

Grammar of Death in the Psalms

With Reference to Motion as Conceptual Metaphor

by

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To Janet

ויהי נעם אדני אלהינו עלינו

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.



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STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The purpose of this study is to determine what relationship, if any, exists between the verbs of *motion* and *emotion* and the language of death in the Psalms. Such motion-emotion verbal pair we describe as *motion-emotion axis*. This will endorse that motion vocabulary in the Psalter is often found in the vicinity of emotion words.

The principal premise of this thesis is that *death* is one of the chief *motifs* in the Psalter, while we distinguish between the idea of *motif* and that of a *theme*. Subsequently we maintain that death motif is underlined by thanatophobic emotional predicaments of the psalmist.

The following questions and issues arise in the examinations of this work. One of the important investigations is exploring some of the key issues in psalmodic studies, particularly in relation to the inquiries of the *identity of the psalmist* as a private individual; and that in the context of his personal experience of distress, in face of death threats. This will be some kind of referential points, as we develop our central thesis objectives. Secondly, we will investigate questions and issues of *religious language* and *prayer* as one of the focal points in expressions of the psalmist's experience and emotions. Thirdly, an ever-present and an intriguing question of the psalmist's *sudden mood changes*, which often appear within a single Psalm, can hardly be avoid, and this issue will be followed up throughout the dissertation. Fourthly and finally, the central subject we examine here is *motion as a concept* relative to motional vocabulary and how it relates to the psalmist's experiential and emotional dimension. The end of the thesis is broader examination of the realms of death and incorporates four aspects of death in biblical context (grave, silence, name, dust and depths).

The plan of investigation begins with describing the thesis objectives with the scope of psalmodic texts; giving an overview of previous studies, particularly of Form-critical traditions. This follows with surveying relevant psalmodic texts, in accordance to the following general criteria we ought to: (1) pay attention to thanatophobic motifs in the Psalter, observing the fact that death motif in the Psalter is associated with not only the lamental and complaint Psalms, as one might expect, (2) examine the relationship in the motion-emotion axis in the psalmist's experience of the spatial dimension (motion in conceptual space, heaven-Sheol).

The following general conclusions and contributions are indicated. The verbs of motion in general, are very sparsely investigated in the biblical literature, hardly at all in the context of the Psalms; and not at all as the *motion-emotion axis* in the thanatophobic experiences of the psalmist. The work has shown that in literary and linguistic terms (*grammar of death*) there is an exceptional presence of motional vocabulary and phraseology associated with the Psalmist's emotional turmoils in thanatophobic situations. The last chapter is assigned to examine five suggested realms of death in bibliical texts which are most commonly found (grave, silence, name, dust and depths).

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PREFACE

We need to make several remarks and annotations regarding the presentation and formatting of this dissertation, and in reference to: the verse numbering; presentation of poetic forms; transliteration of Hebrew texts; Bible translation versions; footnotes; abbreviations and the use of foreign words.

The verse numbering follows BHS (4th ed) which is particularly important and relevant for the texts of the Psalter. In the Psalter it is often the case that the ascriptions to individual psalms are regarded as independent verses or alternatively being incorporated into the subsequent verse. For example in Psalm 138:1 the ascriptions *l'dawid* becomes part of v.1. This scheme is followed by BHS (4th ed). Psalmic textual quotations are presented in poetic forms, following the basic rule of psalmic parallelisms. We find that most contemporary English translations follow the rule of psalmic parallelisms.

If not indicated otherwise, dissertation uses Revised Standard Version (RSV) for English translation. Although often other English versions and translations are used. For example the Jewish Publication Society (JPS) and the New American Bible (NAB) translations

List of abbreviations include: Hebrew Bible books abbreviations, followed by abbreviations of English Bible translations. There is also a list of abbreviations of all those lexicons and dictionaries which are used in the dissertation. There is a more extensive list of abbreviations of journals and periodicals which are being used in the thesis.

Transliteration of Hebrew texts, words or phrases are scarce rather than common. Citations of Hebrew text is given with no punctuations and vowels. There are two reasons for this. One is that the actual Hebrew text has been typed in as the dissertation was being written, which technically means a tremendously more practical and easier way to do it. The other reason is that for a competent reader of Hebrew language following the un-pointed text makes no great difficulty. If there are situations where there may be cases of variance or disputes over pointing, critical notes are added.

The use of foreign words or phrases has been brought to a minimum. However, it can hardly be completely avoided. Such words or phrases are not only generally and commonly used, often also as technical terms and their translating prove to be either not very successful or not very precise. There are such words as *Berufstragik* or a phrase *in vacuo* or *thanatophobia* which are generally accepted and to translate them unequivocally is sometimes hardly possible. For example, in this dissertation, we frequently refer to *thanatophobia*. Thanatophobia is almost regularly (and mistakenly) being translated as the 'fear of death'. Phobia is surely more than fear as a basic fear-emotion. Most often, like with other phobias, it includes anxiety disorder, inability to function, possible panic attacks etc. The issue will be expanded during the course of this dissertation. Another example is the term *theo-poetics* which is really a technical term for an interdisciplinary study which involves literary and poetic analysis, different domains of theology and even philosophy. In that sense the term can be described but not really translated.

ABBREVIATIONS

Hebrew Bible

Genesis	Gen	Job	Jb	Jonah	Jn
Exodus	Ex	Psalms	Ps	Micah	Mic
Leviticus	Lev	Proverbs	Pro	Nahum	Nah
Numbers	Nu	Ecclesiastes	Eccl	Habakkuk	Hab
Deuteronomy	De	Song of songs	Song	Zephaniah	Zep
Joshua	Josh	Isaiah	Isa	Haggai	Hag
Judges	Jdg	Jeremiah	Jer	Malachi	Mal
Ruth	Ru	Lamentations	Lam		
Samuel	1-2 Sam	Ezekiel	Eze		
Kings	1-2 Kr	Daniel	Dan		
Chronicles	1-2 Chr	Hosea	Hos		
Ezra	Ezr	Joel	Jl		
Nehemiah	Neh	Amos	Am		
Esther	Est	Obadiah	Ob		

Bible translations

ESV	English Standard Version
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
KJV	King James Version
LXX	Septuagint
NAB	New American Bible
REB	Revised English Bible
RSV	Revised Standard Version
VUL	Vulgate, lat.translation

Lexicons, dictionaries and standard works

BDB	Brown, Driver and Briggs (Hebrew-Aramaic and English Lexicon of the Old Testament) (Clarendon Press, 1979)
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (Elliger and Rudolph, 1990)
DCH	David JA Clines' <i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i>
EJ	Encyclopaedia Judaica
Jouon	Jouon and Muraoka, <i>A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew</i> (PIB, Roma 1993)
KD	Keil and Delitzsch, <i>Commentary on the Old Testament</i> , vols.1-10 (Eerdmans Pub 1982, rep.)
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (Botterweck and Ringgren, 1970-2002)

Journals

APA	American Psychiatric Association
BBR	Bulletin for Biblical Research
Bib	Biblica
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation
BN	Biblische Notizen
BSac	Bibliotheca Sacra
BZ	Biblische Zeitschrift
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CTJ	Calvin Theological Journal
ExT	Expository Times
HL	Hebrew Linguistics
HS	Hebrew Studies
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College
IJLA	International Journal of Literature and Arts
Int	Interpretation
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBQ	Jewish Bible Quarterly
JET	Journal of Empirical Theology
JETS	Journal of Evangelical Theological Society
JLL	Journal of Language and Linguistics
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JNSL	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
JPCC	Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling
JRH	Journal of Religion and Health
JRT	Journal of Religious Thought
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JSOT	Journal of Studies of the Old Testament
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
NT	Novum testamentum
OTE	Old Testament Essays
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studien
PhPe	Philosophical Perspectives
PRS	Perspectives in Religious Studies
PTR	Princeton Theological Review
RevEx	Review and Expositor
Sem	Semeia
SJT	Southwestern Journal of Theology
StAnt	Studia Antiqua
ThSt	Theological Studies
TB	Tyndale Bulletin
VE	Verbum et Ecclesia
VT	Vetus Testamentum
ZAW	Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

General abbreviations

ch.	chapter, chapters (chs.)
cf.	compare, see also (lat. conferre)
CMT	Cognitive Metaphor Theory
CUP	Cambridge University Press
Dah	Mitchell Dahood, translations of Pss
heb.	hebrew
OUP	Oxford University Press
SBL	Society for Biblical Literature
v.	verse

1. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines the Psalmist's emotional predicaments in his distressed reactions to death threats, mortal danger and the fear of death. We will argue that there is a prevalent death motif throughout the Psalter.¹ In literary and linguistic terms, various descriptions of the Psalmist's experiences of the fear of death closely are accompanied by motional language and vocabulary, augmented by emotional predicaments of the psalmist.

Before we accede to more detailed explications of the objectives of this dissertation there is a need to give some more general and preliminary observations about how to approach the Psalter and what kind of 'world' do we find there.

1.1. Appropriation

For an attentive and an authentic reader comprehension of the Scripture is surely imperative. However, it is not the reader's ultimate goal. The ultimate goal for the attentive reader is its appropriation. This is a step further or beyond the necessary intelligent comprehension. Thus, the reader is not only to adopt the text in comprehension or in appraisal of its authoritative value, neither it is being taken over by it. The appropriation is the reader's adoption taking the Scripture for one's own. In fact we would venture to say that a prerequisite for better comprehension of the Scripture is its appropriation. With Alonso Schokel we then affirm that appropriation is a matter of self-identification.² In the Scriptural context perhaps the best example of appropriation is that of Jesus of Nazareth and his self-identifications with the texts,

¹ The ideas of theme and motif, as distinct rather than synonymous, should be noted here (see below: 'Theme and motif').

² Cf. Schokel, 1998:90f.

events or characters of the OT. This is particularly true when he adopts the texts from the Psalms and identifies himself with the biblical psalmist. This is markedly and powerfully displayed in the last weeks of the life of Jesus of Nazareth (the Gethsemane experience) including his death (dying on the cross).

For better understanding and more adequate perception of the Psalter, and the psalmist's experiences, we insist on the appropriation of biblical psalms. We agree and concur with Alonso Schokel when he says that biblical psalms are "an extreme, and almost inevitable case of appropriation" (Schokel,1998:90). Though the Psalter is a collection, composed and compiled for liturgical purposes, it clearly aims to be an appropriation material for all who find themselves in the situations of the psalmist. Later on in this dissertation we will tackle the issue of the the psalmist as a private individual, relevant to the subject matter of appropriation (see: Identity of the individual psalmist).

Before we approach some of the key issues in the psalmodic studies relevant to this study, we ought to set about and consider issues of our approach to text and methods applied in this dissertation.

1.2. Context based approach

The way this dissertation will address the proposed theme is a context based approach. The heading of this work in itself affirms that this study is not to be a lexical word analysis of death vocabulary, or a lexicon analysis of motion words. The very idea of conceptual metaphors directs us beyond lexicon investigations or dispositions towards a precise lexicographical definitions. It directs us towards the internal literary criteria and situational contexts. In the words of Sawyer,

Meaning relations like synonymy, oppositions, implications and reference, are entirely dependent on the context: words that are synonymous in one context may not be synonymous in another (Sawyer, 1973:29).

The context based approach will also give us opportunity to look into some 'semantic universals', for which motion vocabulary shows numerous common cultural and linguistic denominators (cf. Sawyer,1973:28).

But, before we further elaborate how are we to apply this 'context based approach', let us give our brief attention to the well known phrase: 'there is no text without a context'. The famed expression, if not addressed attentively, may become but captivating phrasal idiom. Without setting text into context there, any text may face a gloomy destiny. We may even be tempted to agree with suggestions and assertions what kind of gloomy destiny may befall any text when resembled to 'dead men and women'. On that account, in somewhat sombre manner, Morgan and Barton in *Biblical Interpretation* (1988), make the following conclusion declaring that texts are like:

dead men and women, have no rights, no aims, no interests. They can be used in whatever way readers or interpreters choose (Morgan & Barton, 1988 in Legaspi,2010:3).

It is true that any text can be potentially abused and misused by any reader-interpreter. But, we do not believe that texts are, neither be treated, like 'dead men and women'. On the contrary, texts are very much alive, so much so that in truth, they have life of their own. It is up to us readers and interpreters to give them a life needed 'contextual breathing space'. Of course, if texts are to be seen as 'dead men and women', the real question is who is the main suspect in killing them? There are several candidates to be reckoned as perpetrators.

One is the "long-entrenched 'objectivism' that sought the one true meaning of a text" (Berlin,1993:143). It may be lexicographer's aim to aspire in determining one precise meaning, it may be a scholar dissecting the textual and literary forms in the attempt to reconstruct the history, while at the same time failing to recognise the actual content-message of the text, wherefrom the text becomes a collateral casualty of this process? The other is that in the reading process, reader may become a 'murderer' of the text simply by not 'reading-out' that what resides in the text, but rather 'reading-in' from a position of the 'historical' task-reader (cf. Berlin,ib.). This appears to be the other extreme whereas the meaning resides solely in the reader.³ Let us now return to the suggested elaboration of our 'context based approach'.

This dissertation's context based approach rests on three premisses. One is that the Psalter is the finest example of Biblical poetry and cannot be comprehended or unraveled in full unless a reader or a research worker is not compelled by it. In the previous section we already unraveled the importance of appropriation as some kind

³ Adele Berlin's discussion on *The Role of the Text in the Reading Process* (1993) is the most instructive and referential work on the subject of different contexts and reading processes. Cf. Berlin:143.

of prerogative to a successful interpretation and comprehension of the Psalter (see: Appropriation). Secondly, as readers and interpreters, we are fully aware, that when we speak of context we are always reminded of the 'multiplicity of contexts'. Whether it be literary, and internal literary context; or external context (historical, cultural, religious). Thirdly, we cannot and will not be ignoring the fact that what we are looking into is the text which accommodates 'scriptural inheritance'.

1.2.1. Multiplicity of Contexts

In literary or linguistic terms, there are more than few definitions of what context is. Most of these will agree in one thing and that is that context has to do with what 'precedes and follows' any part or a piece of writing, whether it be a word, a passage or a phrase. Why is context so vitally important for any text? Simply because we believe that its sole objective is to help us understand and explain the meaning of a text. Therefore, context is there to explain, to clarify and work towards better or full understanding of a text under our scrutiny.⁴

Amongst the multiplicity of contexts (literary and extra literary), it may be useful to apply a fourfold structure to make it more unassuming. Such structure would entail, 'internal' and 'external' context, which interact with 'literary' and 'historical' contexts.⁵

It was legitimate in biblical scholarship to insist, for a long while, on the historical context. But even when studying literary forms (*Form Criticism*) it was not so much 'literary' as it was 'historical', in that sense it was actually extra-literal. On the other hand, the internal-historical context refers to such important contextual

⁴ 'the text or speech that comes immediately before and after a particular phrase or piece of text and helps to explain its meaning'

⁵ Cf. Berlin, 1993:143

elements as, 'original location', 'original audience' etc. And that we certainly cannot and do not wish to ignore.

However, what we will concentrate is more on the internal-literary context which entails all that interrelates between the elements in the text. For example, we shall have situations where a motion verb, within a particular internal-literary context, and interrelating with that what 'precedes' and that which 'follows' in effect may act as emotion word. Finally, for the best insight into the Psalter one has to keep in view that what can be called 'situational context' of the psalmist.⁶

1.2.2. Scriptural Bible

As we 'contextualize' the texts of the Psalter, our approach and understanding of the Psalter is that it is an integral part of the authoritative and unified writing, designated as: 'Bible as Scripture'. Approaching the Psalter as an integral part of the 'scriptural Bible', we also say that it is not 'reducible to a written text'. To use Legaspi's phrase that 'Bible functiones scripturally' (Legaspi,2010:3), in all likelihood we are actually making a passing reference to the Reformed motto *Scriptura scripturae interpretans*, that is to say that the Scripture best interprets itself. This of course places the Bible in the ecclesial context. Though someone may say that it breaches the scholarship's demand for an untainted exegetical and hermeneutical task. One

⁶ Adele Berlin (*The Role of the Text in the Reading Process*) well elucidates issues of reader's approach and response to a text and situational contexts. She particularly explicates the internal literary criteria. In this dissertation this will prove to be an important aspect of comprehending the motion vocabulary and the motion-emotion axis, in respect of the fear of death that the psalmist experiences.

wonders how realistic would be such allegation?⁷ Legaspi well reacts to these question when he refers to Bible's dependance to ecclesial realities

Its nature and authority had to be explicated and legitimated with reference to extrascriptural concepts, whether juridically, as among Catholics, or doctrinally, as among Protestants (Legaspi,2010:4)

In fact, in his superb study, entitled *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies* (2010) Micahel Legaspi introduces this term 'scriptural Bible' (Legaspi:3f.). There he also faces manifold historical challenges over the Bible and Biblical text which "could no longer function unproblematically as Scripture" (Legaspi:4). In this dissertation we clearly and eagerly engage with the Psalter as Scripture and as the portion of the 'scriptural Bible'.

1.3. Symmetrical and Asymmetrical World of the Psalmist.

There is another aspect to the Psalter which needs our attention, that which reflects different conditions that the psalmist goes through (cf. situational context). We already noted that an authentic reader is an attentive reader. And the attentive reader will soon discern that in so many situations the psalmist's world does not always reflect situation of equilibrium and safe orientation of confidence in God (cf. psalms of confidence). His world is not always 'symmetrical'. What does this idea of 'symmetrical' or 'asymmetrical' world of the psalmist really convey and how is it relevant ?

Not scarcely, the psalmist openly and in an unhindered mood and language (cf. parrhesia) displays his emotions and confusions in all sorts of conditions that he finds

⁷ In relation to this, it is most instructive to read through Michael Legaspi's Chapter 1 of his *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies* (2010).

himself in. Not rarely he just does not comprehend what is going on around him and he finds it difficult to understand: "I tried to understand all this, it was too difficult for me" (Ps 73:16). In that sense his world seem to be 'asymmetrical', confusing and not logical. It was probably Walter Brueggemann who initially used the notions 'symmetrical' and 'asymmetrical'. Symmetrical is that world which reflects life which is well-proportioned, orderly and logical; while the 'asymmetry' is reflected in those situations which lack logic, justice and orderliness.⁸ Why would the arrogant and the evildoers have a life of 'plane sailing' (Ps 73:3-6) and the virtuous be stricken and chastised (Ps 73:14). What is then the point of keeping the 'clean heart' and 'washing hands in innocence' (73:13)?

Walter Brueggemann, before going to explicate his threefold schematic approach to the Psalms, concludes that

The Psalms, with few exceptions, are not the voice of God addressing us. They are rather the voice of our own common humanity...It speaks about life the way it really is, for in those deeply human dimensions the same issues and possibilities persist (Brueggemann,2007:1)

If our approach to the Psalter is 'us' as from the poin of view of 'our common humanity', as Brueggemann proposes, what kind of world are we calling from, and then comes again that issue of appropriation ? In all what has been said above, it seems evident from so many situational contexts that the psalmist's world often exhibits this 'asymmetrical' flection and disorientation when in mortal danger.

⁸ Brueggemann likens such 'symmetrical' life with the teachings of the book of Proverbs, where everything seems to be logical, orderly and justifiable; while in the world of the Psalmist and his humanness it seems to be minimal (cf. Brueggemann,2007:3).

So far we have looked through the issues of relevance and importance of the appropriation, we considered the context based approach we assume, finally we examined the '(a)symmetry' of the psalmist's world.

Let us now take a look into the Psalter as we find it through Judaic and Christian traditions, let us also affirm afresh that the Psalter goes beyond communal liturgical poetry, of both traditions and that it really calls for personal piety, reflected through ever present facing of death and dying, as we find it throughout the Psalter.

