# A pastoral investigation of the phrase 'go tloša Setšhila' [traditional purification] as the last phase in the process of bereavement mourning amongst the Basotho

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© 2011. The Authors. Licensee: AOSIS OpenJournals. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License. This article investigates and attempts to provide answers from pastoral perspectives regarding the perception the Basotho have on the issue of traditional purification. The aim of this article is to find out why the bereaved, that have not yet been purified traditionally, are not allowed to be part of certain activities, like going to the church and also performing certain community activities.

The investigation was conducted by way of qualitative research. Three different Sotho Reformed congregations were selected, namely one from the Northern-Sotho speaking congregations, one from the Setswana speaking congregations and one from the Southern-Sesotho speaking congregations. Respondents included one minister, one older man, one older woman, and two young members including a man and a woman from each congregation in order to get a broader perspective. For the sake of confidentiality the names of the congregations and participants remained anonymous.

The results of the article indicate that the rights of the bereaved to perform certain duties in the community are reduced till such time that they are purified traditionally.

## Introduction

It is necessary to understand how death affects Basotho and also the rituals that are performed during and after the burial of a Mosotho<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, death and mourning will be discussed under the umbrella of traditional purification, since traditional purification is regarded by Basotho as the last phase of mourning during the death of a Mosotho.

Even though death is inevitable, the Basotho believe that it cannot occur without a specific cause. Ancestors and witchcraft are in many instances seen as the cause of the death of someone. For that reason, the *ngaka* [traditional doctor] plays an important role during the death of a family member. The traditional doctor (male or female) would be called to come and investigate the cause of the death (Owuor 2006).

In the process he or she will counsel the bereaved, making them strong again (doing so is regarded as extremely important) by offering them traditional medicines and performing incisions at the joints of all the family members, and thereafter putting black fatty medicines upon the cuts. The corpse, at its arrival, must also be smeared by traditional medicines to protect it against the evil spirits and witches that want to turn it into a zombie. Although *badimo* [ancestors] might be one of the causes of the death, they are always respected and consulted for comfort and advice during the death of the Mosotho. There is always a strong relationship between the living and the dead as it is believed that the dead person will soon be transformed into *badimo* [ancestors]. Therefore as *badimo* [ancestor] the deceased will provide protection, blessings, warnings and answers to the living (Semenya 2010:106–107).

In any situation of trouble or difficulty the traditional African will inquire what the cause has been. Therefore, they consult the *ngaka* [traditional doctor] who consult the ancestors on their behalf. After the inquiry they would then have to appease the ancestors. The bereaved family usually expect the *ngaka* [traditional doctor] to be available in all process of healing, thereby giving the bereaved family grief counselling until the last phase of mourning which is traditional purification (Letšosa 2008:107; Semenya 2010:109–110).

1.'Mosotho' is the singular form of 'Basotho'.



# Go tloša Setšhila [traditional purification]

There are a few rituals that are observed during the death of Mosotho such as go ilela [to mourn] which is observed by the members of the family. During this stage of go ilela [mourning] the bereaved family members are expected to stay away from certain duties and activities until they have been traditionally purified. This traditional purification is referred to as Go tloša setšhila [traditional purification]. This term will be used henceforth. Go tloša setšhila is the last phase of the grief counselling to the bereaved and marks the end of mourning. This shows an understanding of grief as a process that has a beginning and an end. It also grants permission to the bereaved to go on with their lives. However, before go tloša setšhila is performed the bereaved are generally not allowed to perform certain activities in the community such as going to church and attending funerals (Semenya 2010:111-112).

Go tloša setšhila [traditional purification] is practised amongst all the Basotho tribes. Although each tribe performs it a bit differently, the essence of this ritual remains the same. The go tloša setšhila ceremony is performed to cleanse a person of the contamination brought about by the death of a person in the vicinity.

The bereaveds' mourning period varies depending on who died in the family. If a husband dies the wife must continue to wear black clothes for a year, and the widower wears a blue or black band around the arm which creates a social identification for the mourner. If it is a child who died the parents may stay in mourning for up to three months. A last born child who has lost one of his or her parents wears bolokwane [traditional amulets] around the neck. These amulets are believed to prevent a person from becoming sleepy during the day, since there is a belief that when a person has lost one or both parents, the person always becomes sleepy when he or she sits or walks. A ngaka [traditional doctor] must be present to perform the go šoma [traditional rituals]. In this case the term means to sprinkle the bolokwane [traditional amulets], armbands and black clothes with traditional medicines before they are used for the mourning process (Semenya 2010:110-111).

