperity if the vulnerable were protected from violence and justice was done for the defenceless. A generation of prosperous kings would rule over Judah if the king obeyed; however, if the rights of the vulnerable and defenceless were disregarded, desolation would come over Judah.

The Lord's concern for the socially vulnerable is also demonstrated in the fact that He swears by His name. Harrison (1973:116-117) explains that God swears by His name to avow His rights as the originator of the covenant relationship. Because God is righteous, He demands that the nation called by His name reflect this concern. This act also appears elsewhere in the Bible, in Genesis 22:16, Isaiah 45:23, Hebrews 6:13-18, etc. It forms part of His demand for man to be

holy, because He is holy (Lev. 20:26; Jer. 22:5). God's mandate to care for the vulnerable also extends to the church as a people set aside for God.

2.13. THE CHURCH IN MISSIO DEI

The church is a body of believers conceived by God, a community of people called for a purpose. The church is called to preach the Gospel, display an example of godly life and speak against the evils of society (Bloomquist, 2012:62-63, 65). The word *ekklesia* (out from and to) refers to people called out from the world to God; i.e. to form part of God's kingdom (Helps Word-Studies, 2011). Roberts (1972) explains that the word "church" is used to translate the Greek word *ekklesia* and comes from the Greek adjective *kuriakos* which means "that which is the Lord's" (Roberts, 1972:28), possibly finding its root in the Jewish synagogue. The church has to constantly remember its task to fulfil God's mission through Christ (Duraisingh, 2010:8). The term church appears twice in the Gospel of Matthew, of which the first is Jesus' reference in Matthew 16:18 to the protection and present existence of the church on earth. He would establish His church and the gates of hell would never prevail against it (Matt.16:18). Then He mentions it in relation to issues of conflict management in the church (cf. Matt. 18:17). It is notable in both cases that the Lord Jesus Christ loves the church and cares for its safety. He provides directives to ensure that anything that would threaten its existence be removed. The church is an inseparable part of Jesus Christ; it is the body of which Christ is the Head (Eph. 5:23). He protects and prepares it that it may be pure and blameless before the Father (Eph. 5:27). His death on the cross was a demonstration of His love for the church and His resurrection brought hope to the body of Christ (1 Cor. 15:57). It is to this body that Jesus entrusted the continuation of the *missio Dei*; to witness about him to the world outside the communion with God. Wright (2006:66) confirms this as follows:

"Jesus entrusted to the church a mission that is directly rooted in his own identity, passion and victory as the crucified and risen Messiah. Jesus immediately followed this text with the words, 'You are witnesses'-a mandate repeated in Acts 1:8, 'you will be my witness'. It is almost certain that Luke intends us to hear in this an echo of the same words spoken by YHWH to Israel in Isaiah 43:10-12: 'You are my witness'."

Bevans (2007:5, 10, 18) goes beyond Martin Luther's assertion that the church is "a creation of the Holy Spirit" and assigns the church to the work of the entire Trinity in the sense that the Spirit invites the church to mission, equips and challenges the church to be involved in missions. The Trinity is revealed as a "community" or *koinonia* that acts together in expressing its love of God to the world. The Spirit created the church and is sent for the *missio Dei*. Hjalmarson

(2013:95-96) concurs with this view in pointing out that there is both oneness and agreement in sending within the Triune God that has to be reflected in the church and be anchored in the love of God.

The church should act as a reservoir of God's love that it channels to the world in horizontal relationships. If the church participates in missions apart from the sender, its message and action becomes meaningless and counterproductive as it no longer reflects the heart of the Sender - which is God. The church has to guard against the limited concept of mission of the sending of missionaries across oceans to Africa. Mission must be conducted in such a way that a distinction can no longer be made between the "sending church" and "receiving church". Mission is doing what God does, reflected in His nature. The church's mission should be understood in terms of exerting influence where it is found; it has to display the love of God to its inner community and the surrounding community, by providing the Good News that meets spiritual and physical needs of the people out of touch with the God of the Bible.

As long as the church is in communion with the Triune God and actively participate in the *missio Dei*, it will guarantee its presence on earth. Wright (2006:66-67) states it clear that "the church's mission flows from the identity of God and his Christ. When you know who God is, when you know who Jesus is, mission is the unavoidable outcome". Mission emanates from God and is to be planned and executed by the church.

The Pentecost experience in Acts 1:8 was the fulfilment of God's promise, made through the prophetic message of Joel, regarding the last days (Joel 2:28-30). The outpouring of the Spirit was manifested through the speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*), signalling God's new era of reaching the nations by breaking language and cultural barriers. The Pentecost experience was a reverse of the curse of the Tower of Babel (Bruce, 1988:59) in Genesis 11, here language served to bring confusion and dispersion to an endeavour in which man sought to make a name for himself apart from God, instead of exalting the Creator (Gen. 11:4). On the day of Pentecost tongues are symbolic of God's work to reunite all nations, by bringing mutual understanding through the power of language.

Acts 1:8 recounts Jesus' promise to His disciples that God would empower them, through the Holy Spirit, to spread the Good News of salvation from Jerusalem to the rest of the world in fulfilment of the *missio Dei* embedded in the Great Commission. From the apostolic age to the present, the church has been privileged to take part in the *missio Dei* through the sharing of the Good News and discipleship (Matt. 28:18-20). Believers are required to be witnesses of Christ, in all spheres of life, in order to make converts for the Kingdom of Christ.

God in His wisdom has committed Himself to work part and parcel with the church, despite its weaknesses. Dodds (2001:217) refers to the words of Sanders (1998) that in His wisdom, God has made a “foolish” decision to risk His mission by entrusting it upon the church, despite its weakness, to become a tool of reconciliation. The church’s effectiveness as the body of Christ is closely correlated to the empowering and supervision of the Holy Spirit, in that the Holy Spirit endows the body of Christ with spiritual gifts that it may function as a living organism. The apostle Paul dedicates the entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 12 to spiritual gifts, their function and indispensability for the life of the church as the body. The provision of the gifts of the Spirit also has the important purpose of equipping Church leaders to build believers to the measure of Christ (Eph. 4:11-12). The church has the social responsibility to permeate its community with good deeds and the message of healing and hope. Saracco (2011:271) elaborates as follows:

“As a community of faith, the church is made up of those who have experienced freedom in their lives through the sacrifice of the Crucified One, and they follow him. ‘It is made up of the poor who are blessed, the sick who are cured, the captives who are freed and the sinners who are justified.’ Built by the Word, this community lives in the power of the Spirit and places its hope in the action of the Risen One. It is a community of new creatures on the way to the fulfilment of times when the victorious Christ will destroy every principality and power forever and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord” (Phil. 2:11).

From the context of liberal democracy in South Africa, Vorster (2007:256) points out that the church as community of people called out for a purpose to provide service in the Kingdom of God, in obedience to God, acting according to the principles found in the Ten Commandments. The church is to do so with the understanding that the church’s “spiritualism” should not be equated to a “holiness”, which separates it from the world as “spiritual” and “sacred”, but in renewing the society in the light of Kingdom principles (Vorster, 2007:257). Vorster (2007:257) adds that such separation creates a vacuum in the society that is eventually filled by “secular ideas”. The church has to be an example of love, stewardship, self-denial and obedience to God, according to Vorster (2007:258-259), engaged in a preaching that elevates Christ as hope to the troubled community. The church has to restore its holiness by becoming a strong voice in opposing mistakes of the past of neglect to the poor, the downtrodden and the sick (Vorster, 2007:256-258).

2.14. SUMMARY

This chapter focuses on the *missio Dei*, where God is depicted as actively involved in His creation. God's mission involves all members of the Triune God in mission to the World, each in a special way. The Father loves the World, the Son agrees to be sent and the Holy Spirit who empowers the Son and is continuously recreating creation to be in harmony with God the Father. The mission of the church is embedded in the *missio Dei* and it centres on the church's willingness to participate in the work God is already doing in the world. Without such obedience, the church's missionary agendas become meaningless.

The second section of the chapter presents, from a Biblical perspective, the *missio Dei* as it relates to the displaced, refugees and strangers. Starting with the first humans, Adam and Eve, the Bible portrays how disobedience led to their expulsion from the place of fellowship with God in the Garden of Eden. The fall into sin or disobedience to God led to man's continual flight from danger in life. The remaining part of the chapter describes God's provision for refugees and strangers, reflecting His deep regard for their predicament.

Chapter 3 conveys the local situation at the Rhulani refugee settlement, in order to establish the psychosocial factors that affect refugees.

CHAPTER 3 REFUGEES: THE LOCAL SITUATION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 has endeavoured to establish the foundation for the *missio Dei* from the perspective of the foreignness of individuals and refugees. In it the *Trinitatis Dei* has revealed itself as involved in the *missio Dei*, with particular focus on the marginalised of society, where the Father sends the Son and the Son obeys willingly to come into the world to restore its fellowship with the Creator under the empowerment of the Holy Spirit who, in a unique way, recreates and restores order in the world and enables the church to partake in God's *missio Dei*. Chapter 3 describes the local situation in the Rhulani refugee settlement. The first segment of this chapter provides a theoretical framework of issues around human dignity and rights. It then analyses these fundamental rights in the light of Biblical principles of human dignity, with particular reference to the refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement.

Sections of this chapter detail the preliminary interviews with the refugees, including the proper ethical guidelines for conducting interviews as stipulated by the NWU set out under 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.6.3, 5.6.4.

3.2. DEFINITION OF REFUGEE

Forced displacement has been a problem throughout the history of mankind, but over time it has taken on new patterns due to the prevailing context and thus demands a new approach in the 21st century. A basic definition of a refugee is that of a person who has been forced to leave his place of origin, due to circumstances that pose a threat to his life. The causes of displacement may be human conflict-generated acts or nature-related disaster, leading to economic upheavals. Article 1a(2) of a document by The Convention on Refugees defines a refugee as a person with a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion..." (UNHCR, 2010:14). The second paragraph of Article 1 qualifies a refugee as any person who is forced to abandon his country or nationality due to external aggression, foreign domination or events that seriously disturb public order thus threatening the lives of individual(s). Refugees are covered by the right to non-refoulment, meaning that refugees or asylum seekers are not to be returned to the areas where their lives and freedom would be threatened (Lauterpacht & Bethlehem, 2001:171). Although the scope of this definition had in mind the "events occurring before 1 January 1951",

the letter of the laws drafted by the convention on refugees remains applicable to today's refugee context.

3.3. THE SITUATION OF BEING A REFUGEE

Refugees are in many cases people whose rights have been abused and dignity violated by people to whom God entrusted authority, most often in the country of origin and in other cases in the receiving countries. This flight from their country of origin deprive refugees of important rights such as the right to belong to a country, a home, have family and develop personal potential. Purkey (2015:1) explains as follows:

It is when an individual is no longer able to function as a moral or political agent, to speak and be heard, to enjoy security and freedom, and to experience the mutual recognition that comes from citizenship and membership in a community that there is a breakdown in the system of human rights and this point is reached when people are forced from their homes and their communities.

Human dignity is not easily definable, yet it is glaring in its absence or when violated (Hogan & D'arcy, 2003:78; Lynch, 2009:1). The Collins Cobuild Dictionary (2006) defines dignity as the sense that one has of being important, valuable and deserving respect and Du Plessis (2010:582) describes it as:

The state of worthiness of any given human being, or in a general sense as the state of worthiness assigned to human beings as such. 'Human rights' would then constitute the demands or claims that can be made as a consequence of being worthy.

Negt (2003:31-32) defines man's dignity on the grounds of the pricelessness of human beings, stating that everything has a price and can be replaced for an equivalent item, but man's value is far above other things in the world. Man is irreplaceable. This assertion provides a concept of what dignity entails. Man is exalted above any price, therefore, he has no equivalent value; man has dignity. Moltman (1984: x) maintains that human dignity is, "a given, shared reality... a source of all moral principles." Without human rights human dignity will fail to realise in practical forms. In addition Newlands (2006:4) points out that human rights "can inspire action to diminish man's inhumanity to man, to discourage the torture, genocide and other manifest evils which remain a continuing and endemic feature of human society" (Newlands, 2006:4). The views stated above cement the fact that man is an important being whose value cannot be compared to any other amongst created matter.

The brutality and human carnage of the great world war (Clayton, 2011:26-38) and the unconceivable and indelible memories of war atrocities of the Rwandan genocide are some of the indicators of how man can become extremely self-destructive, thus compromising the dignity of his fellow man (Foden, 2014:45). The recent plight of asylum seekers travelling by boat to Australia and many of them drowning on the way constitute an example of involuntary displacement that is caused by violation of fundamental rights (Glendenning, 2015:28; Purkey, 2015:3). Such cases also include the recent influx of refugees from Africa to Europe and of many dying in the Mediterranean Sea, a situation that has led some to label them “the boat people” (Der Spiegel, 2014; The Economist, 2015). Man’s tendency to act unjustly against his fellow human being has led to the formulation of guidelines to safeguard the basic needs of people, striving for an ideal world in which all humans collectively seek to fight for the dignity of man and life in its totality.

Since God’s law in Scripture transcends human laws, human rights are an endorsement of the divine mandate found in His written Word regarding the preservation of human dignity in the world. Bezuidenhout (1996:2) points to the transcendence of God’s law by averring that rights are given to men “by virtue of their human and inherent dignity and not by virtue of human law of custom”. They are a means towards attaining human dignity (Bezuidenhout, 1996:2).

Genesis 3 demonstrates God’s concern for human dignity. When Adam and Eve realised their nakedness and vulnerability that is “disarmed” (Henry, 1991:21) as a result of sin, they hid from God and attempted themselves to restore their lost dignity by wearing fig leaves (Gen. 3:7) (Hocking, 1989:104). It did not, however, provide a permanent solution to the problem of dignity. They were ashamed and “degraded from their dignity” (Henry Mathews, 1991:21), but God clothed them with animal skins as a visible sign of care and to address to their lost dignity (Gen. 3:21). It was also symbolic of the redress of sin in that the shedding of animal blood, to fashion garments for Adam and Eve, foreshadowed the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on Calvary to restore man’s dignity through reconciliation with the Creator (Hocking, 1989:104). Christ’s degradation on the cross was the substitutionary atonement to restore man’s lost dignity, as a result of sin (Eph. 2:16; Phil. 2:5-8).

The psalmist speaks of how man was made a little lower than the Creator and God crowned him with glory and honour, giving him dominion over creation (Psalm 8). The message of this Psalm correlates with Hebrews 2:7, which describes how has been crowned with God’s glory. The Greek word employed here, *doxa*, literally and figuratively means “dignity or “worship”. It confirms God’s creation of man with inner dignity; i.e. God crowned Adam and Eve with dignity. Walwoord and Zuck (1985:797) point out that man’s creation endowed him with power and dignity and Paul reminds the church in Corinth about the elevated position God has given

redeemed man over creation. Man will judge angels in God's courtroom (1 Cor. 6:3). The above makes it clear that God is concerned with the dignity of all human beings, both in this present age and in the life to come. This should urge the church to be responsible in matters of human rights for the well-being of man and especially the marginalised of society in the present age and in preparation of the fullness of God's plan of redemption in the age to come.

Human dignity is a subject Calvin also raised. Although Calvin did not refer to the terms *human dignity* or *human rights* as they are understood in a post-modern world, he laid the foundation for the development of Christian ethics on human dignity and human rights, with emphasis on the *dignitas* of human beings as the *imago Dei* (Vorster, 2010:200-201, 205). Calvin points back to "the splendour" of man's original state before it was tainted by sin, in the primeval period, by his Biblical ancestors - Adam and Eve (Partee, 1977:102). He contrasts man's original state of "glory" with the sad condition that brought man's corrupted nature (Calvin, 1994:86). The first Adam brought death through his disobedience of God's command, whereas in Christ Jesus, the second Adam, man recovers the gift of life (Rom. 5:12). Yet even in his fallen state, man has the ability and the responsibility to pursue justice. Calvin (1994:87) further states the following in this regard:

"But it is not God's will that we should forget the primaveral dignity he gave to Adam and Eve; it may well spur us on to follow goodness and justice. We cannot think of our origins, or the end for which we were created, without having the urge to think about eternal life and to seek the kingdom of God."

Vorster (2010:407) further describes the relationship of human dignity as follows:

"In the creation narratives human beings as well as the natural environment derive their dignity from God who is the Origin and Sustainer of all life. God brought life into a state of total inhabitability by separating the chaotic and unfriendly elements from the friendly elements to create an environment in which humans and nature can live in peace and harmony."

The image of God is the key factor in bringing dignity to man through the *Imago Dei*. Man has the *imago Dei* and ranks above all creation, created for "incorruption" and to live eternally with God (Waldron, 2010:225). The concept of the *missio Dei* should reflect that humanity in a general sense and Christians in a special way have the responsibility to send the message of hope to the world and to the marginalised of society in particular. The nature of man, the *imago Dei*, compels man to bring the message of healing and salvation to fellow humans and to extend it to the defenceless and marginalised in society. God's missiological plan includes

man's right to fellowship with the true God and the right to live a dignified life, as part of the universal family of God. It is in the context of the *imago Dei* that the incarnate Christ interacted with the marginalised of the world as part of the *missio Dei*.

Taking it from the context of the refugees at Rhulani settlement, the effects of war and their experiences of witnessing brutal killing violated essential rights by defiling the *imago Dei*. Based on this assertion, it is essential to align the message of human rights to God's sacred laws for the preservation of His image bestowed on man. It makes the church's involvement in matters regarding human plight imperative, particular in terms of the refugees in the world.

The review of human rights and dignity in the context of refugees and socially alienated people also raises the to explore the human rights and refugee phenomenon within the context of the South African Constitution.

3.4. DIGNITY AND THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES IN SOUTH AFRICA

A constitution of any country has to meaningful meet the aspirations of its people. The BBC (2005) reported that "South Africa's post-apartheid constitution has been hailed as one of the best models, because in addition to civil and political rights it guarantees social and economic rights such as health care and education". It is only with the determination to obey and respect the law that real transformation will become a reality in every segment of society, including the refugees living within its borders. The Refugee Act (130 of 1998) states in its preamble the following:

Whereas the Republic of South Africa has acceded to the 1951 Convention Relating to Status of Refugees, the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa as well as other human rights instruments, and has in so doing, assumed certain obligations to receive and treat in its territory refugees in accordance with the standards and principles established in international law.

Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights in South Africa (The constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996) endorses the following rights pertinent to this research: the right to life, freedom and right to property (11); protection of human inherent dignity (Sec. 10); the right to freedom and security of individuals (Sec. 11); the right to residence Physical and psychological well-being (Sec. 12.1, 12.2), and the right to a safe environment (Sec. 24). These are some of the basic rights that are applicable to all people residing in this country, regardless of their social status. They are

commendable laws for human dignity and if put into practice will contribute towards the betterment of human life. The formulation of such laws necessitates the education of all citizens about the rights of individuals as well as of the refugees and displaced. As Ruston (2004:19) asserts that “man’s awareness of his rights must inevitably lead him to the recognition of his duties of implementing those rights for they are the expression of a man’s personal dignity.”

The laws outlined above make vital provision for the protection of human dignity; the equality of every person before the law and the advancement of human right interests in South Africa. They also include important basic human rights such as healthcare, food and water. Fundamental human rights are also embedded in Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 194 (UDHR, 2015), which are also applicable to refugees and all individuals that form part of the international community.

These laws concur with laws enshrined in the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR, 1986). The adoption of the ACHPR reflects the seriousness of African nations towards advancing freedom, justice, equity and dignity for the development of the people of the continent. The laws (Art. 12:1-5) protect refugees against torture; ensures the right to leave and return to one’s country; and the right to receive asylum in another country, if threatened, on the condition to abide by the laws of the receiving country (ACHPR,1986).

Having formulated a theoretical framework for human rights and human dignity, according to Christian and conventional laws, the following section takes a look at the critical matters faced by the community of displaced in the Rhulani refugee settlement.

3.5. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RHULANI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

3.5.1. The Physical Conditions

The arrival of refugees at the Rhulani settlement was a long time in coming and started, according to witnesses from among the refugees, in 1986. It was a forced displacement, brought about by the brutal civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO that saw approximately a hundred thousand Mozambicans killed. Close to one million people perished as an indirect result of the war due to starvation, malnutrition and severe health consequences in Mozambique (Barre & Domingues, 2003:158, 757-758). The refugees initially camped at a nearby village, by the name of Xipurapureni, which was but one point of arrival amongst many for refugees from Mozambique. The main camp was located at Makuleke Village. Xipurapureni formerly served as camp for government workers from the Department of Public Works and, according to persons interviewed³, the conditions at the time of arrival were terrible. The

³ Interview with Makamo (15/05/2015), Sidumo (25/08/2015) and Shitlhango (12/05/2013)

shelters for the refugees were made of plastic and they were not permitted to build permanent homes, given that it was a temporary arrangement. A year later, in 1987, the displaced from Mozambique were instructed to move to the Rhulani settlement, where they were finally allowed to build houses. A number of other refugees remained at Xipurarpureni, even after the instruction to relocate to Rhulani (Makamo, 2015).

The name “Rhulani” derive from a Tsonga term that means “be in peace”. This was the name the late Rev. Khoza, who aided the refugees during their recovery from the trauma they suffered, baptised the settlement and was gladly accepted by the community of refugees. The reverend opted for this name because the refugees were more orderly than those in other areas. The reverend left an indelible mark on the lives of the displaced through the spiritual and physical support he gave to displaced communities in many parts of South Africa, particularly the then Gazankulu area (a former homeland up to 1994).

People lived in difficult conditions upon arrival at the camp and some did not even have proper shelter. Many had to find sheltered under trees and were exposed to dire weather conditions, until assistance arrived; this having already faced incredible hardship on their long journey, on foot, through the Kruger National Park⁴. Some families and friends had to watch helplessly as a loved one was mauled by beasts and many others didn’t know the whereabouts of family members from whom they were separated during the abrupt exodus from zones affected by the civil war.

The Rhulani settlement is a vivid impersonation of poverty and offers few resources for a dignified living. According to Alcock (1997:4, 6), “poverty is not just a state of affairs; it is an *unacceptable* state of affairs” that leads to “social exclusion”. He further points out that it is something that needs to be addressed by all people. Poverty deprives individuals and communities of their dignity, physical nourishment, shelter and beauty; thus affecting individuals both spiritually and physically (Williams, 1998:3).

There are a number of adverse factors that makes life difficult for former refugees dwelling at Rhulani refugee settlement as well as the scores of other refugees using the settlement as a connecting point to the supposedly “greener pastures” of the urban areas. The settlement consists of approximately 200 homes, most of which built of mud bricks and thatched roofs. The terrain in the surrounding area is untidy and piles of waste are found on the periphery of the settlement. Sanitation infrastructure is non-existent and both young and old are forced to relieve themselves in the surrounding bushes, resulting in the odour of human waste

⁴ Interview with Makamo (15/05/2013) and Jonathan Chauke (24/08/2015)

permeating the settlement. Flies descend on food and the faces of young children in summer, posing a real health risk to the residents. Research conducted in a Mozambican refugee camp in Malawi on the environmental impact on the health of refugees and the displaced illustrated the detrimental effects of poor sanitation on health. Unsanitary latrines and living in the proximity of animals were identified as the triggers for diseases, such as diarrhoea, in children in the Nyamithuthu camp in Malawi. Research also showed that families with better accommodation, more buckets to keep water and latrines were less affected by the diarrhoea pandemic in the camp (Roberts *et al.*, 2001:284-285).