1.4. The Psalter and the Psalmist

The Psalms have always been highly regarded in the religious practices of the Judaic and Christian traditions. In ancient times, they were the focal point of the Temple worship of early Judaism. Later, the Psalms continued its vital presence in the synagogue liturgy. Following Judaic worship practices with the Psalms at the centre, the earliest Christian practices also included the Psalms in liturgical practices. In the transition to New Testament Christianity and the Early Church, the importance of the Psalms was transferred from Judaic to early Christian practices. This was evident and vividly presented when Jesus of Nazareth, at the last Paschal supper before his death, joined his followers in worship. It is said that “after they had sung the hymns (ὕμνησαντες), they went out to the Mount of Olives” (Mt 26:30). At the close of worship, it is more than likely those were actually psalms, probably the Hallel Psalms (Pss 113-118) which were traditionally sung at the close of the Paschal service.⁹ Later on, in the Early Christian Church, the Psalms continued to be part of Christian worship (cf. Eph 5:19, Col 3:16). In addition, the Psalter has always been a source of major fascination in biblical scholarship. One of the prime reasons for this fascination with Psalms is well expressed by Alberto Soggin who says that:

Few books of the Old Testament have been read more than the Psalms, because, whether it is through Jewish and Christian liturgy or through personal piety, they seem to come close to the heart of believers. Many compositions contained in the Psalter also have special importance on a linguistic and philological level (Soggin, 1976:363).

Beyond any doubt the Psalms are masterpieces of poetry, and not only religious poetry. but not "*l'art pour l'art-ism*" ('art for art's sake'), i.e. poetry as literary artistry in

⁹ The Talmud mentions that the Psalms were incorporated into the synagogue liturgy from the earliest days. Regarding the Hallel Psalms, Mishna testifies to their importance in the liturgy, cf. Pes 5,7. Also, after ending the fast, the psalm called Great Hallel (Ps 136) was sung, cf. Taan 3,9.

its own right. The Psalms are profound expressions of the deepest human experiences with God, in which ordinary prose is inadequate to express all the Psalmist's joys, sorrows, doubts and longings. So poetry and poetic forms express the inner life in very profound ways. This is also why poetry and religion go so well together. In Bewer's words, "Out of the heart of life they sprang, and to the heart they speak" (cf. Bewer, 1962).¹⁰ This is why the Psalms are so important, because hopes and fears so often meet in them.

Later in the history of theological thought, and with the arrival of critical scholarship and studies of Scripture, the Psalms again occupied a central position in modern biblical critical investigations.¹¹ Indeed the study of form and structure in Scriptural texts and literature owes a great deal to the study of the Psalms. The study of literary genres and forms (*Formesgeschichte*) dominated psalmodic studies and investigations for quite a while. On the other hand, in the theology of the Psalms, other aspects, like themes, motifs or the Psalmist as a private individual, have not really been much at the fore. Some topics, such as the emotional dimension and the Psalmist's experiences, have even been neglected.

The Psalter displays a great variety of emotive conditions, enhanced by emotional language and imagery, all seasoned with a broad spectrum of emotions in varying intensity, such as fear-anxiety or anger-rage etc.¹² It is not an overstatement to

¹⁰ Cf. Bewer, 1962:359-360

¹¹ The emergence of biblical criticism at a particular time in history was no accident. It originated and coincided with the emergence of rationalism during the 17th and 18th centuries. Soon, it developed into a whole set of critical studies, from historical and literary criticism to form criticism.

¹² Fear, dread, anger and regret seem to be in many ways and in so many of the earliest sections and chapters of the canonical OT texts the prevalent emotional predicaments. The biblical narrative commences with human fear: "I heard you in the garden and I was afraid." (ירא) (Gen 3:10); then continues with anger and fratricide: "Cain was very angry (חרה) and his countenance fell." (Gen 4:5-8).

say that in hardly any other biblical canonical texts do we find such emotional representation as in the Psalter. Emotion as a subject in biblical texts, and the Psalms in particular, has only been dealt with sparsely, or worse, even neglected (cf. Kruger, 2000:181). And this is particularly true in relation to the emotions or emotional predicaments of the Psalmist relating to the language of death.

To state that death and dying are often communicated by motion vocabulary, and conveyed by metaphors of motion, such as in 'death is a departure' (cf. Lakoff in Ortony, 1993:231-2) may seem banal, as it is a widely accepted metaphor. Yet, one always ought to be aware that even such metaphoric 'banalities' certainly require explanations. In the case of metaphoric forms, "there must be a systematic account to give of what is understood...and how it is we are able to know this" (Bezuidenhout, 2002:106).

It is more intriguing to investigate the relationship, if there is any, between motion and emotion. That is to say, how motional vocabulary and language relate to that which is emotional, in relation to the Psalmist's fear of death.

It is beyond any reasonable doubt that the Psalter is particularly emotionally charged part of Scripture, more than most other Biblical portions and books. It displays a vast variety of emotional conditions, enhanced with emotional language and imagery. The Psalmist is persecuted by his enemies, abandoned by his God (psalms of lament) or tormented by his own sins (imprecatory psalms), and to make things worse,

People becomes a cause of fear for wildlife: "The fear of you and the dread (מורא) of you shall be upon every beast of the earth." (Gen 9:1-2). Observing all this, the Creator regrets creating human beings: "The LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart." (Gen 6:6-8).

he often seems to be defeated by illness, and mortal fear is not a rare occurrence in his experience.

The Psalmist's overall condition and his reactions to events we shall generally designate as his "emotional predicament". However, his reactions may also be described as moody, or even as in affectation.¹³

Mortal threats and the Psalmist's emotive (or emotional) thanatophobic reactions and the way they are expressed through literary and grammatical intricacies, form one of the fundamental objectives of this work. Incidentally, this emotive disposition of the Psalmist (fear of death) complies with the view that the majority of the Psalms are of the lament type.¹⁴ This is evident in varying degrees and intensities. It is rarely a basic emotion type, for example, simply fear. Rather, there is a blend of emotions (fear, anxiety, phobia, anger, or rage). In colloquial terms, the Psalmist has 'mixed feelings'.¹⁵ A combination of emotions is shown in the Psalmist's anger towards his enemies, whom he wants dead (Ps 55:16) (and who by the way also threaten his life) or raging anger towards the godless (Ps 119:53), or even towards God.

Let us look at some brief evidence of emotional predicaments in the Psalter, as a preliminary overview of the direction this work will take.

¹³ In the structure of emotions, from the outset we ought to be mindful of differentiating between that which is 'emotional' and that which is 'emotive'.

¹⁴ Cf. Kraus: 40, Broyles: 13 etc.

¹⁵ Cf. Ortony, 1988:8, 15-27. An emotional concoction of fear and anger is found with many biblical characters (Cain, Moses, Elijah, and Jonah). The anger of Cain towards his brother Abel (Gen 4) is already proverbial; Moses gets angry with God (Nu 11:11-15); Elijah's emotional predicament is a blend of fear and anger (1Ki 19:3-4,9); Jonah's condition is even more complicated (Jon 4). Beyond his theological discomforts, in terms of modern thought we might say that Jonah was also a 'clinical case' of depression and anger. Not only was he exceedingly angry (רעה גדולה) (4:1), and angry to death (חרה לי עד מות) (4:9) he was also bad-tempered, and God attempted to "deliver him from his evil" (JPS) (להציל לו מרעתו) (4:6).

1.4.1 The Psalmist and His Emotions

As we move forward with this dissertation and develop our objectives, at this point it is necessary to give few introductory and general remarks on the nature of emotions. For quite a while it has been debated, and still is an issue whether there are such emotion types we can call 'basic emotions' (cf. Ortony, 1988). In the end common positions are that most emotions are actually concoction of those considered as 'basic'.¹⁶ Good example may be possible fusion of two emotion types, that of fear and anger, where both of the two are considered as 'basic' (see above FN8). The psalmist often, at times in his chaotic disorientation, displays how such emotional concoction operates in practice.

The penitential psalms are particularly good examples of the Psalmist's emotional and psychosomatic turmoil. His heart throbs (סחר), pounds and shakes:

I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
all the day I go about mourning (קדר הלכתי)...
My heart throbs (סחר), my strength fails me (עזב);
and the light of my eyes -- it also has gone from me (Ps 38:8, 11)¹⁷

This condition frequently also depicts mortal danger, when his feet are on the verge of 'falling' (דחה) into the abyss of death (cf. Ps 56:14). If God were not his help, he would already be in the realm of 'silence' (דומה): "If the LORD had not been my help, my soul would soon have dwelt in the land of silence" (שכנה דומה נפשי) (Ps 94:17).

In such circumstances, the prevalent emotional condition of the Psalmist is determined by fear, particularly fear for his life and the fear of death (thanatophobia).

¹⁶ There were different suggestions or different lists with a differing number of emotion types which are to be considered as 'basic'.

¹⁷ There are some alternative translation of this text, such as Samuel Terrien's: „I am bent down and folded double to the extreme; all the time I must walk as if I were a mourner“ (Terrien; 2003 in *The Psalms: Strophic Structure and Theological Commentary*).

Somewhat unexpectedly, this fear merges with anger, creating a peculiar emotional concoction.¹⁸ The emotion types of fear and anger seem to be the two most frequent emotive experiences depicted in the Old Testament (cf. Kruger, 2000).¹⁹ As for anger in biblical texts, the vast majority of appearances refer to God (518 times) and much less frequently to human anger (196 times).²⁰ Of course, a person cannot be angry without be angry with something. The object of divine wrath is mainly humans (cf. Ps 106; 40, Lam 2:1) and in biblical discourse it is often expressed through the idiom ‘Day of the Lord’ which is essentially the “day of (his) anger” (יום אפיו) (Lam 2:1c). An almost archetypal text for describing divine wrath comes from Joel:

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness (Joel 2:1-2).²¹

Fear of death and death anxiety closely relate to human religiosity (cf. Wen; 2010, Lacocque, 1984). One important causes of the Psalmist’s thanatophobic predicament is when he feels that God has hidden his face. He then pleads: Do not hide thy face from me in the day of my distress! (Ps 102:3).

The language and vocabulary of divine anger abound in many Psalms (cf. Ps 18:8-9). God’s anger is followed by him hiding his face from his people, and this, for the Psalmist, is in itself a life-threatening situation. The imprecatory and self-imprecatory

¹⁸ In a general discussion on emotion, one has to take into account the notion of *emotion types*. See Ortony (1988):15-33.

¹⁹ Cf. Baloian (1992), *Anger in the Old Testament*, refers to 10 different basic terms for anger in the Old Testament. There are also a number of Hebrew terms for fear in Old Testament (see here: Table-Emotion). Both have a variety of manifestations and intensity of expression. In the anger register of the OT emotion vocabulary, we find everything from simple anger and wrath to rage. Likewise, in the fear emotion type register we find everything from fear and dread to terror and panic.

²⁰ Cf. Kruger, 2000.

²¹ Cf. Dobbs-Alsop, 2002.

Psalms are especially rich literary material for investigating the emotional concoction of fear and anger. The language there is so compellingly personal and existential in nature that it is hard to consider it as mere poetic convention. We shall demonstrate that very intimate, personal and private experiences directly reveal the psychological, religious, and even physiological condition of the Psalmist.

In these situations of trouble and mortal dread, an important aspect is the Psalmist's prayerful invocation of God. He cries (invokes) to God for help and salvific intervention:

In my distress I called upon the LORD;
to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears (Ps 18:7 BHS) (RSV).

In his thanatophobic predicament, which may also assume an imprecatory mood, with anger coming to the forefront, as in Ps 55, where he fears for his life, but he also commends his enemies to death:

Let death take them by surprise;
Let them go down alive to Sheol,
For evil is in their homes and hearts.
But I call upon God;
and the LORD will save me (Ps 55:16-17) (NAB).

Invocation of the name of God in articulating his distress and fear of mortal danger is not only informative of the Psalmist's condition. It takes an evocative turn, recalling the 'good old days'. It becomes a painful experience; he is deeply hurt and disappointed in his fellow neighbours and friends:

It is not an enemy who taunts me –
then I could bear it;
It is not an adversary, who deals insolently with me,
Then I could hide from him.
But it is you, my equal,
my companion, my familiar friend.
We used to hold sweet converse together;

Within God's house we walked in fellowship (Ps 55:13-15) (RSV).

The Psalmist feels completely abandoned, and to make the matters worse, it seems as if God has abandoned him as well. In this desperate state, he yearns to be heard by God:

My heart is in anguish within me (לבי יהיל בקרבי)
The terrors of death have fallen upon me (ואימות מות נפלו עלי) (Ps 55:5) (RSV).

We shall also examine how this invocative aspect may be accompanied by a remarkable illocutionary effect, with a sudden, radical change of mood and his emotive make up, from thanatophobic distress to praise. Illocutions are performative type of utterances often contrasted to 'constative' utterances (i.e. making a statement). It is not descriptive or reporting type of verbal act it is performative, i.e. by mere uttering something happens or takes shape. In the words of J. Austin, such act of speech "Is not to *describe* my doing of what I should be said in so uttering to be doing or to state that I am doing it: it is to do it" (Austin, 1962:6).²²

It seems that the Psalmist's invocation of the name of YHWH leads to an overall change of mood, thus accomplishes an event, a change of his mood and his overall emotional predicament. In most religions and religious practices, the invocation of a divine name may be highly efficacious emotionally, even 'magical' in character. As we shall see, this invocative aspect forms a precarious line between prayerful invocation and magical incantation (cf. Wevers, 1956; Rubin, 2009:165-170).²³ Rudolf Otto refers

²² John L. Austin in his published lectures *How to do things with words* (1955, 1962, 1982 2nd ed.) delivered at Harvard University; expounds and develops the performative dimension of illocutionary utterances. Austin also distinguishes sentences from utterances, as we explicate here under: Psalms as prayer utterances. Cf. Austin (1962).

²³ Cf. Wevers on form critical examination of the individual complaint psalms; esp. in relation to the Psalmist's invocation of the divine name. Powerful language, which makes things happen, is particularly

to such experiences of the numinous and invocations as *Berufstragik*, i.e. the invocation of God in response to the threat of mortal dangers.²⁴

1.4.2 The Psalmist as an Individual

While observing the Psalmist's emotional predicaments in his thanatophobic disposition, we should accentuate his individuality, personality and privacy, to ensure we also are engaged with a private individual, a man of flesh and blood. He is not just a cipher, an anonymous part of a corporate personality or a representative of a clan, or tribe.²⁵ In these psalmodic texts there is such a strong element of psychology, anthropology and physiology that makes it difficult to tolerate reduction to a corporate personality, particularly as anatomical idioms extend throughout these psalmodic situations. It may be difficult to envisage the innards and internal body parts (kidneys, liver, and stomach) of such a corporate body (personality).

Of course, the Psalmist is connected to the cult and to the collective 'I' language of the cultic community. However, he is a man of flesh and blood in all his individuality and privacy. His fears and dreads are very real and belong to the realm of his personal and private piety.²⁶ This is particularly true in thanatophobic settings where the Psalmist cannot be simply assimilated into the collective and public performances of the cult. The Psalm 77 testifies that: "In the day of my trouble (ביום צרתי) I seek the Lord (אדני דרשתי) (77:3)".²⁷ It is difficult to agree with Anderson here who comments

evident in the complaint psalms, where emotional salience is recurrently linked to the Psalmist's fears (and resentment) when in mortal danger and the fear of death.

²⁴ Cf. Otto, 2004, ch.12.

²⁵ Cf. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's worship*: 42-46.

²⁶ The identity of the Psalmist will be discussed in the section: Interpreting the Psalms and Identity of the individual.

²⁷ Cf. Ps 16:8; 27:4-6; 73:25; 77:3 etc..

that it is the case of “author's personal involvement in the fortunes of his people. Some great disaster must have befallen the nation, and the Psalmist shares fully in it” (Anderson, 1972:556).

The Psalmist indeed may be fully emotionally involved in his identification with the community, but surely this will not deny his real existence as an individual with a personal and private life, experiences and devotions.²⁸ The Israelite individual and the Psalmist's explicit individuality, according to some commentators, may be seen as *abnormal*:

To be original, someone apart, a personality, whose right of existence depended on being different, would not to the ancient Israelites have appeared as an ideal or an end to attain, but on the contrary, as a *madness*, an *arrogance*, something *abnormal*, or, in their own words, an unrighteousness and a folly (Mowinckel, ch.III:p.43) (italics mine).

Such rationale seems to ignore a number of ‘abnormalities’ in many biblical individuals whose apparent individualist ‘arrogance’ leaves a definite impression.²⁹ Job, an arch proponent of theodicy, is certainly one of these arrogant and abnormal characters and a champion of highlighted individuality. While commenting on Job and his situation, Cox concludes: “Job is no longer merely a man with a problem. He has become a character of the absurd, a person. It is true enough that in one sense he remains an individual” (Cox,1978:51).

Our investigation will explore the cognitive approach to verbs of motion in relation to death language. The fundamental linguistic presumption is that ‘visible’

²⁸ Form-critical assessments too often perceive an individual only as a representative of a corporate body

(clan, tribe, and nation), through considerations that “the whole was a greater ‘I’”. Cf. Mowinckel:43

²⁹ To name two ‘arrogant’ Biblical characters, Hannah and Job. Hannah, Samuel's mother, was proclaimed a drunkard; while in her bitterness (מרת נפש) she poured out her grief before God, which resulted in the priest imploring her to sober up (1Sam 1:10, 14). On the expression (מרה נפש) (‘bitterness of the soul’), see the discussion by Dermot Cox (1978) in *The Triumph of Impotence*.

language and thought are not to be divorced, since visible language is a prominent external manifestation of complex mental operations and cognitive constructions (cf. Fauconnier, 1997:34). We will examine the literary and linguistic aspects of the Psalmist's experience in his thanatophobic distress, in relation to what is linguistically conventional and what is representative of his experiences.

In the past two decades, considerable research has been carried out in the complexity of mental operations, linguistic cognitive organisation, semantic domains and concepts as they are reflected in language. Great contributions to a better understanding of these cognitive-linguistic phenomena have been introduced through Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT), based on the notion of domains and mental spaces blending.³⁰ Some of the most influential works in this area include: Fauconnier (1997) (*Spaces, worlds and grammar*), Langacker (1991) (*Concept, Image and Symbol: The Cognitive Basis of Grammar*), Lakoff & Johnson (2003) (*Metaphors We Live By*), Stephen Shead (2007) (*Radical Frame Semantics and Biblical Hebrew: exploring lexical semantics*).³¹ Key notions in these works are 'mental spaces' and grammatical structures as 'blending' (of mental spaces in reference to experience.³²

³⁰ CMT was principally developed by George Lakoff, Mark Johnson and Mark Turner. These metaphorisation theories rely on the idea of the 'target' domain and 'source' domain. CMT usually applies the formula 'target domain is source domain'. For example Goliath asks David, "Am I a dog?" (1Sam 17:43); the source domain is 'dog' and the target is the 'Philistine' himself.

³¹ On caused motion in Hebrew see: Nili Mandelblit (1997), *Grammatical Blending: Creative and Schematic Aspects in Sentence Processing and Translation*.

³² In the past decades, the word study approach, or lexicon and context-based approach to meaning construction did not offer an adequate solution to mental operations. It did not account for the fact that 'visible' language is the tip of the iceberg in relation to cognitive processes beneath the surface. Even though such approaches observed and analysed the text and context, it was not concerned with mental operations within or across various domains.

1.5. Death as a Recurring Psalmic Motif

1.5.1. Thanatophobia in the Psalter

The point of departure of this work is the premise that death is a recurring motif in the Psalter and that to a great extent, it is characterised by the underpinning language of the fear of death and thanatophobia, accompanied by the emotional predicament of the Psalmist. In the forthcoming sections (cf. Some Postulatory Notes) we will need to expand on the notion and the understanding of the term thanatophobia. However, let us at this point, provide only several observations in regard to thanatophobia as psalmic motif. The first is that the fear of death and thanatophobia are not identical or synonymous. Therefore, thanatophobia cannot be simply translated as 'fear of death'.³³ Though they belong to the same emotion type, the two differ in mode, intensity or reaction. Often the two will need some qualifiers or explicit distinctions to be made along the way.

The Psalter is a religious text and a testimony of faith both of the community and the Psalmist. So are thanatophobia and the fear of death related to human religiosity and religious devotion and if so, in what way?

The relationship between religiosity and death anxiety has been well investigated and researched, yet the final verdict on the nature of this relationship is not unanimous.³⁴ Some argue that the fear of death and religious devotion are not closely connected, others that the two are very closely related. In support of the relationship

³³ As we already indicate, there is an ongoing discussion in the categorisation of emotions and 'basic emotions' that ought to be taken into account. In the structure of emotions, fear and phobia do not belong to the same emotion type. For this, Ortony's (1988) *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions* is a particularly useful tool.

