"YOU ARE MY ROCK AND FORTRESS". REFUGE METAPHORS IN PSALM 31. A PERSPECTIVE FROM COGNITIVE METAPHOR THEORY[1]

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ABSTRACT

The psalms of lamentation are prayers of a beleaguered individual or nation. The one under constant attack of the enemy has no other option but to implore the deity to intervene on his behalf. Yahweh is invoked to save the supplicant and to destroy the adversaries. Apart from this recurrent plea, Yahweh is often depicted as one providing refuge to those in need. Psalm 31 is no exception. The competent reader will identify various refuge metaphors being employed by the psalmist. Through the application of images from the natural world, the poet accentuates the notion that Yahweh acts as a refuge to his people. By taking recourse to the cognitive theory of metaphor, this study endeavours to explicate the cognitive world underlying the use of the refuge metaphors is Psalm 31.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the face of danger the fight or flight principle is often applied: you either stand your ground or you run for cover. In the psalms of lamentation, so one could argue, the supplicant chooses not to fight the enemies, but rather requests the deity to deal with them. He realises that on his own he is powerless against the might of the foes. Yahweh is thus implored to punish the adversaries and restore the psalmist. Besides the invocation for divine intervention, the plaintiff also calls on Yahweh to provide the necessary protection. In Psalm 31, an individual lament, the poet employs various metaphors as a means of emphasising the idea that the deity acts as a refuge in times of affliction. Yahweh becomes a

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safe haven for the embattled supplicant. The importance of the refuge metaphor in the psalms of lamentation is echoed by Brown (2002:30):

> Its associations are wide-ranging and profound. The object of deep longing, refuge is emblematic of the person who places complete trust in God. It highlights the ... role of God ... who is intent on making the world a refuge and provides protection to those in distress.

The representation of Yahweh as a refuge in Psalm 31 can therefore be interpreted as a desire to be safeguarded by the deity. Although scholars (cf. Hugger 1971; Keel 1972; Creach 1996; Brown 2002) explored the notion of Yahweh as refuge in the Hebrew Bible, not much attention has been paid to the cognitive reality underlying these metaphors. This study attempts to illustrate that the employment of the refuge metaphors in Psalm 31 arises from the psalmist's personal experiences and the utilisation of various cognitive strategies as a means of explicating the notion of divine assistance. This contribution will also demonstrate that the tenets of the cognitive theory of metaphors can indeed be helpful in illuminating the cognitive world underlying the utterances of the poet. In order to achieve this, the investigation will be conducted as follows: Firstly, the cognitive theory of metaphor, as introduced by Lakoff & Johnson (1980) will be discussed in detail. Secondly, the study focuses on the cognitive function of metaphor and thirdly, examines the refuge metaphors used by the psalmist.

2. COGNITIVE THEORY OF METAPHOR

The contribution of the cognitive theory of metaphor towards a better understanding of this trope is to be understood against the background of the focus of traditional theories. Although assigning a cognitive role to metaphor, they emphasised the linguistics aspects thereof. It would not be far-fetched to assume that the cognitive theory of metaphor ushered in a new era of metaphor interpretation. Advocates of this theory view it (metaphor) as a matter of thought and reason and investigate the role of embodiment in the creation and interpretation of this trope (cf. Lakoff 1993:202). Metaphor is conceptual, underlying everyday language as well as poetic language. Lakoff & Johnson (1980:3) claim that

> Metaphor is for most people a device of poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish — a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary

> language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic
> of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action.
> For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well
> without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor
> is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and
> action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both
> think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.

Metaphor is an omnipresent tool used to reason and think with,
suffusing our thoughts (Lakoff & Turner 1989:xi). It is to be located
not in language as such, but in the way humans conceptualise one mental
domain in terms of another (Lakoff 1994:43). Metaphor is a way in
which information and experience are accommodated and assimilated
to the conceptual organisation of the world (Kittay 1987:39). McFague
(1975:43) is of opinion that

> metaphorical thinking, then, is not simply poetic language nor pri-
> mitive language; it is the way human beings, selves (not mere minds)
> *move* (emphasis original) in all areas of discovery, whether these be
> scientific, religious, poetic, social, political or personal.

