

**SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA.**

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the research work for this thesis and the subsequent preparation of this thesis by Philip Asura Nggada (PGA/UJ/0120/06) were carried out under my supervision.

Rev. Dr. Jotham M. Kangdim

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this work is the product of my own research efforts; undertaken under the supervision of Associate Professor Jotham M. Kangdim and has not been presented elsewhere for the award of a degree or certificate. All sources have been duly distinguished and appropriately acknowledged.

Philip Asura Nggada

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I dedicate this work to the Good Shepherd of all whose love and untiring desire to care serves as a paradigm for Ministry and to my dear wife Laraba and our two precious daughters Rebecca and Doreen whose understanding and contribution to this work is highly appreciated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE	PAGE
CERTIFICATION - - - - -	ii
DECLARATION - - - - -	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - - - - -	iv
DEDICATION - - - - -	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS - - - - -	ix
ACRONYMS - - - - -	xiii
ABSTRACT - - - - -	xvii

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1	INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND - - - - -	1
1.2	STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM - - - - -	8
1.3	OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY - - - - -	13
1.4	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY - - - - -	15
1.5	JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY - - - - -	16
1.6	METHODOLOGY - - - - -	18
1.7	SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY - - - - -	23
1.8	THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - - - - -	24
1.9	CLARIFICATION OF TERMS - - - - -	26
1.9.1	Sheep - - - - -	26
1.9.2	Motif - - - - -	28

2.0	CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	29
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CHAPTER THREE
CONCEPT OF THE SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE OLD TESTAMENT 57

3.1	SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST	-	-	-	-	-	-	59
3.1.1	Egypt	-	-	-	-	-	-	59
3.1.2	Assyria	-	-	-	-	-	-	60
3.1.3	Babylonia	-	-	-	-	-	-	61
3.1.4	Persia	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
3.1.5	Greece/Greco –Roman	-	-	-	-	-	-	64
3.2	AFRICAN CONCEPT OF SHEPHERD MOTIF	-	-	-	-	-	-	65
3.2.1	<i>Masai</i> Nomads	-	-	-	-	-	-	66
3.2.2	<i>Fulbe</i> Society of Northern Nigeria	-	-	-	-	-	-	67
3.2.3	<i>Bura</i> Ethnic Group in Southern Borno State	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
3.2.3.1	Historical background-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
3.2.3.2	Socio-Political Life	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
3.2.3.3	Economic Life-	-	-	-	-	-	-	71
3.2.4	<i>Mupun</i> Ethnic Group in Plateau State-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72
3.3	SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE OLD TESTAMENT	-	-	-	-	-	-	73
3.3.1	Symbolism of the Shepherd	-	-	-	-	-	-	73
3.3.2	Word study of Shepherd; etymology, occurrences, meanings and usage in the ANE	-	-	-	-	-	-	74
3.3.3	In the Torah	-	-	-	-	-	-	75
3.3.4	In the Prophets-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77
3.3.5	In the Writings-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81
3.3.5.1	Psalms -	-	-	-	-	-	-	81
3.3.5.2	Ecclesiastes	-	-	-	-	-	-	82
3.4	SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE NEW TESTAMENT	-	-	-	-	-	-	83
3.5	CHARTS ILLUSTRATING THE MEANING OF <i>RO'EH</i> (SHEPHERD) IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS USING THE PRINCIPLES OF SYNTAGMATICS AND PARADIGMATICS	-	-	-	-	-	-	86
3.6.	SEMANTIC RANGE -	-	-	-	-	-	-	106
3.6.1	The Semantic Range of שֹׁמֵר -	-	-	-	-	-	-	106
3.6.2	The Semantic Range of פֹּקֵד -	-	-	-	-	-	-	107
3.6.3	The Semantic Range of חֹסֵד -	-	-	-	-	-	-	108
3.6.4	The Semantic Range of חֹסֵר -	-	-	-	-	-	-	109
3.6.5	The Semantic Range of נִקְדַּ -	-	-	-	-	-	-	112
3.6.6	The Semantic Range of מִלְךְ -	-	-	-	-	-	-	113
3.7	EXEGESIS OF SELECTED TEXTS -	-	-	-	-	-	-	115

ACRONYMS

ANE	Ancient Near East
ANET	Pritchard, B. James. <i>Ancient Near East Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975.
ANET	Ancient Near East Text
ARSV	American Revised Standard Version
B.C.	Before Christ
BDB	Bruce Einarson ed, <i>Index to Brown, Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon</i> . Chicago: Moody Press, 1976
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> ediderat, R. Kittel Stuttgart: Deutsch Bibelgesellschaft, 1967.
Bib	Biblica
Cf	Compare
CHALOT	<i>A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> , ed. W. L. Holladay Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988
1Chr.	Chronicles
2Chr.	Chronicles
COB	Church of the Brethren
DBI	<i>Dictionary of Biblical Imagery</i> edited by Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit et al, Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 1998.
Deut	Deuteronomy
Ecc	Ecclesiastes
Ecct	Ecclesiasticus
E.C.W.A.	Evangelical Church Winning All
Ed	Editor
Eds	Editors

E.g	Example
Esd	Esdras
Et al	Latin meaning for And others
Etc	Ecetera
Exod	Exodus
EYN	Ekklesiyar Yan'owa A Nigeria
Ezek	Ezekiel
Ff	Following
Fp	feminine plural
Gen	Genesis
GNB	Good News Bible
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Impf	Imperfect
Isa	Isaiah
IVP	InterVarsity Press
JB	Jerusalem Bible
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBTS	Jos Bukuru Theological Society
Jdg	Judges
Jer.	Jeremiah
JETS	Jos ECWA Theological Seminary
Joh	John
JPS	Jerusalem Publication Society

1Kgs	Kings
2Kgs	Kings
Lev	Leviticus
L.G.A.	Local Government Area
LXX	Septuagint
Mic.	Micah
Mpl	Masculine plural
Ms	Masculine singular
Mss	Manuscripts
MT	Masoretic Text
NAB	New American Bible
NASB	New American Standard Bible Up-Date
NBD	New Bible Dictionary
NIDOTTE	Willem A VanGemeren, ed, <i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> , (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997)
NIV	New International Version
NJBC	Raymond E. ed, et al, <i>New Jerome Biblical Commentary</i> (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 2000).
NT	New Testament
Num.	Numbers
OT	Old Testament
P	Page
Pp	Pages
Prov	Proverbs

Ps	Psalm
Pss	Psalms
Qtd	Quoted
1Sam	Samuel
Sir	Sirach
SPCK	Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge
SR	Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses
TANAK	The Hebrew acronym for Torah (Law), Nebiim (Prophets)and Ketovim (Writings)
TCNN	Theological College of Northern Nigeria
TDNT	Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed, <i>Theological Dictionary of New Testament Abridged in one volume</i> (Grand Rapids: Wm.B Eerdmans, 1985)
TNIDB	<i>The New International Dictionary of the Bible</i> edited by Sinclair Furguson. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978.
TWOT	R. Laird Harris ed, et al, <i>Theological Word of the Old Testament</i> :(Chicago: Moody Press, 1980)
V	Verse
Vol.	Volume
VT	Vetus Testamentum
Vv	Verses
Yhwh	A Tetragramaton for Israel's personal name for their God
ZAW	Zeitschrift fur die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
Zech.	Zechariah

Abstract

This research examines the Shepherd Motif in the Old Testament which has been misunderstood, misinterpreted and subjected to criticism in recent times due to the varying degrees of methodologies by scholars. These scholars use terms like Military dictatorship, aristocracy, autocracy, democracy, kingship, and spiritual leadership to talk on the subject without closely examining the caring motif of the shepherd enshrined in the Old Testament. The objectives of this research are to justify the assertion that shepherd motif especially, Psalm 23 and other related texts encapsulates provision, protection and care as the basis for understanding and interpretation. In Psalm 23 some scholars posit that the shepherd motif reveals a caring and guiding shepherd, while others see the caring motif in vv 1- 4. For others vv5-6 speaks of a host. Some of these scholars focus on the theological import at the expense of exegesis, while others make input from their common life and practical experiences. In the prophetic literatures most scholars examine the shepherd motif to convey leadership responsibilities of Israel's leaders who were contrasted with God and his loving kindness. The gap which this thesis attempts to fill is the discovery of the motif of untiring desire for care by the shepherd, which Psalm 23 and other related texts in the Old Testament reveal. The methods used are grammatico-historical exegesis, canonical approach, syntactical-theological method, principles of syntagmatics and paradigmatics. The researcher has also made some modest recommendations to the Church and society in order to draw implications for pastoral care leadership in the Nigerian situation. The contribution of this research to knowledge is that, it has, for the first time fully laid bare the motif of untiring desire for care as the basis for understanding and interpreting shepherd motif in the Old Testament. This novel discovery which is informative, educative and transformative is not found in any of the materials reviewed by the researcher.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND

In examining the shepherd motif in the Old Testament it is important and quite necessary to give a brief discussion or survey on the background of its literature, because some of the texts to be examined are poetic and prophetic in nature. Poetic literatures occupy a considerable part of the Old Testament. It cuts across the major divisions of the Old Testament namely: תורה=Law, נביאים=Prophets and the כתובים=Writings. This shows that poetry is very important for Biblical authors. For the sake of this research, the researcher chooses to restrict this study to those poems that are poetic in its entirety. Poems are indeed very difficult to interpret and it takes more effort than prose. This is not only true with Hebrew poetry but for other languages as well (Longman III 90).

Even though this study is on shepherd motif in the Old Testament, the researcher specially, focus on Psalm 23 because it consists of shepherd imagery and this will give a better understanding of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. The researcher does recognise the fact that the entire book of Psalms is not the only poetic book, but we have other books like Job, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Proverbs and most of Ecclesiastes that are also poetic in nature. It should be noted that most prophets like Jeremiah, Daniel, Jonah and Micah use symbolism in their prophetic utterances to convey their messages.

What then is poetry? What functions does it play in scripture? What is so significant about it that attracts attention? These are some of the questions that would guide us into better understanding why this material was chosen for examination. Hebrew poetry composed during Israel's early history reflects the following; firstly, it is a form of language native to Israel and most ancient Near East cultures. Secondly, it was a medium, which expresses "the most profound of human feelings and insights. These expressions come through prayer, praise, liturgy, music, wisdom and Psalms"

(Craigie 26). Having noted its expression, what message does poetry bring? Tremper Longman III in his works on Psalms notes:

Poetry appeals more directly to the whole person than prose do. It stimulates our imaginations, arouses our emotions, feeds our intellects and addresses our wills. Perhaps this is why poetry is the preferred mode of communication the Psalters and prophets used whose purpose depends on capturing the attention of their listeners and persuading them their message is urgent (92).

From the above, one can see why the messages of the poets are attractive and their thoughts deeply conveyed. However, the Hebrew poetry is noted for its common characteristic namely: parallelism and Imagery, the former speaks of repetition and extension of meaning and the later speaks of images. Kraus (33) citing Bishop Robert Lowth who in his detail analysis discovered four basic types of parallelisms that are commonly found in Psalms.

Synonymous Parallelism- it repeats the content of the first line with new words in the parallel stichs of the verse. (Ps. 44:6). In Antithetic Parallelism the content in the second stichs contradicts the statement of the first stichs (Ps. 20:8). The Synthetic Parallelism speaks of the second line/stichs expands and supplements the thought expressed in the first line. (Ps. 23:1- 3; 126:1). And the Climatic parallelism maintains that the second stichs repeats a word from the preceding one. It uses words of comparison “like” and “as” (Ps. 29:1; 93:1).

In examining shepherd motif in the Old Testament, especially Psalm 23, one can see that there are elements of parallelisms especially synthetic parallelism which speaks of the second thoughts, completes and supports the first stichs and gives a good relationship existing between the two lines.

“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want” because the Lord is his shepherd he lacks nothing. This verse stands out as the peak for understanding the shepherd motif in the whole Psalm. The other subsequent verses or the five phrases go together. “He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside still waters, He restores my soul, He leads me in path of righteousness for His name’s sake ”(Psalm23:2-3). This explains the shepherd motif of caring which unites the five phrases; the pronoun “he” is used in place of the noun shepherd, which suggests the imagery of the shepherd is carried forward in the subsequent verses. Just as we find parallelism in scriptures we also find imagery too in scripture.

Another important characteristic of the Hebrew Poetry is the imagery or the use of images. The question is why images? And how do they work in scripture? Image is very common with Psalms; it is used in comparing two things. Imagery accomplishes word pictures by means of comparison. This is done in order to teach us some revealed truth. In Psalms, there are varying degrees of imagery used to describe what God is like, a shepherd, a rock, a shield and a fortress.

Meanwhile, there are basically two types of imageries in Psalms namely: (i). Simile and (ii) Metaphor. A simile is a comparison made explicit which is indicated by “like” or “as” in Ps. 42:1 “As the deer pants...” A metaphor on the other hand is a comparison, which is implicit and avoids the use of “like” or “as”. Looking closely to Psalm 23 as an example of shepherd motif in the Old Testament, “The Lord is my shepherd” is a metaphor and a metaphor communicates a more vivid image than a simile, because it is implicit and draws the comparison more closely (Longman III 115).

Additionally, the general use of imagery in poetry speaks to us with deep thought than just literal language. In regards to images, T. Longman III opines: “They stir our emotions, attracts our attention and also stimulates our imaginations as well as help us

discuss some new truths about the object compared” (116). Longman III (117) further states, “Pictures are vivid and striking and communicate its points more than literal language. They also speak a universal language. This is due to the fact that images speak powerfully to our minds, to our hearts and wills as well”. As we examine Psalm 23, the shepherd in this text speaks to our hearts more directly; it quickly reminds us how a shepherd lives with his sheep, tends to their very need, keeps them from getting lost and protects them against wild beast (177).

In the light of this understanding this researcher comes into this study with great deal of concern about some of the misconceptions and interpretations of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament which Psalm 23 has been subjected to criticism in recent times. This Psalm has attracted and challenged many scholarly debates on its theme, structure, genre and *Sitz im Leben*. Bruce posits that Psalm 23 belongs to and exhibits the Shepherd–King motif (Bruce 101) while Koehler opines it is the Shepherd motif alone (Koehler 227-34). For Kraus the later imagery running right through the first four verses vv 1-4 and the last two verses vv 5-6 seem to show no connection with the aforementioned verses, instead it is given the metaphor of a host (Kraus 305). Kraus further sees three different metaphors; a shepherd, a guide and a host (Kraus 305).ⁱ All the various positions held by these scholars seem to be convincing but not sufficiently enough to satisfy the curiosity of this research to this end. This researcher would like to explore the fallow grounds of the text under investigation.

As one examines the shepherd motif in the Old Testament especially in Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Isaiah 40:1-11, Zechariah 11:4-17 and Jeremiah 23:1-8 couple with other interpretive community, one sees a lot of western interpreters struggling to establish the proper interpretation of the shepherd motif but were not able to justify the African sense of a shepherd, which is more closely to the Near Eastern traditions. That sense has greatly

affected their interpretation of the shepherd. In trying to justify the former argument, the African Christians have gone beyond board to interpret the shepherd motif only in terms of preventive, protective and curative measure in crisis or difficult situations. Possibly, due to the alarming rate of insecurity and phobia of all kinds. But then, is this the Biblical interpretation of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament especially Psalm 23? What then would be the proper interpretation of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament? What is so significant about this shepherd Psalm that the shepherd theme has been chosen for examination and not others? What ideals could be derived from this Psalm that the thesis proposed it to be informative, educative and transformative? What other perspectives could this Psalm view and interpret? These searching questions shall serve as guidelines for this study. But more importantly, today's pastoral care has lost its pastoral praxis, spirituality and significance in the 21st century Church in Nigeria.

The researcher believes that proper interpretation of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament within the context of the Church in Nigeria would be of tremendous impact. Also, Nigeria with its vast land and Savannah vegetations couple with the experience of rearing cattle and livestock together with its nomadic way of life would have informed shepherds of God's flock with necessary and sufficient insights about the knowledge and the relationship that exist between the shepherd and his flock and provide more effective pastoral care. But, it is unfortunate that what seems to preoccupy the minds of the shepherds today is the exploitation of the flock rather than caring for the flock. The shepherd motif of caring which encapsulates provision, protection, sustenance and guidance enshrined in Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Zechariah 11:4-17, Jer.23:1-8 and Isaiah 40:1-11 will provide a better alternative to the contemporary practice.

However, looking at the background of the word shepherd in the Near Eastern environment, it is a well-known figure among the various cultures in the agricultural

peoples of the ancient Near East. The word shepherd is used to describe the “gods” and “kings” specifically their functions in that exalted position. “*Marduk*” the god of the Babylonians is seen as a shepherd, *Hammurabi*, the perfect king acknowledges the shepherd role of *Marduk*. In his role, he seeks out peaceful regions for his subjects; he overcomes grievous difficulties and promotes welfare for the people. He guides and protects his servants and so becomes the beneficent shepherd whose rulership is righteous. This ancient understanding of shepherd seeks to reveal the motif of caring that encapsulates providing, protecting and guiding. (Pritchard 177-8).

Similarly, Alexander Heidel in his work *the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Old Testament parallels* reveals the role of Gilgamesh the king as a shepherd. In that ancient tablet he makes the following remarks about Gilgamesh:

Two-thirds of him is god and one-third of him is man. The forms of his body none can march, the onslaught of his weapons has no equal, his fellows are the men of Uruk in their chambers. Gilgamesh leaves no son to his father. Day and night his outrageousness continues unrestrained yet Gilgamesh is the shepherd of Uruk, the enclosure. He is our shepherd, strong, handsome and wise ... He is their shepherd and yet he oppresses them (18).

From the above, excerpts one can see the opposite function of Gilgamesh as the shepherd of the people. He is supposed to protect, lead, guide and maintain justice but he oppresses them. Gilgamesh, despite his position as the king failed in his responsibility as the shepherd of the people.

Additionally, in the Old Testament Israel’s understanding of a shepherd was developed from this background. For Israel the idea is used in three ways: (i) it describes

the relationship between God and Israel, (ii) It also describes the work of the religious and political leaders in Israel whom God appointed to care for His people, and (iii) it was also used by the prophets to describe the true shepherd who is to come (Taylor 7-8). Taylor further asserts that prophets foresaw the coming of the messiah who would save and redeem God's people by executing justice and righteousness (Ezek. 4:23; Jer. 23:5).

In this study one can succinctly summarise the basic functions of a shepherd relevant to this research in the following manner: A shepherd guides, feeds, guards, searches for, identifies with and carefully tends his flock. Here one sees that being a shepherd involves a deep personal interest in the welfare of the flock as a whole and of each individual. It also calls for patience, courage and self-sacrifice (Taylor 7-8). This shepherd motif of caring, which encapsulates feeding, guiding, tending, searching and protecting is what is lost in the pastoral praxis and significance in the contemporary practice.

When the shepherd motif is examined in the light of the Nigerian context, one will see that it encapsulates caring, leading, guiding, providing, protecting and sustaining, which will provide a better alternative to the contemporary practice of the pastoral care leadership in the Church and society. Furthermore, proper interpretation of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament will inform, educate and transform knowledge for pastoral care ministry in Nigeria. For instance in Psalm 23 one sees a paradigm of a good shepherd whose primary function has been clearly spelt out. Just to mention a few of his responsibilities; they are the provision of basic needs for his flock and finding the best way to respond to their distinctive needs individually and collectively. This will further give new insights and improve the relationship existing between the pastor and his congregation for this is necessary and sufficient to improve the pastoral ministry of the church in Nigeria.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research examines the Shepherd Motif in the Old Testament which has been misunderstood, misinterpreted and subjected to criticism in recent times due to the varying degrees of methodologies by scholars. Scholars who have written on shepherd motif used different terms like military dictatorship, autocracy, aristocracy, leadership, democracy, rulership, kingship and spiritual leadership to talk on the shepherd motif without closely examining the caring motif which anchors the basic foundation that gives meaning to the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. Therefore, this study will examine the proper interpretation and understanding of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

As briefly highlighted in the general comments at the introduction of this work mention was made of the misconception and misinterpretation of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. For example Psalm 23 has been misunderstood, misquoted and misinterpreted in recent times. J. Stanley in his works on Psalms 23, comments on the misconception and misinterpretation of this Psalm by a drug addict.

The heroine is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. He lays me to rest by the brooks; he leads me to sweet insanity and destroys my soul. He leads me along the road to hell for the love of its name. Even if I walked in the valley of the shadow of death, I would fear no evil because the drug is with me. My syringe and my needle bring me comfort (70).

A further ground for the justification of this study is the current breakups and schisms in the Church which raises a challenge for the style of leadership that is reliable, dependable and suitable for governing the flock of God. Due to the autocratic and aristocratic style of governance it has created a gap between theology and praxis. Unless the Church returns back to status quo of the shepherd motif of untiring desire to care for

the flock of God in order to learn from the good shepherd and how to shepherd God's flock. Unless this is done as a matter of urgency the flock of God will be fed upon, devoured, scattered, and destroyed by the so-called shepherds who are voracious wolves in sheep's clothing.

Another associated problem with the above is the inadequate and insufficient understanding of the shepherd motif in Psalm 23 as seen in the confession of most parishioners that the Psalm is purely for protection. Therefore, this research proposes that Psalm 23 can be informative, educative and transformative for doing an effective pastoral ministry in Nigeria. Reason being that pastoral care has lost its original praxis and significance.

However, there have been scholarly debates on hermeneutical issues in Psalm 23. The climax of these debates is focused on the theme, structure, genre and *Sitz im Leben*. To advance these arguments some scholars posit the theme of Psalm 23 to be shepherd king motif, others see the shepherd motif alone and some see the metaphor of a host especially, in the later vv 5-6. Some school of Biblical interpretation see the three metaphors of a shepherd; a wanderer and a host passing right through the beginning of the verse to the end of the verse giving sectional heading at some various points of the text under investigation.

This evidently shows no consensus among scholars at some points as indicated above while at some points consensus is reached or agreed by the intrinsic worth of scholars' explanations and interpretations. However, this research seeks to justify and establish that the theme of shepherd is what is dominant or prevalent in Psalm 23. This will be investigated and developed in the course of the exegesis. The researcher will address this misconception and inaccurate interpretation of Psalm 23 in chapter three of the study, which will specifically take into consideration the translation of the text from

the Masoretic Text (MT) to English. Although the Psalm seems admissible by many, it gives room for various interpretations. Koehler in his works on Psalm 23 opines “that the basis of the whole Psalm is the change of pasturage as indicated in vv 5-6” (229). But Anderson argues that it is a forced interpretation of the text (195). Still on the theme Anderson suggests a more reasonable hypothesis that the theme revolves around two word pictures of Yhwh(Yahweh) as a caring shepherd and a gracious host (195). We quite accept this view for it explicitly gives a sense of meaning to the text. For others, Yahweh is seen as a guide of the wanderer according to vv 3-4

Other hermeneutical issues associated with the text under investigation is the genre, majority of scholars like Gunkel, Anderson, Hans-Joachim Kraus and others have identified the genre of this Psalm to be a Psalm of trust or confidence of an individual while others such as Craigie seem to place it in the communal Psalm in the wider context. The reaction to the later view is that it does not have enough or sufficient or substantial evidence to prove that it is exegetically and legitimately communal in context. Perhaps these scholars have jumped into appropriation rather than investigating the issue through exegetical process, which this work, seeks to argue and address.

Meanwhile, the meaning of the text has to be determined or drawn before any application is done. To further determine the meaning of the text, this work seeks to investigate the individuality of the Psalm through grammatical exegesis by trying to identify the constant use of the personal pronouns ‘I’ in both subject and object of the governing sentence by the author. Further investigation will be carried out by the writer’s use of these fragments as a prove reflecting the individuality of the Psalm. Considering the hermeneutical issues involved in the genre of the Psalm, Vogt in his works *Bib* 34 (1953) 193-211 sees the Psalm, slightly different from the popular opinion, and asserts that Psalm 23 is a thanksgiving Psalm basing his position from the content of the last two

verses vv 5-6 which seems to suggest a cultic setting. He saw a disconnection between vv 5-6 and vv 1-4 which seems to disagree with the shepherd metaphor running right through the whole Psalm as the writer is trying to point out. In this position this work seeks to argue that Vogt's position has not taken into consideration the contribution of linguistics in determining the grammatical position of some of the words and the semantic relationships of the whole construction in drawing out the meaning of the text. Recognition is also given to the fact that there are some deep theological thoughts within the text, which might have suggested a cultic setting. But with all of these this study still subscribes the genre of the text to be a poem of confidence or trust by an individual Psalter, which can be applied to the communal setting as noted earlier by Peter Craigie.

However, Loretz in his analysis suggests the genre of the Psalm could either be a poem of confidence or thanksgiving *UF* 6(1974) 187-91. He argues that history has borne this witness but then he did not specify when and where? May be that is the reason why some scholars seem to posit the Psalm as a communal Psalm. Two other scholars Merrill and Vogt seem to echo Psalm 23 to be a royal Psalm. This study does not wholly subscribe to this position arguing from the analysis of the text, for it does not show any characteristic of a royal Psalmody. But these scholars maintain that it can be inferred to a royal Psalmody for the facts of its praise to a king who is a shepherd, again this is highly hypothetical. But Keller (15) opines that Psalm 23 can be called "David's Hymn of praise to Divine Diligence". The reaction to this subscription is that the author agrees with this opinion looking at the contribution of the superscription for the construction לַדָּוִד the preposition may mean "to David", "belonging to David", "for David" and "in honour of David" these are indeed possibilities.

The structure of the Psalm is another hermeneutical issue among scholars. Looking at the structure of Psalm 23 Kraus quoting Briggs and Weiser in his works on

Psalmists say both scholars agree in their position that Psalm 23 consists of three divisions with three basic metaphors (i) the shepherd vv 1-2, (ii) the wanderer vv 3-4 and (iii) the host vv 5-6 (305). But Westermann holds a different view that the Psalm is basically of two parts with two images as well. (i) The shepherd vv1 – 4 and (ii) the host vv 5-6.

Looking at the analysis of these scholars, there are some degree of agreement of the various structures of the Psalm which seeks to concur with the writers opinion that when this poem is carefully examined the shepherd metaphor seems to be controlling the Psalm which can be seen from the beginning of the first verse to the end of the last verse. This is supported by Koehler who maintains that Psalm 23 is a continuously uniform hymn with a single metaphor of a shepherd throughout. It is the shepherd metaphor that gave rise to all the various structures its meaning (233). It can also be viewed as the determining factor of the shepherd motif. If for instance the shepherd metaphor were removed from the text, each of the exegetical and theological pericope would not convey its meaning positively (Biwul 1).

The *Sitz im Leben* or the life setting is the last debate on the hermeneutical issue in Psalm 23, which is still an ongoing issue in modern study of Psalm or scholarship. Anderson (195) opines that Psalm 23 can be classified as a Psalm of confidence and he suggests a cultic setting according to the reference to the house of the Lord in vs. 6. He also proposes that the meal before the enemies implies a thanksgiving banquet for the Psalmist. Anderson further envisages the situation of an ordinary Israelite who was expressing his confidence in Yahweh after he has been discharged and acquitted. He maintains that an ordinary Israelite may have said the utterance either before or during the sacrificial meal (196). Anderson and Von Rad suggest that the Psalmist was a priest or one of the spiritual writers who found consolation in the experience of the cultus

(PHOE 260). But Von Rad and Eaton have this understanding that a royal head representing a community recited the poem (Chad 76-77).

However, Morgernstern in his works in *JBL* 65 (1946) 13-24 suggests that initially the Psalm was not composed to be used in temple worship. A pious Jew closely relates his view with that of Anderson when he asserts that it was the expression of faith and trust in Yahweh (196). Vogt offers a fairly elaborate hypothesis from the substance of the Psalm a liturgical ritual of thanksgiving. (*Bib* 34 (1953) 195-211). Milne in *SR* 4 (1974/75)237-47 proposes that this *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalm is an exilic product. Freedman looking at the shepherd metaphor suggests Exodus experience and advances his thought that it offers hope for an exiled community cut off from home and temple.

With all these sheer diversity of views from different schools of Biblical interpretation. Kraus beautifully and logically set three questions, which summarizes all their arguments. Where was Psalm 23 intoned? At which occasion? Who is the composer? (305). But we will also argue convincingly that all of the above interpretations are possibilities. But the one that factors in its suitability is the expression of trust in Yhwh of an individual Psalter delivered from his enemies and still anticipating greater deliverance in the future. This is indicated by the Psalter looking at the literal translation of the text “even though I walked through the valley of the shadow of death your presence is with me”. The detail explanation of this section will be in chapter three.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary aims and objectives of the research are as follows:

- (i) To be able to provide an adequate translation and interpretation that will correct the misunderstanding and misconception of the shepherd motif which has been subjected to criticism in recent times.

- (ii) To be able to provide proper interpretation of the shepherd motif in Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Jeremiah 23:1-6, Isaiah 40:11 and Zechariah 11:4-17 so as to inform, educate and transform knowledge of the pastoral care leadership in the Church.
- (iii) To be able to justify that the shepherd motif of caring enshrined in Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Isaiah 40:1-11, Jeremiah 23:1-8, Zechariah 11:4-17 and Isaiah 40:1-11, which encapsulates provision, protection, sustenance and guidance will provide a better alternative to the contemporary practice of pastoral care ministry in Nigeria.
- (iv) To establish and develop that *רֹעֵה* *ro'eh* shepherd is a key term in Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Jeremiah 23:1-8, Zechariah 11:4-17 and Isaiah 40:1-11. And this metaphor can be seen controlling the Psalm and other OT texts right from the beginning of the first verse to the very end of the last verse.
- (v) To attempt to restore the dimensions of the pastoral praxis, spirituality and significance which majority of the shepherds have lost as found in the following texts; Ezek. 34:1ff, Jer. 23: 4; 50: 6; 50: 44; 51: 23, Psalm 78: 71; 80: 2 Amos 3: 12; 3:14 Mic. 7:14 Zech. 11:4-17.
- (vi) To reveal the primary responsibilities of a shepherd towards his flocks in terms of caring which encapsulates provision, protection and sustenance. For this will further encourage and strengthens the bond of relationship existing between the shepherd and the flock.
- (vii) To further explore the most effective and sustainable role of the shepherd enshrined in Old Testament relevant to the role of the pastor in the church today.
- (viii) To argue convincingly that the proper interpretation of the shepherd motif in the aforementioned texts will provide, inform, educate and transform knowledge for pastoral care leadership in Nigeria. It is this vacuum that the researcher wants to fill and contribute to in the existing knowledge.

(ix) To challenge and provide enabling environment for scholars to further investigate the unchanging concept of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament and explore viable approaches to the study.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant on account of establishing the proper interpretation and understanding of shepherd motif in the Old Testament enshrined in Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Zechariah 11:4-17, Jer.23:1-8, Isa.40:1-11 and how the loss of these dimensions of the pastoral praxis can be restored. It is quite evident that the shepherds have lost their pastoral praxis and its significance, which is a major problem today confronting the church and society in Nigeria. Both the shepherds and the flocks are very much aware of this scorch. Members can give true assessment of their shepherds, whether these shepherds are true ones or not. Since this problem is a practical one and has been identified the solution is much easier.

The research is also significant for it will help explore and contribute towards proffering solutions to the existing problem. As far as this study is concerned, it is as clear as a motor mechanic who discovers a blockage in the fuel filter and tries to clean it up and fix it back for efficient use. This research is not in any way trying to proffer solutions outside of scripture. For the scripture itself is sufficient to proffer solutions to the existing problem. That is why the shepherd motif in the Old Testament is chosen as the background for this examination to serve as a medium of information, education and transformation in restoring and shaping the originality of the pastoral praxis and significance, which was lost.

A further significance of this research is that since the main thrust of the study focuses on the shepherds who have lost the dimensions of their responsibilities, this research seeks to address some of these deliberate acts which are expressed in the

contemporary practice of pastoral ministry; the shepherds are more to themselves than taking care of God's flocks, the weak are not strengthened, the sick are not healed, the lost they do not seek, the strayed they do not guide and bring back. Therefore, this research is quite significant and timely as it seeks to restore these dimensions and to establish a strong and reliable relationship that would exist between the shepherd and the flock.

The study is significant for it seeks to address the prosperity gospel, which is working in opposition to the shepherd motif and its importance. Many *poimeno* or pastors have set their minds on the acquisition of material possessions at the expense of taking care of God's flock. Therefore this study will sound a general warning to these hirelings in shepherds clothing that judgment awaits them if they do not repent and follow the right pattern of shepherding God's flock.

The study is significant for it seeks to stir up hope, motivation, dependability and trust in Yahweh the good shepherd. For Yahweh is the shepherd that has all the provisions to cater for his flock. It will also serve as a tool for evangelism among the *Fulanis* in Northern Nigeria, whose primary occupation is characterized by farming and rearing of cattle. In the light of this understanding the Biblical principle is laid and a paradigm set for doing an effective leadership of pastoral care ministry in Nigerian Churches. And not only for this segment but for the Church in a wider context.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The current misunderstanding, misconception and misinterpretation of the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament, especially, Psalm 23 in which several metaphors have been adopted lend credence for the justification of this study.

Another ground that lends credence for the justification of this research is the absence of caring in the shepherd motif which led to the prioritization of the shepherds

and mass exploitation of the flock. This is evident today in pastoral ministry in the Church and society.

The current loss of pastoral praxis, spirituality and significance in pastoral care leadership in the Church draws attention for the justification of this research, reason being that most of the shepherds are more to themselves than caring for the flock.

It should be noted that without the full knowledge of what it means to be a shepherd, such pastoral praxis and significance would be impossible to be restored. That is why this research proposes that shepherd motif in the Old Testament is necessary and sufficient to provide the information, education and transformation that is needed to restore the original pastoral praxis, spirituality and significance which was lost

One discovers in the Church (Church of the Brethren) (COB) which is known as *Ekklesiyar Yan'uwu A Nigeria (E.Y.N)* that there is the absence of this pastoral praxis and significance. There is indeed a shift in priority from pastoral care to self-indulgent, accumulation of material blessings at the expense of the spiritual value of the flock. Most shepherds attach much emphasis on building expensive capital projects with no adequate attention to the spiritual life of the flock. Others are interested on expanded membership without being mindful of the quality of the spiritual food they give to their flock. It makes one to wonder the kind of shepherds the church has and what will be the byproduct of their governance.

Following the trend of the author's argument, one can see the deviation of the pastoral praxis, spirituality and significance which leads to its loss in the contemporary practice of pastoral care. That is why this research is very necessary in attempting to arrest the situation. This brings to mind one of the focuses of the shepherds in Ezek. 34: 1ff where the shepherds were unconcerned and busy feeding themselves and accumulating material wealth for themselves. They had not fed the flock, they had not

strengthened the weak, they had not healed the sick neither had they bound up the brokenhearted. They had not brought back the ones that were driven away neither had they sought the lost. And with force and cruelty they governed them. (This translation is mine). From the content of this chapter it is very clear that the shepherds had lost their primary function, which is to feed, to lead, to protect, to guide, to seek and to care for the lost which is the focus of this research basically. It is apparently clear that these shepherds have lost the pastoral praxis and its significance.

The challenge before the Church is to prepare, inform, and educate the next generation of leadership with an adequate understanding of the dimension of shepherd motif of caring for sustainable and continuous leadership prospect in the Church.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

Methods are very instrumental in studying any section of the Biblical Text(s). Like in most research, it requires the researcher to carefully define and describe his method(s) and the steps he intends to take as he examines his text. Yilpet's comment on methodology is worthy of note: "In studying a topic, theme or idea characteristics to a book or part of it, one must employ a method of study on a text or texts" (29).

Many different methodological approaches have been employed for interpreting Biblical Text. The different approaches will arrive at different meanings for the same text. Therefore, having identified the literatures under investigation, the researcher will use the following methods to establish the meaning of the shepherd motif in some of the selected texts in the Old Testament. These approaches are: Canonical approach, Grammatico-Historical Exegesis and Syntactical-Theological Method;

Canonical Approach. The focal point of this approach is its attention to the final form of the Biblical text. It further recognises that a major literary and theological force is at work in shaping the present form of scripture. This approach views the Canonical text as a

unity in the context of the believing community which reads, accepts and passes it on (Yilpet Canon Criticism 30). It further recognises that the central point to exegesis must begin from the canonical context of the biblical text. It further stresses that its focal point to exegesis is to study the features of this particular set of religious text in relation to their usage with the historical community of Israel taking its position from the Jewish background. As Yilpet opines, “hermeneutically, the canonical approach interprets a biblical text in the light of the totality of its canonical context” (42). This approach is important because it recognises the unity and integrity of the text of the scripture. It further accepts the authority of scriptures. This approach when applied to this study of Psalm 23 helps one to interpret the Psalm in the light of other text of scripture.

Grammatico-Historical Exegesis: This methodology seeks to give detail analysis of the text, which agrees with the original language and the original historical situation of the author. This method is very important in this study for it seeks to draw out the authorial intention of the text and asked the question what the author meant in his written text (Kaiser and Silva 235). It pays clear attention to the grammatical aspect of the language in which it was written, cultural context are also specified which gave rise to the text. It clearly reveals that historical and cultural context are very instrumental in determining the meaning of the text. But if these are not taken seriously, it gives room for superimposing meaning to the text or one may say what the author may not mean (19).

Having noted the historical situation of the text, the next procedure is the grammatical aspect of the language, which seeks to analyse the text through its language. Generally, language consists of words arranged in various combinations so as to give a sense of meaning to the text. Hayes and Holladay submission is worthy of note.

Grammatical criticism is concerned not only with how individual words functions as carries or meaning but how those words are

arranged in phrases and sentences to form meaningful sense units, they also maintain that this type of skills or discipline is to recreate and enter the original thought world of the author or text through the language of the text (59).

If one applies this method to study of Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Isaiah 40:11 Zechariah 11: 5, 7-8 it will assist one in giving out an accurate understanding of the texts, especially, the meaning of the shepherd motif as contained in the written texts. Therefore, this kind of method clearly reveals the language; culture and the historical context that gives rise to the text. Still within the exegetical process in this research is the consideration of Syntactical-Theological dimension propounded by (Kaiser 89). Who stresses “syntax is one of the most important avenues for the interpreter to use in reconstructing the thread for the writers meaning. The way in which words are put together so as to form phrases, clauses and sentences will aid in discovering the author’s pattern of meaning” (89). Kaiser also points out that the second part in this exegetical process is the theology because certain doctrine and truth are formed within the theological framework of the written text. This method usually spans within the following consideration: Translation is very instrumental in exegetical process. For it seeks to use the primary source, which is the Masoretic Text (MT). This text will be translated into English, this is achieved through using OT text BHS and Lexicons such as BDB, Koehler-Baumgartner, Strong Exhaustive Concordance and a Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicons of the OT (Staurt 25). Also in this translation method other relevant versions like RSV, JB, JBS, ARSV, and NIV will be used to compare the translated text by the researcher.