Refugees have now been living in the settlement for more than 14 years and while access to water has improved, with pipes having been installed in strategic areas of the camp, the problem of lighting remains a challenge with only a single lamppost to illuminate the whole settlement. Most houses remain in poor condition, although some have opted to demolish their cracking mud houses and build shacks.

In human terms, adequate housing creates an environment that provides both psychological and psychosocial support to individuals and living conditions that are not hazardous to health. In the past year a huge substation power station was built close to the settlement, increasing the potential health risks to the community in the settlement. The environmental conditions of this area are especially important, because of the proximity of the settlement to surrounding communities and an outbreak of cholera would also create health problems for the surrounding villages. A healthy environment promotes the well-being and dignity of refugees. The houses have no electrical lighting, although one huge shaft of electricity has been installed at reasonable distance to provide light to the settlement at night and the department of water affairs have installed a few water taps to supply water to this community.

The houses are built in a disorderly fashion, with very little privacy. Starting in 2000 a new wave of refugees, mainly economic refugees from the neighbouring Zimbabwe, have used the settlement as a temporary stopover before moving on to urban areas in search of employment (Idemudia *et al.*, 2013:18). They sleep and hide in the surrounding trees and bushes, often going for weeks without washing and adequate food.

Groups of refugees stand each morning along the main road waiting for piece jobs. Residents of the township and surrounding villages collect refugees to work in their houses at an exploitative day wage that barely lasts a day. The majority of refugees from Zimbabwe stay outside the settlement for a couple of days to gather the requisite transport fare to the cities, mainly in the Gauteng province, seeking employment.

The settlement is, however, increasingly becoming uninhabitable, because of growing health hazards and overcrowding in certain areas; it diminishes the dignity of people living in it. The surrounding communities call the place *xidakanini*, the Tsonga word for “an extreme informal settlement”. The older generation have no choice but to adjust to these dreadful conditions, whereas the younger South African borne generation has learned to cherish the settlement as the only home they have ever had. They know very little about the painful past that brought their parents there and have in a way adopted this environment as a normal home.

3.5.2. Housing Conditions

Conversations between the researcher and the refugee community revealed the dissatisfaction with housing in the Rhulani refugee settlement. The buildings are structurally unsound and pose a real threat of collapsing, aside from the systematic erosion of these mud huts that offer less and less protections against the elements. The self-erected houses are small and offer no space for study, barely allowing average-sized families to squeeze in for a night of sleep. Although the study was not conducted in Rhulani, the circumstances are similar to those reported in Darfur. Findings pointed to poor quality of houses and financial constraints as the main causes of psychological distress. A study conducted in Kabul, Afghanistan also revealed that poor housing and air pollution can be detrimental to the psychological health of refugees (Rasmussen & Annan, 2009:1, 24-25). Research done at a Palestinian refugee camp, on the outskirts of Beirut, indicated a connection between poor housing conditions and ill-health amongst refugees (Habib *et al.*, 2006:100, 109).

Although most research focus on the mental health of refugees, it is also extremely important to shine a light on the environment in which the refugees live. All factors that influence safety and the fulfilment of basic needs as well as and how they impact on psycho-social health need to be considered (Rasmussen & Annan, 2009:23-24). Physical conditions and economic factors are amongst the key issues affecting mental health.

Adverse living conditions are also known to cause health hazards such as dampness and mould that lead to respiratory complications, headaches, infections and poor mental health. Such physical conditions may *inter alia* drastically affect children development and performance at school (Heseltine & Rosen, 2009:71-72), e.g. the difficulty of studying at candlelight.

3.5.3. Legal Status

Unlike refugee camps in other parts of the world, the Rhulani settlement did not receive enough logistical support or international aid during the previous dispensation. According to Polzer (2007:28-29), South Africa did not have well-defined refugee laws at that time and was not a

signatory of international refugee bodies; hence, Mozambican refugees remained vulnerable and were treated as “illegal aliens” under the Aliens Control Act (96 of 1991). Although laws protecting refugees are well established in the new dispensation, public servants and law enforcement don’t seem all that informed regarding the implementation of such laws. The statistics below illustrate the bias found among members of the South African Police Service (SAPS) in regard to matters related to immigrants and the crime rate in the country (Masuku, 2006:20-21). A total of 87% of the SAPS believed that undocumented immigrants were the major source of crime in the country (Crush & Tawodzera, 2011:4) and refugees were subject to numerous illicit deportations, contravening international law on refugees of war. They were economically deprived and subject to labour exploitation by employers and local communities (Polzer, 2007:32-32), living in a state of limbo for the majority of their stay in South Africa and lack of proper integration provided them little opportunity to acquire refugee status. Crush and Williams (2001:3) indicate that conditions related to Mozambican refugees prior to 1993 made them vulnerable when it came to protection, justice and basic accommodation facilities. Crush and Williams (2001:3) explain these refugees’ economic plight as follows:

“As a result of the Government’s denial that there was a refugee situation, very little international assistance was available. As such, even those settled in separate refugee settlements enjoyed only limited nutritional assistance, not the broader material assistance generally associated with such settlement patterns.”

Polzer (2007:33) agrees with Crush and Williams (2001) regarding the undefined legal status of refugees in these displaced communities as follows:

“One could say that Mozambican refugees in South Africa had the opposite problem so often lamented in the refugee literature – they never had the opportunity to develop a self-image as ‘refugees’, dependence on aid, or expectations of entitlement to rights. Rodgers has called the legal ‘recognition’ process of Mozambican refugees ‘structuring the demise of a refugee identity’. In fact, the very partial refugee identity (the right to go home, but no right to protection) imposed by the UNHCR during this period was not matched by either the state, which consistently treated Mozambicans as illegal aliens, nor by the Mozambicans themselves.”

In most cases Mozambican refugees were obliged to join the migrant labour force, working both on commercial farms and in urban areas “where their lack of documentation rendered them vulnerable to super-exploitation and abuse by employers” (Crush & Williams, 2001:3). The most common problem has been the paying of these vulnerable workers a day wage that is not commensurate to the amount of work required and below the legal wage prescribed by the

Department of Labour. Other forms of abuse include unreasonable working hours, without food or break; and withholding salaries for months, with no justifiable reason. The employer would then report his employee/s to the law to have them deported as illegal immigrants to their country of origin, without paying their due wages (Muanamoha *et al.*, 2010:894).

Many refugees in the Rhulani settlement were faced with their illegal status in South Africa. The government of the Republic, through its office of the Department of Home Affairs and the Mozambican counterpart, devised a two-pronged solution to address the refugee population. The first strategy was to repatriate those who were willing to return to their home countries (Handmaker, 1999:293; Crush & Williams, 2002:1-2). This endeavour managed to repatriate approximately 35 000 of the refugees, but the majority opted to stay for two key reasons: 1) some had lost all their belongings and were afraid to venture into an uncertain future, by returning to a country recovering from the effects of a civil war and 2) it was the only home the younger South African born generation knew and were reluctant to return to their country of origin. A number of refugees who were repatriated even made their way back to South Africa, because the prevailing conditions on the other side of the border were not yet conducive for a new life.

The second option was to regularise the papers of those who chose to remain in South Africa. This regularisation was approved in February 2000 and came to be implemented in April 2000, after a range of setbacks (cf. Regulation of Refugee's Act) (Department of Home Affairs, 2000; Refugees Act, 1998, No. 130). The Department of Home Affairs began the process of issuing permanent residence and travel documents to the displaced, which marked a new page in the lives of the displaced that enabled them to freely travel in the country, with no fear of arrest or deportation. It also facilitated their search for employment and access to basic services.

One of the visits to the Rhulani refugee settlement revealed the concern over the pending decision by local authorities to relocate them to a new area, to make room for the extension of the Malamulele business district.⁵ It has created a great deal of anxiety, because very few had the resources to start life elsewhere. Some refugees even began to question whether the visits of the researcher were connected to the process of removal and refused to be interviewed. Upon further enquiry, the researcher learned that a group of unidentified individuals had come to inspect the area in order to introduce proper roads. The residents have since then been living in fear, not knowing whether the survey of the area is connected to their possible removal to make room for industry and the possible expansion of Malamulele Town. Only a small

⁵ Conversation with refugees in the camp and interview with the target group; empirical study (30/09/2015)

percentage of the former refugee group has decided to start life elsewhere in the nearby villages, although they do return on a regular basis to visit relatives in the settlement.

3.5.4. The Psycho-social Situation

3.5.4.1. Cultural Distance and Culture Shock

Culture shock is the experience of being suddenly introduced to a drastically different new environment or the “initial adjustment to an unfamiliar environment” (Fozdar, 2009:1345-1346; Pedersen, 1995:1). Its intensity will depend on the extent of the cultural distance between people entering the new environment and the host culture. Migrants entering new cultures are faced with the challenge of assimilating into new cultures; the failure of which it leads to psychological stress in the form of uncertainty, confusion and anxiety (Kristjánsdóttir & DeTurk, 2013:196). Refugees forced to resettle in another country may experience insecurity, lack of self-esteem and loss of personal identity. These factors may trigger a grieving process that is necessary for the refugee to accommodate the loss and reorient their lives to cope within the new environment. The symptoms of culture shock may manifest as *inter alia* homesickness, criticalness of the new culture, illness and confusion. It may also be expressed as aggressiveness or disappointment (Van Tilburg *et al.*, 2005:79, 81). Culture adjustment between the sending culture and the receiving one can include isolation, projected anger and helplessness (not hopelessness) about the future (Henry, 2012:587, 595-597).

Individuals respond differently to new environments and culture shock may be mild if the cultural variables in the new environment are similar to those of the receiving environment and acculturative stress tend to be greater when there is large cultural differences with the host culture (Van Tilburg & Ad, 2005:101). The former refugees of the Rhulani refugee settlement seem to have experienced little or milder culture shock, partly because of the common language of the receiving culture (with a slight difference in accent). Having no extreme language barriers assisted them assimilation into the new environment. Over the years the local residents have come to enjoy the Tsonga accent of the refugees and have introduced it into local radio dramas. This has brought a measure of harmony between these two Tsonga-speaking groups. The younger generation has not experienced culture shock or difficulties in acculturation, having been born in South Africa. Schooling has been another contributing factor to the rapid acculturation of the younger generation. Children are more productive if they study in an environment where they feel acceptable and accommodated, but are vulnerable to “acculturative stress” if rejected or discriminated against by either teachers or their peers (Vinokurov *et al.*, 2002:426, 440). Acculturation has, however, been more challenging for the

older generation in the Rhulani settlement, whereas socialisation within the education system has made it somewhat easier for children.

3.5.4.2. Uncertain Future

The community of refugees have endeavoured to rebuild their lives in this new environment by improving their skills, language proficiency or finances in their search for employment and making a contribution to society. They have also strived to make new connections within the community of refugees and beyond the settlement. Such behaviour corresponds to other research on refugees (Yakoa & Biswasb, 2014:134, 140; Bose, 2014:153, 157). Many, however, remain uncertain about their future in this country, given the incidences of xenophobia or rumours of xenophobia from neighbouring provinces. Although the majority of these have been granted permanent residence status, there are some who are still hesitant to move elsewhere to start new life in the surrounding villages. They can't be sure that they will be welcomed into new communities and the process has been slow, despite an announcement by local chiefs that everyone was free to locate, if they wish to do so.

3.5.4.3. Raising a Family

Raising a family in the settlement has also been a stressful experience to some parents. There is a concealed feeling of unworthiness amongst former refugees that makes them regard themselves as a "second-rate" community. Although legal documentation has given refugees access to basic human needs, they are beset by fear of rejection. Educating their children has thus become a symbol of hope for a community that lost everything as a result of war. A number of interviewees spoke of how hard they work to educate their children that they may one day be made "humans", of which the Tsonga word is *vanhu*. Children have become the shining beacon of to eradicate the poverty and a way to restore their dignity within the larger community.

There has been an increase in children absent from school to roam the streets in search of food, a number which have become beggars. These young children really need to be encouraged to attend school, because without a measure of education the crime rate in the township and surrounding villages may well increase - as someone has noted.

This challenge cannot be generalised at this point; a considerable number of youngsters interviewed expressed their aspiration to be educated and relieve the poverty in their homes. Access to basic education will enable them to contribute to the development of their communities and the nation in which they now live. There is a real desire to be of relieve the hardship in their community and family. A number of children remain undocumented, despite

being born in South Africa to legally documented refugee parents. This creates all kinds of difficulties, including access to certain basic services.

The section below recounts a number of key stories of the refugees in this settlement, relating the painful struggle of twenty years marred by civil war in Mozambique that created economic catastrophe and left approximately 1.7 million displaced in the SADC region (Crush & Williams, 2001:1). Many of those who experienced the direct impact of the civil war still struggle to recover from the trauma, of which the community in the Rhulani settlement is part of the path towards healing. It will, however, take some much longer than others. Some avoid revisiting the painful past, fearing that that they may open up healing wounds. Others were willing to recount the painful story and vent deep-seated emotions, despite their reservations. These accounts were obtained over a number of visits to the refugee settlement and from general conversations with the refugees, thus the identities of individual refugees are not disclosed.

3.5.4.4. Story 1: Recounting the Painful Past

The following is a story that represents the trauma suffered by many of the displaced at the Rhulani refugee settlement (the names used for the subjects are fictitious in order to protect the privacy of the interviewee).

Tsakani (not her real name) arrived at Rhulani in 1992, having fled the war. She does not remember her age, but is between 50 and 70. She recounts her story seated on her worn out slipping mat, with her crying grandson on her lap. She said all her belongings were taken during the civil war. She was struck by an axe on the head, she said, pointing to a scar on her head. She was beaten and her bag of *swigema* (dried cassava) was taken by her assailants. She lost all her teeth in this brutal attack. She was then grabbed and forced to follow a group of rebel soldiers, she called *Matswngas*, together with her sister and daughter. They were put in a group, upon which the babies were grabbed from their mothers and killed, while they witnessed the brutality. They were later released by the soldiers and the whole group was forced to flee to South Africa. Tsakani could not eat for days, because of these traumatic experiences and her bruised mouth. She travelled from Hlengweni, Mapayi for days and the whole group slept at Chaveni, after an arduous journey, then arrived in Joni - the name commonly used by Mozambicans for South Africa.

They slept in the Kruger National Park and before they could continue their journey, they had to undergo a ritual of individual confession of *swiyila* (i.e. taboos or forbidden things committed in the past that may bring a bad outcome to the journey) that the *swikwembu* (gods) may protect them from unforeseen dangers such as mauling by dangerous animals in the Park. They

travelled in two separate groups - a group of men and one of women. Very few were killed by animals on the journey. Tsakani confessed at the end of her story that she often misses her family back home in Mozambique, especially her sister-in-law. She was living with the burden of uncertainty about their whereabouts or if they are even still alive.

Upon arrival, she lost the money intended to acquire documents that she may stay legally in South Africa. She was glad that the Department of Home Affairs assisted her and other refugees with temporary ID's. It was a relief to stay in the country, without the fear of being arrested and deported. When asked about how people treated her upon arrival, she admitted to having been well received and was glad to receive *mudende*, a social grant given to disadvantaged communities by the South African government (Polzer, 2004:5).

When asked if she could forgive her attackers, during the civil war, she said that she finds it difficult to forgive and forget, saying "I decide to keep quiet, it happened and nothing I can do about it". She still has nightmares, however, about the brutal removal of her teeth and sometimes experiences symptoms of post-traumatic stress during sleep and during the daytime. She often relives images of the abductors who tortured her, prior to her escape to South Africa.

Tsakani later moved closer to her brother in Shigalo Village in South Africa, where she died in 2012 after being run over by a local bus. Her experience reflects that of many Mozambicans in the Rhulani refugee settlement, during their forced flight to South Africa. It went along with *inter alia* uncertainty over the way, the danger of wild animals in the Kruger National Park, heavy armed forces and electrified fences (Handmaker, 2001:3; Handmaker & Singh, 2002:2).

3.5.4.5. Story 2: A struggle with Life Challenges

Joao's (not his real name) story is one example adjustment among many and represents those who rose above the challenges of being a refugee. He came to the settlement at an early age and has grown into a committed young man, determined to rise from the rubble of the painful past. He enrolled in a nearby high school and managed to complete Grade 12, but could not continue his studies due to financial constraints. He secured employment at a spare parts garage, where he received a meagre income to support his mother. Over time Joao and his mother resettled in a nearby village, leaving behind a brother and his family at the refugee camp.

A few years later, Joao's mother was accused of witchcraft. A crowd of young people marched around at night, singing hostile songs, and chased Joao and his mother from the village. The shack they lived in was destroyed by the mob. A couple of fellow refugees were targeted and chased away the same week, also accused of witchcraft. Police vans were visible in the area

day and night to monitor the situation. Joao had no choice but to return to the Rhulani settlement. His self-esteem was badly affected by this incident and to add to this frustration, he had not been paid his full salary at the spare shop for three months. Joao decided to resign, because it did not bring the income he desperately needed, and is now confined to his brother's house in the Rhulani refugee settlement. He currently has no means of income and has become a burden to his brother. He is still building up the courage to start over again.

3.5.4.6. Story 3: Emerging from Poverty

Emmanuel started a spaza shop on the outskirts of the Rhulani refugee settlement, where he used to sell basic items such as candles, matches, cooking oil and the like. He also owned a grass cutter with which he rendered services to individuals around Malamulele Township. The lawnmower broke down, because of long usage, which he then sold and began selling airtime and fruit. His persistent spirit of entrepreneurship yielded him good result over time.

He then managed to establish a number of mobile spots, where he sells fruit from local farms. It enabled him to purchase a bakkie (pick-up truck), with which he transports his stock of fresh fruit, and has employed people to work at his mobile fruit shops. Since his permanent residence permit allows him to freely move around the country, he has opted to start a better life in a nearby village and has built a better house. Emmanuel is a success story of a determined displaced person who emerged to overcome the misfortunes of the past and face the future. His story shows that most of the displaced are capable people that if given an opportunity, can become independent and look after themselves and their family.

Most of these refugees have proved to be hard workers and were forced by circumstances to abandon their places of origin. Moving to a new environment had for some time halted their industrious spirit, yet they gradually learned to deal with life's challenges. These refugees are honest people, who were functional members of society in their country of origin. Stein (1981) describes it as follows:

“The key to Kunz's model of flight is the idea of push. In the language of migration theory, it is common to think of the immigrant as pulled to his new land - attracted by opportunity and a new life. The refugee is not pulled out; he is pushed out. Given the choice, he would stay. Most refugees are not poor people. They have not failed within their homeland; almost all were functional and independent, a great many were successful, prominent, well-integrated individuals who flee because of fear of persecution.”

Informal business such as street vending, shoe repair, gardening and other menial activities are often predominant amongst foreigners given the lack of access to formal employment, due to

documentation challenges. However, such businesses are at the same time a source of income for local residents within the surrounding disadvantaged communities. Disagreement does at time arise between the two groups, when both the non-national and “illegal” immigrant claim to have started the business before a citizen moved in. Somalis in Limpopo Province are known to be outstanding street vendors. They travel from place to place, selling blankets and other basic goods in villages. South Africans have expressed concerns regarding “foreigners” stealing their business, yet many of them are unwilling to do menial work.

There is a generally and unfounded notion that foreigners are stealing jobs and that they are the main cause of crime in the community. This sentiment is not confined to South Africa; many nationals in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries have shown the same concern over foreigners, although there is no official data to prove such concerns. In a survey made in SADC countries, the majority of subjects interviewed accused foreigners of taking employment away from citizens. Crush and Pendleton (2004:2) point out the following:

“Perhaps the most significant and consistent finding is the fear – certainly not confined to Southern Africa – that migrants steal rather than create jobs. Although the majority of people in all countries see immigrants as a threat to jobs, very few have personal knowledge or experience of such an occurrence. Over 60% of respondents in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique have never heard of anyone being denied a job because it went to a foreigner; in Swaziland and Botswana the percentage drops to 34% and 50%, respectively. Even fewer people know from their own experience of someone being denied a job because it went to a foreigner. Almost 90% of respondents in all six countries have no personal experience of being denied a job because it went to a foreigner.

One particular study has revealed that worsening economic conditions in South Africa could be the main factor triggering xenophobia, where citizens tend to resent and blame foreigners for this adversity. Nationals consider it unfair to compete with foreign nationals over national resources and opportunities. They feel foreigners should remain in their country of origin and resolve its problems, rather than competing for scarce resources in the receiving country (Nyamnjoh, 2006:45; Umezurike & Isike, 2013:55).

A recent resurgence in xenophobia, in early 2015, reflects how this social evil continues to pose a threat and particularly to certain foreigners. Recent xenophobic attacks on individuals from other parts of Africa, Mozambican nationals in particular (Afrophobia), brings back painful

memories of the 2008 xenophobic⁶ attacks and the killing of Emmanuel Sithole on 8 April 2015⁷. These attacks will continue to invoke fear and terror among Mozambican refugees at Rhulani settlement and other foreigners scattered around the country. The efforts of local media and traditional leaders to educate their communities and discourage such acts (cf. 3.5.4.1) have, however, made refugees and foreigners in the rural areas relatively safer from attacks.

Despite many challenges and past trauma, not everything is gloomy in the lives of the former refugee. There are indeed stories of those who are determined to work hard to make ends meet and some have managed to obtain casual employment such as gardening, shoe making and shoe repair. Others sell new and used cloth at local markets, regularly travelling in groups to distant places such as Durban and Gauteng to restock their small businesses. They also sell food in the Malamulele shopping complex. A couple of others use their skills to make pots, boilers and buckets. Some have really managed to get established and pull themselves out of poverty, through their small businesses.

The following section describes the process of integration, as part of efforts made by the South African government (Polzer, 2004:3-4; Ngwato, 2011) and traditional chiefs in villages surrounding the Rhulani refugee settlement.

3.5.5. Community Integration

From a psychological and behavioural perspective, belonging or acceptance plays an important role in any social group. A sense of belonging or the absence thereof determines the psychological health of individuals. Individuals who are denied the need to belong to a particular group develop a feeling of isolation, alienation and loneliness. In contrast, belonging brings more fulfilment or meaningful relationships, thus attenuating the feeling of loneliness (Taormina & Gao, 2013:158; Mellor *et al.*, 2008:213-217).

A study amongst Bosnian refugees living in the United States indicated the importance of belonging and was connected with what the receiving community considered valuable and what they had prior to abandoning their homes. Their identity was affected when they lost their belongings and moving into a new environment. Belonging in a refugee situation may also be interpreted by the necessity to survive, create friendship ties, finding employment or establishing a new social network (Keyes & Kane, 2004:815-817). Refugees are often torn between belonging to multiple places or sometimes develop the empty feeling of not belonging to any

⁶ Parker, F. 2012. Xenophobia rears its head as 'war' declared in Mayfair. <http://mg.co.za/section/news-national>. Date of access: 04 Sep. 2012.

⁷ Ncube, Trevor, Mail & Guardian, 8 May 2015. <http://mg.co.za/author/trevor-ncube-author>

particular group at all. Belonging can be equated with the provision of the right for protection and dignity, access to services and basic needs by the government in order to function as individuals (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013:130).