Murphy (1996:174) postulates that the reason behind the notion
of metaphor as a mode of representation and thought lies in the fact
that certain aspects of human knowledge are difficult to represent: they
are abstract and complex, and therefore they are represented in terms
of easier-to-understand domains, that is, metaphorically (cf. also Lakoff
& Johnson 1980:115). When we think

> about abstract ideas such as "inflation", "anger" and "life", we employ
> more concrete concepts, a process which "allows us to refer to it [an
> abstract concept], quantify it, identify a particular aspect of it …
> and perhaps even believe that we understand it" (Lakoff & Johnson
> 1980:26).

2.1 Conceptual and linguistic metaphor

The cognitive view on metaphor regards it as the cognitive mechanism
whereby one conceptual domain (source domain) is partially mapped,
that is, projected, onto another conceptual domain (target domain).
The target domain (abstract conceptual reality) is then understood in
terms of the source domain (physical reality). Metaphor is thus "a cross-
domain mapping in the conceptual system" (Lakoff 1994:43). Life,
arguments, love, theories, ideas, understanding, and others are target

domains; while journeys, buildings, food, and others are source domains (cf. Kövecses 2002:4). In order to understand the target domain in terms of the source domain, one has to have appropriate knowledge of the source domain (Lakoff & Turner 1989:60).

An important distinction is also drawn between conceptual metaphors or metaphorical concepts on the one hand, and linguistic metaphors or metaphorical expressions on the other hand (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1993:209). The former refers to those abstract notions such as *theories are buildings*, *ideas are objects* and *love is a journey*, while the latter are words or linguistic expressions that come from the language or terminology of the more concrete conceptual domain (cf. Yu 1998: 14, Kövecses 2002:4). Metaphorical language, consisting of linguistic expressions, is but a surface manifestation or realisation of conceptual metaphor (Yu 1998:4). The metaphorical linguistic utterances reveal the existence of the conceptual metaphors (cf. Kövecses 2002:6).

The following example from Lakoff (1993:206) may illustrate this best:

> *Love is a journey*
> Look how far we've *come*
> We may have to go *our* separate ways
> It has been *a long and bumpy road*
> We've gotten *off the track*
> The relationship isn't *going anywhere*
> We can't *turn back* now.

A person who uses this conceptual metaphor utilises the knowledge of journeys to comprehend the abstract category of love. There are ontological correspondences, according to which entities in the domain of love (lovers, their common goals, the relationship and their problems) correspond systematically to entities in the domain of a journey (travellers, vehicles, destinations and roads) (Lakoff 1993:207). There are also epistemic correspondences, whereby knowledge of the source domain is mapped onto knowledge of the target domain to form inference patterns (Yu 1998:15). Wierzbicka (1986:292) takes issue with the way Lakoff (1993) uses this conceptual metaphor. She holds that the *love is a journey* metaphor is limited to the relationship between lovers and not between a mother and her child. This suggests that the

love is a journey metaphor is not applicable to the entire range of the use of the concept *love*, for there are also non-metaphorical definitions of love (cf. Wierzbicka 1986:292). It cannot, however, be denied that the *love is a journey* metaphor enriches human understanding of and reasoning about the concept of love in a particular aspect (Yu 1998:35).

2.2 *Love is a journey* as an example of conceptual mapping

The conceptual correspondences between the source domain (journey) and the target domain (love) are commonly referred to as mappings (cf. Kövecses 2002:6). The elements of the source domain are mapped onto the target domain. The sentence "Look *how far* we've come", indicates the distance covered by the travellers (we). Three constituent elements of a journey are emphasised, namely the travellers, the journey itself and the physical distance already travelled. Expressed in the appropriate context this sentence will convey the necessary information about love as an abstract category. The hearer who is familiar with this conceptual metaphor will interpret it as referring not to real travellers but to lovers; not to a physical road or distance, but to the progress made in and the duration of the relationship; not to a real journey, but to different events that occurred and the stages people went through in their relationship. The sentence "We've gotten *off track*" suggests that, for various reasons, two persons lost their focus and the relationship went astray, and not that a vehicle went off the road due to the driver losing his focus and concentration behind the steering wheel. The utterance "It has been *a long and bumpy road*" is not about the physical obstacles on the road, but about the difficulties a couple experience in their relationship. Kövecses (2002:7) offers a helpful schema of the set of mappings that characterise the *love is a journey* metaphor:

Journey (Source)	*Love* (Target)
travellers	lovers
vehicle	love relationship
journey	events in the relationship
distance covered	progress made
obstacle encountered	difficulties experienced
decisions about which way to go	choices about what to do
destination of the journey	goal(s) of the journey