³⁴ James (1936), Lacocque (1984), Fritscher (2003), Wen (2010), McNamara (2012)

between the fear of death and religiosity, Donald Templer devised what he called Death Anxiety Scales (DAS) and Death Depression Scales (DSS) as the means of 'measuring' the fear of death (!).³⁵ Templer pinpoints the lack of an adequate method as the reason for the lack of consensus regarding the relationship between the fear of death and religiosity:

A likely explanation for this ambiguity in the literature is lack of an adequate method for measuring fear of death. In no study previously reported has the reliability or validity of the instrument for assessing death anxiety been determined. In the present study, the 15-item Death Anxiety Scale (DAS) was employed. The reliability and validity of this scale were determined by a diversity of procedures (Templer, 1969, 1970).

If we examine these scales (DAS and DSS; see Tables) and ways of 'measuring' the fear of death, we might ask how the Psalmist's fear of death, his anxiety or thanatophobia would be measured or ranked. Regarding the Psalter and the Psalmist's experiences, the relationship between emotional predicaments and religious devotion is very close. This should not be taken for granted, but rather carefully examined.

³⁵ Cf. Templer, D. I. and Dotson, E. (1970). 'Religious Correlates of Death Anxiety', *Psychological Reports*, 26, 895-897.

1.5.2. Hebrew Concept of Death

The Israelite concept of life is closely related to the totality and integrity of the body. On the other hand, when examining it in canonical texts, we find that death for a biblical writer means not only the actual termination of life and cessation of vital functions. For the Israelites, the 'awareness of totality' in the matters of life and death is crucial. The body and its internal parts should be intact (unbroken bones, unshed blood). This totality is commonly expressed through the term (נפש) (*nefš*) (soul, neck) denoting a living person, a self and centre of "consciousness" (cf. A. Johnson, 1949:19).³⁶ Life is to be maintained by all means and the concern for the continuity of life reaches into every sphere of the Israelite social fabric. The extension of one's personality and life is manifest in different expressions. Apart from natural causes, accident or death, illness also weakens the body and bodily functions and the fading of vitality commences, with death taking the final toll.

This fading of vitalities in Hebrew thought is the closest cognisance of the imminence of death. In the ancient Israelite concept of life and death the fading of vitality is the foyer to death and dying. Consequently, the biblical language of death often portrays a state of limbo between living and dying as death. Thus, a sick person was at times considered more dead than alive, as in Ps 88: "I am reckoned among those who go down to the Pit. I am a man who has no strength" (cf. Ps 88:5).³⁷

However, for the Psalmist, the state of death, or rather a near death experience is not just a theoretical mind exercise. It presses urgently upon the suffering one.

³⁶ Cf. A. Johnson, 1964:1-22.

³⁷ Detailed discussions of these aspects are given by Aubry Johnson (1964) in *The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel*.

There are several other, frequent aspects of death in the Israelite mindset. One is the sense of being forgotten (out of sight, out of mind) and another is the significance of the name and the household. For the Psalmist it begins with the feeling of being forgotten, as he says the man is like grass, the wind blows him away and the “place remembers us no more” (לא יִכִּירֵנוּ) (Ps 103:15-16). The forgotten one is 'dismissed among the dead' (במתים הפשי), and his bed (הפשי) (88:6) is being made ready among the dead.³⁸ He is already counted (חשב) as dead (88:5a) and feels no strength left in him (“I am a man with no strength”, 88:5b) (הייתי כגבר אין־איל).

Like one forsaken among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave (88:6a)
(במתים הפשי כמו חללים שכבי קרב).

Those whom thou dost remember no more, they are cut off from thy hand (6b)
(אשר לא זכרתם עוד והמה מידך נגזרו) .

Death is the place where one is removed from memory. And in being forgotten, the worst of all is being separated from God. In death 'there is no remembrance of you' (Ps 6:5). Once annihilated by death, not even God can help, for nothing remains and nothingness 'rules'. A dead person is 'out of reach', even God cannot find those who are beyond reach (cf. Clines, 1989:195) (cf. Jb 7:21b).³⁹

This we find in the New Testament, where alienation and abandonment are exemplified in Jesus' cry, in reference to Psalm 22: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46). We may hesitate to conclude that the dead have been “expelled from Yahweh's sphere of influence” (Wolff, 1973:106), since apparently

³⁸ There are uncertainties and variant readings of Ps 88 of במתים הפשי (88:5). Some suggest it is better to read *napši* (my life), Weiser (1962:586); Keil & Delitzsch (KD, Ps 88) with LXX (εὐ νεκροῖς ἐλεύθερος) prefer to read 'free among the dead'; Vulgate reads: *inter mortuos liber sicut*.

³⁹ One's ability to reach, i.e. exercise an authority over someone or something, as in the question of death or the power of death itself, in OT texts often finds correspondence in the abilities of the parts of the body; feet, for walking and going; hand(s) for power and authority. On the forms and functions of body parts, see: H.W. Wolff (1973) in *Anthropology of the Old Testament* (p.67f).

Yahweh's sovereignty stretches into the underworld, and even “Sheol is naked before God, and Abaddon has no covering” (Job 26:6).⁴⁰

In defining death, biblical writers also emphasise that the separation of the dead is both from God and the community of the living. Being cut off from one's community or people may involve incurring the death penalty, or simply banishment. The neglect of circumcision as reported in Gen 17 is a case in point:

Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people (Gen 17:14).
(וערפל זכר אשר לא ימול את־בשר ערלתו ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מעמיה)

Men who were not circumcised were to be cut off from the community and treated as if dead. Was this punishment an expulsion from the community, or death itself? The *halakhic* interpretation tends toward a blending of the two views – excommunication or extermination.⁴¹

Another important aspect of death in the Israelite mind is the idea of the name and household. The idea of the 'name' (שם) carries the notion of life's extension. Extermination of the name means the cessation of one's existence and memory. Likewise, the name bears invocative powers, i.e. one can call upon a name. For instance, the levirate marriage legislation aimed to secure that one's 'name' was not “wiped out from Israel” (מחה שם) (cf. Dt 25:5). Destroying the name (סוראת־שם) equalled a death sentence (cf. Hos 2:17). Illustratively, the evidence of the motion verb סור (sur) (turn aside, depart) in the Psalms demonstrates how often it appears in an intense

⁴⁰ Cf. Job 5:20.

⁴¹ “This scarcely means the death penalty...but rather exclusion from the sacred community, a kind of excommunication, which also meant ruin for the one concerned” (von Rad,1972:201) or Delitzsch's interpretation which represents a more traditional view that the text here explicitly supports capital punishment (KD, 1983 reprint:224). Some commentators argue for extermination (Keil and Delitzsch) while others opt for a 'a kind of excommunication'.

emotional and thanatophobic context.⁴² Male offspring secure one's continuity, as the "heritage from the LORD" (Ps 127:3). There is also the concept of the 'house' or 'household' (בית), through which memory and life is extended and preserved and continuity granted (cf. Sheriffs, D. 2004).

Frequently death is the result of punitive actions. In legal texts, there are some extraordinary, shocking punitive actions and death sentences. Some examples occur in the 'Book of the Covenant' (Ex 21-23); "He who insults his father or mother shall be put to death" (מות יומת) (Ex 21:17). Sometimes, more leniencies are shown in other cases involving death:

When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be punished (נִקָּם יִנְקָם). But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be punished; for the slave is his money (כִּי כֶסֶף הוּא) (Ex 21:20) (RSV).⁴³

There is no explanation of what this punishment is to be. The rule of *lex talionis* is clearly not applicable here and the punishment is to be decided by a 'court of justice'. Another broad area is death incurred as a result of divine wrath and vengeance.⁴⁴ There is a 'connection between offence and mortality'.⁴⁵ In fact, this is where it all starts, for the whole theme of mortality is in effect the divinely executed death penalty, since God has cursed men with mortality.

In conclusion, we can summarise several areas of the Israelite understanding of death. One is infirmity or illness, which harms the totality and wholeness of the individual. Then there is the sense of being forgotten by men and by God in particular,

⁴² By removing their names, Yahweh in effect sentences other gods (בעלים) to death: "Then will I remove from her mouth the names of the Baals, so that they shall no longer be invoked." (Hos 2:17).

⁴³ NRSV gives here: "... and the slave dies immediately", for נִקָּם (= revenge, be punished).

⁴⁴ Cf. T. Hieke, 'Das Alte Testament und die Todesstrafe' (*Biblica*, 85 (2004), pp.349-374; also, Berges, 'Der Zorn Gottes in der Prophetie und Poesie Israels auf dem Hintergrund altorientischer Vorstellungen' (*Biblica*, 85 (2004), pp.305-330).

⁴⁵ Wolff, 115.

which is also a great cause of the fear of death. Life, as opposed to death, has 'extensions', such as the name and the household which guarantee continuity of life. Finally, death can be incurred through a punitive action, accident, or homicide.

With the preceding section (1.3.) we provided some overall insights into the nature of the psalmist's anxieties in the face of mortal dangers as well as the way the Israelites understood death as some kind of a pattern or a disintegrative processes as opposed to totality and integrity of human being.

The following pages will be dealing with those issues which need some clarifications at the fundamental definitional level. Such as distinction between theme and motif, or the notions of what is emotive and that what is emotional and finally to clarify and distinguish between fear and phobia.

1.6. Some Postulatory Notes

Several postulates behind to the further discussions in this work need addressing to clarify the use of terms and words which may sometimes be considered synonymous. The Psalmist may muse on mortality and death as inevitable (contemplation and anticipation), or he may be exposed to death as an immediate threat (prediction). What kind of reactions does he display? Are these reactions emotional or emotive? Indeed, we may even need to be more precise in asking whether his reactions were at times in affect, as it seems to be the case in the imprecatory and self-imprecatory psalms. Or, the Psalmist may also display a more lasting emotive condition, such as being moody.⁴⁶

Another domain of possible ambiguity and false synonymy is that between fear and phobia. Some suggest that thanatophobia should simply be translated as the fear of death. Treating fear and phobia as equivalent or synonymous is not correct.⁴⁷ As we look into different psalmodic texts, and the structure of the Psalmist's emotions, we will note that his 'emotional predicament' varies in mode and intensity. As for thanatophobia, in differentiation from fear, it arrests and immobilizes from normal functioning. One such point of reference may be when the psalmist is not only contemplating mortality or predicting death (fear), or based on an immediate threat of death (thanatophobia).

⁴⁶ Cf. Bower and Forgas (2000).

⁴⁷ It may only be acceptable at the popular level in colloquial speech.

1.6.1. Theme and Motif

It ought to be made explicit that we differentiate between the ideas of the theme and the motif. As already proposed, one of our starting positions is that death is a prevailing, recurrent motif in the Psalter. It is the *Ubi sunt* motif, always re-appearing within the variety of psalmodic thematic ensembles.⁴⁸ We will also show that the motif of death can be found in many, if not most thematic units of the Psalter. Even in the thematic psalmodic sections expressing confidence, a recurrent motif of death is found.

Since the beginning of psalmodic critical studies, certain issues have taken precedence, such as structures, literary genres (*Gattungen*), settings (*Sitz im Leben*), and poetic principles and, perhaps most of all, the history of forms (*Formesgeschichte*). Some or most foci relate to the study of forms. Although it almost goes without saying, content and form belong together.⁴⁹ There are however issues of content which still linger and are open to further investigation, including the issues which this work aims to examine and consider - those which belong more to content and less so to form and genre. Building on the rich heritage of past studies of forms, the theology and theological consideration of the Psalter should hold the position of principal interest. Due to an awareness of the potential risks and dangers of form-critical studies taking over psalmodic research entirely, some voices were raised in favour of giving more focus to matters of content. One scholar in particular, Martin Noth, was conscious of the risks, and on more than one occasion issued an alert in reference to 'forms' and

⁴⁸ *Ubi sunt* ("Where are..(they)") a Latin phrase and common literary cipher and motif for mortality and life's transience.

⁴⁹ Cf. Mowinckel, 1962:25.

'formulas'. This is also where the concept of the theme comes in: "Such cooperation and correlation of form criticism and theme orientation is indispensable, if Psalm research is not to sink into "formula criticism" and "formalism" (cf. Noth in Broyles, 1989:18).

Yet traditional psalmodic scholarship favoured an emphasis on the classification of types, rather than taking on the theme(s) of the Psalter as its focus.⁵⁰ Discussing the relationship between form and contents, Mowinckel gives due warning that the issues of theme and motifs in the Psalter should not be overlooked or ignored.

A form may live, even if the content has become more or less incomprehensible, and the ideas connected with it have changed, or have got a different emphasis. It goes without saying that in the classification of the psalms due attention must be paid to the motifs or themes included in the different form elements and thus recurring in several psalms as characteristic of the group. Essential parts of the content lie concealed in the form elements. Each motif or theme must be followed up in the different psalms and its quality be determined by comparison (Mowinckel, 1962: 25).

However, Mowinckel here does not discuss the distinction between a theme and a motif, though it can be assumed he was fully mindful of the distinction. The aim of ascertaining a singular, all-encompassing theme in the Psalter may prove to be unattainable.⁵¹ With these issues and problems in mind, many scholars maintain that to "value fully any psalm, it must be used in the context of all of them" (cf. Brueggemann, 1984:16).⁵² Brueggemann then strives to corroborate the thematic context and the overall

⁵⁰ H.H.Rowley, 1961:162-209, provides an excellent insight into and an outline of the basics of Gunkel's theory of types in the Psalter.

⁵¹ The truth of the matter is that most of the theological themes of the OT, as expounded for example in W. Dyrness's (1979), *Themes in Old Testament Theology*, may be valid and found in the Psalter.

⁵² Fully endorsing the tenets and the heritage of historical-critical psalmodic scholarship (historical and cultic context) as well as following their predecessors (Gunkel, Mowinckel. Kraus et al.) there are scholars who explore postcritical approaches to the Psalter. After the emergence of cognitive linguistics and its methods (cf. The Psalmist and his experience), there seems to be a great number of scholars who

theme of the Psalter. He maintains that the overall theme of the Psalms is the orientation-disorientation-reorientation of the Psalmist, and roughly groups the Psalms thematically into poems of orientation, poems of disorientation and poems of new orientation (cf. Brueggemann, 1984:19-23).

Let us turn now to theme and motif at their definitional bearings. A theme is the unifying idea of a literary work, while a motif is subservient to the theme as its leading instrument. In literary terms, a motif reappears significantly within a single work, attendant on the main theme (cf. Baldick: 162).⁵³ In a literary work, motif and theme are closely linked, yet there is a difference between them. It is useful to indicate that a theme assumes an opinion, while a motif, being subservient to the main theme, plays an instrumentary role.⁵⁴ In the Psalter, the language of imprisonment appears frequently, whether literal, physical imprisonment, or the Psalmist being in distress, but then released by God, as in Ps 142:

Listen to my cry for help,
for I am brought very low.
Deliver me from my pursuers,
for they are too strong for me.
Lead me out of my prison
that I may give thanks to thy name! (Ps 142:7-8) (NAB).

God's sovereignty may be the main theme here, while prison language may be a subservient motif to the dominant theme. Here, a word of caution ought to be given.

One should not confuse symbols and motifs. Imprisonment here is a motif, which

are proponents of examining the psalmodic texts as evidence of the Psalmist's cognitive and emotive experiences (Brueggemann, Gillingham, Alter).

⁵³ The motif serves as a tool for a situation, an incident, or an idea of a work that is elaborated into a more general theme (cf. Baldick, 2001:162). A case in point is the book of Hosea, where the motifs of marriage and adultery serve the main theme and message of the book – God's love for his people.

⁵⁴ There are also distinctions between major and minor themes. The whole narrative of a work revolves around the main theme, while minor themes appear and disappear.

explains the main idea (theme). Symbols, on the other, hand represent something else, helping us to understand it.

Another example where we can see that death is prevailing and recurrent motif in the Psalter is Psalm 23, the psalm of confidence. This psalm has gained wide popularity due to its powerful imagery of trust, confidence and security in the shepherd's competence. "I fear no evil for you are with me", though in the rough terrains there is mortal danger, "though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death" (v.4).⁵⁵ The theme of the psalm is safety within the guardianship of God. Yet, even in the Psalmist's confidence, the death motif is present, subservient to the main theme of the psalm.

The motif of death is of course almost omnipresent in the lament Psalms, particularly where the Psalmist feels abandoned by God. One example is the well-known 22nd Psalm, marked by the theme of abandonment, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?".⁵⁶ The motif of death here and in many other psalmodic texts is conveyed by the most vivid, powerful imagery of the biblical bestiary. The psalmodic bestiary is repeatedly present in death motif scenes. The marvellous and masterly description begins with the strong *bulls* of Bashan (v.12), symbolising a mighty, life-threatening enemy, as in the vivid descriptions of destruction of the prophet Isaiah:⁵⁷

Wild oxen shall fall with them, and young steers with the mighty bulls. Their land shall be soaked with blood, and their soil made rich with fat (Isa 34:7).

⁵⁵ Cf. Terrien, 2003:240.

⁵⁶ However, the latter part of Psalm 22 (vv.2 3-32) consists of praise and thanksgiving, which raises another key psalmodic issue - that of the Psalmist's sudden changes in mood.

⁵⁷ The region of Bashan was a fertile region (east of Jordan) famous for its cattle (cf. De 32:4, Am 4:1).

This is followed by roaring *lions*, with mouths open wide to devour (v.13, 21). Perhaps the most frequent omen of death in the biblical bestiary is the dog. Here, the image is of hordes of dogs (v.16), almost always the ultimate death 'conveyers', i.e. psychopomps (cf. Berkovic, 2015:7-11).

Following the proposition that death represents a major motif within the Psalter, we will be examining not only the way the Psalmist feels and the way he expresses his feelings about death and dying, but also the thematic divisions in the Psalter in which the death motif appears.

1.6.2. Emotional and Emotive

In speaking of the Psalmist's experiences associated with his emotions or emotive states in reference to death, whether as an immediate threat (prediction) or as anticipation, we shall be using the phrase 'emotional predicament'. On many occasions, there will be a need to qualify the precise demarcation line between the emotional and the emotive. Additional effort will be required if these terms are to be used or annotated appropriately. This may not always be possible, and some overlap is almost inevitable.

'Emotional', as colloquially used, refers to a display of emotions. On the other hand, 'emotive' refers to the ability to arouse emotion; the two should not be interchangeable or synonymous. The elementary characteristic of emotions is that they involve reactions to events or the prospects of events occurring.

Emotion has the properties of a reaction: it often has an identifiable cause - a stimulus or antecedent thought, it is usually a spasmodic, intense experience of short duration, and the person is typically well aware of it (i.e. emotions typically have high cognitive involvement and elaborate content) (Bower, 2000:89).

Ortony distinguishes between event-based emotions (where reactions to events are independent of prior expectations) and prospect-based emotions (responses to confirmation or cancellation of predicted events) (Cf. Ortony, 1988:85-108; 109-133). In the Psalmist's experiences, both of these emotional reactions are present. A good example of the emotive is in Psalm 16, particularly the latter half (vv.7-11). The psalm does not describe the crisis of the threat of death, since the theme is lifelong communion with God, yet the motif of death appears again, as it does in so many psalms. Contemplation of life and the imminence of death are not resolved through emotional reaction.

I keep the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand,
I shall not be moved.
Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also dwells secure.
For thou dost not give me up to Sheol,
or let thy godly one see the Pit. (Ps 16:8-10).

However, the overall mood is emotive and though he faces the thought of death, the Psalmist does not seem to be emotional or afraid. Moreover, he is optimistic, his body 'dwells secure', his 'heart is glad' and he is convinced that he will not be 'given up to Sheol'. The overall intonation is emotive, and shows that the Psalmist actually conquers his fear.⁵⁸ Yet there are circumstances in which the Psalmist responds to a situation or an event, as in Psalm 38, one of the seven penitential psalms, with emotional reactions.⁵⁹ There he is 'broken' (דכה) and his heart is 'moaning' (נהם) (38:9).

⁵⁸ On Ps 16:8-10 there is a helpful discussion in Weiser (1962), pp.175-177.

⁵⁹ Cf. Pss 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143.

In an emotional state, he walks around aimlessly, in what is known as psychomotor agitation⁶⁰:

I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
all the day I go about mourning (כל־היום קדר הלכתי) (Ps 38:7).