Rhulani settlement is located in the Malamulele in the Vhembe area consisting of 14 villages that are predominantly Tsonga speaking and occupying an area of approximately 1551. 93 Km². (Wikipedia, 2015; See also 1.2). The primary language of communication in these villages is Tsonga, the language spoken by most refugees in the settlement with a slight different in accent. This has allowed many displaced people from Mozambique to intermingle with nationals and have also led to permanent relocation to nearby villages. The language element has assisted the displaced Shangaan people to acculturate with a relative ease and without upsetting the cultural elements of either cultures. Engstrom (2001:505, 507) identifies *inter alia* education, language and work as key factors in acculturation in his exploration of an American situation.

There have been different responses as to how different age groups respond to social integration in the Rhulani refugee community. The younger generation interacts with the hosting community easily, looking and behaving like them in many ways. It is difficult to differentiate them, having grown up together and use the same medium of communication. The Xitsonga/Shangaan vernacular has facilitated integration, since the accent is basically the same. Children of displaced families have a higher ability to acculturate, in comparison to their parents, and obtain in a way a better education than their parents. This situation may in the long term affect their relationship with parents, particularly in matters of worldview as they develop new associations (Aronowitz, 1984; Gonzales *et al.*, 2004).

As noted earlier, the younger generation adopted the Rhulani Refugee settlement as their only home and many have never been to their parents' country. There are some threads of identity conflict from residing in a refugee settlement, however, which creates a sense of being "second-grade citizens". Although they are born in the country, there remains a question regarding who they are and where they belong. They also live with the shame of belonging to a refugee settlement and of bearing the pain of being teased by their national counterparts in the area and at school, who consider anyone with dark skin and dressed slovenly or who is dirty as a *mzambikwa*. The word *mzambikwa* has been pejoratively used by the nationals to refer to Mozambicans or any uneducated or "uncultured" person. Refugee children also at times retaliate by hurling slurs at the offenders.

According to personal observation and conversations by the researcher, confirmed in interviews with the target group⁸, an instruction was issued by local authorities for national migrants to integrate some members of the Rhulani settlement that were resettling in the surrounding villages into these communities. In reaction to this, certain chiefs have imposed conditions to limit the disadvantaged community of former refugees from integrating in an area under his leadership; everyone is given a site to build a house provided he builds a quality house (cement houses). These conditions are not easily met by former refugees who earn a meagre income. As a result, many residing in the area under this *Nduna* have teased those on the other side of tribal boundaries of staying at *Masomalia* area (Somali's area). This is a new word for scorned areas where immigrants seeking integration have built their homes. Furthermore, even those who have managed to relocate and began the road towards integration have experienced traces of emotional and social alienation by the nationals.

Although the population of the displaced have managed to integrate with relative ease in terms of certain aspects, their accent has led to teasing by the locals. This has become a thorny issue to most of the adult population of refugees, who struggle to adapt to the local accent. Reitz and Sklar (1997:236-237, 241) relate that in terms of culture, race and the economic assimilation of immigrants the use of a foreign language (English in their research) or speaking the language of the recipient culture with a different accent was an "annoying" ethnic behaviour and one of the factors that impacted negatively on social interaction and the economic status of the immigrant. Minorities need to learn the language of the majority group in order to facilitate assimilation, which is one of the cultural stressors for which the displaced communities under study need to develop coping mechanisms.

3.5.6. Integration and Burial Process

Former refugees at another village adjacent to the refugee settlement have no access to the main graveyard and have been allocated a separate piece of land for the burial of their deceased loved ones. A number of refugees consider this a form of alienation, because they are foreigners. The cemetery at Shigalo Village is shared by nationals and former refugees, which has led to many nationals refusing to participate in the burial ceremonies of former refugees. Yet the *Ndhuna* (headman) expect former refugees to participate fully in burial services of nationals and whoever fails to do so may face certain sanctions or a monetary fine.

Physical separation, due to death, and burial form part of an unavoidable human ordeal dating back to man's fall in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:19; 5:5). As much as death often creates

⁸ Interview with the target group, Rhulani refugee settlement (30/09/2015)

devastating psychological wounds, a process of healing is required for the bereaved. Aggrieved family members battle to adjustment to the loss (Clements *et al.*, 2004:149-150). Funeral proceeding provides the opportunity for healing and is an expression of grief as they walk the path of healing and closure to (O'Rourke *et al.*, 2011:730, 733).

Healing from the loss of loved ones is also important amongst refugees. According to Englund (1988:1168), who conducted research on Mozambican refugees in Malawi, proposes *non-discursive* methods as opposed to the verbalised therapeutic approach. The core focus of his non-discursive methods for trauma management is mortuary ceremonies and spirit exorcism as key methods of healing. Although the researcher is not in full agreement with the method employed, particularly in regard to the spirit of the dead, some aspects are valid. One of these is providing logistic support to ensure mourners' spiritual and psychological "well-being". This would consist of providing materials needed in the event of the death of loved ones, particularly coffins. According to Englund (1988:1168) such measures "draw attention to poverty and insecurity as major obstacles to refugees' ability to regain their well-being". Apart from the issue of contacting the spirit of the deceased, which contradict Christian doctrine (Is. 8:19; 2 Kings 21:6), the rest of his propositions are truly valid to the Mozambican refugee community.

3.6. THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL IN A REFUGEE SITUATION

3.6.1. Acts of diakonia as Witness to Christ

Meals are a powerful tool for expressing God's love amongst people and refugees in particular. According to Chester (2011:13-22), meals were part of Jesus Christ's evangelism and discipleship strategy. He ate with outcasts and the marginalised, such as Zacchaeus. He also describes food as playing a role in both salvation and judgement (cf. Luke 1:53; 6:21, 25). Although missions cannot be confined to sharing a meal with those in need, but it should be a particular part of our love for God's people. Petersen (2001:377) states that "God has chosen us to be His hands and His feet and His eyes and His ears here on earth". By providing food to those in need, Christians partner with God in a symbolic act of friendship, intimacy and unity. Such an attitude stands in sharp contrast to the ceremonial barriers imposed by the Pharisaic faith that excluded gentiles and the poor. Meals create and enforce community. Chester (2011:121) explains as follows:

"The Lord's Supper declares the death of Jesus not just in the symbolism of bread and wine, but in the community created by the cross. We've seen time and again how meals create and reinforce community. Christ told us to take bread and wine because they form a meal that binds us together as a community."

Providing in the needs of refugees creates the opportunity to express God's love and thus opens the door for many refugees to understand their spiritual need, i.e. they become open to hearing God's will for them. According to Albinson (2001:385), refugees have lost their identity and been "stripped" of all that makes them dignified individuals. They are often very prepared to share their difficulties with someone who is willing to listen, as much as they are open to hear the Gospel. This was how Jesus reached out to the poor and the disadvantaged of His day. Helping people with their problems also requires showing compassion, by providing what is relevant to their situation and the solution found in Jesus (Taylor-Pearce, 2001:419-420). The church of Christ has an obligation to be the voice that fights for those who have their rights and dignity trampled. Purves (1989:12) asserts that compassion displays God's inner nature, revealed in Jesus Christ, and we are capable of the same as we establish a relationship with Him through Jesus.

As Purves (1989:17) says, "compassion goes beyond sympathy for those that are suffering; it means getting involved in people's life for healing and wholeness". Every instance Jesus is said to have compassion, He is found becoming involved in some kind of act or deed of love for that person. He broke religious rules by touching people with leprosy (Matt. 8:3) and He never distanced Himself from those who are in need. He also responded to people according to their specific needs. He stood steadfastly beside those on the margins of society. Purves (1989:35) adds that "compassion is not an elective in the Christian faith; it is part of its very substance and integrity. Compassion is connected to the Kingdom of God, where each member partners with another to address communal needs.

The evangelistic efforts of the church may also prove more effective by focusing on man's whole life, thus developing ways that makes it meaningful and relevant to the context (Purves, 1989:89). Christian ministry has to be one of words and in deeds. Organisations connected to the marginalised need to join forces to provide relief that people may learn the love of God.

The Xurhani Project was run by the late Rev. Khoza, who came to be called "Pastor Xurhani" for being involved with this community of refugees. According to the refugees interviewed, the term *Xurhani* (be fed or be satisfied) was coined by him and related to the feeding programmes that were run within the Rhulani settlement and other refugee arrival points in different areas of the then Gazankulu area.

The name Xurhani went beyond the semantic to become a symbol of hope and personification of God's tangible acts of *agape* love. Christian churches and religious leaders showed the love of God through practical aid to the helpless and disgruntled by the cruelties of war. It serves as vivid illustration of holistic ministry.

The New Testament Greek word for service, διακονέω, denotes being an attendant to someone. It is an activity performed by house servants to their masters. Christian counselling in the refugee context has to reflect the same level of service to those in need, in order to restore hope and life that can only be experienced with the presence of Christ in the person of the counsellor, thus bringing wholeness to them. Claerbaut (1983:17) points out that:

“Humans were created to be whole persons with physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. Deprivation in any of these dimensions has a deadening effect on the others, since all parts are interrelated and interactive. Suffering physically makes it difficult to function well psychologically. Severe emotional disabilities are sometimes translated into physical disabilities. A spiritual sterile life is often revealed in depression and low energy level.”

The message of the Gospel has to address the needs of the people in a holistic way. Bosch (1980:212) heeds this approach to mission in his emphasis on the necessity for believers to share in the daily affairs of the people, arguing as follows:

“The gospel is not intended for man’s soul only but for man as a whole, not for individual only but for society: To argue that the church has nothing to do with politics is self-deception, not to get involved in politics means, in fact, to support the political *status quo* publically or implicitly.”

The classic 1972 paper by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) pointed to the necessity of proclaiming the Gospel in association with human development, as “ministry to the whole man” or “holistic” ministry that is defined as *diakonia*. Unfortunately, some theological views have disregarded this premise, choosing to separate social intervention from proclaiming the Gospel (Nkansah-Obrempong, 2009:196) and social intervention is left to secular humanitarian efforts. A holistic intervention to aiding those in need, should be part and parcel of participation in the *missio Dei* (Nordstokke, 1999:163). In the preamble of his book, Nordstokke points out that “Christians believe that in Baptism, they are empowered by the Holy Spirit to participate in God’s mission for the healing of the world. If that is true, every church and every congregation has the basic resources for diaconal commitment” (Nordstokke, 2009:9).

In the *missio Dei*, the church is an “agent of transformation” that brings healing and reconciliation to people affected by social evils such as HIV/AIDS, violence, poverty and other afflictions that create marginalisation and ensures social justice by integrating the fight for poverty into the *missio Dei* in Africa (Nordstokke, 2009:19, 38).

The refugees repeatedly expressed their gratitude for food, clothes and medication received through church intervention (*diakonia*). They were provided with mealie-meal and soup that has come to be known as *khupukani* or *gubugani*. The religious organisations that have provided sustenance are *inter alia* the Roman Catholic Church and the Xurhani Baptist Church, as the refugees called it. There have also been valuable efforts from other independent churches. These churches often work in cooperation with various NGO's to provide food, medication and treatment. Saint Basil the Great taught that God's miraculous power manifests through medicine and the physicians who administer it (Trader, 2011:10). God is, therefore, the Healer in both natural and supernatural ways that result from prayer. Operation Hunger, the Xurhani Project, the Roman Catholic Church, the Full Gospel Church and Baptist Church are amongst the religious organisations and stakeholders that have provided aid. A number of churches and church leaders in Malamulele Township have offered diaconal assistance to the refugees on different occasions, in service to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Diakonia was expressed in the establishment of a school/crèche (Rhulani Play Centre) by various churches, individual Christians and businesses to assist offer refugee children an early learning programme. The building has also served for literacy programmes to adults. These intervention efforts were always paired with God's Word.

3.6.2. The Word of God and Prayer

The refugees were strengthened by the preaching of the Word of God and prayer sessions conducted by different churches. They recalled *inter alia* the Xurhani Baptist and the Full Gospel Church. These groups come on a regular basis to share the Word of God with them, prior to distributing food. Different stakeholders such as GIMARECO⁹ (Giyani Malamulele Regional Committee), founded by Bishop Shikwambana, from the Faith Mission Inner Fellowship groups in the settlement also contribute to this fellowship¹⁰. One of the committee's tasks is to ensure that the assistance brought to refugees is well accounted for and safe for consumption. It also verifies that monetary contributions from different organisations are properly administered.

Anderson (2010:132-133) avers that the Word of God can be a "hermeneutical moment", by means of selected stories that can relate to counselees' experiences. Distribution of food is done in a way that expresses *agape* love to the refugee, bolstered by prayers expressing God's love beforehand.

⁹ Interview with Bisho Sikwambana (28/08/2015)

¹⁰ Interview with Bisho Xikwambana (28/08/2015); Xithlango and Makamo (2013); Julius Hlungwane and Jonathan Chauke (24/08/2015)

As Anderson (2010:137) points out, prayer is a shared life with God. Jesus shared His life with God the Father during challenging moments in His earthly ministry (Luke 22:42). Prayer has a “healing praxis”, removing experiences and past trauma that continue to plague the person in the present (Anderson, 2010:145). It also has therapeutic power, as it allows those who are burdened with life to surrender their troubles to God through Jesus (Matt. 11:28).

3.7. SUMMARY

In a changing world pressed by national and regional conflicts, poverty and pain, refugees leaving their countries in search of protection is no longer a remote reality. The difficulties refugees experience within the Rhulani refugee settlement affects these displaced individuals on multiple levels. It is a situation where individuals and families have undergone the psychological and social effects of the traumas of war that have compromised their right to a normal life and dignity. The struggles in the settlement not only affect the community of refugees, but have ramifications for the lives of the receiving communities and how they interact with each other, often in the search for healing and integration into their new environment; thus creating new levels of stressors that need to be addressed.

The psychosocial barriers that the displaced community at Rhulani Settlement have encountered have created distress on various levels. The brutality of the past civil war in Mozambique that sent hundreds of people over the borders caused psychological and social wounds in need of healing. It is also in this situation where the rights and dignity of people were violated and where the church has to play a role, in the light of God’s *missio Dei*, by providing support through counselling principles that complement the mission mandate to the world. The church is motivated by the fact that the *imago Dei* in man has been compromised because of such societal evils and God is in the process of restoring creation to its wholeness, in which the church has the privilege to participate.

These stressful experiences require the establishment of counselling mechanisms that will bring healing, self-value and hope to this community. It can only be achieved by means of a missionary approach that is holistic, in which counselling as *missio Dei* is paired with the rebuilding of broken lives to develop their potential for the Kingdom of God. It is, therefore, important to examine factors that contribute to the process of healing, in order to formulate a paradigm from a Christian perspective for counselling refugees who have suffered similar experiences.

CHAPTER 4 COUNSELLING AS PARTAKING IN THE *MISSIO DEI*

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Having described the circumstances of refugees in Chapter 3 and the difficulties that have influenced the psychosocial status of the community as consequence of the civil war as well as the local situation; this chapter seeks to establish a basis for Christian counselling as part of *missio Dei*. It formulates a Biblical perspective of care to refugees and the displaced, in order to illustrate how such people may be aided to heal from their psycho-spiritual wounds. This goal is accomplished by means of a revelation-historical exegesis of selected passages from both the Old and the New Testaments that is applied to the context of refugees and displaced people.

From the early ages of man's history to the post-modern time, tragedies and situations that disrupt the normal course of life are prevalent in a world full of uncertainties. When such tragedies strike they leave behind people with painful stories, brokenness and a dysfunctional community. One Biblical example is Job who was a righteous man that encountered deep tragedy in life. He lost all his possessions, his business and employees; his children were taken from him in a short space of time; and his relationships with friends were shaken (Job 1:1-22). Painful experiences may bring both physical and psychological wounds that could last a lifetime and may require care from others to heal.

Social injustice has led to brutal wars from the earliest of times to the present. Such conflicts have in many ways caused the displacement of communities, separation of families and loved ones and disruption of normal life. This experience is very real to the people in the Southern African Development Communities region SADC. Many have suffered psychological traumas, wounds and scars that bring painful memories of civil war and ethnic conflict. Such communities and individuals need proper intervention, in form of counselling, to bring healing and to rebuild their lives to function as normal individuals again.

4.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF COUNSELLING EMBEDDED IN THE *MISSIO DEI*

Pastoral counselling or care of souls (*cura animarum*) dates back over three millennia to Israel's "wise men" (*hakhamim*) and is also connected to wisdom literature (Marrs, 2014:30). Care of souls is a key aspect of God's work as shepherd to the elected nation of Israel. The concept of "shepherd" is one of the most well-known metaphors used to reveal God's care for His people. The role of the shepherd encompasses meeting both the physical and spiritual the needs of the sheep. The shepherd provides guidance, food, protection and gathers lost sheep. He,

furthermore, tends to the psychological needs of the sheep. Golding (2006:22) indicates that the primary emotions associated with shepherds are “negatively fear” and “passively peace or well-being”.

Yahweh is the Shepherd to His people. Psalm 23 portrays His valuable traits of care as Provider for His people. Like sheep, His people will not want because He shepherds them (v. 1); they do not fear, because He is with them (v. 4a); and He brings comfort to them, through his “rod” and “staff” (v. 4b). The Lord prophesied through Jeremiah that He would provide shepherds amongst His people to tend them and they would not be afraid, terrified or lost (Jer. 23:4). Speaking in terms of vulnerable children, Hawley (2004:10) urges the church to show love for Jesus Christ, by shepherding “vulnerable lambs” and helping them to realise their purpose in life. Based on the concept of the priesthood of all believers, this responsibility of caring is entrusted to all believers (1 Pet. 2).

Counselling is also important within the context of the refugee community, because of their traumatic experiences of war. Such counselling seeks to bring healing to the people outside the church context, who may not have yet come into contact with the Gospel. True well-being is only possible when a person is reconciled with God, through Jesus Christ, and becomes a disciple that takes part in the *missio Dei* as the aim and meaning of his life. Counselling is essential, because trauma tends to prevent people from hearing the Gospel properly and freely. Counselling, embedded in the *missio Dei*, brings healing and salvation.

Although salvation is key element in the Christian faith it should not be used as a prerequisite to helping people with their problems. Counselling should be taken as an act of love that would lead people to the saving knowledge of God.

In order to accomplish that aim, counselling expands beyond church borders to address the needs of the lost who may not be reached within the normal confines of church counselling. McClure (2010:19-21) defines pastoral counselling as the bridge between theology and “concrete human experiences”, with the aim of finding ways or guidelines that will aid dealing with such experiences within the ministry context. Although pastoral counselling is more confined to the church context than “pastoral care”, it may expand beyond such borders. Following the same Biblical pattern, the church’s mission has to have a direct connection with the outside world; counselling “moves beyond the walls of the church and engages in missionary points of concentration” such as evangelism and work for justice and peace. The local church has the responsibility to bring continuity to the propagation of the Good News within the setting of the community to thereby reach every structure of society; in this particular

instance, the displaced community. In order for this to occur, the scope of care should be properly defined and every possible means should be employed to reach the unreached.

4.3. WORKING DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING

People live in a world full of challenges and unforeseen tragedies. When they occur, they disrupt the normal functioning of people and bring along stressors that affect their lives, which leads to dysfunction in their interaction with the world and society at large. Counselling can aid such people to overcome these difficulties and be healed that they become functional members in their communities. This section, therefore, seeks to provide a working definition of counselling from a Christian perspective, taking into account the psychotherapeutic perspective. Although Prochaska and Norcross (2010:3-4) define psychotherapy “as the informed and intentional application of clinical methods and interpersonal stance derived from established psychological principles for the purpose of assisting people to modify their behaviours, cognitions, emotions and/or other personal characterises”, the focus of this study is on Christian counselling, which is a vastly different approach.

Christian counselling aims at bringing change in people as they are confronted with the truth of the word of God and are guided to align their lives with God’s will. Counselling is therefore a reversal of man’s tendency to disobedience to God’s guidance as reflected in Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3) and accept God’s redirection of one’s life according to his original design. Collins (2007:4, 19) emphasises this fact as he argues that Christian counselling is about “change” and helping people who seek to change. The counsellor is a specialist who guides people through the process of change to stimulate growth that they may better their lives. Christianity is unique in that it involves prayer and the Word of God. It is characterised by love, compassion and God’s sovereignty as well as the eschatological hope of relationship with God and others, with the aim to provide or seek advice and encouragement to deal with life’s problems (Collins, 2007:4, 19).

According to Dueck and Walling (2007:154, 149), Christian or pastoral counselling is a proactive act of service to a world in need. A service that values Jesus Christ’s sacrificial death and seeks to bring justice to individuals; bringing hope and healing to people in pain within the context of God’s love expressed by the counsellor. The counsellor should not deprive counselees of help for financial reasons (Dueck & Walling, 2007:154, 149).

Hubbell (1997:57) defines Christian counselling as “helping the hurting”, when they encounter problems in life that cause emotional upheaval. If this counsellor is a Christian, it is then called a “Christian who counsels”. Although Hubbell’s (1997:57) definition sounds perfectly plausible,

counselling has to be based on Christ's teachings for it to be called Christian counselling. Hubbell (1997:57) does, however, mention an important basis for Biblical counselling, which is God's command to the Covenant people to love God (Deut. 6:4) and that such love has to be translated into love for one's neighbour (Lev. 19:18) and caring for the defenceless (strangers, widows, orphans and the poor) (Ex. 22:21ff).

The Greek word for "admonish" (*noutheteo*) also translates to "counsel" and to "verbally confront" (Mack, 1994:27-28; Marrs, 2014:31). It is a type of counselling approach purely restricted to the Bible as the only source necessary to address the counselee's problems, without the aid of psychotherapy. This is the approach the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul took, expressed with love and compassion (Matt. 9:36; Rom. 9:1-3). As previously mentioned, all suffering is the result of sin and the role of the counsellor is to confront the counselee with his/her sin in a loving way to establish his relationship with God.

Christian counselling is grounded in the Bible, which is the authoritative and complete guide to all aspects of life. Counselling need not depend on secular approaches, it is sufficient in itself to provide the solution to all troubles (Adams, 1978:24). Christian counselling needs to be informed by the pillars of reformation: the authority of Scripture, Grace and Faith (Lotter, 2001:10).

Adams (1978:94) points to the fact that the epistles were written to address many kinds of crises that emerged in the early church, some of which were individual in nature and others collective (Adams, 1978:79). Because the Bible seeks to address man's problems, it is therefore a relevant and self-sufficient tool for providing directives for counselling and caregiving. It is the responsibility of the counselee to determine the nature of the crisis situation, in the light of Scripture, in order to find a helpful solution (Adams, 1978:94).

Tan (2011:326-327), in contrast, presents an approach that sees the integration of sound psychotherapeutic techniques into Christian counselling. He further asserts that Christian counselling can be approached from various angles, but its sources always remains Scripture. His approach integrates Christian theology and a "distinctively Christian Psychology that is more substantially grounded in biblical and historical theology and ultimately in Scripture". The Biblical text should be carefully interpreted, before being applied to heal and a full range of Christian doctrines should be integrated to inform such counselling.