The application of the journey domain to the love domain provides the concept of love with this set of elements. The concept of journey, as it were, "creates" the concept of love (Kövecses 2002:7). This implies that the target concept is not structured independently of and prior to the domain of journey. The elements of the target concept (love) derive from the source domain (journey) and on this basis, the conceptual mapping can occur. These and other epistemic correspondences will determine the way people conceptualise, reason about, and talk about their love relationship. Conceptual metaphors head and govern a system of linguistic metaphors. The system of metaphor is highly structured by its ontological and epistemic correspondences operating across conceptual domains (Yu 1998:17). The metaphorical mappings do not occur in isolation from one another. They are at times organised in hierarchical structures, in which "lower" mappings in the hierarchy inherit the structure of the "higher" mappings. Lakoff (1993:222) calls this phenomenon "metaphor inheritance hierarchies". The following example, which includes the conceptual metaphor *love is a journey*, illustrates such a hierarchy:[3]

Level 1:   The event structure metaphor
Level 2:   *Life is a journey*
Level 3:   *Love is a journey; a career is a journey*

The two versions of the metaphor at Level 3 — *love is a journey* and *a career is a journey* — inherit the structure of the higher mapping at Level 2 — *life is a journey* — which is a more general metaphor containing the two metaphors at Level 3 as its more specific manifestations (Yu 1998:17). The inheritance hierarchy accounts for the generalisa--tion of inference (Lakoff 1993:224). Love is an important aspect of life and therefore the *love is a journey* metaphor inherits the structure of the *life is a journey* metaphor. The understanding of difficulties as impediments to travel occurs not only in events in general, but also in life, in a love relationship, and in a career. The inheritance hierarchy guarantees that this understanding of difficulties in life, love and careers is a consequence of such understanding of difficulties in events in general. The metaphors higher up in the hierarchy tend to be more

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3   Taken from Lakoff (1993:222).

widespread than lower level mappings. The event structure metaphor may be pervasive, while the metaphors for life, love and careers are more culturally specific (cf. Lakoff 1993:224-225).

3. THE COGNITIVE FUNCTION OF METAPHOR

Kövecses (2002:32-33) claims that the question regarding the function of metaphor is a question about the cognitive function thereof. Conceptual metaphors are classified according to the cognitive function they perform. Three general kinds of conceptual metaphors can be distinguished, namely structural, ontological and orientational metaphors.

3.1 Structural metaphors

The metaphor discussed above (*love is a journey*) is an example of a structural metaphor, for here the source domain provides a knowledge structure for the target domain. The cognitive function of such a metaphor is to enable speakers to understand target A by means of the structure of source B (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980:461, Kövecses 2002:32-33). As was illustrated, this comprehension takes place by means of a conceptual mapping between the features of the target concept and the source concept. The time concept can, for example, be structured according to motion and space (*time is motion*). People conceive of time in terms of some basic elements: physical objects (times are things), their locations (the passing time is motion) and their motions (future time are in front of the observer; past times are behind the observer) (cf. Kövecses 2002:32-33). Structural metaphors thus allow for the structuring and understanding of their target concepts.

3.2 Ontological metaphors

Ontological metaphors involve the projection of entity or substance status upon something that does not have that status inherently (Lakoff & Johnson 1980:461). These metaphors enable humans to view events, activities, emotions and ideas as entities for various purposes, that is, in order to refer to them, categorise them, group them, or quantify them. We conceive of our experience in terms of objects, substances, and containers in general, without specifying what object, substance or con-

tainer is meant (Kövecses 2002:34). Ontological metaphors provide a more delineated structure to undelineated experiences. The following examples illustrate the way in which these metaphors are used:[4]

> My fears that she would leave proved to be totally unfounded (referring).
> She is full of hatred for the one who killed her friend (quantifying).
> The enormity of the task caused him to quit the job (identifying causes).
> The brutality of the genocide shocked people all over the world (identifying aspects).

Lakoff & Johnson (1980:461) assert that people hardly notice metaphors such as these, because they are so basic to everyday conceptualisation and functioning. They are nevertheless a means by which people understand either non-physical or not clearly bounded things as entities. Once an abstract concept has received the status of a thing through an ontological metaphor, the concept so conceptualised can be structured further by means of structural metaphors. If, for example, the mind is conceptualised as an object, more structure can be provided for it by means of the "container" metaphor as in: "He has totally gone out of his mind"; "my mind is *filled* with dreams of becoming a star". The notion of containment is challenged by Wierzbicka (1986:300-306), who postulates that there is a sentence like "Harry is in love" which is not metaphorical at all. She claims that

> plain common sense indicates that expressions such as *in love*, *in pain*, *in despair* don't refer to place. They refer to certain psychological states.