Similar descriptions and emotional reactions are found in other Psalms, such as Ps 35:14 and 43:2. In his 'emotional predicament', the Psalmist may appropriate an *emotive* (as in Ps 16) or *emotional* disposition (as in Ps 38). As for his reactions to death threats (prediction), his emotional reactions prevail over the emotive, though his emotive predicament is predominant when musing on his mortality (anticipation).

We have provided some preliminary observations on the distinctions between the 'emotional' and the 'emotive'. It has also been noted that within the emotion type of fear, fear and phobia should not be treated as synonymous. We now need to give some thought to and focus on the more specific emotion type of fear, and what distinguishes fear from phobia or anxiety.

1.6.3. Fear and Phobia

This investigation of the emotional predicaments of the Psalmist in facing death threats and some introductory observations on the fear emotion type need to assess some distinctions. For example, commonly asked question is 'How is thanatophobia different from fear of death?' No doubt, such questions are most likely founded on the conventional dictionary definitions where thanatophobia is translated as 'fear' of death. We of course cannot expect that dictionaries and lexicons will go into discussing the distinctions between 'fears' and 'phobias'. On the other hand, one does rightfully

⁶⁰ Cf. Barre (2001: 177-187).

expect that analytical scholarship cannot be grounded on lexical definitions. However, let us explore the distinctions between fear; as an emotion type, and phobia; as one of very specific expression of that emotion type.

Biblical texts are obviously furnished with fear emotion type vocabulary in very different contexts and intensities (fear, dread, confusion).⁶¹ Here we cannot go into detailed discussion on emotion theories and emotion structures, yet some basic notes, particularly regarding the fear emotion type group and distinctions within it are required.⁶²

In most dictionaries thanatophobia is simply defined as the ‘fear of death’. Phobia on the other hand is defined as ‘anxiety disorder’ featured by: persistent and irrational fear disproportional to the actual danger, resulting with incapacity to function normally. It can become a state of mind, rather than just an emotional reaction as with fear. At the same time, as it will be noted from the psalmist’s thanatophobic experience, phobic reactions can be manifest in the so called psychomotor agitation, i.e. restlessness and aimless motion, ‘walking about whole day long with a gloomy face’ (cf. Ps 35:14; 38:7; 42:10).

Anxiety is emotive condition that belongs to fear type emotions (cf. Gruber, 1990). While fear is caused by events or agents, a variety of ‘diffuse causes’ may make a person ‘feel anxious’ (cf. Ortony, 1988:111).⁶³ Job felt anxious (phobic) about what the future had in store for him: “What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has

⁶¹ Some of the more frequent fear words that appear in biblical texts include: fear (אָר), dread and confusion (התת), dread (פחד), anxiety (אָנ).

⁶² For a detailed and expanded discussion on emotion structures, see Ortony, A. *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions* (1988).

⁶³ Anxiety is usually vague and indirect, with no particular source, and more unconsciously oriented.

happened to me” (cf. Jb 3:25) (NIV); the Septuagint here translates: “φόβος γάρ ὄν ἐφρόντισα ἤλθεν μοι”. What one reads in this text is that Job’s fear was a persistent fear, in many ways disproportional to the actual danger. At the time before the misfortunes struck him his fears were seem to have debilitating effect on him. The accumulation of his fears resulted in him feeling anxious. Some have suggested that his very prosperity and success induced ‘a need for punishment’. Clines suggest that “success has aroused guilt to an intolerable degree, and has induced freefloating anxiety” (Clines, 1989:103). As for Job’s religious devotion, it is impregnated with a more virtuous kind of fear, that of the ‘fear of God’ (ירא אלהים) (Jb 1:8). On the other hand, anxiety may be conceived as an outcome of punishment for disobedience, as in Lev 26:17:

I will set my face against you, and you shall be smitten before your enemies; those who hate you shall rule over you, and you shall flee when none pursues you. (Lev 26:17).

Anxiety is a state of mind accompanied by physical and behavioural aspects, such as restlessness or nervousness. An example of the Psalmist’s anxiety is found in penitential Psalm 38. There, he paces back and forth gloomily (קדר), his days are filled with affliction (ענה), and he feels utterly broken (דכה עד־מאד) under the threat of imminent death (cf. 38:12). Phobia then represent a type of anxiety disorder, and as with anxiety, more severe forms of phobia may have a number of psychosomatic manifestations.⁶⁴ The sufferer is obstructed and his ability to function normally is limited.⁶⁵ When experiencing such anxiety disorders, the Psalmist frequently feels

⁶⁴ In terms of modern science, phobia belongs to the realm of neurosis.

⁶⁵ In spite of the fact that emotion in the Hebrew Bible is still a neglected theme (cf. Kruger, 2000:181), a number of authors have addressed the issue of the physiology of fear and distress in the Hebrew Bible (Collins, 1971; Driver, 1953; Kruger, 2004; Barre, 2001; Smith, 1998).

claustrophobic, or “shut up so that he cannot escape” (Ps 88:9) (כלא ולא אצא).⁶⁶ Similarly to כלא, the root צרר (be narrow, tight) is found frequently, generally in reference to trouble and distress. It refers to narrow straits, where a person is bound or forced into a constricted position, unable to move.⁶⁷ The Psalmist then feels the ‘constraints of his heart’ (צרר לב) (Ps 25:17).⁶⁸ From these narrow straits, where the Psalmist is trapped, only God can bring him out into the open (רהב) (e.g. Ps 18:36).

Fear as negative emotion is a reaction or a response to events or agents (prospect based or unexpected). That is a common experience for most people, although with differing intensity - from terror (strong fear) to worry (weak fear).⁶⁹ Fear, although negative, still allows a person to function. Phobia and anxiety, on the other hand, comes close to psychosis, and is debilitating, hindering normal functioning. As it develops, it can erupt and be overwhelming to the point of near psychosis (cf. Lacocque, 1984:218f). The Psalmist is so weary in his fears and anxieties that he is unable to function normally, as in Psalm 6:

I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping (Ps 6:7).

Similarly the Psalmist is so ‘encompassed’ by troubles that he cannot see things as they are (cf. Ps 40:12) or even speak (cf. Ps 77:4). He feels shut in (כלא) and cannot escape (אצא) (cf. Ps 88:9: כלא ולא אצא).

⁶⁶ The basic meaning of the root כלא is to restrict or restrain flow or movement.

⁶⁷ Cf. King, 2012:141f.

⁶⁸ Jeremiah undergoes similar distress and refers to the ‘walls of the heart’ (קירות לב) “My breast! My breast! How I suffer! The walls of my heart! My heart beats wildly, I cannot be still.” (Jer 4:19)(NAB).

⁶⁹ In the emotional framework and response, unexpectedness is recognised as important for emotions and directly correlates with the intensity of the emotion. Unexpectedness complicates matters, as it can be manifested in all sorts of ways (cf. Ortony, 1988:64f.).

Most people are afraid of death and dying, and this is frequently tied to religious beliefs. Though a full and detailed analysis of this complex emotional structure cannot be given here, in relation to the psalmodic texts we ought to be able to establish what the Psalmist experiences - a disorder of the mind, full blown phobia, worry or a state of depression?

We have by now hopefully establish the distinctions between fears and phobias. While phobia can obstruct and make normal functioning unmanageable; fear though a toilsome emotional challenge still provides a human being for relative operational prowess. Further through this dissertation we now ought to identify the psalmist's fears of death and dying, noting also when does his emotional state display thanatophobic signs.

1.7. Thesis objectives

In summary of the preceding sections, particularly 1.2. and 1.3., several premises arise upon which this dissertation will rest.

First, it is the supposition that the fear of death is one of the chief motifs in the Psalter. Equally distributed within a variety of thematic segments (whether within the psalms of lament or even in the psalms of confidence). This motif of death emerges in a variety of ways and representations. Whether it is in the more overpowering manner as that of the psalmist's anxiety over his death, which in effect incapacitates him from normal functioning (thanatophobia) or simply death being mentioned almost in a 'casual' way (Ps 23:4). Death and the fear of death, so it seems is the underpinning contexts of so many Psalms.⁷⁰ Since the Psalter is primarily a religious text the Psalmist's experiences fundamentally reflect his religious devotion, where his emotional predicament is closely related to his religiosity. Within this framework, how does one reckon with his fear of death? The relationship between religiosity and death anxiety has been well recognised and often investigated.⁷¹ Fear of death is recognised as one of the primeval human fears, in the words of Andre Lacocque: "Even the earliest men and women understood that inner peace is unequivocally tied up with the taming of our most primitive fear, the fear of death" (Lacocque, 1984:219).

Discussing further the 'fear of engulfment' Lacocque introduces one of the most primitive of images of death, "being swallowed by a monster" (Lacocque: 219). Many religious texts, myths and legends include this motif of engulfment by a monster or by

⁷⁰ See above: 'Fear and phobia'.

⁷¹ James (1936), Lacocque (1984), Fritscher (2003), Wen (2010), McNamara (2012).

earth.⁷² Monsters are often of the watery kind (sea monsters) such as in the Mesopotamian myths and Tiamat, the primordial goddess of the ocean, described as a sea dragon.⁷³ Some similarity, if not equivalence, is found in the biblical Leviathan, representing the forces of chaos and death.⁷⁴ But in the day of God's revenge, this deathmonster will be destroyed:

In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea. (IsA 27:1).

In the psalmodic text, it is again God who crushes the heads of Leviathan (note that this monster is thought of as having several heads: "Thou didst crush the heads of Leviathan" (אתה רצצת ראשי לויתן) (74:14). Apart from these watery monsters, the earth itself can engulf and draw one to death, as in the story of the punishment of the Korah rebellion in Numbers 16:

And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men that belonged to Korah and all their goods (Nu 16:32).

This also explains the location of Sheol, the place and realm of death and the departed. It is conceived as being below or within the earth (see here: Orientational metaphors). This is why the Psalmist often refers to "those who go down" the (ירדי), whether to silence or to the Pit.⁷⁵

⁷² P. Lacocque, (1984) 'Fear of Engulfment and the Problem of Identity' (*JRH* 23/3). Lacocque also makes reference to 'nocturnal thoughts' which can be filled with apprehension of engulfment and the fear of death; he says "such primitive terror really never leaves us." (Lacocque:218).

⁷³ Tiamat's description includes a tail and she is often represented as a sea serpent. Cf. Beyerlin, 1978:80-89.

⁷⁴ Cf. Ps 74:14

⁷⁵ As for the religious interpretation of emotions or emotional interpretation of religion, Schilderman's discussion links these to the varying natures of different types of religions, whether more transcendent or more literalist. Schilderman here also rightly notices that the traditional distinction between emotion and reason in which the two compete does not contribute towards a better understanding of the relationship between religion and emotions (see: H. Schilderman (2001) *Religion and Emotion*: 85-96).

Secondly, for better understanding of the Psalmist's emotion of fear of death we ought to handle those issues which will tackle our better understanding of who the Psalmist was in his personal identity (i.e. his individuality, personality and privacy). While the Psalmist as a private individual displays a plethora of emotive or emotional reactions to the fear of death, the issue of the identity of the Psalmist as a private individual is a major concern of this study. Can the title allude to a singular person, whether the poet who wrote individual Psalms, the editor of the Psalter, or an Israelite of the time, an 'experiencer' who lived through all that is depicted in the Psalms? Is private individuality and individual experience acceptable in the context of the Psalter? Or, as some have suggested, is genuine individuality abnormal, even arrogant (cf. Mowinckel, 1962 ch.III:p.43)? These questions will prompt us to outline some of the key issues in psalmodic studies and in interpreting of the Psalms, the identity of the individual in the Psalter, and the textual episodes where the Psalmist's mood radically changes within the same Psalm.

Thirdly, and most notably, we recognise that in the texts and contexts of death, psalmodic literary compositions show an extraordinary designs of motion vocabulary (motion words), which more often than not correlate to the Psalmist's emotional makeup and predicament. In the dissertation such correlation will be referred to as *motion-emotion axis*. What is then proposed is that in the Psalter, the motion words (or verb groups) are frequently found in close vicinity to the emotion vocabulary. Our question is to establish how and why these correlate, particularly relative to the psalmist's fear of death experiences.

Some may even suggest that literary and linguistic motion-emotion vicinity of vocabulary may be a mere linguistic accident; or perhaps a matter of pragmatic literary conventions. Alternatively, as we propose, it calls for closer examination and an ontological explanation. Conventions, particularly in poetic material, cannot simply be evaded and ignored. They cannot simply be reckoned as poetic embellishment or simply a matter of poetic pragmatics. They still require an interpretative strategy. We ought to be able to answer to a question: is this a case of more than a mere linguistic coincidence, that motion and emotion so often stand so close to each other? It may be that such motion-emotion axis has not yet been tackled in biblical research is that such appearances were most of the time been treated as a matter of literary conventions. Therefore it has been accepted as satisfactory interpretative strategy. We shall observe and examine the intriguing relationship between motion and emotion in the Psalter. Or, more precisely, how is death and dying (as the utmost form of immobility) grammatically and linguistically adhered closely to motion (verbs and grammar). And how the underpinning psalmist's emotional reaction fits in his fears of death.

1.8. Scope of the Work

The core issue of this dissertation (death in the Psalms) and its focus (motion vocabulary and emotion) cannot claim to cover the entire Psalter or embracing each and every Psalm, and this is not a commentary to the Book of Psalms. Consequently, the scope of this work ought to be narrowed down and confined to either a selection of particular group of Psalms, which clearly touch on and include the motif of death. Somewhat unexpectedly a motif of death will be found even in such Psalms, where we may anticipate it the least, as in Psalms of confidence.

With more clear display of death motif we will find it in penitential, imprecatory and self-imprecatory Psalms.⁷⁶ It will also be found in sections of other individual Psalms, outside those groups, but which portions clearly comprise elements of imprecation or penitence.⁷⁷ Our attention will be assigned, furthermore and somewhat unexpectedly to examine those Psalms or portions where the psalmist confidence in Yahweh is the main theme, yet the motif of death is all the same decidedly integrated in such texts (for example: Ps 16; 23; 27).

Finally, we will focus on those Psalms or portions, where we find a considerable presence motion-emotion axis clearly evident. Particularly where in the context of emotional or emotive predicaments, there is a discernible motional vocabulary, in the face of death threat. For the sake of the argument, there where the motion-emotion axis is distinctly present, we refer to them as '(e)motional Psalms'. These will be examined chiefly following our organisation and the manner of motion patterns: such as words of haste, words of surrounding and following; words of stumbling and wandering and words of throwing and falling.⁷⁸

Closer examinations will be given to the psalms where the psalmist expresses sorrow and repentance for his sins (penitential psalms), psalms where the psalmist

⁷⁶ Imprecatory Psalms are usually numbered as follows: Pss 7; 35; 55; 58; 59; 69; 83; 109; 137; 139. The motifs of death are clearly present in many imprecatory sections of other Psalms, such as: Ps 5:11 ('cast them down'); 12:4 ('cut off all deceiving lips'); 17:13 ('deliver my soul from the wicked, by Thy sword'); 54:7 ('destroy them'); 58:7-8 ('break their teeth'); 59:12 ('slay them'), etc.

⁷⁷ There are seven penitential psalms (according to ecclesial titular designation): Pss 6; 32; 38; 51; 104; 130; 143. The psalms grouped under this name are expressive of sorrow for sin and requesting repentance with very clear and prominent elements of thanatophobia; for the psalmist's sin may alienate him from God and that for him may mean death. As for example in Ps 6: "Return, O LORD, deliver my soul"(6:5) or "in death there is no remembrance of thee"(6:6).

⁷⁸ For example, in Ps 104:29 with the fear of death there is an assemblage of motion ('haste', 'gather', 'withdraw'). Similarly, all of Ps 142 is interwoven with emotion and motion. There the psalmist in his mortal anxiety (צָרָר) walks (הֵלֵךְ), his spirit is faint (lit. 'turn aside', עָנָף), he has no way to flee (נֹס).

utters imprecations against his enemies or pursuers (imprecatory psalms) and psalms where the psalmist calls for punishment over himself, professing his own innocence (self-imprecation).

1.9. Organisation of the Thesis

Chapter 1. Introduction

With general introductory remarks (1.1.) this chapter opens up the nature and the place of the Psalter in Judaic and Christian history; followed by indicating the main concerns of this thesis - emotions of the psalmist and his fear of death; in relation to motion vocabulary of the language of death.

Closer outlining of how the psalmist's emotions are presented in the Psalter is provided in the next section of this chapter, followed by closer exposition of the main concern of the dissertation, including: (i) the fear of death of the psalmist, and (ii) some fundamental ideas on the concept of death in Hebrew thought (1.2; 1.3.).

Basic hypothesis of the dissertation is furnished focusing on the following assumptions: (i) death is a recurring motif in the Psalter (1.4.); noting the (ii) basic remarks on the distinctions between phobia (thanatophobia) and fear, and (iii) between a theme and a motif. The end of Chapter 1 focuses on the thesis objectives; with the three dissertation's propositions; (i) death is a recurring motif in the Psalter, with particular concerns to emotion and motion vocabulary, (ii) recognizing the psalmist as a private individual, so to be able to speak of the individual's fears or any other emotion, (iii) recognizing that the emotional predicament of the psalmist in literary context is very frequently followed by motion words and orientation metaphors.

Chapter 2. Linguistic Considerations

This chapter concentrates on religious language in general and in the Psalter in particular. In matters of religious language, issues that we deal with are: 'conventions' and 'parrhesia' of the psalmist in his emotional predicament.

Second part of the chapter focuses on metaphors and concepts specifically, conceptual metaphors, particularly in relation to motion as a concept. Finally, we examine the relationships between motion and space, as they are fundamentally related; and the way this relationship is defined in theological terms (theology of space).

Chapter 3. Realms of Death

This chapter addresses the five realms of death: 'the grave'; 'the silence'; 'the name'; 'the dust' and 'the depths'. These are found in Hebrew conceptualization of death brought forward in many OT texts, particularly and more vividly in poetic material and the Psalter. Rich and vivid imagery of death realms as portrayed in the Psalter is particularly well researched by Othmar Keel (1978), in his famed work *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*. This may need a separate treatment but it was considered of an import for this work to provide the basics of the imagery of death as found in the Psalter, even though it is more comprehensive than the more focused topic of this dissertation.

Chapter 4. The Psalter and the Psalmist

Intention of this chapter is twofold. One is to call on the Form-critical approach to the Psalter, which in so many ways determined our understandings of the psalms.

Further to this, we need to enquire how that particular historical and critical heritage of the psalmodic studies relate to some aspects of this work. There are key issues in studying the Psalter which directly relate to our subject matters (eg. psalmist as a private individual, swings in mood, individual anthropology). Given a great legacy to psalmodic studies, with the Form-critical scholarship, and fathers of *Formgeschichte* methods (Gunkle, Mowinckel, Kraus and others) we are indebted to the studies of the Psalter for their scholarship success. However, following this now traditional approach to the Psalter, we critically ought to question some of their assumptions.

Chapter 5. Psalmist and His Emotion

This relatively short chapter aims to open up some more focused topics of emotional predicaments of the psalmist. Particularly reference is given to emotions as these often come as an emotive concoction rather than clear cut basic emotions. Exemplary for that are two most frequent of emotions – fear and anger - perhaps generally most common, and as many authors indicate surely also in biblical texts.

Chapter 5. Hebrew Motion Vocabulary and Grammar of Death

The chapter begins with introductory remarks on the way motion is generally observed in threefold manner (general motion, directed and the manner of motion). This is followed by an overview of studies in the field of biblical studies which refer to Hebrew motion in Hebrew Bible.

The next section of the chapter is devoted to provide an overview of the biblical writer's concept of the world (Hebrew cosmology) and how in real or fictive terms the psalmist moves within such space. Central part of this chapter outlines four possible

modes of motion, more specifically in the manner of motion dimension (verbs of haste and hurry; verbs of surrounding and following; verbs of stumbling and wondering and verbs of falling and throwing).

Finally the chapter closes with some purely grammatical aspects (Grammar of death) within the Hebrew verbal system, particularly that of the verbal stems of the 'weak verbs'; noting that there seem to be a pattern of verbal subgroups such as Ayin Waw or Ayin Yod, and Double Ayin verbs which notably appear in the motion-emotion axis pattern.

Motion verbs such as of the type of: Ayin Waw: (טול, חוש, נוס), or Double Ayin type: (אפף, נדד, סבב) etc. It seems that grammatically, these motion verb types are prominent in motion-emotion axis representation. We expect to demonstrate that such distinct appearance of these verbal groups is not a matter of grammatical coincidence.