It should be noted in Exegesis that textual approach will be used in this research in order to determine the original wording of the author. Why this method is chosen is

because of variations in reading and wording especially when using an edition from the major committee of translation of scripture RSV, JB, NKJV, NAB, and NIV. For instance in vs 4 of Psalm 23 the word **הִמָּה** is translated “they” by NASB, RSV, NIV, etc. but the BDB offers variety of options such as “the same”, “who”, etc. But P. Craigie noted in his textual notes that Dawood suggest, “behold” in his studies with the Ugaritic (Hm Psalm, 47). The research’s position is that since the word *hemmah* is in the emphatic position, the research submits to the MT to take the meaning “they” or “the same”, therefore, the translation would read, “They shall comfort me...” Another example is the word **שִׁלְחָן** *shulhan* “table” which E. Power, suggests an emendation to **שִׁלַּח** *shalah* “weapon” “spear” etc. Most versions translate this word as “table” but for E. Power suggests the reading to be “thou preparest arms for my defense against my enemies”. It seems to reveal the sense meaning of the text but highly hypothetical, The researcher subscribe to the Masoretic rendering of “table” to be the most acceptable translation which suits the literal context of the text, so that when one translate, the reading becomes “you will spread a table before me in the presence of my enemies”.

Other variant readings within the text are **וַיִּשְׁבְּתִי** *washabti* in vs 6a, which suggest literal reading as “and I shall return”, derived from the root word **שׁוּב** *shuv*. But if the construction is **וַיִּשְׁבְּתִי** *wayashbti* which suggests the meaning “and I shall dwell” it then means that the root word is from the Hebrew verb **יָשַׁב** *yashab* I tend to support the MT construction for it clearly reveals the meaning of the text taking into consideration of the last construction **יָמִים לְאֶרֶךְ** *Yamim laorek* which is literally translated by BDB as “Length of days”, “forever” and “continuity”. With all these variations taken into consideration my reading is carefully established.

Furthermore in Exegesis the researcher shall also consider the book context, which helps the exegete to know where the thought of text begins, and how that pattern when developed will contribute immensely to the argument stated (69). The texts under investigation are poetry, oracle of Judgment and hope in nature and exhibit the basic ideals for parallelism and imagery. The parallelism that is dominant in Psalm 23 is synthetic parallelisms, which are seen throughout the text vv 1-6, in Ezekiel 34 the imagery is that of the shepherd, so also Isaiah. In Zechariah 11 there are poetic features and the image of a shepherd.

Finally, exegesis seeks to discover the meaning of words as they are used as nouns or verbs in a given sentence or construction. “The meaning of word may be marked by the interaction of that word with the meaning of the terms which surrounds it.” As it applies in this study, there are key verbs in the text that would help determine the meaning of the shepherd motif. For example in Psalm 23, there are verbs אֶחְסֶר לֹא “I shall not want”, יִרְבִּיצַנִי = “he makes me to lie down”, יְנַהֲלֵנִי = “he leads me”, שׁוֹבֵב = “he restores” all pointing towards the role of a shepherd.

Theological Analysis: This approach seeks to establish the central message of the texts. Looking at the theology of the text, one would obviously say that it deals with caring, therefore, the message of Psalm 23, Ezek 34, Isaiah 40:11 and Zech.11 concentrates on the caring shepherd which is the underlining concept of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

Principle of Syntagmatics and Paradigmatics: By syntagmatics we mean words relation by use, the principle maintains that “the meaning of a word is its use in a language system” this further explains that to find out the meaning of a word one has to look at other words within the context, which would serve as guide to clearly depicts what it means. For instance to find out the meaning of *ro'eh*, in Psalm 23 this word often occurs

in sentences with other word like “rod”, “staff”, “green grass”, “dews” and “Still waters”. When this method is applied to this research it will give a guide to what *ro’eh* means. Therefore, one can make an intelligent guess that the word *ro’eh* in its semantic relationship gives the idea that the word may be referring to a shepherd, or used in the context of a shepherd.

The other dimension of this approach is the principle of paradigmatic, which simply means study of sense relations between words or words related by meaning (synonymous, antonyms). This principle will be used in this study to demonstrate how it works. To achieve the primary objective of this research, primary sources will be used in a justified manner to clearly set the agenda for the discourse. These primary tools are Masoretic Text(MT), Septuagint –LXX, ANET- Ancient Near East Texts, Bible Dictionaries and Encyclopedias, Concordances and Lexicons and other necessary and sufficient materials for the study. When these primary sources are used properly, it will aid in drawing out the authorial intention of the text and how the text can be interpreted in the Nigerian *Sitz im Leben* in order to avoid the superimposition of meanings to the text. When these methods are carefully applied to the texts under investigation it will certainly bring out the desired objectives of this research.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The issue under investigation is the misconception and misinterpretation of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament as is found in Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Zechariah 11:4-17, Jeremiah 23:1-8 and Isaiah 40:1-11, which has affected the dimensions of pastoral praxis and its significance for the Church in Nigeria. Therefore, this research shall primarily concentrate on the shepherd motif in the selected passages above.

We can also see in other parallel texts the same concern is revealed, for example Jer. 23:5; 5:23, Isaiah 48:21, 61:5; 63:11, Ps 78:71; 80:1, Amos 3:12, 7:14, Mic. 7:14

Zech. 10:2; 11:8-9, 5:17, all of these Old Testament texts deal with true shepherds and false shepherds in different contexts. But the main concern here will be the adequate translation and meaning of the shepherd motif, clearly revealing those sustainable qualities of a true shepherd, which Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Isaiah 40:11 unfolds.

Still within this research's scope and limitation the Church of the Brethren too will be studied. This researcher intends to take into consideration the ancient background of the shepherd motif in the Ancient Near East, Old Testament and Greco-Roman world. The New Testament texts too will be looked into especially texts that are related to the topic under investigation, such text as John 10. Looking at John 10 in the light of Psalms 23, one can see striking similarities between the two. For Jesus himself said emphatically, that he is the good shepherd. In John's text, Jesus clearly demonstrates all the qualities of a true or good shepherd, which is parallel to Ps. 23. Other New Testament texts will be considered as we seek to study the shepherd motif, for example, Mt 9:36; 25: 32; 26:3; Mk 6:34; 14:27, 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4 and Rev. 7:17. All these speak of Jesus the good shepherd. This researcher's intention is not to study the above texts in greater detail but to demonstrate that Ps. 23 is not the only text dealing with the shepherd motif.

However, my focus in this study will be on Psalm 23. For it seeks to establish the basis and the climax for understanding the shepherd motif of untiring desire for care in the Old Testament. All other scriptures seem to relate with this Biblical model for shepherding the church. Locally and in wider context, one recognised the fact that majority of OT works have been done in German, Latin and Syriac.

1.8 THEORETICAL / CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the combination of three theories namely; motif, conceptual and hermeneutical principles. Motif theories argues that for an event to be occurring repeatedly in a written text is said to be operating in

motif theory or customarily it applies to repeated instances of the same pattern which essentially incorporate images (Ryken 17-18). Looking at the context of this study, this theory plays a significant role in understanding the shepherd motif. In the context of this research one can see the image of a shepherd which repeatedly occurs in the Hebrew *TANAK*. The question is why did God choose to reveal himself in the image of the shepherd repeatedly and not others? What is so important about this image that God is so interested in? Without detailed analysis it will be very difficult to arrive at a good conclusion. Right from biblical era God has been revealing himself with shepherd metaphor to Jacob and the Prophets.

On the conceptual theory, this argument is based on the concepts or ideas that are found in periodic times or traditions. This also simplifies how a particular ideology is conceived and used by different traditions in their periodic history. Relating this to the context of this research one has explored the concept of shepherd from Ancient Near East backgrounds have come out with interesting results. Both traditions have similar concepts and understanding, except the Old Testament which clearly spelt out the caring motif of the shepherd for the flock.

Hermeneutical principles essentially deal with interpretations of individual author's meaning in a given text. Generally, hermeneutics is the overall term which embraces the art and science of biblical interpretation (Osborne 5). Within the hermeneutical horizon is exegesis whose focus is the author's intended meaning of a given text. In this study the researcher has used the dimension of this principle in order to interpret very closely to the authors intended meaning of a given text as one has demonstrated in the selection of these texts that generally concentrate on the shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

Osborne argues that

Hermeneutics is important because it enables one to move from text to context, to allow the God-inspired meaning of the word to speak today with as fresh and dynamic a relevance as it had in its original setting. Moreover, preacher or teachers must proclaim the word of God rather than their own subjective religious opinions. Only a carefully defined hermeneutic can keep one wedded to the text (Osborne 6).

From this excerpt one can see the significant role of hermeneutical principles in determining the meaning of a text in a given context as demonstrated in this study. All of these theories are viable in justifying the content of the study.

1.9 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

The following terms are explained in the context of this research;

1.9.1 Sheep: These are animals that are most frequently mentioned in scriptures with nearly four hundred references with flocks. In the modern practice, sheep are allowed to fend for themselves and left without fends but in the ancient Palestine, these animals were totally dependent on shepherd for protection, grazing, watering, shelter and tending to injuries. In most cases sheep will not survive long without a shepherd. They are creatures with other qualities lack of intelligence prone to wondering and unable to trace their root to the sheep fold even at close range (Ryken 782). In the ancient world their origin can be traced back to the Middle East and they are of different species. They are categorized in two ways (i) the domestic sheep and (ii) the wild sheep (Sarsapanila 482). In the ancient world sheep are very important to the nomadic agricultural life of the Hebrews. Their peculiar characteristics and the shepherds who pasture them make them particularly apt sources of metaphor for spiritual realities. From the earliest days, sheep

were a central part of the Israel's economy (Gen. 4:2). Examples of figures in the Old Testaments who were shepherds were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David and Amos (Gen. 12:16; 30 – 31; Ex. 3:1; 2 Sam. 7:8; Amos 1:1). It should be noted that there were shepherdess who handled sheep in the Old Testament, for example, Rebecca (Gen. 29:9) and daughters of Jethro in (Ex. 2:16).

The value of sheep cannot be over emphasized for they are raised for both food (milk, meat) and wool. They were in natural part of life in arid Palestine because they will be able to survive minimal amount of water and grass and can be moved to new grazing and watering areas during dry season (Ryken 782). In the context of our study, we choose to reflect on the helplessness and weaknesses of the sheep which seeks to explain the actions and qualities of good shepherd who in scripture is a case study of the motif of caring and compassion (782) which is lost in the contemporary practice. This is seen in the task of the shepherd to lead, guide, provide, protect, and tend the injured ones from morning to evening. It was also observed that the shepherd was a constant companion of the sheep, which explains the intimacy or relationship existing between the shepherd and the sheep. The metaphorical usage and flock are used interchangeably in scriptures but convey the same meaning. In Exod. 2:15 – 3:1 speaks of Moses as a shepherd leading the Israelites which later led one of the Psalmist to speak of God leading his people “like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron” (Ps. 77:20) RSV. In a similar sense, Joshua was called to lead Israel “that the congregation of the Lord may not be a sheep without a shepherd”. (Num. 27:17) RSV. In (Isa. 4:11) GNB speaks of God taking care of His flock like a shepherd. Sometimes the word flock is used to indicate the group of sheep (Ps. 107:41; Ezek. 36:37-38).

In the Old Testament it is mostly used explicitly or implicitly of the people of Israel especially in Psalms 74:1; 79:13; 121:4. Also in 1Kings. The flocks are also used in

reference to God's possessions as found in (Ps. 95:7; 103:3; Mic. 7:14). But the central issue of this possession is for Israel to look ultimately unto God who is able to provide, protect, sustain and feed them. Mention also should be made in the New Testament usages of Israel as the lost sheep described by Jesus in (Matt. 15:24). They are also weakened and exhausted by Christ's description in (Matt. 9:36). This imagery of flock or sheep is also used by other New Testament writers to describe the Church of God (Acts 20:28-29; 1Pet. 5:2).

1.9.2 Motif: Motif is a pattern of events occurring repeatedly in a written text. Customarily, it applies to repeated instances of the same pattern, which often incorporate images. It could also mean an artistic design of the artist interacting with the mind of his readers (Ryken 17-18).

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The primary task of this study is to discuss the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. And this chapter is the second section of the study. In the first section we concentrated on the intention of the study in the form of a proposal. We also discussed the background to the study, the research problem, the aims and objectives of the study, the significance of the study and suggested methodology that would be appropriate for handling the study. This is done in order to serve as the fundamental basis for our discussion on the shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

In recognition of the fact that there have been numerous studies on the shepherd motif in the Old Testament, but there has not been any adequate research on the sociological analysis, caring motif, the nature and forms of the shepherd motif that will inform, educate and transform our understanding of pastoral style of leadership in the Church. When this is properly explored it will restore the loss of the pastoral praxis and its significance. Hence, this research is timely in attempting to fill in the gaps that exist in recent studies.

Meanwhile, the main focus of this chapter is to review literatures related to the topic “shepherd motif in the Old Testament”. To be more specific, this study shall pay particular attention to Genesis 48:15, Numbers 27:17, Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, and Zechariah 11:4-17 and other related texts. The researcher has classified these literatures based on the subject matter rather than chronological dating of the materials. This is to bring in all literatures dealing with the subject matter simultaneously.

In the light of the above this research classifies the subject-matter in the following order; Commentaries, Books and Articles written on Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, and Zech.11:4-17 and others. The main task here is to briefly examine the contributions these authors have made especially, on the problem of shepherd motif in the Old Testament

and how they have solved the problem. After they have been assessed this will help us to identify the existing gaps in the studies of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament and be able to focus adequately in fulfilling such gaps.

Scholars who have written on the shepherd motif in Gen. 48:15 Num. 27:17, Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Jeremiah 23:1-8; Zechariah 11:4-17 , Isaiah 40:1-11 and Psalm have been reviewed for the fact that they have addressed and contributed to the research. These authors have devoted quite a number of pages to address the issue. Some of these authors have used different terms like military leadership, rulership, kingship and spiritual leadership to talk on the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. For instance, in Psalm 23 Anderson sees the shepherd motif in revealing a caring and guiding shepherd which is seen running right through from vv1-6, while others do not seem to see that, instead they see the shepherd motif only in vv1-4, for others vv5-6 speaks of a host which is entirely a different theme with no connection with the previous verses. Some give much of their attention and energy to the theological import at the expense of exegesis, while others make input from their common life and practical experiences.

In the prophetic literatures most scholars are of the opinion that the shepherd motif conveys leadership responsibilities of Israel's leaders who were contrasted with God and his loving kindness. Some of these authors have critically examined the above texts exegetically and theologically, while others have made casual comments before arriving at their conclusions, these comments are not exegetically based but from common life experiences. Both of these categories have been reviewed for their contribution to this research.

For the sake of this study, the researcher has reviewed few commentators whose works have direct bearing on this research. These commentators share a common position which show that the shepherd motif is very central in Gen. 48:15 Num. 27:17, Ezekiel 34,

Jer. 23, Isaiah 40:11, Zech. 11:4-17 and Psalm 23. This shepherd motif is expressed in caring terms, which is the primary responsibility of both political and spiritual leaders. Lack of this caring is a major concern within the contemporary church/society setting today. The question we must begin to ask ourselves is how can we restore this biblically based principle of shepherd motif in the Old Testament to the church/society today? If restored, what value would it bring to the Church's leadership? That's why we feel this research is important because it will indeed inform, educate and transform our leadership ministry in the Church and society.

However, other works reviewed are books written on the Psalms, the Prophets and other related writings. These materials are not commentaries and their positions are not coming from proper exegesis but are mostly comments from practical life experiences of the authors, which to some extent is very helpful to the research. In the third category we have reviewed few articles written in Journals on shepherd motif. These are the positions of individual authors reviewed and their contributions to this research:

Nahum M. Sarna in *The JPS Commentary on Genesis* devotes pages 352 to review on Genesis 1-50. Pages 324-330 are devoted to chapter 48. His work comes out of thorough exegesis. He sees chapter 48 as a complete exegetical unit with the following structures vv1-12 the adoption, vv13-16 the grandfather's blessing, vv17-20 reversal of seniority, vv21-22 a gift to Joseph. Sarna further observes that there are two fundamental themes governing the text; the elevation by adoption of Joseph's two sons to the status of Israelite tribes and the advance in status of Ephraim over the first born Manasseh.

Meanwhile, our primary concern is v15 which falls in the second section of his exegetical unit, which deals with the grandfather's blessing, where the word רֹעֵה *ro'eh* is translated shepherd. In this context Jacob acknowledges the Lord God by calling him 'my shepherd'. Sarna opines that the word in the ancient Near Eastern literature

symbolizes rulers, kings and deities which are similar to what the Old Testament asserts with the exception of the later. But in the context of v15 the shepherd motif expresses the idea of God as provider, protector and guide. Unfortunately, Sarna's work lacks the detail analysis of untiring desire for care by the shepherd. This would have served as an important contribution to the research work in exploring and developing the concept of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

Another relevant work by Timothy R. Ashley on *The Book of Numbers in The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*. He devotes pages 667 to the whole commentary on the book of Numbers, out of which pages 550-551 to chapter 27:17. His work comes out of detail exegesis with textual comments at the footnotes. Ashley considers chapter 27 as a complete exegetical unit with two basic structures as follows; vv1-11 deals with daughters of Zelophehad and vv12-23 concentrates on Joshua named as Moses' successor. Our interest is in the later which focuses on Moses' prayer to the Lord God to choose a leader for the children of Israel "who can go out before them and come in before them, who can bring them out and bring them in". Ashley observes that the term רעה which is translated shepherd in the context of v17 does not necessarily depict just a leader. But according to the context and tone of the verse it thus suggests military leadership- a leader who will conquer and divide the land of inheritance to the people of Israel.

Ashley further observes this motif as a simile which is used as a figure of speech for a scattered, helpless and defeated people. This researcher slightly disagrees with Ashley that the image of the shepherd is a metaphor not a simile. This work would have been strengthened if the caring motif is expressed in an untiring manner by the shepherd.

In the same vein Craigie in the book *A Commentary on Psalms 1-50* devotes pages 203-204 out of the 375 pages to examine Psalm 23. Craigie divides his work into

two fundamental sections 23:1-4. The Lord as shepherd and 23:5-6 the Lord as host. This work comes out of detail exegesis and it is worth reviewing. In his analysis Craigie sees the shepherd motif right through Psalm 23 with fundamental points expressing protection and provision. But the work lacks the connectivity of the caring motif which explains the uniform hymn of the text under investigation. Craigie further sees that this motif is not only restricted to the character of the relationship between God and the Psalmist but the motif is drawn from the ancient Hebrew tradition revealing the richness of the motif in wider spectrum as many people over generations had experienced Yahweh as shepherd. Both the exodus and wilderness experiences reveal that God had been known as a shepherd because he provided, led and protected the Hebrews. The work offers valuable contribution to this research and much more will be used in the exegesis.

In A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms; ICC series Vol. 1. Briggs devotes pages 207-212 to analysed Psalm 23. The work comes out of thorough exegesis; the author tries to be more accurate in his translation as close as possible to the Masoretic text to retain its meaning. He sees Psalms 23 as a guest Psalm which expresses calm confidence in Yhwh as (i) shepherd (ii) guide and (iii) host. His structure is quite illuminating with each of the stichos falling into his rightful position. He maintains the three stichos in tetrastichi pattern with its parallel themes as noted above. In his analysis the shepherd motif is quite dominating and it gradually extends to the second stichos and to the third stichos. One of his major contributions to this research is his approach to exegesis; he uses textual, historical, syntactical and grammatical methods to maintain the literary integrity of the text by drawing out the cohesive and intended meaning of the author. On the whole he observes that the shepherd motif could be applied to royalty as well as other human institutions, yet in his work he has not discussed the dimension of the caring motif which serves as the basis for understanding and interpreting Psalm 23.

Hans Joachim Kraus's *Commentary on Psalms 1-59*, is also an analysis of Psalm 23. Kraus work comes out of proper exegesis. After establishing his translation he examines some key Hebrew words in the text and offers textual comments acknowledging the works of others scholars like Koehler, Briggs, Weiser and Morgenstern. Kraus sees the shepherd motif running right through his three major division of the text with three basic images, the shepherd (vv. 1-2) the wanderer (vv. 3-4) and the host (vv. 5-6). Unfortunately, Kraus' work does not explain the shepherd's untiring desire for care, which should have explained the basis for interpreting shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

Kraus maintains that there is a gradual development of the shepherd motif giving guide to the wanderer and even offering hospitality to his guest. In the phrases "your rod and your staff" he unquestionably refers to the shepherd protecting, guiding and leading his flock to pasture. In his conclusion he maintains that the shepherd motif is a major theme in Psalm 23(303-309). This work is important to this research for its clarity in revealing the shepherd motif in terms of caring, guiding and leading, which in essence are the basic qualities of a leader which is mostly lacking in our contemporary setting.

In his commentary titled *Biblical Commentary on Psalms vol. I* Franz Delitzsch devotes pages 328-332 to work on Psalm 23. Delitzsch sees the shepherd motif of the Psalm coming right through the text from vv. 1-5, where is seldom taken by most commentators as a different structure from vv. 1-4. He argues that the rod and staff are not so much with the pilgrim, which would be confusing transition with shepherd metaphor, but those of Yahweh the shepherd *שֹׁבֵה* as in Mic. 7:14 and in connection with Num. 21:18 as *מִשְׁעֵבֶה* the filling up of the picture as means of guidance and defense. In the middle of his work, he clearly brings out the meaning of *רֹעֵה* *ro'eh* in its contextual usage as one who graciously and uniformly provides for and guides his people. He also

brings out other relevant texts, which are announced in later prophecy as the visible manifestation of this shepherd, (Isaiah 40:11 and Ezekiel 34:17). In his conclusion, he acknowledges the different translations of וְיִשְׁבֹּתִי and וְשָׁבֹתִי the LXX and MT rendering but כ as preposition is better identified with וְיִשְׁבֹּתִי than which is involved in וְשָׁבֹתִי as a natural consequence. This work is important because it has helped in solving some of the critical issues associated with the text and that the Shepherd motif is a central phenomenon in Psalm 23. This work critically lacks sufficient interpretation for the shepherd motif of untiring desire for care in Psalm 23.

Another critic of Psalms is Anderson in his work titled *The Psalms 1-72, New Century Bible Commentary* also explores Psalms 23. Anderson's work comes out with proper exegesis. He divides the structure of the Psalm into two major sections, namely: Yahweh as shepherd vv. 1-4 and Yahweh as host vv. 5-6. Anderson opposes the view of the three sections and three images in the Psalm as held by scholars like Kraus and Briggs, but maintains the traditional and most acceptable view as indicated above. Anderson sees the shepherd motif enshrined in caring shepherd and a gracious host. In the middle of his work, he contends with L. Koehler who maintains that 'the background of the whole Psalm is the scene of the change of Pastures', but accepts that it is a forceful interpretation of the text, especially vv. 5-6. Commenting on the literary genre of the text, he classifies the Psalm as a Psalm of confidence or trust, but was reluctant to define its *Sitz im Leben*. However, in attempting to define the context of the Psalmist, he offers two probable suggestions that the Psalmist may have been accused unjustly or may have suffered greatly in the hands of his adversaries and after his discharge he offers thanksgiving to Yahweh who delivered him(195-200). This work is chosen for its significant contributions in maintaining the traditional view of shepherd motif and for its valuable options on how the shepherd motif can be viewed or interpreted in its defined

context, the only weakness of Anderson's work is the ability to explain the connection between the shepherd and the host in an untiring desire for care by the shepherd.

According to Alexander Maclaren in *A Commentary on the Book of Psalms* devotes Pages 226-232 to Psalm 23. Maclaren's work is an expository work rather than critical exegesis. In his structure, he maintains the traditional view of the text with two basic images across, the shepherd vv. 1-4 and the host vv. 5-6. Despite this major division, the authors shows the development and connectivity of the shepherd motif with that of the host enshrined in caring motif, which springs forth from the shepherd. In the middle of his work he stresses the importance of two verbs "he leads"; and "he makes me to lie down" depicting the tenderly care of a shepherd, but did not show expressively the continuation of the caring motif in an untiring desire for care by the shepherd. Towards the end of his work, he draws comparison from the ancient Near East concepts of leaders and rulers as shepherd. He also draws application on the relationship between Yahweh with his people. This work is important to this research for its valuable contributions in maintaining the central motif of the Psalm and the messianic implications of the Psalm in the New Testament.

Allan Harman in his work, *A Mentor Commentary*, explores the whole book of Psalms. Harman devotes pages 125-126 on Psalm 23:1-6. Harman like most scholars maintains the two basic divisions of the text: the divine shepherd vv. 1-4 and the gracious provision vv. 5-6. He sees the shepherd metaphor quite dominating in the whole text and gives the link with the gracious provision of the shepherd as the host. (So Maclaren, Kraus, etc). In his comment the Psalmist declares 'Yahweh as his own shepherd' this appropriation of the language as individual is applicable to a nation as a model (Pss. 79:13, 95:7, 100:3, Isa. 40:11, Ezek. 34. In maintaining the shepherd motif of the text, Harman sees the whole function of the shepherd enshrined in the caring motif of the flock

in terms of providing, guiding, leading and protecting. Harman notes an important connection of the Psalmist's context with that of the Exodus experience when he sees the verb "leads" recurring in Exo. 15:13 also the phrase "for his names sake" also used of the Exodus experience (Ps. 6:8). Finally, Harman draws the application of the text to the contemporary context expressing the deep and intimate relationship between God and his people. Unfortunately, this work lacks detail and critical analysis of the text to arrive at the said position. Anyway, this work will contribute to this research in revealing the dimension and function of the shepherd, which is enshrined in the motif of caring.

Another relevant material to this research is the work of White on *The Psalms*. White's work on Psalm 23 is not rooted in proper exegesis but is worthy of note. Like some scholars, he structures the Psalm into three main divisions with three basic metaphors namely: shepherd, guide and a host. He also stresses the function of the motif with other parts of the text but the most predominant motif is that of the shepherd. However, in his critical examination of the text, he offers valuable insight to this research work in explicating and exploring the dimension of the shepherd motif in terms of companionship, support and unending hospitality which other scholars have not revealed. Although his understanding of the shepherd motif is rather clouded with unending hospitality rather than untiring desire for care by the shepherd(377).

In his comment on Psalm 23, Gaebelein's devotes pages 465-466 to work on Psalm 23; his work is not rooted in proper exegesis but mostly comments. The structure of Gaebelein's the text is different from other scholars reviewed; He sees assurance in vv. 1-3 and comfort in vv. 4-6, and seems to be carried away by comments and did not see the Shepherd metaphor right through the verses. However, he is able to see the shepherd motif in the Old Testament, when he cites Jacob in Gen. 45:29 "God who feed me" which literally connotes 'my shepherd'. Like Harman, Gaebelein sees in the Psalm Yahweh as a

shepherd of an individual who trust in him and also in a wider spectrum Yahweh as the shepherd of Israel. His contribution to this work is that he recognizes the shepherd motif in the Law and in Psalms. In his comments on the *Sitz im Leben* he sees Israel at the background but did not indicate what time the event occurred.

Another useful contribution to this research is the work of Daniel I. Block titled *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 25-48 in The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*. Block(273-309) like most scholars gives the structure of the text in two broad divisions namely. 34:1-10 Judgment on bad shepherd and Yahweh the good shepherd 34:11-31. Looking at the background of the concept of the shepherd motif, the author makes use of some Hebrew words and Akkadian cognates depicting the shepherd motif. “*ra’a*” and “*re’u*” “to graze” or “to shepherd”. It is believed by scholars like Sagging and others that the verb technically functions as “to rule”. He also believes that the Egyptians use it extensively in their writings “the god has chosen the king to be the shepherd of Egypt and the defender of the people.” This means that the motif is on style of governance or leadership responsibilities.

After noting the ancient Near Eastern tradition of the concept and usage of shepherd, Block sees this designation of rulers as shepherd has a long standing tradition in the Torah Num. 27:17, where it pictures Moses’ prayer to Yahweh to have some one over the congregation of Israel so that they might not be a sheep without a shepherd, which can also be compared with the prophecy of Micaiah ben Imlah “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains like sheep without a shepherd” (1King 22:17).

This work is chosen for his critical examination of the text, which would contribute a lot to the chapter on Exegesis. However, the central focus of Block’s studies dwells around the relationship between the bad shepherd with their subjects in terms of caring, which was completely abused by the rulers of Judah, where he sees Ezekiel

charging the rulers with three crimes of commission, they consume the milk of the flock, they fleece the flock and finally they butcher the fatlings. All these are violations of their leadership roles. Towards the end of his work he portrays Yahweh as the good shepherd against the wicked shepherd who will deliver or restore his people back to him. A critique on his exegesis is the lack to further explore the dimension of the untiring desire for care by the shepherd.

Another critical scholar whose work is worthy of note is Delitzsch. In his discussion on the Book of 'Ezekiel' in *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament Vol. 2* agrees with the popular view of the two basic divisions of the text as noted earlier in Block's work he further develops this into three basic division of the text namely: deposition of the bad shepherds vv. 1-10, collecting and tending of the flock vv. 11-22 and appointment of the good shepherd vv. 23-31. The commentator sees the shepherd motif from the beginning of first verse to the end of the last verse.

In the first section the shepherds were called to Judgment because, they fed themselves and neglected the flock as a result of that the flock were scattered and became prey to the wild beast. This indicates a gross violation of the shepherd motif and abuse of their roles as shepherd. Yahweh in this text made a promise, he will appoint his servant David to shepherd over his flock, (not literally but someone in Davidic lineage would shepherd Israel). Delitzsch in his work on Ezekiel further notes "this word of God is a repetition and further expansion of Jeremiah's prophecy in Jer. 23:1-8" The question is who are these bad shepherds ? This poses dispute among commentators, whether to see the bad shepherds as kings and priests or the false prophets and teachers or simply the kings or all those in rulership position. He opines that we should not take the term and apply it to kings alone but we must be open to other interpretive dimensions as all persons entrusted with the responsibilities of governing the nation or even the whole

body of civil authorities in Israel which includes , kings, priests, prophets and judges are seen as shepherds. Unfortunately, this material lacks the explication of the motif of untiring desire for care by the shepherd. This is a major weakness to this research work.

Lawrence Boadt(324) is another major contributor to this research. In his work on *Ezekiel 34 in Jerome Biblical Commentary* like other scholars maintains the popular view of the two major section of Ezekiel 34:1-10 denouncing Israel's bad shepherds and 34:11-31 God as the good shepherd. The author sees the shepherd motif in the two sections and notes how it is used fundamentally in two ways -human and divine. He traces the ancient derivative of this concept from the Sumerian kings as rulers of the ancient Near East refer to themselves as shepherds of their people. Other supporting references that Boadt admits which picture human leaders as shepherds are Jer. 2:8, 10:21, 25:34-36 and Zechariah 11:4-17.

In the last section of his work, he portrays Yahweh as Israel's shepherd with the following supporting references Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:11, Jer. 31:10. Meanwhile, there is a further development beyond the function of Yahweh as a provider but also defender of justice and upholder of the weak, which is enshrined in the shepherd motif. This material contributes significantly to this study in retaining the shepherd motif in the text. Although the work is not detail in exegesis but his comments are worthy of note.

The last contributor in this category is John N. Oswalt in works on *The Book of Isaiah 40-66: The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*. Oswalt devotes page 55 to comment on the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. Drawing insight from the book of Isaiah where Isaiah calls the sovereign God the shepherd of Israel. Oswalt contributes to this research by portraying Yahweh as a caring shepherd over Israel his flocks demonstrating the qualities of one who is concerned about the varying needs of his people. The author also makes an interesting survey of the shepherd motif whose root is

taken from Sumerian traditions as clearly suggested in the Sumerian law code of *Lipit-isthar* (Ca 1850 BC) and similarly as one found in the Babylonian code of *Hammurapi* (ca 1675 BC). This too will be taken into consideration in the background study of the shepherd motif.

In *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, Philip Keller draws his insight from the wealth of experience he learned during his own years as a shepherd, he avoided exegetical procedure but has given much attention to application. One of his major contributions to this study is his understanding and explication of the shepherd Psalm to depict the shepherd's role in his desire to care for the flock and applies that to the expressions of love that Christ has for his followers.

Another contribution of this material to this research is his comments on common life experiences which are practical and helpful to the leadership model in the contemporary Church and society. Meanwhile, towards the end of his work, Keller clearly spells out the shepherd motif in terms of caring which a major lack is in the contemporary secular and sacred leadership, his major weakness is his leave of absence on critical issues and exegetical approach.

The author of *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*, Christopher Wright examines the shepherd motif from the ancient Near Eastern laws that kings are designated as shepherds and they exist for the benefit of their subjects. The king's primary role is to serve his people, care for their needs, provides justice and protection, and avoids oppression, violence and exploitation. Wright sees the central idea of the shepherd motif in terms of caring and concern, and not on exploiting the sheep. In his conclusion, he maintains that "shepherd speaks of responsibility more than rights and powers"(126-127). This work would contribute a lot to this research in understanding the

qualities and roles of a good shepherd which has some theological implications in the New Testament.

Walter Brueggemann in *Theology of the Old Testament*, employs the pastoral shepherd imagery for Yahweh which Psalm 23 emphasizes. He also like most scholars maintains that the central idea of the Psalm is the shepherd motif. And this motif expresses itself in feeding, testing, leading, providing and caring. Brueggemann further emphasizes that the usage of these verbs suggest a time in Israel's life when she was completely dependent upon Yahweh's gracious supply of needs for survival. He further draws insight from Exodus and wilderness experience which reveals Yahweh's leadership which characterizes in leading, testing, feeding, protecting and his availability to Israel in every situation and readiness to aid her transformation.

Brueggemann sees the motif of leading and feeding in a pastoral direction whose motions are those of a shepherd tending sheep, in tenderness, gentleness and attentiveness. In examining vv 4-6, he sees the term comfort relating to the imagery "your rod and your staff they comfort me". He further observes that the theme of feeding immediately follows the shepherd imagery, which is a major departure by some scholars who do not seem to recognize the flow of the shepherd motif from the beginning to the end of the verse.

In the middle of his work, Brueggemann, sees the development of the imagery in the prophets e.g. Isaiah tradition 40:11 where the pastoral imagery recurs. Finally, he opines that the characteristic actions of Yahweh in feeding and leading, transform situations of distress. Unfortunately, he did not see untiring desire for care by the shepherd. The choice of this material has contributed a lot to this research especially in maintaining the shepherd motif as the main theme of the Psalm, also the development of this motif in prophetic literatures and the implications it has for leadership and pastoral

approach(201-204). Providing new and valuable insight to the introduction of the book of Psalms, Claus Westermann(306) revitalizes the reader's understanding by drawing out the distinct meaning of the Psalms abiding with religious significance and relevance to the present concern. Pages 127-132 are devoted to Psalm 23. He sees the Psalm displaying the motif of the individual Lament with all the verses belonging to the motif of trust.

Westermann develops the shepherd motif along the lines of the two functions of the shepherd leading the flock and providing water and pasturage and protection against the Psalmist's enemies. In his analysis, Westermann's central understanding of the shepherd motif revolves around the 'declaration of confidence' or trust of the Psalmist. But he further says that the trust solemnly dwells on real life experiences not on theoretical discussions, in which the ordeal of suffering, anguish, and doubt plays a part. He concludes his work by drawing relevance to the life experience of a believer who no matter what difficulties he faces and passes through, when he trusts Yahweh, he will be taken care of, then in and through his trust will achieve fellowship with God and can say יהוה רעי The material will contribute in no small measure to this research in developing the shepherd motif from the Sumerian tradition and the application of it in real life experiences in which trust plays a dominant role without seeing the continuous and uniform hymn of the caring motif.

Elena Bosetti's Yahweh *Shepherd of the People*, right from the ancient antiquity to the modern era. Bosetti's work is one of the most detailed and comprehensive material on the shepherd motif. Bosetti, like most scholars identified the motif principally with human kings and rulers, but there is an exception with the Egyptian concept, where the king is deified after death. The most ancient documents that refers to a deity in the image of the shepherd dates back to the texts of the pyramids (2500-2350BC) (Bosetti 12)

Meanwhile, Bosetti holds very strongly that the shepherd motif is very central in the Old Testament, this is seen in her expositions of the motif in *Torah, Nebi'im* and *Ketovim*, her comments on Psalm 23 is worthy of note she sees the pastoral care of Yahweh as the link between the two motifs shepherd and Host (12). This is important and affirms our study that the shepherd motif enshrines in the pastoral care of Yahweh is what is lacking in recent studies and contemporary situation.

In her conclusion Bosetti further sees the image of the shepherd describes God's character especially in his "taking care" of his people as he loves, guides, nurtures, protects, provides and defends them and his ever presence with them on their journey. That's why Israel has the confidence to say "the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want".

In the book *Interpreting the Psalms*, Miller sees the shepherd motif as the most dominating motif in the whole of Psalm 23 especially, verse one "the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want" he further sees the shepherd motif as one of the positive images that is constantly claimed in the Old Testament that God is the refuge, the rock, the provider and the supporting arms of those who trust in him. On the background of the Psalms, Miller sees two perspectives, one as individual Psalter who expresses trust in his God and two from Exodus experience, where Yahweh resumes as the shepherd who cares, protects, provides, sustains, leads and guides. In the middle of his work, Miller acknowledges the contributions of the following texts in developing the shepherd motif in Ps. 95:7, 100:3, Isa 40:11, Ezek. 34, and Jer. 33:12 (112-119), but fail to further explain the nature of the caring motif. In his conclusion, he draws the implications of the shepherd motif in the New Testament perspective of the good shepherd seeing Christ as the ideal shepherd who cares and lays his life for the flock.

The book *'This is that' The New Testament Development of Some Old Testament Themes* is one of the most elaborate and exceptional writings on the shepherd motif in

Zechariah, where the prophet is called to act as a shepherd. The author devotes pages 100-115 to work on the shepherd motif. Although, like most scholars, the author traces the ancient Near Eastern concept of the shepherd motif and farther field to Egypt and Greece. In the former the ideal king is seen as the herdsman of all men who has spent the day caring for them and the later speaks of *Agamemnon* as shepherd of the hosts or people's who also exhibit similar responsibility. Bruce also sees the prophecy of Micah 5:4 which speak of a ruler in Israel as Yahweh the shepherd of Israel who leads his people like a flock, and in Ezekiel's oracle, he speaks of the coming messiah of David's line as the good shepherd. He also further opines that the six chapters in Zachariah 9-14 are most profound and that might have influenced Jesus' thinking on the subject of the smitten shepherd and the scattered flock. He concludes his work that the influence of these chapters on the New Testament especially the passion narratives are quite significant because Jesus sees his role as the messianic shepherd foreshadowed. This material will contribute immensely to this research on basis of the development of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament from the ancient Near Eastern tradition, but the only weakness of the material is the lack of investigating of the motif of untiring desire for care by the shepherd as the basis for interpreting and understanding shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

According to Ignatius Obinwa in his book titled *The Shepherd Motif in Ezekiel 34 and its Theological Import* observes quite recently that biblical scholars have given much attention to the exegetical aspect of Ezekiel 34 without paying particular attention to the theological import of it. According to him this existing gap made many rulers to think it is only Israel that is addressed, without reflecting on their contemporary situation that they are answerable to Yahweh. In establishing his facts he sees five areas in his theological import that ought to be taken into consideration (i) Yahweh is Lord over the

whole earth (ii) rulers and kings are Yahweh's viceroys and must be careful (iii) Yahweh has active interest in the universe (not *deus absconditus*) (iv) Yahweh hates injustice and highhandedness of all sorts (v) true peace is from Yahweh.