This research proposes a Christian counselling approach based on the principle that all good knowledge originates from God and all attempts should integrate sound tools and important insights from pertinent sciences, including psychology, in service of God's instruction to be of

aid to others. The Bible, however, remains the final authority in all respects (Marrs, 2014:31). Christian counselling provides a platform for the hurt to answer Christ's invitation for those who are "heavy laden" and His promise to give them rest (*anapausis*), i.e. refreshment (Matt. 11:28). The counsellor, as the disciple of Jesus Christ, is aware of the burdens people suffer in life and he acts in obedience to his Lord to bring people to the knowledge of God's love that help them find restoration and healing in him. Counselling has to, however, consider other important Biblical truths in the Gospel of Jesus Christ that are uplifting to the spirit of those that are discouraged or broken (cf. Luke 4:18). *Paraklesis* is the New Testament Greek word for "calling near" for help and exhortation; admonishing; encouragement; comfort; that which affords refreshment and *parakaleo* which drives this truth home occurs over 130 times in the Bible (Marrs, 2014:32). The Holy Spirit dwells inside those that seek Christian counselling to provide healing through the ever-present help of God in times of trouble (see *inter alia* Ps. 46:1).

4.4. HEALING AND CARE TERMINOLOGY

Health is an important theme in the book of Hebrews and is expressed in nouns such as "health", "healing" and "cure". Grundman (2014:555) refers to various contexts where health appears in Scripture. Health is realised as an outcome of healing or restoration (Is. 58:8; Jer. 8:22); as a result of salvation or deliverance (Ps. 42:11; 43:5; 67:2); as a result of peace that yields "completeness", "soundness or welfare" (Gen. 43:28; 2 Sam. 20:9); and as the result of healing (Prov. 3:8) (Grundmann, 2014:555). The word also serves as an important tool for healing in Scripture. In Proverbs 4:20-22 the father advises his son to listen to his words or counsel (*dabar*), because they provide healing or wholeness (*marphe*). The power of the word "to heal" is also mentioned in Proverbs 12:18 and 16:24.

One of the Old Testament terms for healing is the word *raphe* (to heal) and the participle *raphe* means "to restore to ease and comfort" (Onyiah, 2006:118-119). It also refers to "healer" or "physician". God is depicted as the healer of the covenant nation and He made Israel the promise that He would not bring upon them the diseases inflicted on Egypt, on the condition that they hear and keep God's commandments (Ex. 15:26).

Monroe and Schwab (2009:121, 123) define healing as "a divine work bringing growth or positive spiritual change to painful or distorted perceptions, experiences, habits, or emotions of a person". They further remark that the Biblical understanding of healing has to be considered in both physical and spiritual metaphorical terms (Monroe & Schwab, 2009:121, 123). The term *rapha*, for instance, is applied to heal various objects aside from human beings. It could refer to the healing of a contaminated house (Lev. 14:48); contaminated water (Ezek. 47:8), potters

vessel (Jer. 19:11) and the healing of the Lord's altar (1 Kings 18:30) or even the healing of a corporate body.

2 Chronicles 7:14 describes how God promised to heal Israel from its "wound", but only if they humbled themselves before God and repented from their wicked ways and earnestly sought His face (Monroe & Schwab, 2009:123). As they journeyed through the desert of Shur, to the Promised Land, the people of Israel ran short of water and had their hopes dashed when the water they found at Marah turned out to be bitter. God came to their rescue by healing the waters (Ex. 15:24-26). The term used here is *rapha*, which reflects God's willingness to heal His people. Monroe and Schwab (2009:122) explain that the word *rapha* denotes physical healing and also an act of restoration of "broken relationships".

Israel was compelled to establish their spiritual relationship with God by keeping His commands and this attitude paved the way for their physical healing. God is at the forefront of healing, restoring and bringing wellness. His brings healing that is holistic, showing concern for both the physical and the spiritual or the "inner healing" (Monroe & Schwab, 2009:126). Monroe and Schwab (2009:124-126) further state that:

"both the metaphorical usage of healing language in the Bible and Jesus' healing ministry point to the necessity of spiritual healing and redemption of God's people. In 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:3 we see a distinction made between the 'inner man' and the 'outer man'. According to Paul, God has given to Christians his Spirit that dwells in the inner person, and who renews the inner person even as the outer person is wasting away. Later in chapter five (v. 18-20) Paul commands believers to work for the healing and restoration of those estranged from God's love."

God heals those whose hearts are broken and the wounded (Ps. 147:3). Isaiah 53 describes the suffering Servant, Jesus Christ, as healer of man's diseases through His vicarious death on the cross. However, two dimensions of healing are considered in the passage: Christ, the Suffering Servant, heals physical disease; yet, the passage also points to a much larger scope in which Israel would be healed through the "comprehensive eschatological" fulfilment of restoration from exile (Watts, 2015:89, 92).

Meaningful Christian pastoral care needs to begin with a firm theological foundation rooted in Scripture (Anderson, 2008:104). Caregivers are to work in obedience to God's *missio Dei*, with the awareness that by helping people restore wellness and wholeness they are partaking in God's continuous work of creation in preparation for the better world in the life to come (Grudmann, 2014:560) as well as God's continuous work of recreation to address all evil

affecting present society such as wars, human displacement and suffering. Having considered God's healing, the following section will focus on how God has healed individuals forced to become fugitives.

4.5. GOD'S HEALING OF FUGITIVES AND THE DISPLACED

The analysis below explores this topic by means of the examples of David, Elijah, Elimelech and Ruth. Their selection is based on the similarities between their social circumstances and that of the refugees. They became fugitives in order to save their lives or voluntarily chose to travel to another country, as economic migrants, with the same purpose. Refugees can certainly identify with the challenges they faced and in all instances God came to them to care for and heal them. God's intervention can also inform the basis for Christian counselling to the refugees and displaced.

4.5.1. Ruth: The healing *Hesed*

This section revisits the story of Ruth with the aim of examining it from the counselling perspective. The Book of Ruth presents a story of a family in Bethlehem that became refugees and sojourners in the land of Moab, due to economic difficulties. Famine bore down on the Promised Land (Ruth 1:1). A land "flowing with milk and honey", according to God's promise in Exodus 3:8, was devastated by hunger as the result of divine judgement for the nation's sin against God (Lev. 26:19; Lev. 26:20). The family consisted of four members, the first of which was Elimelech. His name (my God is king) was a reminder of the days when the Judges ruled under the leadership of Yahweh. He travelled with his wife, Naomi (meaning amiable or pleasant one) and their two sons Mahlon and Khilion (meaning sickness and consumption respectively). Upon arrival in Moab, the two sons married two gentile women called Ruth and Orpah. The family was, however, struck by tragedy with the death of the male members of the family, which left Ruth in a vulnerable position.

A number of negative feelings grew inside the remaining family members, due to the tragic events they suffered and Naomi, in particular, was emotionally and economically bankrupt. She was in a precarious economic situation, given that her husband had sold their inheritance including the land (Ruth 4:3; 4:4). The death of Naomi's husband (Elimelech) and his sons left her traumatised and grieving for the loss (Ruth 1:3, 5). She had no one to console her in her wretched state. As Erdel (2011: 5) on his comments on seven signs of hard times points to death in the book of Ruth as man's hardest enemy and to widowhood as a life disruption that brings dispossession in terms of one's position, security and place. The lack of children in the family meant lack of posterity and hope for the preservation of their generation. Upon hearing

that the Lord had restored His people's fortunes, she returned home with Ruth (Ruth 1:6) to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest (Ruth 1:22). She experienced the pain of separating from Orpah, who chose to stay in Moab, evident in their cries of separation (Ruth 1:10, 14). She may have felt a sense of guilt and blame for returning home alone, with her dead loved ones left behind in a gentile nation and this was the consequence of disobedience to God's law for leaving the Holy Land and taking refuge in a gentile nation. She had the sense of shame and emptiness upon entering her home country emptyhanded (Ruth 1:21). Her former neighbours and members of her societal class may well have been shocked at her disturbing condition, yet at the same time the women cheerfully welcomed her home. They were moved by the situation, as they asked: "Is this Naomi?" (Ruth 1:19). Naomi revealed her pain by rejecting her name that meant "pleasant", opting instead to be called Mara (bitterness), because her spirit was filled with sorrow and she bore the scars of a painful past.

There are those who interpret this as not so much Naomi blaming God for her misfortunes, but rather trusting God with her bitterness¹¹. Phanon's (2010:33) viewpoint out that by using God's covenant name of *Shaddai* (the Almighty) she meant to say that God, who is in control of life, caused all her misfortunes would seem more credible (Gaebelein, 1992:525; Phanon, 2010:33). This is often a natural reaction of humans when faced with overwhelming hardship in life. God dealt with her "bitterly" (Ruth 1:20), which is not to say that she was casting aspersions on God. Despite being a good God by nature, He allowed great misfortune to befall her. Gould (2006:268) asserts that "unsolved grief" is often connected with spiritual issues such as "anger at God" and "emotional wounds".

There is no overt manifestation of God in the book of Ruth; instead, He worked behind the scenes to bring healing by demonstrating His love. The awareness of God's *hesed* and unchanging faithfulness brings "calmness and emotional safety" that builds trust (cf. Ps. 23:2; 117:2). He showed His care for Naomi in her broken state, through His covenantal love, *hesed* (Ruth 1:8; 2:20; 3:10). Kynes (2010:1) describes the qualities of God's *hesed* by means of a variety of words such as "kindness", "love", "steadfast love" and "loyalty". *Hesed* can have infinite descriptions, given that it is the personification of the character and nature of God.

God showed His *hesed* (loving-kindness) to Naomi and engaged the entire community to aid in healing her wounds of the past. Through *hesed*, God displayed His never-ending goodness to Israel. It is a kind of love that is relational in both horizontal and vertical dimensions and the kind of perfect love that only Christ Jesus fully expressed in His crucifixion and resurrection to

¹¹ David Atkinson. 1983. The message of Ruth: the Bible speaks today, edited by J.A. Motyer and J.R. Stott. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press. p. 52.

provide the means for sinners to share in the *koinonia* of God's children, which is the church and the platform for such loving fellowship with one another (Kynes, 2010:2). In the Old Testament *hesed* defines how the community of God cared for others and represented God to the entire community (Embry, 2013:18). LaMothe (2014:386—387) adds that *hesed* is revealed in Jesus Christ through His solidarity with the poor, healing of the sick, preaching of forgiveness and commanding of compassion and love to thereby create hope for a society that is created around care for others in fulfilment of the *missio Dei* (cf. Barber, 2014:274).

Phanon (2014:20) points out that there are times when individuals, being human, develop resentment towards God and paint a superficial picture of His character. In their judgement they fail to see the reality of a God full of grace. The “hidden hand of God” is apparent throughout the book of Ruth (Phanon, 2014: 23). The power of His love proves to be far above the “Law” of God, yet without upsetting the Law. He welcomed a sojourner who left the Land of Promise and returned broken, but upon turning back to Him, He accepted and allowed Ruth, a foreigner, the privilege of finding a home with the elect people. According to the *Torah*, marrying a gentile was forbidden (Deut. 7:3). Ammonites and Moabites were not allowed to be part of the nation of Israel (Deut. 23:4). However, as in the case of Naomi, God continued to show Ruth a “double *hesed*”. As Phanon (2010:37) puts it, God gave Naomi “more fullness than she can handle”. He did not deal with her according to her “blindness”; instead, He blessed her with a grandchild and turned the presumable “cause of the curse”, Ruth, into a blessing by ensuring the continuance of her lineage.

Ruth's gender and her foreign heritage prohibited her from living on her own, not having the same legal status as men (Siquans, 2009:447). Ruth did, however, achieve a “legal status” that is not found anywhere else in the Old Testament (Siquans, 2009:443) and only possible through her marriage to Boaz. Long (2014:15) indicates that in Ruth and Boaz the author presents a paradigm of what God desires in relationships. God's covenantal and faithful love, *hesed*, teaches the “law of kindness” and surpasses all boundaries, making all people in the world a family. He further notes that “God, as well as Naomi's complaints against him, pervades the story and creates the impression that God is as much an actual character as Naomi or Boaz” (Long, 2014:16).

The Lord provided Boaz, a relative of Naomi from the tribe of Judah, to grant her relief by redeeming Naomi's patrimony and taking care of Ruth. The law made Boaz the relative of Naomi who would act rightfully as kinsman-redeemer to Ruth, the widow of the oldest deceased son of Elimelech, and ensure that this lineage would continue (Ruth 3:2). Boaz also redeemed Elimelech's land, thus bringing financial security to both Ruth and Naomi. A collective involvement of the community helped the two widows to become functional again. Thus,

demonstrating that God's vertical love, as a "Restorer" and "Nourisher" (Ruth 4:14-15), has to be expressed inside of man through horizontal expressions of acts of love towards others.

Displacement creates a state of dislocation, as refugees are driven out of their homes, which has serious economic and social implications. Refugees struggle to make ends meet, feed their families and find a secure place to stay. This is vulnerability similar to that experienced by Ruth and Naomi. The two women lost three of their family members, through tragic death, and bore the trauma and grief of this loss. In the book of Ruth God shows His *hesed* love as Restorer and Sustainer, which is reflected in the support offered by others and Boaz taking legal responsibility for Ruth. If he had rejected this responsibility, the lives of Naomi and Ruth would have been jeopardised. It is an example of how God uses His people, through their higher legal status and position, to take on the cause of the vulnerable and defenceless by applying the "law of kindness" or *hesed* that ties people in the world together into one family. The church must play its role, but it is the duty of anyone who has the means to do so. The *missio Dei* is the obedience of the world to God's acts of renewal and healing. Elijah represents the next principle of counselling from the divine perspective.

4.5.2. Elijah: Dealing with Depression

Elijah's ministry (as described in 1 Kings 18) began in the reign of Ahab, when God's prophets were persecuted and replaced with the prophets of Baal. The sins of disobedience and idolatry by the Israelites, under the leadership of Jezebel (Ahab's wife, who was born in Canaan) had tarnished their covenantal relationship with Yahweh. A challenge was levelled at the prophets of Baal to determine who was truly God between Baal and Yahweh, whereby only the true God would be able to send fire from heaven to burn the sacrifice on the altar (1 Kings 18:24). The prophets of Baal prayed feverishly to no avail; Yahweh, however, sent fire to consume everything on the altar in response to Elijah prayer (1 Kings 18:38). Then Elijah ordered the Israelites to kill all 450 prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18 22, 40).

Elijah could have earned the respect of the Israelites, upon performing such a courageous and heroic act and triumphing. Instead, he was confronted with Jezebel's brutal campaign to kill all God's prophets, at the instigation of Ahab (1 Kings 9:1-2). Elijah fled, fearing for his life, upon hearing Jezebel's threats to kill him (1 Kings 19:1-3). This would be the event that created a great deal of trouble for Elijah and gave rise to his psychological problems.

According to Olley (1998:38), Elijah experienced "emotional collapse" and "depression" as a result of the victory over Baal. His condition further reveals "deep psychological insights" of "generalised depression" resulting from stress. His retreat to a cave identifies in Elijah a profile

of an introverted personality that gradually falls into depression and isolation from other people. Such experiences distort an individual's perception (Howell & Howell, 2008:657). Elijah thought he had been completely abandoned, despite Obadiah protection of one hundred prophets faithful to Yahweh (1 Kings 18:9; Heb. 11:38). Elijah's depression also manifested itself in his falling asleep twice, eating patterns and thoughts of suicide (1 Kings 19:4). These characteristics describe people who have lost hope for the future and have developed self-condemnation and low self-esteem (Howell & Howell, 2008:658).

God initiated a healing "session" with Elijah through a number of questions. According to Howell and Howell (2008:658), this questioning can be compared to the techniques part of cognitive therapy that aid the counselee to unearth their feelings and guide them toward a realistic perspective on their problems or presume to have. Wiseman (1993:172) points out that the question "What are you doing here?" was God calling on him to "reassess". It was also a rebuke and impelled him to confess his fears and feelings. The prophet's perception of the situation was not realistic; he felt that he was not the only prophet left (1 Kings 19:10). God also assigned Elijah a task to shape new behaviour (Howell & Howell, 2008:558). He "re-assigned" a project to him, sending him to anoint Jehu as king (Baker, 2002:4).

God attended to Elijah's physical needs by offering him sustenance (1 Kings 19:4-8), which reminds Baker (2002:4) of a similar act by the Lord Jesus Christ for his discouraged disciples after an unsuccessful night of fishing. He served them a meal to revitalise their bodies (John 21:9-14) (Baker, 2002:4). God appeared to him and talked to him (1 Kings 19:9, 11-13), listening to his complaints (1 Kings 19:10-14) and giving him guidance (1 Kings 19:15-17). He also encouraged him (1 Kings 19:18), strengthening his hand with the addition of Elisha to the team as a disciple (1 Kings 19:19-21). God's encounter with Elijah emphasises the importance of listening when seeking to provide assistance to another (1 Kings 9-10, 14). The Lord taught him to listen to the "voice" (Hebrew: *demâmâh*) of the Lord, which does not always manifest in dramatic winds and earthquakes but also in silence (1 Kings 11-13).

Elijah's circumstances are similar to that of the refugee in the sense that he was also a fugitive, fearing for his life. Refugees usually flee their homes to escape a threat to their lives. Secondly, Elijah experienced depression that may have been triggered by the trauma of experiencing the mass killings of the prophets of Baal; being persecuted by Jezebel's followers; the belief that he was the sole survivor and of being abandoned. All these experiences led to Elijah's downward spiral that would require counselling to enable the fugitive prophet to become a normal and functional individual. God's intervention played a role in this healing process, which also required the prophet take the first steps on his journey of healing. The plight of refugees is similar in many ways in that they are fugitives, experience trauma, sometimes feel

persecuted and lack the means to meet their physical needs. God was aware of Elijah's needs and came to his aid. Counsellors treating refugees could gain a great deal from the analogy of Elijah's life.

4.5.3. David: the Fugitive and God's presence

Psalms 34 relates to David's conflict with King Saul that forced him to flee to the land of the Philistines, because of Saul's intention to kill him in his rage (1 Sam. 20:31; 22:1). David was arrested and brought before King Achish, also known as Achish. Fearing for his life, he pretended to be insane to avoid being suspected of espionage. This pretence saved him and upon his release, he escaped to the land of the Philistines. It was these circumstances that reminded David of the Lord's place in his life, leading him to write this Psalm of praise.

David's life offers further insights on counselling fugitives or the displaced. Psalm 34:18 describes God as being close to the broken-hearted and the contrite in spirit. This Psalm reflects that God does not only punish sinners, but also provides care through His presence and ultimately salvation. He listens to the cries of the "poor man" and delivers him from troubles.

God did not deal with David as his deceitful behaviour deserved, but saved his life. David called on the Lord in his vulnerability and found deliverance (Ps. 34:4). Psalm 34:3 is the call for all to exalt God and speaks of the Lord's care of the broken-hearted. The ancient Hebrew root word, *shabar*, means *inter alia* "to crush", "to hurt" or "be broken". Those that are contrite in spirit experience something similar and it is in many ways a picture of refugees in modern-day society, who are helpless and broken by displacement and "physical and psychological torture". Counselling in refugee camps needs "workable guidelines on how to assist such people (Neuner *et al.*, 2004:579). As in this passage, the Lord comes to them and heals their brokenness.

Although verse 20 of this Psalm presents the prophecy of Jesus's crucifixion, on behalf of humanity (John 19:36), it emphasises the value God has people. As is evident from Jesus' crucifixion, God's care for people is holistic and tends to both the spiritual and physical. "He keepeth all his bones (of Jesus Christ the Pascal lamb - Ex. 26:46; John 19:36) not one of them is broken" (Ps. 34:20) and figuratively Christ's body, the church, is kept whole.

The core of the Psalm is to remind those who suffer persecution that God is near them and they will eventually surpass their trouble in the end. The apostle Peter makes an extensive reference to this Psalm as he encourages Christians who faced suffering as "strangers" and "aliens" amongst Gentiles (cf I Peter 3:10—12; 2: 11—12) (Gréaux, 2009: 604—605).

David's flight from attack (by a fellow Jew or compatriot) finds its application in the Rhulani refugees' escape from the threat to their lives in war-torn Mozambique. The narrative finds its relevance therein that the Mozambican war was one between two brothers inflicting pain and sorrow or intending to inflict sorrow on the other. A further similarity is how flight to a new environment may require various forms of disguise to avoid capture or death, just like David pretended to be insane. Refugees endeavour to protect themselves in a multitude of ways, such as obtaining false identification or attempting to emulate the local accent to pass themselves off as part of the receiving community. It is important to remember that even in the direst of circumstances, God still shows them mercy.

Having provided a look into a biographical analysis of fugitives, from a counselling perspective, the following section considers counselling from a Christological perspective.

4.6. CHRISTOCENTRIC COUNSELLING

Jesus Christ's healing ministry served the genuine purpose of revealing God as the Sustainer of life and belief in Him would bring the fullness of life (Grundmann, 2014:558). His ministry of care for people was based on the announcement of the Good News of the Kingdom of God, including salvation as entering the Kingdom and combating social evils that threaten whoever is called to share in the Kingdom through the ministry of healing of disease and exorcism of the demon possessed (Matt. 4:23). Furthermore, He healed to reveal Himself as the Messiah and Son of God who came to usher in the Kingdom of God in the world (Shelton, 2008:115; Watts, 2015:92).

Jesus cared for those in need and brought healing to the worst of the afflicted. He invited those who are tired and burdened to come to Him for relief from their hardships (Matt. 11:28). Jesus not only healed people, but also trained and sent out His followers to share in the ministry of healing (Bate-Omi, 2012:69). Bate-Omi (2012:69) relates three principal Greek terms that are key to Jesus' healing ministry in the Gospels, the first of which is *iasthai* and refers to medical healing. The second term is *sozo* that means "to save", "to rescue" and "to maintain integrity". Matthew 1:21 speaks about Jesus' commission to save His people from their sins, but the same word refers to another dimension of curing people: He cured and saved people from demon possession (cf. Luke 8:36). The final term is *therapeuo*, meaning "real healing" and is normally translated as "curing" (Bate-Omi, 2012:83). Saving and healing are thus two sides of the same coin in the ministry of Jesus Christ. The original term for healing here refers to the whole person, as opposed to individual members of the body.

Grundmann (2006:374) asserts that Jesus pairing salvation with healing offers irrefutable proof of the importance of physical healing in His ministry. Scripture indicates God's holistic approach to caring. Jesus offered sustenance to the hungry (Matt. 9:10; Mark 6:31ff), He comforted the weeping (Matt. 15:21-22; Mark 10:13; John 11:33) and healed the sick (Mark 6:13). His acts of healing served the greater purpose of proclaiming the Good News (Warrington, 2003:84). "Lessons may be learned from Jesus' healing ministry, including his readiness to minister to people in need and his commitment to wholeness" (Warrington, 2003:92). Watts (2015:92) concurs with Warrington (2003) that Jesus Christ's healing ministry served to reveal His as the Messiah. Jesus came for the sick and people in need of a "healer" (Matt. 9:12). From a Biblical perspective health and well-being are signs of God's continuous act of creation and of His salvation; they are the shadow of the ideal world of the Eschaton (Grundmann, 2014:560).

Although the Bible does not present formalised types of counselling, there are many passages and Biblical encounters that allude to caregiving and its importance in God's ministry. In Genesis, God advised Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:1-5), Abraham gave advice to Lot (Gen. 15:5-9); and Job's friends were at his side after the numerous tragedies he suffered and large sections of the book provide a record of this counselling process (Job 4, 5, 8, 11, 15, 18, 20, 22). Prophets play the role of counsellors to kings in the Old Testament (2 Sam. 12:1-15; Jer. 21:1-14; Dan. 2, 5, 6). In the New Testament Jesus counsels Nicodemus (John 3), the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-30); and an adulterous woman (John 8:3-11). Acts 20:25ff instructs leaders or elders to give the counsel of God.