Chapter 6. Some Distinct Psalms

In the scope of this work there are some particular individual Psalms or subgroups within the Psalter which are particularly concerned with the psalmist's distress, and particularly the fear of death. More specifically these are penitential Psalms and imprecatory Psalms. Among some of those the idea of self-imprecation is especially interesting to examine.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

The conclusion, first looks through those original and rudimentary points of departure which we set off with in the first three sections of the Introduction (Appropriation, Context based approach and Asymmetrical world of the psalmist).

Further to that, we determine in our conclusion that religious language of the Psalter and of the psalmist is not 'reducible to text'. That is to say that psalmist's prayer, as a fundamental type of religious language, can not be treated only as text and sentences, but also as utterances of the psalmist.

To be able to argue our case we also infer that the psalmodic anthropology, apart from collective dimensions, clearly and in an undisguised manner bring forth a powerful anthropology of a private individual. Finally, we expect to have proven that the fear of death is one of the leading psalmodic motifs in the Psalter, as frequently noted that theme and motif are to be distinguished.

We now need to examine some linguistic considerations in relation to religious language, language of death and one of the central tenets for this work, metaphor and motion as conceptual metaphor.

2. LINGUISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

Linguistic considerations for this dissertation are determining factor for several reasons. One is that language is the repository of what we know of the ancients, where language is not only the prominent, but the only witness we have in assessing the psalmist and his experiences. Secondly, Psalter surely belongs to a religious language type; and religious language to certain extent may or may not be conventional. Thirdly, language of death belongs to that dimension of human speech where a plethora of linguistic indirections are used (euphemisms, general circumlocutions, metaphors, verbal circumventions). Among those, more common, and diachronically widespread, are metaphors of 'death as a departure' or 'death as sleep'. As we shall explore further, these, or similar language avoiding techniques, are quite understandable since death and dying is as unpleasant and emotionally traumatic experience.

2.1. Religious Language and Conventions

The Psalter has been identified as theopoetic literary material and prayer utterances.¹ That is to say, the psalmist's thanatophobic experiences are enclosed in the form of prayer, and prayer is indisputably one of the constants of religion.² It is then worth considering the religious dimension of the language of the Psalms, irrespective of whether the Psalter as a 'prayer book' and the prayers of the Psalmist are offered within a public, cultic service, or as the prayers of a private individual uttered in privacy as a demonstration of personal piety.

¹ See here: 'Psalms as prayer utterances'.

² Cf. McNamara, 2009: 206.

Instead of colloquial language, people at prayer use more formalized, elevated kind of speech, which also includes certain conventions, customary in the language of poetry and prayer. McNamara is right when he notes that the religious language of prayer is “peculiar” because the addressee is so special.

The practice of praying varies tremendously in form and content (repetitive mantras, praise, petition, worship, thanksgiving, etc)...When people pray or when engage in religious ceremonies or rituals, they talk in a more formalized style of language (McNamara, 2009: 206).

Speaking to an invisible interlocutor, who also happens to have a divine nature, can be a bewildering enterprise. That is, in religion as a subjective experience, prayer engages with an invisible presence.³ The question is; will there be any response? In relation to religious language Webb Keane (1997) summarizes certain issues, particularly prayer.

By what means can we, and in what manner ought we, talk with invisible interlocutors? How can we get them to respond? How should we talk about them? By what marks do we know that some words originate from divine sources? Are these words true, fitting, efficacious, or compelling in some special way?

These questions touch on more general problems concerning the relations among performance, text, and context. They also involve the relations among experience, concrete practices, and what is culturally construed to lie beyond ordinary experience, whether that is in the past, the future, at a spatial distance, or across an ontological divide. The problems of communication between this world and another, or of handling authoritative words derived from distant sources, are critical to many religious practices: Not only do they impose special semiotic difficulties on human practitioners, but their language must sometimes contend with the fact that the very presence of the deity, spirits, or ancestors cannot be taken for granted (Keane, 1997:48).

These seem to be the basic, common characteristics of religious language, conventions and prayer. Du Bois (1986) lists some features of religious language/speech that include:

- (i) different vocabulary and intonation,
- (ii) more fluent speech than is usual in colloquial speech, and

³ Cf. William James.

(iii) vocabulary and lexis with archaic elements not usual in colloquial language.

This kind of elevated, high-style speech is out of the 'ordinary', but why?⁴ Some scholars suggest that it is due to a shifting of control, from a mere human to a superior agent (God), or a shifting of identity, i.e. "The individual sets aside his or her own identity to interact with or participate in the identity of the spirit of God" (McNamara: 208).

McNamara (2009) is also right in pointing out that religious ritual is 'people's work'. Namely, during rituals, "participants do something together that cannot be done by each participant alone" (ib. 209). Yet, apart from the fact that the Psalter is a liturgical text, this is exactly where we often find the Psalmist in his personal and private piety, using words and prayers that would hardly be performed in public.⁵ Then, he often has no patterned religious language, as we might expect. The parrhetic, unhindered nature of the Psalmist's language has already been noted; in such cases his language is not religious at all. This is especially true in the light of the fact that there are many lamental psalms or lamental portions within other psalms which are not categorized as psalms of lament. Actually, in the Psalter, we find not only individual psalms of lament, but frequently the juxtaposition of lament and thanksgiving within a single psalm.⁶ Relative to our focus of interest (death in the Psalms), Bernd Janowski

⁴ Grammatically the archaic verbal forms seem to be more appreciated to make the whole religious scenery and language more hallowed.

⁵ See here: 'Parrhesia of the psalmist' and 'Anthropology of the Psalms'.

⁶ For example, Ps 22:23-32 (thanksgiving), after Ps 22:1-22 (lament). This problem of the Psalmist's swings of mood has been already discussed in Chapter 2.

makes an interesting suggestion and comments on the themes in such psalmodic texts.

He says,

The common theme of both genres can be defined as the conceptual pair of 'life and death, in the two way direction of meaning, each of which articulates a different experience, 'from life to death' (lament) and 'from death to life' (praise) (Janowski, 39).

Janowski's statement is an ample affirmation of some of the basic ideas of this dissertation, as well as tackling some of the critical issues in examining the Psalms, such as the Psalmist's swings in mood. He also insists that laments are not to be observed as an 'illicit' aspect of faith. On the contrary, lament before God is not only legitimate, it is "an indispensable element of faith" (Janowski, id.). To sum up and highlight the issue; laments are actually not only fundamental anthropological texts in the Psalter, they are in many ways the basics of biblical spirituality. Suffice it to note that some of the most admirable, spiritually laudable episodes in the lives of certain biblical characters arose out of the context of their laments and the clearly parrhetic mode of their speech. For example, after Job's dirge and rather arduous laments, the divine verdict was as follows,

My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends; for you have not spoken of me what is right (כִּי־יָ), as my servant Job has (Jb 42:7).

Similar examples of how laments affirm biblical spirituality are seen in many other biblical characters and episodes, like Moses or the prophet Elijah.⁷ What is commendable in all of them is that for all these individuals, through the phase of laments, their spiritual coherence experienced an ascent (cf. Jb 42:5). Of course, in view of traditional religious language, it may be asked if lament is an appropriate way

⁷ With Moses, there is an incident of lamentation to God where he seems to feel unable to carry the burdens of leading the people (Nu 11:15). In the case of the prophet Elijah, it is about fear for his life and his grievance against God after faithful service (1Ki 19).

of speaking with God or to God. This is important, since the more elevated kind of religious language in prayer takes place in a restrained context, particularly in public liturgy.⁸

Besides the 'legitimacy' of lament, there is also a discussion regarding the extent to which poetic language 'aims at reality'. Ricoeur points to this and highlights some extreme views, where poetry is seen as a "question of nothing outside of language itself"; in other words, poetry is a self-contained language with little if any relevance to reality. Or in Ricoeur's words,

Here we run up against a very strong tendency in contemporary literary criticism to deny that poetic language aims at reality or that it says anything whatsoever about something exterior to itself, since the suppression of reference, the abolition of reality seems to be the very law for the functioning of poetic language (cf. Ricoeur, 1975:83).

As we look through and into the Psalmist's experiences, particularly in the context of mortal danger and his fear of death, in answer to these questions regarding the reality of poetic language and the psalms, it can soon be demonstrated that the Psalmist's experience is very real. In fact, his laments are not only very real, but they also give "dramatic energy to praise" (Janowski, 40).

Another point of interest in relation to religious language is the question of conventions. The language of the Psalms thrives on conventions and metaphors. Conventions are essential to the functioning of poetic language, and the Psalter being poetry, it can hardly avoid certain linguistic conventions and forms. The relationship between literary conventions and conventional meanings and metaphors also needs investigating. However, one cannot emphasize enough that the poetic aspects of

⁸ Janowski stresses how the word 'lament' is to be understood in modern use; whether it is too broad or too narrow; and whether it occurs almost exclusively in a negative context (cf. Janowski, 2013:36-37).

language, conventions and metaphors cannot be equated with literary embellishment. For instance, when the Psalmist uses the word 'cords' (חבל) as a convention, whether the 'cords of death' (חבל־מוֹת) or 'cords of Sheol' (חבל שאול) or even birth pangs (חבל יולדה) (cf. Hos 13:13), this is not a mere literary device. It reflects reality and the Psalmist's very real experiences and emotional predicament.⁹

While in the fashion of religious and an elevated language, the Psalmist calls upon God as his 'shepherd' (רעה) (Ps 23), a 'stronghold' (שגב) (Ps 9), a 'rock' (סלע) (Ps 18), a 'king' (מלך) (Ps 10), or his 'chosen portion' (חלק) (Ps 16), the Lord is also his 'light' (אור) (Ps 27). On the other hand, in his thanatophobic emotional predicament, the vindictively disposed Psalmist speaks in a parrhetic manner. There is no rhetoric elevation, but language typical of imprecatory texts and laments. He begs to be 'thrown in the dust of death' (עפר־מוֹת) (Ps 7:5; 22:15), as a broken man ready for death (Ps 109); he knows that Yahweh 'turns humans to return to dust' (תשב אנוש עד־דכא) (Ps 90).

As we are going to assess the language of death in the Psalter, we will note that it often, if not predominantly, operates on the basis of 'linguistic indirections'; mostly by means of euphemistic constructions.

⁹ Although we cannot go into an elaborate general discussion on literality and non-literality and the familiar problem of the 'form-meaning' pair, neither can we avoid touching on the subject. More attention to these issues will be paid in the next sections discussing the problems of metaphor and meaning.

2.2. Language of Death

A distinctive feature of death language in general is its use of linguistic indirection, through a variety of linguistic forms and stylistic devices. Throughout cultures and ages, verbal circumvention and linguistic indirection have usually concerned the most intimate areas of human life, such as love, sex or death. Social, cultural or religious customs tend to prohibit, or at least restrict ways of speaking about these in direct, unhindered, parrhetic speech. Effectively, they become linguistic taboos. Verbal taboos are grouped around three main areas of human endeavour: (i) that which is unethical (not morally correct), (ii) that which is unaesthetic (not visually pleasing), and (iii) that which is emotionally unpleasant (fear, death). Elaborate linguistic devices and techniques can be used to avoid direct reference to these domains, i.e. 'taboo-avoiding techniques' (TAT), such as euphemism and circumlocution.¹⁰

For humans, the termination of life, death and dying are traumatic experiences with a high emotional charge. This is mirrored in the way we think or speak about death and dying. As a result there are some favourite euphemistic linguistic indirections for death and dying, such as sleep, departure and silence. There are many collocations and linguistic clichés which make use of the verb (to die, dying) or the noun (death) as well as adjectival forms (dead, deadly, deathly). Something unbearably tedious is 'deadly boring'; traffic warnings read "Dead Slow", and this is not restricted

¹⁰ Though euphemism and circumlocution are close linguistic relatives, they are not to be equated. Euphemisms are taboo-avoiding techniques (TAT), circumlocutions are linguistic 'beatings about the bush'. The difference being that circumlocutory expressions do not necessarily include one of the three conditional elements which determine euphemistic expressions.

to English or other modern languages.¹¹ The use of death lexica in biblical texts may convey grammatical superlatives. The outraged prophet Jonah was described as “angry to death” (עַד־מוֹת) (Jon 4:9):

God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "I do well to be angry, angry enough to die (הֲרַהֵלִי עַד־מוֹת) (Jon 4:9).

Samson's wife Delilah bothered him so much so that he was annoyed to the utmost or “deathly weary” (קִצַּר לְמוֹת) of her complaints:

And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death (Jdg 16:16) (וּתְקַצַּר מִפֶּשׁוּ לְמוֹת)

In the face of death and dying, human beings often get emotive or emotional (see here: Emotional and emotive) which then affects the way language and words are employed.¹² Such ‘emotional predicaments’ lead to certain linguistic changes and shifts. The more intense the emotional arena, the more susceptible language becomes towards metaphoricity and changes in semantics, when a word acquires a new meaning or connotation. This principle is usually known as *Sperber’s law* (after, Hans Sperber), and describes a semantic shift which often occurs between literality and non-literality,

If at a certain time a complex of ideas is so strongly charged with feeling that it causes one word to extend its sphere and change its meaning, we may confidently expect that other words belonging to the same emotional complex will also shift their meaning (in Ullmann: 240).

For example, death is often compared with departure, whether as a motion event or concept. When death is referred to as a ‘departure’, it shifts in meaning from

¹¹ The phraseology of accentuated 'superlatives', using the nominal (death) or adjectival (dead, deadly) forms in expressions of extreme experiential episodes: *frozen with fear (emotion), * bored to death or deadly boring (emotion), * dead slow (caution), * dead silence (utter silence), * dead as a doornail (utterly lifeless), * drop dead (sudden death), * till death do us part' (eventual and final), * dead reckoning (guesswork), * dead language (no longer in use), etc.

¹² There are, of course, dimensions in human life where death can be considered a relief, or heroic act (cf. Daube: 1962).

the real event to a metaphor (cf. Lakoff in Ortony, 1993:231-232). Death as a departure is one of the most widely recognized (literary) conventions. Is it then a metaphor or a convention? Ning Yu puts it in this way;

In cultures where death is departure is taken as literal belief, namely the belief that spatial movement is involved in death, this equation certainly is not a metaphor. If a concept is understood in its own terms and hence semantically autonomous, it is not metaphorical. If, on the other hand, a concept is understood in terms of another concept or concepts, it is not semantically autonomous and therefore is a metaphor (Ning Yu, 1998).

It seems then that even if 'death as departure' is strictly speaking a metaphor, it is also a convention of 'death talk'. Does that mean that all conventions are actually metaphors, or all metaphors conventions? One way or the other, one is fully aware that death is a real event, even if conveyed by a metaphor of motion. Logically, if death is a departure, then on that journey there ought to be a 'driver'. In the death-departure metaphor, Lakoff observes death personified (at least in English) as a driver, coachman, footman, etc. (cf. Lakoff in Ortony, 1993:231). Then he asks why death is related to motion and departure,

Why isn't death personified as a teacher or a carpenter or an ice cream salesman? Somehow, the ones that occur repeatedly seem appropriate. Why? In studying personifications in general, we found that the overwhelming number seems to fit a single pattern: events (like death) are understood in terms of actions by some agents (like reaping). Consider, for example, the death is departure metaphor. Departure is an event. If we understand this event as an action on the part of some casual agent – someone who brings about, or helps to bring about, departure (Lakoff in Ortony, 1993:231-232).

This is helpful and exactly where our exploration about death as motion (departure) will help greatly in explaining motion vocabulary of the psalmodic language of death and how, if at all, it relates to psalmist's emotional predicament; as we find it in literary context.

In the Psalmist's thanatophobic experiences, various death personifications, or such 'death-drivers', occur. One may be God himself (Ps 71:20; 102:25), but in the

realm of biblical-psalmodic bestiary, animals are also personifications of ‘death-drivers’ on the death-journey. In the history of religions, these are known as *psychopomps*, or guides of souls to death. In the biblical and psalmodic bestiary, the dog most frequently adopts the role of a *psychopomp* (Pss 22; 59; 68) (cf. Berkovic, 2015:7-11).¹³ Let us now examine several distinctive words and frequently used euphemisms when speaking of death.

In the metaphorisation of the language of death, something similar happens with the word ‘silence’. Silence is the absence of sounds or noise, and as such, it is an event phenomenon. Yet when speaking of the total lack of sound, one may describe it as ‘deadly silence’. As death is highly charged with emotive and emotional predicaments, ‘silence’ can undergo a semantic shift and become a metaphor for death. When the Psalmist goes through a near-death experience, he frequently describes it as going down to ‘silence’, as if to a location, but in the realm of death. Therefore, “The dead do not praise the LORD, nor do any that go down into silence (ירד דומה) (Ps 115:17). We shall be looking more closely to ‘silence’ as the realm of death.”¹⁴

Another common metaphor for death is ‘sleep’. A dead person is said to be “sleeping an extremely deep sleep in his grave - so deep that he will never again wake up” (Edwards, 1978:43). The sleep of death is indeed accomplished in deadly silence, but it is a rest which is not welcome. In a lament outcry, the Psalmist prays:

Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;
lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death

¹³ A *Psychopomp* (Greek ψυχοπομπός), literally “guide of souls”, is an angel, god, or demi-god given the task of guiding the souls of dead into the afterlife. In different cultures and religions, these guides are mainly depicted as animals (‘horses’, ‘ravens’, ‘dogs’, ‘owls’, etc.). In Greek mythology, the task is assigned to the god Hermes.

¹⁴ See here: Realms of death

(האירה עיני פן־אישן המות) (Ps 13:4)

“Consider and answer me”, or perhaps: “Look at me, answer me”, with Dahood, who suggests that here the psalmist’s cry also denote his appeal for immortality, comparing it with Prov 20:20 and the phrase “the sleep of darkness”, i.e. death (cf. Dahood, PSS I:77-78). Rashi also compares this with the text from Dan 12:2 and interprets it with the “eternal sleep” (cf. Gruber,2007:221). The psalmist’s prayer is given in imperatival mood and the several hiphil imperatives (אור and נבט) are provided with paragogic he so to add more formal and solemn addressing God. Such constructions are discussed further in ‘Horizontal and Vertical Motion’ (in: ‘Hebrew Motion Verbs and Grammar of Death’).

In the context of Ps 13 the psalmist is ‘asleep’ due to his ill health and fear of his enemies. Alternatively, his sleep may be because of his grief caused by God turning his face from him, perhaps because of some of his sins? This latter option is also viable since this ‘sleep of death’ may be due to God who seem to be distant and silent? Whichever, if YHWH is going to be silent, and this the psalmist left by his God, it will be like certain death to him; cf. “if thou be silent (חשה) to me, I become like those who go down to the Pit” (Ps 28:1).

We were considering some elementary dimensions of the language of death (departure, silence, sleep) in its metaphorical and conceptual aspects, we now need to examine more closely how metaphors and concepts, and indeed ‘conceptual metaphors’ function.

2.3. Metaphors and Concepts

What are *metaphors* and why do we really need them? Do metaphors cover the whole plethora of linguistic indirections (non-literalness)? Metaphors were for quite some time understood only as decorative figures of speech, a matter of poetic or literary high style.¹⁵ However, even if metaphors were reckoned as ‘lofty words’ they still need accounting for and an interpretative strategy for this literary, decorative gesture must be provided. Even if metaphors are still in part viewed as literary embellishments, or only linguistic in nature, they are really expressions ‘we live by’.¹⁶ In advancing and developing the cognitive theory of metaphor (CTM), Olaf Jakel proposes nine tenets, basically implying that it is hardly possible to communicate effectively without metaphoric speech. The first of the nine tenets is the so-called (1) *ubiquity hypothesis*, of which the following can be concluded:

- “metaphor is not an exceptional matter of poetic creativity”,
- it is “perfectly ordinary, everyday language”, and finally
- “linguists have to face the task of accounting for them”.¹⁷

Here, we ought to ask two questions: (i) what is metaphor really all about, and (ii) how does it relate to the language of death and motion in the Psalter?

¹⁵ The apostle Paul writing to the Christian church in Corinth, says he did not come to them with ornamental ‘lofty words’ (ὑπεροχὴν λόγου), i.e. a high style of speech. “When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom” (Cf. 1 Cor 2:1).