The purpose of mourning to the Basotho is to express sorrow. After *setšhila* [purification] the woman is free to wear her normal clothes again and the widower or next of kin may also stop wearing the band. The widow or the widower is not supposed to mingle with the community or engage themselves in sexual activities for the set period as it is believed that they will transmit *makgoma* [impurity or bad luck associated with illness] to the people (Molapata 2005:63; Setiloane 1975:68–69).

According to the Pedi tradition the widow or widower is not allowed to cook in public ceremonies, go to church or even to

take a walk, unless embarking on a serious trip or visit. The neighbours whose children are under age sometimes invite the *mohwana* [bereaved] to come and offer water to their children so that the children may not be affected by *makgoma* [bad luck] when they meet the *mohwana* [bereaved] on the street. The *mohwana* [bereaved] would be the first to drink the water from the big cup and thereafter pass it to the children to drink from the same cup.

The next of kin of the *mohwana* [bereaved] are supposed to be available during *go tloša setšhila*. This phase makes it possible for the mourners to perform certain duties in the community again. They may once more mingle with the community without any fear by attending church services and participating in community activities since they would be free from *makgoma* [bad luck].

Typically, traditional beer would have been prepared by the women of the community during the week as well as food for the family. The hair is cut amongst all family members and later during the day the clothes of the deceased are shared amongst the family members. Early in the morning family members normally gather and sprinkle traditional beer and snuff for *badimo* [ancestors], whilst announcing the purification ceremony. Most of Basotho use aloe; traditional medicines; goat or lamb dung for purification. They would bathe in water mixed with aloe; or goat or lamb dung. *The malome* [uncle] in most cases is the one who performs the purification. The *ngaka* [traditional doctor] must again be present to perform the *go šoma* and also to give advice to the family.

After the purification rituals have been completed the mourning garments (mostly black) are burned and all restrictions on the family are lifted. Those who had been mourning would thus be incorporated back into the broader society and the widow or widower may again mix freely with other people (Molapata 2005).

## Research methodology

Five people were interviewed per congregation, one man, one woman, one young male, one young female and a minister. For the sake of identification and technicality the following symbols were used for the different categories:

- Congregation:
  - o V = Classis Vaal River
  - o T = Classis Tshwane
  - o L = Classis Limpopo
- Interviewees:
  - o MM = mature man
  - o MW = mature woman
  - YM = young man
  - YW = young woman
  - o REV = the minister of the congregation or reverend.

# Interview conducted in one of the congregations in Classis Vaalrivier

The minister of this congregation had a vision for the church he was serving. This could be deduced from the interview that the researcher had with him. The adult man who was interviewed was in his forties and he regularly attended church service. The adult woman interviewed was in her early fifties and had been a member of the Church for a long time. She was a member of a service group called the 'Reformed Church Mothers Union'.

The young woman was a member of the Reformed Church Youth Movement (RCYM). She was in her midtwenties. The young man was in his early thirties and also a member of (RCYM) where he acted as the chairperson. The congregation was mainly Southern-Sotho speaking. To follow is a description of the way the interview proceeded. The interviews were conducted in the language spoken by the interviewees. The responses which are provided were translated into English.

## Interview conducted in a congregation in Classis Tshwane

The minister of this church had been with the mainly Tswana speaking congregation for more than a decade. The mature man who was interviewed was in his forties and a member of the church council. The mature woman was an elderly lady in her sixties. She was a passionate member of the church and loved her church. She was also a member of the mothers union. The young man attended church service regularly and was a member of the RCYM. He was in his thirties. The young woman was also a member of RCYM and in her late twenties. She was well-educated.

The symbol used to identify Classis Tshwane is 'T' and the name of the classis will precede that of the person interviewed. A description of how the interviews proceeded (as translated into English) will follow.

# Interview conducted in one of the congregations in Classis Limpopo

The minister in this congregation had approximately six years' experience as a minister of the Word of God. The interviews were conducted at one of his branches and it accommodates mainly the Pedi (North Sotho) speaking people. The mature man interviewed had been an elder of the church for many years and was in his sixties. The mature woman was in her late forties and has been a member of the Reformed Church since her marriage.