There exists, however, ample evidence that abstract states are conceptualised in terms of bounded locations in space, as indicated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Lakoff (1993). Wierzbicka's critique on Lakoff's employment of the *love is a journey* metaphor derives from her notion of metaphor. She treats metaphor as "a linguistic device … which by definition can't convey meaning in a fully explicit manner" (Wierzbicka 1986:294). She also holds that metaphor is not conceptual as claimed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980); it is primarily linguistic in nature. To deny that metaphor is conceptual in nature, however, is to rob it of its cognitive function. The aspect of containment will be elaborated in the discussion on image-schemas.

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4   Examples added by the author.

Kövecses (2002:35) is of the opinion that personification is to be conceived of as a form of ontological metaphor. In personification, human qualities are given to non-human entities. Personification permits humans to use knowledge of themselves to maximal effect, to use insights to help them comprehend such things as forces of nature, common events, abstract concepts, and inanimate objects (Lakoff & Turner 1989:72). Just how common personification is in literature and everyday discourse becomes apparent in the examples below:[5]

> Fortune *smiled* on their enterprise.
> Death is a *thief*.
> The wind *whistled* in the chimney.
> My car *went dead* on me.
> Life has *cheated* her.

The non-human entities, (fortune, death, wind, life and car) are given human qualities, such as smiling, robbing, dying, cheating, and whistling. In this way, humans can come to a better understanding of the abstract concept, for the person now serves as the source domain. An important question relating to the idea of personification is why people use certain kinds of persons for a target. That is, why do people employ certain source domains (representing different kinds of people) as a means of comprehending, for example, the concept of time and death? Lakoff & Turner (1989:73) are of the opinion that the answer lies in the *event is action* metaphor. This metaphor allows for the comprehension of external events as actions. The mapping from actions to events has a structure somewhat different from other mappings. Each action consists of an event plus the agency, which brings that event about (Lakoff & Turner 1989:75). The mapping thus adds structure to the event domain, making the event the result of an action and introducing the agent who performs that action. The fact that actions have agents leads to events being viewed in the same way, resulting in the personification of events such as time and death. Take, for example, the utterance "death robbed him of his life". In this case, a person is using his or her knowledge of death: every one dies because death is inevitable. The general phenomenon of death is thus seen as playing

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5   Examples 1-3 added by the author.

a causal role in the death of every person (Lakoff & Turner 1989:78). The composition of this commonplace notion gives rise to the understanding of death as an agent who brings about the individual event of death.

The use of this particular agent (robber) is linked to the metaphors for the concepts that death affects: life and people. If someone employs the conceptual metaphor *life is a precious possession*, death will most likely be conceptualised as a robber that takes away a precious possession (*life*).

3.2 Orientational metaphors

The cognitive function of orientational metaphors is to allow for coherency among the target concepts in the conceptual system. Most of the metaphors in this category have to do with the basic human spatial orientations such as up-down, front-back, centre-periphery, in-out and on-off. These spatial orientations

> arise from the fact that we have bodies of the sort we have and that they function as they do in our physical environment (Lakoff & Johnson 1980:462).

Orientational metaphors give concepts a spatial orientation, with an "upward orientation" and a "downward orientation":

> *Health and life are up; Sickness and death are down*.
>
> He is in *great* shape. His health is *declining*. He *dropped* dead.
>
> *Physical basis*: Serious illness causes one to physically lie down. A dead person is physically down.
>
> *More is up; Less is down*.
>
> The oil price *increased*. The crime rate went *down*. It is too loud, please turn the radio *down*.
>
> *Physical basis*: If one adds more of a substance or physical objects to a pile, the level goes up. If some is taken away, the level goes down.
>
> *Control is up; Lack of control is down*.
>
> The team is in a *commanding* position. He is *under* my control. The employees are in an *inferior* position.
>
> *Physical basis*: Physical size normally correlates with physical strength, and the winner is typically on top.

These examples illustrate that an upward orientation usually goes together with a positive evaluation, whereas a downwards orientation indicates a negative evaluation (cf. Kövecses 2002:36). The spatial

metaphors are rooted in the physical and cultural experience and therefore viewed as arising from such an experience (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980:645). They are culture-specific, that is, not all cultures give priority to the up-down orientation. In some cultures more emphasis may, for example, be put on an active-passive orientation or in-out orientation.