¹⁶ Cf. Lakoff & Johnson (2003), *Metaphors we live by* (University of Chicago).

¹⁷ Cf. Jakel, 2002:21.

2.3.1. How do Metaphors Work?

Problems of definition. Before discussing what metaphors really are and how they work, we must at least refer to the problem of definition in discerning where metaphors are different from other forms of linguistic indirection. So what is specific to metaphors?

Non-literalness has an enormous scope of expressions; its terminology and range of meanings are issues in themselves. So it is useful to observe and note the difference between form and process. For example, the word 'metaphor' belongs to a particular form of non-literalness, at the same time non-literalness should be viewed as a general underlying process associated with the equivocal nature of language. Possible problems arise when the particular form (e.g. 'metaphor') is used interchangeably for the whole process (i.e. 'metaphorisation').¹⁸ Soskice affirms that there may be at least 125 different definitions of metaphors or linguistic indirections, or non-literal forms of language:

Anyone who has grappled with the problem of defining metaphor will appreciate the pragmatism of those who proceed to discuss it without giving any definition of it at all. One scholar claims to have found 125 different definitions, surely only a small fraction of those which have been put forward (Soskice, 1985:15).

The language of death, which is the focus of this work, teems with non-literal expressions. One such example is the expression: 'the end of the earth' (Ps 61:2):

From the end of the earth (מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ) I call to thee, when my heart is faint.
Lead thou me to the rock that is higher than I (Ps 61:3) (RSV).

The 'end of the earth' can hardly be understood as a geographical location, for there is no such place.¹⁹ In fact NAB translates this as: 'From the brink of Sheol I call'

¹⁸ Cf. Robson, 57.

¹⁹ 'The one praying is not in the temple but is far away geographically' and 'the end of the earth' means far away, (see Dt 28:49, (cf. Limburg, 2000:202)

(NAB). Most people agree that this may be metonymy for a great distance.²⁰ Others say it is a designation for the location death and the underworld.²¹ Finally, some commentators consider the expression 'the end of the world' simply as a metaphor for the Psalmist's state of distress, or a figure of speech for a near-death experience.²² Being so far from God, experiencing the furthest possible separation from God, is very brink of existence itself.

Thus, among questions of definitions may be distinctions between simile, trope and metaphor; or between analogy and metaphor, etc; and Boyd reflects these dilemmas by asking "What is 'metaphor' a metaphor for?" (Cf. Boyd in Ortony, 1993:481f.). The word 'metaphor' indeed often becomes a generic term for all possible aspects of linguistic indirection; and if we reckon that at the very least, a metaphor is a figure of speech; so are tropes, similes, analogies or metonymies. On the other hand, there are some differences of opinion as to whether metaphors are only language specific (only a matter of language) or whether they involve deeper cognitive operations (mindsets, ways of thinking and concepts). The view that metaphors are only language-based, with little or no mental operation involved, has been seriously challenged, and it has been successfully argued that metaphors are not only language-based but also 'experience-based' and 'conceptbased'.²³ The linguistic dimension is a reflection, or a tool and manifestation of mental events and processes (see below: Three theories of metaphor). What is specific to metaphors may be best seen as we

²⁰ This may mean: 'From a distant place', or 'Far away from the Temple' (Anderson, A.A., 1972:447)

²¹ Holladay, *VT* 19 (1969); Dahood, (1965).

²² Weiser: 443.

²³ Cf. Soskice, 16f.

examine theories of metaphors. But before that, the very word 'metaphor' can give us some clues for understanding metaphors better in general.

Metaphor is transference

The etymology of a word is not always a guarantee or sure guide for fully understanding the concept behind it. However, it still helps usher us in the right direction. Considering the etymology of the word 'metaphor' will certainly assist us to understanding them better. Metaphors have always been a concern in coherent language studies and language use. This appears to have started with the Greek grammarians, particularly Aristotle (*Poetics*) and his classification of nouns into several categories. Aristotle categorised words as "ordinary" or "rare", "metaphorical" or "ornamental", "invented" or "lengthened", "curtailed" or "altered".²⁴ For him,

Metaphor is the application of a strange term either transferred from the genus and applied to the species or from the species and applied to the genus, or from one species to another or else by analogy (*Poetics*, 1457).

The word 'metaphor' (μεταφορα) can be translated as 'transference', from meta (trans) and φερειν, meaning 'to carry (over)'. The debate then progressed in terms of the process of transference; what is being transferred, or the transference of what to what? Aristotle also mentions epiphora (carrying over). But what is being carried over or transferred? Is it the meaning of a word, transferred from one thing to another? If so, who decides on this new or intended meaning? One would expect that meaning(s) are intended by the author. These are important issues, as they directly affect many biblical idioms in the Psalter which we will be tackling and hopefully answering as we

²⁴ Cf. *Poetics* 1457b.

examine some of them. Most concern the anthropological dimension of the Psalmist's experiences (fear of death) and human anatomy.

One of the fundamental questions in speaking of metaphors is the process of transference (metaphorisation), or the product (metaphor).²⁵ If the former, then there is a plethora of non-literal word uses which are not metaphors by default; if the latter, i.e. then of course there are complex issues to be reckoned with, as we shall note while presenting the three classic ideas of metaphor. If we mean both, as Aristotle's proposed, then we are bound to end up in further ambiguities. The discussion on distinguishing metaphors from non-metaphors is still going on; the parties in the debate concur is that there are still ambiguities (cf. Aaron, 2001:8).²⁶ Fundamentally, metaphor is transference from the original meaning to a secondary application of the same word. Examples can be given from biblical texts. A fascinating example of transference and extension from the original meaning to a secondary word application is the Hebrew נפש. The literary transference of נפש is quite an amazing example of how a word can undergo a process of metaphorisation. The original, primitive meaning of נפש was its nominal form 'throat', followed by its verbal variant 'to breathe' (or 'to exhale'), from where it became extended to 'soul', finally and thus simply acquired the meaning '*person*'.²⁷

²⁵ See above: 'Problems of definitions'.

²⁶ Cf. Aaron, 2001:1f.

²⁷ Cf. C. Westermann, 1997:743-759.

2.3.2. Three Theories of Metaphors

In traditional theories there are three views of metaphors. One is the so-called 'substitution theory', the second view is the 'comparison theory', and the third is the 'interaction theory'.

Substitution theory

Firstly, the substitution theory of metaphor asserts that a metaphorical (M) (nonliteral) word, phrase or expression is a substitution for a literal (L) word and meaning. An example is found in the opening verse of Psalm 23, "The Lord is my shepherd" (Ps 23:1). The (M) here is the word "shepherd" which is a substitution for the (L) or literal meaning of the entire understanding of what shepherd is and means. In order to interpret it, one needs to understand that a shepherd looks after his flock, cares for, protects and feeds it, etc. Possibly, this text may be translated in more literal terms: "The Lord is my guardian, provider and protector". Is the word 'shepherd' here substituted only as literary ornament for the literal expression and meaning of everything shepherds really are? Even if this is true, it is a rather simplistic, not fully satisfactory explanation.²⁸ In this example, the interpretation will have to choose which of the shepherd's characteristics best fit the whole idea of the Lord being the shepherd, or list them all to fully understand (explain) the metaphor. However, there may be other characteristics of shepherds which are not as appropriate to apply to the Lord. Therefore, the substitution theory has its weaknesses, i.e. metaphoric expression is not merely a substitution for literal words - it is far more complex than that.

²⁸ Cf. Soskice, 1985:25-26.

Metaphorical description is not just an attempt to translate literal thoughts (cf. Soskice, 25).

Comparison theory

Secondly, the *comparison* view is based on similarity between two 'objects', comparing their resemblances and likenesses, rather like a simile, in which two different things are compared using the words 'as' or 'like'. Similes may be considered more decorative than metaphors, which have more interactive meaning and are more than simple comparisons (see below: Interactive view). Of course some similes are simple, even simplistic, but there are also complex similes. For example, the righteous man of the Psalter is 'like a tree' (כעץ); he is "Like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither" (Ps 1:3).

The comparison theory is also something of an analogy which moves between two 'objects', the metaphorical expression (M) and the object (O). Firstly, the metaphorical expression (M) refers to the object (O), secondly it makes a comparison with that metaphorical expression. O is like M, and the key issue is the similarity between the two, expressed with *like* or *as*. In the substitution theory, as in the example of Psalm 23, the words 'as' or 'like' do not appear. The Lord is not *like* my shepherd, but rather, the Lord *is* my shepherd". On the other hand, the Psalmist in mortal distress says, "My heart is like wax (לבי כדוֹגֵג), it is melted within my breast" (Ps 22:14). He does not say that his heart actually *is* wax. Those who are threatened by death are not dead yet, they are 'like' those (משל) who 'go down the Pit' (Ps 28:1).

Interaction theory

The third view of metaphor is the so called interaction theory. This view is based on the basic assumption that metaphors are not only a matter of language but of thought patterns, i.e. thoughts operate on a metaphorical basis. Metaphors are conceptual in nature, and metaphors of language serve the conceptual nature of thought. The interaction theory was developed by Max Black, building on I. A. Richards' (*The Philosophy of Rhetoric*) observation of the principles of metaphors, which stated: "when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction" (Richards, :93).

This approach to metaphors is in many ways most satisfactory and goes beyond the simple literal/non-literal divide. It tackles the very core of conceptual and cognitive mechanisms of mind and language; it does not only focus on texts or forms, but involves contexts. Metaphors are essentially a component of human cognition and thus not 'purely linguistic, but conceptual in nature' (cf. Cruse, 2004:201). Yet, there are also views that metaphors have no special cognitive content but rather are emotive in nature, thus the so-called Emotive theory (cf. Soskice, 26f.). The cognitive dimension of metaphors is prevalent, particularly as the interaction view of metaphors is also closely related to concepts and conceptual thinking.

Metaphors are closely associated with concepts and conceptual thinking. One fundamental concept of human cognition is motional and spatial metaphoric conceptualization. Motion then ceases to be only a physical movement from A to B in real space; motion and space become constituent parts of human conceptual thinking. Perhaps one of the best examples of metaphoric conceptualization is our cognition of

motion and space in our use of up and down. For example, happy is 'up', while sad is 'down' (e.g. 'I am feeling down', 'He is really low' and 'You are in high spirits'), or conscious is 'up', while unconscious is 'down' (e.g. 'Get up!' or 'Is she down (asleep)? Health and life are 'up'; sickness and death are 'down' (e.g. 'he fell ill', 'he dropped dead' or 'he pepped up').²⁹ And these are not just English examples; we find the Psalmist's experiences follow the same pattern, because such conceptualization is grounded in experience. There are many languages and cultures which abide by these concepts of 'up' (more and good) and 'down' (less and bad). In fact, there are no languages or cultures where it is the other way round, where for instance illness is 'up' and life is 'down'.³⁰

The 'interaction view' of metaphor corroborates two things. One, it is grounded in human experience (cf. Lakoff, 1993:240), and two, metaphors are not mere linguistic expressions.³¹ Both these aspects of the interaction theory of metaphors, the conceptual and the contextual, are crucial in considering the Psalter's language of death and the Psalmist's experiences. So motion as a concept is discussed, as well as the challenging concept that an event like death can also be understood in terms of action ('death is a departure') (cf. Lakoff, 1993:232; 2003:14f.).

²⁹ Cf. Lakoff & Johnson:14-15

³⁰ "There are other languages in which MORE IS UP and LESS IS DOWN, but none in which the reverse is true" (Lakoff, 1993:240).

³¹ Cf. Lakoff (1993), 'Contemporary theory of metaphor' (in Ortony:209)

2.3.3. Metaphors in the Psalms

How do metaphors function in the Psalms, and what is metaphor-specific about them, in contrast to simile, metonymy, analogy, catachresis, or other non-literal or linguistic indirection aspects? We find several examples in the Psalms, either illustrating the very nature of metaphor, or exemplifying transference. This will provide us with a better understanding of how metaphors work in the Psalter, particularly within the framework of this thesis.

Let us begin with one of the most famous psalms of confidence, Psalm 23, which also comprises a motif of death. It begins with a well-known opening line, “The Lord is my shepherd”. Is this an analogy, anthropomorphism or metaphor? If it is an analogy, it is nonetheless also a metaphor? Saying, “The Lord is my shepherd”, rather than, “The Lord is like my shepherd” may indeed have the characteristics of metaphor, but it is also an analogy. Is it all only a matter of terminology, or essence? Logically, if the Lord is “my shepherd”, then I must be a “sheep”! Later on in the Psalm the speaker passes through the ‘valley of death’ (23:4). Is this a metaphor for general distress, affliction and possibly mortal danger, or the fear of loneliness and being abandoned? Perhaps it is simply an extension of the general pastoral scenery of the psalm. The Psalmist may be walking through the hazardous terrain, yet God is his guide. Interestingly, the psalm begins by referring to God (23:1) in the third person singular. But in the dangerous circumstances of the ‘valley of death’ the Lord becomes ‘you’ (second person singular).³²

³² Cf. Terrien, 2003:240.

In the Psalm 18, the psalmist alleges, 'The Lord *is* my rock' (יהוה סלע) (Ps 18:2), and in Psalm 28, he actually invokes that rock, "I call my rock" (אקרא צורי) (Ps 28:1), and pleads, "My rock, be not deaf to me".³³ These examples lead us to think that these are typical instances of the substitution view of metaphors. There are many instances in the Psalter where the comparison view of metaphor is evident, for example in the Psalmist yearning to be 'like a bird' (Ps 11:1) or 'like a lion' (Ps 7:2). The animals of the Psalms (the Psalter's bestiary) are good examples of substitution and comparison overlapping. The psalmist describes himself in deep depression: 'I am a worm and no man' (אנוכי תולעת ולא איש) (22:7). In Ps 11, the wicked have already bent their bows to kill him, and he is urged, 'Fly, you bird' (נודי צפור) (JPS). Other translations render, 'Fly like a bird' (NAB, RSV). In another place, someone is preying 'like a lion' (Ps 17:12).

Further to the above examples which really raise questions of what is metaphor specific, it will be useful to give some examples of transference in the Psalter's vocabulary of death. In Psalm 18, the Psalmist is in distress and mortal fear, he describes this experience as being encircled or bound by the 'cords of death': "The cords of Sheol entangled me (חבלי שאול סבבוני); the snares of death confronted me (18:6).

The primary meanings of חבל is cords or ropes, often used in a maritime context, for keeping a ship firmly moored, or for tightening the masts and sails, making the ship ready to sail. חבל is also a measuring rope, particularly for measuring land, often as part of an inheritance. As for ships' ropes,

³³ There is many such analogies in the Psalms where God is a rock. Cf. Pss 18; 19; 27; 31; 42; 62; 71; 89 etc.

Your ropes hang loose (נטשו חבליך); it cannot hold the mast firm in its place, or keep the sail spread out (Isa 33:23).

These are actual ropes used by mariners, as in Eze 27:8, 28 חבליך is used to mean 'your mariners'. However, in Psalm 16, the psalmist uses the 'ropes' in both ways, for measuring cords, and as a figuration for his inheritance, "The lines are fallen unto me (חבלים נפלוֹ לִי) in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage" (Ps 16:6) (JPS).

Or as the NAB translates, "Pleasant places were measured out for me; fair to me indeed is my inheritance". Literal ropes or cords, are soon subject to transference, so that חבל occurs in phrases denoting emotional predicaments. A measuring cord for determining the borders of a piece of land becomes a 'portion of calamity' (חבל חלק) which God apportions to the wicked (cf. Jb 21:17). It can also denote 'cords of birth pains' (חבלי יולדה) (cf. Hos 13:13). In this transference, ropes acquired almost exclusively a connotation of emotional states, most frequently in relation to death and distress. The Psalmist is in mortal anguish, encompassed (אפף) by the 'cords of death' (cf. Ps 116:3).

The snares of death encompassed me (אפפוני חבל־מות);
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish (Ps 116:3).

As already noted, many scholars agree that there are uncertainties and maybe "terminological imprecision" in regard to what is to be considered a metaphor, or some other form of linguistic indirection (non-literalness) (cf. Soskice, 15f.). Having reviewed the three main theories of metaphors, we may conclude that there are uncertainties in identifying a metaphor or another non-literal figure or form (an analogy, for example). An example may occur so rarely that some ambiguity will remain, depending on the interpreter's arguments. On the other hand, the 'interaction

view' of metaphor is probably the most helpful and aims to identify some clear examples of metaphors, as we already seen in many of the Psalms.

In our examination of metaphor theories or views of metaphorisation, it was fascinating to find many emotional predicaments and conditions describing death 'as' or 'like', waves or cords of death (Ps 18), or the heart being 'as' wax (Ps 22), etc. It is intriguing to observe that we cannot find expressions where the lexeme 'death' is used in the comparison or substitution view, such as '*death is like...*' (כמות).³⁴ Otherwise, we do not read that 'death is like' – 'going down' or as 'being swept by the waves'. The Psalmist simply says the experience is 'going down' or 'descending', in other words, like motion. Frequently, in the experience of dying or mortal danger, the Psalmist describes himself 'as those who go down' (cf. Ps 28:1 etc.).

We ought now to explore concepts; particularly relevant to this work is *motion* as a concept. Motional vocabulary in the Psalter indicates motion as a concept, as well as an event. As we investigate motion as a concept, we cannot circumvent or ignore the spatial dimension, since physical and conceptual motion happens in real or fictive space.

2.4. Conceptual Metaphors

Metaphors and concepts are a pressing topic in theology and biblical exegetical studies. How do metaphors and concepts relate? What is a concept? Might it not be true, for example, that the 'shepherd' of Ps 23 is simply conceptual in nature, the

³⁴ The closest to this may be an expression where an insatiable and an arrogant man is compared to be as death (כמות), i.e. never had enough.

perfect ideal of care and concern? Or, should the 'rock' in so many Psalms simply be considered as an idea, a *concept* of safety, protection and security?

It is recognized and widely accepted, though still not necessarily unanimously endorsed, that metaphors are an essential component of human cognition. Following the prior assumption about the cognitive nature of metaphors, they are also conceptual in nature (cf. Cruse, 2004:201).³⁵ A concept serves to categorize our experiences. In Biblical poetic material and the Psalter, there are many concepts and conceptual categories. For example, as noted earlier, the 'shepherd' is a concept for security, protection, care, etc. In biblical literature and the animal kingdom, the 'lion' is the perfect idea of power and strength, which in the process of metaphorisation becomes conceptual in nature. In the biblical, and not only biblical context, another animal, the 'dog', as a psychopomp, conceptualizes the threat to one's life and the bringer of death. As in Ps 22,

For dogs have encompassed me;
a company of evil-doers have enclosed me;
like a lion (?), they are at my hands and my feet.
I may count all my bones;
they look and gloat over me.
They part my garments among them,
and for my vesture do they cast lots.
But Thou, O LORD, be not far off;
O Thou my strength, hasten (הוֹשֵׁ) to help me.
Deliver my soul from the sword;
mine only one from the power of the dog (יֵד־כֶּלֶב) (Ps 22:17-21) (JPS).

To sum up how metaphors and words relate to concepts and conceptual thinking, without going into too theoretical a discussion of how images relate to or differ from concepts; we will conclude by saying that the human senses and cognition produce a "new level between words and the world: a level of mental representation"

³⁵ For discussions on concepts see: Cruse, 2004:210; Lakoff in Ortony, 1993:206-208 and R.W. Langacker, (2002) *Concept, Image and Symbol: The Cognitive Basis of Grammar* (Mouton de Gruyter, New York).

(Saeed, 2009:33). This process of association and representation yields concepts and the ability of thinking conceptually.³⁶ Building on the above examples of metaphors taken from real life, then proceeding to the process of conceptualization, we now turn to one of the most frequently present concepts in human experience: that of movement and motion.

Several questions may be asked here. Is motion as a concept really so closely associated with death? And, secondly, are there any other general principles or concepts prior to the motion-death concept? As we will see, both questions have affirmative answers. Death is often depicted as departure, hence the metaphor of 'death as departure'. The NT texts are more explicit in actually using the very word 'departure' to allude to death.³⁷ In the OT, particularly in the Psalter, there is a much more vivid and rich range of conceptual or metaphoric expressions using motion-death aspects. That idea that 'death is a departure' arises a posteriori from another general principle and a metaphor, that 'life is a journey'. So, the departure of death may be seen as a kind of extension of life's journey.