God loves everyone, regardless of their social status and also cares for the helpless and the downtrodden of society. The prophetic text referring to the coming of the Messiah in Isaiah 9:6 presents an important attribute of the ministry of counselling. Jesus the Messiah is called "Wonderful Counsellor". The noun counsellor (Hebrew: *yā'ats*) means providing advice, counsel, guidance or bringing purpose.

The enablement of the Spirit upon Jesus gave Him the wisdom and understanding to offer counsel (cf. Is. 11:2) for the good of His people. Many people will come to the mountain of the Lord (cf. 2:3). Jesus, the Messiah he will teach people the ways of the Lord with authority and many would listen to his teaching of God's Word (Isa. 2:3;), as distinguished and exceptional leader ruler (Walvoord & Zuck, 1985: 1053). He is the God-man who existed throughout the eternity past with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, acquainted with all the mysteries and counsels of God. God sent Him to the world to provide counsel to His people (Ps.16:7).

According to the Gospels, Jesus' counselling approach related to His time of ministry. He especially tended to the marginalised, but took account of people in every sphere of society.

While on earth, Jesus embraced both the poor and the rich, reflected in His encounters with people such as the rich young man described in Luke 18:18-39. Although this young man scrupulously observed the Torah, he was anxious about eternity and needed guidance. He epitomises the meaninglessness of life without Jesus. He may have rich in material terms, he lacked spiritual fulfilment. It was not his material possessions that were the source of contention, but the idolisation of these and had an unquenchable desire for riches. He was enslaved to the love of riches and to accumulate as much as he could to himself and disregard others in need (Stanley, 2006: 56, 57-59). Jesus' counselling approach was to challenge the man to move away from his dependency on earthly riches, telling him to give away his earthly riches and follow Him. This may have appeared rude to the young man, yet it brought the message home. He had to get his priorities straight and focus on that which would bring him true well-being. Jesus' request was not received very well, instead the young man chose to part ways with Jesus.

This is an example of the imperative to save man as part of healing in Jesus' counselling approach. This aspect also indicates the necessity to always take into account the main purpose of guiding the marginalised through the healing process. Almy (2000:32, 34) points out that in counselling man's rebellious nature of refusing to believe in God and deciding to occupy God's place, instead of submitting to God's rule, constitutes the core of the sinful nature that the message of the Gospel seeks to correct. This marks the difference to secular counselling that seeks to attribute erratic behaviour to the individual's past experiences.

4.7. THE SPIRIT AS COUNSELLOR

Because counselling plays an important role in the missionary programme of the church, the Lord Jesus ensured its continuity through the presence and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament church. Jesus called him the *paraklētos* (*paraclete*), the Comforter, and would have the same functions as Jesus (John 16:7). He would come to provide another dimension of ministry, which transcends geographical and physical barriers by being simultaneously available to all men everywhere. Scholars have noted that the qualities of the Spirit are correlated to Jesus life and ministry—he is another, that is one of the same kind with Jesus Christ. Jesus is the truth and the Spirit is “the Spirit of Truth” (Jn 14:6); Jesus is the “the Holy One of God” (Jn 6: 69) and the Spirit is the “Holy Spirit (Jn 14:26); both Jesus and the Holy Spirit have come from the Father to minister to the world (Jn. 1:11 and Jn. 16: 28; Jn 15: 26 (Pack, 1989:142).

The advent of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts 2 made it possible for believers to minister to others in need, through the enablement of the gift the Spirit (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit, as Giver of Life, works in making God “real” to the counselee and provides guidance to both counsellor and counselee, as they study the Scripture and is involved in spiritual matters such as discerning demonic influence in the life of the counselee (Tan, 2011:365-367).

4.8. COUNSELLING AS FULFILMENT OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

The Great Commission is the key to making disciples and to equip them in a new *koinonia* in the body of Christ. It is in this light that Paul asserts that believers become new creatures when they come into relationship with Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). The command to make disciples encompasses the need to look after the well-being of new converts by addressing their spiritual and physical needs. Christian counselling forms part of this effort, by bringing growth that is made possible through salvation. Babler *et al.* (2007:188) point out the following:

“One of the things we need to make certain we ask about is the counselee’s spiritual condition. If you discover the person is an unbeliever, it becomes your responsibility to introduce him to Christ. Only responding to the problem he presents is not adequate. You will not be able to deal fully with the presenting problem until the person knows Christ.”

The point of departure for counselling from the above perspective is salvation and the key to its efficacy. This is because people who have not yet been reborn cannot fully grasp the full nature of their problem, without the right relationship with the Creator and without the work of the Holy Spirit to engender the conviction of the sinful nature as well as the renewal of mind to recognise this helpless condition (Rom. 12:2). There is also the necessity to repent from sin and to set out on a new path, in accordance with the Word of God. Based on this premise, Christian counselling leads individuals to Christ.

Despite the validity of the above proposition, it could be counterproductive if each counselling opportunity makes salvation a prerequisite for further assistance to those in need of care. Christian counselling should provide every counselee the opportunity to hear the Gospel, through the presentation of the Word and deeds, without the imposition that continued assistance depends on immediate conviction. Potter (2007:307) remarks in this regard that the counsellor is obliged to inform the counselee of the Christocentric nature of the counselling, yet it need not to be in a confrontational or argumentative manner; it has to be crafted in such a way that “evangelism can, and should be woven throughout the content and purpose of Christian counselling” (Potter, 2007:307).

The counsellor has to be a physical representation of God's love, throughout the counselling process, as some may come to the knowledge of Christ in experiencing the love and empathy that a Christian caregiver can provide to a non-believer. It is as Bonhoeffer (1971), cited in Bosch (1991:375), writes in his prison letter to Bethge: "The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell man of every calling what it means to live in Christ, to exist for others." It must always be kept in mind that the *missio Dei* encompasses the whole life.

As underlined in previous chapters, individuals need to lead a balanced life in order to be functional beings and in turn be productive members of the body of Christ and the community at large, in accordance with Matthew 28:18-20 that urges believers to disciple those who accept Christ that they be grow to maturity in faith and become examples of hope and healing to others. Jesus' approach to discipleship aimed to draw people into a faithful relationship with Him that they may become His obedient disciples, through the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, to transform their lives to give hope and healing to all in need. His followers are to continue the work He began by "emphasizing the power and worthiness of His name, which brings forgiveness and healing" (Strauss, 2012:447). He did not come to be ministered to, but to minister to others in order to bring life and hope (Matt. 20:28). His earthly life was an expression of true love in practical ways.

A true view of self is important for a successful healing process in Christian counselling. The purpose of both counselling and the Great Commission is to give people a proper perspective of self and God. The caregiver leads the hurt into communication with God, in an interaction that seeks to help people understand their problems through God's eyes, as Isaiah's encounter with God made him realise his unworthiness and sinful state (Is. 6:5). The holiness and presence of God is so astonishing that even those that are saved are overwhelmed (Guthrie & Motyer, 1993:595). It was an encounter that revealed the necessity to be cleansed from his sinful nature. The Christian counsellor facilitates such an experience as he reveals God's presence to the counselee. The understanding of self and God plays an important role in the person's relationship with God. Henrichsen (1976:41) explains it as follows:

"You will never have a true understanding of who God is until you understand yourself. The converse however is also true. You will never have a true understanding of yourself until you understand who God is. These two ideas are mutually dependent."

The role of the caregiver is, therefore, to guide the traumatised to self-discovery in the light of who God is. The Great Commission addresses the spiritual needs of the broken hearted. It is informed by the Biblical theology that people are enslaved by sin and that its ramifications

create imbalances in people's life. They need to place their burdens in the hands of the Creator and subject their lives to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. They also need to surrender to the Lordship of Jesus that they may follow God's plan for their lives (Tatarnic, 2014:292).

From a mission perspective, counselling leads people towards facing traumatic events of life by connecting the counselee experiences with the overall purpose of God to save man. Paul and Silas led the prison jailer to Christ as the ultimate solution to his problem (Acts 16:31). The jailer's pressing crisis presents the interplay between soteriological and psycho-social missiology. A similar incidence is that of Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians. Upon being struck by God's power, he felt helpless and sought the solution in submission to God's irresistible power. He simply asked: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9: 6)

Traumatic events may very well lead to God and therefore salvation. God often uses helplessness to present salvation as means to address man's psycho-social needs. This reality can be correlated to experiences of refugee communities whose traumatic experiences compelled them to salvation. Bosch (1991:399-400) points out, in reference to social difficulties, the following:

"Never before in history has people's social distress been as extensive as it is in the twentieth century. But never before have Christians been in a better position than they are today to do something about this need. Poverty, misery, sickness, criminality, and social chaos have assumed unheard-of proportions...To introduce change, as Christians, into all of this, is to mediate salvation."

The counsellor, as God's agent, facilitates healing to the traumatised. The counsellor should also bear in mind that while he uses his expertise to assist people in crisis, at the same time he is to seek "windows of opportunity" to attract people to God. Describing the missionary responsibility of the church and its environment, Shawchuck and Heuser (1996:60) assert that the church should develop the ability to identify and take advantage of "windows of opportunity" for outreach and bring people into God's fellowship. Certainly caregiving to the displaced presents such windows of opportunity that the church and the caregiver must take into account in obedience to the Great Commission.

4.9. COMMUNAL APPROACH

The healing of individuals, as missionary endeavour, also seeks to restore individuals to being functional members of their family and the society they live in. It restores wholeness in them, through the Gospel message, for the propagation of God's Kingdom. It is important to bear in mind that people, particular in African society, find meaning in the cultural group to which they belong and contrasts sharply with the individualistic nature of other cultural settings (Ishii, 2013:124), where individual's rights are entrenched in the constitution in such a way that it undermines that of the community. The Biblical approach to counselling, however, should emphasise the communal good.

As in Paul's analogy of the body, each member is indispensable to total well-being yet is not more important than the whole (1 Cor. 12). This is a philosophical approach that corresponds to the cultural point of view of the community under study. In the context of *ubuntu* society each member is interconnected with others in a web, where the suffering of one is the suffering of all, and where meaning is found in the existence and well-being of others. *Ubuntu* concerns and care for the disadvantaged and particularly the sick, the poor, widows and strangers (Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005:228).

Many African proverbs suggest the philosophical concept of a communality where people are interdependent and find meaning because of others; decisions are made by the group. Mucherera (2005:101), in his discussion of caregiving, highlights mutuality by means of the African proverb of "one tree does not make a forest". The caregiver or counsellor should seek to understand the socio-cultural analysis of the traditional African context, in order to develop a proper approach to Christian counselling. This forms part of addressing the individual in a holistic way, as previously discussed. These communities can be compared to the Biblical ideal of one body, in which each member of society has an indispensable part to play for the good of other members. From an African perspective, people function better as part of the community when individuals find meaning in the existence of others: "I am because you are." (Mucharera, 2006:101)

In explaining the necessity of taking the Biblical approach to counselling, McClure (2010:27, 216) points out that from the Biblical view that deems each person as "inseparable" from others, people are expected to make a contribution to other members of the group. Scripture encourages believers to care for one another in the body of Christ in a range of passages that urges acting to the benefit of others. It is creating unity by accepting one another (Rom. 15:7), loving one another (1 John 3:11) and comforting one another (1 Thess. 4:18) (cf. Kranz, 2014).

McClure (2010:216) adds that healing and salvation are important elements towards the realisation of the Kingdom of God or urging people to share therein, since all that exist is mutually dependant and the well-being of the world is dependent upon the “well-being and the flourishing of all” (McClure, 2010:216).

4.10. HOLISTIC COUNSELLING

Seeking the well-being of individuals in a holistic way is ensuring that they have the essential elements for them to live, viz.: food, shelter, work and emotional nourishment. Man is, therefore, considered within the context of a human being that has an essential nature that is basically synonymous with his or her physical body (Tan, 2011:328).

Christian counselling thus needs to consider man from a holistic perspective, always bearing in mind man’s psychological and spiritual need for love and security. Man can achieve a healthy self by communing with God. Man’s actions stem from the difficulties he faces and they need to be analysed from all angles - biological and spiritual.

The Hebrew perspective on salvation has always been holistic in nature (Jayakumar, 2011:228-230). According to Potter (1981:1-2), salvation should move away from being understood by an “in-group” in a reductionist approach thus straying away from its Biblical meaning.

The Hebrew *yasha* (to save), from which the name Jesus derives, also means “he who saves,” “to be wide” or “to be spacious”. It described the act of rescuing people from danger and those who were victorious in the battlefield as well as liberating people who are oppressed by their particular circumstances. Its rich meaning became diluted when translated into the Greek *soteria*, which emphasises the salvation of soul. Such meaning lightens the richness of Hebrew meaning of salvation, which emphasises the well-being of the individual in his totality (cf. Potter, 1983:1-2).

Certainly salvation bearing the fullness of life is the meaningful life Jesus sought to emphasise in His promise of life in abundance to those who come to him (John 10:10). He intends that the life of those who come to Him may be “wider and more spacious” or better than the current one and that those who experience it may in turn pass it on to others deprived of such richness of life in the love and grace of God. The life in John 10:10 promises safety, as in the metaphor of the Shepherd going out and finding good pasture (Potter, 1981:9). In the present social context, even the material assets of the world should be employed to the benefit of all and no human being should exploit and do injustice to others, particularly those in the minority (Potter, 1981:26).

In contrast to the Hebrew philosophy, the Greek espouses a narrow view of healing that distances God from man; a God who is not involved in the physical needs of man. This is also the gnostic view of the human body, which advocates a dualism that sees the body as evil and the spirit as good (Brown, 2005:150; Cooper, 2006:17). In reference to the introduction to the letters to the Colossians, Barclay (1975:98) points out that because Gnosticism considers the body evil and the spirit good, the body could be starved and denied its needs or conversely, it could be thoroughly indulged since it is of no consequence either way (Barclay, 1975:98). Gnosticism, according to Bosch (1991:200), deems salvation as freedom from the body, the material world and repudiation of the desire for the physical world. He also characterises salvation as the “liberation from all bondage as well as new life in Christ” (Bosch, 1991:117).

The same is true of the term “conversion”, from the Hebrew perspective, which means to turn. This was primarily addressed to the people of God in the Old Testament. By failing to obey the covenant God made with them, they denied the gentile world the opportunity to turn away from their evil practices and come to God (Potter, 1983:17; Peter, 1991:298, 304, 306). Furthermore, their turning entailed commitment to doing justice and creating a just society that is exemplary to the world around them: “Being turned to God is also being turned to one’s fellow humans” (Potter, 1983:17). In so doing, the people of God work in partnership with Him in alleviating pain and suffering and bringing into reality the Biblical meaning of salvation, which is concerned with the present and future life.

Jesus presented a more versatile form of counselling, during His earthly ministry. Yet in every incidence He involved the physical to address the spiritual and used the earthly to reveal the divine (Armstrong, 2014:101-102). He referred to physical water to illustrate spiritual thirst to the Samaritan woman (John 4:7,10) and provided physical bread to point to the necessity of spiritual bread (John 6:11, 35). Thus He steered His “counselees” towards His saving mission of restoring the lost to the Kingdom of God. In this respect, His approach to counselling had a missiological appeal. It valued the individual as a whole, without separation of his physical and spiritual needs.

The holistic approach to counselling may not necessarily demand immediate salvation to the counselee, but it provides the person with the best alternative to his problem: the acknowledgement of sin and the decision to entrust his problem to Jesus as the first step to healing.

Christian counselling is an integrative ministry that seeks to address individual’s needs in a comprehensive way. This requires addressing all of man’s needs. This is only possible when sound knowledge from other fields of science are integrated, making “the spiritual” and

theological or religious insight as well as the psychology element work towards the well-being of the marginalised and strangers (Greider *et al.*, 2006:181).

Caregiving has to look to the individual in his entirety in order to provide adequate assistance. Anderson (2010:31) advocates such an approach when he states that “Christian who counsel must counsel the whole person, especially when that persons experiences dysfunction in any aspect of life”. He takes into account the “integrative” core of personal humanity and says “one way of understanding the biblical teaching that persons are created in the “image and likeness of God” (Anderson, 2010:31) is to think of humans as related simultaneously to God and to each other. If any aspect of the relationship is affected, it leads to disorder and compromises the total well-being of the system.

Sin in man’s life leads to imbalances in his totality; it affects all aspects of man’s life, including the environment he lives in. Thus the Biblical expression “image of God” applies to the entire human - self, body and soul - and the social environmental existence of the person (Anderson, 2010:32-33). The evangelistic efforts of the church may also be more effective by focusing on man’s whole life, thus developing ways that make it meaningful and relevant to its surroundings (Anderson, 2010:89).

The classic 1972 paper by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church, Mekane Yesus (EECMY), pointed to the necessity of integrating human development into proclaiming the Gospel as “ministry to the whole man” or “holistic” ministry, which is defined as “*diakonia*”. Unfortunately many choose to disregard this approach and separate social intervention from spreading the Gospel (Nkansah-Obrempong, 2009:196), whereby social intervention is often left to secular humanitarian efforts. However, if the development of the inner man is necessary for the development of society than it should be part and parcel of social action that aims at ameliorating man’s physical needs (Nordstokke, 2009:163). In his book’s preamble, Nordstokke (2009:9) points out that “Christians believe that in Baptism, they are empowered by the Holy Spirit to participate in God’s mission for the healing of the world. If that is true, every church and every congregation has the basic resources for diaconal commitment.”

Counselling also needs to take into account the social evils people face such poverty, violence and HIV/AIDS; issues that the church cannot overlook (Robert, 2009:23, 28). The church, as an “agent of transformation”, should seek to bring about healing and reconciliation to people affected by such social evils. Nordstokke (2009:19) urges that the “approach should be characterized by compassion, mutuality and eagerness to understand and advance the struggle of those who seek justice”. He sees the fight against poverty as part of the mission of the

church in Africa, where the church has to “participate in God’s transformative and healing mission amid the brokenness in the lives of the church and the world” (Nordstokke, 2009:38).

4.11. CONCERNED FOR PEOPLE ON THE MARGIN

The encounter with Zacchaeus shows Jesus’ concern with the redemptive aspect of His “clients” (Luke 19:1-10). His going to the house of the marginalised, shows His empathy for all who seek help. He created rapport by sharing a meal with him, thus opening a channel of communication. Sharing a meal with someone was a meaningful gesture. From the Jewish perspective, a meal symbolised communion with the guest and marked the moment where people shared their love and oneness as they eat together. In accordance with the Gospel’s imperative of full and equal status between Jew and gentile (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:28), Jesus used the Lord’s Supper to identify His followers through the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine, symbolising the sacrifice of His body and blood, to bring communion with them (1 Cor. 15:11-39) (Chester, 2011:101-102). It marked the remembrance of the important event in the history of mankind when the incarnated God came and died a vicarious death to meet God’s requirements for the lost to receive divine grace and forgiveness.

The encounter with Zacchaeus depicts Jesus’ non-judgemental character. His empathy opened people’s eyes to their problem and to willingly address the problems that burdened them. Zacchaeus’s encounter with Jesus led him to return the money he wrongfully acquired from people and also went so far as to give half of his wealth to the poor (Luke 19:8). In this incident Jesus looked beyond the change in behaviour, knowing that positive change starts from the inside out and thus declared “today salvation has come to this house, for he (Zacchaeus) also is a son of Abraham” (Luke 19:9). Through this expression, Jesus presents His higher goal of meeting people’s need for redemption, as part of his therapeutic processes.

This aspect leads to the fact that salvation plays an important role in the therapeutic process, since it brings the individual into contact with God and makes him confront his sinful nature, to thereby redirect his lives in accordance with divine will to bring transformation (Delkeskamp-Hayes, 2010:96-97). It not only creates an awareness of the sinful nature, but of God’s *agape* love that offers them acceptance and belonging in the community of believers.

The counsellor has to be aware of its importance and make efforts to aid people in achieving this stage of *koinonia*. This process should not be forced onto the person, but it has to be presented in clear terms that he can embrace it voluntarily. As Zhang and McCoy (2009:46) remark on matters of counselling to victims of political trauma, “the therapist needs to walk a fine line, allowing the client ample space to tell the story in his or her own way while at the same

time being open to using empathic language that reflects the therapist's values and sense of justice regarding the client's experience".

4.12. A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO CARE

An important element of Jesus' ministry was His proactive approach to people in need. He often did not expect such people to come to Him, but reached out to them and made them aware of their needs through simple interaction. Mission is, as God's mission, made possible by the coming of Christ and the advent of the "eschatological event of salvation" Hahn (1965) in Bosch, 1991:54). The church is, therefore, given a mandate to permeate the society in which it lives with "God's love and redemptive deeds" (Bosch, 1991:54). Based on this premise, mission is seen as a task or responsibility invested upon an individual or group of people who set it into action. They have the mandate to go out and accomplish the task, as opposed to waiting for the lost to seek help. Jesus interacted with people from all kinds of social backgrounds, at their level of understanding, without ever condescending to them.

Jesus Christ may have challenged Nicodemus, of rabbinical ranking, about how to enter God's Kingdom (John 3:4), but with the average masses He adapted His approach to meet their needs in a way relevant to their lives. He often addressed their spiritual needs with references to nature and in the form of parables, in accordance with His mission to liberate the oppressed and bring hope to the poor (Luke 4:18-19). He also performed miracles, such as the multiplying of bread and fish to feed the multitude, to meet their physical needs (John 6:11).

4.13. SUMMARY

This chapter lays the foundation for Christian counselling. It defines counselling as providing care to and effecting change in people. The Biblical perspective of counselling is one of verbal confrontation and admonishing to guide people towards living in accordance to God's will, in which the metaphor of the shepherd reflects His guidance and protection. The elucidation of certain terminology reveals healing from the Biblical perspective, as it relates to God's healing approach. The chapter also describes God's care for the fugitive in times of trouble, in terms of certain figures from Scriptures that would also demonstrate the refugee's perspective.

The Lord Jesus Christ ministered on earth as the Healer of people, reaching out to them and working with the Holy Spirit (the Counsellor) to meet their needs. Counselling forms part of God's commission in that it brings people into communion with God. It needs to take a holistic

approach to address both physical and spiritual needs, in emulation of Jesus. It is the active endeavour of reaching out to others in the manner of Jesus.

Chapter 5 details the empirical study in the Rhulani refugee settlement, conducted to formulate a paradigm for counselling refugees as part of the *missio Dei*.

CHAPTER 5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an empirical research design and steps followed for data collection in light of the problem statement, and research objectives. The research methods for data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations were also dealt with. Interviews were made to a group of respondents through semi-structured interviews at the Rhulani refugee settlement in order to determine the psycho-social factors experienced by the community of refugees there. Factors that were useful in bringing healing to this community are outlined based on various themes that surfaced from the interviews. This ground work consisted of data collection from interviews and the last section sets forth various thematic forms resultant from the empirical study. A literature control is made to the established themes.

5.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

This research centres on the community of refugees at the Rhulani refugee settlement. The researcher has been closely involved in this community and has personally experienced their plight. The researcher has obtained first-hand information of the challenges they face in the settlement through interaction during a number of visits to the settlement. This endeavour is facilitated by a shared language (Tsonga) and knowledge on the cultural background of this community.