4. REFUGE METAPHORS

4.1 חסה (v. 2)

The psalmist begins with the words בך חסיתי in his portrayal of Yahweh ("In you, O Lord, I have sought refuge"; v. 2). The idea of taking refuge may well derive from the common experience of finding protection in the hills (cf. Gerstenberger 1971:622, Wiseman 1980:308). The verb חסה denotes the confident seeking of security, rather than a flight of desperation. Apart from two exceptions (cf. Judg. 9:15; Isa. 30:2), חסה is used exclusively for seeking refuge in Yahweh (Hill 1997: 218, 219). חסה communicates dependence on Yahweh as opposed to the trust in the own ability. Compare the remark of Gamberoni (1982: 75) in this regard: "Verzicht auf Selbsthilfe, Vertrauen auf JHWH". The object of deep desire and refuge is emblematic of the person who places complete trust in God (Brown 2002:30). It also denotes trust by means of a metaphor rooted in the concrete experience of taking cover (Creach 1996:33). In using בך חסיתי with reference to the deity

> Der Psalmist verankert damit seine geplagte und hilflose Existenz ganz in Gott, von dem er weiß, daß er hilfsbereit ist (Gamberoni 1982:75).

The poet's portrayal of Yahweh as refuge (חסה; v. 2) might have derived from this experience of finding shelter in the hills or even in the holy place. On a cognitive level, the psalmist organises the cultural experience of finding refuge in the hills/holy place in such a way that a new metaphor or image of Yahweh is formed. This cognitive organisation allows him to map the experience of being in a shelter (source domain) onto Yahweh (target domain). He uses a model of the concrete world to conceptualise an abstract category (Ungerer & Schmid 1996: 121). This new conceptualisation of Yahweh is grounded in the experience of going into holy places or to hills. Through this conceptu-

alisation, the structural metaphor *Yahweh is a refuge* is formed. The essential feature of protection associated with the source domain (*refuge*) is conceptually mapped unto the target domain (*Yahweh*), thus highlighting the defensive quality of the deity. The psalmist also "moves into Yahweh" and so Yahweh becomes a place of refuge, where the plaintiff can find the necessary protection from danger. According to Jenni (1992:195) בך חסיתי might well allude to the "Bewegung in einen Raum *hinein* (mit Endlage *im* Raum)", whereby on a metaphorical level the deity becomes a shelter.

4.2 צור (v. 3c)

The utterance "be a rock of refuge for me, a fortified house to save me" in v. 3 continues the notion of refuge provided by Yahweh. צור denotes a large solitary rock, a crag, or rocky mountain chain (Creach 1996:28). Large rocks and boulders often served as hiding places or shelters, lookout points, places of execution and sacrifice (Hill 1997:793). Because of its hardness, צור conveys the idea of stability and immovability. It provides a solid foundation, protection and security. Its literal use of providing shade from an overhanging "rock"/ "cliff" in the desert sun (Isa. 33:2) was extended to the figurative use of God providing refuge for his people (cf. Fabry 1989:977). Compare the remark of Keel (1972:159) in this regard:

> Die meisten Stellen …, die Gott als Fliehhöhe, als unzugängliche Bergfeste … oder als (Flieh-) fels … feiern, dürften eine natürliche Gegebenheit des Landes vor Augen haben, die für dieses immer wieder von Kriegszügen heimgesuchte Gebiet von hervorragender Bedeutung war.

צור is employed metaphorically in contexts describing the action of Yahweh, and the personal experience of deliverance from adversity, whereby the deity is seen to be a refuge in which one may trust (Knowles 1989:310). With regard to the use of "rock" as an indication of the relationship between Yahweh and the psalmist, Eichorn (1972:45) observes that

> צור als Anrede und prädikative Bezeichnung Gottes, … , begegnet im Munde eines Individuums nur in solchen Psalmen, die… in ihrer Struktur auf eine Offenbarung Jahwes bezogen sind, die durch den Beter, dessen Verhältnis zu Jahwe durch das צור sein Jahwes für ihn

bestimmt ist, vermittelt wird und die durch das so charakterisierte
existentielle Verhältnis Jahwes zu dem Beter qualifiziert wird.