One of the most immediate, basic, human experiences relates to space and motion, accompanied by a tendency towards constant physical activity, so that motion is one of the most fundamental, widespread concepts.

³⁶ For a more extensive discussion on images and concepts, see: Saeed, 2009:32-50.

³⁷ "The time of departure has come" (2 Tim 4:6); "And I will see to it that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things." (2 Pet 1:15).

2.5. Motion as an Event and a Concept

2.5.1. General Remarks

Verbs of motion belong to a group of high frequency words and comprise a considerable lexical corpus in our speech and cognition. They are not only ubiquitous and linguistically dominant, but also cross-linguistically one of the earliest language acquisitions in the early stages of human life. We could say that the frequency (and distribution) of motion verbs are relative and proportional to the regularity of a particular experience relative to this word group. Indeed, verbs of motion are pertinent example for the motion-emotion axis, and the association of the two seems to be quite frequent.

We cannot here expound on statistical methods used in general linguistics which study the frequency of particular verbs. But the language of death and the appearance of motion verbs in psalmodic texts occur frequently, and often in relation to emotive expressions and emotion words.³⁸

In terms of distribution and frequency of use, the Bible is of course very specific literary material. It comprises many books and authors, and a multiplicity of stylistic characteristics, with each book also having a unique origin and history. However, the root reason for the ubiquity of motion words should not come as a surprise. Motion

³⁸ Although, for the study of the Bible, as for other fields of application of statistics, the results of statistical tests are not to be regarded as conclusions in themselves. The detection of frequency and distribution of words is a research subject in quantitative linguistics. Quantitative linguistics investigates how words are arranged in terms of their frequency of appearance. Empirically, quantitative linguistics measure the number of instances of a word per sample of one million words (*ipm*, instances per million words), also known as 'mean frequency' (*f*). Cf. Sharoff, S et al. 'Core Lexicon and Contagious Words' (2003). Extensive studies on methodology and the frequency of words in biblical texts has been investigated by R. Bee, & M. Weitzman (in *VT*, 31/4, 1981), R. Bee, (in *VT*, 29,1979) and on statistical methods R. Bee, (in *VT*, 23/1973). However, their studies seem to be almost purely mathematical, with no intention of considering the cognitive value of statistical results.

events belong to the earliest stages of human psychological development.³⁹ In reality, we are either constantly on the move through physical space, of our own volition (actual motion), or being moved around (caused motion), or we simply cannot help witnessing an abundance of motion events that happen around us, as our field of vision is constantly bombarded by motion in all shapes and forms (perceived motion). So much so, that in the hyperactivity of movement, we sometimes perceive things as moving when they are really stationary. We perceive the sun moving at sunrise and sunset. There is also motion which is not actual, physical, or perceived; but implicit. This has been called as fictive, abstract or virtual.⁴⁰

Apart from the ubiquity of motion, what is more important for this research is the fact that motion is both actually and conceptually dominant. Motion words cannot be viewed only as physical phenomena, but also as concepts derived from the commonality of experience.

2.5.2. Real Events and Fictivity

Motion is an event, whether real or fictive; in many ways it is basic to human experience and existence.⁴¹ It is also intrinsic to life and the exact opposite of complete immobility or death. In its basic form, a motion event follows one of these patterns:

³⁹ cf. Sigal Uziel-Karl, 'Motion Verbs in...' (*Linguistics*, 38 vol.3) motion verbs, as well as path and posture verbs, "comprise an important semantic domain in all languages".

⁴⁰ The intricacy of motion is additionally reinforced by physical actions such as gestures and simulated movements. Cf. Matlock (2004), *The Conceptual Motivation of Fictive Motion* ' (p.15-19).

⁴¹ To speak of 'fictive motion' sounds almost oxymoronic, since motion is by default a real event. On the other hand, motion is also a concept, and one of the suppositions of this thesis is that motion as a concept, in its fictivity, produces very real experiences. On the fictivity of motion, see: Talmy, 2003:23, in Tomasello (2003).

Movement + Path, or alternatively, Movement + Manner + Path, or Source + Path + Goal. And there are movements with no delineated trajectory, like wandering around aimlessly (see: Manner of motion).

Biblical death language composed of motion words does not assert real motion through physical space along a delineated physical trajectory. Although the journey is through the conceptual space-domain of death, the fictivity of motion triggers a variety of emotive and emotional reactions. Even the ancients indisputably associated life with motion and death with a lack of motion. The living move, while the dead are motionless. The *Book of the Dead* notes that the dead are those who have been: “Without motion for millions of years, now have come into life” (Plate XVII; Budge, 1999:467). But they will be ‘ordered’ to be motionless no more,

O thou who art motionless,
thou who art motionless,
thou whose members are motionless,
like unto those of Osiris.
Thy members shall not be motionless (Plate XVIII).

Why, then, is the domain of motion so closely related to the concept of death? In the fictivity of motion, did it become a matter of *linguistic pragmatics*, accepting linguistic conventionality, or a matter of style and stylistic embellishment? Even, if we accept that ‘the dead’ are referred to as ‘the departed’ as a matter of linguistic convention, we still need to account for the widespread use of motion vocabulary in death language.

2.5.3. Directionality and Manner

Among other aspects of motion (e.g. directionality), the intrinsic factors of motion are velocity (slow-fast) and manner (walking, crawling, swimming, flying, hurrying, wandering about). The Psalmist, aware of his mortality, in a pessimistic mood and describing the brevity of life, uses both:

The years of our life are threescore and ten,
or even by reason of strength fourscore;
yet their span is but toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away (כִּי־גַזְזוּ דַיִשׁ וְנִעַפְפָה) (Ps 90:10).

He draws some very picturesque scenes using the manner of motion with its concomitant emotional dimension to describe his inner consternation and/or illness. He is weary (יִגַע) in his groaning (אָנַח) and he swims (שָׁחָה) in his tears: "I am weary with my groaning; every night I make my bed to swim" (Ps 6) (JPS).

2.5.4. Verticality and Horizontality

Vertical plane

In spatial orientation, the vertical dimension is so obvious as to be rather dominant. In the spatial conceptual realm, we can note without too much difficulty the 'ups' and 'downs', 'ascents' and 'descents', the 'heights' and 'depths'. This vertical spatial category frequently touches the emotional and the religious grounds of universal religious experience. Opposites in the spatial category of vertical dimension and verticality are often couched in familiar spatial deictic expressions: up there and/or down here. However, these deictic depictions do not necessarily refer to higher or lower ground (up or down), this can be conceptual.⁴²

⁴² For example, the Hebrew verb (עָלָה) (= go up, ascend), as in many language uses, may not necessarily refer to the higher, elevated ground, e.g. Jos 7:4; Jdg 6:35; 2 Sam 2:2, etc.

From where does this polarity - up-down, in vertical motion and spatial orientation - come? It is due to two particular factors. One is the physical fact that the 'canonical' orientation of human beings is the upright position. That is to say, humans do not crawl or fly, but rather walk and move in the upright position. This is accompanied by conceptual reasoning, so that what is 'upright' and 'up' is better than what is 'flat' and 'down'.⁴³ In short, life is 'up' and death is 'down'. Lazarus, just like Jesus, "rose from the dead". This of course, conceptually seems quite natural; one does not descend from the dead because in terms of spatial metaphors, one cannot get any lower than death. If there is a sudden death, then we say the person "dropped dead".

Horizontal plane

Horizontal metaphorical spatial orientation and a similar division into opposites are also very much present in experiential and conceptual aspects; though less frequent than the vertical, horizontal motion also significant. Indicatively, biblical motion language, in reference to the horizontal plain, gives precedence, primacy, vigour and power to the right rather than to the left. Interestingly, the history of

⁴³ There is a number of examples for the conceptual orientational metaphors. Chiefly in relation to vertically vectorialized experience. Feeling happy and healthy is 'up', while being sad or sick is being 'low' and 'down'. One 'wakes up' or 'gets up' (conscious); and it is going down while 'falling asleep' or 'dying down' when diminishing in intensity or liveliness, like 'falling ill' or 'going down with flue' (unconscious). For the convenience sake Lakoff groups them in the following clusters: * happy is up; sad is down / * conscious is up; unconscious is down / * health and life are up; sickness and death are down / * having control is up; being subject is down / * more is up; less is down / * good is up; bad is down / * high status is up; low status is down / * foreseeable future events are up and ahead / * rational is up; emotional is down (Lakoff,2003:15-24).

religions attributes favouring the right over the left to the androgynous nature of human beings.⁴⁴

This is also why biblical texts show that the right side, or right hand, occupies the more privileged role, with more immediate authority (cf. Mat 22:44). It is also the place of shelter and protection. The Psalmist repeatedly invokes the protection of the right hand of Yahweh (Pss 16:8; 17:17). He is secure there and will not be moved (מוט).⁴⁵ Yahweh's right hand gives the Psalmist his support (18:35) and is always victorious (20:7; 110:5; 118:15). The Psalmist is safe and sure that "your right hand will find out those who hate you" (Ps 21:9). In fact the he always glances to the right to see if there is anyone to defend him:

I look to my right hand,
but no friend is there.
There is no escape for me;
no-one cares for me (Ps 142:5).⁴⁶

We shall note (cf. Motion emotion in Pss) how horizontal motion also has a special place in the Psalmist's emotional makeup. The majority of Hebrew verbs describing manner of motion are on the horizontal motional plane. In the Psalmist's case, this adds considerably to the emotional salience (see: Motion table).

⁴⁴ Some rabbinic, and not only rabbinic sources in the history of religions, interpret the horizontal dividing line between left and right in terms of the androgynous nature of human beings, i.e. referring to human sexuality and the coexisting aspects and duality of feminine and the masculine elements in humankind. According to some religious interpretations, primeval man incorporated both genders in the same being. The traditional horizontal left-right gender division assigns the right to the masculine element, and the left to the feminine. In Helladic mythology, there were popular representations of divinities with female heads and exposed male (phallic) genitals.

⁴⁵ "With the Lord at my right hand (מימיני), I shall never be shaken (מוט)" (Ps 16:8).

⁴⁶ The right and the right hand are always represented as stronger, more responsible and accountable. The evangelist Matthew warns that your left hand does not need to know what your right hand is doing (Mat 6:3). Sitting or sleeping at a person's right (hand) side is a sign of authority or special protection (Mat 22:44; 25:33-34). That is why on the great Judgment Day, the sheep will be placed 'at his right hand' and the goats 'at the left' (Mat 25:33).

2.5.5. Motion as a Concept

Motion is certainly one of the earliest, basic human experiences. Even if we do not move ourselves, the perception of motion is one of the elementary experiences of all the living beings. Humans perceive motion before they are able to move themselves (walk, crawl), and this is not only characteristic of humans. All living beings have some experience of movement, growth or change.

A newborn baby can already follow with its eyes an object which moves across its visual field. Other mammals have also been shown to be sensitive to visual motion from the outset. Newborn animals react to moving, but not stationary objects (Radden, 1996:423).

Things that change (move) take priority in perception and experience over those that remain inert or constant. Awareness of motion is awareness of life and living.⁴⁷ That which is lifeless is also motionless; death is thus the ultimate cessation of motion. In the animal world, awareness of motion may mean the difference between life and death and is vital for the survival of a species.

As a concomitant of its critical importance, motion readily becomes an intrinsic part of our conceptual world. Motion has a mirror image in the conceptual domain and cognition, with a plethora of motion metaphors. Many motion metaphors are deeply located in and motivated by the experience and perception of movement.⁴⁸ Some scholars even suggest that there is an 'overwhelming bias towards motion verbs' and strive to 'remedy this unilateral focus on motion verbs' (Lemmens, 2004). Lemmens' attempt is bound to fail, however, since motion as a concept is used so frequently in all areas of life.

⁴⁷ Shakespeare notes in *Troilus and Cressida*: "Things in motion sooner catch the eye than what not stirs".

⁴⁸ Change, since motion is essentially change, is often described through motion metaphors, such as changes in state or condition, e.g. In English, 'How are things going', or 'Let us move on' and the very familiar phrase: 'Time flies'.

Motion metaphors are the surest indication of the presence of movement in concepts and conceptual thinking. Metaphorical expressions which use motion vocabulary are fictive motions and are one of the commonest forms of fictivity in language in general.⁴⁹ The semantic shift between literality (motion as an event) and figurativity (motion as a concept) seems to appear frequently in our experience and language. The frequent use of motion vocabulary shows how conceptually dominant is the domain of motion. The conceptual dimension of motion is often expressed in opposites, whether vertical (up-down) or horizontal (left-right). Thus heaven and the divine abode are said to be up, while Sheol is located down.

How fictive are the motion involved in death language, the space or location of such simulated motion and the 'motion of dying'? Is the Psalmist's descent to Sheol (or to the Pit) more fictive than his going down into the dust (grave)?⁵⁰ In the motion of dying, there seems to be an overlap between metaphoricity and literality.

We 'come' from the dust and will return to the dust (Eccl 3:20); this usage is a standard example of a dead metaphor. Conceptual thinking about death relates also to spatial orientation - up and down. In general terms, is up better than down? In the Psalmist's experiences, apart from motion vocabulary, posture and changes of position are included (stand, sit, lie). When in a gloomy mood, he feels 'down', and "sits in darkness like those long dead" (Ps 143:3).⁵¹

⁴⁹ Cf. Talmy, 2003:23, in Tomasello (2003).

⁵⁰ Cf. Job 17:16.

⁵¹ On the other hand, to 'lie down' is not necessarily a 'down' experience. The Psalmist lies down and sleeps in peace, since God looks after him (Ps 4:8). He also lies down in 'the green pastures' and rests (Ps 23:2).

2.6. Motion and Space

2.6.1. Orientation Metaphors

The Psalmist's physical and emotional orientation (or disorientation) in the motionspace context is often bound by what are called orientation metaphors. In *Metaphors we live by* Lakoff and Johnson argue that metaphors are not extraordinary, but an ordinary part of everyday language.⁵²

Orientation metaphors are an inherent dimension of movement and spatial orientation. Spatial orientation is due to the fact that we have bodies which function and move within three-dimensional space, and postures and movements are bound by this physical space. But orientation metaphors are also conceptual in nature and relative to spatial orientation as reflected in our 'mental spaces'. Spatial language and its conceptualization have a special place in our mental spaces, which are "Mental constructs in which alternative representations of states of affairs are held" (Cruse, 2004:331).⁵³ The Psalmist lies down in sleep: "I lie down and sleep" (Ps 3:6), but in his waking strength he arises, and asks: "Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers?"(cf. Ps 94:16).⁵⁴

2.6.2. Up is Good, Down is Bad

The polar opposites and the spatial category of verticality and vertical dimension, we often hear used the familiar spatial deictic expressions: up there or down here; even when it may not be the case, in terms of higher or lower grounds - up and down.

⁵² Cf. Lakoff and Johnson, 2003:14-21.

⁵³ The notion of 'mental space' has been introduced by Gilles Fauconnier (1985), *Mental Spaces: Aspects of Meaning Construction in Natural Language* (MIT Press) (1994, 2nd ed.).

⁵⁴ Cf. Ps 4:8.

For example the Hebrew verb (עלה) (= going up, ascend), like in many (other) language uses may not necessarily refer to the higher ground of being elevated up (cf. Jos 7:4; Jdg 6:35; 2Sam 2:2).

Why would up be better than down? There are two particular factors in relation to this reasoning. One is the (physical) fact that the canonical orientation of human beings is upright, followed by reasoning (conceptual) that the 'upright' and the 'up' are better than that what is 'down'.⁵⁵ In short, life is 'up' and death is 'down'. Biblical Lazarus, just like Jesus, "rose from the dead". This of course, conceptually seems quite natural; one does not descend from the dead. In terms of spatial metaphors one cannot get lower than that. Death is as down as one can get; and if there is a sudden death occurring then we say "*drop dead*".

2.6.3. Motion and Space

Motion and spatial orientation are involved in some of the most common metaphors, with actual physical space often interwoven with the construal of virtual space. We have noted that 'up-down' orientation is particularly frequent in our conceptualization of motion and space awareness. Multi-tiered conceptual space is also present. So the physical sky above our heads is regarded as just below the virtual heaven. In most religions, heaven is the abode of the gods and the future location of life after death.

⁵⁵ There are several examples of conceptual orientational metaphors, chiefly in relation to vertically vectorialized experiences. For the sake of convenience, Lakoff groups them in the following clusters: * happy is up; sad is down / * conscious is up; unconscious is down / * health and life are up; sickness and death are down / * having control is up; being subject is down / * more is up; less is down / * good is up; bad is down / * high status is up; low status is down / * foreseeable future events are up and ahead / * rational is up; emotional is down (cf. Lakoff, 2003:15-24).

The verb 'to go' in English, like the Hebrew בּוֹא, relates to general motion but also has directional properties, in both the secular and biblical spheres. In English, 'go' often implies direction, forming phrasal verbs with 'to' or 'into' (temporally or spatially).⁵⁶ For example, the Hebrew בּוֹא (*go*) implies entering ('Go into the ark', Gen 7:1) and may be considered as general or directed (horizontal) motion. Sometimes בּוֹא can also overlap in meaning with other directional verbs, like 'going out' (יֵצֵא) or directional verbs of vertical motion, like יֵרֵד 'coming down', as in Psalm 69, where the Psalmist despairs for his life and has "come into deep waters" (בִּאתִי בַמַּעַמְקֵי מַיִם) (69:3), i.e. descended into the deep.

Spatial orientation, motion and posture form a linguistic-conceptual package. The frequency, distribution and interconnection of motion verbs and dying form the backbone of this work. Descent and ascent (vertical motion) predominate in respect to death in the Psalter. Often, it represents fictive movement from higher to lower ground ('going down', 'sinking', 'falling'). And it seems to be a noticeably one-way road, so: "Who goes down to Sheol does not come up" (כִּן יוֹרֵד שְׂאוֹל לֹא יַעֲלֶה) (Job 7:9).

Dying and death are thus fictive motion, closely related to our common spatial experience and orientation. Conceptual metaphors and common language-experience generally agree that 'up' is better than 'down'. We even speak of 'higher' and 'lower' states of existence! A sick person is 'down' and his posture changes from standing to

⁵⁶ This indicates a 'semantic shift' from the spatial to the temporal domain. It also creates a conceptual blending of the two domains, spatial and temporal. In some languages (satellite languages) like English, such transference from motion (fictivity) to the temporal domain is well exemplified by the use of the auxiliary motion verb 'go', which then becomes an indicator of the future tense. In the phrase 'I am going to do something' the speaker is not going anywhere (though real movement may be involved) because 'going to' here is not a spatial designation, but simply a temporal marker for a future event (Langacker, 2002:149). There is space-to-time transference; the spatial sense of 'go(ing)' and motion switches to the temporal marker of a future event. The semantic shift, as opposed to semantic field is indicated, quoted and discussed by Langacker (cf. Langacker, 1991:149).

lying; so often this is not only fictive motion (posture). Typical human functioning is determined by vertical, erect posture, which is the 'normal', natural position. Vertical motion, especially downwards, reveals certain gradience, i.e. from rest to death.⁵⁷ To lie down may be to sleep or rest, but also it is associated with illness. Illness, physical or mental, may be a forerunner of death, as in Psalm 13, the “sleep of death” (ישן מות) (Ps 13:4). Being lowered means being incapacitated, whether through sleep or illness. This is a shadowy existence and the shades ‘do not rise’ (בל־יקמו) (cf. Is 26:14). On the other hand, if a person is revived and gets well again, he is ‘up and running’, or walking straight (אשר).

2.6.4. Orientation in Time

The grammar and language of death as orientation in time create a threatening state of affairs. When death is fast ‘approaching’ it becomes emotionally salient experience with a thanatophobic vein. Therefore the past means life has passed.