The Rhulani refugee settlement is situated in the Limpopo Province, approximately 40 kilometres from the Punda Maria Gate of the Kruger National Park, outside Malamulele Town. It is situated between Giyani and Thohoyandou, on the East and West respectively, along the R81 road. As already mentioned, the settlement is the result of refugees fleeing civil war in neighbouring Mozambique that started after 1975 and ended in 1992, with the official signing of the Rome Peace Accord (cf. Chapter 1).

Like many refugees of war the residents of this settlement have experienced psycho-social stress as a result of the circumstances surrounding their abrupt dislocation from their homes and country. Many arrived in South Africa stripped of all their belongings, a significant part of their personal dignity. There are two factors leading to psychological stress for these refugees, according to De Jongh (1994:233), the dreadful experiences of war and the loss of personal

possessions (cf. Chapter 1). An uncertain future, as they travel to a new environment, causes further distress.

Most of the Mozambican refugees in Rhulani experienced the trauma of witnessing the death of fellow refugees because of electrocution by electric fences or mauling by wild animals, as they made their way on foot through the Kruger National Park into South Africa, despite travelling in groups to ward off wild animals.

The research seeks to formulate, in reference to the *missio Dei* and the insight gained in the Rhulani refugee settlement, a paradigm on how the church can participate in God's restoration plan towards the marginalised. According to Kemper (2014:189), the *missio Dei* is the foundation for the church's mission as the body of Jesus Christ. Mission emanates from God Himself; it is entrenched in His nature (Bosch, 1991:390). It's the mission that starts with the Triune God and is motivated by His *agape* love, expressed in the incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ in a mission to restore the broken world. It is a *missio Dei* empowered by the Holy Spirit, the *parakleto*, (Greek noun for Comforter or Consoler) (John 16:7). As Dodds (2011:211) remarks, the incarnation of Christ and the Holy Spirit are key to accomplishing the *missio Dei* (cf. 2.2, 2.3, 2.4).

The church is called to respond to the needs of society and partake in the *missio Dei*, in a holistic way. Besides the spiritual necessity, the church has to embark on propagating God's Kingdom by confronting social evils such as poverty (Deut. 15:4) social injustice (Ex. 23:1) and the like (Hedlund, 1991:76-78).

Bearing in mind the challenges discussed above, it becomes necessary to respond to the plight of the refugee community by addressing their psycho-social needs as refugees within the context of God's love in the *missio Dei*. The church has the duty to help people recover their relationship with God (John 16:8) and lead them to the renewal of their minds (Phil. 3:15).

5.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this research is to formulate a paradigm, embedded in the *missio Dei*, for counselling refugees; a population deemed an "at-risk group" in society (De Villiers & De Villiers, 2005:10, 12; cf. Chapter 1). This research focuses on the refugees at the Rhulani refugee settlement.

5.4. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study followed a revelation-historical exegesis, with the aim to establish key guidelines for counselling that is integrated into the *missio Dei*, to aid refugees within the context of Mozambican refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement.

The researcher made an “immersion” (borrowing some aspects of the grounded theory), in order to collect the information, which is a research approach that requires the involvement of the researcher in the environment of the population under research (in this case the Rhulani settlement). Strauss and Corbin (1990:275) point out that grounded theory is a research form that uses a general methodology. It is a set of procedures for analysing data, leading to the formulation of a theory of benefit to the subject matter being researched.

The research also upheld continuous contact, interaction and involvement with this group of refugee over a period of twenty years (1995-2015). This enabled in-depth observation and knowledge of the challenges and trauma they experienced and how various interventions aided in bringing functionality to the majority of these refugees. Establishing contact with the refugees within their natural setting assists the research to collect data directly from the source (Neuma, 2006:92-93).

This qualitative research focused attention, as much as possible, on the holistic approach to considering the needs of former refugees. Various interviewing tools were employed to ascertain how the social needs of the displaced have contributed towards the *missio Dei*, expressed through caregiving that provides healing to people with broken lives.

5.5. RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher gathered data by means of semi-structured interviews (De Vos, 2011:353). This approach assists in extracting data regarding personal perceptions and feelings as well as in identifying links with various interventions made by the churches and other stakeholders to offer support to the target group. Interviews were held with two groups of respondents, viz.: (1) The refugees at Rhulani settlement and (2) various stakeholders to determine the interventions they made in the settlement to assist the refugees through difficult times. Interviews enabled respondents to interpret and express their experiences in a non-constraining environment.

The research seeks to build an all-inclusive picture of the experiences of the community of refugees in the settlement (Creswell, 1994:145). Research participants will hereinafter be referred to as respondents.

Church leaders who formed part of the group of the displaced, with a long history of life and challenges in the camp, were approached to share their experiences. This included a pastor's wife, whose husband passed on, who was greatly involved with the "*Xurhani*" project.

5.5.1. Limitations

Given that refugees recounted traumatic events that occurred approximately twenty years ago, the research had to be based on their personal experiences in regards to factors that were instrumental in bringing healing or in attenuating their trauma, by means of interventions that were made at the time by various stakeholders, particular that of churches.

Respondents were offered counselling and comfort, whenever needed during the recounting of their past experiences, of which there was one incident that required such intervention.

5.5.2. Permission to Conduct Research

Permission to conduct these interviews with respondents was granted by the research committee of the Faculty of Theology at North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, in accordance with the relevant guidelines. Permission was also sought from each respondent, in writing, and each respondent gave consent by signing a letter to confirm their participation.

5.5.3. Sampling

The research work focused on the group of refugees of the Rhulani refugee settlement. They were all refugees who fled war-torn Mozambique and came to settle at Rhulani in the Mavambe, under the jurisdiction of Chief Mavambe.

5.5.3.1. Sample Size

A total of 13 ($N=13$); male = $N\ 10$; women = $N\ 3$, were interviewed and the process of interviewing was terminated upon reaching saturation stage. Two of the respondents were Ndhunas (chiefs) in the refugee settlement.

Given the low level of literacy, interviews were conducted in Tsonga/Shangaan, the mother tongue of the respondents. Most of the main interviews were recorded, with prior permission from the respondents, and critical aspects were written up by hand for comparison of relevant aspects of the study at hand. The age range of the respondents was between 50 and 75 years.

5.6. DATA

5.6.1. Data Collection

The researcher identified the respondents during visits to the refugee settlement of Rhulani and he explained the purpose of the research. Aspects such as anonymity, confidentiality, privacy and risks were addressed. Respondents were duly informed that they were free to withdraw at any point of the research, if they felt it necessary. The interviews with the refugees were conducted at the home of the chief of the settlement, in a comfortable setting and with no distractions.

The following questions formed part of the interview conducted with refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement:

1. Please tell me your name and surname.
2. Can you tell me the story of how you came to South Africa?
3. When did you arrive here?
4. What are the difficulties you encountered on the way?
5. What was your arrival point?
6. How was life in the Rhulani refugee settlement?
7. Did you feel welcomed?
8. What kind of help did you receive upon arrival?
9. What helped you most to find healing?
10. What else do you think helped others to heal from traumas of the past?

The researcher made field notes of the interview, which included personal findings and his own feelings regarding the experiences and personal observation during the interviews (Botma, 2010:217-219).

5.6.2. Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was used as tool to collect data, which involves *inter alia* the process of construction of meaning from the data examined.

Denzin and Lincoln (1998:3) describe qualitative research as follows:

“Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them.”

Swinton and Mowat (2007:9) elucidate this research method as follows:

Qualitative research involves the utilization of a variety of methods and approaches which enable the researcher to explore the social world in an attempt to access and understand the unique ways that individuals and communities inhabit it. It assumes that human beings are by definition ‘interpretive creatures’ that is the way in which we make sense of the world and our experiences within it involve a constant process of interpretation and meaning-seeking.

The process further involves gathering of information, sorting it into meaningful categories and based on the outcomes, compiling the qualitative text. The main aim of analysing the data is to establish facts and explore the root cause of the matter being investigated (De Vos, 2011:399).

The analysis of data entailed collection of information from interviews; categorising major themes; correlating with information from specific activities from stakeholders’ intervention in the settlement and establishing major factors or themes that were helpful in bringing about healing and wholeness to the population of refugees. Voice recordings were transcribed verbatim and coded (De Vos, 2011:411).

5.6.3. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was ensured by means of the following guidelines of Kreftine (1991:215):

- The researcher lives in the community where the refugees are settled.
- The researcher wrote field notes for reflection and he also had regular communication and discussions with the promoters regarding the findings.
- The researcher used different sources such as interviews, literature review and personal observations. He worked under the supervision of two promoters.
- The same set of interviews was used for individual respondents amongst the refugees.

5.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Respondents were provided in advance with information on the nature of the research to be conducted; i.e. that it would serve for academic purposes and participation was voluntary. No incentives or payments were given to those who participated in the research. Participants remained anonymous and were made aware that privacy and confidentiality would be upheld throughout the research. The data collected would not be divulged or made available to other individuals or entities. The names of respondents were kept anonymous and disclosure of names was done with the prior consent of individual participants themselves.

5.7.1. Informed Consent

Prior to the research, the purpose of the research was explained to the respondents. The letter of consent was translated into Tsonga and explained to them prior to the research commencement. The researchers also informed the respondents on matters related to confidentiality; protection and safety of the respondents (see Annexure A, C & D).

5.7.2. Right to Self Determination

The research was guided by the ethical principle of respect for the respondents. Each respondent functioned as a co-researcher, who participated voluntarily and was free to discontinue the study at any point of the process without any penalty (De Vos, 2011:116, 119; Burns & Grove, 2005:101). The respondents also had prior information regarding the process.

5.7.3. Right to Privacy, Anonymity or Confidentiality

Each respondent's privacy was respected fastidiously. The researcher ensured that personal information, such as names or recorded data, was kept confidential. The names of the interviewed respondents were coded with numbers and kept anonymous (De Vos, 2011:119; Burns, 2005:107).

5.7.4. Right to fair Treatment

All respondents were treated with dignity and fairness, regardless of age or gender (Burns & Grove, 2005:107).

5.8. RESULT OF THE STUDY

The results collected from the empirical research with the refugees are explored below. Verbatim quotes, from transcribed interviews with respondents, are provided and literature control serves to validation findings (Botma, 2010:197).

5.8.1. Results from Interviews with Refugees

Interviews made with respondents brought the following themes to the surface:

Matters related to security and protection – refugees showed appreciation concerning security and protection provided to them. Matters related to acceptance and integration – refugees also showed appreciation for the gesture of love and welcoming on the part of local chiefs and some of the communities in the villages. Prayer and ministry of the Word of God – refugees mentioned the assistance they received through the ministry of God's Word and prayer as one of the factors that contributed to their healing. Burial of loved ones – the respondents interviewed highlighted the support received upon losing loved ones. The matter of *diakonia* service – refugees pointed out the role played by various stakeholders, in providing food and medication, as a contributing factor in bringing healing and wholeness. Refugees involvement – respondents made mention of how they took a proactive role in participating with various stakeholders to attenuate their situation.

5.8.1.1. Theme One: Security and Protection

One factor that arose from interviews with respondents was security and protection. The refugees at Rhulani mentioned that they were able to cope with the post-war trauma, due to being provided a safe environment. The statement of the respondent below reflects the sentiment of the majority of the target group:

The first group [of refugees] where accommodated by the chief in the villages; they were protected and were given clothes. It was not easy because we were foreigners; but we were helped by their protection. When they provided us with IDs we had some kind of relief, because we were no longer arrested unless we went beyond the boundaries of the areas we were accommodated.

Mellor *et al.* (2008:213-217) state in this regard that belonging brings more fulfilment or meaningful relationships, thus attenuating the feeling of loneliness. When individuals need to belong to a particular group goes unfulfilled, they develop a feeling of isolation, alienation and loneliness (cf. Chapter 3; 3.1.11; 3.1.17).

The authorities, in particular, assured to a certain degree that there were no arrests and repatriations of refugees (cf. 3.1.9; 3.1.13; 3.1.14). They made mention of having been issued identity cards, which provided a degree of mobility, and were permitted to circulate within the confines of the then Gazankulu homeland. This data came from the respondents who formed part of the first waves of war refugees, dating back to 1986¹². They also mentioned the efforts of Chief Minister Ntsanwisi's government to sensitise communities in the surrounding villages to accommodate and protect the Mozambican refugee communities as fellow brothers. This was partly due to their common language, Shangaan/Tsonga, and as Steinberg (2005:4-5) proposes, mutual sympathy between the two groups due their shared economic plight (Polzer, 2009:99-100; cf. Chapter 1). At a much later stage, this security and assurance was strengthened with the issuing of a non-citizen South African green identity book for refugees who chose to remain in South Africa that came about through the intergovernmental agreement between South Africa and Mozambique (cf. 3.1.14).

As discussed in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.2), from the *missio Dei* perspective, God is in the process of bringing people to His *koinonia* (cf. 2:12). The Word of God makes clear that there is no "strangers" within the context of the nation of Israel. The theoretical concept of protection for asylum seekers is given in the Torah, to ensure that those whose lives are threatened are given protection (Num. 35:6, cf. 2.23.3).

The findings are further confirmed by God's acceptance and protection of refugees and the marginalised (Ex. 22:1-24). He embraces those who take refuge in Him (Ps. 9:9); He is a refuge to the oppressed. Furthermore, God reminded Israel upon entering the Promised Land to have a "heart of stranger", i.e. to have sympathy for strangers, having once had the same experience in Egypt (Lev. 23:9) (cf. 2.11; 2.18). The Torah prohibited Israel from oppressing a stranger; they had to learn from their oppression in Egypt (Ex. 23:9). It is apparent that Israel's oppression in the land of Egypt served as a valuable lesson in compassion for those who would go on to find refuge in the Promised Land. The book of Ruth relates God's active protection to refugees on the basis of His *hesed*, i.e. His steadfast love, expressed in His action through others to bring relief to both Naomi and Ruth, who became strangers in each other's country, and Boaz who offer security and protection to both of them (cf. 2.17; 4.1.6).

5.8.1.2. Theme Two: Acceptance and Integration

"When it was decided that refugees should be given IDs; I then felt that I am also considered a person together with our wives and children."

¹² Interviews with A. Sidumo (Aug. 2015), J. Hlungwane (Aug. 2015) and J. Chauke (Aug, 2015)

“The first group [of refugees] was accommodated by the chief in the villages; they were protected and were given clothes. It was not easy because we were foreigners; but we were helped by the protection they gave to us.”

This theme concurs with Bosch’s (1991:10, 391) assertion that in *missio Dei*, God reveals Himself to the world as God who first loved the world and who is involved in the affairs of the world. God loves the stranger and made provision for their acceptance. God will reward those who take care of strangers (Matt. 25:34-35) (cf. Chapter 2; 2.2; 2:22). God ensures a *koinonia* where there is no distinction between the elect Israel and the stranger, within the nation of Israel (cf. 2.23.5; 3.1.18; 3.1.9). God advocates care for the displaced in the community of Israel and He “watches over the strangers” (Ps. 146:9) (cf. 2.19).

Acceptance and security were, therefore, other factors that helped the refugees in the Rhulani community to find healing. The first groups of refugees arrived at Xipurapureni in the late eighties, without food or any means for survival, and were later transferred to a more permanent settlement at Rhulani. They found themselves in a new environment, where nothing was familiar. The majority of refugees were in a vulnerable and insecure state. When asked “what helped you to find healing?”, they indicated that they were accepted as *vanhu* (the Tsonga word for person) and that they were accepted by the tribal authorities, who also engaged their communities in the villages to discourage acts of hostility against them. They were instead reminded that they were fellow brothers, sharing common cultural ties.¹³ The same response was also confirmed by the former chief¹⁴ and Paul in recounting their ordeal as they moved to their final destination in the Rhulani camp.

It is important to note that the response from the target group in the empirical study slightly differ from that of the theoretical analysis on the Mozambican refugees made during the literature review. This relates to derogatory terms levelled against this population group. Respondents did not express much concern about this matter (cf. 3.1.17), which may be due to the fear to voice such concerns or, as previously noted, traditional leaders made some effort to discourage verbal attacks to foreign nationals.

5.8.1.3. Theme Three: Prayer and Word of God

The following themes about the usefulness of prayer in their situation transpired:

“Many of us did not know God, it is true that war is a painful experience, but it pushed us out of our homes and brought us here to know God.”

¹³ Interviews made with Jonathan and Julius Hlungwani

¹⁴ Interview made with Julius Mathusse

“Whenever a brother [i.e. refugees] was hurting inside, there were prayers brought to that particular refugee to encourage him although we had no material resources to assist him.”

The above corresponds to Bosch (1991:391) stating that the church mission’s enterprise is beyond church planting, but is in displaying the love of God by being at service to the *missio Dei* and being a witness of Jesus Christ (cf. 2.2).

Respondents described how the preaching of the Word and prayers played a role in healing refugees from traumatic experiences and doing the groundwork for caregiving and an awareness of their need for God. Pastors from the Baptist Church, also known as “Xurhani Baptist” and other surrounding churches came on a regular basis to preach the message to lead them to the knowledge of God’s love and empathise with them through their difficult times. These prayers were conducted on a regular basis, prior to food distribution, and they at times provided medication to treat sick refugees (cf. 3.1.19.2).

The basis-theoretical principle here is that God’s Word, *dabar*, provides healing and wholeness (Gen. 43:28; 2 Sam. 20:9). It has the power to counsel and restore relationship with God (cf. 4.1.4). God has concern for the healing of the displaced or fugitives (cf. 4.1.5). The Lord Jesus Christ is the living Word (John 1:1, 14) and invites all who are burdened to come to Him to find relief (Matt. 11:28).

The Holy Spirit, as Counsellor, works in both the counsellor and counselee (cf. Chapter 4) in searching for causes of hurt that could not be identified with the usual tools of counselling. He is the Counsellor (John 14:26) that Jesus Christ promises to the disciples with troubled hearts (John 14:1). Who does not bear witness of Himself, but who empowers and bear witness of Jesus Christ reveals God in people to restore relationship between people and God through salvation (Heb. 1:1-3; 1 John 1:2; cf. 2.5). The effectiveness of prayer and the Word of God is made possible through the work of the Holy Spirit.

From the meta-theoretical perspective, refugees find encouragement in listening to the Word of God. Prayer is of equal value during counselling, because it affords the hurt the opportunity to vent their pain before the Lord. Monroe and Schwab (2009:128) note that “Christian counsellors participate with God’s healing activity when they point the broken to the one who is and will continue to restore his creation” (cf. 4.1.4).

5.8.1.4. Theme Four: Burial of Loved Ones

The group all mentioned interventions made when one of their loved ones died:

“We were provided a place to bury our loved ones when they passed on.”

“The Roman Catholic Church helped most in assisting refugees when they went to hospital for treatment, they helped when they died, and they also helped with the burial process.”

This theme correlates with the non-discursive approach to therapy proposed by Englund (1998:1167, 1172), who points out that assistance to the refugee upon the death of loved ones has a therapeutic effect (cf. Chapter 1; 3.1).

Respondents mentioned the help received from churches, the Roman Catholic Church in particular (also called *Murhoma*), in providing transport for the sick to the hospital and coffins for the burial of loved ones upon their death. It was a great source of relief to the bereaved and the refugee community as a whole, given their lack of means to undertake such matters. The separate burial site the tribal chief of Mavambe and Shitlhelani set aside for the refugees, in close proximity to the Rhulani settlement, was also of tremendous value. Many considered it an act of love, but others deemed it discriminatory not to offer them access to the main cemetery.

From the basis-theoretical perspective, God heals the broken-hearted and wounded (Ps. 147:3). Isaiah 53 describes the Suffering Servant as taking man's diseases on Himself, through the vicarious death on the cross. God identifies with pain and loss in the suffering and death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. Christ was the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, bearing man's punishment that he may have peace and through His scars bring healing to both spiritual and psychological wounds (Is. 53:4-5; cf. Chapter 4; 4.1.4).

5.8.1.5. Theme Five: *Diakonia* Service

“There were churches that helped us with clothes and food. They helped us a lot, because we did not have any source to get food for ourselves.”

“They also treated us with the medication they provided. This is what made our hearts find healing.”

The value of this kind of service, Grundmann (2006:374) explains, is confirmed in the importance Jesus attached to caring for the body by connecting salvation with healing (cf. 4.1.9). Bosch's (1991:399-400) contends that Christians are in a better position to alleviate poverty, misery, sickness and other social crises and by doing so they “mediate salvation”. He also asserts that the Gospel is not meant for man's soul alone, but for man as a whole (Bosch, 1980:212; cf. 4; 4.1.10).

The basis-theoretical perspective portrays feeding the stranger, fatherless and the widows as an act of charity that yields blessings from the Lord (Deut. 14:28-29; cf. Chapter 2). God provided sustenance to Elijah in his moments of greatest distress as refugee (1 Kings 19:4-8; cf. Chapter 4: 4.1.7; 4.1.13). The Lord Jesus Christ showed love for the poor and the needy. His gospel was not based on words alone, but was expressed in deeds as well.

The interviews during the empirical study revealed the refugees deep gratitude for the assistance they received in terms of food and medication. They fondly recalled the mealie-meal and soup that came to be known as *khupukani* or *gubugani* (cf. 3.1.19.1).

The establishment of a school/crèche, called Rhulani Play Centre, inside the settlement assisted children of refugees with their early learning development. The crèche buildings also served as school for the adult literacy programme.¹⁵ As previously mentioned, many refugee parents (just like most African impoverished communities) find hope for their predicament in the education of their children. The parents of children who remained undocumented expressed great concern over the inability to obtain social welfare or the more recent children's grant. They also feared that their children would not be able to progress with their education beyond Grade 12, since admission to the exams is refused without proper identification.

The findings on this theme, from the empirical study, underscore the importance to proclaim the Gospel in a way that is sensitive to all the social needs of people in a "ministry to the Whole of man" or a "holistic" ministry, which is defined as "*diakonia*" (Nordstokke, 1999:163; cf. 3.7.1).

5.8.1.6. Theme Six: Refugees Involvement

"We fundraised money and started a care group called Lulekani Support Group...we started a garden of maize and other vegetables...we distributed food [to refugees] even to other refugees as far as Lulekani in Phalaborwa."

The respondents related that as a result of various interventions from both the church and NGO's they later undertook the pro-active role of securing the camp against intruders and also established a garden, from funds available to them, to grow vegetables that could be sold to raise funds for the purchase of other types of food that was equally distributed among the members of the settlement.

This initiative emulates how God addresses the ailment of depression, as in the case of Elijah. God did not only provide in his needs, but also entrust him with responsibility that he may grow

¹⁵ Interview with principal of Rhulani Play Centre

from the adversity that caused him to flee (Howell & Howell, 2008: 558; Baker, 2002:4; cf. 4.1.7).

They formed a committee, headed by the ndhuna (chief), who served as intermediary with the tribal authorities and conveyed instructions from the tribal authorities as well as mediating solutions, whenever conflict arose between the parties or individuals within the settlement.

One of the best approaches to support the poor and economically disadvantaged, such as refugees, is to equip them with the tools that will enable them to look after themselves (Adeney, 1984:43). This way, refugees also improve their skills and gain self-confidence and self-esteem (Fernandes, 2015:248, 253, 258; cf. 4.1.7).

