ABSTRACT

*Kupepeta ‘winnowing’: A metaphor for reading the Bible seMadzimai*

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**Keywords:** seMadzimai, kupepeta, winnowing, Shona, Zimbabwe, womanist, womanism, metaphor, Bible, interpretation, hermeneutics, women

My doctoral study engages womanist perspectives in formulating seMadzimai, a Bible reading approach that takes into consideration the ancient contexts of biblical texts while addressing comparative Zimbabwean women’s contexts. In the Shona language seMadzimai means ‘as women’ or ‘from the perspectives of women’. Womanist scholars and theologians prioritise the experiences, perspectives, and aspirations of women of colour. They recognise that distinctive voices - particularly those of women of African descent from diverse cultural contexts - have been few in theological and biblical interpretation discourses (hence the clarion call for more voices). The Shona language and culture (which are essential to the seMadzimai approach), as well as the biblical texts and their ancient contexts, make extensive use of metaphors. Metaphors help people understand new or abstract concepts by relating them to other commonly known concepts. Various metaphors have been suggested to describe approaches to reading the Bible. However, there has neither been gender sensitive Bible reading approaches formulated specifically for Zimbabwean contexts nor metaphors to describe such work. In this oral presentation I propose that kupepeta, or ‘winnowing’ is a suitable metaphor that captures the essence of the task of reading the Bible seMadzimai. The kupepeta metaphor can aid the conceptualization, interpretation, and application of biblical texts in terms of reference that are familiar in Zimbabwean contexts. The presentation surveys several core components of the kupepeta, or winnowing process, while expounding their practical functions, and elucidating their corresponding metaphoric value in illustrating the core elements of the seMadzimai Bible reading approach.

**References**