Meanwhile, in the course of his study, Obinwa identifies the central motif in Ezekiel 34 as the shepherd motif which draws on leadership responsibilities and individual accountability. Obinwa's work exhibits some great deal of scholarly approach, taken into consideration of the placement of Ezekiel 34 in relations to the whole chapter, textual criticism and structural analysis of the chapter, examination of the concept of shepherd in the Old Testament, Ancient Near East and in New Testament and also detailed exegesis of the individual verses. Unfortunately, Obinwa's work lacks the untiring desire for care by the shepherd as the basis for the understanding and interpreting shepherd motif in the Old Testament. These excerpts will contribute a lot to this study in treating the exegetical section of the work and the background study of the concept of the shepherd motif. However, a critical examination of his theological import in the chapter has much emphasis than the exegetical part, which we seldom doubt his balanced study. Anyway, this too is subject to criticism.

The book *Tend My Sheep* by Harold Taylor like Bruce and others traces the root of the shepherd motif from the ancient Near Eastern background. The term is principally designated to describe human leaders as well as God's attitudes toward his people. Taylor offers three basis ways in which the idea was used in the Old Testament. Firstly, to describe the relationship between God and Israel, secondly, to described work/role of both the religious and political leaders in Israel and thirdly, it is used by the prophets to picture the coming messiah as the good shepherd when Israel's leaders failed to serve as true shepherd in terms of saving, protecting, leading, sustaining and providing for the flock (7-17). Unfortunately, Taylor fails to see the untiring desire for care by the

shepherd as the basis for interpreting shepherd motif in the Old Testament. This work has enormous contributions to this research in exploring the basic concept of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament and ancient tradition.

Vogt in his article “The Place in life of Psalm 23” *Bib* 34 (1953) 195-211 submits to the general consensus of the two basic divisions and metaphors in the Psalm thus vv1-4 Yahweh as shepherd and vv5-6 God as host. But his main focus concentrates on the genre and the setting of the Psalm. While commenting on the problems of form and setting of the Psalm, he proposes a “fairly elaborate hypothesis” that the Psalm contains the substance of a liturgical ritual of thanksgiving of which a sacrificial banquet is part of it. With reference to enemies in the text, he opines that it speaks of an accused person’s banquet when he was declared צַדִּיק righteous, discharged and acquitted that he offers thanksgiving to Yahweh. This excerpt will contribute remarkably to this research in defining the original context of the Psalter. However, this work lacks thorough exegesis that would explain the caring dimension of the shepherd motif.

Koehler in his article on “Psalm 23” *ZAW* 68 (1956)227-234 concurs with some scholars who affirm that the shepherd metaphor is retained through out the whole of Psalm 23. In his translation on pages 228-29, he clearly shows an implicit translation “so long as the Lord is my shepherd I shall suffer no lack.” The author would have taken a step further to explain the connection of the untiring desire for care by the shepherd which is retained in the shepherd metaphot. In this construction, Koehler in general terms simply reflect the shepherd’s metaphor in terms of provision. That’s why some scholars like Milne and Freedman, posit that this will be better understood in Exodus experience and the travel of the Jews Deut 2:7, “you have not lacked a thing.” The shepherd metaphor is extended through out the Exodus experience. This is also a very strong indication of the shepherd motif of caring in the Old Testament.

In his contribution on the matter, Morgenstern in “Psalm 23” *JBL* 65 (1946) portrays Yahweh as the shepherd who cares, provides, leads and offers hospitality to his host. His contribution to this research is quite significant in that he stresses the fact that the shepherd metaphor is retained through out the Psalm and that this motif is an important quality of a good leader, this understanding is similar to Koehler’s contribution except that detail analysis of the care that would bring out the untiring desire for care by the shepherd is what is lacking. Commenting on vv. 5-6, he says “the Psalm was not composed for use in the Temple worship but a pious Israelite expressing his faith and confidence in the Lord”. Morgenstern’s analysis seemingly differs from Vogt who offers a fairly elaborate hypothesis that the setting of the Psalm is more of a liturgical ritual of thanksgiving of which a sacrificial banquet was a part.

In “Psalm 23: Echoes of the Exodus” *SR* 4 (1974/1975) 237-247 Milne’s interpretation of the shepherd motif is not entirely confined to the Psalter as an individual in his own context, but also in an exilic context, he and Freedman see the shepherd motif is quite revealed in Exodus experience which provides hope for the exiled community cut off from home and Temple. He portrays Yahweh as a caring shepherd who guides, feeds, protects and sustains Israel in all her distress and adverse situations. This view is not wrong considering the responsibility attached to a shepherd. Milne further sees the shepherd imagery quite developed in the prophetic literature and even in New Testament, but fail to explain nature of the caring shepherd in an untiring desire for care. This is an important contribution to this research for it broadens the mind of the researcher to see the various dimensions in which the shepherd motif could be interpreted or viewed.

Merrill’s work on “Psalm 23 and the Jerusalem Tradition” *VT* 15 (1965)354-360 accepts the popular view of the two basic divisions of the text and the two metaphors governing the Psalm –Yahweh the shepherd vv1-4 and divine host vv 5-6. He believes

with certainty that the Psalm belongs to the Jerusalem tradition and could be dated to pre-exilic times, but the tone of the Psalm is in connection with meal and offering of thanksgiving in which the Psalter was delivered from affliction from his enemies. This too will contribute to this research in defining the *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalm. However, the weakness of this scholar is that he fails to investigate the untiring desire for care as the basis for interpreting and understanding Psalm 23.

In the course of this study, this researcher came across some unpublished articles, written by Kubgak and Biwul. These enriching materials contribute significantly to this research work. Kubgak(2008) works on Psalm 23 comments on some critical issues surrounding the background of the Psalm and how it can be read from the ancient custom of hospitality. He acknowledges the various scholarly contributions on the metaphor controlling Psalm 23 and the general consensus that the shepherd metaphor controls the Psalm. He affirms that shepherd motif is very strong in the ancient Near East and Old Testament contexts. But towards the end of his work he concentrates on how ancient custom of hospitality could serve as the basis for reading Psalm 23 without being mindful of the caring motif. His work will serve as an eye opener to this research in reading the Psalm from the background of ancient custom of hospitality.

Having reviewed some commentaries and books written on shepherd motif in the Old Testament this section is concern with reviewing articles written in journals on the shepherd motif. We are not in any way reviewing all works on the subject matter, but we are reviewing some selected works that would contribute to this research. Therefore, the researcher has reviewed works on Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34 and Zechariah 11.

Biwul in his article *Let it Make Meaning: Suggestions for Rightly Handling Scripture in Pastoral Hermeneutics* demonstrates a good grasp of background information and the context of a text as helpful in pastoral hermeneutics. Taking his

example from Ezekiel 34:1-10; he sees Ezekiel 34 as a complete exegetical unit with two main divisions vv 1 -16 and vv 17 – 31. Although his illustration concentrates on the historical and political context of the last days of Judean monarchy when it was besieged and deported to Babylon over their covenant infidelity. Biwul sees the text situated “within an indictive section of leadership irresponsibility, where the prophet employs the shepherd metaphor and sheep to address the audience. He went on further to say that these shepherds (kings and rulers) failed in their responsibilities in leading, guiding and protecting Israel. Instead they devoted much energy in exploiting the sheep; they were selfish, harsh and brutal. These kings were supposed to lead all Israel with “sense of compassion, love, care, responsibility and accountability”.

Towards the end of his work, he draws a cursory look at the contemporary situation of leadership in secular and sacred domains in Nigeria and Africa at large. That this “negation of duty and self-centeredness is akin to modern experience”. The author notes how obvious fact-failure of leadership always brings untold hardship on people and that God also has a way of dealing with such wicked and greedy leaders of modern era. This submission is quite related to Obinwa’s work on Ezek. 34. Meanwhile, the weak point of this material is the ability to investigate the untiring desire for care by the shepherd which would have served as the basis for the understanding and interpreting shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

The article *The Road to Emmaus* in Biblical Theology series devotes 1-4 to talk on the shepherd motif in Zechariah 11:4-17 the study recognizes the complexities surrounding the text on the genre, its exact historical correspondence and how it is possibly used in the New Testament. The question is, is Zechariah speaking of himself shepherding God’s people or is he representing God as his shepherd or is Zechariah narrating the whole disobedient history of Israel? Whatever position one takes, it clearly

reveals that shepherd motif is quite evident in the text. In v4, Zechariah is told to resume the role of a shepherd as a symbol of God's care for Israel. This assertion is further questioned; does the shepherd role dwells around God's care for Israel from Exodus to Exile or focuses on Israel after returning from exile?

Meanwhile, from Israel's history they have had and experienced bad and wicked shepherds and God was the only true shepherd to his people. In the middle of his work he sees the shepherd motif found and developed in prophetic literatures, where Israel's wicked leaders and leaders are contrasted to God and his loving care for Israel (Ezek. 34;37:15-28; Mic 5:4-5; 7:14 Jer. 23:4). He further observes two things developed from the Old Testament idea of shepherd –firstly, God's leaders were to be shepherds like him to protect and care for the people, secondly, the idea of shepherd closely relates to king's role. In his conclusion he draws the implication of the shepherd motif in the New Testament taking John 10:1-18 where Jesus fulfills the role of a good shepherd who cares and protects the sheep from enemies. Unfortunately, this document lacks detail explanation of the shepherd motif of untiring desire for care as the basis for interpreting and understanding shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament.

A useful and relevant work to this research is Mary B. Gladwell, *The Shepherd motif in the Old and New Testament* http://www.xenos.org/ministries/crossroads/online_journal/issue_2.htm. (Accessed 13th, March 2008). Gladwell affirms that the shepherd motif is found throughout the scripture from Genesis (48:24) to Revelation (7:17). She maintains that this shepherd motif is the most dominant motif in scripture and hardly another motif richer than this in content. She raises an important questions why God might have chosen this motif to reveal himself to man? In an attempt to answer this question, Gladwell notices shepherding as a major occupation in Palestine, the patriarchs were all shepherds. It is interesting to see that Gladwell picks up three characters

representing the three divisions of Hebrew scripture namely: Moses, Amos and David. So everyone was familiar with this occupation. Therefore, God uses this motif in scripture describing his people as sheep and their political and religious leaders as shepherds.

Gladwell's work is quite detailed and has a very strong footing. She draws her motif from the ancient Near Eastern traditions seeing the parallels in the Old Testament context, where leaders, rulers and kings were called shepherds. This motif is used to describe and demonstrate their ruling potentials to pasture their subjects in Jer. 4:1,8; 50:44). She acknowledges that Psalms 23 is a paradigm for spiritual leadership.

Drawing her conclusion, Gladwell sees the development of this motif in the prophets and draws messianic implication of Ezekiel 34 fulfilled on Jesus in Matthean thesis and John's gospel. However, this work lacks the detail analysis of the unending desire for care by the shepherd, which would have serve as the basis for the understanding and interpretation of the shepherd motif.

A cross examination of the Church in Nigeria reveals a high regard for shepherding, but when it comes to what it takes to be a shepherd adequately, many are below expectation and some embrace the whole and are doing quite well. The question is, do we have shepherds? In answering this question, we must define who a shepherd is. From our studies we have established that this biblical imagery-shepherd is defined in two ways (i) literal meaning and (ii) figurative or symbolic meaning. The former explains one who takes of sheep whose function is to provide, guide, lead, protect and act as a companion for the sheep. In the later development, it refers to both civil and religious leaders who are figures of authority and leadership (Ryken 782).Therefore from this working definition we do have shepherds.

In this section the researcher briefly reviewed documents from the Church of the Brethren and their position on the shepherd motif. These documents are chosen for the

fact they represent the basic ideal of the shepherd motif of many churches, especially in Northern Nigeria and Nigeria at large. The Church of the Brethren has its constitution as the official document that clearly spells out what the Church believes and the practices of the Church.

The researcher reviewed pages 1 to 10 of the constitution (2002) where it is clear the background of the Church is rooted from a people who are coming from a very humble beginning with their background as farmers and shepherds. These people are governed by core values which explain how the Church takes care of one another especially the weak and the less privileged. The Church leadership is called upon to demonstrate this pastoral approach to the entire system of the Church. But over the years of her existence in Nigeria it became very obvious that the core values are not strictly observed. The leadership responsibility of the Church is deviating from the original standard and it is inconsistent with biblical teachings and none sounded a prophetic alarm that is why the researcher feels it is necessary to address these irregularities. However, the document lacks the basis of the untiring desire for care by the shepherd.

In the book *For All Who Minister: A Worship Manual of the Church of the Brethren* stresses the importance of calling into the leadership positions especially, the calling to ministry which all the dimensions of pastoral care -its spirituality, praxis and significance to ensure that members are properly nourished, but in practice these core values are not fully adhered to by the ministers and the results are untold stories of malnourishment amongst members and amassing of wealth by the clergies. This is a clear indication that a vacuum has been created that needs urgent response if not, further dangers await the church.

The *National Ministers Council Held at the EYN Headquarters Mubi on the 14th February, 2007* affirmed that pastors are the image of God and this image is that of the

Shepherd. Because God reveals himself as the great and good shepherd Isa 40:11, Ps 23, Ezek.34, therefore all pastors should emulate this characteristic. As a shepherd he is to lead, guide, and protect the flock from being attacked by wolves in sheep clothing. The council further foresees that in the nearest future lack of tending the flock would create massive exodus of members to other worshipping centres. Finally, the council urges all ministers to change the pattern of shepherding the flock, but was unable to investigate the untiring desire for care by the shepherd as the basis for shepherding God's flock.

The Church of the Brethren has good materials written on how to take care of its members, but the problem of shepherding still persists. That is why this thesis proposes that a return to the biblical concept of shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament would inform, educate and transform pastoral approach to ministry in the Nigerian Church.

Having reviewed commentaries and books written on shepherd motif in the Old Testament in Genesis 48:15, Numbers 27:17, Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Zechariah 11:4-17 Isaiah 40:11 and others. The researcher understands that these materials will significantly contribute to this research work. It is apparently clear that all these authors have emphasized that shepherd motif occupies and plays a significant role in the Old Testament. But in today's modern practice of both sacred and secular leadership we find that the lack of shepherd motif in terms of caring is a major issue confronting the church in Nigeria and Africa at large.

While reviewing books and articles the researcher saw a lot of western interpreters struggling to establish the proper interpretation of the shepherd motif, but were not able to justify the African understanding and experience of a shepherd, which is more closely to the eastern understanding. This thesis proposes that dialogue between the two backgrounds would contribute to a better understanding of the shepherd motif in the

Old Testament. This too is a gap that this research work wants to contribute to knowledge.

While reviewing documents of the Church of the Brethren, it is apparently clear that the church has good materials on how to take care of its flock. But the church seems not to be effective in shepherding. That is why this thesis is timely to attempt to proffer solution by exploring the shepherd motif in the ancient Near East and the Old Testament. This work is not the first of its kind but as the researcher examined the shepherd motif in the Old Testament he discovered that a lot has not been explored by the western interpreters, who champion biblical interpretation. Longman III notes in his work on Psalms that western experience does not have the immediate understanding of the shepherd imagery of Psalm 23 as ancient Israelite and an African would have had (118). Also the interviews with first-hand experienced Fulani shepherds, commenting on their responsibilities and the relationship that exists between them and their flocks has opened the researcher's eye to see the shortcoming of western interpretations in African context. In the course of this discussion the researcher discovered some overlay of truths that have not been revealed before.

Here is an example, of the interviews with a Fulani shepherd who happened to stop me for a ride to a near by village called *Mbulatawiwi* in Southern part of Borno State. The researcher interviewed him on his role as a shepherd and the relationship existing between him and his flock and this was his remark. "Every cow has its own name peculiar to others". He maintains, "When that name is called, it is only the cow bearing that name that will respond". That clearly reminds me of Meyer's works on the shepherd "the eastern shepherd knows all the particulars of each of his sheep ranging from genealogy, defects, temper to tastes, which is embodied in the name of the sheep" (157). This shows that shepherd-sheep intimacy is necessary for effective pastoral

ministry, because it gives full information about a particular sheep and the level of relationship existing between the sheep and the shepherd. This local understanding of the shepherd can be concrete ground for building biblical understanding of shepherd motif presented in the Old Testament for the Nigerian context. This shows that caring forms the basis for understanding shepherd motif and is very essential for the shepherd's role.

Meanwhile, of what importance is the literature review to the main aims and objectives of the research work, which we have earlier on presented in the proposal? A general look at the whole review is that we were able to give attention to the three stated objectives while the fourth one will be given attention in the subsequent chapters. The researcher was able to justify the first objective that shepherd motif of caring in the Old Testament which encapsulates provision, protection, sustenance and guidance will provide a better alternative to the contemporary practice of leadership in the Church and society. In the second objective the study established and developed that רעה *ro'eh* is a key term in Psalm 23, Ezek 34, Jer.23:1-8, Zech.11:4-17, Isa.40:11.etc., which the researcher has demonstrated in the reviews –commentaries, books and articles. The third objective too has been given attention, where it seeks to reveal that majority of the shepherds (both political and spiritual leaders) have lost the originality of the caring motif and its significance, hence, this research is attempting to proffer solution to the problem. The fourth objective of the study will be given much attention in the subsequent chapters.

Finally, the researcher observes that there exist gaps that this research is attempting to fill. Therefore, the need for the shepherd motif of caring and pastoral praxis to be explored for necessary and sufficient understanding is needed. For this will help to minimize the problems and challenges of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament and the Nigerian situation.

CHAPTER THREE CONCEPT OF THE SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The main task of this study is to discuss the shepherd motif in the Old Testament and its implications for leadership in Nigeria. This is the third section of the research. In this third section, this researcher's primary focus is to discuss the background and development of the concept of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. In discussing this concept one shall try as much as possible to bring out the main thrust of the concept of the shepherd motif in the ancient background. However, it is worthy of note to define the word *roeh* shepherd; The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery defines shepherd in two ways giving (i) literal meaning and (ii) figurative or symbolic meaning. The former explains one who takes care of sheep whose function is to provide, guide, protect, lead and act as a companion for the sheep. In the later sense, it refers to both civil and religious leaders who are figures of authority and leadership. In describing the nature of the sheep, which is helpless, this helps to elucidate the actions and qualities of a good shepherd who in scripture is a case study of care and compassion (Ryken 782). In the context of this study, this explains the shepherd motif of caring which seeks to address the loss of pastoral praxis and its significance in recent times. The shepherd is also called to tend, feed and guard the sheep. For the shepherd to carry out his functions properly, he must possess certain items such as sling, bag for food, a rod, a flute, a cloak, a tent and a dog. Other qualities that are expected of a shepherd are to be strong, brave, devoted and selfless (Douglas 724).

Looking at the Hebrew word for shepherd which is רֹעֵה '*roeh*' and the Greek word ποιμήν '*poimen*' they both mean one who tends flocks or herds, a shepherd or a herdsman (Mt 9:36; 25:32; Jn 10:11,14,16). Other meanings associated with the word are a pastor, superintendent and guardian (William 382). The later development of the meaning of this word in Pauline epistle is the Pastor (Eph. 4:11). It is in this sense that this study

seeks to explore the dimensions of Pastoral care. H. Hobbs(292) in The Bakers Dictionary of Practical Theology notes the same root meaning as *poimen* translated to protect or shepherd in the NT (New Testament) understanding, which refers to a shepherd in terms of tending and guiding the flocks. In its later usage the term is referred to a minister or a priest in charge of a Church or congregation having spiritual as well as physical care of a number of persons (Stein 1055). In this sense the pastor is a shepherd whose primary function is to take care of the people in both physically and spiritual ways. A clear example in scripture especially in the New Testament is where Jesus refers to himself as the good shepherd in (John 10:11, 14, 16). Also Peter in his epistle chapter 2:22 – 5:4 also refers to Jesus as the good shepherd of the flock. From the activities of the good shepherd one sees that the motif of caring is quite prominent. The good shepherd is also compassionate, he values the sheep more than his own comfort, he lays his life for the sheep, he loves the sheep and is ever willing to sacrifice his life for the sheep.

In the light of the above, the writer shall discuss the following backgrounds: the Egyptian concept, Assyrian understanding, Babylonian concept, Persian idea and the Grecian/Greco-Roman concept of the shepherd as this would adequately inform us of the development of the Old Testament concept of the shepherd motif.

Additionally, studies of the shepherd motif in Africa especially the *Masai* nomads in East Africa and *Fulbe* society in Northern Nigeria will be considered in chapter four for application because of its good picture of the shepherd and his relationship with the flock which is important for understanding the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. In the second segment of this study the researcher shall discuss the development of the concept of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament especially in the law, prophets and writings. Just before then we shall also do a word study of shepherd רעה *ro'eh* and its semantic relationship with other words like שמר *shamar*, פקד *paqad*, חסד *hesed*, חסר

hasar, נקד *noqed* and מלך *melek*. The study of these words would give a better picture of the shepherd motif in its defined context.

3.1 SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

Looking at the background of the word shepherd in the Near Eastern environment, it is a well-known concept among the various cultures of the agricultural peoples of the ancient Near East probably due to its geographical and economic setting (Taylor 7). It is also discovered that shepherding is one of the chief sources of income in the ancient Near East. The peoples' familiarity with shepherding, especially in terms of the nature of the work, the responsibility of the shepherd, and his ideal qualities gave rise to a figurative concept of a shepherd and his work (Jeremias 901). This concept is given below with case studies in Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Egypt and Greece.

3.1.1 Egypt

The Egyptian concept of shepherd motif is akin to the Babylonians and Assyrians, but it is more developed. Not only human leaders or kings are metaphorically called shepherds but also deities (or deified kings). For the Egyptians a god who protects, guards, feeds or cares for his people is metaphorically referred to as a shepherd. For example, the Egyptian god Amon also called 'strong drover' is referred to as a shepherd because he is said to guard his people and offers timely protection (Jeremias 901). Also Bosetti discovers that in the texts of the pyramids in Egypt which are dated back from 2500 – 2250 BC are the most ancient documents that refer to the deity in the image of the shepherd whose primary function is protection (Bosetti 12).

Bosetti further observes that the texts of the pyramids bear the Egyptian stamp of aristocracy which is exclusively Pharaoh's with some probable exceptions with the noble classes; this is in contrast to the Mesopotamians because the image of the shepherd seems to operate within democratic dimension. Additionally, Bosetti discovers an ancient

inscription with the expression '*Shamash-re'ua*' which means Shamash is my shepherd and '*Ir-a-ni-Marduk*' which also signifies '*Marduk* has pastured me' (13). Although, this confession is from an individual, who expresses his confidence in the god who takes care of him. It also has a national outlook in which the whole nation depends on God for their sustenance and protection. This ancient expression is very similar with what we find in the shepherd psalm of 23 'the Lord is my shepherd'. One of the most striking contrasts of the concept of the shepherd-god in Mesopotamia is that it concerns itself primarily with issues of life here and now, not after death as is in Egypt.

The Egyptian sun-god in most instances is being referred to as a shepherd because his function is similar to that of a shepherd in terms of care, guide and responsibility. Although, there is a slight variation in the concept of the shepherd in Mesopotamia and Egypt, both agree and refer to God as a shepherd. In Mesopotamia the title of a shepherd is the prerogative of a king, then of the divinity, but in Egypt it is god who is named as shepherd before human kings prior to deification. (Bosetti 12). Similarity, in Egypt (c. 2000 B.C.) the sage *Ipumer* describes the ideal king as the tradesman of all men who spent quality time caring for his subjects (Pritchard 441).

3.1.2 Assyria

The concept of the shepherd in Assyria developed from a literal to a figurative sense. For instance, the gods of this nation are seen as shepherds because of the peculiar role they play concerning their subjects in terms of feeding, leading and protection. In Assyria human leaders or rulers are seen as shepherds in terms of responsibilities, qualities and risks. The major tasks of a shepherd as well as human leader or ruler are embodied in the word 'care'. The exegetical evidence of this word in many contexts suggests the ability to feed, to protect, to maintain justice, to correct, to rescue, to lead, to guide and to be faithful to the flock which is being entrusted in care of the shepherd.

This understanding of the shepherd motif reveals the art of caring which serves as the basis of shepherd motif in the Assyrian background (Jeremias 901). Even with that when it comes into actual practice this motif of caring seems not to be sufficiently and adequately handled or rather abused by many in leadership position. For example, Tiglath Paleser III of Assyria is a typical example of a monarch/shepherd in the 8th century period who concentrated on expanding his territory instead of defending the cause of justice and righteousness. This has created a gap between theology and praxis. He was rather autocratic. Therefore, this research is an attempt to address the ongoing issues of the different dimensions of the shepherd motif with a view to proffer alternative solution through the understanding of the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament.

3.1.3 Babylonia

The Babylonian concept is also akin to that of Assyria. The title of a shepherd is metaphorically used for human leaders or rulers especially in terms of responsibility. The staff of a king, like that of the shepherd is a symbol of office or responsibility which involves care and protection. The term shepherd is also used to describe the “gods” and “kings” with respect to their functions. “*Marduk*” the god of the Babylonians is seen as a shepherd, *Hammurabi*, the perfect king acknowledges the shepherd’s role of *Marduk*. In his role, he seeks out peaceful regions for his subjects; he overcomes their adverse conditions and enhances the well-being of his people. He guides and protects his servants and so becomes the beneficent shepherd whose leadership is righteous (Pritchard 177-178). From this research, the ancient understanding of the shepherd motif reveals leadership quality which expresses itself in the motif that encapsulates provision, protection and guidance as the basis of shepherd motif.

Similarly, on the works of Alexander Heidel (18) on the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Old Testament parallels reveal the role of Gilgamesh the king as shepherd. In that ancient tablet we have the following remarks about Gilgamesh.

Two- thirds of him is god and one- third of him is man, the form of his body none can march... the onslaught of his weapons has no equal, his fellows are the men of Uruk in their chambers. Gilgamesh leaves no son to his father Day and Night his outrageousness continues unrestrained yet Gilgamesh is the shepherd of Uruk, the enclosure. He is our shepherd, strong, handsome and wise...He is their shepherd and yet he oppresses them (Heidel 18).

A cursory look at this excerpt, shows that Gilgamesh as the shepherd of the people had some failures in his responsibility despite all that was said of him. He was supposed to protect, lead, guide and maintain justice amongst his subjects, but he oppressed them. From the ongoing research the study shows that the concept of shepherd has to do with leadership responsibilities. What seems to be absent in Gilgamesh's responsibility as a shepherd is the motif of caring.

3.1.4 Persia

The Persian concept of the shepherd motif is akin to the Assyrians and Babylonians in terms of leadership responsibilities. Persia used the concept of the shepherd motif literally and figuratively. But the root concept is derived from their religious beliefs and practices and the god they worshipped. The majority of the people in the empire worshipped *Ahura Mazda* who is believed to be the wise Lord and the Maggis serving as wise men and Medes serving as priests. Just before the emergence of the new religion, the early religion of the Persians had been simple pastoral and agricultural cults.

Zoroastrianism is the name of the religion commonly practiced among the Persians. Their sacred book is known as *Avesta*. There are inscriptions of Persian rulers who are believed to have practiced Zoroastrianism, for example king Darius I. (Hinson 162). This religion is seen as a cult which believes that *Ahura Mazda* together with the holy spirit warned against an evil spirit called Ahiman (Oludahunsi 38-39).

Similarly, Hinson examines Zoroastrianism and comes out with this findings that the nature of this religion is dualistic, that is the belief of two important but opposing powers, of good and of evil. The followers of this religion believe in the supreme god of goodness, Ormazd and his team of archangels and angels. They also believe in a god of evil called Ahiman with his host of demons. The adherers of this religion strongly believe that the conflict existing between good and evil is an ongoing process and that the god of goodness will triumph over the god of evil in the end. This gives the followers confidence that death is not the last resort and the righteous together with the god of goodness will celebrate their victory (Hinson 162).

Zoroastrianism in its teaching emphasizes and encourages human beings to serve the god of goodness who is seen as a shepherd and to follow a high code of conduct and gentle morality. It is believed that this kind of religion clearly had influenced on the style of leadership adopted by the Persian monarchs who were compassionate, merciful and very considerate towards their subjects or subordinates. They never force their subjects to follow their own religion; instead they always encourage the people they conquered to follow their own culture and customs. Zoroastrianism and Judaism share similar concept on the future saviour who is yet to be revealed. Oludahunsi also stresses that truth and mercy are basic teaching in both religions (Oludahunsi 35).

In the light of the above it is evident that caring, compassion, freedom and gentleness are strong virtues for those in leadership position. We may also draw inference

from this finding that as a good shepherd of the people one must exhibit such virtues. Without the motif of caring, which should be the heartbeat of the shepherd motif such leadership responsibility is bound to fail or will not make any impact on where it is exercised.

3.1.5 Greece/ Greco-Roman

The Greek concept of the shepherd motif is derived from the regular Homeric description of *Agamemnon* as shepherd of the people who takes care and protects them from any external aggression (Jeremias a 486). This concept is further developed by Philo who draws insight from a shepherd from the Old Testament stories. He describes the *nous* as the shepherd of irrational powers of the soul, he also maintains that rulers are shepherds and further concludes that God is the shepherd who feeds the world and all that is in it through the instrumentality of his logos (Jeremias b 902).

In the Greco-Roman world and later Judaism Jeremias (902) notes that the concept of shepherd has a negative representation because rabbis categorized shepherds as thieves and cheats and hence are devoid of certain civil rights. He further observes that people were forbidden to purchase 'milk, wool or even kids from them due to their roving life style, which enables them to steal from the flocks' they pastured (Jeremias 902). In spite of the fact that shepherds have bad and insignificant reputation, we see from the content of scripture God is still called the shepherd of Israel who led Israel his flock out of Egypt, guides in the present and again will one day gather Israel to himself as a faithful shepherd . And not only God is seen as a shepherd but human leaders and teachers too. For example Moses and David are also referred as faithful shepherds.

From all indications it thus reveals that these nations shared common characteristics of leadership qualities in their concepts of shepherd and the most binding is the art of governance and relationship between rulers and the ruled, which in essence

reveals the motif of caring but to a larger extent has not been adequately observed even if it does, it is mildly attended.

3.2 AFRICAN CONCEPT OF SHEPHERD MOTIF

The concept of shepherd motif in Africa is akin to the ancient Near East tradition in terms of form, nature and motif. A closer examination of this concept reveals a major thrust in the study of the shepherd motif, which is the quest and art of caring. In Africa shepherds are identified with livestock and cattle as it is obtainable in the ancient Near East background. The image of the shepherd in African context is understood both literally and metaphorically. The gods in Africa are seen as shepherd for they offer protection, provision, lead and guide their worshippers in all activities. They punish wrong doers severely depending on the degree of offence and show kindness and favour to the righteous doers. All of these qualities are tied around leadership responsibility be it of God or humans as we noted earlier in Egypt. To get to the heart of the matter, this study shall take a look at some specific regions in Africa which will give us the African understanding of the shepherd motif.

In the metaphorical sense, the concept conveys leadership responsibilities and relational affiliations. Most of the African tribes do recognize the fact that the shepherd-sheep relationship is deeply rooted in their cultural heritage or norms and values. Of this Mbiti in his works on kingship in African religions and philosophy writes “African concept of kingship is deeply rooted in traditional African life through blood and betrothal (engagement and marriage)”. Mbiti further maintains that “kingship controls social relationships between people in a given community...it determines the behaviour of one person to another. This sense of kingship binds up together the entire life of the tribe and even extends to animals and non living objects”(194), thus ensuring motif of caring. This understanding illustrates a deep and genuine relationship between the rulers

and the ruled. This ideal picture serves as a paradigm for perfect relationship from the kingly line even to the smallest family unit. Furthermore, the family head is seen as a shepherd by implication because he functions in a similar way as a shepherd. For just as the shepherd provides, leads, guides, cares and sustains his flock, so it is with the head of the nuclear and extended family (Mbiti 194).

Meanwhile, in our study of the shepherd motif in Africa, we have selected four tribes that would serve as a vehicle to convey this understanding. They are the *Masai* in East Africa and the *Fulbe* society in Northern Nigeria, the *Mupun* in the middle belt Nigeria and *Bura* in North Eastern Nigeria. These tribes are selected because they have some striking similarities with that of the eastern shepherds. The implication is that it will further inform, educate and transform the African Christian for good leadership with a sense of caring.

3.2.1 *Masai* Nomads in East Africa

The *Masai* nomads are found in Kenya and Tanzania. Before the advent of the colonial masters, they were found in the 'Great Rift Valley of Africa'. They had their first contact with the Europeans in 1840. After this encounter they were faced with various challenges of drought, famine and an epidemic of small pox and rinderpest with their cattle (Jayanth 1).

In his article "*Masai: The Shepherds of East Africa*" P. Jayanth (1) traces the location and identity of the *Masai* tribe. He identifies the *Masai* as nomadic and pastoral people living in the East African region. He stresses that they are perennial nomads who live solely on their flocks for milk, meat and even blood for survival.

The *Masai* live in small clusters of houses call *kraal* which consists of eight families with their cattle. They are so much intertwined with their cattle. One of the most important things about them is the position of their cattle which occupies the nucleus of

their existence, for the fact that it is their source of wealth. And so the cattle and flock are tended and cared for with a great deal of concern. The *Masai* shepherd stays behind and sometimes in front of the flock as he guides, directs and leads his flock in search of pasture and water. This style of leadership is slightly different from the traditional ancient Near East society in which the shepherd stays in front always, while the sheep follows him from behind. What is important here is the care offered to the flock. It doesn't matter the position of the shepherd. (Jayanth 1)

The *Masai* shepherds are warriors and are divided into groups such as child, junior and senior warrior, junior and senior elder. The age groups from 14-30 are known as *Morans*. They live independently in the bush. During this time they learn their cultural values and norms, they also develop courage, strength and endurance which they are known for. P.Jayanth (2) opines that they are great hunters and during the initiation period they are taught skills on how to survive. In the time past, the young *Masai* must prove his manhood by killing a lion (Jayanth2). It is like David the shepherd boy who while tending his father's sheep in the wilderness killed a lion and a bear that attacked his sheep (1Sam 16:34-36).

It has been observed that the *Masai* are caring shepherds and their lives are blended with their cattle. With the aforementioned qualities, we can affirm that they are warriors and look after their flock with great care, hence can be described as good shepherds. And from all indication the communal life and their braveness in leadership role are strong evidence that they exhibit common characteristics with the ancient Near East tradition of the shepherd motif, but with some limitations in the caring motif.

3.2.2 The *Fulbe* society in Northern Nigeria

The *Fulbe* society popularly known as the *Fulani* communities are predominantly pastoral nomads, although there are few exceptions that settled down and concentrated on

agricultural farming. They are like the Bedouins in the Middle East. The physical environment in which they live is the bush in the Savannah belt of Northern Nigeria. One of their characteristics is that they migrate from one place to another in search of pasture and water for their flock and sometimes due to climate, economic and political reasons. They also have cattle and livestock in which they earn their living. What is so interesting about this society is their social structure and their attitudes toward the flock they pasture, they give prime attention and caring to the flock and the community.

A significant initiative is the contribution of S. Mogensen (78) on the social organization of the *fulbe* society of Northern Nigeria and notes that a key component of the pastoral *fulbe* is the flock to which they are closely attached. He further maintains that the cattle play a major role in the social organization of the *fulbe* and that the social status of an individual in the society is determined largely by their relation to cattle. He notes again on the significance of the flock in which a *fulbe* proverb says “ If one harms the cattle, one harms the *fulbe*” and “If the cattle dies, the *fulbe* will die” and “cattle surpass everything and they are even greater than father and mother”(Mogensen 78).

Additionally, in explaining this proximity S. Mogensen quotes Hopen (27):

Ownership of cattle gives membership in the society and the loss results in expulsion. Membership in the society places an individual under strict code of conduct...Serious breaches of this code are believed to cause a reduction in the fertility and milk yield as well as an increase in the mortality of the herd upon which the offender is dependent (Mogensen 27).

The researcher's other findings with the *fulbe* shepherd is the personal interaction with some of them in which one discovered some interesting illumination about the relationship existing between the shepherd and his flock. In an interview with M. Adam

who by every inch looks a typical Fulani shepherd, he lamented over his tragic experience during the Jos 2001 religious crisis, where he lost some of his cows and a brother. Despite all these tragic experiences he did not turn off my request when I asked him to tell me about his intimacy with his flock. He maintains that every cow, goat and sheep is given a name distinct from the other. He stresses that every young calf born in the family of the flock is named after its mother. It then means that when the mother of any of this is called the little ones will equally respond with her. This also explains the fact that relationship existing between the shepherd and his flock is a primary factor that leads to the responses.

A. Masoba is the next man on my interview list who is also my student in Hebrew. He too is a typical Fulani shepherd before his conversion to Christianity. From his experience when asked on the same question he offered some quite revealing truth that cows names vary from one clan to the other. He said “If a clan maintains the brown herd then all the brown cows have their peculiar names distinct from those clans who have other colours”. This explains the diversity and peculiarity of one flock to the other, which will help the shepherd to know how best to attend to their distinctive needs. In other words this explains the diversity of the interrelationship existing between the shepherd and his flock and the responsibilities of the shepherd to his flock.

From the above excerpts we could see how informative, educative and transformative this thought revealing truth can help us see the dimensions of the shepherd motif of caring in the African perspective. It is geared towards the understanding of the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament. Yet the full dimension of the caring motif is not adequate and sufficient.

Of what significance are the concepts of shepherd from these ancients background and the African context to the Old Testament understanding of shepherd motif by African

Christians? How has it developed and influenced the Old Testament writers as a major stream running right through the scripture? This will be our next engagement as we study the concept across the major divisions of the Old Testament scriptures, namely כתובים, תורה, נביאים, meaning Law, Prophets and Writings.

3.2.3 *Bura* Ethnic Group in Southern Borno State

The *Bura* people are found in the then North Eastern State of Nigeria which is presently Borno State and Adamawa State. Their precise location is in four local government areas namely; Biu, Shani, Kwaya, Hawul etc. in Borno State, and one in Gombi LGA in Adamawa State. Biu division is most central in tracing the areas where *Bura* people are found. David says Biu division lies between latitude 10° and 11° 15' and longitudes 11° 30' and 13° and has a total area of 3,550 square miles and its altitude is 2,500 feet with a weather that is similar to that of Jos in Plateau State (Davies 2-4).

3.2.3.1 Historical Background

Historically, the *Bura* ethnic group is among the different tribes who migrated from the East around 1000AD. These ethnic groups are Marghi, Kilba, Kamwe, Chibok etc. The *Bura* ethnic group came long before the 19th century. This can be identified with their type of animals e.g goats and donkeys which resemble that of the East, some of their pots resemble the Egyptian decorations and the musical instruments like the harp resembles David's type of harp as recorded in Psalms.