4.3 מעוז (v. 3c)

מעוז is employed together with צור and renders the meaning of "fortress"
or "military bulwark" (cf. Isa. 17:9; 23:11, 14; Dan. 11:7, 11, 39)
(Zobel 1984:1021). Stressing inaccessibility, it serves as a refuge in
which humans take shelter from their enemies (cf. Deut. 33:27; Jer.
21:13; Ps. 71:3) (Wilson 1997:1016). מעוז is primarily employed with
reference to Yahweh because it expresses strength, and together with
צור emphasises stability (Zobel 1984:1022). It articulates the firm
trust of the righteous in the ability of the deity. He is a מעוז and at
the same time offers salvation from their misery (cf. Isa. 17:10; Pss.
27:1; 28:8). With regard to the use of this term in the psalms of la-
mentation, Zobel (1984:1026) remarks:

> In ihnen spricht sich die Glaubensüberzeugung Israels von JHWHs
> unbezwingbarer Stärke und seiner einzigartigen Machtfülle aus,
> die sein Volk und jeder einzelne als Hilfe, Errettung und göttlichen
> Beistand erfahren hat und immer neu zu erleben hofft.

4.4 סלע מצודה (vv. 3d, 4a)

מצודה indicates a place where one can safely hide (cf. 2 Sam. 5:7, 9;
Pss. 91:2; 144:2) (Hugger 1971:101-103, Creach 1996:27). Like צור
and מעוז it also denotes a place of refuge, where someone is safe from
pursuing enemies. מצודה also designates a location that is difficult to
reach (Schunck 1984:1083). In metaphorical contexts, Yahweh's care
is symbolised by the fortifications of a settlement. Especially in the
psalms of lamentation, the poet employs מצודה to describe God as a
safe haven for the afflicted (cf. Schunck 1984:1085).

סלע as a synonym of צור, appears in the Hebrew Bible in a geo-
graphical and metaphorical sense (Haag 1986:873). The rocks, desig-
nated by סלע are: (1) places where wild animals live; (2) places where
fugitives hide, and (3) places that lend themselves to the building of
fortifications and strongholds (cf. 1 Sam. 13:16; Isa. 7:19; Jer.16:16;
48:28) (Hill 1997:267). Like the word צור, סלע also symbolises Yahweh's
permanence, protection and care for his people.

Noteworthy from the above-mentioned discussion is the fact that the psalmist employs four different Hebrew terms (צור, מעוז, מצודה and סלע) as a means of accentuating the shelter provided by the deity. This underscores the importance of the refuge notion in Psalm 31. In terms of the cognitive theory of metaphor, one can argue that the underlying cognitive strategy, with regard to the utilisation of these refuge metaphors, is that of metaphor coherency. One of the tenets of the cognitive view of metaphor is that concepts can be coherent when they "go or fit" together (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980). The conceptual metaphor *Yahweh is the shepherd of Israel* is, for example, not congruous with the conceptual metaphor *Yahweh is the husband of Israel*. The reason for this is that both metaphors, in terms of the source domains (*shepherd* and *husband*) highlight different aspects to describe the target domain (*Yahweh*). However, the metaphor *Yahweh is a shield* will be coherent with *Yahweh is a fortress*, since both draw attention to the protective quality of the deity. Related to the notion of coherency is the idea of metaphorical entailment or instantiation, which plays a role in the way a metaphorical concept is structured. If one applies this to the aforementioned notion of divine shelter, the following metaphorical structure comes to the fore:

> *Yahweh is a rock and fortress*
> *A rock and fortress provides protection*
> Therefore: *Yahweh provides safety and protection*

5. CONCLUSION

This study highlighted the frequency of refuge metaphors in Psalm 31. The aim was to explicate the use of these metaphors by applying the tenets of the cognitive theory of metaphor. It became clear that the poet's experience of the natural world (source domain) allows for the employment of these concepts with reference to the deity (target domain). Just as the rocks and hills of Palestine offers protection against the enemy, so the supplicant finds refuge in Yahweh. Through the skilful application of a particular metaphorical structure (as opposed to a random selection), the psalmist accentuates those qualities of the divine character, which are appropriate in the situation of affliction. The plaintiff is in need of shelter and therefore Yahweh should act accordingly, that is, safeguard

the righteous. This exploration concludes that in terms of the refuge metaphors in Psalm 31 and the array of other metaphors found in the Psalms, the cognitive theory of metaphor can indeed be a valuable tool for illuminating the cognitive strategies underlying the use of these concepts.

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