The young man was in his mid-twenties. He was fond of singing and passionate about his faith in God. The young woman was also in her mid-twenties. She attended church regularly and she was involved in many church-related committees. This congregation will be classified as 'L' and the symbol for the classis will precede that of the member.

## The results

## Views on the issue of mourning

The VMM regarded mourning as an important period of time because it provides the bereaved person with an opportunity to heal and to understand death. Both the VMW and the VYM did not attach much importance to the process of mourning and explained that the dead had been buried, people had come to the funeral as well and the bereaved had been comforted. The VYW said it was very important because if you did not mourn for the death of one you loved you could fall ill because you failed to show respect for the deceased. The VREV explained that the process of mourning had culture-specific patterns that would differ, but that it nevertheless served the commendable purpose of helping the bereaved to let go of the one who had passed on and would also help to relieve the grief experienced. To him it was also important that the mourning should be in a way that would demonstrate obedience to God.

According to the TMM mourning helped to release grief whereas the TMW said it showed that you were still in grief. The TYM said that grief helped because one gets relief from the hurt that was experienced because of the loss of the beloved one. The TYW pointed out that it helped those who had remained behind to accept that a loved one was no longer present or with them. The TREV explained that it assisted the bereaved in lifting the burden of grief endured by them.

The LMM argued that mourning helped to reduce depression which is caused by the death of a loved one whereas the LMW regarded it merely as a way to follow tradition. The LYM responded by saying the main idea was to respect the deceased whereas the LYW said it was not important and thought it could cause illness. The LREV said it helped in the process of overcoming the pain suffered by the bereaved and also helped to re-enforce hope in the sense that the deceased had *passed on* (to a life hereafter).

# Why would people stay away from church whilst in the process of mourning?

The VMM said that those people who stayed away from church did not have faith in God and that they only had faith in tradition, whereas the VMW explained that people respected their tradition but she was of the opinion that people should come to church whilst mourning and have faith that God was with them even in times of loss. The VYM believed that the bereaved in mourning should not be deprived of the opportunity to go to the very place where they could worship God, the church. According the VYW mourners are impure and therefore should not enter the church buildings. The VREV explained that he was aware of the belief that people had, namely that they had been defiled by death and they were therefore staying away from the Church until such time as they had been purified traditionally.

The TMM said that it was a tradition to stop attending church services for at least a certain period of time. The TMW argued

that they had to stay away from the church because they were still defiled. The TYM explained that they believed that they should respect the church because they could convey their impurity to others who were attending church and they believed this had to last until they had been purified traditionally. The TYW said that they were defiled. The TREV expressed the opinion that they were lost and had no faith in God.

The LMM said God had warned Moses not to come closer to the holy place and therefore even the mourners should not come closer to the Church of God for a certain period of time. The LMW said they were defiled whereas LYM thought that it was not good for mourners to stay away from church. The LYW said the mourners did so because they did not want to defile other people. LREV said it was a sign of little faith in God. Mourners could go to other places, for example public hospitals, and could therefore go to churches as well.

#### Purification and different views on it

The VMM said that purification was not important and that it did not have anything to do with God, whereas the VMW regarded it as very important because if you had not been purified bad luck would follow and your life could be turned upside down by difficulties and problems. The VYM was in favour of it and said one could not live without being purified. The VYW answered that when you had not been purified, people would not like you because of your impurity and therefore it was very important to get purified. The VREV did not share the traditional belief about impurity. According to him he could not be defiled by death and therefore purification was not necessary or important to him. Both the TMM and the TMW argued that it was good for a person to be cleansed since people ended up being defiled by the death of a beloved. TYM reasoned that purification helped to remove the impurity that had been caused by the death of a family member. The TYW believed in the value of purification because impurity impaired a person's ability to think and act properly. TREV pointed out that Christ purified his believers with his own blood and there was no need for go tloša setšhila [traditional purification].

The LMM said purification was good because it marked the end of mourning. LMW reasoned that it was good because one cleansed oneself of death. The LYM argued that it was good in terms of sharing the deceased's possessions whereas LYW responded by saying that it was good because one could be cleansed from the impurity that accompanied death. The LREV regarded purification as unimportant because Jesus Christ has purified us with his blood. Death did not make Christians defiled. Death was a way for Christians to attain eternal life.