3.2.3.2 Socio-Political Life

Marriage is one of the greatest social events among the *Bura* people, which serve as the nucleus of their existence. They are polygamous provided they are able to feed and maintain their families. Both nuclear and extended families are practiced in the context of *Bura* people. The head of the family is seen as a shepherd in terms of feeding, protecting, leading and sustaining (Desmond 118).

In the political life, the *Bura* people do not have a king; hence leadership responsibility is in the custody of the chief who is chosen by the elders. The chief is responsible for the well-being of his subjects. He is to be humble and become a servant of his people in attending to their needs, especially in maintaining justice and peace to ensure peaceful coexistence.

3.2.3.3 Economic Life

The economic life revolves around farming and rearing of cattle and other domestic animals such as fowl, goats and sheep. *Bura* people have a very strong concept of shepherd very close to that of the Eastern peoples in the Ancient Near East. The *Bura* concept of shepherd is also similar to the *Fulanis* in the Sub-Saharan Africa. They are known to have cattle and other domestic animals such as sheep and goats around them. They have a great deal of concern for their flock(Desmond 119).

The *Bura* shepherd functions in similar dimension with the *Fulanis*, in terms of giving protection, feeding and leading the flock to good pasture and water. They pay close attention to the weak and feeble ones. The *Bura* shepherds are sometimes hired by the *Fulanis* to take care of their flock, and are rewarded by the *Fulanis* for their faithfulness in taking good care of the flock. These lead many hirelings to have herds of their own.

The *Bura* concept of shepherd is not restricted to only animals but develops to figurative usage in terms of human responsibility and even looking after the farm. The primary function of the shepherd is to take care of the flock in terms of feeding, protection, guiding and leading the flock to good pasturage. The shepherd is always in front to lead the flock where good grass and water are available, he is also sensitive and cautious to the direction he leads his flock to avoid armed robbers and dangerous animals.

The shepherd is to take the following instruments with him for food and protection; goad, axe, bow and arrow, skin of water and oil. There is a special relationship existing between the shepherd and his flock. Each of the sheep has his own name peculiar to the other and when the shepherd calls they respond accordingly.

A significant contribution of the concept of shepherd to the understanding of the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament is the motif of caring and faithfulness, for it informs, educates and transforms the concept under investigation.

3.2.4 *Mupun* Concept of Shepherd

The *Mupun* ethnic groups are found on Jos Plateau in Pankshin and Mangu Local Government areas. An interview conducted by the researcher with Rev Dan Pochi a resident of Mangu shows that the concept of shepherd among the *Mupun* people develops from the literal to the figurative sense. Literally, a shepherd is identified with the cattle and livestock. He is seen as someone who goes out to look after cattle and livestock, he never returns home even when he is hungry. He looks for good pasturage for the animals and offers timely protection against predators.

The *Mupun* shepherd carries the following items with him; stick, bow and arrow, small knife, sling, small bag of skin called '*Kluk*' and traditional match to ignite fire. The shepherd lives and pays close attention to the flock especially the weak ones and the ones that are hurting. He does not run away when a dangerous animal appears instead he uses his weapons to kill or chase away the predator. Just like other shepherds discussed, the *Mupun* shepherd is also courageous and has a deep sense of caring for the well-being of the flock. From the ongoing study of the shepherd motif in some African tribes one would begin to see some similarities with the ancient Near East tradition which will help transform the concept of leadership in the Church and society only if adopted.

3.3 SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The concept of the shepherd motif meets its full development in the Old Testament. The origin of this development can be traced back to the ‘Exodus’ and Desert wanderings, where God exhibits the qualities of a good shepherd. In faithfulness, care, love and discipline, he “leads his flock to safe pastures” (Lois 1141). In his mercy, he is able to scatter the people in wrath, and gather them in forgiveness as recorded in Jer. 31:10 (Stewart 1104). He is compassionate to the weak and the oppressed but judges the unfaithful oppressors. Hence, in many instances, this explicitly referred to God as a good shepherd.

Meanwhile, the concept of human kings / rulers as shepherd is also present in the Old Testament, though unlike the Egyptian and Babylonian. David was called a shepherd (before he became king) in a literal but not in metaphorical sense. However, his responsibilities are similar to that of a shepherd. To have a clearer and fuller view of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament, it would be worthy of note studying it in three sections namely; Torah, Prophets and Writings respectively. Just before then, we shall explore the study of the Hebrew word for shepherd in its various dimensions and usages in the various contexts of the Old Testament.

3.3.1 Symbolism of the Shepherd

Generally speaking, biblical symbols are images that stand for something in addition to its literal meaning. It is indeed laden with meaning than simply the connotation of the straight image. Most of biblical writers or authors make use of different symbols or images to convey or communicate biblical truths (Longman III 14). The use of symbols or images are not restricted to either of the testaments, both the Old and New Testaments authors/writers make numerous use of symbols in communicating God’s truth to their audience. For instance water, apart from its literal meaning goes

beyond to symbolize salvation in Jesus' discussion with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:14.

In the light of our research, the writer do recognize the fact that apart from the prophets, other figures in scripture like the priests, sages, judges, kings and leaders make use of symbols in other to convey some biblical truths. In the context of this research, the symbolism of the shepherd is seen and used in both the Old and New Testaments. Apart from its literal meaning of one who takes care of flock/livestock, to its gradual development to a figurative sense conveys leadership responsibilities in terms of leading, guiding, protecting and maintaining justice and peace among the ruled with the motif of caring as the under guiding factor.

Specifically in the Old Testament there are prophets and certain few figures who before their calling were shepherds like Amos was a shepherd before he was called to prophesy. During his ministry in the 8th century BC, he served as a guide to the people, a voice for the voiceless, a watch dog and an eye opener to the people. Zechariah too was called to act as a shepherd and a host of others; Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah etc. these prophets served as shepherds in guiding, leading and protecting the people from their oppressive rulers. Apart from the prophets other figures like Moses and David were shepherds too before they were called into leadership positions. Both leaders led administering pastoral care to the people they were governing. From all indication symbolism of the shepherd in the Old Testament conveys leadership responsibilities with the sense of caring.

3.3.2 Word study of shepherd in the Old Testament

The Hebrew root from which the words associated with shepherd and shepherding are derived is רעה, the noun רועה or participle corresponds to the Greek word ποιμην, which literally means a keeper or pasture. Out of the 168 occurrences of the root, 83

times occur as participles in masculine and once in the feminine in Gen. 29:9 רִעָה (Jonker 1139). The noun is also figuratively used to refer to a political / spiritual leader, human or divine.

As in the case of the verb it occurs with two subjects attached to it; man and animal. With man as subject, the verb literally means “to feed, “to tend”, and “to shepherd” metaphorically, with man/God as subject, it means “to lead” or “to rule” and with animals as subject it means “to graze” (Jonker 1139-41). From the background study of the shepherd motif and its root word where shepherd is derived, it thus informs us that the activity of a shepherd is quite demanding, full of responsibility and risks. Within the Old Testament context a shepherd can be the owner of the sheep/ flock or a ‘hired hand’. Like the owner, a hired hand is expected to be responsible for the well- being of the sheep and restitution is demanded of him for the lost of a sheep except he makes a genuine excuse. This gives us a clue of leadership responsibility and accountability. Having studied briefly the general meaning and usage of the Hebrew word for a shepherd, a more specific study and contextual meaning is given below in the Torah, Prophets and Writings.

3.3.3 תֹרֵה (Torah)

The concept of the shepherd motif in the Torah is derived from the Hebrew root word רעה which occurs about 29 times, 23 in Genesis, 4 times in Exodus and 2 times in Numbers. In the Torah, the root רעה occurs as both nouns and verbs. There are indications where animals, men and God are used as subjects. Within the context of the Torah the concept is used both in the literal and figurative sense. In the literal sense, Abel, Jacob and Rachel are keepers of flock and are therefore shepherds/shepherdess. Although, Jacob is more or less a ‘hired hand’ he is demanded to retribute for a lost sheep (cf Gen. 31:39; Exod. 22:10-13). Figuratively, God is referred to as a shepherd of Jacob

who in terms of responsibilities guides, leads, protects and provides for him based on his righteous saving and redemptive acts (Gen. 48:15, 49: 24). From the two standpoints of the literal and figurative usage of the word רעהו we could deduce from their contexts a sense of responsibility or leadership, which is based on taking care of the flock, encapsulates providing, leading, protecting and guiding.

In the book of Exodus and in particular, the wilderness experience, the picture of Yahweh as shepherd became more pronounced in several contexts, this concurs with what E. Jacob notes “the image of the shepherd and the flock which by its frequency bears witness to the central theme of Exodus”(203). In Exod. 15:13 and 17, especially, in his saving acts. Yahweh is portrayed as a shepherd who leads his flock to safe pastures. In this same context Yahweh is also described as a powerful leader who drives out the heathen nations and makes Israel his own flock to have a place of safety (cf. Ps.78:52-55, 70- 72). In their journeys in the wilderness, Yahweh as shepherd provided food, water, protection and guide for Israel. Therefore, the concept of the shepherd motif which is expressed in terms of caring which encapsulates feeding, protecting, guiding and sustaining became more realistic. It is in the light of this understanding that the leadership quality of a shepherd is more demanding in the Nigerian and African situation.

Thus in the Torah, one may conclude that the undergirding principle of the shepherd motif draws insight from the ancient Near East background which portrays leadership with a sense of caring for the needs of the subjects being ruled. Although, there is a slight degree of variation in the acknowledgement of Yahweh as the shepherd of Israel, because this grew out of living religious experience of the people which is to be distinguished from the courtly style of the ancient Near East understanding (Jonker 1141).

3.3.4 נבאים (Prophets)

The concept of the shepherd motif in the Prophets or in prophetic literatures is more of a figurative than a literal sense. Although in the Former Prophets or early Prophets both the literal and the figurative sense are used. In 1Sam 17:20 the word shepherd is used in a literal sense on the account of David who lived as a shepherd to take care of the flock. Also in 1Sam 27:7 the word *ro'eh*/shepherd is used in a literal sense to refer to Doeg the Edomite Saul's chief shepherd who takes care of his flock. But in 2Sam 5:2 and 2Sam 7:7 the literal sense is developed to the figurative meaning where the concept of leadership responsibility is portrayed. Additionally, in 1kg 22:17, 1Chr. 11:2;17:6 and 2Chr.18:16, the concept of the shepherd is drawn from the figurative sense which depicts the leader as one who is able to lead, guide, protect and provide for his subjects.

Meanwhile, the concept of the shepherd motif is more developed in the exilic and post- exilic, than the pre-exilic prophets. In the pre- exilic prophets, the concept is tied around the political and military rulers not in terms of title, but responsibility. The prophets of the pre-exilic period especially, the 8th and 7th centuries were mostly seen as prophets of doom because they primarily prophesied destruction, famine and exile upon Israel for disobedience. During the 8th and 7th century period the concept of the shepherd motif in the prophets took both the literal and figurative sense. But the figurative sense outweighed the later. Kings, rulers, judges, priests and almost all in leadership position were seen as shepherds in terms of quality and responsibility (Keil and Delitzch 80-84).

For instance in Jeremiah, the concept is clearly seen in the figurative sense which pictures leadership responsibilities though the word is not often used. Israel's shepherds (Political and Religious) fail to meet the demands / expectations of God in their offices

and led to the scattering (probably exile), of the people (Jer.10:21). As the good shepherd, God is said to restore his people and guard them as a shepherd (Jer. 31:10ff).

Additionally, the book of Jeremiah also gives the metaphorical usage of the concept of shepherd in the political and religious leaders of different ranking and authority. What the concept seeks to reveal is the responsibility of the rulers and how well they govern. So the metaphorical usage of the *רעה* *roeh* is quite understandable since shepherds were expected to show caution, patient care and faithfulness towards their flock (Jonker 1141). But with all these cautions, E. Bosetti (106) observes that in Jeremiah, leadership position had the task of administering the pastoral care of God above all towards the poor and the weak, but they failed and therefore abused their powers and offices and are much to themselves. Therefore, the basic principle of caring motif is completely lacking in their responsibilities. What is happening here is the other aspect of the shepherd motif which functions militarily, autocratically and mischievously without the act of *רחם* *raham* which seeks to convey care, protection and concern.

Similar to the above document is the book of Ezekiel, in his two chapters (34 and 37), the prophet gives the metaphorical usage of the concept of shepherd motif to reveal the duties of the kings and political leaders to their subjects as well as the individual responsibility of the sheep to another. In examining chapter 34, Bosetti (110) sees the scenario as a tribunal; the trial is in progress, on the one side the wicked shepherds stand accused, the flocks are witnesses of their injustices and Yahweh as the presiding judge and accuser. Verses 2-10 gives detail record of the indictment, judgment and sentence, because of the various atrocities committed by the Kings of Israel, which is globally defined as “they did what was evil in the sight of the Lord”(2kgs 23:32,37). Bosetti observes that this text is a social connotation of Ezekiel 34. The prophet through divine utterance decried the charges against the shepherds of Israel on the ground that they

neglected both their primary and secondary assignments in the following “the weak were not strengthened, the sick were not healed, the crippled not bound up, the strayed were not brought back and the lost were not sought”. From the above text Ezekiel clearly reveals the style of leadership that shows no bit of concern and care for the sheep from the shepherds of Israel, which led to the scattering and becoming prey to the wild beast. This neglect of duty calls for Yahweh’s judgment upon the shepherds of Israel (vv 8 and 10). For he will require his sheep from their hand and would stopped them from feeding the flock.

From the above text, the principle of the shepherd motif of caring is violated by the shepherds of Isreal for the lack of protection, feeding and guide for the flock. Hence the untiring desire for care by the shepherd is completely absent in this context.

The shepherd imagery portrays by Isaiah the prophet in this classic chapter 40:11 shows a God who is tender, meek, kind and attentive to the various needs of his flock as is poetically captioned

he will feed his flock like a shepherd,
 he will gather the lambs in his arms,
 he will carry them in his bosom,
 and gently lead those that are with young

Bosetti (117) compares this chapter with Jeremiah 31 to bring striking similarities of the caring and compassionate attitude of Yahweh towards his flock. In this text we could see the principle of the shepherd motif of untiring desire for care is clearly shown in the tone and content of the verse. This is what Yahweh wants the leadership of Israel to demonstrate at all levels for it reveals their calling and mission.

Zechariah is one among the many prophets who uses an extensive image of the shepherd to equate kings and nature of leadership in Israel. We do recognize the fact that the prophecies of Zechariah are highly apocalyptic and difficult to interpret. Notwithstanding, a close investigation of these prophecies reveal events that are futuristic and largely associated with the end of history connected with the second advent of the messiah were used in the fulfillment of Christ's betrayal and when he was struck. (Zech.11:11-12 cf Mt. 26:14-16; Zech. 13:7-9 cf Mt. 26:31).

The whole idea of the shepherd imagery in Zechariah is to portray the true identity of the shepherd and his leadership over Israel. It also reveals the rebellious nature of Israel with her ruling shepherd in all ages. Zechariah gives us another dimension of the shepherd motif in order to bring judgment upon the shepherds and flock of Israel (Bosetti 122).

Zephaniah being a contemporary of the prophet Jeremiah also uses the metaphor of the shepherd to convey to his audience the distinct nature of Yahweh's pastoral care to him as an individual. Zephaniah sings with joy of being pastured or cared by the ideal shepherd. Sometimes one wonders to see the gentleness of the prophet and at other times to hear the prophet's proclamation on "the day of the Lord" **יְהוָה יִהְיֶה** (Zeph1:15-16)

Zephaniah being mindful of the shepherd metaphor links it with the idea of remnant of Israel who are humble and poor, freed both from the shame of sins done in the past and from the risk of committing any more in the future. Although the term shepherd and flock are not explicitly mentioned, but the feminine adjectives refers to the sheep as does the verb "to gather". Using the principle of syntagmatics which maintains that "the meaning of a word is its use in a language system" what this means is that looking at other words in the same context, for example, sheep, gather, remnant, and guide are used in the same context with shepherd. This gives a clue to the role of the shepherd(Warren

2). Seeing the kind of people in this situation thus, depressed, weak, poor and scattered. Zephaniah uses the shepherd imagery to reveal the special care of the lord reserves for such people. In this context the shepherd imagery is used to convey leadership responsibility with the special art of caring, which is expected from the leadership cadre of Israel and Judah.

3.3.5 In the Writings (כתובים)

The concept of the shepherd motif in the writings conveys both literal and metaphorical meaning, but the later dominates most profoundly. In the writings the books of Psalm and Ecclesiastes are the only text where the word *ro'eh* shepherd appears which conveys both the literal and figurative sense of the concept of the shepherd motif.

The researcher shall examine them in order of preference.

3.3.5.1 Psalms

Psalm 23 is one of the most popular texts which deals with the concept of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. This Psalm has six verses. Most scholars posit that the shepherd imagery occupies in the first four verses with the image of a host in vv 5-6, while others opine three imageries in the whole Psalm thus shepherd vv1-2, wanderer vv 3-4 and chief host v 5, but the researcher's view takes a departure from the popular opinion and opines that the shepherd imagery dominates the whole psalm from the first verse to the last verse. Here the Psalmist draws his meaning from the literal perspective, which suggests the very function of the shepherd in terms of providing, guiding, leading and protecting, and further develops it to the metaphoric understanding, but the later controls the thrust of the psalm.

This study agrees with Kraus (305) "who unquestionably refers to the shepherd's protecting, guiding and leading to pasturage. Therefore, the result is that psalm 23 consists of two parts: vv1-4 (ending with the meter 2+2+2) speaks of the shepherd,

Yahweh and vv 5-6 deal with God as the host in the holy place”(Kraus 305). Detail of this analysis will be in my chapter four which concentrates on the exegesis of some texts which Psalm 23 and other selected text will be examined.

Apart from Psalm 23 we shall also examine other references in the same book, where the shepherd imagery is indicated. In Psalm 28: 9 the psalmist uses the image of the shepherd in a metaphorical sense, calling Yahweh as their leader to protect and save them and to always carry them along. Psalm 78:71 gives the picture of the shepherd from the literal to the metaphorical sense, the Psalmist acknowledges David as a shepherd taken by God to lead his people. We could draw insight from this Psalm that both the literal and the figurative meaning of the shepherd imagery convey the concept of leadership or rulership with a sense of caring.

In Psalm 80:1 the Psalmist acknowledges Yahweh as the shepherd of Israel. The concept is taken against the background of Exodus where the children of Israel were fed, led and protected by the God of their ancestors. It may also reflect Israel’s experience of wandering in the desert where Yahweh the good shepherd provided food and water, led and protected them from their enemies. Thus the concept of shepherd motif therefore reflects that of leadership with also a sense of caring.

3.3.5.2 Ecclesiastes

The book of Ecclesiastes is another text in the (כתובים) which presents to us the concept of the shepherd motif from the collections of wise sayings. Here the sage uses the image of the shepherd in a figurative or metaphoric sense to speak of his wisdom and wise sayings as a shepherd who guides, instructs, leads and provides knowledge for the wise who takes heed to his instruction and to avoid the path of folly. The writer acknowledges Yahweh as the shepherd and the source of all wisdom.(Eccl. 12:11).

Therefore, we may summarise that the concept of the shepherd motif in the writings reflects leadership role, and in the poetical books, sages and teachers are seen as shepherds, because they guide, lead and instruct people on the path of wisdom and righteousness. They also assist in combating erroneous teachings.

3.4 SHEPHERD MOTIF IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The concept of shepherd motif in the New Testament is rooted from the Old Testament idea. It is closely connected to leadership responsibilities with the sense of caring. A look at the synoptic gospels clearly reveals or portrays Jesus Christ as the one who fulfills the role of the good shepherd. In Matthew 2:6 cf 22:41,46 we see Jesus being portrayed as the promised king who is to come and shepherd God's flock cf. Ezek. 34:11-31; 37:24-28; Mic. 5:4-5. In an effort to bring this identity clearly, Matthew goes ahead to portray Jesus as the shepherd-king who in contrast to the self-centred shepherds throughout Israel's history comes with gentleness, mounted on a donkey.

Matthew quoting from Zechariah 13:7-9 in Matthew 26:31 recognizes that Jesus is the stricken shepherd who will sacrifice himself for the flock. Jesus through his selfless service and humility becomes a shepherd-king who provides the necessary sacrifice so that the flock will be protected, guided and saved from the wicked shepherds (rulers) who seeks to destroy the flock (Chad 2-5). It is interesting from our study to discover that in Zechariah 11:4-17 we see an allegory of the shepherd who is betrayed and sold for a prize of thirty pieces of silver. And in the parable of the lost sheep, Jesus is portrayed as the shepherd who has concern for the whereabouts of his flock. In this sense Jesus has demonstrated the quality of the good shepherd by being responsible and showing love for the flock he pastures.

In John's account Jesus is portrayed as the one who fulfills the function of the good shepherd who cares for the sheep and protects them from the enemy (John 10:1-18).

Reading this chapter in the light of the Old Testament texts we have examined (Jer. 23:1-4; Zech.11;Ezek. 34). One would see Jesus as the good shepherd who is being contrasted with Israel's shepherds who fail in their responsibility. These passages affirm Yahweh as the shepherd of Israel (Ps.80:1;cf. Ps.23:1; Isa.40:10-11). It also calls for some measure of responsibility of all those in leadership responsibility to be faithful and committed as Jesus the rightful shepherd who knows his flock and they also recognize him, his sheep knows his voice and can distinguish it from the voice of the false shepherd who are robbers.

Jesus further uses the imagery of the good shepherd to distinguish his kind of ministry from that of the false shepherds and to project his sacrificial love for his flock (Morris 443). Here Jesus demonstrates a high sense of good relationship between him and his flock. As the good shepherd he demonstrates his knowledge of his sheep. This statement can further be understood from the perspective of the Eastern shepherd who knows all the particulars of each of his sheep; its genealogy, defects, temper and taste. But the hireling may not have a good sense of all the particulars of his sheep because his concern is to earn a means of livelihood. Therefore, he cannot lay his life as a sacrifice for the flock which is a genuine test for a true shepherd (Meyer 156-57). A genuine test of this sense is seen in Jesus as the good shepherd who laid his life for the brethren. Other writers of the New Testament developed their concept of the shepherd motif from the above understanding. For instance Hebrews 13:20 speak of Jesus as the great shepherd of the flock who by his blood of the eternal covenant equip the saints with everything good to do his good will.

The apostle Peter in his epistle admonishes the elders of the church who are also shepherd to tend and care for the flock of God who has made them overseers, not by compulsion but in willingness to serve, not for shameful gain, not as domineering over

them instead being examples to the flock and when the chief shepherd appears he will reward them with an unfading crown. It is interesting to note from this passage that *presbyterous* or elders of the church are seen as shepherd in terms of leadership role who are to take specific roles in tending and caring for the flock of God. These passages demonstrate the nucleus of the shepherd motif. What the good shepherd expects to see is that his undershepherds care for the sheep just as he has done as we reveal in our earlier study. The good shepherd expects to see in his shepherds the qualities of a good shepherd not like the foolish ones that left Israel to be scattered and devoured by ravenous wolves, but to serve Israel with love and humility demonstrating their untiring desire to care. The New Testament writers further develop the concept of the shepherd motif in the new role of the shepherd to guard the sheep from false shepherds that are already at work, who are forerunners of the final deceiver who will come to try to lead astray the flock (1 Tim 4:1-5; 2Tim3:1-9; 2 Pet.2:1-22; 1 John 4:1-6; Jude 1; 2Thess.2:1-12). The apostle Peter admonishes the elders of the church that a day is coming when the good shepherd and the guardian of our soul will return to reward his faithful shepherds(1 Pet.2:25).

One can clearly draw from this study that the concept of the shepherd motif derives its meaning from the Old Testament idea of tending flock and further develops and gives a richer meaning to that effect. We have also demonstrated from the New Testament that the untiring desire to care lies at the centre of the shepherd motif which this research attempts to fill in the gap. Therefore, if the church and society would embrace such motif in their leadership it will definitely transform their way of governance and ensure caring and safety for the populace. In the next sub-section we shall explore the African understanding of the shepherd motif in order to draw the implications to the African context.

3.5 CHARTS ILLUSTRATING THE MEANING OF *RO'EH* (SHEPHERD) IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS USING THE PRINCIPLES OF SYNTAGMATICS AND PARADIGMATICS

In this section the principle of Syntagmatics and Paradigmatics are used in order to determine the meaning of shepherd motif in the Old Testament in the following texts; Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34; Jeremiah 23:1-6 and Zechariah 11:4-17. To each of the text a table is designed to give the meaning of *ro'eh* or shepherd in various contexts as shown below.

Syntagmatics is one of the three principles of researching Biblical terms. Syntagmatics essentially deal with word relations in a given context. This principle will be used to determine the meaning of *ro'eh* or shepherd in various contexts as shown above. In syntagmatics “the meaning of a word is its use in a language system” (Warren 2)¹¹. What this means is that a linguist may look at other words in the same context e.g if in a group of words we have staff, rod, sheep, grass, stream, flute and a small skin bag. This gives an idea to its meaning; we may suggest that the above items used are in the context of a shepherd (Ps.23).

In the table below, we have reference section in the first column, which gives the texts in which the word *ro'eh* occurs. The second column gives the grammatical roles of the word under investigation, whether it functions as the subject, object or a prepositional phrase. In the next column it tells us the kind of action to which the subject, object or prepositional phrase is attached or plays. The next column gives other key terms in the verse, which does not include exact parallels. But gives a clue to its meaning. The last column gives other key concepts in the context, which is sorted out by looking at two verses before and after¹². This gives us an idea to the meaning of the word in that context.

Considering Psalm 23:1-6. In the first verse the word *ro'eh* or shepherd is playing the grammatical role of the subject of the sentence. Hebrew language does not have

linking verbs as; is, are, was, were, ecetera. The usage is determined by the context. The Psalmist is the possessor. The word is (my shepherd) and the noun possessed is the Lord. The Psalmist here makes the Lord his own in a personal relationship. This further explains the covenant relationship between the Psalmist and his Lord. Looking at the key term(s) in the verse, we see “want”, which by the virtue of this description confirms the satisfaction that comes from his Lord who is his shepherd. The last column which stands for the key concepts in the context is found in two verses before and after, thus, leads, restores and righteousness. The last column gives us an idea or the impression of how *ro'eh* is used in the context of leading, restoring and walking the path of righteousness. We can draw inference from that *ro'eh* as is also used in the context of leadership responsibilities. By this analysis the shepherd who is the principal subject of the sentence function in leading his flock, refreshing their souls and leading them aright in the way they should go.

The subsequent verses 2-5 gives us the grammatical role of the shepherd as subject of the sentence. The verbs give us the action of the shepherd in which he makes the sheep to lie down, he restores, he leads and even prepares or anoints his flock.

In vv 2, 3 and 5, there is no indication of the possessor and the noun possessed. But have the verbs “to pasture” and “to lead”. The key terms are located in those verses; pasture, lead, fear comfort, anoint goodness and mercy. The key concepts in the above contexts tell us how the shepherd plays the role of restoring, leading, comforting, anointing his flock and also protection to his flock. In v 6 *ro'eh* or shepherd plays the grammatical role of the object of the sentence. The verb to which it is attached is “to dwell”. The Lord in this verse is the possessor and the noun possessed is the house. Therefore, shepherd motif of caring plays a significant role in the above text. The contexts explain further the driving force of the shepherd motif by the untiring desire to

care. This is shown in the last two columns.

Table (1) Syntagmatics for Psalm 23:1-6

Versions used for the whole texts: Revised Standard Version

Reference	Gram- matical role of she- pherd	Verb of which is subject/ object in a phrase or clause	of it	Possessor	Noun possessed	Other key terms in the verse	Other key concepts in the context – two verses before and after
Psalm 23:1	Subject	Is		Psalmist	The Lord	Want	Leads, restores, righteousness
v.2	Subject	Makes me lie down		None	None	Pasture, lead	Restores, righteousness, comfort
v.3	Subject	Restores, leads		None	None	Righteous- ness	Shepherd, leads, comfort, anoint
v.4	Subject	Are		The Lord	Rod, staff	Fear, comfort	Leads, restores, righteousness
v.5	Subject	Prepare, anoint		None	None	Anoint	Restore, lead, righteousness, fear, comfort, goodness, mercy
v.6	Object	Dwell		The Lord	House	Goodness mercy, dwell	Fear, comfort, anoint

In the chart below, *ro'eh* is playing the grammatical role of the subject qualifier and the verb attached is feeding. The possessor is the Lord and the noun possessed is the flock. Looking at the other key terms in the verse, we have; led, gathered and held that explains the function of the shepherd in a caring manner. The context suggests the shepherd will come with might; he will rule for himself and will also direct and instruct his flock. The above context suggests leadership responsibility with a sense of caring which affirms this study of the shepherd motif in prophetic literature. The last column gives us some details of the context in which *ro'eh* 's meaning is determined. Therefore, *roeh* is used in the context of fear, might, rules, weighed, measured, directed, and instructed. This cannot be determined or found by etymological studies.

Table (2) Syntagmatics for Isaiah 40:11

Reference	Gram- matical role of she- pherd	Verb which is subject/ object in a phrase or clause	of it	Possessor	Noun possessed	Other key terms in the verse	Other key concepts in the context – two verses before and after
Isaiah 40:11	Subject qualifier	Feeding		The Lord	Flock	Lead, gather, hold	Fear, might, rules, weighed, measured, directed, instructed

This is another text in the context of this research that demonstrates the principle of shepherd motif. In v1 *ro'eh* is seen as the subject of the sentence with the verb “to destroy” or “to scatter”. *Yahweh* assumes the position of the possessor while the noun possessed is the pasture. Within the text there are other key terms in the verse which do not have direct parallels. These terms are “destroy” and “scatter”. In the last column of the table we have key concepts in which the meaning of *ro'eh* can be determined. It is apparently clear that *ro'eh* is found in the context of care, scatter, driven away, gather, fruitful and multiply. In v 2, *ro'eh* plays the grammatical role of the subject and “says” is the verb attached to the governing sentence, the possessor is the people; the key terms in the verse are; care and driven away. It is interesting to note that the key concepts in the context are; cared, driven away, gathered, ecetera. Therefore, the meaning of *ro'eh* in this context reveals the role of the shepherd but here it attracts judgment, because the rulers fail in their responsibilities as shepherds. This analysis affirms this study of the absence of pastoral care leadership from the leadership of Judah.

In v 3, *ro'eh* plays the role of the subject in the sentence similar to the two previous verses. The verb attached is ”to gather”. The possessor is the Lord and the noun possessed is the flock. Other key terms which do not have direct parallels are gather, driven away, bring back, etc. Other key concepts in the context of the verse are destroy, scatter, care, driven away, not attended, dismayed, reign, justice, deal wisely, etc. it is obvious that the meaning of *ro'eh* in this context conveys the responsibility of the shepherd, but here the shepherds have failed woefully by destroying, scattering, and not caring for the flock. This irresponsible role of the shepherd attracts *Yahweh's* judgment. It clearly shows the absence of caring motif.

In v 4 the grammatical role of the shepherd in this verse is the subject while the verb to which it is attached is “set over”. Both the noun and the noun possessed are not

indicated. But the last column gives the context in which the meaning of *ro'eh* is determined. Therefore, *ro'eh* falls in the context of caring, scattering, driven away, gathering, reigning etc. This could be positive and negative as suggested of Israel's failure to administer pastoral care to their subjects. Within the same context *Yahweh* promises to do what Israel's shepherds fail to do. He will reign with justice and righteousness. Despite the failure of Israel's shepherd; *Yahweh's* caring was consistent which explains the untiring desire to care for the shepherd, which also affirms our study.

Ro'eh in v 5 plays the grammatical role of the subject of the sentence while the following verbs attached to it are "says" and "rises up". Both the possessor and the noun possessed are not indicated. Other key terms in the verse which do not have direct parallels in the verse are; riase up, righteousness and justice. Other key contexts in the context of the verse in which the meaning of *ro'eh* can be determined are; gathered, remnant, fruitful, feared, dismayed, etc. From this analysis, *ro'eh* functions with issues related to justice, righteousness and gathering which explains the motif of caring by the shepherd.

V 6 has *ro'eh* as the subject of the sentence with the verb "shall". Both the possessor and the verb possessed are none. Other key terms in the terms are "save" and "righteousness". The last column which gives the key concepts in the context of the verse are; hear, fear, dismay, justice, and righteousness. Therefore *ro'eh* can be determined to convey the responsibility of the shepherd with the sense of caring. This also affirms this study of the shepherd motif of caring.

Table (3) Syntagmatics for Jeremiah 23:1-6

Reference	Gram- matical role of	Verb which it is	Possessor	Noun possessed	Other key terms in the verse	Other key concepts in the context – two verses before and after
Jeremiah 23:1-6	she- pherd	subject/ object in a phrase or clause				
v.1	Subject	Destroy, scatter	Lord	Pasture	Destroy, scatter	Care, scattered, driven away, gather, fruitful, multiply
v.2	Subject	Says	The Lord	People	Care, scatter, driven away	Destroy, scatter, driven away, attend to, gather, remnant, fruitful, multiply
v.3	Subject	Gather	The Lord	Flock	Gather, driven away, bring back, fruitful, multiply	Destroy, scatter, care, driven away, not attended to, fear, dismayed, raise up, righteous branch, reign, deal wisely, justice, righteousness.
v.4	Subject	Set over	None	None	Set over, care, fear, dismayed, missing	Care, scattered, driven away, gather, remnant, fruitful, multiply, raise up, reign, justice, righteousness
v.5	Subject	Says, raise up	None	None	Raise up, righteousn ess, justice	Gather, remnant, fruitful, multiply, fear, dismayed, justice, righteousness
v.6	Subject	Shall	None	None	Saved, righteousn ess	Care, fear, dismayed, justice, righteousness

In the same way the tabular presentation below demonstrates the principle of syntagmatics as was done with the previous texts.

As indicated in the first column *ro'eh* functions as the object of the sentence in verse 2 with the verb prophesy attached to it. Both the possessor and the noun possessed are the shepherds of Israel. The key term in the context of the verse is feeding. Other key concepts found in the context of the verse are eat, clothe, slaughter, ruled, bound and brought. Therefore, the meaning of *ro'eh* is related to leadership responsibility, it is apparently clear that the shepherds of Israel have failed in their responsibility for not taking care of the flock, instead they eat, slaughter, and clothe themselves.

In v 3, *ro'eh* functions grammatically as the subject of the main clause and the action of verb is “to eat”. This understanding should not be taken literally but figuratively. Both the possessor and the noun possessed are not indicated. Other key terms in the verse which do not have direct parallels are; slaughter, eat, clothe and feed. The key concepts in the context of the verse are feeding, strengthening, healed and ruled which are all in the negative. This indicates the total absence of the caring motif by the shepherds of Israel which this research is trying to develop as noted in the objectives of the study.

Similarly, in v 4, *ro'eh* plays the role of the subject in the governing sentence. The action of the verb in the main clause is “to strengthen”. Meanwhile, both the possessor and the noun possessed are not indicated. But other key terms in the context of the verse are all in the negative; feeding, eating, scattered, searched, wandered. Therefore, *roeh's* meaning is determined by the fact that the shepherds of Israel were irresponsible in discharging their civil and religious responsibilities, which further violates the principle of the shepherd motif.

It is interesting to note that v 5 has *ro'eh* as the subject of the sentence. There was no verb attached to it primarily. But the indication of the linking verb in the text helps in determining the meaning of the text. Having noted this, the previous verses 1-3 do have the possessor that the noun possessed, likewise v 5. Other key terms in the verse are; scattered, sought, ruled which are all in the negative. Additionally, other key concepts in the context of the verse are; eat, slaughter, clothe, wandered, ruled, etc, are also in the negative. This further elucidates the meaning of *ro'eh* in a defined context with issues related to leadership responsibilities. It also affirms our study of the shepherd motif, but the impression here we have no caring shepherd, but in the later verse we will see Yahweh's untiring desire to care for his flock.

In v 6 *ro'eh* plays the grammatical role of the subject in a prepositional phrase, the verb searched explains the action of the *ro'eh* or shepherd in the text. In the two columns of the possessor and the noun possessed we have none. But other key terms in the verse are; scattered, wandered and sought. Other key concepts in the context of the verse are; strengthened, healed, ruled, brought back, etc. But the key terms and concepts are in the negative. Therefore, *ro'eh* in this context is related with issues of leadership responsibilities. It becomes clear that the attitudes of the shepherd towards their flock were quite irresponsible. They do have the flock at heart. The shepherd motif of caring which should be the concern of the shepherds of Israel has been grossly abused by the shepherds themselves. But in the later verses vv 10-15, it can be seen, Yahweh restoring back the situation of his flock, thereby exhibiting the untiring desire to care for the flock.

In the syntactical construction of vs 7, one sees *ro'eh* functioning as the subject of the main clause with the verb "to hear", but the mood of this verb is imperative. We have no possessor and the noun possessed. Other key terms of the verse which do not have direct parallels are not found. But other key concepts in the context of the verse are;

scattered, searched, sought, fed, wandered, they are all in the negative. Therefore, the meaning of *ro'eh* in this context is related to issues of leadership responsibilities. The shepherds in this context are leaders or rulers of Judah who failed in their leadership responsibilities, by not taking care of the flock.

Vs 8 has *ro'eh* as the subject of the main clause. The action of the verb is in the context of searching. The possessor is the Lord while the noun possessed is the shepherd. Other key terms in the context of the verse are prey, food, and searched. Other key concepts in the verse are; scattered, searched, sought, wandered, but all are in the negative. It is obvious that the meaning of *ro'eh* in this context is related to the role of the shepherd. But if it were etymologically it will not bring out the meaning of *ro'eh* in this context.

In v 9 *ro'eh* functions as the subject of the sentence, the verb *hear* exhibits the action of the subject. We have no possessor and the noun possessed. In the column of other key terms in the verse we have *hear*. The last column gives the key concepts in the context of the verse, which are found to be requiring, feeding, rescuing and searching. But all are in the negative. Therefore, *ro'eh's* meaning in this context suggests judgment and accountability.

V 10 has *ro'eh* as the object of the sentence in which the verb “am” is implied in the text. The text has no possessor and the noun possessed. Other key terms in the verse are rescuing, feeding and requiring. The key concepts within the context of the verse are prey, food, search and seek, which also defines the meaning of *ro'eh* in the context.

In v 11 the subject of the sentence is not indicated as well as the verb, the possessor and the noun possessed. But other key terms and key concepts are indicated as shown in the table. Therefore, *ro'eh's* meaning can be defined in the table. Therefore, the meaning of *ro'eh* can be defined in the key concepts of the verse which are “gathering”,

“rescuing”, “feeding”, all of these are in the positive, because Yahweh will certainly do that.

In v 12 *ro'eh* functions as the subject while seeks functions as the verb. The verse does not indicate the possessor and the noun possessed. But the key terms and concepts are indicated which further defines the meaning of *ro'eh* in the context of seeking, requiring, and feeding. All of these are in the positive because the zeal of the Lord will accomplish it. Therefore, the contextual meaning of *ro'eh* is related to leadership responsibility.