5.9. SUMMARY

Chapter 5 comprises the empirical study with the refugees at the Rhulani refugee settlement with the purpose of exploring the factors that contributed to healing the trauma they endured during the civil war in Mozambique that claimed many lives. Although 13 respondents participated in the study, a saturation point was reached in which the researcher was confident that the findings already obtained were representative of the experiences of all refugees and adequately addressed the themes the researcher encountered during his years of contact with this community. Aside from the 13 respondents, four representatives from various stakeholders that offered aid to the refugees in their difficult days were interviewed. The following themes stood out from the data analysis:

The refugees' need for security and protection was addressed, for which they showed true appreciation. The gestures of love and welcoming on the part of local chiefs and some of the communities in the villages gave them a sense of acceptance and integration, for which were tremendously grateful. Prayer and the ministry of the Word of God also formed a positive contribution that gave them strength and hope in life. The support they received from churches upon the loss of loved ones was of particular value, just as the *diakonia* service provided by various stakeholders in the form of food and medication. This was an expression of love and compassion that made a difference in their lives and contributed to their healing and wholeness.

Findings from the empirical studies also indicate the synergetic effort made by various stakeholders in order to help refugees enjoy wellness. Firstly, it reflects that the *missio Dei* is not confined to the church alone; God engages both Christian and non-Christian to fulfil His plan for Creation. The intervention made in all modalities was an expression of God's love for the refugees and the marginalised, thus revealing God's work in communities.

CHAPTER 6 FORMULATION OF AN APPLICABLE PARADIGM

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapters lay the foundation and background of the conditions at the Rhulani refugee settlement, as a result of displacement brought about by the past civil war in Mozambique, and for offering Christian counselling as participation in the *Missio Dei*. The civil war in Mozambique forced thousands to abandon their homes and flee to South Africa. In the early eighties the number of Mozambican refugees in South Africa was estimated between 250,000 and 350,000 (Steinberg, 2005:1). During 1996, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) amnesty allowed Mozambican refugees to apply for permanent residency in South Africa (Hargreaves *et al.*, 2004:1272; cf. Chapter 1). Most of these refugees returned home, when the war ended, but a great number of them chose to remain behind and were granted permanent residency (Steinberg, 2005:15; cf. Chapter 1).

The trauma of war and other psycho-social distress experienced by the refugees who chose to remain, both at the time of fleeing and since settling in South Africa, created the need to formulate a counselling approach from the perspective of the *missio Dei*.

Based on themes six themes from the empirical study in Chapter 5 (cf. 5.1.13) conducted with the refugees at the Rhulani refugee settlement, the literature study and Scriptural perspectives, this chapter seeks to formulate a paradigm for counselling refugees embedded in the *missio Dei*. Refugees fall under the category of what De Villiers and De Villiers (2005:10, 12) coin “the at-risk groups” of society, due to their vulnerable situation.

6.2. DEFINITION OF A PARADIGM

The term paradigm in this research refers to a model or pattern¹⁶ for counselling refugees, within the context of the *missio Dei*. This paradigm may serve as approach to counselling in any other similar refugee situation.

¹⁶ Oxford English Dictionary online. <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/learner/paradigm>

6.3. SUMMARY OF KEY ELEMENTS

A brief summary of key elements established from the preceding chapters are as follows:

Chapter 2 provides a definition of *missio Dei* and a historical exegesis of Scripture, as Biblical basis for the *missio Dei*. *Missio Dei* is the Latin for “the sending of God”, wherein the *Trinitatis Dei* is seen as being actively involved in an on-going mission to creation. God creates and re-creates, preserves, directs and rules over His creation, as opposed to deism that sees God as creating the universe but no longer in touch or involved with His creation (cf. 2.2). The *missio Dei* and *missiones ecclesiae* (the mission of the church) interact, in which the primary goal of the church’s mission(s) comprises the church’s participation and service in God’s work. The chapter also particular emphasises the *missio Dei* to refugees and strangers within the nation of Israel as the elect nation. God reveals His love for this marginalised group (cf. 2.6, 2.8, 2.10).

Chapter 3 describes the circumstances of the refugees at the Rhulani refugee settlement. It highlights the stressors of housing, legal status and the personal experiences of refugees. The definitions of terminology regarding rights and matters of human dignity are set out as it relates to refugees as bearers of God’s image that would ensure the equal rights of all members of society. The chapter also presents the proposition that God has a special gospel message to their particular situation.

Chapter 4 defines Christian counselling embedded in the *missio Dei*. It examines the concept of care and healing from a Biblical perspective, as it applies to God’s healing and Jesus Christ’s interaction with people during his earthly ministry. Particular passages of Scripture serve to demonstrate the importance of a holistic approach to healing.

Chapter 5 presents the empirical research made on the ground with a group of refugees and it reveals six themes pertinent to the importance of counselling, healing and care of refugees. They are as follows: (1) matters of security and protection; (2) acceptance and integration; (3) prayer and ministry of the Word of God; (3) intervention in the burial of loved ones; (4) assistance form stakeholders in terms of sustenance and medication; (5) refugees involvement in improving their circumstances; and finally, (6) *diakonia* service, i.e. assistance with food, medication and clothes.

The following section provides a research summary, followed by the proposed model for Christian counselling as sharing in the *missio Dei*.

6.4. SCRIPTURAL AND LITERATURE BASIS FOR MISSIO DEI TO THE REFUGEES

It is clear from both the Old Testament and New Testament that God has a mission towards the well-being of refugees, the vulnerable and people on the margins of society. The long history of this is well founded in the Bible (cf. 2.11). The examples of Adam and Eve; Abraham, Lot and his family; Jacob and his family; and Ruth and Elimelech and his family are among the refugees of the Bible who had to adjust to a new environment (cf. 2.12, 2.15, 2, 2.17).

Scripture reflects God's hand in the *missio Dei* to refugees. He seeks to restore them and at times, steer the course of events in their lives to fulfil His purpose (cf. 2.23.1, 2.23.2, 2.23.3, 2.23.4, 2.23.5, 2.23.6).

It is also notable that from the Scriptural perspective believers are strangers (*xeno*) living in a temporary state, called by God for *missio Dei* by proclaiming the Good News to the oppressed and that their spiritual knowledge should give them a deeper understanding and sympathy for physical strangeness. They are as such equal participants in the responsibility of the physical Israel of welcoming and taking care of strangers (cf. 2.5, 2.21, 2. 22).

God has identified Himself with strangers in the world through the incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ as the living Word that brings the good news of salvation and liberation from the bondage of sin, which is the main factor of the marginalisation of individuals (cf. 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.11).

The Holy Spirit's role as part of the *missio Dei* has in mind the plight of the marginalised, such as refugees; He thus empowers Jesus Christ and engages in the *missio Dei* to the disadvantaged and dispossessed of society, particularly in relation to Luke (cf. 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3).

The task of Christian counselling and caregiving is founded in offering support to the hurt (cf. 2.1.2); an important part of the *missio Dei* to the refugees, because it speaks to people's trauma (cf. 4.1.3). God provides a holistic approach to healing, showing care for all the dimensions of man and refugees in particular (cf. 4.1.4, 4.1.10, 4.1.12).

Scripture presents God's works of healing the hurt and displaced, in which He seeks to restore them that they may become functional individuals in their communities. Examples of these are Naomi, Ruth, Elijah and David (cf. 4.1.7, 4.1.8, 4.1.6).

The church has a mandate to be proactive in reaching out to people that are hurt, as a way of participating in the *missio Dei* (cf. 4.1.13; 4.1.14).

The literature review indicated the great influx of refugees in South Africa as well as the SADC region as a whole. It has also revealed the global scope of the phenomenon that *inter alia* demonstrates the need for the psychological care of such individuals (cf. Chapter 1, 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 3.5.4.1, 3.5.4.2, 3.5.4.3). There is a significant need to formulate a counselling approach pertinent to displacement from a Christian perspective that could be applied locally, in the South African context, and elsewhere.

Findings from the empirical studies revealed six key themes that are helpful to formulate a paradigm for counselling amongst refugees, as part of the *missio Dei*; to guide them towards healing and becoming functional in their personal lives and productive members in the receiving communities.

6.5. FORMULATING COUNSELING GUIDELINES ON THEMES THAT AROSE FROM THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

6.5.1. Security and Protection

It is essential to ensure a secure and safe counselling environment for refugees, especially for this population group (cf. 5.1.14). Feeling threatened or unwanted by the receiving communities and the fear of being deported to their places of origin (cf. 5.1.15, 3.6.1) has a truly detrimental effect on refugees. It was clear from visits the researcher made to the settlement and as noted from the empirical study that refugees remain suspicious in any situation and particularly in the presence of unfamiliar individuals. Asking questions immediately places them on the defensive, impeding communication. Most of the refugees would hide or stay away from an appointment, made to enquire about life in the settlement, apparently in fear of being arrested or deported. This fear was especially intense with refugees who, although they were genuine refugees, did not have the legal documents to remain in the country.

The above findings provide a number of guidelines for making refugees feel safe and secure during counselling. The counsellor needs to build a rapport with the refugee by assuring a safe relationship with the counsellor by creating a friendly atmosphere through casual visits to them and a proper introduction of the counsellor to reduce fear. The counsellor should educate the refugees on their rights, particularly of *non-refoulment*. Refugees are protected under the right to *non-refoulment*, meaning that refugees or asylum seekers are not to be forcibly returned to places where their lives and freedom would be threatened (Lauterpacht & Bethlehem, 2001:171; cf. 3.2).

The counsellor should inform refugees of the support services available to them; for example, the role of Home Affairs, the need to apply for asylum seeker status and the duty of the police to protect (not harass) them. He should also encourage interactions with local communities, in order to build friendships and discourage hostility, demonstrated in derogatory terms from either side (cf. 3.6.1). In this particular situation, the inclusion of Shangaan in local radio dramas proved effective in creating mutual appreciation and acceptance of their cultural diversity (cf. 3.5.4.1).

6.5.2. Acceptance and Integration

The interviews revealed the importance of acceptance and integration in the receiving communities to the target group, who linked it to their value as individuals - “vanhu” (cf. 3.5.4.3, 5.1.15). Being considered “persons”, regardless of their nationality, was therapeutic to the refugees.

These human needs of the refugees correspond to the basis-theoretical perspective that obliged Israel to accommodate strangers in the Promised Land and to treat them the same as the people of Israel (Num. 15:16; cf. 2.16.1, 2.16.2, 2.16.3, 2.16.4, 2.16.6). According to Bosch (1980:52), strangers were to be welcomed without reservation within the community of Israel.

The counsellor addresses matters related to acceptance and integration amongst refugees by accepting all people, regardless of their salvation status and on the basis of they being created in God’s image and object of God’s love (Anderson, 2010:31, 84; cf. 2.6). God’s love can also find expression in providing them shelter, if necessary, in cooperation with other stakeholders.

A sense of belonging is vital, from a meta-theoretical perspective, and this need going unfulfilled leads to unhealthy relationships in their lives (Taormina & Gao, 2013:158; cf. 3.6.1). In the case of the refugees at Rhulani, this need was met by providing a place to stay as symbol of welcome. Tribal authorities arranged accommodation, eventually settling at Rhulani refugee settlement. As previously mentioned in regard to acceptance and integration (cf. 5.1.15), the surrounding communities need to be prepared to welcome refugees and integrate them into the villages. This has proven to be a success endeavour with the Mozambican refugees of Shangaan/Tonga descent (cf. 3.61), who wish to do so. The counselling approach should seek out receiving communities and educate them on their responsibility, in terms of God’s care and love for the stranger and refugee (cf. 2.7.2, 2.16).

6.5.3. Prayer and the Ministry of the Word

The empirical study also identified prayer and the sharing of God's Word as important factors for laying the groundwork for in-depth counselling, in *missio Dei*, and bringing about healing (cf. 3.6.2, 5.1.16). God's Word and prayer are essential to Christian counselling, in the context of refugees, to create awareness of God's love and fellowship with Him. The Word offers a therapeutic message to the hearts of refugees and the basis-theoretical principle points to God as the Healer of both people and the rest of creation (cf. 2.4.3, 2.5.1., 2.5.2, 4.1.4, 4.1.5, 4.1.9). The counsellor should also create the opportunity for refugees to share the insight they have gained from God's Word with each other (cf. 5.1.16).

Anderson (2010:132-133) explains that the Word of God can be used as the "hermeneutical moment", by employing selected stories that relate to counselees experiences (cf. 3.7.2). Sharing or *kufakaza* (to testify) is an approach in which refugees can interact and encourage one another from the Word and from personal experiences on the path to recovery in a group setting (cf. 5.1.16). Such gatherings also provide a platform to vent traumatic experiences.

Prayer has the two-fold value of providing refugees a forum in which to pour out their burdens and hurt before God and also a way for the counsellor to prepare the hearts of people for counselling, guided by the Holy Spirit (cf. 4.1.2, 4.1.9, 4.1.11).

6.5.4. Burial of Loved Ones

Death is the painful loss of loved ones and a truly traumatic experience for family left behind. When death occurs suddenly, it leaves behind shock and complicated grief. Family members are forced to adjust after the loss (Clements *et al.*, 2004:149-150). The meta-theoretical perspective has shown that the funeral process is instrumental in achieving emotional relief. The funeral proceedings provide mourners an opportunity to come to terms with the reality of loss and to express their feelings as they walk the path of healing. It also gives them a sense of closure that they may go on with life (O'Rourke *et al.*, 2011:730, 733; cf. Chapter 1; 3.6.2, 5.1.17).

Some refugees shared their painful experiences of loss of relatives and friends, during the civil war. One female respondent recounted her memories of the war's brutality and she was particularly concerned about the whereabouts of her loved one, greatly distressed by the uncertainty of whether she was still alive or not (cf. 3.5.4.4).

The empirical study revealed how assistance and intervention during death of a loved one amongst the refugees brought relief to the families left behind. The African perspective of

family, which is also the culture of the refugees at Rhulani settlement, includes both the living and the dead (cf. 3.6.2). Burial is a therapeutic process that offers peace to those left behind. The process of bidding farewell to those that have passed on plays a vital role in the psychological well-being of refugees.

Having a place to bury deceased family members and friends in the camp contributed to the healing of the refugees. It became an experience they remembered and appreciated, with special reference to refugees who passed on in the Rhulani settlement.¹⁷ The tribal leaders played a crucial role in providing a proper burial place and the church assisted in providing burial services, coffins and food for the burial ceremony (cf. 3.6.2, 5.1.17).

Interviewees (especially Paul, Makamo, Julius and others) attached enormous value to the assistance provided by the church.¹⁸ The chief at the nearby village of Shitlhelani arranged a separate piece of land that served as cemetery for the refugees.

The counselling or caregiver perspective on support to bereaved refugees, during the time of loss of loved ones, has to be of benefit to the process of healing. The counsellor or caregiver has to be sensitive to the implications inherent to displacement and the associated financial burden. They have also resettled in a new environment, with little or no knowledge of where to obtain assistance in the event of the death of a loved one.

The cultural background of the refugees dictates that showing support or sympathy for the bereaved, also known as *ku rilisa*, normally entails a monetary or food contribution to the burial process. A counselling process has to bear in mind such therapeutic aspects or “non-discursive” therapy, proposed by Englund (1998), on the same population of refugees (cf. Chapter 1, 5.1.17). This would include providing the necessary elements for the burial of loved ones, particularly coffins. Such measures “draw attention to poverty and insecurity as major obstacles to refugees’ ability to regain their well-being” (Englund, 1988:1168, cf. 3.6). Apart from the contacting of spirits, which contradicts Christian doctrine (Is. 8:19, 2 Kings 21:6), the rest of his propositions are greatly relevant to the refugee community. Englund (1998:1172) points out that aside from cultural rituals, humanitarian assistance alleviates the pressure of bearing the cost of proper burial and thus contributes to their well-being.

Lastly, findings from the empirical studies tend to deviate from earlier remarks from general conversations with the refugees that felt alienated by the fact that they were allocated a separate burial place from that used by local communities (cf. 3.6.2, 5.1.17). However, the

¹⁷ Interview with Paul Chauke, Jonathan Chauke and Makamo (2013-2015)

¹⁸ Interview with Makamu, Paul Chauke and Julius (2013-2015)

feeling identified from the interviewed in the empirical study has shown that the gratitude of refugees for the provision of burial place seemed to have surpassed negative feeling they had for being provided a separate place to bury their loved ones from their counterparts.

6.5.5. *Diakonia* Services

As previously mentioned, sharing food with strangers or guests has a deeper meaning from an African perspective. According to Chester (2011:13-14, 22), Jesus' ministry to the marginalised most often occurred over a meal to demonstrate His acceptance. He, furthermore, used meals to teach about salvation and future judgement. He further points that "our attitude to the marginalized is to be shaped by our experience of God's grace to us". (Chester, 2011: 82) (cf. 3.7.1).

The *missio Dei* to the refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement involved acts of *diakonia* (cf. 3.7, 3.7.1). These acts of compassion were instrumental to the wellbeing of the refugees, as noted in Chapter 5 (cf. 5.1.18). This reinforces the premise that the message of the Gospel has to address the person as a whole, by caring for his physical needs as well (cf. 4.1.10). *Diakonia* is in essence a service to the Lord Jesus Christ, expressed in ministry to people needs (cf. 4.1.20). From the basis-theoretical perspective, feeding the stranger, fatherless and the widows is an act of charity that yields blessings from the Lord (Deut. 14:28-29) (cf. 2.10, 2.15, 2.16.4). God provided food and water to Elijah in his most sorrowful moments as refugee (1 Kings 19:4-8; cf. 4; 4.1.7).

The Lord Jesus Christ showed love for the poor and the needy. His gospel was not based on words alone, but was expressed in deeds as well. He prayed and multiplied bread to feed five thousand people and he also engaged His disciples in the process of feeding the needy (Luke 9:13, 14, 16), assuring them of the reward to anyone who would give a cup of water to the least, i.e. the forgotten and marginalised in society (cf. 2.16.4; Matt. 10:42). The command to care extends to the New Testament church. The command to looking after the widow and the fatherless or the vulnerable is equated to "pure" religion or sound faith (Jas. 1:27) (cf. 3.7.1). From the meta-theoretical perspective, Maslow presents physiological needs such as food, water as first level of needs in his hierarchy that individuals needs in order to function properly (Taormina & Gao, 2013:156-157) (cf. 3.7.1., 5.1.18).

The process of helping refugees to recover from traumatic experiences of war includes the counsellor's or caregiver's sensitiveness to such physical needs for food, clothes and their state of health to ensure their wholeness. This was noticeable on various interventions by churches

and NGO's in providing food and medication to those who needed it most (cf. 3.7.1). It was a form of sharing God's love that had touched the lives of the refugees.

Counselling intervention in a refugee situation, where most often the conditions of living are precarious and where people need sustenance, helping those undergoing trauma with their physical necessities is an indispensable aspect of *diakonia*. The empirical studies with refugees have shown that such acts of compassion were therapeutic to them (cf. 5.1.18). Counselling as *missio Dei* to refugees should prioritise the physical necessities of the refugees.

It is important to note that the counsellor needs to guard against mere humanitarian interventions that do not lead refugees to perceive God's love and His involvement in their lives. The pattern of caregiving has to follow the Lord Jesus Christ's approach of ministry to people. The counsellor should, however, be aware that humanitarian interventions should not be ends in themselves. However, as Jesus Christ's approach, meeting refugees' physical needs should be connected to the spiritual necessity of the refugees (cf. 2.6, 4.1.4, 4.1.10, 4.1.12). The *missio Dei* is never complete if people do not develop a special relationship with the Creator and the initiator of mission, which is the core of *missio Dei* (cf. 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10). Those who provided food to the refugees often paired it with sharing of God's Word and prayers, which provided awareness of God's love. Addressing people's spiritual needs always formed part of priding in their physical needs (cf. 5.1.18). To some he advised to sin no more, to the Samaritan woman he pointed to the necessity she had for water of life and to the multitude who benefited by his bread multiplication he showed them their need for the bread of life which is him (John 4:1-10).

6.5.6. Refugees Involvement

Christian counselling, embedded in the *missio Dei*, should seek to eliminate chronic dependence in the lives of the refugees. The goal of various interventions should promote a return to wholeness in refugees, including guiding them to responsibility for their own lives. Once circumstances have reached a degree of normality, refugees can then be encouraged to return to their homes in Mozambique without any creating a sense of coercing (cf. Chapter 1). A number of other measures can be taken to empower those who choose to stay in their new environment, also found in the empirical study (cf. 5.1.19).

The basis-theoretical perspective also informs the research in the sense that God involved traumatised people to bring about healing, making them part of their own recovery. In the case of Elijah, He assigned him a task as part of the healing process (cf. Chapter 4). He sent him to anoint Jehu to kingship (1 Kings 19:15-17). He was assigned to anoint King Hazael as king

over Syria (1 Kings: 19:15), Jehu king over Israel (1 Kings 19:16) and Elisha as future successor to Elijah. Naomi and Ruth took a journey back to Bethlehem for social, spiritual and psychological support as part of recovery journey (cf. 4.1.6, 4.1.7).

From the meta-theoretical perspective, counselling that facilitate healing, well-being and growth should *inter alia* be “supportive”, “psycho-educative” and “empowering”. It must move refugees from marginalisation into reclaiming their dignity and make them aware of their right to a decent life. People on the margins of society are empowered not only towards coping with psychological traumas, but find ways of dealing with the situation they are facing (Manzanilla-Manalo & Manalo, 2014:112) (cf. 4.1.7).

As the refugees gradually regained their wholeness, they became involved in managing the daily events of the settlement by forming committee soon after they arrived. This committee liaised with the local tribal authorities on a regular basis to ensure the efficient functioning of the settlement. The steering committee ensured order in the settlement by *inter alia* clearing vegetation along paths, particular those that led to schools to ensure the safety of the children. They also prohibit the sale of alcohol inside the settlement.¹⁹

The refugees also formed the Hluvukani Support Group to address food security, once donations gradually ceased, by establishing vegetable gardens in the vicinity of the settlement. Proceeds from the produce served to purchase other food necessities. They also shared part of the produce with refugee settlements in other areas of the province, such as Lulekani in Phalaborwa.

The Word of God was proclaimed within the camp by visiting pastors from different churches and members of the *Xurhani* Project, which provided both food and spiritual healing. This prompted some members of the refugee community to take the initiative of rising above their painful circumstances, by forming a fellowship inside the settlement that would offer mutual encouragement prayer and the Word of God.

One of the interviewees (interview with Antonio Shitlango²⁰) remarked that although the spiritual ministry offered by outside church leaders, they felt that they could benefit more from such ministry by starting an inner fellowship that could identify with the problems of the group. They, therefore, established a Christian fellowship nearby where people could share their struggles and experiences.

¹⁹ Interview with Makamo, Chauke (2013) and stakeholders (2015)

²⁰ Interview with Shitlango (2013-2015)

The following should be considered:

- Assistance to refugees needs to take a holistic approach; otherwise the well-being of refugees may not be adequately addressed. Upon arrival they need to be provided with suitable accommodation and sustenance and also made to feel welcome in the new environment. This helps them through the grieving process. It is vital to ensure that all stakeholders are available and are contributing, as needed. This needs to be properly coordinated according to their area of competence, e.g. the food provider; community leaders such as chief; the church and law enforcers.
- It is imperative that physical and/or post-traumatic disorder is identified early on to offer the required assistance timeously.
- It is recommendable that traditional leaders; religious ministers or clerics and other influential people in the community begin immediately with the process of sensitising and encouraging people to welcome and show compassion for refugees. Churches and other organisations can organise group visits to refugee settlements and share their belongings with them, as a way to build mutual love. Receiving communities should be made aware that there are a range of goods and skills that can be exchanged to their mutual benefit. This would eradicate the misperception that refugees and foreigners are nothing but a strain on resources and competition for employment.
- In order to encourage a healthy community, the refugees should be encouraged to form a committee and appoint a spokesperson to ensure the efficient management of the refugee settlement and discourage lawlessness. This chief or liaison then serves as intermediary between the leadership of the receiving community and that of the refugees.
- Establishing support groups have to be encouraged to create the opportunity for sharing traumatic experiences and encouragement, which could also include prayer and sharing the Word of God.
- Refugees should be urged and perhaps be financially assisted to integrate into the community, to avoid the settlement from deteriorating over years of existence and becoming a harbouring place for people who are not genuinely (this is a personal observation of the researcher in reference to the Rhulani settlement).