# In which way does Christ fit in with *go tloša* setšhila [traditional purification]?

The VMM said that Christ did not fit into the purification process. The VMW argued that purification was merely a

tradition and Christ did not fit into it. The VYM explained that Christ had nothing to do with it as it was only a tradition. The VYW answered that Christ did not feature in the tradition whilst the VREV explained that Christ did indeed have something to do with purification but not at all in the same sense as the *go tloša setšhila* [traditional purification]. The Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross to purify people from sin by his blood and doing so has nothing to do with *go tloša setšhila* [traditional purification] performed by a traditional doctor. Purification by Christ's blood concerns eternal life for human beings and *go tloša setšhila* had nothing to do with eternal life.

The TMM responded by saying that Christ did not have a place in *go tloša setšhila* [traditional purification]. The TMW said Christ did not fit into traditional matters. The TYM said Christ did not fit anywhere in traditional cultures. The TYW pointed out that *badimo* [ancestors] and a traditional doctor would be necessary for *go tloša setšhila* and not Christ, whereas the TREV emphasised purification by the blood of Jesus Christ in order to set human beings free from the grip of sin.

According to the LMM God loves things that are pure and for Christ to fit in they first had to be purified. The LMW and LYW said Christ did not fit anywhere in traditional cultures whilst the LYM argued that Christ did. LREV pointed out that go tloša setšhila [traditional purification] was not the place where Christ belonged. Go tloša setšhila was the place where the traditional doctor belonged to cleanse believed 'victims' of impurity brought on them by the occurrence of the death of someone in their close vicinity. It was, however, important to remember that with his blood Christ made those who believed in him pure and by doing so he could secure eternal life for those who believed in him.

#### Discussion

The aim of the article was to investigate and provide Biblical guidelines or perspectives regarding the perception Basotho have on the issue of *go tloša setšhila* [traditional purification].

Positive results from the interviews indicate that to mourn helps to let go and do away with grief, and to accept with hope that the beloved has passed on. The bereaved should mourn in a way that is in accordance with obedient to God. Those who do not attend church services during mourning period show that they lack faith in God. Mourners should come to worship God in his Church and believe that God is with them even during the times of loss. Christians cannot be defiled by death since Jesus Christ has purified those who believe in him with his blood and therefore death is a way to attain eternal life for Christians. Christ has nothing to do with go tloša setšhila [traditional purification], because with his blood he purified those who believe in him, not through purification done by a traditional doctor. Go tloša setšhila has nothing to do with Christianity and is separated from the purification of Christ. Christ's blood purifies those who believe in him. Purification through the blood of Jesus Christ is related to eternal life for believers whereas *go tloša setšhila* [traditional purification] performed by a traditional doctor is not related to eternal life.

Negative results from the interviews indicate that to mourn does not help, because one has already been comforted by people. One could fall ill from mourning. The mourners are defiled by death and should not attend church services for a certain time so as not to defile other people until such time that they have been purified traditionally.

The implication is that amongst the Basotho people there still some misunderstanding and confusion with regard to *go tloša setšhila* [traditional purification] and the rituals which accompany it. Some see some value in it and some not. This article intends to give some perspective regarding this in a biblical and pastoral perspective.

# The word of God regarding mourning and traditional purification

#### **Old Testament**

Cooper (2010) says that after burial, for the first seven days, immediate family members 'sit shiva' [seven] which traditionally includes sitting low to the ground, burning a candle for the entire week, not wearing leather footwear, covering mirrors or turning them around, and having a prayer minyan [ten adults] in the house for three daily prayers (morning, afternoon, and evening after dark) so that kaddish [prayers for the dead] can be said. This process with the accompanying ritual can be highly therapeutic for the family. It brings the community together, strengthens the bonds of relationships, and gives a framework of support in the face of a difficult experience. It also gives a sense of connectedness with the tradition in knowing these rituals have been practised for thousands of years. Many who do not ordinarily observe traditional Jewish practices have found great merit and deep meaning in sitting shiva [seven].