V 13 has *ro'eh* as the direct object of the sentence with the simple futuristic verb “will be” no possessor and the noun possessed. The key term indicated in the verse is “to lie down” other key terms in the context of the verse are; bring back, bondage, make strong and watch. All of these concepts are in the positive, because Yahweh will do it by himself. Technically, in this context Yahweh demonstrates the motif of untiring desire to care. He also executes justice.

Vs 16 has *ro'eh* or shepherd as the subject of the sentence. The entire verbs are in the simple future; I will seek, bring back, feed, watch over, etc. Both the possessor and the noun possessed are not found in the verse. But the key terms and concepts are indicated in the last two columns. Hence, *ro'eh* is determined in the contexts of executing justice, feeding and watching over his flock.

Vs 23 is the last verse in the chapter which has *ro'eh* as the subject of the main clause with the verb “to feed”. The possessor is the Lord and the noun possessed is “my servant”, while the key terms in the verse are, set over and feed. Other key concepts in the context of the verse are; covenant, peace, banish, dwell, security, etc. In this syntactical relationship, *ro'eh* is defined in the context of covenant, peace, security which cannot be found by etymological studies.

Table (4) Syntagmatics for Ezekiel 34

Ezekiel 34:2	Object	Prophecy	Shepherds of Israel	Shepherds of Israel	Feeding	Eat, clothe, slaughter, ruled, bound, brought, healed, bound-up, etc.
Ez. 34:3	Subject	Eat	None	None	Slaughter eat, clothe, feed. etc	Feeding, strengthen, healed, ruled.
Ez. 34:4	Subject	strengthen	None	None	Strengthen, healed, brought back, etc.	Feeding, eat, scattered, searched, wandered, ruled, scattered, etc.
Ez. 34:5	Subject	Was	None	None	Scattered, sought, ruled	Eat, slaughter, clothe, wandered, searched, feed, strengthen, etc
Ez. 34:6	Subject in a prepositional Phrase	Searched	None	None	Scattered, wandered, seek	Strengthened, healed, ruled, brought back, etc
Ez. 34:7	Subject	Hear	None	None	None	Scattered, searched, seek, fed, wandered.
Ez. 34:8	Subject	Searched	The Lord	shepherd	Prey, food, searched.	Scattered, seek, searched, wandered.
Ez. 34:9	Subject	Hear	None	None	Hear	Prey, required, feeding, rescue, searched, etc.
Ez. 34:10	Object	Am	None	None	Rescue, feeding, require	Prey, food, searched, seek.
Ez. 34:11	None	None	None	None	Searched, Seek,	Require, feeding, rescue, gathered, feed, seek, etc.
Ez. 34:12	Subject	Seeks	None	None	Scattered, seek, rescue	Require, searched, seek, rescue, seek, gathered.
Ez. 34:15	Direct object	will be	None	None	Lie down	Seek, bring back, bandage wound, make strong, watch over, justice, feed.
Ez. 34:16	Subject(I)	Seek, bringback, feed, strengthen, watch over.	None	None	Seek, bind, bring back,	Lie down.
Ez.34:23	Subject	Feed	The Lord	My Servant	Set Over, Feed	Covenant, peace, banish, dwell securely, sleep

From the table below, *ro'eh* is playing the grammatical role of the subject of the sentence in verse 4. The verb to which it is attached with the subject is “said”. The possessor is the shepherd and the noun possessed is God. Looking at the key term we have “slaughter”. The key concepts in the context of the verse which determines the meaning of *ro'eh* are; wailing, ruining, pitying, etc.

In v5 *ro'eh* plays the role of the subject and the verb attached to it, is “to have”. The possessor and the noun possessed are not indicated in the verse. Other key terms in the verse are; blessed pity. Therefore *ro'eh* is used in the context related to wailing, delivering, union, tending and grace.

V 6 *ro'eh* assumes the grammatical role of the subject with the following verbs; “have pity” and “cause to fall”. Within the verse there is no possessor and the noun possessed. Other key terms in the verse are found to be; pity, fall, crush, etc. Therefore, the meaning of *ro'eh* in the context of the verse is related to; doomed, blessed, pity, ecetera.

In v 7 *ro'eh* functions as the subject of the sentence with the following verbs; became, took, named, tended. Other key terms in the verse are; doom, slain, grace and union. Therefore, *ro'eh* in this context could mean; blessed, crushed, destroyed, impatient, detested, died and devoured.

Similarly v 8 has *ro'eh* as the subject of the sentence, and the verbs of which is attached to the subject are; destroyed and became. There are no indications of the possessor and the noun possessed as in the last two columns. Other key concepts found in the context of the verse, the meaning of *ro'eh* is related to union, crush, grace, deliver and pity.

To determine the meaning of *ro'eh* in verse 9, one can see *ro'eh* functioning as the subject of the sentence and the verb of which it is attached is; said. There is no

indication of the possessor and the noun possessed in the verse. Other key terms in the verse are; die, destroy, and devour. Therefore, the meaning of *ro'eh* in the context of the verse is related to the following; annul, detest, covenant, union, grace, ecetera.

In v10 *ro'eh* grammatically functions as the subject of the main clause and the actions of the verbs are expressed in the following; took, broke and annulled. The context in which the meaning of *ro'eh* is related to is the issues of ; destroy, impatience, die and devour.

In v11 *ro'eh* functions as the object of a prepositional phrase, its meaning is determined by looking at the last column which deals with the context of the verse, hence *ro'eh* is related to grace and covenant.

V12 has *ro'eh* as the subject; other key terms in the verse are wages, shekels, weight. Other key concepts in the context of the verse which are related to the meaning of *ro'eh* are grace, union and brotherhood.

In v13 we have *ro'eh* as the subject of the sentence, the Lord functions as the possessor and the noun possessed as the house. We have no key terms in the verse. Therefore, union and brotherhood are said be related to the meaning of *ro'eh* in this context.

V14 indicates *ro'eh* as the main subject of the sentence. The verb in the verse expresses the action of breaking and annulling. The Lord is seen as the possessor while the staff assumes the position of the noun possessed. Union and brotherhood are found to be the key terms in the verse. Therefore, the meaning of *ro'eh* in this context is related to the issues of caring, healing, seeking, nourishing, and devouring.

V15 has *ro'eh* as the subject of the sentence; there are no indications of the possessor and the noun possessed in the verse. The key term in the context of the verse is worthless shepherd. Other key concepts which determine the meanings of *ro'eh* in the

context of the verse are; union, brotherhood, caring, healing, seeking, nourishing, devouring, fearing, deserting, and withering. In v 16 *ro'eh* plays the grammatical role of the subject and the context related to its meaning are union, brotherhood and withering.

Finally, verse 17 has *ro'eh* functioning as the indirect object while “to desert” as the verb. The possessor as indicated in the table is the Lord, while the noun possessed is the worthless shepherd. Other key terms which helps in defining the meaning of *ro'eh* are; deserted, smote, withered and blinded. Therefore, the meaning of *ro'eh* in this context is related to the issues of caring, seeking, healing, nourishing, tearing, smiting and deserting.

From the chart below, syntagmatics deal essentially with word relations in a given context. In this study the researcher has demonstrated the meaning of *roeh*/shepherd in various contexts. This is seen in the key concepts in the various contexts of the verses investigated. Therefore, *roeh* is used in the context related to leading, restoring, comforting, caring, having mercy, ruling, directing, instructing, having justice, having righteousness, gathering, devouring, tearing, feeding, etc. This analysis has demonstrated the thesis' desired goals of the untiring desire for care by the shepherd

Table (5) Syntagmatics for Zech 11:4-17

Reference	Gram-matical role of	Verb of which it is subject/ object in a phrase or clause	Possessor	Noun possessed	Other key terms in the verse	Other key concepts in the context – two verses before and after
Zechariah1 1:4-17						
v.4	Subject	Said	The shepherd	God	Slaughter	Wail, glorious, ruined, blessed, pity
v.5	Subject	Have	None	None	Blessed, pity	Wail, glory, pity, deliver, grace, union, tended
v.6	Subject	Have-pity, cause to fall	None	None	Pity, fall, crush, deliver	Doomed, blessed, pity
v.7	Subject	Became shepherd, took, named, tended	None	None	Doomed, slain, grace, union	Blessed, pity, crush, deliver, destroy, impatient, detested, die, devour
v.8	Subject	Destroyed, became impatient	None	None	Destroy, impatient, detested	Pity, crush, deliver, grace, union, die, devour
v.9	Subject	Said	None	None	Die, destroyed, devour	Grace, union, destroy, impatient, detested, covenant, annul
v.10	Subject	Took, broke, annulled, made	None	None	Grace, covenant	Destroy, impatient, detestable, die, devour
v.11	Object	Was	The Lord	Word	Annulled	Grace, covenant
v.12	Subject	Said	The Lord	Wages	Wages	Grace, union, brotherhood
v.13	Subject	Said	The Lord	House	None	Union, brotherhood
v.14	Subject	Broke, annul	The Lord	Staff	Union, brotherhood	Care, seek, heal, nourish, devours, tears.
v.15	Subject	Said	None	None	Worthless shepherd	Union, brotherhood, care, seek, heal, nourish, devour, fear, deserts, smite, withered, blinded
v. 16	Subject	Raising up	None	None	Care, seek, heal, nourish	Union, brotherhood, smite, withered, blinded
v. 17	Indirect object	Deserts	The Lord	Worthless shepherd	Deserts, smiths, withered	Care, heal, devours, nourish, seek

The table below demonstrates the principle of Paradigmatics, which simply means study of sense relations between words or words related by meaning (synonyms, antonyms). For instance in Ezek.34:23 this principle demonstrates that “my servant” is synonymous to the word *roeh* or shepherd and is used in the context of raising someone and putting him in charge of something or giving him some responsibilities. Therefore, one sees that the context deals with leadership role as was investigated. In the same vein the word ruler is also synonymous to *roeh* shepherd used in the context of leadership responsibility. In Jer.23:5 the righteous branch or king is also synonymous to *roeh* shepherd used in the context of rulership, but this time emphasis is on ruling or reigning wisely. In Zech.11:6 King is synonymous to shepherd the focus here is on the specific role of the king which is used in the context of executing justice and righteousness. In vv 15-17 of chapter 11 one sees that the worthless shepherd is antonym to *roeh* shepherd used in the context of leadership role, where the worthless shepherd showed no concern, the flock not pitied, scattered, not cared and not nourished.

Context is that of feeding, rescuing, leading, watching over, e.t.c. in the positive, and fed upon, not pitied, devoured, crushed, not healed, not cared and scattered in the negative. Compare this to etymological findings.

Table (6) Paradigmatics: words related by meanings.

Parallel term	Semantic relationship	Reference	Term occurring
My servant	Synonymous	Ez. 34:23	Rise and put in charge
Ruler	Synonymous	Ez. 34:23	Rise and put in charge
Righteous branch/king	Synonymous	Jer. 23:5	Rise up, reign, deal wisely
King	Synonymous	Zech. 11:6	Execute justice and righteousness
Worthless shepherd	Antonym	Zech. 11:15	No pity, crushed, not delivered
Worthless shepherd	Antonym	Zech. 11:16	Not cared, not sought, not healed, not nourished, devoured, tearing off
Worthless shepherd	Antonym	Zech. 11:17	Deserts, smite, withered, blinded

3.6 SEMANTIC RANGE

In this section of the study few but basic words have been selected and examined to give the semantic range of the word רעה (shepherd). The semantic range gives us the contextual meaning of a particular word and how its meaning relates with other words in similar context. The writer shall now study them as indicated below.

3.6.1 The Semantic Range of שמר

Etymology

The Hebrew שמר *Shamar* is related to the *Akkadian* ‘*Shamaru*’ meaning to “wait upon”, “attend to”; the Arabic ‘*Samara*’ meaning “to watch”, and the Phoenician “to watch”, or “guard”. It is also synonymous to the Hebrew *nasar* meaning “to watch” “to guard” “to keep”, and /or “to observe.” (Hamilton 939)¹

Occurrence/meaning/ Concept

The word *Shamar* occurs as verb about 465 times in the Old Testament; 420 in Qal, 37 in Niphal, 4 in Piel and 4 in hitpael². שמר primarily means “a great care” or “a diligent care” “to be careful or attention to be paid to the obligations of a covenant, to laws, statutes e.t.c.”(Hamilton 959)³ e.g Exd. 20:6; Lev. 18:26; Deut. 26:16; Ezek. 11:20. The subject of שמר may be God or man; the object however, is never God but flock, Israel, man, laws, covenants, statutes, e.t.c.

Usage / Concept

שמר is used in both human and theological terms. It carries the idea of tending and the objects are Eden (Gen. 2:15), flock (Gen. 30:31), house (Isa. 15:16), and persons (Psalm 34:20; 86:2; 121:3-4, 7 also implied in Gen. 4:9. It also carries the idea of self discipline/respect and reservation, hence the common rendering ‘to keep oneself from something/ someone.’ cf. Prov. 30:8; another concept is that of observing God’s laws and commands resulting in his (God’s) reverence, fear and love. It also has a concept related

to shepherding. To keep a flock denotes total care that is ensuring the safety and health of the flock and also ensuring that the flock is well fed. It is obviously the opposite of exploitation and maltreatment. This is exactly what is found in the context of Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23. The shepherds were acting contrary to their calling and responsibility.

From this semantic range we can draw our conclusion that the word שָׁמַר *shamar* is closely associated with רָעָה *ro'eh* in terms of tending or shepherding, which brings our minds to the understanding of leadership responsibilities with a sense of the motif of caring.

3.6.2 The Semantic Range of פָּקַד

Etymology

The root פָּקַד *paqad* occurs in the *Akkadian* 'pagadu' and it means 'to watch over,' 'to entrust,' 'to appoint,'. It is also found in Ugaritic 'pqd' meaning 'to order,' or the Phoenician *pqd* – 'to appoint,' or 'to authorize' Also the Aramaic *pqd*, 'to order' and Arabic '*faqada*,' to 'miss' or 'be missing.'(Williams 658) ⁴

Occurrence / Meaning and Concept

The verb occurs about 303 times in the Old Testament, 103 times in the book of Numbers and 49 in Jeremiah. It also occurs about 235 in Qal, 21 in Niphal, 1 in piel, 2 in pual, 29 in hitpael, 8 in hophal and 4 in hotpael.

פָּקַד *paqad* is regarded as the most problematic verb in the Old Testament. It posits some difficulties in interpretation due to its multiple and more or less unrelated meanings. Scholars however tend to agree with three meanings as primary. First, to number or count. This is mostly used in military context where soldiers and / or fighting men are counted, and also in census. cf 2 Sam. 24:1ff. Second, to appoint a governor or official and third, to attend to with care or to take note.(Hamilton 731)⁵

Hamilton sees the third rendering as the most appropriate and primary, that is “to exercise oversight over a subordinate either in the form of inspecting or of taking action to cause a considerable change in the circumstances of the subordinate, either for the better or for the worse.”(Hamilton 731)⁶ .But in the context of our study it thus implies leadership responsibilities.

This interpretation has a theological concept that can be viewed in two directions. First, it denotes God’s care/concern for his people. Second, the idea of ‘taking action to cause a considerable change in a circumstance’ as stated by Hamilton denotes divine visitation which portrays the idea of active intervention either positively or negatively.

Similarly, פקד *paqad* in its semantic range is closely associated with רעה *ro’eh* the idea relates to the role of a shepherd. A shepherd cares for and gives attention to his flock. This gives us the motif of caring which underlies leadership responsibility.

3.6.3 The Semantic Range of חסד

Etymology

The word poses difficulty among scholars to clearly figure out its etymology, and they prefer to say its etymology is unknown.

Occurrences/ Meanings

The root occurs about 250 times in the Old Testament, its etymology is unknown. Generally חסד means love, mercy and kindness. In the LXX, the Greek equivalent is *eleos* (mercy) and in the Vulgate, the Latin equivalent is *mesercordia* (compassion, mercy). The BDB and GB have love, goodness and grace; the KB on the other hand has “mutual liability of those belonging together.”

There is however, a debate among scholars on the most likely meaning of חסד. Nelson Glueck, supported by W. F. Lofthouse, (1933), N. H. Snaith, H. W. Robinson,

Ugo Masing e.t.c. say the context of חסד in the Old Testament is covenant of an ethically binding relationship, hence חסד most likely means ‘covenant loyalty.’

A contrary view is given by Assension, Stoebe, and Sidney who view חסד as meaning mercy, good heartedness, and free acts of rescue or deliverance including faithfulness ... respectively. Taking into consideration its secular usage especially in Rahab’s story (Josh. 2:12), Lot (Gen. 19:19), and David and Jonathan (1 Sam. 20:8, 14, 15, 17), Stoebe concludes that חסד describes good actions with no obligation hence, it denotes mercy, kindness, love, goodness, compassion, grace, favour, e.t.c. Even though in the case of David and Jonathan there is a covenant, this is preceded by love.

Usage

Commenting on the theological usage of חסד, Hamilton in *TWOT* centred his study on the textual context occurrence of חסד. He posits the question, ‘do(es) the Old Testament texts refer to God’s compassion and love?. Therefore, the semantic range of חסד is closely associated with רעה because it relates to the role of a shepherd. A shepherd ought to love, and care for his sheep and should be compassionate and give prime attention to the flock he tends. By implication it implies leadership responsibility with a sense of caring.

3.6.4 The Semantic Range of חסד

Etymology

According to Meier, the word is among verbs of ‘want,’ ‘lack,’ or ‘need,’ חסר *hasar* is the most common and broadly attested to in the languages of the ancient Near East. It occurs in same form as the Hebrew (חסר) in Aramaic, Arabic, and Ethiopic.(Meier 225)⁷

Occurrence

The earliest occurrence of the verb is in Genesis 8:3,5; 18:28 with the idea of reduction (or to diminish), first, of the waters of the flood (Gen. 8:3,5), and second, of the righteous in Sodom (Gen. 18:28). The adjective is mostly found in Proverbs and other wisdom literature. Here, it denotes lack of wisdom/ understanding and / or man's spiritual predicament consequent in sinful, immoral, and/or unethical behavior(s).

Meaning

The verb *hasar* חָסַר generally entails a state of lack, being in need, or in lack of something. In the Qal, it means to diminish, to decrease, or to lack; the Hiphil means 'to cause to lack', the piel means to deprive. The noun/ adjective חָסַר describes one who lacks; the participle חָסֵר want or lack.(112)⁸ The man who is in lack is said to be in a state of poverty.

In the Old Testament, the subject of חָסַר is always man and when it is God, it is only referred to in the negative not positive, mostly contrasting him with lack or poverty. The objects may be one of the man's basic needs for survival i.e. food, water, clothing, ecetera.

Usage and Concept

The use of חָסַר in the Old Testament is human/ secular and theological. In the human usage, it denotes poverty or deficiency of something as stated earlier. It is also interesting to note that in the human usage, it is associated with 'the heart.' This is however figurative especially when it is used in the negative (e.g to have no heart) because no human being can survive without a literal heart since heart is the organ that helps in blood circulation and also regarded as the seat of one's emotion and volition (Meier 225).

The metaphorical expression of ‘a lack of heart’ in the Old Testament implies a number of things mostly in the wisdom literature especially proverbs. A man who ‘lacks a heart’ is said to be careless (Proverbs 24:50), lazy (Prov. 12:11; 28:19), foolish, e.t.c. A man’s lack of heart implies his inability to discern the right from the wrong; the good from the bad; the beneficial from the unbeneficial; the true from the false e.t.c. This man is said to be foolish/stupid. The result of this is misfortune, poverty, and spiritual declension. Hence, ‘lack of heart’ (wisdom, knowledge, or understanding) is somehow associated with sinfulness, immorality or unrighteousness, evident in adultery, oppression, injustice ecetera.

In its theological usage, it is always referred to in the negative ‘God does not lack.’ The Old Testament portrays God as the owner of everything hence he does not lack, neither do people or things associated with him.⁹ He is the one who provides “both necessities and luxuries”(Meier 227) to the children of Israel, the righteous needy, the oppressed, and all who put their trust in Him, for example, (Deut. 2:7; 1 kgs. 17:14,16; Pss. 23:1; 40:17; 86:1).

The idea of God’s provision is closely related to his sufficient grace / favour חן, compassion חסד, and steadfast love חסד well being or prosperity, hence, he provides out of his graciousness and not obligation. The grace of God upon an individual results in abundance, prosperity and well being שלם (226).

From the above concept, the Old Testament views poverty / lack as divine punishment or disfavour either as a result of sin committed, or lack of faith / distrust. The incidence of Job implies that this is not always the case. One can be poor because of sin/laziness or distrust. However, God’s sovereignty also plays an important role as in the case of Job. This is however, rare.

From our research we have seen the various rendering of חסר and its semantic range with רעה. From its theological standpoint God's provision is associated to his being like a shepherd. The idea is that of special care or love. Therefore, this rendering connotes special care in leadership responsibility. A leader must be fashioned in like manner of a shepherd to be able to achieve the maximum quest of the motif of caring for his flock and subordinates.

3.6.5 The Semantic Range of נקד

Etymology

The word נקד *noqed* in Hebrew signifies shepherd, herdsman, or sheep-dealer (Amos 1:1; 7:14).

Ancient Near East

The root נקד *noqed* occurs in Ugaritic נקד which is used as the title of the priest-scribe. The rendering *naqidu* is used for herdsman. This literally implies one who takes care of the flock.

Old Testament Usage

In the Old Testament the word is used for shepherd in 2kgs 3:4 for King Mesha of Moab. In this context the word has nothing to do with any religious contexts. The second place where the word is used is in reference to Amos who is called a *noqed* or Tekoan shepherd (Amos 1:1; 7:14).

From the two positions of the ancient Near East derivatives and the Old Testament that is the priest and the shepherd, it implies leadership responsibilities. Therefore, the various rendering of the נקד *noqed* with its semantic range with רעה *ro'eh* it conveys the idea of leadership with a sense of tender care (Cornelius 150).

3.6.6 The Semantic Range of מֶלֶךְ

Etymology

מֶלֶךְ is a denominative verb derived from the noun מֶלֶךְ it is common designation for ‘kings’ in the ancient Near East especially West Semitic. Related word occurs in Akkadian, ‘*Sarrum*’ meaning adviser.

Occurrence / Meaning

The verb occurs mostly in Qal and Hiphil and only once in hophal. In Qal it means to reign; in Hiphil it means to cause to reign that is to anoint or crown. As a denominative verb, its meaning is depended on the meaning and concept of the nominative מֶלֶךְ *melek* hence it is important to look briefly on the nominative. In the ancient Near East and the Old Testament, מֶלֶךְ *melek* can be translated ‘lord, captain, ruler, prince, chief and king.’(Culver 507). It is the name used for “all kinds of monarchical rulers (city, states, lands, territories, and tribes). The basic idea of מֶלֶךְ *melek* (kingship) is formulated in Judges 9:2: It is one man ruling over a particular group of people or territory”(Nel 956). The feminine מַלְכָּה *malka* denotes the wife of a king or a ruling queen (cf. 1kgs. 1) in Assyria, the feminine form *melekat* refers to the goddess *lishtar* regarded as queen of heaven. Synonyms of מֶלֶךְ in the Old Testament are ‘*nagad*’ (leader / captain), ‘*nasa*’ (pre-monarchical family/ clan head), and ‘*misiach*’ (anointed one) denoting the Old Testament idea of the role of the king in relation to God. King is therefore seen as a head, a chief administrator and an adviser that runs the affairs of the territory he heads.

Usage / Concept

In the Old Testament, the verb מֶלֶךְ is used in both human and theological terms. In the human usage, man is the subject of the verb whose role is that of ruling or

overseeing the affairs of men. In the theological term God is the subject but never the object. Nel notes that in both the Old Testament and the ancient Near East, God is viewed as king of the world, the gods, the nations, and Israel(960). The concept of God as king, or human king as God, is well attested to in the ancient Near East. In Babylon, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Syria for example, the gods are seen as kings and kings are seen as deified humans or sons of the gods (Nel 956).

The Old Testament also has a developed theological concept of kingship. In the Old Testament, kingship is seen as a sacral / divine institution. The idea of God as king is prominent especially in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah. It is also dominant in the Psalms, Daniel and Malachi. The royal formula יהוה מלך denotes the absolute rule of Yahweh over not only Israel, but ‘the nations’ and the gods. This idea of God as king is argued by some scholars to be in Israel even before the exile and is said to be rooted in the theology of the ark and Zion.

The association of human kings with God is also prominent in Israel, however, the idea of deification as in the ancient Near East, is not prominent. On the contrary, anointed by God, the human king is viewed as God’s vice- regent and hence expected to obey the law and failure to do that attracts criticisms from the prophets especially in the pre-exilic period.

There is also an eschatological / messianic concept of kingship which is given a Christological interpretation in the New Testament. The root of this is in God’s covenant with David, to establish his line forever. The decline of the re-establishment of the Davidic dynasty after the exile led to the re-interpretation of the covenant. This is prominent in the Royal Psalms; God is said to be the ideal king promised to come from David’s line. The Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7:16, the adoption of the king as a Son of God in Psalm 2, and the characteristic reign of the promised Davidic King (justice,

peace, sovereignty, righteousness, ecetera). led to an eschatological and Christological interpretation. These were never realized in any Judahlites king, hence God is the promised Davidic king whose rule is characterized by peace, justice, righteousness and sovereignty, this is to display the characteristics of a shepherd who will shepherd his people in justice and righteousness through his loving care (963). Therefore, *melek* is semantically related with *ro'eh* interms of the concept of ruling with tender care with the administration of justice, righteousness and mercy on the subjects.

3.7 EXEGESIS OF SELECTED TEXTS

3.7.1 EXEGESIS OF PSALM 23

Having established the background study of the shepherd motif from the ancient Near East and the Old Testament, we shall in this chapter concentrate on the exegesis of some selected texts that would broaden the scope of our understanding of shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament. In the light of this the following texts will be examined; Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Zechariah 11:4-17, Jeremiah 23:1-8 and Isaiah 40:1-11.

Prior to examining the above texts, it is worthy of note to determine the different literary genres, its significance is to help the exegete interpret the given texts correctly. From the Psalm we see poetic and metaphorical expression of the shepherd motif, in Ezekiel we see the figurative expression of the shepherd motif and Zechariah is complex and highly debatable among scholars as to what genre is expressed. However, three genres have been detected namely; the poetic, metaphorical and the figurative. Both Jeremiah and Isaiah maintain the figurative and messianic expressions of the shepherd motif. The researcher shall examine the above texts individually;

3.7.2 Background

Psalm 23 is the most familiar text and most widely read Psalm. Most scholars believe that the background pictures a member of the cultus community who expresses

his confidence and trust in Yahweh his shepherd who saves him from all his foes and gives thanks to God at the banquet in the house of the Lord v6. Kraus (305) agrees with the Masoretic rendering observes that the psalmist is someone belonging to the community of believers, who in the house of the Lord has experienced supernatural blessings, who vacate the temple trusting Yahweh and speaks of his vow that “I shall return to the house of the Lord...”. Other scholars like Roberts (3) quoted “Psalm 23 Song of Passage” in Lundbom (6) suggests David as the author of the Psalm against the backdrop of fleeing from his son Absalom. It is likely that this Psalm belongs to the same period with Psalm 27:4 and Psalm 63 which speak of David retreating with his faithful followers to Kidron valley and Mount of Olives into the plains wilderness of Judah when counseled by Hushai to pass over to Judah as quick as possible for the safety of his life (Keil 134).

3.7.3 Authorship and Date

From the title, the Psalm is that of David לדוד. However, Eiselen (526) objects this and said “His [the Psalmist] clear dependence upon the prophets and the reference to the temple (v.6) shows that the Psalm cannot be Davidic. It is a product of the Persian period and came from a soul richly endowed with religious feelings.” Adeyemo(26) on the other hand agrees with the former that David who “was a shepherd boy, musician, warrior and king,” wrote the Psalm and others making a total of 73 Psalms out of the 150 Psalms in the Psalter. Comparing Adeyemo’s portrayal of David and Eiselen’s portrayal of the anonymous psalmist, it is not unreasonable to say that David wrote the Psalm. Eiselen’s proposal is highly hypothetical. The view of the other scholar seems quite reasonable to see the author of the Psalm as a shepherd boy and a king, it is not surprising that David was familiar with the shepherd vocation and thus can freely use it as an image

of Yahweh in relation to his experience of Yahweh's caring which embraces feeding, leading, guiding, protecting and restoring attitude toward his servant.

In terms of religious piety one of the pious men of the Old Testament is certainly David. This is expressed in his love for the law, willingness/readiness to forgive and repent, love for the house of God, etc. hence, he can also be described as "a soul richly endowed with religious feeling". Though the temple was not built in David's life time, he had the desire to build it and he also spoke of God's presence (2 Sam. 7:18), thus, the temple or house of God in Psalm 23:6 can mean the presence of God or before the ark of the covenant and these are all familiar to David.

However, the authorship of this Psalm is highly ambiguous among Biblical scholars. Two scholars Merrill and Vogt analysed the authorship through the instrument of this genre as a royal Psalm for the fact that it praises a king who indeed is a shepherd but this too is highly hypothetical. Keller (15) and Yilpet (21) suggest exegetical evidence looking at the superscription for the construction לַדָּוִד the preposition לִ may mean the following – "belonging to David", "to David", "for David" and "in honour of David". Additionally Dillard and Longman III (215) translate the preposition לִ preceding דָּוִד as "by", "of/about" for Davidic authorship. All of these are indeed possibilities. The writer subscribe to the later option for it correlates with the *Sitz im Leben* of the Psalter. If David is seen as a shepherd boy and the promises confirmed on him as the shepherd of Yahweh's people, there is every possibility to attribute authorship to him. The NIV footnote agrees with Davidic authorship of the Psalm. We do recognize the fact that other interpretive school of thoughts may vary slightly from mine analysis and opinion. Nevertheless, we subscribe to the Masoretic rendering and other scholars who maintain Davidic authorship.

There is no consensus among scholars as to the time of composition. Most scholars posit the exilic period as the most probable date of composition looking at the shepherd metaphor in the Exodus experience as proposed by Milne (237-47). For it provides hope for the exiled community cut off from home and temple. Another school of thought sees the pre-exilic period as the most favourable date of its composition for it echoes the early life of David and his kingly rule as the shepherd-king close to Yahweh's heart, which becomes Yahweh's ideal stamp of approval. This study favourably submits to the later opinion. If we accept Davidic authorship, it then means David wrote the Psalm out of his own experience when he spent his early years caring for sheep (1 Sam. 16:10-11). The Psalm could possibly be written in David's life time (1011-941BC) or shortly after.

3.7.4 Purpose and Theology

The meaning of a given text owes its importance to the purpose and theology of the text. Its placement in Psalms is to stress the care of Yahweh to an individual apart from the popular opinion of his communal care for Israel. In its theology, it pictures a distinct quality of God as a caring shepherd and a dependable guide, provider and protector for those who trust in him. An attitude of submission and obedience to him would result into the hope of eternal life and security. Other theological content in the Psalm gravitates around faith and trust which are very strong theology in Psalm 23. Additionally, the purpose of the Psalm is to express God's care for the righteous and his righteous acts in relation to his people who are seen as his flock which further encourage them to have trust and confidence in him despite odd situations.

3.7.5 Structure

There are basically two major schools of thought who believe the structure of the Psalm has two to three imageries or metaphors. The first school of thought maintains that

vv1-4 deals with Yahweh as the shepherd and vv5-6 as Yahweh the Host. Scholars who submit to this division are Anderson, Kraus and Craigie. On the other school of thought, the structure is further divided into three parts with three basic images thus vv1-2 the shepherd, vv3-4 the wanderer and vv5-6 the Host. Scholars belonging to this position are (Weiser, Briggs, et al).

Looking at the two suppositions by these scholars, there is every tendency to believe the two positions. Nevertheless, we would rather opine that the image of the shepherd is what is predominantly found in the Psalm from the very first verse to the very last of the verse. Supporting this argument is the analysis of L. Kohler who posits that Psalm 23 is a continuously uniform hymn in which only one single picture of the shepherd controls the Psalm. Therefore, the researcher's structure is thus; Yahweh the shepherd vv1-4 and shepherd as host vv5-6.

3.7.6 Genre

Majority of scholars like Gunkel, Anderson, Kraus and others have identified the genre of this Psalm to be a Psalm of trust or confidence of an individual while others such as Craigie seem to place it in the communal Psalm in the wider context. The reaction to the later view is that it does not have enough or sufficient or substantial evidence to prove that it is exegetically and legitimately communal in context. Perhaps these scholars have jumped into appropriation rather than investigating the issue through exegetical process, which this work, seeks to argue and address. Meanwhile, the meaning of the text has to be determined or drawn before any application is done.

3.7.7 Exegetical Comments

Having established the structure of the Psalm, in this research, the former view is admitted due to its exegetical evidence of the picture of the shepherd that is found controlling the text.

3.7.7.1 Hebrew Text

Ps 23:1- 6

23 מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד יְהוָה רֵעִי לֹא אֶחְסָר:
 2 בְּנֵאוֹת דֶּשֶׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל־מֵי מְנַחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי:
 3 נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב וְנַחְוֵי בְּמַעְגְּלֵי־צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ:
 4 גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶךְ בְּגִיא צַלְמוֹת לֹא־אִירָא רָע כִּי־אַתָּה עִמָּדִי
 שְׁבֹטְךָ וּמִשְׁעֵנֶתְךָ הִמָּה יִנְחַמְנִי:
 5 תִּעְרֹךְ לְפָנַי שִׁלְחַן נֹגֵד צִרְרֵי דִשְׁנֵת בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי כּוֹסֵי רְנִיָּה:
 6 אַךְ טוֹב וְחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה לְאֶדְךָ

3.7.7.2 Translation of the Hebrew Text.

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want;
² he makes me lie down in green pastures.
 He leads me beside still waters;
³ he restores my soul.
 He leads me in paths of righteousness
 for his name's sake.
⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
 I fear no evil;
 for thou art with me;
 thy rod and thy staff,
 they comfort me.
⁵ Thou preparest a table before me
 in the presence of my enemies;
 thou anointest my head with oil,
 my cup overflows.
⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
 all the days of my life;
 and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
 for ever.
 (RSV)

Yahweh the Shepherd (vv1-4)

A critical examination of this Psalm especially from vv1-4 reveals that the text is free from any textual dittography and emendation. And so the translation is smooth. The poet begins with רֵעִי יְהוָה which is translated “The Lord is my shepherd”. But Kraus

(306) raises a question that how can this sentence consisting of two nouns be understood? Kohler (228) opines that vs1 has a polemic connotation if the subject of the sentence is taken to be רַעִי and יְהוָה to be the predicate, the meaning would definitely change, it may mean that another god assumes the position of Yahweh as the shepherd which is falsehood and a misconception and misinterpretation of the Psalm which this research noted in its statement of the problem.

The Lord is grammatically functioning as the subject of the sentence on which verses 2-6 are supporting verses to the יְהוָה. The Psalmist makes Yahweh his personal possession in the image of a shepherd. Recalling the ancient imagery, this is also used by the traditions of the Near Eastern that the king is the shepherd of the people. Also in the cultic tradition of Jerusalem Yahweh is glorified as the shepherd of Israel (Ps 80:1). This understanding is found in other Old Testament related texts such as Pss 79:13; 95:7; 100:3 and Isa. 40:11. It is interesting to note that the expression of trust and confidence of an individual in this text is always associated with the metaphor of a shepherd and his flock. The Psalmist confidently calls Yahweh his shepherd, an image depicting literally one who takes care of his flock in feeding, guiding, protecting and leading. And this is the experience of the Psalmist. Although the grammatical position of the רַעִי is seen as the object of the sentence. The exegetical evidence in this construction suggests ‘my shepherd’ is in the possessive noun in which the Psalmist acknowledges and professes Yahweh to be his only and one shepherd who takes care of him. Looking at the poetical analysis of this construction “The Lord is my shepherd I shall not be in want” belongs to synthetic parallelism in which the second idea builds on the first idea; other developments are seen in the construction of the succeeding sentences (Kraus 307).

The Psalmist also uses the word Yahweh in his confession which is also the covenantal and personal name of God used to refer to the God of Israel exclusively. In

using this name, the psalmist did not generalise the shepherd's role to any or every deity, but to the God of his forefathers. The name appears as the subject of the sentence. The absence of a strong verb in relation to the name suggests that it is stative. It denotes that Yahweh is continually and unceasingly the shepherd of the psalmist. The implication of this verse is that there exists an intimate relationship between the shepherd and the sheep. This work is not the first of its kind but as one examines the shepherd motif in the Old Testament one discovers that a lot has not been explored by the Western interpreters, who championed biblical interpretation, it was when the researcher went out on a practical research and met with first-hand, experienced Fulani shepherds, who commented on their responsibilities and the relationship that exist between them and their flocks that he discovered the short coming of Western interpretation in African context. During this process one is surprised to discover some overlay of truths that have not been revealed before. For example, there was a time the researcher came into close contact with one Fulani shepherd named Alhaji Ardo Idrisa who happened to stop him for a ride to a village called *Mbulatawiwi* in Southern part of Borno State. The researcher interviewed him on his role as a shepherd and the relationship existing between him and his flock. This was his remark. "Every cow has its own name peculiar to others". He maintains, "When that name is called, it is only the cow bearing that name that will respond". This confirms the postulations of Meyer that "the Eastern shepherd knows all the particulars of each of his sheep ranging from genealogy, defects, temper to tastes, which is embodied in the name of the sheep" (157). This shows that shepherd-sheep intimacy is necessary for effective pastoral ministry, because it gives full information about a particular sheep and the level of relationship existing between the sheep and the shepherd.

A couple of months later, the author interviewed another *Fulani* shepherd named Adamu Idrisa while shepherding his flock at the out skirt of Theological College

Northern Nigeria's compound, when asked the same question, he offered the same explanation as above, except with a modification that, there is a special name that applies generally to all the cows. When the shepherd calls that name they all will respond spontaneously. This further suggests that there exists a level of intimacy between the shepherd and the flock. He also maintains that much attention is given to the weaker ones in terms of feeding and caring. He also said the flocks are carried to the stream three times a day to drink. This is to tell us that caring is very central for the shepherd's role. The local understanding of the shepherd can be concrete ground for building biblical understanding of shepherd motif presented in the Old Testament.

Literally, a shepherd is a keeper of sheep and possibly, goats or cattle. In the ANE, it is used metaphorically for kings and rulers because of their parallel roles to that of shepherd. In this context, the latter is more appropriate; the object of the shepherd is not a flock of sheep but the possessive 'my' referring to the psalmist. Thus, Yahweh is metaphorically a shepherd to the Psalmist; he (Yahweh) relates to/deals with him (the psalmist) as a responsible or good shepherd does to his sheep. It further entails the kind of relationship that exists between the shepherd and the sheep. Meanwhile, in exploring the research question, Danladi Adam a typical Fulani shepherd was examined. In the process he shared his tragic experience during the Jos 2001 religious crisis, where he lost some of his cows and a brother. In spite of his tragic experiences he was willing to be questioned and gave information valuable to this research. He maintains that every cow, goat and sheep has peculiar name distinct from the other, he stresses that every young one born in the family of the flock is named after its mother. It then means that when the mother of any of those is called the little ones will equally respond with her. This also explains the fact that relationship existing between the shepherd and his flock is a primary factor that led to the responses.