6.6. SUMMARY

It is the purpose of this research to formulate a paradigm for counselling that is embedded in the *missio Dei*. It is an approach to counselling that sees the importance of a holistic ministry to the disadvantaged, with particular reference to the Rhulani refugee settlement, to identify the benefits of various interventions that may be integrated to provide care and healing to the refugees as partaking in the *missio Dei*. Such caregiving correlates with God's work of restoration of His creation. Scripture analysis has reflected God's holistic approach to healing, an example caregivers need to emulate in addressing the challenges faced and to provide effective solutions to the problems of refugees. The counsellor or caregiver has to take into account the following matters, identified at the Rhulani refugee settlement:

Security and protection are of great value to the refugees. Assuring their safety and protection is a way to address the psychological and social needs amongst the receiving population. Efforts may be made in an integrated way, in which various sectors of society could ensure the security of the refugees. In a tribal society, chiefs have the important role of urging communities to care for the refugees.

Refugees need acceptance and integration that they may feel valued in the receiving community. This should be informed by the fact that all people are made in God's image, including the displaced community of refugees. Prayer and sharing God's Word are vital for building fellowship with God and fellow humans. Refugees also need support upon the death of loved ones. Christians and caregivers can share resources to assist with the grieving process, which may form part of *diaconal* services in which the church extends its love to the needy and showing compassion for the destitute. Equally important is empowering the refugee to learn to stand on their own feet and take care of themselves. Refugees have an important role to play in their own integration, by applying their skills for personal care and contributing to the development of their community.

The Christian counsellor must always remain aware that God urges His people to be open to strangers and live in harmony with the elect nation. The church, as the spiritual Israel, has the responsibility to embrace refugees that are hurt and are in need of love and protection. The Christian counsellor, as part of the church, promotes care and healing as he shares in the *missio Dei*. He has to be guided by the fact that in a new relationship, made possible by Christ, there is no bond slave in the new Israel. The caregiver bears the attitude of Christ, who set aside His divine rights in order to stand beside the marginalised of society and offer them the

opportunity to live an abundant life, in a welcoming environment where they can develop their potential.

It has been established from this chapter that all aspects of assistance offered to the refugees in the Rhulani settlement as well as the proclaiming and sharing of the Word of God have enabled the kind of trusting relationship that is needed for in-depth counselling. It highlights the importance of works of compassion as fundamental to their healing, as they experience God's love through human intervention at various levels.

Counselling, anchored in the *missio Dei*, seeks to empower the disadvantaged to become more independent and put the trauma they experienced behind them, to once again be functional human beings. Interventions aided this community to a certain extent to stand on their feet and find solutions to their problems, despite continued difficulties. Counselling, as the *missio Dei*, is a type of caregiving that empowers individuals to share in the *missio Dei* and heal.

CHAPTER 7 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Mass displacement is a global phenomenon that puts social strain on both the sending and receiving countries. The growing number of war refugees and migrants has become a reality, affecting many areas of the African continent and extending to the global community where no nation is exempt from the effects of involuntary migration and its implications for society. Such an influx of refugees poses serious challenges to the receiving community and the refugees themselves.

This research particularly focuses on the refugees that fled the devastated communities of war-torn Mozambique; thus driving thousands (mainly from the southern part of the country) to South Africa, risking electrocution by electrical fences and being mauled by wild animals along the journey. The abrupt nature of the exit and traumas of war created the necessity of devising a counselling approach that is relevant to their experiences.

The purpose of this research is to formulate a paradigm, embedded in the *missio Dei*, for counselling refugees and establishing how counselling may share in the *missio Dei*, with particular reference to the refugees at the Rhulani refugee settlement. The research seeks to offer a counselling approach that will, as part of the *missio Dei*, enable refugees to rebuild their lives.

A revelation-historical exegesis of Biblical passages was conducted to establish the *missio Dei* in terms of the refugees and the grounded theory method was used to conduct the empirical study in the refugee settlement.

The above exegesis (cf. Chapter 2) describes the involvement of the Triune God - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit - in the *missio Dei*. He is also actively recreating and building in united fellowship with the other members of the Trinity. Sin distorted God's image in man, affecting the whole of creation, and the *missio Dei* comprises the restoration of fellowship between God and man. "Mission" is the church in obedience to God's continuous work all over His creation that extends beyond the church and makes all living beings part of God's plan.

A basis-praxis for the *missio Dei* to refugees was established to reveal sin's role in displacement in both its physical and spiritual dimension, leading to the "foreignness" of God's people. Various characters from Scripture were studied the refugee perspective (such as Adam, Lot,

Ruth and all those associated with their stories), in order to discover how God addressed their plight as refugees. It also became clear from Scripture how God has made provision for the protection of refugees in the Torah and by reminding Israel how their experience as refugees in Egypt should open their hearts to strangers. They were to show compassion and offer hospitality to the strangers in their midst and allow them to participate in the worship of God in the temple.

Chapter 3 describes the conditions within the Rhulani refugee settlement in regard to housing, legal status and the psycho-social challenges they faced as case studies of these refugees overcame their challenges. The chapter provides the background to this refugee settlement and the various experiences and environmental factors that had an impact on them, thus compromising their dignity. It seeks to define the refugee, especially in terms of his human dignity as created in the image of God, to inform the care that needs to be provided.

The study presents how the intervention of various stakeholders and the church in particular is instrumental in bringing relief to refugees by means of food, medication and the Word of God.

These kinds of traumatic experiences require establishing counselling mechanisms that will promote healing, self-esteem and hope to this community. This has to be done by following a missionary approach that is holistic, in which counselling as *missio Dei* is paired with rebuilding broken lives to develop their potential for the Kingdom of God.

Chapter 4 seeks to formulate a paradigm for counselling, as partaking in the *missio Dei*. It provides an analysis of the local refugee situation, with particular focus on the problems that affected their psycho-social status in the community as a result of both the civil war as well their experiences in the Rhulani settlement. The review of the traumatic events in the lives of selected refugees from Scripture reflects the realities of being a refugee. It also reveals the proactive approach God takes to healing, either through direct intervention (as in Elijah) or by using people (as with Ruth and David). A range of healing-related terms from Scripture further elucidates God's cares for the displaced and His holistic approach to healing.

Chapter 5 describes a paradigm for counselling refugees, within the context of the *missio Dei* and in reference to the empirical study conducted among 13 respondents in the Rhulani refugee settlement. It presents the observations of the researcher during numerous visits to the settlement and the findings of the interviews, which raised six salient themes: security and protection; acceptance and integration; and prayer and the ministry of the Word of God in the settlement. Included in these themes is the assistance offered upon the burial of a loved one and *diakonia* services of providing food, medication and education to children and adults.

Chapter 6 provides a paradigm, based on the six themes found in the empirical study from which guidelines were formulated. It relates the damaging effects of mortal danger, the perception of rejection by the receiving communities and the fear of deportation to the country of origin.

From the refugees' perspective, acceptance and integration was linked to their sense of value as human beings (*vanhu*); to be considered "persons" or people with inherent value were therapeutic to the refugees. In the case of the refugees at Rhulani, this need was met through the provision of a place to stay as symbol of welcome. The shelter provided by tribal leaders, prayer and God's Word during fellowship opportunities in the camp contributed greatly towards their recovery and well-being. Refugees found comfort and consolation in the support and assistance tribal leaders and churches provided to them for the burial of deceased family members and friends. These acts of compassion (a separate graveyard, food, medication and clothes) were instrumental in the well-being of the refugees. They also regained a sense of usefulness from their involvement in finding solutions to the challenges they encountered in the settlement and by offering assistance themselves to fellow refugees in growing and sharing food.

7.1. SUMMARY OF PARADIGM

Counselling, as the *mission Dei*, in the refugee situation should realise that the well-being of refugees is a synergetic effort to be approached from a holistic perspective. The counsellor needs to be aware of the psycho-social needs that affect the refugees and engage various stakeholders to address the different needs of the refugee. The counsellor also needs to be aware that God's work extends beyond church boundaries, by using both believers and non-believers to fulfil His mission of bringing healing and wellness to the refugees.

7.2. CONCLUSION

Although this empirical study had focus on the microcosmic entity of the Rhulani refugee settlement, the findings from the various themes find universal application in relatively similar refugee situations. The first theme shows evidences of insecurity in the lives of refugees and lack of protection that caused refugees to live in state of limbo. At times this developed into fear to accept access basic needs that were made available to everyone in the context of South African laws for refugees (3.4). Such fear may have also existed due to lack of information from the part of refugees themselves thus leading to self-alienation. It could also have been genuine

fear of harassment from public servants in specific departments such as hospitals and clinics and the police.

It is thus recommended that Christian counselling as *mission Dei* should provide adequate information to the refugees with the sense of security and protection as enshrined by laws concerns refugees in the hosting country. Education and consultations need to be established to empower refugees with adequate knowledge on matters affecting their lives and strengthen their inner value as individual made in God's image. Secondly an aggressive work to workshop and educate people who have strong influence within the community concerning the rights of refugees has to be done. This endeavour should include traditional leaders as they have powers to influence those who are under their sphere of authority in the village communities. By equipping them with correct knowledge they will be able to discourage negative tendencies and hostile feelings towards refugees and foreigners. Counsellors are to encourage co-existence by arranging regular visits and interaction between receiving communities and the refugee community. Counsellors are to educate refugees regarding services provided by various stakeholders.

It is also noted that although it is often hoped that refugees will return home to their country of origin as the situation normalise, this may not be the case. The Rhulani experience presented alternative solution to refugees who were uncertain about returning to their places of origin with the option of integrating in the receiving communities. Such action has a biblical support in Numbers 15:16 where God encouraged the people of Israel to accommodate strangers living amongst them. As in the Rhulani refugee situation the process should not be compulsory, yet guidance has to be given and traditional leaders or people of influence can be instrumental in negotiating mutual acceptance between hosting communities and the refugees. It is recommended that community media is used to educate people about refugees and their needs in order to combat stigma about displaced people. Within the context of the micro-study of the Rhulani refugee settlement radio drama was used and cultural traits of the refugees were introduced in stories. This was instrumental in familiarising the communities about the refugee's culture and language. This was done in amusing ways thus creating gradual acceptance from the receiving communities. It is recommended that public media and other means of communications be used to provide education about refugees and encourage discussions and debates where people can express their views and discourage violence against foreigners.

Integration may be facilitated by mutual visits and reciprocal help between nationals and foreigners and through sharing of gifts of love such as food and clothes. The tribal leaders may play a vital role in encouraging such interactions between the two communities. This would

encourage the erosion of the spirit of ubuntu which teaches that one's value depends on others wellbeing; caring for others regardless of their origin or colour is congruent to this fact.

Third, themes of prayer and sharing of God's word introduced key aspect of group counselling as a mutual exercise. It is a form of counselling that proved relevant to this community where respected figures such as religious leaders shared a word of consolation and God's love to the people and this was later replicated to the refugee community themselves as they formed prayer groups that were used to encourage one another by sharing personal experiences. This was used as way of providing mutual encouragement and healing as they shared painful experiences of the past. It is recommended that group interaction amongst refugees is encouraged as tool for mutual healing.

Another vital aspect for counselling as *missio Dei* is found on the administering of acts of compassion of *diakonia* which consisted of sharing food, medicine and assistance in times of loss of loved ones due to death (see 6.5.5.). These were instrumental in bringing healing and wellness to this community of refugees and have a universal appeal to people in displacement situations. These activities realised through concerted effort from various stakeholders both Christian and secular. It also consolidated the fact that God is at work in his creation by employing all elements available in what he created to bring healing. His Spirit is at work in a universal way in both Christians and non-Christians for the fulfilment of the *mission Dei*. It is recommended that a synergic effort be made in the process of assisting and healing destitute people such as refugees. All stakeholders are indispensable to effect healing in their through coordinate efforts. Christian counsellors are to encourage refugees to make use of available services and refer them to various service providers for necessary assistance. It is recommended that service providers make regular visits to the refugee's settlement or camp to ensure that their services are accessible to the refugees.

Lastly, displaced people should be looked at in terms of what they can contribute to themselves and to others. They are to be encouraged and use their skills and talents as a way of bringing healing to their personal lives (see theme 6.5.6.). Many refugees have developed useful skills in their home country prior to their entry in the receiving country; these skills can make positive economic contributions to the receiving communities and help them earn an income for their livelihood. This also helps in creating a sense of self-worth as they focus on positive activities as opposed from self-pity and hurting matters they experienced in the past. It is recommended that mechanisms be put in place to identify refugees that may have valuable skills; these should also help fellow refugees who lack such skills and use them for the enhancement of their community

to combat overdependence on donations. Counseling based on the *mission Dei* should encourage and oversee the implementation of these positive activities in the lives of refugees as a way to help them fulfil God's purpose for their lives even in a displaced environment.

7.3. REFLEXIVITY

I entered this research more as a participant. Although I was not a refugee, I had a great deal in common with the respondents being from the same country. I may not have directly experienced the effects of war effects, as they did, I know what it feels to lose a loved one due to war or to be isolated from friends and family in fear of attack. I know how it feels to travel on a road tense and uncertain whether I will reach my destiny safely and of living in a town where you have to queue and fight to buy a loaf of bread to survive another day, because of an economy devastated by the effects of war. I know how it feels to be teased, because of where you come from. Because we had all these aspects in common, we gained a sense of understanding each other.

Each time I interacted with them and asked questions it felt like I was interviewing myself. The fact that I share the same identity, language and past experience did make it easier for the refugees to open up and share, but it may also have influenced the data-collection process and the developing of themes in the empirical study. In certain respects my involvement was like that of a participant and not a neutral observer. Each time I interacted with them and they offered some resistance, for some unknown reason, they would become at ease with me as soon as they learned that we had travelled the same journey and had the same experiences, albeit in different ways. None of the stories they shared seemed distant, but a reunion with experiences past.

However, on another note, interaction with the target group was never easy. I used to visit the camp to see friends, before I embarked on this research project and also participated in offering assistance, with a few pastors from other churches, to the new wave of Zimbabwean refugees in the camp and arranged for their relocation in late 2001. I never thought that getting involved in a serious study with this population group would be challenging. I always considered the task of starting an empirical study as easy, but I soon discovered that it was a hard mountain to climb upon officially approaching the chief for permission to conduct research. We had a meeting with him and a number of former refugees to discuss the matter and present my request to them. After I had made my request known to them, I could sense the atmosphere had changed and no one seemed interested in being part of this project. All they agreed to at this stage was that if anyone was interested in participating, they would contact me. Time went by and no one

showed any interest. After months of efforts, I made arrangements with a few refugees but they failed to attend on various occasions (seemingly due to suspicion over the purpose of the interviews). I then managed to contact one of the former chiefs to recommend me to them and this marked the beginning of a good relationship with the community of refugees.

This process taught me a few valuable lessons. I learned to overcome my fear, as new researcher, as I ventured into a project with refugees of war. I also developed the skill of negotiation in an environment of refugees. Above all, I learned to respect them as I observed the challenges they face daily in order to make ends meet.

Lastly, as I look at the research on its entirety, I learned to involve whoever is seeking to fulfil a mission, regardless of salvation status or religious affiliation.

7.4. FURTHER RESEARCH

7.2.1. The presence of refugees in this part of the world has led to the spread of Christian churches. An estimated hundred independent churches have been established by former refugees, beyond the area of initial arrival amongst the rural South African community. One area of further research in this community of refugees would be towards the understanding of how displacement can contribute towards the propagation of new churches and how these churches develop into indigenous and contextual churches.

7.2.2. Secondly, a new wave of economic migrants have been gradually joining this community; some on a temporary basis and others for an indefinite period. This group consists of a younger generation of Mozambicans and includes children born to former refugees born in South Africa. An in-depth study on how this new generation is coping with the challenges of presumably having double identity and the struggle of living between two cultures.

7.2.3. A third area that could be vital to research amongst this community is related to the matter of forgiveness, given that the first settlers at the Rhulani camp consisted of people who experienced gross atrocities of war and that many still bear the scars caused by acts of violence and other abuses that stole from them their human dignity. A study on forgiveness and reconciliation within this community would be of great importance.

- 7.2.4. A fourth theme for further research concerns establishing guidelines for counselling the victims of xenophobia.
- 7.2.5. Research on “inter-generational trauma”, where the trauma of the parents and grandparents had an effect on the children and grandchildren, could also be of value.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure B: Interview Questions with the target group

Topic: Christian Counselling as Participation in the *Missio Dei* amongst Refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement in Limpopo, RSA

Name: Diniz Raul Soares
Student No. 22454322

Interview Questions to former Refugees at Rhulani Refugee settlement

1. Please tell me your name and surname.
2. When did you arrive in South Africa?
3. Tell me the story regarding your journey to South Africa.
4. How many were in your group?
5. What are the difficulties you encountered on the way?
6. What was the situation when you first arrived in the settlement?
7. Did you feel welcomed by the community?
8. What kind of help did you and other fellow refugees receive upon arrival?
9. Do you remember the names of people who helped you?
10. What were some of the difficult memories you carried from the journey?
11. What helped you most to find healing from the wounds of the past?
12. What else do you think helped other refugees to overcome the pains of the past?

Annexure B: Interview Questions to Service Providers

Interviewee: Diniz Raul Soares

Student No. 22454322

1. Please introduce yourself and tell us about your ministry involvement.
2. In which way have you been involved in assisting Mozambican refugees?
3. When did you start assisting refugees from Mozambique?
4. Where were the first points of arrival of the refugees?
5. How were they allocated places of settlement?
6. Do you remember the physical or psychological condition of the refugees on arrival?
7. In which areas did your organisation/church help the refugees?
8. Do you remember other organisations or churches that assisted refugees?
9. What was the area of their assistance?
10. What is your personal assessment of the impact of assistance provided by the church on the refugees?

Thank you for taking time to participate in this research.
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Annexure C



Private Bag X2046, Mmabatho
South Africa, 2735

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

INFORMED CONSENT

Dear participant

You are kindly invited to take part in a research project (doctoral thesis), entitled **Christian Counselling as Participation in the *Missio Dei* amongst Refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement in Limpopo, RSA.**

Researcher

Diniz Raul Soares, P.O. Box 605, Malamulele, Student No. 22454322; Cell. No. 083 355 4923

Purpose

The aim of the project is to establish factors that helped the community of former Mozambican civil war refugees found healing. It seeks to assess how the contribution of various Christian interventions can be intergraded in Christian counselling as part of the *missio Dei* amongst refugees.

Participation in this study will involve

Scheduled interviews with residents in the Rhulani settlement will be held.

Risks and Discomforts

No risks or discomforts are associated with this project.

Confidentiality

Participants will have a choice of remaining anonymous, in which case the study will just refer to "respondents". Information obtained via the research will be used for research purposes only.

The research results will be presented in the format of a thesis that will be submitted to the North-West University, Mafikeng Campus, for examination and most probably will some of the findings be published in an accredited academic journal.

Withdrawal without Prejudice

Participation is voluntary and refusal to participate in this study will involve no penalty. Each participant is free to withdraw consent and discontinue participation at any given moment in time.

Costs or Payments

There will be no costs involved for taking part in this research study. No participant will receive any payment to participate in this research project.

Questions

Participants may contact Prof. S.J. van der Merwe (sarel.vandermerwe@nwu.ac.za cell 083 310 0372) or Prof. George Lotter (George.Lotter@nwu.ac.za cell 083 284 5299) with questions concerning this research study. Prof. Brunsdon acts as the supervisor for this research project.

Agreement

This agreement states that you have read and received a copy of this informed consent. Your signature below indicates that you understand the parameters of your participation and agree to take part in this research study.

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

Participant's Name _____

Signature of Researcher _____ Date _____

Annexure D

Informed Consent (Nhlamuselo wa Ntwanano)

Eka mungheneleri,

Wa rhambiwa ku va xi ave xa vulavisisi bya projeke (Doctoral Thesis), e hansi ka nhloko mhaka leyi nge **Christian Counseling as Participation in the Missio Dei amongst Refugees in the Rhulani refugee settlement in Limpopo, RSA.**

Mulavisisi

Mufundhisi Diniz Raul Soares

Xikongomelo

Xikongomelo i ku lavisisa leswi swi nga pfuna va hlampfa lava chaveleke a Africa Dzonga vari karhi va huma e tikweni ra Mozambique leswaku va kuma ku horisiwa e mirhini na le moyeni kuva va kota kuya mahlweni na vutomi.

Ku nghenelela eka vulavisisi lebyi

Hi lulamise swivutiso eka vatshami va le ndhawini ya le Rhulani. Mi ta komberiwa ku kuhlamula swi vutiso.

Nghozi kumbe Sikarhato

Ku hava leswi nga ta xanisa kumbe ku karhata lava ngata nghenelela eka vulavisi lebyi.

Xihundla

Hinkwavo lava nga ta hlawula ku nghenelela vana nfanelo yakuka vanga paluxiwi mavito ya vona loko vanga swi tsakelanga. Mahungu la ma nga ta humelela eka vulavisisi ma ta tirhisiwa ku tsala Thesis kumbe buku leyi yingata yisiwa a yunivesithi ya le North-West, ekempasini ya le Potchefstroom, hi xikongomelo xa ku kambisisiwa. Mahungu lamangatava ma kumekile manga ha paluxiwa eka vukandzihisi lebyi tivekaka bya dyondzo.

Ku va unga ngheneleli

Munhu wa ngenela a handle ka ku sindzisiwa; loyi a ngenelaka u ntshuxekile ku va a tshika nkarhi wun'wana na wun'wana loko swi fanerile a handle ka ku fayiniwa kumbe ku chavisiwa.

Ku Hakeriwa

A ku hakeriwi nchumu ku nghenelela; na kambe ku hava leswi hakeriwaka hi kuva munhu a ngenelerile eka vulavisisi lebyi.

Swi vutiso

Lava nghenelelaka vanga khumba Prof. S J van der Merwe (sarel.vandermerwe@nwu.ac.za cell. 083 310 0372) kumbe Prof. George Lotter (George.Lotter@nwu.ac.za Cell. 083 284 5299) ku endla swi vutiso leswi vanga tshukaka vava na swona mayelana na vulavisisi lebyi. Prof. Brunsdon u tirha tani hi mu rhangeli wa vulavisisi lebyi.

Ntwanano

Lowu i ntwanano wa leswaku u hlayile na ku kuma papila leri ra ntwanano lowu hlamuseriweke wona. Wa komberiwa ku sayina tani hi xi kombiso xa le swaku u twisisile swi laveko swaku nghenelela na ku tlhela u pfumela ku nghenelela eka vulavisisi lebyi.

Nsayino wa mu ngeneleri _____ Siku _____

Vito ra mungheneleli _____

Nsayino wa Mulavisisi _____ Siku _____