Mourning continues for *sheloshim* [thirty days], during which mourners are not supposed to cut their hair, wear ironed clothes, get married, attend festive events, or embark on business journeys. *Kaddish* [prayers for the dead] is said every day at prayers (traditionally three times a day) for eleven months for a parent, child or spouse. Most of the mourning rituals are designed to help people through the grieving process. On the mystical level, it also helps the soul during its transition. This is particularly true of the prayers that are sent to support a soul which needs redemption. We will see that the power of prayer for those who have died is an important part of the redemption process (Cooper 2010).

Letšosa (2010) implies that the period of mourning varied amongst the ancient Hebrews. It could last for more than two months. For Jacob mourning lasted 70 days (this also included the embalming period) (Gn 50:3) whilst Aaron (Nm 20:29) and Moses (Dt 34:5–8) were mourned for a period of 30 days after burial. In 2 Samuel 13–25 we read that David's

child, whom Uriah bore, had died. After David had heard this sad news he got up from the ground, he washed himself, put on lotion and changed his clothes, and he went into the house of the Lord and worshipped. David did not dwell in his grief but rather got up and worshipped the Lord in his time of grief. He did not mourn for an extended period of time. This shows that mourning was an opportunity to release grief in one's person and it was to be done in a way to glorify God.

#### **New Testament**

Letšosa (2010) argues that Christian burial was viewed in the light of the hope of resurrection. Death was referred to as sleep (1 Th 4:13) and the grave as a place of rest. The body was viewed with respect as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19) and as the subject of resurrection (1 Cor 6:13–14). The use of professional mourners was quite common when finances permitted it (Mk 5:38). However, crying unceasingly without hope of the resurrection in mourning was discouraged (1 Th 4:13). Christians could cry for the immediate loss, yet they also had to think of the heavenly joy and the glory that would be waiting in the New Jerusalem for the deceased. Jesus conquered death and so should all those who believe in him have victory over it. Burial was also used symbolically to depict the believer's positional identification with Christ in death to sin (Rm 6:4–5; see also Pfeiffer 1975).

We are not to without hope. Death and dying is certainly not a time for levity or frivolity, it is a time of sorrow. Yet, for the Christian, death may simply be seen as a time when the body falls asleep in Jesus, until he returns with a shout, and all the dead in Christ will rise to new and everlasting life. This is the Christian hope. The raising of this little girl in Matthew 9: 24–26 was Jesus' declaration to all of us that death is no obstacle in God's plan (Ross 2009).

# Purification in the Old and New Testament

Ritual purification is a feature of many religions and Christianity is no exception. The aim of these rituals is to remove specifically defined *uncleanliness*. Some see benefits in these practices as they are believed to prevent infections especially in areas where humans are in close contact with each other.

In the Old Testament, according to the book Leviticus, to be ceremonially unclean simply meant that the unclean person could not enter into the Temple, the place where God dwelt amongst his people. This was not a punishment, for to be unclean did not necessarily mean the person was a sinner (it could, because one with unconfessed sin in life was also called unclean). A person who was sick, defiled by contact with death or disease, menstruating, giving birth, had mildew in his or her house, and so forth, was 'unclean'. 'Unclean' simply meant there was a barrier between clean and unclean, between God and what was unclean in particular. The law was teaching people that all contamination, corruption, disease, and death were earthly and physical, and therefore

incompatible with the holy Lord of life. Therefore, whilst in a state of uncleanness the individual could not go to the sanctuary and could not contact others as it would render them unclean (Ross 2009).

Purification rites associated with burial are described at length in chapter 19 of the Book of Numbers. In Judaic tradition anyone who even touched a corpse was considered unclean and contaminating to the whole community for a period of seven days (Nm 19:11). The prescribed purification ritual involved the sprinkling of the tent in which the deceased died, all the vessels and everyone present with Hyssop dipped in lustral water. Anyone who touched the corpse was also required to bathe in the water for a number of days before he could be regarded as purified (Nm 19:17-20). Lustral water comprised spring water poured on the ashes of a sacrificial heifer that had been burned for the deceased (Hutchings 2007). Animal blood was also used for cleansing and the priest had to perform the cleansing. The Old Testament was a shadow of what was to come - Our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament Christ, through his love, offered himself as a sacrifice to purify us from the impurity caused by sin. The New Testament Greek word ' $\alpha\gamma$ no $\tau\eta\phi$ ' [purity] refers to the result of the cleansing of the soul by God through Christ

Hebrews 9:11–15 gives a clear explanation of what has been said in Numbers 19. In the time of the Old Testament animals were used for sacrifices and the High priest had to perform the ritual. The animals were offered by the people. The blood of the sacrificed animals was for a temporary covering of sin. Christ's blood purified and removed sin from his believers forever. The offering of Christ was by the fiat of the eternal spirit that was in him. He is the perfect sacrifice whereby all who believe in him obtain eternal redemption (Guzicks 1997–2003; Coffman 1983–1999). Christ's blood purifies not only outwardly, as Levitical sacrifices on the Day of Atonement, but inwardly unto the service of the living God (Jamieson; Fausset & Brown 1997).