The fourth man on the interview list is the researcher's student in Hebrew. Aminu Masoba was a typical Fulani shepherd before his conversion to Christianity. From his experiences when asked the same question he offered quite a revealing truth. He asserts that the names of cows vary from one clan to the other. He said "If a clan maintains the brown herd then all the brown cows have their peculiar names distinct from those clans who have other colours". This explains the diversity and peculiarity of one flock to the other, which will help the shepherd know how best to attend to their distinctive needs. In other words, this explains the diversity of the interrelationship existing between the shepherd and his flock and the responsibilities of the shepherd to his flock.

From the above excerpts one can see how informative, educative and transformative this thought revealing truth can help one to see the various dimensions of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament, which is gearing towards restoring the pastoral praxis and its significance that was lost over the years in Nigerian Churches. The question this research must begin to ask is, does the Church clearly know that she has lost the originality of her pastoral praxis and significance? How informative, educative and transformative is the Church in terms of restoring the dimensions of the shepherd motif? One must honestly confess that most shepherds have lost this sense. A practical example is the researcher's personal experience when he was reflecting on the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. Two notable realities came into his mind. A shepherd's experience as a leader of a pastoral care group at TCNN Bukuru, where he teaches. In the later experience, the researcher observed in the congregation the absence of pastoral care. This to some extent has affected the lives of the flock in terms of caring, guiding, feeding and protection. It was discovered that the major problem was the inability to know the sheep particulars such as genealogy, temper, defects and name. Distance too was a major problem. But the sheep also did not open up its problem for the shepherd to detect

immediately and suggest solution. It became clear that there was a vacuum that needed to be filled. The various dimensions of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament especially Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, Zechariah 11, Isaiah 40:11 was vividly understood. Maybe the story would have been different.

The second experience was the researcher's pastoral care group where two of his members were found wanting, one was expelled from the college for theft and the other silently committed suicide. It did not occur to the researcher neither was he informed that these students were having serious problems. As the leader of the group he was not sensitive enough to detect their problems. It was not possible to know their worries and predicaments until it surfaced. In this context we clearly saw the inability to come to terms with the particulars of each of the sheep's genealogy, defects and temper, which would have educated one more about each of the sheep identities. It was also observed very closely the loss of the pastoral praxis and significance when compared with the shepherd motif in the Old Testament. One realised how uninformed and uneducated one really was. Within the same context one discovered the gap that existed between the shepherd and the sheep, that proximity was not there, hence the relationship was far apart which resulted to these tragic experiences.

The next phrase that draws attention in the text is **לֹא אֲחַסֵּר** translated "I shall not be in want" (NIV); "I shall not want"(RSV, NASB,). This translation is very close to the Masoretic rendering. Many scholars are of the opinion that the construction is what gives meaning to the whole sentence. Similarly, the researcher agrees with this position and further elaborates that the shepherd motif is rooted and developed from this verse because all the caring, protecting, leading and guiding hangs on the same verse. Because Yahweh is his shepherd therefore, he lacks nothing. This same phrase **לֹא אֲחַסֵּר** "I lack nothing"(JB) gives the impression and pictures an individual member of the cultus

“flock” who expresses confidence that he is sheltered under the benevolent and powerful lordship of his shepherd and therefore suffers no need (Kraus 307). It should be noted that the shepherd metaphor of the ancient Near East tradition forbids the charming way Psalm 23 may be understood. A parallel text of the ancient Near East to the text under investigation is the hymn of *shamash*. Kraus writes

A text from Mesopotamia also can report about a deity’s benevolent and powerful office of shepherd. You take care of the people of the lands altogether; whatever the king and ruler, caused to be brought is everywhere given over to you. All who have living breath you pasture (307).

In general terms both the ancient Near East Text and Psalm 23 clearly demonstrates simply shepherd’s provision. Craigie (206) notes that this is more than that it recalls God’s care and provision for his flock during Exodus experience and after. (See also Deut 2:7) “You have not lacked a thing”. The same verb חסר *hasar* is used in Psalm 23 which also gives clear indication of the Exodus undertone which extends throughout the shepherd metaphor as we noted in the studies of Milne and Freedman in chapter two of the literature review.

In verses 2-3 the shepherd motif further extends giving us the nature of the shepherd’s role in terms of guidance and provision. We could also see a continuous link with the echoes of Exodus experience which tells us of the shepherd’s care in terms of leading his flock to a good pasturage, this is to refresh the flock in other words to bring back the vigour of life. Craigie (207) notes also that the verb נהל *nahal* “to guide” is both used in Exodus 15:13 and Psalm 23:2 which further gives the role of the shepherd. The shepherd does not only lead the flock to green place but to watering places. Here also the Psalmist emphasizes that the shepherd leads his flock not over dried fields but to

succulent pasturages and best water holes which is quiet where the flock may satisfy their thirst without haste. It also speaks of water in abundance where the flock could confide in appreciation to their shepherd for the care he offers them. Apart from the material comfort is the spiritual nourishment and happiness of being led into path of righteousness or proper path (Kraus 307). The whole embodiment of care rest on the fact that Yahweh leads the psalmist for his name's sake, this further entails that it is not the psalmist own effort which enables him to live righteously but Yahweh does it for the glory and honour of his name (Oesterley 183).

However, Craigie (207) sees the expression “for his name's sake” to associate the metaphor with Exodus and wilderness experience because of the same expression found in Ps.106:8 in the context of deliverance from Egypt. Here the psalmist expresses his confidence of divine guidance and refreshment to continue in the future because he has recently experienced such blessings in the past. The Exodus undertones indicate the Psalmist expectation is based on the solid foundation of Israel's faith during Exodus and wilderness journeys. In vs 4 the Psalmist expresses another dimension of faith and confidence in his shepherd who protects and delivers him from his enemies. Most scholars believe that occasionally flock may wander through dark valleys in search for good pasturage and water holes to drink from (Kraus 307). This verse also captures the dangers of travel through *גיא צלמורה* which is translated “the valley of death's shadows”, “very deep shadow” or “valley of darkness”. Oesterley (184) argues that the reading should be *Zalmut* which is translated “shadow of death” but a cursory look at the Masoretic rendering reveals that the reference being made is to the dark ravines which abound in Palestine. The Psalmist assures himself with Yahweh as his shepherd he fears no harm in passing through such valley of death for Yahweh guides and protects him with his rod and staff.

The last part of the verse “your rod and your staff, they give me comfort” is strengthened by the description of the shepherd’s rod and staff argues Roberts(12-13). He continues to say the rod of the shepherd is two feet long which is used to defend lions and bears, as well as serving as a guiding stick. On the other hand Lawson (127) opines that .the other weapon is the staff which serves its role as being hooked at the end so as to pry the flock loose from thickets. Briggs (209) further elucidates that the staff serves as a support in walking while the rod serves the function of giving blows. More importantly the two weapons serve the function of providing protection for the psalmist who is the sheep. Looking very closely to the confession of the psalmist “even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of deep darkness...”the fear is taken away because of the protection of the shepherd. This verse proves and supports the theory of the shepherd motif of untiring desire to care.

Shepherd as Host (vv 5-6)

The last two verses pose some difficulties among scholars. Majority of scholars believe that there is the evidence of change of pasturage as the case may be. This is shown by the expression of the petitioner declaring Yahweh as his host by spreading out his table before him in the presence of his enemies (Kraus 308). This research slightly departs from the popular opinion of what others seem to posit, but further enlightens the intellectual community of faith that a cursory examination of the verse further elucidates Yahweh’s role as shepherd in the form of a host. This study supports the brilliant exposition of Roberts (14) that vs 5 re-echoes the ancient practices of winter to feast in front of the starving prisoners of war as recorded in Judges 1:7 “And Adoni-bezek said, ‘Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to pick scraps under my table. As I have done, so God has repaid me’ and they brought him to Jerusalem and he died there”. Despite the hostile enemies of the psalmist the Lord being his shepherd

provides food for him to be nurtured. The verse continues to say within the context of the hostile environment *thou anointest my head with oil, my cup overflows* (KJV). This also pictures Yahweh's powerful hand of protection over the psalmist while his enemies look on (Kraus 308). The symbol of oil in the text calls for an attention. Of what significance is the oil? In the ancient Near East tradition, literally the oil is used for healing the wounds of the sheep. It also symbolises royalty or favour. This is a special favour the Psalmist experiences which also pictures the bountiful care of Yahweh his shepherd and host. The last portion of verse 5 says *my cup overflows* Leupold (214) opines that this "cup" is one of both body and spirit. Both entities are wonderfully nourished by the shepherd in providing food and sustenance. It is apparently clear that the shepherd motif of caring is expressively seen in the shepherd's feelings and actions toward the sheep.

My cup overflows this translation is not far fetch from the Masoretic rendering, for it depicts the contextual meaning of the text. A cursory look at the text reveals a continuous flow of thought which has link with the other syntactical construction of the verse. The cup which overflows is the cup given by the shepherd host which pictures a benevolent shepherd host who makes abundant provision for the needs of his guest (Anderson 199). In this verse we would see the caring motif of shepherd host towards his sheep. In the last verse which is v 6, it continuous with *goodness and mercy shall follow me*. Anderson further stresses that the Psalmist in this verse expresses another confidence in Yahweh his shepherd host whose welfare is further being taken care of. In the previous verse the Psalmist expresses his feelings as being surrounded and pursued by enemies, but now there is a great transformation of his circumstances, he is no longer being hunted down by his enemies, but the Lord's mercy and goodness will be the characteristic of his whole life. What give him this confidence are the present and past experiences of the Shepherd's provision and protection over his life that makes him to confide in the

untiring care of the Shepherd host. Craigie (208) argues in a more positive way that **חסד טוב** translated “goodness and mercy” re-echoes the language of Exodus and wilderness experiences which comes to a climax that the God of covenant who in the past had shown his loving kindness to his people in their redemption would also continue to do so in the future.

The last section of verse 6 calls for attention “and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever” A critical observation of this construction reveals an interesting scenario, if we begin with the fact that one who was persecuted, oppressed and pursued has indeed found protection and comfort while his enemies look on. The positive confession of trust by the Psalmist indicates a radical change and transformation. Now, he is pursued by **חסד טוב** Yahweh’s goodness and mercy instead of the enemies’ pursuance and insult. The palmist has gotten this asylum by the provision of the Temple where Yahweh dwells or lives. The Masoretic rendering gives us the original meaning **בבית יהוה** which is translated *in the house of the Lord* this rendering also means the petitioner will ever live in the presence of Yahweh forever where he will be sheltered by the benevolent, caring and untiring shepherd host.

From the exegetical point of view right from the very first verse to the end of the verse we have identified and justified the assertion that shepherd motif is the prominent theme of Psalm 23. We have also seen the nature, form and motif of the shepherd which makes it distinct from other texts that contains the metaphor of a shepherd. The untiring desire for care by the shepherd is quite significant, because it gives the basis for the understanding of shepherd motif in the Old Testament.

3.8 EXEGESIS OF EZEKIEL 34

3.8.1 Background

The background to the book of Ezekiel stems out of exilic context of the prophet's declarations. In other words Ezekiel prophesied to the children of Israel already exiled in Babylon. Although, the central message revolved around individual moral responsibility. Being from a priestly line his message is also soiled with visions of the temple, cultic regulations, purity and apocalyptic discourse of various dimensions (Dumbrell 151). The book's unity is more comprehensive than any book of the Old Testament.

3.8.2 Authorship and Date

The authorship of Ezekiel has never been criticized until the 19th and 20th centuries, where scholars postulate divers views on the content, context and theology of Ezekiel's prophetic declarations. Meanwhile, in the early years of critical scholarship, Ezekiel works remained impressed with single personality that permeates the book. (Dillard and Longman III 316). This view is also supported by Gray (198) in which he notes "no other book of the Old Testament is distinguished by such decisive marks of unity of authorship and integrity as this" (198).

Dillard and Longman III (316) further observe the tensions of these critical scholars with the book, that "how could Ezekiel be a prophet of strong sense of social justice and also a priest having detail knowledge of the temple and ritual regulations"? Other area in which Ezekiel was heavily criticized was the book's complex of visions and allegories. However, this dispute on variables ruled above is a challenge to modern scholarship, but scholars still hold that Ezekiel is no doubt an accepted work of single authorship and integrity.

The book's date has been unanimously agreed by scholars that it stems out of exile. Dumbrell(151) opines that the book covers Ezekiel's ministry to the exiles in

Babylon prior to the fall of Jerusalem in 587/586BC. Except that some critical scholars are of the opinion that chapter 1:1 which records Ezekiel's early age relate with King Jehoiachin's reign exiled in 597BC. But even with that he is still considered by the deportees the king in exile.

It should be noted that Ezekiel is the only book in the Old Testament that contains considerable precision of dates than any book of the Old Testament. The NIV study Bible notes that twelve of the thirteen references specify times when Ezekiel received a divine message and the other is the date of the arrival of the messenger who reported the fall of Jerusalem (33:21). We can therefore draw a logical conclusion with all certainty that Ezekiel received his call in July 593BC, he was active for 22 years and his last dated oracle being received in April 571BC (29:17).

3.8.3 Purpose and Theology

The purpose and theology of any given text usually stems out of its occasion. From the text itself, it is apparently clear that the context is exilic. Ezekiel was among the Jews exiled to Babylon in 597 BC by Nebuchadnezzar before his prophetic calling and declarations. One would have expected Ezekiel to firstly bring message of consolation, hope and restoration, but on the contrary during his early years of ministry, he faithfully declared to his fellow exiles the harsh, heart-rending, hope crushing and impending judgments as we find in chapters 1-24 (Barker 1226).

R.K. Harrison in his studies notes that "Ezekiel was not so much a manual of theology as the expression of the divine word spoken to men. In this case it was communicated in a variety of ways to a demoralized and unhappy remnant in exile, and it is only against such a background that the distinctive contribution of Ezekiel can be appreciated" (852). Nevertheless, the theological message of Ezekiel revolves around a number of readings grouped together. Dillard and Longman III rightly observe that such

groupings are as follows. The Holiness and Transcendence of God, which captures sin as an affront to God's holiness. And that rebellion and idolatry will no longer be ignored by Yahweh, so the exile would produce a purged people ready to live in obedience to God (325). Another interesting theme is the theology of grace and mercy of Yahweh. Even though Judah and Jerusalem would be judged, a message of hope is given to the remnants who will survive the exile.

The book of Ezekiel also stresses the sovereignty of God which pictures the rulership of God over and above the affairs and destiny of other nations apart from Israel. Individual responsibility is another dimension of Ezekiel's theological message. Having seen the generations of Israelites who had lived in rebellion against God and his covenant stipulations, Ezekiel still emphasizes the individual consequences of both obedience and transgression (18:1-32; 33:10-20). It should be noted that Ezekiel's message also calls for corporate responsibility, where the shepherds of Israel were charged with lack of caring for the sheep.

For the sake of our research, this last segment of Ezekiel's theological message directly affects the concept of shepherd motif in the Old Testament, where the shepherds of Israel were contrasted with the care and loving kindness of Yahweh to Israel.

3.8.4 Structure

A full grasp of the literary analysis of Ezekiel's macro-structure would give us a better understanding of the placement of Ezekiel 34. Dillard and Longman III(320-321) unanimously consent with other scholars that the book's mega-structure falls in the following categories.

- i. Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (1-24).
- ii. Oracles against foreign nations (25-48).
- iii. Blessing for Judah and Jerusalem (33-48).

Looking very closely to chapter 34, one sees a complete exegetical unit made up of two main sections vv 1-16 and 17-31. For the purpose of this study the writer examines chapter 34 with the following consideration

Vv 1-10 Judgment on Shepherds.

Vv 11-16 Yahweh's Shepherd role

Vv 17-23 Judgment between Sheep and Goat

Vv 24-31 Ideal Shepherd and a Blessing

3.8.5 Genre

Identifying a particular genre in a given text has bearing on its interpretation. That is why “in studying any material in scripture be it a topic or an idea characteristic to a book or parts of it, one must employ a suitable method of study on a text or texts” (Yilpet 29). In our premier text chapter 34, Ezekiel exhibits a high sense of poetic and symbolic language in his utterances to convey his message to his audience. This opinion is strongly supported by Dillard and Longman III(320-321) and further elaborates by K. Harrison(846). The writer examines that the most appropriate genre that runs throughout the chapter is prophecy; this is strongly evident by the presence of what we technically call “prophetic oracular formula” **כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה** which is translated “thus says the Lord” in vv 2,10,11,17 and 20. This device usually precedes the prophet's message. The prophet also uses another form of authenticating his message of divine source by means of **אָמַר יְהוָה** translated “says the Lord” in vv 15 and 30. It is usually appended at the end of the prophetic declaration. These are ways of identifying the message of the prophet is from divine origin.

3.8.6 Exegetical Comments

Having established the grounds for proper exegesis, the writer's intention is not in any way to give every detail instead to primarily focus on some crucial issues within the

text that has bearing on the concept of shepherd motif. In this respect we shall examine this text exegetically following the structure analysed. Before then lets consider the Masoretic Text.

3.8.6.1 Hebrew Text

abePN"hi ~d'š'a'-!B, ² rmo*ale yl;îae hw"βhy>-rb;d> yhiîy>w: ^{WTT} **Ezekiel**
34:1
 Yrm:âa' hKoï ~y[iørol' ~h,'ylea] ûT'r>m;a'w> abeäN"hi lae_r'f.yI y[eäAr-l[;
 aAlâh] ~t'êAa ~y[iäro 'Wyh' rv<Üa] 'laer'f.yI-y[e(ro yAhÜ hwI©hy>
 yn"âdoa]
 ~y[i(roh' W[βr>yI !aCoêh;
 WxB' _z>Ti ha'PyrIB.h; WvB'êl.Ti rm,C,âh;-ta,w> 'Wlke'aTo bl,xeÛh;-ta, ³
 `W[r>ti al{i !aCoβh;
 ~t,^aaPerI-al{) hl'äAxx;-ta,w> ~T,øq.Z:xi al{ 'ûtAlx.N:h;-ta, ⁴
 ~t,êboveh] al{â 'tx;D;'NIh;-ta,w> ~T,êv.b;x] al{â 'tr,B,'v.NII;w>
 ~%r,p'(b.W ~t'Paο ~t,îydIr> hq"±z>x'b.W ~T,_v.Q;bi al{â td,b,Paoh'-ta,w>
 hd,βF'h; tY:ix;-lk'l. hl'²k.a'l. hn"yy<ôh.Tiw: h[,_ro yläB.mi hn"yc,βWpT.w: ⁵
 `hn"yc,(WpT.w:
 ynEÛP.-lK' l[;'w> hm'_r' h[äb.GI-lK' l[;βw> ~yrIêh'h,ä-lk'B. 'ynIaco WGYv.yI ⁶
 `vQE)b;m. !yaeîw> vrePAD !yaeîw> ynIëaco Wcpoân" '#r,a' 'h'
 `hw")hy> rb;iD>-ta, W[βm.vi ~y[iêro !kEâl' ⁷
 zb;‡! YÿnIâaco-tAy*h/ ![:y:â al{â~ai hwI©hy> yn"âdoa] Y~auän> ynIa'ø-yx; ⁸
 h[,êro !yaeäme 'hd,F'h; tY:Üx;-lk'l. hl'øk.a'l. ynI"aco ûhn"yy<h.Ti(w:
 al{i ynIβaco-ta,w> ~t'êAa ~y[iroh'(W[Ûr>YIw: ynI+aco-ta, y[;Pro Wvir>d'-
 al{)w>
 s `W[r'
 `hw")hy>-rb;D> W[βm.vi ~y[iêroh'('lkel' ⁹
 ynIâaco-ta, yTióv.r;d'w>) ~y[iøroh'-la,(ynI"n>hi hwI©hy> yn"âdoa] rm;úa'-hKo ¹⁰
 ~t'_Aa ~y[iProh' dA[± W[ir>yI-al{w> !acoê tA[âr>me ~yTiB;v.hiw> ~d^aY"mi
 s `hl'(k.a'l. ~h,βl' !'yy<ih.ti-al{)w> ~h,êyPimi 'ynIaco yTiÛl.C;hiw>
 ynIβaco-ta, yTiîv.r;d'w> ynIa'š-ynIn>hi hwI+hy> yn"âdoa] rm:βa' hKoï yKi² ¹¹
 ~yTi(r>Q;biW
 !KEβ tAvêr'p.nI 'Anaco-%Atb. AtÜAyh/~AyB. Arød>[, h[, 'ro ûtr;Q'b;K. ¹²
 Wcpoân" rv<âa] 'tmoAqM.h;-lK'mi ~h,^at.a, yTiäl.C;hiw> ynI+aco-ta, rQEâb;a]
 `lp,(r'[j]w: !n"β[' ~AyðB. ~v'ê
 ~ytiPaoybih]w: tAcêr'a]h'ä-!mi ~yTic.B;qiw> ~yMi^a;h'-!mi ~ytiäaceAhw> ¹³
 lkoβb.W ~yqišypia]B' laeêr'f.yI yreäh'-la, ~ytiy[ir>W ~t'_m'd>a;-la,
 `#r,a'(h' ybeîv.Am
 ~h,_wEn> hy<âh.yI laePr'f.yI-~Ar)m. yreîh'b.W ~t'êao h[,âr>a, 'bAJ-h[r>miB. ¹⁴
 yreîh'-la, hn"y[,Pr>Ti !mE±v' h[,îr>miW bAJê hw<n"âB. 'hn"c.B;'r>Ti ~v'Û
 `lae(r'f.yI
 `hwI)hy> yn"ïdoa] ~auβn> ~ceêyBir>a; ynIâa]w: 'ynIaco h[,Ûr>a, ynI"ä] ¹⁵

vboêx/a, tr,B,äv.NII;w> byviêa' tx;D;äNIh;-ta,w> 'vQeb;a] td,b,Ûaoh'-ta, ¹⁶
 hN" [<ir>a, dymiPv.a; hq"±z"x]h;-ta,w> hn"ômeV.h;-ta,w> qZE+x;a] hl'PAXh;-
 ta,w> jP'(v.mib.
 ~ydI(WT[;l'w> ~yliPyael' hf,êl' hf,ä-!yBe('jpevo ynIÛn>hi hwI+hy> yn"âdoa]
 rm:Ba' hKoi ynIëaco hn"TEåa;w> ¹⁷
 Wsßm.r>Ti ~k,êy[er>mi 'rt,y<'w> W[êr>Ti 'bAJh; h[,Ûr>Mih; ~K,^ami j[;äm.h;
¹⁸
 '!Wf)Por>T ~k,Pyleg>r;B. ~yriêt'ANæh; 'taew> WTêv.Ti ~yIm:â-[q;v.miW
 ~k,_yleg>r;B.
 is `hn"yT,(v.Ti ~k,Pyleg>r; fP;îr>miW hn"y[,êr>Ti ' ~k,yleg>r; sm;Ûr>mi
 ynI+acow> ¹⁹
 'yTij.p;v'(w> ynIa'§-ynIn>hi ~h,_ylea] hwIßhy> yn"ïdoa] rm:±a' hKoi !ke^{a1} ²⁰
 `hz")r' hf,P !ybeîW hy"ër>bi hf,ä-!yBe(
 tAl+x.N:h;-IK' WxßG>n:T. ~k,îynEr>q;b.W WpDoêh.T,
 '@tek'b.W dc;ÛB. ![:y:© ²¹
 `hc'Wx)h;-la, hn"t"ßAa ~t,²Acypih] rv<ôa] d[;ä
 hf,P !yBeî yTiêj.p;v'äw> zb;_l' dA[ß hn"yy<îh.ti-al{ }w> ynIëacol.
 yTiä[.v;Ahw> ²²
 `hf,(l'
 dywI+d' yDIäb.[; taeP !h,êt.a, h['är'w> 'dx'a, h[,Ûro ~h,øyle[]
 yti'moqih]w: ²³
 `h[, (rol. !h<ßl' hy<îh.yI-aWh)w> ~t'êao h[,är>yI aWh...
 ~k'_Atb. ayfiän" dwIßd' yDIîb.[;w> ~yhiêl {ale('~h,l' hy<Ûh.a,
 hw"©hy> ynIåa]w: ²⁴
 `yTir>B:)DI hw"ßhy> ynIia]
 #r,a'_h'-!mi h['Pr'-hY")x; yTiîB;v.hiw> ~Alêv' tyrIåB. '~h,l'
 yTiÛr;k'w> ²⁵
 `~yrI) ['Y>B; Wnàv.y" w> xj;b,êl' 'rB'd>Mib; WbÛv.y" w>
 ATê[iB. '~v,G<'h; yTiÛd>r;Ahw> hk'_r'B. ytiP['b.GI tAbiybis.W
 ~t'²Aa yTiît;n" w> ²⁶
 `Wy*h.yI) hk'Pr'b. ymeîv.GI
 Wyðh'w> Hl'êWby> !TEåTi '#r,a'h'w> Ay©r>Pi-ta, hd,øF'h; #[e'
 û!t;n" w> ²⁷
 tAjåmo-ta, 'yrIb.viB. hw"©hy> ynIåa]-yKi W[úd>y" w>) xj;b,_l'
 ~t'Pm'd>a;-l[;
 `~h,(B' ~ydIîb.[oh' dY:ßmi ~yTiêl.C;hi'w> ~L'ê[u
 Wbiv.y" w> ~le_k.ato al {å #r,a'Ph' tY:ïx;w> ~yIëAGI; 'zB; dA[ï
 Wy'h.yI-al{ w> ²⁸
 `dyrI)x]m; !yaeîw> xj;b,P'l'

#r,a'êB' 'b[r' ypeÛsua] dA[ø Wy'h.yI-al{)w> ~ve_l. [J'Pm; ~h,2l'
ytiîmoqih]w: ²⁹
`~yI)AGh; tM;îliK. dA[β Waïf.yI-al{)w>
laeêr'f.yI tyBeä 'yMi[; hM'he^aw> ~T' _ai ~h,Pyhel{a/ hw"±hy>
ynIôa] yKiä W[^ad>y"w> ³⁰
`hwI)hy> yn"ïdoa] ~auPn>
~auPn> ~k,êyhel{åa/ 'ynIa] ~T, _a; ~d'åa' ytiPy[ir>m; !acoï
ynI±aco !TEïa;w> ³¹
`hwI)hy> yn"ïdoa]

3.8.6.2 Translation of the Hebrew Text

EZE 34:1 Then the word of the LORD came to me saying,

EZE 34:2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?"

EZE 34:3 "You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat *sheep* without feeding the flock.

EZE 34:4 "Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them.

EZE 34:5 "They were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every beast of the field and were scattered.

EZE 34:6 "My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill; My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there was no one to search or seek *for them.*"

EZE 34:7 Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

EZE 34:8 "As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "surely because My flock has become a prey, My flock has even become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but *rather* the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock;

EZE 34:9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

EZE 34:10 "Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them."

EZE 34:11 For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.

EZE 34:12 "As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day.

EZE 34:13 "I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.

EZE 34:14 "I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

EZE 34:15 "I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord GOD.

EZE 34:16 "I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.

EZE 34:17 "As for you, My flock, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.

EZE 34:18 "Is it too slight a thing for you that you should feed in the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pastures? Or that you should drink of the clear waters, that you must foul the rest with your feet?

EZE 34:19 "As for My flock, they must eat what you tread down with your feet and drink what you foul with your feet!" "

EZE 34:20 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them, "Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

EZE 34:21 "Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad,

EZE 34:22 therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.

EZE 34:23 "Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

EZE 34:24 "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.

EZE 34:25 "I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

EZE 34:26 "I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

EZE 34:27 "Also the tree of the field will yield its fruit and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure on their land. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

EZE 34:28 "They will no longer be a prey to the nations, and the beasts of the earth will not devour them; but they will live securely, and no one will make *them* afraid.

EZE 34:29 "I will establish for them a renowned planting place, and they will not again be victims of famine in the land, and they will not endure the insults of the nations anymore.

EZE 34:30 "Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people," declares the Lord GOD.

EZE 34:31 "As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God," declares the Lord GOD. (NASB).

Judgment on Shepherds (vv 1-10)

A critical examination of chapter 34 reveals a complete exegetical unit in which the chapter is an extended metaphor of shepherd-sheep, where the leaders and the people of Israel are represented. In verse one the prophet begins with a phrase hw"By>-

rb;d> which is translated “the word of the Lord”. This characteristic is peculiar with all the prophets of the Old Testament (Jer.1:1; Mic.1:1; Hos.1:1; Am.1:1). It suggests that the entire message hangs on this expression. It also indicates that the prophet is exclusive as far as the message is concerned. He is only an instrument for divine transmission. “Son of man” in this text suggests a mortal being that is charged and ordered to prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. This is the first indication of the word *ro’ehim* a plural form of the singular noun of *ro’eh* translated shepherd. This word is used to describe leadership role of the gods in ancient Near East, but in our text it suggests all the different spheres of leadership cadre in Israel. In Israel the leadership is made up of both higher and lower sphere; the princes, magistrates, priests, levites, the great Sanhedrin or council of state and all who were given the responsibility of directing public affairs (Henry 1406). Kiel and Delitzsch (80-94) agrees with Henry (1406) and further includes false prophets and false teachers as part of the *ro’eh*.

The indictment falls on the leaders of Israel especially kings who fail woefully in discharging their responsibilities as they should. Yahweh through the mouth of his prophet declares the inescapability of the shepherds and assures them of his judgment. Why? because they are guilty of violating the principle of shepherd motif which ensures caring, protecting, feeding and sustaining. The prophet uses the word **וְהִנֵּה** a particle of interjection translated “woe” or “alas”, it suggests in this context a sense of the certainty of judgment. We could see the prophecy being impressed upon his mind by Yahweh with this expression “even to the shepherds” which indicates emphasis and the direction of the judgment on the misconduct of the shepherds. One wanders again with the use of prophetic oracular formula “Thus says the Lord” by the prophet having said the word which proceeds from him is from God. How do we reconcile this hermeneutical issue? I think the interpretation of this is not far fetched from the preceding example we had, which

also focuses on emphasis. This also brings to mind the urgency of the prophet's indictment.

In vv 3-6 the prophet now explains why Yahweh is against the shepherds, because they primarily focus on themselves at the expense of taking care of the sheep. Instead of giving prime attention to the needs of the sheep, they only prioritise what they would gain to satisfy their ego. This attitude also reveals the nature of their governance and their selfish motives. The prophet in characterizing their behaviours makes use of high poetical language that sounds metaphorical to bring to surface their misconduct. In this characterization, we could see the demonstration of the use of strong verbs by the prophet; eat, clothe and slaughter. Technically, when the verbs are analyzed they all belong to the Qal verbs, they are verbs which occupy a very strategic position in the Hebrew verbal idea conveying the active mood of the action.

In the Masoretic Text, the prophet uses the following expressions in Ezek.34:3 **תאכלו** translated “you eat” or “you devour”, **תלבשו** translated “you clothe” or “put on” and **תזבחו** translated “you slaughter”. It is interesting to note that all of these verbs are Qal Impf 2mpl(Todd and William 628). These verbs are the product of the rhetorical question in the text “should not shepherds feed the sheep?” The expected answer should be in the affirmative: yes! Shepherds responsibility is to take care of the sheep in terms of feeding, protecting, guiding, sustaining, ecetera. But these shepherds have not dully played their role in this sense; instead the focus is on themselves. By the viture of this misconduct and irresponsible behaviour, the principle of shepherd motif is being violated. It clearly shows lack of untiring desire to care for the sheep. In verse 4 we see an expanded commentary on verse 3, where the lack of concern is further demonstrated by the shepherds. It is amazing to see the prophet's concern on the negligence of the shepherds over the sheep. “The weak ones were not strengthened, the sick not healed, the

crippled not bound up, the strayed not brought back, the lost not sought” (Translation mine). This further reveals the attitudes of the shepherds towards the sheep. They completely forget their theocratic calling and primary responsibility in taking care of the sheep. Apart from their primary responsibility, the nature of their ruling is with force and harshness towards the sheep, which to some extent is equivalent to the style of governance with the Pharaohs of Egypt (Keil and Delitzsch 84). This art of cruelty clearly depicts the kind of shepherd Israel suffered from their hands.

Keil and Delitzsch (89) further observe the last clause of the verse, “the flock were ruled with violence and severity” gives a reflection of Israel’s experience in Egypt where they were violently treated by their rulers (Ex. 1:13,14). These rulers (shepherds) adopted the same measures used by the Egyptians’ Pharaohs for the oppression of the Israelites. In the actual sense the shepherds were supposed to take care of the flock and to render justice and protection for the flock. But the neglect of primary responsibility resulted in the suffering of the flock which verses 5 and 6 portray. The flock became prey to the wild beasts. Why? On the account of their having not been a shepherd. The wild beast may refer to other nations like Babylon and Egypt .They were indeed ravenous wolves in shepherd’s clothing who only seek for their own advantage at the expense of the flock. The above context echoes exilic experience of Israel when they became prey to the heathen nations around them. The comments of Hitiziq cited by Keil and Delitzsch is worthy of note

When we find this mournful fate of the people described as brought about by the bad shepherds and attributable to faults of theirs, we must not regard the words as applying merely to the mistaken policy of the kings with regard to external affairs, for this was in itself simply a consequence of their neglect of their

theocratic calling and of their falling away from the lord into idolatry (84).

This research also agrees with the above excerpts, if the whole weight of the judgment rests only upon the shepherds then the other side of the coin will not be justly seen as the case may be. But if the neglect is from both sides, that is, the shepherds and the flock then we are making a good case for their involvement in idolatry which resulted in the punishment of scattering of the flock and the disposition of the bad shepherds by the destruction of Jerusalem (Keil and Delitzsch 85). Towards the end of verse 6, we could see the prophet lamenting over the plight of the flock of the neglect of the shepherds who have not taken it upon themselves the responsibilities of caring and protecting the sheep. Daniel Block (283) opines that “this is the most blatant violation of the shepherd’s role. In the context of our research this is where the shepherd motif of caring is completely absent. These shepherds neglected their primary function hence ceased to function as shepherds.

In verse 7 we see the continuation of the flow of thought from the preceding verse where the shepherds negated their primary responsibility. Still in verse 7 the prophet resumes in similar statement drawing the attention of the shepherds to listen carefully to the judgment that would come upon them. The prophet uses לכן which is translated “therefore”, this is to further stress the certainty of the judgment.

Block (285) sees vv7-10 as the verdict pronounced upon the shepherds of Israel, these verses give a description of Yahweh’s response to the crises faced by his flock. A twofold appeal to hear the divine declaration. Vv7-9 leads the reader to expect an announcement of judgment upon the irresponsible rulers (shepherds) as noted by Block (285). But if one studies the content of the verse, one is surprised to see that the prophet went on to focus on the flock or sheep, which also explains the reason why the judgment

would certainly come, because the shepherds have neglected their fundamental role to take care, feed, protect and seek the flock. Verse 9 also reiterates the same expression used in verse 7 for the shepherds to pay close attention, why Yahweh would judge them. Yahweh further declares that the absolute responsibility shouldered on the shepherds have been exploited by the shepherds for personal gain. Block (285) further comments that. “For this reason, Yahweh will deliver the sheep from their tyrannical leaders; he will do that by their removal from office and stopping them from being parasitic. And that he would hold them responsible”. Block further examines “since the shepherds who had been appointed by Yahweh to care for his sheep have not only neglected their duty but turned to be ravenous wolves among the sheep, because of this Yahweh will intervene to rescue his flock from their grip” (286). It is interesting to note that judgment awaits the rulers (shepherds) and hope for the flock.

Yahweh’s Shepherd Role (vv11-16)

Vv 11-16 is an exegetical unit which falls under what W. Brownlee (430) says “hope for the scattered flock” in this segment he opines that it concentrates on what the rulers (shepherds) of Judah failed to do as shepherds, Yahweh declares he will do. Brownlee further comments that what John 10 says of Jesus captures the role of the Messiah as shepherd. It is interesting to note that the content of the verses is what the prophets accuses the leadership of Israel of having failed to do; those areas of concern are leading astray of the flock and search for those who were lost. In this situation Yahweh declares that he would search, rescue and regather the flock of Israel from the nations they had been preyed upon. And he would care for them as a loving shepherd does to his flock. Yahweh’s promise to his flock is to return them to their own land and would feed

her on her mountains and ravines. Both her individual and national need will be met by Yahweh's Messianic shepherd (Alexander 913).

Judgment between Sheep and Goat (vv 17-24)

In the above verses Yahweh declares he will bring justice among members of the flock. This justice has nothing to do with external aggression from foreign rulers rather from within the sheepfold of Israel, especially "those who had taken advantage of the flock through their position as shepherd would be treated as all other sheep or goats" (Alexander 913) the rams and the goats as translated by (Cooke 376) are leading men among the people. Alexander (913) maintains that previous leaders were seen as fat, sleek and strong because they had fed on the best pasture and drank the best and clear waters. But out of lack of concern for other members of the flock,

Alexander captures this event and submits

They arrogantly had trampled the rest of the pasture and muddied the clear drinking water. Vv17-29 they had abused their positions of strength and bullied the other sheep driving many (vv20-21). These shepherds would be judged and destroyed (vv16,17,20) for there would be no irresponsible behaviours for such leaders (913).

From this submission one could see the magnitude of the judgment declared by Yahweh, because the shepherds failed to be responsible in discharging their respective duties as they should. The shepherd motif has been drastically abused by these irresponsible leaders and rulers, hence, the desire for the recovery of the motif is

required, which Yahweh intends to restore. This would shortly be realized in the succeeding verses.

Ideal Shepherd and Restoration of Blessing (vv 25-31)

These verses further stress the promises of Yahweh and the blessings that would follow afterwards. It should be noted that this covenant of peace was not the new covenant. This is a future covenant that would be realized in the nearest future. Firstly it guarantees the absolute removal of foreign nations (considered as “wild beasts”) from the land of Israel, so as to live securely. Secondly, Yahweh would bless Israel with abundant produce and satisfaction (vv26-27, 29). And thirdly they would live in absolute security (914).

The absence of famine indicates Yahweh’s abundant provision as a shepherd does to his flock. Israel would come to the realization that indeed Yahweh was their God and would consciously feel his presence ever with them and Yahweh would testify that of a truth Israel are my sheep and the sheep of my pastures declares the lord. The double declaration of “says the Lord” is an emphatic oracular formula stressing emphasis by the Lord himself.

A cursory investigation of the text (chapter 34) reveals that the central motif is that of the shepherd, these shepherds have been identified as the rulers, leaders, princes, judges and kings, who failed in their responsibilities as shepherds. However, the shepherd motif which revolves around caring which embraces provision, protection, guidance and leading is completely absent. But towards the end of the chapter Yahweh assures Israel through the mouth of the prophet, he will resume as the shepherd, he will care for his sheep, in terms of provision, protection, leading, healing, seeking and sustaining.

Therefore, from these exegetical evidences it clearly shows and fulfills the untiring desire of the shepherd motif which this dissertation attempts to fulfill.