In Luke 11:37 during Christ's conversation with a certain Pharisee it becomes palpable that Christ exalts purity to the realm of the spirit, which does away with ceremonial purity. Salvation is not by ceremony, but by the sacrifice of Christ. Therefore, purity is brought into the Christian's life and maintained through (1) confession of sins and (2) assurance of forgiveness, and sanctification through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers offer their whole being and labor as a 'living sacrifice'; and cleanliness becomes a way of life (Rm 12:1 & Jh 13:5–10) (Doud, 2010).

It is more important for people to get their hearts right with God than to conduct the order of the ritual correctly; and getting the heart right with God begins with faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, finding forgiveness and cleansing from God through him, and following his teachings about

the spiritual life faithfully. There is a real danger to replace the true meaning of the word of God (the letter and the spirit of it) with traditions. Moreover, one has to be careful since these traditions quickly achieve the level of canonicity and one might even forget what the word of God actually says about the tradition (Ross 2009).

## Conclusion

From the Old Testament and the New Testament it is clear that people who lived in those times mourned the death of their loved ones. This was done to let go of the grief and to help them understand that their loved one was no more. It also helped these people to recover and go on with life (Gn 50:1–11; 1 Sm 1:11–2).

A few pastoral guidelines may be learnt from this article and will be provided as concluding remarks.

Mourning should go hand in hand with obedience and glorification to God. In David's situation of bereavement (2 Sm 12:20) he went into the house of the Lord and worshipped. He did not stay away from his Lord and he did not stay away from his Lord's house (church in our terms). He did not permanently dwell in grief but recognised God's grace and forgiveness and returned to God. Surely, one could not really be healed from the grief of death if one stays away from God. Hence, the bereaved should be encouraged to attend church services even during the time of mourning and the congregations should be taught to make some extra effort to indicate moral support and not make the bereaved feel unwanted and impure.

The bereaved has to be guided with the Word of God to accept what has happened. Such acceptance in the presence of God does not mean that they may not miss the deceased; it means that they must not grieve in such a way that it would seem as though they are accusing God of taking the person and it also means that they should continue with their life in the grace of God. This pastoral counselling may be done during house visitation, Sunday sermons and Bible study.

Once the bereaved comprehend that death does not defile them and does not in any way have to affect their relationship with God the issue with regard to *go tloša setšhila* [traditional purification] would become a thing of the past. In such instances where the pastor or church leaders realise that people have some questions concerning defilement after death – they should rather focus more on teaching the bereaved about the effect of the blood of Jesus that was shed for our sins and that continuing with the *go tlosa setšhila*, being committed Christians would thus be an indication of undermining the blood of Jesus.

Even though the practice of not attending church services and being denied contact with other people when bereaved is still common amongst sects like the Zion Christian Church in South Africa which is normally referred to as ZCC who consider their members who happen to attend any funeral service as defiled and compel them not to attend church

services for seven days – the truth of the Word should be spread to all people. Instead of writing off such sects as not interpreting the Word of God correctly one should rather address this issue in a very comforting and nonjudgemental manner at the graveside just after the interment. People should be sent off to their houses with the blessing of the Lord and the knowledge that their attendance of the funeral service did not defile them in any manner because our Lord has risen and death has been conquered. Hence, blessed are those who sleep in the Lord.

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## **ADDENDUM 1: Questionnaire**

The language used for the original questionnaire was Sotho. The following copy is a translation. In a few cases the Sotho terminology was retained as it had also been retained in the text.

- 1. How important is the issue of mourning?
- 2 Why would people stay away from the church whilst mourning?
- 3. What do you think of the issue of purification? [Go tloša setšhila]
- 4. Where does Christ fit into the issue of purification?