3.9 EXEGESIS OF ZECHARIAH 11:4-17

3.9.1 Background

Zechariah's literary piece is set against the background of the first returnees from Babylonian exile. In other words the prophet's ministry took place in the post exilic period. A closer investigation of the background of the text reveals a similar context with Haggai. Despite King Cyrus of Persia's edict for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild Yahweh's temple in 539 B.C. The communities of the Jewish people were faced with external opposition and variety of personal and practical difficulties, which delayed the rebuilding of the temple until God spurred Zechariah and Haggai to stir up the people for the construction of the temple of the Lord. When one studies the background of the text carefully, we see chapters 1-8 are issues of immediate concern to the restoration of the community (Dillard and Longman III 428).

3.9.2 Authorship and date

The authorship of Zechariah has been a disputable fact among scholars. Most Biblical and literary experts affirms chapters 1-8 and chapters 9-14 to be works of two different authors, until recently Carstasen(504) argues that chapters 9-14 seem to be the works of an anonymous writer other than Zechariah. Reasons being that chapters 9 and 12 each begin with the word oracle as does the book of Malachi; since Malachi too is anonymous. Other reasons revolve around different literary genres. Carstasen(507) further observes that there are notable differences in the following(a) chapters 9-14 are predominantly poetry, while chapters 1-8 are prose. (b) Chapters 9-14 do not contain vision, while chapters 1-8 use vision. (c) Last 6 chapters do not mention Zechariah, while the former records that. We can go on and on. But a critical and analytical mind may tend

to pay cursory observation that such arguments are not strong enough to disconnect the literary unity of the text. It clearly appears that the prophecy of Zechariah emanates from a single author. This research agrees with the unpopular opinion that Zechariah is the scribe behind his write up. This research substantiates the fact that writers have different literary skills of presenting their ideas, so the question of genre and names varies whether present or not in the two sections are weak to nulify Zechariah's authorship. Since scholars have not authentically prove who that anonymous author of the section is as we find in the study of Isaiah. This study subscribes Zechariah the son of Iddo, as the author of his book.

Regarding the date of Zechariah being a contemporary of Haggai, both prophecies are carefully dated. We gathered with certainty that the first utterance comes two months after Haggai's associate began to preach in 520 BC. From the background we could see the certainty that Zechariah is set against the background of the first generation of returnees from the Babylonian exile, dated to the second year of Darius 520/519BC (Longman II and Dillard 428).

The central point of Zechariah's message is captured in 1:4b thus says the Lord of hosts. "Return (shub/v) from your evil ways and from your evil deeds" the connection this observation has with the shepherd motif of our study is the fact that the bad shepherds have been cautious to repent and the Messianic implication of the shepherd is further stressed by the cruelty of the shepherds which the sheep deserves by also slaying their noblest leader 12:10-13:1 (Carstesen 507).

3.9.3 Purpose and Theology

The primary purpose of Zechariah was to rebuke the people of Judah, encourage and stir them up to complete the temple's building. Additionally, the prophet calls on

Judah to return to the Lord or repent. If they return to Him he would also return to them and fulfill all his promises.

The theology of any given text is wrapped in its purpose having considered the scholarly opinion of the authorship and date of the two halves of the book of Zechariah. One thing that is certain is the literary unit of whole text, looking intently to the whole text there is that evidence of a gradual development of its theology. The theology of the text revolves around two principal theme; Redemption and Judgment. This is evident when one looks at the first half that is chapter 1-8 which mostly concerns itself with series of visions around, reformation, redemption and judgment both for Israel and Gentile nations around. It should be noted also that the taste and experience of redemption in the restored community was not yet full. But even a greater redemption will be realized in the future which the second half that is chapter 9-14 addresses (Longman III and Dillard 436).

In a more theological discourse Barker (1406) argues that the book is related to its messianic as well as its apocalyptic and eschatological motifs. He further stresses that the messianic emphasis predicts Christ's coming; lowliness, his humanity, rejection, betrayal, priesthood, kingship, building the temple, his coming glory and establishment of peace and prosperity. With the above understanding one could see the role of the messianic shepherd.

Meanwhile, most scholars affirm the theological significance of Zechariah's name to mean "to remember" preferably the Lord remembers; in the context of Zechariah it then means the Lord remember his covenant, promises and takes deliverance action to fulfill it. Finally, the book promises deliverance from Babylonian exile, restoration and a functioning temple and even greater picture of salvation and restoration to come through the messiah.

3.9.4 Structure

Basically the structure of Zechariah 11 has been broadly divided into two major sections, firstly 11:4-14 which dwells on the foolish shepherd and secondly vv 15-17 focuses on the role of the false shepherd (Mitchelle and Merlin 302-14). However, most commentators and exegete vary in their opinion per say, some see the structure in a consistent whole with a major heading Bad shepherds and Bad flocks (Cody 357).

3.9.5 Genre

The type of literary genre under investigation has attracted lots of debates among scholars; some scholars posit that Zechariah chapter eleven is allegorical in nature, others see it from historical perspective, narrating the long history of Israel's disobedience to their God. Both poetical and historical narratives are strong possibilities of the form of literature the text is. A further investigation of the genre reveals that there are prophetic visions, judgment and salvation oracles, although the prophetic vision 1:7-6:8 are called apocalyptic literature. But the text under investigation falls within salvation oracles which are seen in chapters 9-14. It becomes obvious if the prophetic vision is read along side with salvation oracle, the prevailing theme is encouragement because of the glorious future that awaits the people of God (Barker1406).

3.9.6 Exegetical Comments

3.9.6.1 Hebrew Text

Zechariah 11:4-17

!h<ÜynEqo rv,'a]°hg")reh]h; !acoï-ta, h[ePr> yh'_l{a/ hw"åhy>
 rm:ßa' hKoi⁴
 rvI+[.aw: hw"ßhy> % WriB' rm;êayO !h<âyrek.moW Wmv'êa.y<
 al{åw> '!gUr.h]y:)
 `!h<)yle[] lAmßx.y: al{i ~h,êy[eroåw>
 ykiønOa' hNE'hiw> hw"+hy>--aun> #r,a'Ph' ybeîv.yO-l[; dA[±
 lAmix.a, al{å yKiû⁶

'WtT.kiw> AKêl.m; dy:âb.W 'Wh[e're-dy:B. vyaiÛ ~d^a'a'h'-ta,
 ayciâm.m;
 ~d'(Y"mi lyCiPa; al{ïw> #r,a'êh'-ta,
 ynEâv. yliú-xQ:)a,w" !aCo+h; yYEânI[] !kEβl' hg"ëreh]h;(!acoâ-ta,
 'h[,r.a,w")⁷
 h[,Pr>a,w" ~yliêb.xo) ytiar'âq' 'dx;a;l.W '~[;nO' ytiar'Ûq' dx;úa;l.
 tAl^aq.m;
 ~h,êB' 'yvip.n: rc:Ûq.Tiw: dx'_a, xr;y<âB. ~y[iProh' tv,l{ïv.-ta,
 dxi²k.a;w"⁸
 ~ybi(hl'ix]B' ~v'Pp.n:-~g:w>
 dxêK'Ti 'td,x,'k.NIh;w> tWm^at' ht'âMeh; ~k,_t.a, h[,Pr>a, al{ï
 rm;§aow"⁹
 ~Ht'(W[r> rf:ïB.-ta, hV'Pai hn"l.k;§aTo tArêa'v.NIh;'w>
 ytiêyrIB.-ta, 'rypeh'l. At+ao [D;P>a,w" ~[;nOë-ta, 'yliq.m;-ta,
 xQ:Ûa,w"¹⁰
 ~yMi([;h'-IK'-ta, yTir;PK' rv<ia]
 yKiî ytiêao ~yrlâm.Voh; '!aCoh; yYEÛnI[] !keø W['d>YEW: aWh+h;
 ~AYæB; rp:βTuw:¹¹
 ~aWh) hw"βhy>-rb;d>
 Ýal{â~aiw> yrIβk'f. Wbîh' ~k,²ynEy[eB. bAjô~ai ~h,^aylea] rm:âaow"¹²
 ~@s,K'(~yviîl{v. yrIβk'f.-ta, Wliq.v.YIw: Wld'_x]
 rv<ia] rq'êy>h; rd,a,â rceêAYh;-la, 'Whke'yliiv.h; yl;^aae hw"÷hy>
 rm,aYO" w:¹³
 tyBeî At±ao %yliîv.a;w" @s,K,êh; ~yviäl{v. 'hx'q.a,w") ~h,_yle[]me(
 yTir>q:By"
 ~rcE)AYh;-la, hw"βhy>
 hw"ëx]a;h'(-ta, 'rpeh'l. ~yli_b.xo)h; taeP ynIëVeh; yliâq.m;-ta,
 '[D;g>a,w")¹⁴
 s `lae(r'f.yI !ybeîW hd'PWhy> !yBeî
 ~yli(wIa/ h[,îro yliPK. ^êl.-xq; dA[â yl'_ae hw"βhy> rm,aYOðw:¹⁵
 'dqop.yI-al{) tAdÛx'k.NIh; #r,a^aB' h[,øro ~yqi' me ûykinOa'-hNE)hi
 yKiä¹⁶
 lKeêl.k;y> al{â 'hb'C'NIh; aPe_r;y> al{â tr,B,βv.NIh;w> vQeêb;y>-
 al{) r[;N:âh;
 s `qre(p'y> !h<βyser>p;W lk;êayO 'ha'yrIB.h; rf:Ûb.W
 An=yimiy> !y[eä-l[;w> A[âArz>-l[; br,x,î !aCoêh; ybiâz>[o 'lylia/h'¥
 y[iÛro yAhâ¹⁷
 ~hh,(k.ti hhoïK' Anâyimiy> !y[eîw> vb'êyTi vAbây" 'A[roz>

3.9.6.2 Translation of the Hebrew Text

ZEC 11:4 Thus says the LORD my God, "Pasture the flock *doomed* to slaughter.

ZEC 11:5 "Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished, and *each of* those who sell them says, 'Blessed be the LORD, for I have become rich!' And their own shepherds have no pity on them.

ZEC 11:6 "For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land," declares the LORD; "but behold, I will cause the men to fall, each into another's power and into the power of his king; and they will strike the land, and I will not deliver *them* from their power."

ZEC 11:7 So I pastured the flock *doomed* to slaughter, hence the afflicted of the flock. And I took for myself two staves: the one I called Favor and the other I called Union; so I pastured the flock.

ZEC 11:8 Then I annihilated the three shepherds in one month, for my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also was weary of me.

ZEC 11:9 Then I said, "I will not pasture you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be annihilated, let it be annihilated; and let those who are left eat one another's *flesh*."

ZEC 11:10 I took my staff Favor and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples.

ZEC 11:11 So it was broken on that day, and thus the afflicted of the flock who were watching me realized that it was the word of the LORD.

ZEC 11:12 I said to them, "If it is good in your sight, give *me* my wages; but if not, never mind!" So they weighed out thirty *shekels* of silver as my wages.

ZEC 11:13 Then the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter, *that* magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty *shekels* of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

ZEC 11:14 Then I cut in pieces my second staff Union, to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

ZEC 11:15 The LORD said to me, "Take again for yourself the equipment of a foolish shepherd.

ZEC 11:16 "For behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat *sheep* and tear off their hoofs.

ZEC 11:17 "Woe to the worthless shepherd

Who leaves the flock!

A sword will be on his arm

And on his right eye!

His arm will be totally withered

And his right eye will be blind."(NASB)

For the interest of this study, the exegetical unit deals with the careless shepherds as a whole. Although what makes this exegetical unit different is its allegorical genre and its exact historical correspondence and its image in the New Testament. A viable and

sustainable insight to this difficulty is the question; is Zechariah speaking of himself shepherding God's people or is he representing God as shepherd? Or is Zechariah reciting the long and disobedient history of Israel with this allegorical statement or is he speaking of the inhabitants in the land who had already fallen into disobedience (Chad 1). In the above submission, all the questions raised are possibilities. One might not be wrong and inadequate if he embraces any of the possibilities.

V4 is very crucial in understanding the passage. The text commences with a prophetic oracular formula mostly used by prophets over the centuries כה אמר יהוה, which is translated "Thus says the Lord". This ascertains the origin of the divine instruction, and it thus reliably informs us that the prophet is only an instrument to channel this divine course. But the oracular tone takes a negative turn against both the shepherds and the flock. A closer investigation of the following texts reveals Jer. 23:1-4. Ezek. 34:1-31 and Ezek. 37:15-28 stand at the background. One could glaringly see that the symbolic action of the prophet is to bring judgment on Judah, preferably on rulers or leaders who fail in both civic and religious responsibilities. Other possible reason for the judgment is the rejection of the messianic shepherd- king similar to the servant in the servant songs of Isaiah 42:1-4.

Meanwhile, in the symbolic action of the prophet becoming a shepherd doomed to slaughter, Cody (357) submits that "the basic mandate to the prophet is to play the shepherd of the flock". The interpretation suggests that the flock is Judah and the motive for the mandate is judgment on the rulers of Judah.

Vv 5-6 describes the actions of the people that attract Yahweh's punishment. One wanders in this prose descriptions who are the buyers and sellers? Perhaps the flock of Israel is bought as slaves by foreign nations or outsiders and those who sell them are their rulers or leaders. This gives us a good picture of the lack of caring for the sheep by the

shepherds (rulers) of Israel. They became so proud and so insensitive to the needs of the flock, parading themselves with their riches at the expense of the basic needs of the flock. Their shepherds (rulers) both civil and religious have no pity or concern for the flocks. This thought is contrasted with the primary function of the good shepherd.

The first clause of verse 6 echoes the last clause of verse 5 "... have no pity". One begins to wonder why might Yahweh do same as the shepherds of Israel? The simple answer to this question is the fact that Yahweh gives same Judgment to all inhabitants of the land, perhaps both the rulers and the flocks for violating his covenant stipulations. The judgment could also be as a result of the corruption found in Israel. We could see from the content of the verse that Israel exploits the people by amassing wealth for themselves which is apparently seen from their response of "I have become rich (Zech. 11:5). Israel's exploitation does not only come from their shepherds, but also from their neighbours perhaps foreign nations, according to this expression ("fall each into another's power"). From all indication it thus shows that the corruption is both horizontal (neighbours) and vertical (kings), Zech. 11:6 (Chad 1).

Vv 7-8 there is the recurrence of Yahweh's instruction for Zechariah to assume the role of the shepherd for the people, which indeed the prophet assumes and acted the way he had been instructed. The indication of staff in the verse is typical of a shepherd, the staffs are meant for protection and direction. But in this text the staffs are used symbolically, to depict favour and union which further elucidates that the Lord pastures his people with favour and union. A scholar in this school of thought interprets the two staffs of favour and union to represent God's person, his beauty and majesty; God who is wise and faithful (Ps. 27:4; 90:17; Prov. 3:17). We can see here that the symbol of Zechariah assuming a shepherd's role is to clearly demonstrate God's care for his people with blessedness and protection.

At this point one may begin to ask, why is Yahweh so loving and caring despite Israel's disobedience? The answer is found in the image of the good shepherd whose care and desire is untiring. The shepherd's caring motif has always been consistent with Israel throughout their relationship with Yahweh.

In verse 8 the prophet who assumes the shepherd's role is said to have removed three shepherds. In this context the prophet is representing Yahweh as shepherd. There has been considerable debate among scholars to identify the three shepherds. Much ink has been expended in an attempt to clearly figure out who these shepherds are. Cody (358) argues that "some scholars attempt to identify the three shepherds with three historical persons and thus to date the oracle. But the text seems to be silent about these details.

However Chad (1) opines that "if one takes v8 to represent Israel's history then the three shepherds might be the successive removal of the final three wicked kings of Judah with one month representing their short reign (2kings 23:34-24:20)." The above statement is not far fetch from the interpretation of the text, except that the good shepherd will dispose the bad shepherds or unfit leaders (Barker 1418). We could see in vs 9 that despite God's graciousness and faithfulness the people were unthankful, so Yahweh gives them over to their idolatry and immorality as described by their impending death and annihilation (Zech. 11:9 of Ezek. 5:10; Lam. 2:20). vv 11-12 gives us the picture of Yahweh breaking his covenant with Israel by the symbol of breaking the two staffs. The expression "if it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not keep them" this expression should not be taken literally, but should be understood in the light of the context. The fact that the shepherd demands his wages refers to the severance of ending the relationship but thirty pieces of silver is an insult to compare the kind of service

rendered by the shepherd, after all in the ancient Israel thirty shekels of silver is the price of a slave.

The symbolic action of throwing the money to the potter in the temple signifies worthless price. It thus suggests that the fit place to cast the money is to the priest in the house of the Lord. But the English version agrees with the Masoretic rendering in Mt. 27:10 “and gave them for the potter’s field, as the lord appointed me” (Barnes PCSB).

V14 captures what is obtainable in verse 10 of the breaking of the first staff. The second staff ‘ties’ is broken. This symbolizes the break of the two kingdoms Judah and Israel but we see the exact opposite of these dissolution in (Ezek. 37:15-19; 21-24; Hos 1:11; 3:18; Isa. 11:12-13) which speaks of Yahweh uniting and gathering of the children of Israel from where they had been scattered worldwide. Thus, the Lord would fulfill when he brings both Israel and Judah under the messianic shepherd despite his rejection (Barnes PCSB).

Vv 15-17 speaks of the foolish or false shepherd. Here Zechariah is given a new mandate to play the role of a foolish shepherd. In his role as the worthless shepherd he will not spare the flock, nor feed or protect the flock but he will devour, exploit and destroy the people. The withering of the arm and the blind nature of the shepherd’s eye is to portray to Israel that this shepherd fails in his responsibility of healing and sustaining the flock, he also fails to seek the shepherd. A close look at Israel’s history is littered with foolish and careless shepherds (leaders) who exploited, and devoured the sheep and expose them to selfish and wicked purposes. This also describes the symbolic judgment that would come upon Israel.

How does the above interpretation correlates with the shepherd motif in this study? It is apparently clear that the major theme of Zachariah 11 is that of the shepherd. Again and again one sees the activities of the shepherds (Leaders) of Israel and the

nonchalant attitudes of the flock too. The shepherds were careless, selfish, exploitative and greedy. They were more of a hireling than shepherds who have the flock at heart. Therefore, the principle and practice of the shepherd motif is being violated by Israel's shepherd. Despite all of these, the good shepherd with his untiring desire for care continues to care for Israel because of his unfailing love and promises.

3.10 EXEGESIS OF JEREMIAH 23:1-8

3.10.1 Background

The prophecies of Jeremiah are primarily set against the background of the rule of Josiah's three sons and grandson, the last four rulers of Judah (Dillard and Longman III 285). The prophet indeed ministered during the most tumultuous and critical eras in the history of the Jewish people. During that period the great Assyrian empire was at the verge of collapse and the rise of Babylonian empire and during these years Judah was swept into idolatry, corruption, injustice and immorality of diverse dimensions (Harrison 802).

Of the personality of the prophet, there are accurate historical records by most scholars that the prophet was born around 640BC in a definite historical location of Anathoth, a village two to three miles north-west of Jerusalem. Jeremiah was from a priestly lineage and his father Hilkiyah was also from the descendant of Abiather who too was from a priestly stock (Harrison 802).

In order to fully grasp the prophecies of Jeremiah, one need to take a step further with a great deal of Biblical material to assist in order to fill in some of the historical background of Jeremiah. To this account we have the narratives of 2 Kings 21-25 and 2 Chr. 33-36 which give us a comprehensive account of the life and ministry of Jeremiah. Additional materials are also found in the books of his contemporaries like Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Ezekiel (Thompson 10).

3.10.2 Authorship and Date

The authorship of Jeremiah has never been disputed among scholars; both the internal and external evidences are glaring. The book preserves the accounts of the prophet's ministry whose personal life and struggles are known to us in greater detail than any other prophet in the Old Testament. A mention should be made of Jeremiah's closest associates Baruch who is said to be responsible for the final editorial work of the book (Barker 1115).

Regarding the date of Jeremiah's work, there have been two strong opinions; one school of thought asserts that the date of the prophet's birth and hence the date at which the prophet commenced his ministry. The other school of thought opines that the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign was both the year of Jeremiah's birth and call to ministry. If the two views are accepted, it then means that the date of Jeremiah covers a period from 627BC-586BC (Thompson 10). This research substantially agrees with this opinion because it covers the birth of the prophet and the span of his ministry.

3.10.3 Purpose and Theology

The primary purpose of Jeremiah is to urge God's people to *shub/v* שׁוּב which is translated "to repent" or "to return from their sinful act and back to God". Jeremiah indeed confronts many different calibre of people with their sins, e.g the kings, prophets, priests and people. The weight of his message rest on the shepherds of the people including the foreign nations (NLT 1197).

Theology plays a vital role in the message of most prophets in the Old Testament. Jeremiah's theology stems out of his perception or ideas of God and his practical experience with Yahweh which shape his theological message. Thompson (107) submits

that “Jeremiah’s views about God, Israel, the nation and the individual, sin, repentance and the future hope, has greatly influenced his message”. But much of his theology comes from his own encounters with Yahweh in the rough and tumble of life. Harrison(819) opines that Jeremiah’s concept of God had much in common with that embraced by the eight-century prophets who acknowledged Yahweh as the sovereign creator of the universe as well as ruler of history who could commission king Nebuchadnezzar to do his bidding(Jer. 27:6).

In Jeremiah’s theological discourse, one can see that the prophet has a good knowledge of the attributes of God, for example love and compassion which he shows to Israel steadily despite their arrogance and covenant infidelity. One sees again Yahweh demands implicit obedience from Israel and strictly detest sacrifices to pagan deities and oblations offered to him by a disobedient nation (Jer. 6:20; 7:21f; 14:12).

Having insight to the content of the Torah, Jeremiah is fully aware of the covenant stipulations and relationship between Yahweh and his people Israel, he is also aware of the faithlessness and apostasy which characterize the religious life of the people of Israel throughout their history. Yahweh through the mouth of his prophets rebuked them and they went through diverse forms of affliction, which even led to their exile in Babylon. They had to endure this chastisement. Jeremiah’s theology also rests upon the forceful condemnation and immoral behaviour of Israel especially the shepherds of Israel (kings, prophets and priests in Jer. 5:30f, 6:13f; 14:14 (Harrison 819).

Of what connection has the theology of Jeremiah on the shepherd motif? It is apparently clear that Jeremiah in chapters 21-23 deals with condemnation on the shepherds of Israel who violated their civil and religious responsibilities instead of tending, guiding, leading, sustaining and protecting the flock, they exploited them for their own gain. This is an absolute contrast to the shepherd motif in the Old Testament

which calls on shepherds or leaders to love, care and desire the well-being of the people under their governance.

3.10.4 Structure

Due to the book's chronological disorder, it is difficult for scholars to arrive at a consensus on the book's structure. However, little but renowned expertise on the text of Jeremiah has this insight as their contribution. Thompson (9) posits that the structure of Jeremiah is as follows;

- i. The call of Jeremiah and the two visions (1:4-18)
- ii. The Divine Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (2:1-25:38)
- iii. Jeremiah's controversy with false prophets (26:1-29:32)
- iv. The book of consolation (30:1-33:26)
- v. Incidents from the days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah (34:1-39:8)
- vi. Jeremiah's experiences after the fall of Jerusalem (40:1-45:5)
- vii. Oracles against the nations (48:1-51:64)
- viii. Appendix: the fall of Jerusalem (52:1-34)

Meanwhile, R Harrison (801-2) analysis is worthy of note.

- i. Prophecies against Judah and Jerusalem (1-25)
- ii. Biographical material connected with Jeremiah (26-45)
- iii. Various oracles against foreign nations (46-51)
- iv. Historical appendix (52)

From the two standpoints, one can see that there is a slight variation on the chapter division on the pronouncements of judgment against Judah and Jerusalem. The former has (2:1-25:38) while the later 1-25. Even with this divergent construction, the obvious thing is that the main theme of the chapterization has not been distorted. For the sake of this research the study embraces an exegetical unit of 23:1-8 from the main

structurization of chapters 1-25. This is because chapter 21-23 strictly dwells mainly on judgment of the rulers(shepherds) and faintly on the subjects under governance.

3.10.5 Genre

Having noted the role and significance of literary genre of other texts, it is also important to look very closely to the text of Jeremiah, especially the text under investigation. Most scholars affirm that there are two sections in the passage comprising of poetic segment in vv 1-6 and a prose segment in vv 7-8. These literary genres exhibit the characteristics of condemnation and future hope of the children of Israel(Thompson 486).

3.10.6 Exegetical Comments

3.10.6.1 Hebrew Text

Jer 23:1-8

- 23** הוֹי רְעִים מְאַבְדִּים וּמִפְצִים אֶת־צֹאן מִרְעִיתִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה:
- ² לָכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־הָרְעִים הָרְעִים אֶת־עַמִּי אַתֶּם הִפְצַתֶם אֶת־צֹאנִי וַתִּדְחִוּם וְלֹא פָקַדְתֶּם אֹתָם הֲנִנִּי פָקַד עֲלֵיכֶם אֶת־רַע מִעַלְלֵיכֶם נְאֻם־יְהוָה:
- ³ וְנָאֲנִי אֶקְבֹּץ אֶת־שְׂאֵרֵי צֹאנִי מִכָּל הָאָרְצוֹת אֲשֶׁר־הִדְחִיתִי אֹתָם שָׁם נִהְשַׁבְתִּי אֶתְהֶן עַל־נֹהֶן וּפְרוּ וּרְבוּ:
- ⁴ וְנִהְקַמְתִּי עֲלֵיהֶם רְעִים וְרָעוּם וְלֹא־יִירָאוּ עוֹד וְלֹא־יִחַתּוּ וְלֹא יִפְקְדוּ נְאֻם־יְהוָה:
- ⁵ הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְנִהְקַמְתִּי לְדָוִד צֶמַח צְדִיק וּמֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ וְהִשְׁכִּיל וַעֲשֵׂה מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה בְּאֶרֶץ:
- ⁶ בְּיָמָיו תִּוָּשַׁע יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכֹּן לְבֶטַח וְזֶה־שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָאוּ יְהוָה צְדֻקָנוּ:
- ⁷ לָכֵן הִנֵּה־יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְלֹא־יֵאמְרוּ עוֹד חֵי־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הֵעֵלָה אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

8 כִּי אִם־תִּיַהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלָה נְאֻשָׁר הִבִּיא אֶת־זֶרַע בֵּית
 יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ צְפוֹנָה וּמְכֹל הָאֲרָצוֹת אֲשֶׁר הִדְחִתִּים שָׁם וַיָּשְׁבוּ
 עַל־אֲדָמָתָם:

3.10.6.2 Translation of the Hebrew Text

"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" says the LORD. ² Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: "You have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. ³ Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, says the LORD.

⁵ "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

⁷ "Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when men shall no longer say, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,' ⁸ but 'As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.' Then they shall dwell in their own land." (RSV)

Having established the background and preliminary procedures for doing exegesis, chapter 23:1-8 falls under an exegetical unit. Thompson(485) and Couturier(284) see this exegetical unit deals with promises for the future of the dynasty and the people. In this submission the two exegetes further give the specific theme contained in the passage, rather than being general. Following this argument Dumbrell(141) and Thompson(485) maintains oracle of judgment against the house of David and foreign nations. Following the review of the various considerations above this study embraces the following sub-units within the exegetical units.

Judgment on the Shepherds (vv 1-4)

These verses fall within the literary units of the oracle of judgment upon the rulers of Judah who corrupted Israel or God's flock. The verses also give a future restoration of the children of Israel from exile and the enthronement of Davidic king who is ideal and would care for the flock of Israel. Thompson (486) sees the genre of the passage to compose of two poetic segments vv 1-4 and vv 5-6, and a short prose section vv 7-8. The prophet introduces the text with an oracle of indictment woe, which in essence confirms the above theme as judgment. Prophets in the Old Testament are fond of using this word preceding other statements of prophecies.

Looking at the grammatical construction of the phrase הוֹי רָעִים *hoi ro'im* which is translated "woe to the shepherds". In this context the shepherds refers to the rulers, kings and other figures in leadership responsibility. From the context of the verse and the literary background of the text, it thus means that these shepherds have a role to play in dispensing their God-given responsibility of taking care, leading, protecting and providing for the flock. But they failed and were careless and neglectful rulers for quite a number of years. From the background of the text especially, the historical records of the ways of Judah one would tend to believe that the task for kings or rulers of Judah were bad shepherds and fits in properly in this context. They were the ones, who caused the suffering of the flock that brought about their exilic experience. In fact the blame strictly rests on the rulers (Thompson 487). The verse closes with the prophetic oracular, formula נֹאֲמַתְיָהוּהָ translated "declares the Lord" or "says the Lord". This appendix further intensifies the certainty of the coming judgment because the Lord says it. In verse two, the prophet gives the reason for the judgment and goes on with specifics. The introduction of the word לָכֵן *lacen* which is translated "therefore" is purpose clause which also gives the consequences of their action.

Jeremiah resumes again to the prophetic oracular formula **כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה** giving us the impression and the certainty of the coming judgment. For as far as the Lord says it shall come to pass. This is in contrast to the false prophets' declaration in Jeremiah's day. In the following court room scenario we see Yahweh in the position of a judge and the shepherds (rulers) being indicted for three charges; i) For scattering the flocks ii) For driving them away iii) For not paying attention to them. From the charges leveled against the shepherds (rulers) of Judah, it thus appears that the rulers lack shepherding motif. The verb that hightens this understanding is **פָּקַד** *pagad* which is translated in the following ways in most of the Ancient Near East languages. In the *Akkadian pagudu* means "to watch over", "to entrust", "to appoint"; in *Ugaritic pagad* means "to order"; In *Phoenicia* the meaning is similar to *Akkadian* "to appoint" or "to authorize" in *Aramaic paqad* means to order and *Arabic Fagada* to miss or be missing (Williams 658). Thompson (487) observes that the verb has a range of meanings. Among these are the followings "look after", "go to see", "take care of" "long for" "pass in review" "muster" "commission" "appoint" "call to account" "ask for vindication" "avenge" (when used with 'al). From these range of meanings, Thompson further observes that there are two usages that are very close to the Masoretic meanings rendered by translators. Thus NEB translates "you have not watched over them, but I am watching you to punish you for your evil doing". Those translations give the sense meaning of the text. These shepherds did not prioritized concern for the flock rather they only attend to themselves and left the flock to wander. Yahweh will bring judgment upon the bad shepherd for violating the principles of shepherd motif.

In verse 3 the prophet declares the regathering of the remnant of the flock by Yahweh himself. A commentator observes that "By contrast with verse 1 Yahweh says that it is he who scattered the flock". One would think there is contradiction in the text.

But by no means has a contradiction, the interpretation suggested that the nation was scattered or went into exile due to their rebellion and rejection of the covenant provisions. The bad shepherds were those responsible for their curses towards the end of verse 3 and beginning with verse 4, a promise and a hope is attached. This time around it is Yahweh that will do it.

Jeremiah promises a far much regathering of the Jews in which God will call his people from all the nations of the world from which they have been scattered. He will gather them in their own land, purge them and send them their promised messiah (Jer. 30; Isa 2:1-5; 4; 9:1-7; 11:1-12; 6; Zech 12:14; 21). He will set shepherds or rulers over Israel who will attend or watch over the flock or care for the flock. Threat, anxiety and dismay will be a thing of the past. It further suggests that Israel will have good rulers and good governance. Barnes analysis shows that these shepherds are men like Ezra Nehemiah and Maccabees raised by God. A promised made to David in (2 Sam 7:12-16) (Barnes 2005).

In vv 5-6 most commentators affirm that this section is a short poetic piece, which further gives the important aspect of Messianic thinking (33:15-16). From the content of the verse, it describes the ideal shepherd or king and his role during his messianic reign. In Jeremiah's description this ideal king will rule with justice and righteousness, under his leadership there will be one united nation instead of the two kingdoms North and South experienced over the years. Salvation, peace and safety will characterize his reign. Who then is this ideal shepherd or king? Could it be someone from Davidic dynasty or David's family tree? How do we identify this king and when should we expect him? To further advance the complexities of this ideal shepherd is the name he is called with יהוה צדקנו which is translated "the Lord our righteousness. No one in all the Old Testament prophecies is identified with this name, even king David who also is being

described as one who rules with justice and righteousness in his time was not given such a sacred name.

However for a Biblical theologian and modern Biblical exegete this description applies to עִמָּנוּאֵל *immanuel* which is translated “God with us” this name applies to Jesus Christ who is also from tribe of Judah a descendant of King David. This same king is seen as the ideal shepherd who fits in the context of the good shepherd in John 10.

Vv 7-8 this portion is a prose section in our exegesis. It gives a broad spectrum of deliverance of the people of Israel, which supercedes the deliverance of Israel from Egypt not in terms of miracles but in respect to its earnest deliverance from Babylon. Closer investigations of these verses reveal a repeated occurrence of these lines in Jer. 16:14-15 but with slight variations. The placements of these verses play a significant role even in this construction. But LXX places these verses at the end of the chapter and after v 40 which suggests a fluctuation in Jeremiah’s tradition, but the meaning of the text in its context is appropriate (Thompson 491). The question is why this repetition? From the exegetical evidence it thus suggests that the prophet is making an emphasis or making the more impression.

Meanwhile, those two verses give the essential part of the total picture of the messianic age. Yahweh’s flock who were scattered and dispersed in other lands would return to their own native land when the ideal shepherd began his reign. This picture is also similar to Exodus in Egypt but is far more in grander than the original. It gives an impression that the descendants of Israel would return from the northern and from all the countries of the world they have been scattered. It also pictures a divine blessing as recorded in Ezek. 34 and 37. This interpretation further suggests the role of the ideal shepherd in leading, guiding and providing for the flock.

From all the exegetical evidences in the texts explored it thus reveals that the shepherd motif is an essential drive in the Old Testament, which the shepherds of Israel lacked. Their main focus is not for the well-being of flock but theirs. They lacked the untiring desire to cater for the flock, which Yahweh confronts the leadership of Israel within all its history.

3.11 EXEGESIS OF ISAIAH 40:1-11

3.11.1 Background

From the evidential weight of the superscription one is convinced that Isaiah *ben* Amoz a resident of Jerusalem prophesies during the reign of the four kings of Judah namely; Uzzaiah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. A comparative analysis of this superscription rhymes with Micah who also is a contemporary of Isaiah. Most scholars tentatively agree that Isaiah began his prophetic ministry in the year king Uzzaiah died in 740 BC- 6:1 (Dillard and Longman III 275). No evidential weight to prove their position according to critical sources. Isaiah writes during the stormy period of Assyria expansion and the decline of Israel under king Tiglath-Peleser III (745-727BC). Detail to this assertion is the works of Butterick (412) observes by Nggada (12) that Isaiah's ministry falls into four distinct sections. Firstly, the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis of 735BC which records Isaiah's prophetic declaration of judgment and call for righteousness in 742BC. Isaiah confronted King Ahaz not to trust in his political military and diplomatic ties but to only trust in Yahweh's salvific strength for deliverance. This event was in the prophet's ministry. Secondly, when king Ahaz refused the words of Isaiah, Isaiah withdrew himself (8:16-18) and devoted his time to training his disciples until further mission by Yahweh. Thirdly, a significant period is the enthronement of King Hezekiah 715BC which records

the prophet's middle years of ministry. During the formative years king Hezekiah broke his father's diplomatic ties with two foreign powers Assyria and Egypt under the pressure of Isaiah. When the king opposed Isaiah, he went bare-footed dressed as a captive for three years as a symbol of warning (20:1-6). Fourthly, this era marks the prophet's later ministry which is dated during the reign of Sennacherib's crisis in (701BC). During this turbulent period, the prophet offered hope to King Hezekiah that God would deliver Jerusalem from the impending disaster (37:33-38). These periods records Isaiah's early and later years of ministry.

3.11.2. Authorship and Date

The authorship of the book of Isaiah has attracted a lot of audience and scholarly debate across the centuries, possibly due to its composition, origin, structure, message and subject matter. These issues raised some challenges about the whole book. Due to these complexities various theories and hypothesis were postulated about the single and multiple authorships. Since its composition the authorship of Isaiah has never been criticized until 1167, by Ibn Ezra who opines that Isaiah of Jerusalem is the author of chapter 1-39 and not the whole chapters of the book. He expresses doubt about the second part of the prophecy. A further criticism was vigorously raised by Doderlein in (1775) and Eichorn (1783) who contended that chapters 40-66 were written by a different author who lived about 150 years later during the Babylonian exile named Deutero Isaiah. A further investigation by Duhn in 1892 argues for a separate author of the suffering servant songs (Isaiah 42:1-4; 52:13-52:12) and chapters 56-66 whom he named Triro-Isaiah (Gaebalein 6). What then is the position of this thesis? We must recognize the fact that ancient Mss, Deadsea-scroll and early Christians ascribed the book's authorship to Isaiah son of Amoz an 8th century prophet who lived in Jerusalem and saw the vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem (MacDonald 935). Additionally, there are

sterling witnesses from the New Testament who ascertain Isaiah's single authorship and makes quotation from the three sections of Isaiah; John the Baptist's quotation of Isaiah 40:3-4 in Matt. 3:3; Lk 3:4; Jn 1:23; Matt 8:17; 12:18-21 quotes Isa 53:4. Jesus' quotation in John 12:38-41 in Isa. 53:1.

Another angle to look at this analysis is the unity of plan and development of the text maintains that there is indeed display of consistent plan and order, which does not go well with theories of collection of fragments by two or more authors. For instance the dominant theme of chapters 40-66 comfort/salvation/judgment is progressively built on chapters 1-39 which is judgment and salvation. The book also displays a high literary quality in poetic style in which thought and language fit together. The poetic material includes series of oracles in chapters 13-23; a wisdom poem in 28:23-29, the song of the vineyard 5:1-7, hymns of praise in 12:1-6 and his favourite technique of personification in 24:23 "the sun and the moon are ashamed".

However, the researcher also recognizes the arguments for separate authorship on the historical, literary and theological factors. But for whatever reason(s) one may have, one thing is certain that there are indeed valid reasons for both the division of the book into sections in terms of theological unit. Oswalt (4) citing one of the volumes of works compiled by Brueggemann says

II Isaiah theologically is seen to be originally derived from I Isaiah. As for III Isaiah, he also cited the works of R. Rendhorff who says that III Isaiah completely depends on I and II Isaiah and that an independent existence of this third section is, in my opinion hardly conceivable(4).

So, the question of single authorship is still an unending debate among scholars. But what remains constant throughout in this discussion is the fact that today Isaiah exists

as a unified work. Perhaps we would better and simply accept the works of Anderson (505) and MacDonald (935) in which the former opines “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” and the later opines that difference in content and outlook does not necessarily mean different authorship. Therefore, the position of this research rest on the fact that Isaiah is the brain behind his literary piece.

Regarding the date of Isaiah, most scholars affirm that the traditional position is that Isaiah wrote his book during his ministry which began about 739BC and lasted to about 700BC (McCain 168). Considering the structure of the book in two sections in chapter 1-39 records the events during Isaiah’s ministry and possibly, these chapters 40-66 at his later days (Barker 1014). Looking at this opinion Spencer and Excell says this might give the prophet a lifetime of 90 years. One of the strongest evidence about the date of the book is the superscription (1:1) which records the prophetic mission of Isaiah Ben Amoz and Hezekiah in the Mid-eight century BC. Fishbane contends that since chapters 40-66 does not begin with any new chronological reference, the ancient presumably understood the prophecies in the last half of the book as part of the prediction of Isaiah Ben Amoz. For the sake of this research the 8th century 739 BC is the most probable date.

3.11.3 Purpose and Theology

Having established the situational circumstances surrounding the text of Isaiah there are indeed two major themes that run across the entire book, that is Judgment covering chapters 1-39 and salvation/redemption which covers chapters 40-66. Other existing themes like holiness, sin and worship are also found in the text. It is also amazing to discover that the name Isaiah and his two children have significant role in understanding the themes and purpose. Isaiah signifies “Yahweh is salvation” or “salvation is of the Lord”. The first child *shear Jashub* means – “a remnant will return”

and the second child *Maheer shalal-hash-baz* means “ the body shall very quickly be taken”. All of these names were symbolic to the nation (8:18). When one studies the content of Isaiah’s message, the names capture the essence of the message, which clearly pictures Yahweh as the source of Isaiah’s redemption, Yahweh will spare a remnant for himself and his judgment will certainly come to pass (Mattfeld n.pag).

Looking closely to the content of our thesis, which essentially covers the background of chapters 40-66. Some scholars are of the opinion that the content of chapters 40-55 is mostly identified with Babylonian empire its collapsing and the rising of the Persian Empire. Isaiah presents message of comfort/consolation to Zion (40:1; 51:1-2;7-5 while in Babylon. Therefore, Isaiah’s experience of exile is to purge and cleanse her for greater glory. Yahweh is preparing a new exodus in which foreign nations will share this blessing.

Another possible suggestion to clearly understand the message of Isaiah is a look at the historical setting of Jerusalem which falls between 739BC and 701BC. This period clearly fits the content because it is characterized by high economic prospects, stable agriculture, strong military outputs but strangely enough there were social evils, such as oppression by the rich and upper class, injustice, violence and dishonesty. Shepherds were more to themselves than attending to the needs and difficulties of the people (Westermann 9). Therefore, Isaiah’s single authorship is most appropriate in our discourse.

3.11.4 Structure

In the structurization of the book, scholars give three possible suggestions with major themes attached;

Chapters 1-39 Judgment/Salvation

Chapters 40-55 Comfort

Chapters 56-66 Consolation/Redemption/Judgment

Looking closely to the text under investigation, Isaiah 40:1-11, falls under the exegetical unit considered as overture 40:1-11 (Webb 161). Therefore, in the context of our exegesis our structure is adopted from Oswalt with a slight reconstruction as seen below:

Vv 1-2 Comfort

Vv 3-5 Yahweh's Intervention

Vv 6-8 Yahweh's Irresistible Force

Vv 9-11 Divine Might and compassion

3.11.5 Genre

The book of Isaiah contains series of literary genres more than any material in the Old Testament. Prose and poetry are the major features in the book. Isaiah also uses other forms of genre to convey his message to his audience. Some of these features are personification, sarcasm and wisdom poem. Meanwhile, the text under investigation falls within oracles of deliverance/comfort and restoration/hope (Barker 1015).

3.11.6 Exegetical Comments

3.11.6.1 Hebrew Text

Isa 40:1-11

40 נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ עַמִּי יֹאמֶר אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

² דַּבְּרוּ עַל-לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַם וְקְרְאוּ אֵלֶיהָ כִּי מְלֹאָה צָבָאָה כִּי
נִרְצָה עֲוֹנָהּ כִּי לָקַחָהּ מִיַּד יְהוָה כַּפְּלִים בְּכָל-חַטָּאתֶיהָ:

³ קוֹל קוֹרֵא בַּמִּדְבָּר פָּנֵי דֶרֶךְ יְהוָה יִשְׂרוּ בְּעֵרְבָה מְסֻלָּה
לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ:

⁴ כָּל-גֵּיא יִנְשָׂא וְכָל-הַר וְגִבְעָה יִשְׁפְּלוּ וְהָיָה הָעֵקֶב לְמִישׁוֹר
וְהָרְכָסִים לְבִקְעָה:

⁵ וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד יְהוָה וְקָרְאוּ כָּל-בָּשָׂר נַחֲדוּ כִּי פִי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר:

6 קוֹל אָמַר קְרָא וְאָמַר מָה אֶקְרָא כָּל-הַבָּשָׂר חֲצִיר וְכָל-חֲסִדּוֹ
כְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה:
7 יִבֶּשׂ חֲצִיר נִבֵּל צִיץ כִּי רוּחַ יְהוָה נִשְׁבָּה בּוֹ אַכֵּן חֲצִיר הָעָם:
8 יִבֶּשׂ חֲצִיר נִבֵּל צִיץ וּדְבַר-אֱלֹהֵינוּ יָקוּם לְעוֹלָם:
9 עַל הַר-גְּבֵהָ עָלִי-לָךְ מִבְּשָׂרְתָּ צִיּוֹן הָרִימִי בְּכַח קוֹלְךָ מִבְּשָׂרְתָּ
יְרוּשָׁלַם הָרִימִי אֶל-תִּירְאִי אֲמָרִי לְעָרִי יְהוּדָה הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:
10 הִנֵּה אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה בְּחִזֵּק יָבוֹא וּזְרַעוּ מִשְׁלָה לּוֹ הִנֵּה שְׂכָרוֹ
אֲתוֹ וּפְעֻלָּתוֹ לְפָנָיו: 11 כְּרַעַה עֲדָרוֹ יִרְעָה בְּזַרְעוֹ יִקְבֹּץ טְלָאִים
וּבְחִיקוֹ יִשָּׂא עֲלוֹת יְנַהֵל:

3.11.6.2 Translation of the Hebrew Text

ISA 40:1 “ Comfort, O comfort My people,” says your God.

ISA 40:2 “ Speak kindly to Jerusalem;

And call out to her, that her warfare has ended,

That her iniquity has been removed,

That she has received of the LORD'S hand

Double for all her sins.”

ISA 40:3

A voice is calling,

“ Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness;

Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

ISA 40:4 “Let every valley be lifted up,

And every mountain and hill be made low;

And let the rough ground become a plain,

And the rugged terrain a broad valley;

ISA 40:5 Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,

And all flesh will see *it* together;

For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

ISA 40:6 A voice says, “Call out.”

Then he answered, “What shall I call out?”

All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.

ISA 40:7 The grass withers, the flower fades,

When the breath of the LORD blows upon it;

Surely the people are grass.

ISA 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades,

But the word of our God stands forever.

ISA 40:9

Get yourself up on a high mountain,

O Zion, bearer of good news,

Lift up your voice mightily,

O Jerusalem, bearer of good news;

Lift *it* up, do not fear.
 Say to the cities of Judah,
 “ Here is your God!”
 ISA 40:10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might,
 With His arm ruling for Him.
 Behold, His reward is with Him
 And His recompense before Him.
 ISA 40:11 Like a shepherd He will tend His flock,
 In His arm He will gather the lambs
 And carry *them* in His bosom;
 He will gently lead the nursing ewes. (NASB).

Looking at the plan and development of Isaiah’s literary piece and maintaining single authorship of the text, chapters 40-55 gives us a picture that the preceding chapters recall the judgment of Yahweh upon the nation Israel. Jerusalem lies desolate, Israel is in exile in Babylonia and the exilic experience took a long time, there was record of great distress and unprecedented happenings (40:2; 42:24f; 51:17) in fact some of them think they were forgotten 40:27, 49:14. But the goodness unfolds by the prophet sets a glimpse of hope and a ray of light, to the exiles. The prophet urges them to believe that Yahweh will liberate his people. It’s another form of Exodus, in fact a new one (Ridderbos 526).

Comfort (vv 1-2)

Considering the structurization of the text which we previously established. Chapters 40-55 give hope to the exiles to believe in the salvific strength of Yahweh. Webb (161) notes three important and stirring imperatives to depict the urgency of the prophetic declarations, thus “comfort... speak... proclaim” (vv1-2) Yahweh is about to do something great in no distant future. Let the exiles rejoice for Yahweh is in the process of visitation. This emphatic tone of hope at the opening verse of Isaiah 40 is maintained throughout chapters 40-55. Jerusalem is now forgiven, acknowledged by Yahweh as his people using the appropriate expression “my people” Yahweh’s tender language is captured by the prophet in vs1. The expression used by the prophet recalls the

Sinaitic covenant, relationship established between Yahweh and Israel which is indeed a privilege and mission.

Yahweh's Intervention (vv 3-5)

The above construction is a poem detailing how this comfort can be offered to a sinful nation and ruined people. It does not give the impression that human activity is involved in salvaging Israel, rather it is a divine intervention that Yahweh will deliver his people. It is indeed a message of comfort to his people (Oswalt 51). From the Masoretic Text it is God who comes out of the wilderness for his people. Some scholars like Dumbrell and Stummer see the image of the way paralleling Babylonian enthronement of the state deity *Marduk* at the annual New Year Festival. The interpretation is denied by Whybray and accepted by Muilenburg. But more recently J. Eaton (40) gives a proposal that it is a festal way but having its root in a supposed enthronement festival indigenous to Jerusalem.

Yahweh's Irresistible Force (vv 6-8)

In these verses a further herald is raised by the above verses in which the prophet understands it as an address to himself, especially the prophet is replied by the content in verse 8. The prophet no longer trust or believes in the frailty of human personality but in the supreme power of divine word which confronts his hopeless situation (Dumbrell 117). The text also shows the sterling quality of God's word that is same character with God. It is unchanging and reliable (Webb 163). In this truth Webb further comments that "it is trust in a person who is committed to us and has all the resources necessary to care for us" This statement concurs with one of the basic quality of a shepherd.

Divine, mighty and Caring Shepherd (vv 9-11)

The opening verse begins with an imperative and these verses conclude the introduction of chapter 40. It pictures God as the coming king of Jerusalem. cf 52:7. Our

main focus in this verse is the shepherd imagery. Oswalt (55) observes that the picture of the coming king as shepherd is a known metaphor in the ancient Near Eastern Tradition especially, from the Sumerians as suggested by a statement in the Sumerian law code of Lipit-Istar (ca 1850 B.C.), and with a similar one in the Babylonian Code of Hammurapi (ca 1675 B.C.) Here Yahweh is described in the caring terms of a shepherd rather than praising his quality. We have noted earlier in our discourse in chapter three regarding the background of the shepherd and its meaning which pictures royal kingship. In this context it implies to Yahweh as the king who will achieve the kingship in the new Exodus (Dumbrell 117). In verse 11, the imagery of the shepherd becomes apparently clear. The RSV translation is adopted in this study for it clearly brings out the sense meaning of the text closely to the Masoretic rendering.

He will feed his flock like a shepherd,
 he will gather the lambs in his arms,
 he will carry them in his bosom,
 and gently lead those that are with young.

It is interesting to note that in this text the prophet uses six strong verbs; four *qal* verbs and two *piel* verbs. The *qal* expresses simple form of it and the *piel* usually expresses the intensive form of the *qal* in the active voice.

In the first clause the verb כרעה from the root רעה *ptc ms* means “pasturing” or “tending” most translators prefer feeding which also gives the sense meaning in its context. Yahweh as the shepherd will passionately provide his flock with the best of pasture. As a shepherd who knows the very need of his sheep, so will Yahweh provide for Israel their needs. In analyzing the second verb ירעה which has the same root with כרעה translated “to pasture” or “to tend”. But in this construction it is *qal impf 3ms*. In the context of the text it means “to tend” or “to shepherd”. The third verb in our text is

קִבֵּץ from the root קִבֵּץ it is *piel impf 3ms* translated “gather together” this verb expresses intensification. It still builds on the preceding verse of the shepherd. It suggests the role of the shepherd, those sheep that were scattered on the mountains of Israel and foreign nations will Yahweh assemble in their own land, with tender care.

The prophet went to use the verb יָשָׂא from the root יָשָׂא. It is *qal impf 3ms* translated “to lift” or “to carry”. It gives the impression of how dearly and caring Yahweh is to his flock. The phrase “in his arm” expresses Yahweh’s protection for his flock. It further suggests that no human force or effort would snatch the flock from his hand. The verb עָלָה rooted from עָלָה is in the *qal ptc fp* translated “to give”. The significance is it expresses the sense of tenderness and caring. The final verb in the text under investigation is יָנַח from the root יָנַח. It is *piel impf 3ms*, which expresses the intensity of the action. In this context Yahweh will lead and refresh his flock as a shepherd leads his flock to good pasture and fresh water. Despite Israel’s rebellion and apostasy Yahweh as a divine lover continues as a good shepherd to cater for the needs of Israel. The text also demonstrates the principle of shepherd motif of untiring desire to care. In the next section of the work we shall draw the various implications as it applies to Nigerian *Sitz Im Leben*.

CHAPTER FOUR IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP IN NIGERIA

This section seeks to draw implications from what we have examined or explored on the meaning of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament, especially, in the texts we have examined. This is done in order to apply its message to the Nigerian *Sitz im Leben*.

4.1 NIGERIAN SITUATION

The implications of the shepherd motif in Nigeria would have significant impact on the leadership responsibility in both the Church and society. Nigeria has witnessed different systems of government from autocratic to dictatorship and from military to democratic systems of governance. Since the concept of the shepherd motif has bearing on leadership responsibility, we shall now explore the various contexts in the Nigerian life situation.

4.1.1 In the Political Context

A look at Nigeria in the post independence era one would not be wrong to compare her with Israel's life in the eight century. It was a period of prosperity, relative peace and moral decadence. Yet it was also a time of mass oppression, exploitation of the underprivileged and corruption. There was discrimination at all sector and a sharp contrast between the wealthy and the poor. Other social vices include injustice, violence and bloodshed. Most of the prophets of the eight century decried their voices to be heard

from kings' palaces to the extreme quarters of the poor. They saw injustice, falsehood and oppression in both the civil and religious leadership and are calling for a redress in Israel's life situation. These shepherds, who are supposed to care for the needs of their subjects, maintain peace and order, justice and righteousness plunged the nation into chaos because of their selfish ambition.

What we have seen above is not far-fetched from what is obtainable in Nigeria. Before the emergence of Democracy in Nigeria, the country has witnessed several military coup-detas in 1966, 1976, 1983, 1984, 1993-1999(Nggada 76). Towards the end of the last two administrations (Gen.Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida and Gen. Sani Abacha), Nigeria experienced mass exploitation and gross violation of fundamental human rights, this came up as a result of bad leadership. This is an indication of the violation of the principle of shepherd motif which is based on the ideals of caring. The shepherds devoured, scattered and led astray the flock with no sense of caring and protection. In this study one discovers that the untiring desire to care of the shepherd is what is completely absent in Nigeria's leadership responsibility.

With the birth of democracy there was the expectation of the breath of freedom, equity and good governance, but it is unfortunate that our politicians in the various arms of government are cut up with high level of corruption to the extent of not responding to the needs of their subjects. Therefore, the need for pastoral care leadership which is based on the principle of shepherd motif is urgently needed in Nigeria for sustainable leadership. As Okediji notes

A shepherd-leader is to ensure that in his civic and political duty
a new political class which is genuinely committed to Justice,
accountability, transparent political behaviour and good

governance that focus on compassion, especially for the poor, needy and helpless(Okediji 51).

The above statement concurs with the principle of the shepherd motif which is strictly based on caring.

4.1.2 In the Economic Context

Economically, Nigeria is a blessed country with surplus mineral resources like petroleum in the Niger-Delta, tin and columbite in central Nigeria, and good fertile ground for agriculture and rearing of livestock. One expects to see what Yamsat says quoting Aristotle “Politics is all about power sharing, the sharing of resources and the maintaining of justice for the good of all citizens of a given state or nation” Due to the unequal distribution of political power, the subjects of this country are suffering a great deal. Orphans, widows and the underprivileged cannot make ends meet. The avaricious rich men employ the service of the common people at a very cheap rate to enrich themselves. And as a result of that the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer. All of these happened because some few individuals are holding and controlling the wealth of this nation. This is a clear indication of gross violation of the principle of good governance. Jeremiah and Ezekiel in their prophetic utterances call the leadership of Judah to order for their lack of being true shepherds. As shepherd of Israel they are called to serve and to care for the flock of Yahweh but these shepherds focused on themselves at the expense of the suffering flock.

One of the dimensions of shepherd motif is to maintain justice, righteousness and truth. This too we find quite demanding on the leadership of this country. The leaders take bribe to pervert justice and they have “turned justice into poison and righteousness into bitterness”(Mic 3:11)NIV. This is a clear picture of our judiciary; the common person cannot find justice because the leadership has been bought over and so the guilty

ones are set free while the not guilty are punished. Should not our leaders maintain justice and order? Since the principle of shepherd motif demands justice and righteousness in governance for peaceful co-existence, therefore our leaders should practice and encourage that for the same purpose.

4.1.3 In the Social Context.

The Nigerian social context reflects Israel's community in the eight century period in which there is a clear distinction between the rich and the poor. The politicians and some few individuals belong to the rich class while the less privileged and the peasants' farmers belong to the other group. With this social inequality, the rich ones use their influence and connections to evict widows and orphans in their legitimate homes and inherited lands. These avaricious land grabbers used the labour and sweats of the underprivileged to amass wealth for themselves and children. Such is the situation with Nigeria, the rich use their privileged positions to seize land and other viable possessions of the poor and the defenseless to enrich themselves, while the poor are left without due rights and privileges. Because of this high level of injustice, it has affected our social endeavours and breeds in antisocial behaviours like; robbery, assassination and violence. Needless to say, if there were the application of the principle of shepherd motif in our leadership, these things would have changed.

4.1.4 In the Religious Context

Recalling the religious life of Israel during the sixth and eight centuries, there was a high level of moral decline and apostasy. Israel is called to serve as light to the nations and a city of peace and truth. But it has turned out to be the opposite. The religious(shepherds) leaders were called to be faithful and responsible in order to take care of the flock of Yahweh. They were also called to serve as custodians of truth, justice and righteousness but they have turned out to be some thing else. Above all they were

called to be model of good leadership for the nations but the shepherds ended up working against these virtues. Such is our nation Nigeria,

The Church's leadership which is rooted and built upon the principle of shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament has turned out to be something else. Instead of setting a good precedent she went as far as practicing dictatorship and gross violation of the principle of justice, righteousness and truth in her leadership. It is unfortunate for some shepherds who call themselves mentors but eventually hate with passion of those whom they are mentoring for fear of taking over from them. At least if every system fails the Church should be able to stand out and correct the abnormalities and restore good leadership pattern in the manner of shepherd motif for both the Church and society. This is currently lacking in both the Church and society. In our attempt to explore the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament, we discovered that what makes leadership sustainable is the untiring desire to care by the shepherd. Despite the behaviour of the flock, the good shepherd shows caring and concern continuously for their well-being.

From all indications the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament has great potentials to offer the Church and society in terms of good leadership only if they would implement that.

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY

The problem this research examined is the misconception and misinterpretation of the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament especially Psalm 23; Ezek.34; Zech.11:4-17; Jer.23:1-8 and Isa. 40:1-11, which has been subjected to criticism in recent times. Most scholars adopted varying degrees of methodologies to come up with different terms for the motif to denote autocracy, democracy, aristocracy, military dictatorship, kingship, civil and spiritual leadership to talk on shepherd motif without closely examining the caring motif which serves as the basis for the meaning and understanding of shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament.

Therefore, the primary objectives of this research had been nine-fold; to be able to provide adequate translation and proper interpretation of shepherd motif in Ps. 23; Ezek. 34; Zeck. 11:14-17; Jer. 23:1-8; Isa. 40:1-11 that will correct the misunderstanding and misconception of the motif subjected to criticism in recent times; to be able to justify the assertion that shepherd motif of caring enshrined in the texts above, which encapsulates, provision, protection, sustenance and guidance is the basis for the interpretation and understanding of shepherd motif in the Old Testament; to establish and develop that *roeh* shepherd is a key term in controlling all the texts we have examined; to be able to provide proper interpretation of shepherd motif in the texts we have examined in order to inform, educate and transform knowledge of pastoral care leadership in both the Church and society; to attempt to restore the dimensions of the pastoral praxis, spirituality and significance which majority of the shepherds have lost as we have examined in the texts above; to reveal the primary responsibilities of a shepherd towards his flock in terms of caring which will further encourage and strengthen the bond of relationship existing between the shepherd and his flock; to make modest recommendations for the shepherd;

to be able to challenge and provide enabling environment for scholars to further investigate the other dimensions of shepherd motif in the Old Testament and explore viable approaches to the study. To achieve these objectives the researcher consulted materials and sources that are relevant to the study to be able to identify the existing gap in which this study fill in. The researcher used the following methods to achieve the above objectives; canonical approach; this is important because it recognizes the unity and integrity of the text of scripture. Grammatical-historical Exegesis; this approach is important for it seeks to draw out the authorial intention and the situation surrounding the text. Syntactical – Theological method; this approach is important because certain truth and doctrine are formed within the theological framework of the written text.

Principles of syntagmatics and paradigmatics are important in researching biblical terms and concepts for it seeks to bring out the contextual meaning of the word(s).

Using the above objectives and methodologies the researcher discovers the untiring desire for care by the shepherd, which is seen as the basis for the understanding and interpreting the shepherd motif enshrined in Old Testament. It clearly reveals that the exegetical process and theological approach have shown much insight in revealing the basis for the understanding of the shepherd motif.

Having explored the various section of the Hebrew scriptures *TANAK* we saw a paradigm laid by Yahweh for all the shepherds of Israel to emulate in order to govern Israel with a sense of caring, because God is the shepherd of Israel (Ps.80:1;23:1;Gen.49:24), but the shepherds of Israel have a different agenda which has turned the community into chaotic disorder. The prophets called for a redress on the leadership of both Judah and Israel. But there was no improvement, which on more than one occasion Israel's shepherds did fail in their responsibility. These shepherds include all those in leadership position in both the civil and religious circles as kings, priests,

false prophets, false teachers and judges. They were accused of lack of caring for the flock. These shepherds have not provided for the flock, they have not guided and led the flock to good pasturage and streams of water, they have not healed the wound of the broken hearted, neither have they brought back the lost ones, instead they devoted more to amassing wealth for themselves. These shepherds have lost the pastoral praxis, spirituality and significance. They have also lost the core values of the motif of caring, which is the basis for the understanding of shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament. However, the underlying briefings would bring to light how we have achieved the goal of our study.

In chapter one we have laid the foundation of the study taken into consideration the thesis statement, general and specific objectives of the study, significance of the study, justification of the study, appropriate methodology, theoretical/conceptual framework of the research, clarifications of terms and organization of the study. In the second chapter of the research we reviewed some selected works of scholars relevant to the study, especially their position and how they have approached the problem. This section further reveals the existing gap in which this thesis is attempting to fill in. This gap is the untiring desire for care by the shepherd which is seen throughout the texts we have examined. Another helpful dimension of the shepherd motif is the loss of its pastoral praxis, spirituality and significance which is a major concern for the pastoral care leadership in the Church and society.

The background study of the Shepherd Motif forms the third chapter of the study in which a detailed study of its concept and its development in the ancient Near Eastern tradition was given, taken into consideration Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greco-Roman world and Africa. Within the same chapter we give a detailed study of the concept of the shepherd motif across the three sections of the Hebrew scriptures of the

Old Testament. In each of the section we give the etymological and the semantic relationship or contextual meaning of the word *roeh* in the various context of the Old Testament. Similarly, since the study is primarily on shepherd motif in the Old Testament we have paid particular attention to some selected texts in the Law, Prophets and Writings. This research also looked into the shepherd motif in the New Testament. We have also studied רעה *roeh* with its semantic relationship to other words like, שמר *shmar*, פקד *paqad*, חסר *hasar*, חסד *hesed*, נקד *noqed*, and מלך *malak*. Within the same chapter we have examined some selected texts (Psalm 23; Ezek. 34; Zech. 11:4-17; Jer. 23:1-8; Isa. 40:1-11) in the light of biblical exegesis in order to bring out an interpretation very close to the Masoretic rendering that would lead to better understanding of the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament. In the fourth chapter the writer drew implications arising from the texts we examined in order to apply its message to the Nigerian *Sitz im Leben*. While in Chapter five we drew the conclusion of the study.

This researcher has examined shepherd motif from the ancient Near East background and the Old Testament which affirms our study of the shepherd motif. We have also developed the meaning of the shepherd motif with its various dimensions in the texts we investigated; we discovered that the central thrust rest on leadership responsibilities with a sense of caring, which the shepherds of Israel were accused of not tending the flock of God with a sense of caring.

5.2 FINDINGS

1. This research explored the shepherd motif in the Old Testament in which most scholars relied upon the titles. But with recent findings, it is discovered that no attention is given to the shepherd motif of untiring desire for care by the shepherd. As such the untiring desire for care, which is unconditional for every shepherd is the

- basis of understanding shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament. For it is found to be informative, educative and transformative.
2. Having explored the background of the shepherd motif in the ancient Near East traditions, it is discovered that it is only the gods that are being referred to as shepherds with the exception of Egypt in which human kings have to be deified to become shepherds. But in this study it is discovered that the above aforementioned facts do not apply to the Old Testament understanding of the shepherd motif, for in the Old Testament. Yahweh is seen as the shepherd of his people (Ps. 80:1; Isa. 40:11 and in the prophetic literature Yahweh is designated as the good shepherd and the messianic ruler is also designated as the good shepherd. Also both civil and religious leaders are referred to as shepherds.
 3. This research is the first in researching biblical terms using the principles of syntagmatics and paradigmatics on shepherd motif in the Old Testament. The research has demonstrated the above principles using Psalm 23, Ezek. 34, Jer. 23:1-8, Zech. 11:4-17, Isaiah 40 1-11, which furthers reveals how informative, educative and transformative shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament can serve as paradigm for pastoral care leadership in the Church and society.
 4. It is discovered in this study that the term shepherd does not always refer to animate beings but even essence like soul is sometimes referred to as shepherd. The Greek philosopher Philo describes *nous* as shepherd of irrational powers (Jeremias 901).
 5. This research comes out with some core values from some African tribes on the concept of shepherd motif as a tool for the understanding, interpreting and applying the shepherd motif in the Old Testament for the African Christians.
 6. Most of the Western interpreters who championed biblical interpretation were not able to explore the richer dimensions of the shepherd motif, but this research

- discovers that from the *Fulani* shepherds' that every cow has a name peculiar to others, when that name is called, it is only the cow bearing that name that will respond thus expressing the intimate relationship existing between the shepherd and his flocks.
7. This research discover that the local understanding of the shepherd can be concrete ground for building biblical understanding of shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament, especially for African Christians.
 8. The researcher discovers a significant initiative from the works of Mogensen (78) on the social organization of the *fulbe* society of Northern Nigeria and notes that a key component of the pastoral *fulbe* is the flock to which they are closely attached maintains that the cattle play a major role in the social organization of the *fulbe* and that the social status of an individual in the society is determined largely by their relation to cattle. He notes again on the significance of the flock in which a *fulbe* proverbs says “ If one harms the cattle, one harms the *fulbe*” and “If the cattle dies, the *fulbe* will die” and “cattle surpass everything and they are even greater than father and mother”(Mogensen 78)
 9. In this study it is discovered that the central thrust of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament rests upon leadership responsibilities with a sense of caring, which the shepherds of Israel were accused of not tending the flock of God with a sense of caring.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are drawn from the research.

1. This piece of work is highly recommended for biblical scholars as a model and resource material in researching biblical terms, concepts, and motifs, using the principles of syntagmatics and paradigmatics.

2. The paradigm discovered by the researcher on shepherd motif in the Old Testament has great potentials to offer the Church and society in terms of good leadership.
3. From this research we discovered what makes leadership sustainable is the untiring desire to care of the shepherd. This has been demonstrated by Yahweh with Israel his flock in the wilderness experience. Despite Israel's obnoxious behaviour, the good shepherd shows caring and concern continuously for their well-being. Therefore, leaders (shepherds) of the Church and society should emulate that for the well-being of the people.
4. This research wish to remind the church of her leadership which is rooted and built upon the principle of shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament, instead of practicing dictatorship and gross violation of human right and justice in her leadership.
5. The current uprising in North Africa and Middle East is an indication of the lack of absolute care and response to the needs of their people. Therefore, the principle of shepherd's caring motif is strongly recommended as the solution to their problems.
6. This study would serve as a general warning to all shepherds that judgment will certainly come upon those who do not take heed to the principle of shepherd motif in governance.
7. This research is strongly recommending all institutions of human endeavours to pattern their leadership to pastoral style of government in order to ensure peace, equity, justice, security and well-being of their people.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This researcher has examined the concept of the shepherd motif from the background of ancient Near East, Old Testament and Africa. The writer saw that the imagery of the shepherd occupies and plays a major role in all the traditions studied. First and foremost

the image is being referred to God in the metaphorical sense, because of the role he plays in providing, guiding, leading and protecting mankind. And in the figurative sense human kings are seen as shepherds and are expected to function in similar way as shepherds. Literally, it refers to the one who tends sheep and pastures flock. The gods too are being referred to as shepherds. From all indication it has been observed that the ancient Near East background and African concept of the motif of caring is limited and insufficient.

In this research we have examined the shepherd motif in the Hebrew Scriptures *Torah*, *Neviim* and *Kethovim*(*TANAK*) especially, the prophetic literature where the wicked leaders of Israel are contrasted with God and his loving care. Two things develop from this study of the shepherd motif in the Old Testament concerning the idea of shepherd. Firstly, God's leaders were to be like him. They were to care for the sheep as he cares for them. But Israel had failed in this mission and exploited the people for personal gain and exposed them to idolatry and immorality. This is seen in the texts the researcher has examined in Jer 23:1-6, Ezek.34, Zech.11:4-17. Secondly, the idea of shepherd is closely associated with the role of the king; the expected messiah who will come from the loins of David must be a great shepherd who will be able to clothe himself with humility the task of shepherding God's people. He will rule with wisdom and righteousness, and practice loving kindness and truth (Chad 2). From our research of the Old Testament concept of shepherd motif it thus reveals that the concept is an untiring desire to care.

We have undoubtedly seen that the shepherd motif conveys leadership responsibility in which caring seems to be lacking in human dictatorship, kingship, leadership, rulership and the gods with the exception of Yahweh.

5.5 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The contribution of this research is that it has for the first time, fully laid bare the motif of untiring desire for care by the shepherd as the basis for understanding and interpreting the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament. For it is found to be informative, educative and transformative. This discovery is not found in any of the materials the researcher has reviewed.

For the first time in recent scholarship, this research has used the principles of syntagmatics and paradigmatics on selected texts on shepherd motif in Old Testament to bring out a clearer understanding and interpretation of the shepherd motif enshrined in the Old Testament. This discovery is not found in any of the materials the researcher has reviewed.

NOTES

¹The word *shamar* with its cognitive ancient Near East derivatives has similar meanings, when compared with *ro'eh* (shepherd) in its semantic relationship it captures the basic function of the shepherd and gives a fuller revelation of the contextual meaning of the word. To buttress this assertion see שמר in *Theological Word of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2 edited by R. Laird Harris *et al* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 939.

²It is interesting to note that the Hebrew verbal idea of strong verbs are expressed, in the Qal it gives the sense of the active mood, while in the Niphal it suggests passive mood, in the Piel it conveys the intensification of the action and the Hitpael depicts the reflexive action.(For a perfect treatment of these synopses see M. Mansoor *Biblical Hebrew* Vol. 1 pp190-191.

³When the concept is applied to the context of the shepherd it exemplifies the basic caution that is involved in the role of the shepherd.

⁴Although the etymological derivation of *pqd* may not necessarily gives the contextual meaning but gives the root meaning of the word, also to some extent it serves as a pointer to the meaning of the word. See Tyler F. Williams ‘פקד’ in *NIDOTTE* Vol. 3, edited by Willem A. VanGemeren *et al* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), p. 658.

⁵The third rendering is more at home with the literal and metaphorical meaning of the shepherd motif in both of the sister testaments towards his flock.

⁶Hamilton in *TWOT* Vol. 2, p. 731 sees the concept of the shepherd motif in the light of exercising leadership or rulership principles over the ruled with a view to see relief and developmental changes in the lives of the oppressed either for the positive or negative. Therefore, a shepherd must embrace the caring motif as his attitude towards his flock.

⁷From the foregoing studies I concur with Meier’s opinion that the verbs of want, lack, or need, חסר *Hasar* is the most common and broadly accepted in the Semitic languages of ANE e.g. Aramaic, Arabic and Ethiopic for they have the same form in Hebrew. See M.Mansoor *Biblical Hebrew* Vol. 1 .p.6

⁸See detail meaning conjugation of “חסר” in *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988, p.112.

⁹Not only people associated with God are said to lack nothing, but also land. cf. Deut. 8:9; Judg. 18:4.

¹⁰רחם *Raham* is closely associated with נחם *Niham*, for it conveys the meaning of care, protection and compassion. The semantic relationship of these words with רעה *roeh* is that roeh in both of its form either in the noun or verb conveys similar meaning of caring, protection and provision.

¹¹This principle is well researched by Andy Warren in his lecture notes MTB 501 Old Testament Exegesis in Hebrew TCNN 2003. This principle is also intensively used by Philip Asura Nggada, MTh thesis 2005 TCNN Bukuru.

¹²In Exegesis, it is imperative to look at verses before and after in order to get the sense unit of the text. In the syntigmatics chart the last column gives the key concept in the text.

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GLOSSARY

HEBREW WORDS

lka *akal* - “to eat” or “to devour”

יהי rma *amar Yehvah* “says the Lord”

lba *aval* - “to give” different from *natan* “to give”

tybb *babayit Yehvah*- in the house of the lord

tysrb *bereshit*- beginnings or Genesis

יהי ynda rma hk *co amar adonai yehvah* - “thus says the Lord”

יהי דבר *debar Yehvah* - “the word of the Lord”

אל *el* – God

רוח *hasar* – want, lack or need

הם *hemmah* - “they”, “who” “behold”

דוח *hesed* – Mercy, “love”

וה *hoi* – particle or interjection meaning “woe” or “alas”

עמנואל *Immanuel* – “God with us”

לבש *labash* – “to clothe”

לכן *lacen* - “therefore”

לדוד *la Dawid* – “to David” or “for David”

לא אחר *lo'lasar* – “I shall not want”

לא *lo*- “negative particle” “not”

שב שח ללס מהר *maher shalal-hash bash* - “the body shall very quickly be taken”

למלכה *malka* – a ruling queen

למלך *melek* – “king”

מִסֵּךְ *misiach* – “anointed one”

נֹסֵף *nasa* – “premonarchical family clan head”

נָהַל *nahal* – “to guide”

נִקְדָּה *naqad* – “leader” or “captain”

נֹקֵד *noqed* – one who take care of the flock or a sheep dealer

נְבִיאִים *nebiim* – prophets rooted from the word *nabi*

פָּקַד *paqad* – “to watch over”, “to appoint”

רָאָה *ra'a* and *re'u* – “to graze”, “to shepherd” or “to rule”

רָחַם *raham* - is closely associated with *niham* for it conveys the meaning of “care”, “protection” and “compassion”

רֹעֵה *ro'eh* – “shepherd”

שָׁלַח *shalah* - “weapon” or “spear”

שָׁלוֹם *shalom* – “peace”, “wellbeing”, “prosperity”

שָׁבַת *shavat* - “to dwell” or “to sit”

שָׁמַר *shamar* - “to repent”, “to tend”, “a great care” or “a diligent care”

שׁוּבָה *shub* - “to turn back to God”, “to return to God”, “to repent”

שָׁרְיָה *shear jashub* - “a remnant will return”

שֻׁלְחָן *shulhan* - table

תַּנַּךְ *tanak* - acronym for Hebrew scriptures Torah, Prophets and Writings.

תּוֹרָה *torah* - law Genesis – Deuteronomy

חֶסֶד *tov hesed* - “goodness and mercy”

צְדָקָה *tsedeq* - “righteous” from the root “*tsadaq*”

ytbsw *washavti* - rooted from Hebrew verb *shuv* – “to return” in this context it suggests

“and I shall return”.

לארך ~ymy *yamim laorek* - “length of days forever”

ynlhyeny *yanihalni* - “he leads me”

hbsy *yashabha* - “he restores”

ytbsy *yashabti* - rooted from Hebrew word *yashab* means “to sit” or “I shall dwell”

ירבצוני – *yarbesteni* “he makes me lie down”

יהוה מלך *Yehvah malak* - “rule of Yahweh over the nations and the gods”

יהוה רעי *Yehvah ro'iy* - “the lord is my shepherd”

יהוה צדכנו *Yehvah Tsedikenu* - “ the lord our righteousness”

זלמות *zalmut* - “shadow of death”

זבה *zevah* - “to slaughter”

ANCIENT NEAR EAST WORDS

Ahiman - evil spirit in Persian religion

Ahura mazda – The wise lord who is worshipped by people in Persian empire

Amon – Egyptian god who is called strong drover or shepherd

Avesta – sacred book of those who practice Zoroastrianism

Hammurabi –the exalted prince in Babylon, who feared God to bring about the rule of righteousness in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil doers; so that the strong should not harm the weak. In his code- “ I rule over the black headed people like shamash and enlighten the land to further the well-being of mankind”. This excerpt is qtd from Hammurabi code of laws c.1780 B.C. (PCSB 2005).

Ipumer-sage

Ir-a-ni Marduk- the translation of this expression “Marduk has pastured me”

Marduk-the god of the Babylonians, he is also the god of righteousness, dominion over earthly men and made him great.

Maggis- wise men

Medes- priest

Melekat- this refers to the goddess *lishtar* regarded as queen of heaven.

GREEK/LATIN WORDS

αγαμηννον *agamennon* - “shepherd in regular Homeric description”

εληθος *eleos* - mercy

γοψιμ *goyim* - Gentiles

μησηρχοδια *mesercordia* - compassion or mercy

νους *nous* - shepherd of irrational powers

ποιμην *poimen* - pastor or shepherd

ποιμηνοι *poimenoι* - shepherds or Pastors

πρησβυτηρους *presbyterous* - “elders”

Sitz im Leben- life setting or life situation

vulgate - Latin translation of the LXX

INDEGENOUS WORDS

Bura- A tribe found in the North Eastern Nigeria precisely in Borno State and Adamawa state. They are located in five local government areas; Biu, Shani, Kwaya, Hawul and Gombi. They are believed to have migrated from the East in 1000A.D.

Fulbe-The *fulbe* society popularly known as the *Fulani* communities are predominantly pastoral nomads, although there are few exceptions that settled down and concentrated on agricultural farming. They are like the Bedouins in the Middle East

Kraal- a small clusters of houses built by the *Masais*’ which consists of eight families with their cattle.

Kluk- a small skin bag used by the *Mupuns* shepherd to carry items such as small knife,

sling, bow and arrow.

Masai- they are nomads found in Kenya and Tanzania in –East Africa.

Morans- this refers to the age groups from 14-30 *Masai* ethnic group.

Mupun- this is an ethnic group found in the middle belt of Nigeria , precisely in Pankshin and Mangu L.G.A. of Plateau State.