Hopelessness and despair are responses to the fact that “my days are passed away (עבר)” (Jb 7:8-10) and “my days are past” (ימי עברו) (17:10-11). The Psalmist is also well aware that motion through space and time reflects life’s transience, as if the wind “passes over him” (כי רוח עברה־בו) (cf. Ps 103:16). Passing away, the past, and spatial-

⁵⁷ The dynamics of motion and posture in death language reflects our experiential realities. There are stative meanings of being in a position ('sit', 'stand', 'lie') but they also comprise either a certain motion, a change of position, or a certain degree of sensorimotor control needed to maintain the position. There is a gradation in degree of control required, from standing (vertical elongated) which requires the highest degree of control, to the lying (horizontal elongation) with the least physical effort and control needed (Newman, 2002:2). Standing is also viewed as most powerful position, while the horizontal position of lying down is the weakest, and associated with sickness, sleep or death. With postures and placement verbs ('place', 'sit', 'put', 'lie', 'stand') we may be sometimes misled by the dimensions of verticality and horizontality in relation to objects in the real world. “Ontological dimensions seem to conflict with the dimension intuitively associated with the posture verb” (Lemmens in J. Newman 'The Linguistics of sitting, standing and lying'). For example, 'the cup stands on the table' while a building 'lies on the corner'.

temporal movement away from (life) can be so disturbing for the biblical author, and happen so fast, that his existence fades rapidly from memory, and even “his home” (מקומו) does not remember him anymore (cannot recognise him?).⁵⁸ Of life, he says: “The wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place knows it no more” (איך) (Ps 103:16). Yet, we also ought to recognise that this is not merely a thanatophobic element. Namely, the “melancholy observation about human finitude” is employed here in order to enhance the praise of the eternal nature of divine grace” (Gunkle: par.2/56, p.59).⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Dahood rightly notes that (מקומו) (lit.) “his place” clearly bears the nuance of his own home and abode. So in Job 7: “He shall not again return to his house; his place shall know him no more” (7:10) (cf. Dahood, PSS III:29).

⁵⁹ Weiser then continues, “Only the man who is aware of and grieves over the wretchedness of his creaturely life has any inkling of this, because, like the narrator of Genesis and the singer of Psalm 90, he discerns that behind the burden of mortality is man's aspiration to be himself eternal” (Weiser:662).

2.7. Theology of Space

The descriptive theology of space and orientation (theography) focuses on the spatial motion and language localising the divine and its relation to the human.⁶⁰ In our experience, it is assumed that God is up there (heaven), and we are down here (earth). How did the Psalmist and his contemporaries experience this (e)motional existential issue beyond the temple and the liturgical spectacle? No doubt it was closely related to their experience and understanding of spatial interpretations, divine immanence and divine transcendence. The language of space and motion is crucially relevant both to human experience and of course to existential and religious experience.⁶¹

In the Old Testament, there appears to be a threefold localization of God. God is up (in heaven) (Ps 73:25), then he is down (in the temple) (Ps 5:7, 11:4, etc.):

The LORD is in his holy temple,
the LORD's throne is in heaven;
his eyes behold, his eyelids test,
the children of men (Ps 11:4).

Thirdly, God is found within the loci of theophanies (*numen locale*) (again down).⁶² The Psalmist, in his exuberance and experience of God's nearness, says, "There is nothing upon earth that I desire besides thee" (Ps 73:25b). At such times, even space seems to be qualitatively different, and the Psalmist himself somehow becomes part of the divine residence (cf. 73:13-17).

⁶⁰ Cf. Noppen, 1996: 679.

⁶¹ "The language of space offers a concrete metaphorical anchorage for the expression of mental experiences and intellectual conceptions, and thus enables humans to situate themselves with regard to reality by means of those relations and coordinates with which they normally orient and locate themselves in the sphere of physical experience" (van Noppen: 680).

⁶² Cf. Rudolf Otto (2004).

2.7.1. Holy Geography

We have noted that motion, apart from being real physical event, it is one of the most common forms of conceptual thinking and is reflected in the way we use language.⁶³ Along with motion experience come the experience of space (real or conceptual). In religious perception, heaven is up and hell is down. Thus, in his emotional turmoil, the Psalmist seems to move, or identify himself with those who move in a fictive space. When he dies, he will go down (ירד) (to Sheol or the Pit); alternatively he may be taken up (עלה) heavenwards.⁶⁴ The Psalmist then lifts up his hands (Ps 63:4) and eyes (Ps 121:1) towards heaven; he even lifts up his soul (himself) (Ps 25:1; 86:4).

Mircea Eliade discusses the sacredness and profanity of space as it is often perceived. His discussion may be helpful to clarify the idea of 'holy geography' along with the Psalmist's experiences and emotions in the face of death. Eliade says, regarding the homogeneity and non-homogeneity of space: "For religious man, space is not homogeneous; he experiences interruptions, breaks in it; some parts are qualitatively different" (Eliade, 2009:20). Physical, Euclidean space is homogenous, uninterrupted and geometrical, it can be: "Cut and delimited in any direction; but no qualitative differentiation and, hence, no orientation are given" (id.).

'Profane' spatial description and orientation always reveal the need for the fixed points of reference, which is one of the fundamental axioms of physics and physical space.

⁶³ See here: Motion as a concept .

⁶⁴ See here: Hebrew motion vocabulary.

Sacred space is divided (interrupted) between the sacred and the profane so

Eliade notes that,

The manifestation of the sacred ontologically founds the world. In the homogeneous and infinite expanse, in which no point of reference is possible and hence no orientation can be established, the hierophany reveals an absolute fixed point, a centre (Eliade, 2009:21).⁶⁵

Non-homogenous, sacred space is not only a break in homogeneity, but also a revelation of absolute reality, as “some parts of space are qualitatively different from others” (Eliade, 2009:21). Unlike profane space, which is homogenous, a shapeless spatial amalgam, in non-homogeneous space, a person may be negligent or inconsiderate, and as we may say ‘nothing is sacred’ to him or her. Sometimes a fully legitimate emphasis on a personal experience of God (*numen personale*) may erase any sense of the sacredness of a space (*numen locale*), and a process of profanization takes place. This is strange to the Psalmist, as he aspires to both the personal experience (*numen personale*) and the locale. Eliade actually successfully demonstrates that hardly anyone can “succeeds in completely doing away with religious behaviour” (Eliade:23), particularly in relation to spatial orientation.⁶⁶ He then concludes that the experience of profane space, “still includes values that to some extent recall the nonhomogeneity peculiar to the religious experience of space” (Eliade, id.).⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Eliade prefers to use the term hierophany rather than theophany, which he finds a more restrictive, though more popular term.

⁶⁶ “Revelation of a sacred space makes it possible to obtain a fixed point and hence to acquire orientation in the chaos of homogeneity...The profane experience, on the contrary, maintains the homogeneity and hence the relativity of space. No true orientation is now possible, for the fixed point no longer enjoys a unique ontological status” (Eliade:23), that is why profane space becomes an amorphous mass “consisting of an infinite number of more or less neutral places”(id.).

⁶⁷ “There are, for example, privileged places, qualitatively different from all others – a man's birthplace, the scene of his first love, or certain places in the first foreign city he visited in youth. Even for the most frankly nonreligious man, all these places still retain an exceptional, a unique quality; they are the 'holy

Often, in studies of the Psalter, we end up in a cul de sac by failing to take into account both aspects (sacred and profane) in relation to space and motion, for example, the 'localized divinity' (numen locale) who is also present in the cult of Yahwism and the holy Temple. Clearly, the Psalmist's religious experience is personal and deeply individual beyond the cultus, and his God is very personal (numen personale).⁶⁸ In Psalm 16, the Psalmist claims that Yahweh is always present with him: "I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Ps 16:8).

Does the Psalmist then find space non-homogenous, and is his orientation stable, or interrupted? His emotive predicaments reveal both. His 'holy geography' and personal experience do not always mesh, for human holy geography naturally places God in the heaven(s), in the higher regions; and humans in the lower regions (earth).

2.7.2. Orientation and Disorientation of the Psalmist

The Psalmist's orientation and disorientation depend on the division of the sacred and profane space, for he occupies realms, the real historical and physical earth and the sacred space of the Temple, and the fictive heaven and underworld. His

places' of his private universe, as if it were in such spots that he had received the revelation of a reality other than that in which he participates through his ordinary daily life" (Eliade:23).

⁶⁸ Joseph Ratzinger (1968), in his masterly work *Einführung in das Christentum* (Introduction to Christianity) in Part I (Ch.2, par.2), The inner suppositions of faith in Yahweh, presents the crucial and complementary elements of both aspects of faith (in the Jewish and Christian religions), of the personale and the locale experience. But, Ratzinger rightly warns against the danger of a religious person identifying the place (of his experience) with a deity itself. In fact, he stresses that while localized experiences of the sacred and the divine may be legitimate, they may lead to multiplying local deities, as the experiences are multiplied. This is why the biblical deuteronomist repeatedly insists on the centralisation of Yahwistic worship. Cf. De 12. One should not sacrifice or seek God "at every place" (בכל־מקום) "but at the place which the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you" (12:14). This is also the place where Yahweh will show his immediate presence and the place where his name is to be (לשום את־שמו) (12:5b). But it ought not to lead to such a localisation of Yahweh that he will cease to be a free God, who 'travels' with his people (cf.2 Sam 7:5-7).

theology of space is coherent, though, non-homogenous. He is well aware of the 'heights' and the 'depths', locating God in both, for "the Lord's throne is in heaven" (Ps 11:4), and he also has his dwelling "in his holy temple" (11:4a).

If I ascend (סלק) to the heavens, you are there;
if I lie down in Sheol, you are there too (Ps 139:8).⁶⁹

Divine omnipresence is portrayed in spatial terms, as prophet Amos describes in Am 9. For, those who want to run away from God they "dig into Sheol" but „from there shall my hand take them (לקח)" (Am 9:2). So is the knowledge of God higher than heaven and deeper than Sheol (cf. Job 11:7-8). The balance between divine immanence and transcendence is quite evident.⁷⁰

2.7.3. Deus Absconditus and Mundus Inversus

Following orientation metaphors and the theology of space (*theography*), there are also the 'where?' questions of the Psalmist's experience. Sometimes the question is posed to him, "Where is your God?" (איה אלהיך) (Ps 42:3, 10), or voiced in general, "Where is their God?" (איה אלהיהם) (Ps 79:10). Questions regarding the exact location of God are eternal, concerned with his hiddenness – has he withdrawn from his creation (*deus absconditus*) or is he mightily yet invisibly involved in omnipresent operations ('*deus revelatus*')?⁷¹

⁶⁹ The verb סלק appears only here and is loan word from Aramaic, cf. Dan 6:24 (והסק דניאל מן גבא).

⁷⁰ The prophet Amos portrays the divine omnipresence in Am 9. Those who want to run away from God "dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them" (לקח) (Am 9:2). Also the knowledge of God is higher than heaven and deeper than Sheol (cf. Job 11:7-8). There is a balance between divine immanence and transcendence.

⁷¹ These were questions troubling great men of faith throughout the history of religions, from Aquinas, Pascal and Luther. Blaise Pascal struggled particularly. "This is what I see and what troubles me. I look on all sides, and I see only darkness everywhere. Nature presents to me nothing which is not a matter of doubt and concern. If I saw nothing there which revealed Divinity, I would come to a negative

In the context of the Psalmist's thanatophobic predicaments, these questions deserve some attention. Two traditions of Yahweh's omnipresence can be traced. One is found in texts such as Ps 88:6, where Yahweh is absent from the underworld:⁷²

My couch is among the dead,
with the slain who lie in the grave.
You remember them no more;
they are cut off from your care (Ps 88:6).⁷³

The other tradition, seen in texts like Ps 139, claims the divine presence is found even in the realm of the dead. God holds "the depth of the earth" and "Sheol is naked" before him.⁷⁴ The Psalmist's experiences of Yahweh often contrast each other. When he fears death, God is hidden (*Deus absconditus*), "He made darkness his hiding place" (Ps 18:12). Then there is "the unfathomable mystery of distress" and separation from God, which means death and annihilation.⁷⁵ In his mighty, theophanic majesty, God is no longer hidden. When the Psalmist's cry "reached his ears" and he was delivered from a strong enemy, the powers of death and chaos withdrew and God was revealed (*Deus revelatus*) (18:15-16). Such dynamics and a phenomenon of a vacillating mood of the psalmist, Otto calls "contrasting harmony".⁷⁶

conclusion, if I saw everywhere the signs of a Creator, I would remain peacefully in faith. But, seeing too much to deny and too little to be sure, I am in a state to be pitied." (Pascal).

⁷² Cf. Ps 6:5; 30:9 etc.

⁷³ Cf. Jonah 2:5.

⁷⁴ Cf. Ps 95:4: "Whose hand holds the depths of the earth"; Am 9:2: "Though they break through to the nether world, even from there my hand shall bring them out; Though they climb to the heavens, I will bring them down", Job 26:6: "Sheol is naked before God, and Abaddon has no covering".

⁷⁵ Cf. Kraus, 1988:259.

⁷⁶ The 'numinous', awesome experience of God in the OT as *mysterium tremendum* is described in a sadly neglected work by Rudolf Otto (2004), *Das Heilige-über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationale* (Verlag C.H. Beck, München). Otto describes the notions of the numinous and the *tremendum* as a tremor before the divine: the awesome, the majestic, the energetic and the absolutely other (and incomparable). These are experiences that the Psalmist faces regularly. Otto calls this 'contrasting harmony', which makes us shudder, yet attracts us at the same time (cf. Otto, Ch.6 The Fascinans).

On the other hand Kraus' assumption that the event in Ps 18 is "supra-individual" , followed by H. Schmidt's "impression that the subject was not at all a human king who suffers and is rescued but rather a god" (Kraus: 259). In view of 18:6 and its context this is hardly tenable.

Mundus inversus

Another reason why the psalmist is confused, disorientated and emotionally unstable is that he is already living in a 'topsy-turvy' world (*mundus inversus*) where things are upside-down in comparison with the expected, normal world (cf. Kruger, 2006).⁷⁷ In this place, situation or experience, everything is reversed in relation to the normal state of affairs. This may include behaviour, which inverts, contradicts, abrogates, or presents alternatives to commonly held cultural codes. The Psalmist's swings of mood within the same psalm may be attributed to this, as may maxims expressing a utopian view of the world, such as, "Let the weak say: I am strong" (Joel 3:10) or, "The meek shall inherit the land" (Ps 37:11).⁷⁸ The biblical *mundus inversus* was foreshadowed in Ancient Neareastern religions and myths, from Egyptian to Sumerian literature (cf. Kruger, 2006:115). In Neferti's visions, the Egyptian prophet sees a parallel, alternative world: "I show thee the land topsy-turvy. The weak of arm is

⁷⁷ Dictionary definition of the term 'topsy-turvy' implies that the top is downward and the bottom up or upside down. Alternatively it is a state of utter disorder and confusion. Probably coming from top(s) (up) and the obsolete *terve*, ('to overturn', from Middle English, *terven*).

⁷⁸ Joel's words are clearly echoed in the Apostle Paul's reasoning: "I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor 12:19). Perhaps the best reflection of this topsy-turvy world is in the principle taught by Jesus of Nazareth: "many that are first will be last, and the last first" (Mt 19:30).

the possessor of an arm. Men salute (respectfully) him who (formerly) saluted. I show thee the undermost on top...".⁷⁹

There are other examples:

The world of the dead is the exact reverse of that of the living. Everything there is just the opposite... There, for instance, the sun and the moon travel from west to east ... when the dead go downstairs, they go head first ... they go to market, but the market takes place at night ... They speak the same language as the living but every word has exactly the opposite meaning: ... sweet means bitter, and bitter sweet. There, to stand up means to lie down, etc (cf. Levy-Bruhl in Kruger, 2006).

Reversals of conventional behaviour are found in the customs of the Hellenic Trausi tribe. They customarily wept at the birth of a child, and rejoiced and danced at the death of a person (see: 'Death as a release'). The inversion of life and death, of mortal and immortal life, and the Israelite belief (or disbelief) in human immortality and the transition from one world to the other, are discussed in the following chapter (Hebrew motion vocabulary and the language of death), where it will be argued that there are unequivocal indications that death is not only downwards motion.

The psalmist often finds himself in a topsy-turvy situation, or imagines an idealistic world where standard logic and the socio-economic order do not apply. Not surprisingly, this often takes the form of socio-economic criticism and involves the socially vulnerable (the poor, widows, children), or outcasts (e.g. barren women, cf. Job 24:21, Is 54:1-5).

Alec Basson (2007, 2009) analyzes Ps 74 and Ps 113 in the light of the *mundus inversus* experience of the Psalmist (cf. Basson, 2009:1-14). In Psalm 113, it is the "Lord our God" (יהוה אלינו) who creates a new arrangement of the world, whereby the "poor

⁷⁹ In Kruger, 2006:115. 'Prophecy of Neferti' (ASA, 29/3) is a discourse set in the 4 Egyptian dynasty, but actually written during the 12th dynasty, and is typical of the royal propaganda of the time.

from the dust” will be seated with the “princes of his people” (Ps 113:5-9).⁸⁰ Similarly, in Pss 74 and 75, “It is God who judges: he brings one down, he exalts another” (75:7).

Following this general discussion over the issues of religious language, motion and spatial orientation in the psalmist’s emotional experiences, we ought to provide an overview of those realms of death that we find in the Scriptural text, and particularly in the contexts of the Psalter.

⁸⁰ Cf. Basson, 2009:6.

3. REALMS OF DEATH

It is plausible that there should be quite a number of aspects and views over death throughout the OT, but we shall examine only those for which we believe present the key expressions of death realms in the OT texts, five of them: 'grave', 'silence', 'no name', 'dust' and 'depth and darkness'.

3.1. The Grave

The grave is frequently referred to as a place of rest, though it is also the realm where worms reign. The grave in biblical literature, particularly if we agree that Sheol and the grave are more or less the same place, is described in many ways.¹ It is 'insatiable' (cf. Is 5:14, Hab 2:5, Pro 30:16, Rom 3:13), 'spacious' (Hab 2:5) (הרחיב (כשאול), and with the power to hold a person down with 'cords of death' (חבלי־מות) (Ps 18:5;116:3).² The grave can be an abode (Ps 49:15) or the place where a bed is spread (יצע): "If I ascend (סלק) to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed (יצוע) in Sheol, thou art there!" (Ps 139:8). Perhaps the most powerful poetic portrayal of the grave deathbed is found in Isaiah 14:11: "Maggots are the bed beneath you, and worms are your covering" (יצע רמה ומכסיד תולעה) (Is 14:11).

The location of the grave (Sheol) is, as expected, deep down, in the land of gloom, darkness and irreversible descent ("Who goes down to Sheol does not come

¹ A grave can be a 'rock-hewn tomb' (Lk 23:53), with a stone rolled across the opening (Mat 27:60; Mk 15:46), or a 'heap' (גדיש) (Jb 21:32); which is probably a grave mound formed of earth Delitzsch gives some enlightening information on Arabian customs regarding the form and positioning of graves (KD, Delitzsch, vol.4: 419-20).

² In the NT we are told that the power of the grave was unable to hold Jesus down ("because it was not possible for him to be held by it"). It is said that God released the bonds of death over Jesus (λύσας τὰς ὀδύνας αὐτοῦ) (Ac 2:24).

up” (Job 7:9).³ This is a place from whence no-one has ever come back: “I go whence I shall not return” (Job 10:21).⁴ It has the gripping power (cf. Ps 49:16) and an insatiable appetite. The prophet says that the “nether world (שאול) enlarges (רחב) its throat and opens its mouth without limit (לבלי־חק)” (cf. Is 5:14; Hab 2:5) (NAB).⁵ It never says, “Enough” (הוֹן) (cf. Pro 30:16).

The arrogant man shall not abide. His greed is as wide as Sheol; like death he has never enough. He gathers for himself all nations, and collects as his own all peoples (Hab 2:5).⁶

Apparently, the netherworld is also a surprisingly spacious place (הרחיב כשאול) as we have it here in Hab 2.

3.1.1. Death as a Release

Death is the arch enemy, but the person attacked may be victorious, escape, succumb or find release in losing the battle. If the Psalmist seems a fatalist at times, ‘going the way of all the earth’, his yearning to escape counters any suicidal moods. David Daube’s study, “Death as a Release in the Bible”, though very useful and concise, mainly focuses on death as a release, as an escape from danger.⁷

The most frequent epitaph on tombstones is “Rest in peace”. The grave is seen as the ‘place of rest’ or ‘final resting place’, where release is granted, not only in the Judeo-Christian tradition, but in other religions too. Some the finest compositions of classical music are Requiems invoking, ‘requiem aeternam donna eis Domine’. In other

³ JPS here translates Sheol as ‘grave’: “He that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more”.

⁴ Cf. בטרם אלך ולא אשוב .

⁵ The etymology of Sheol as a toponym has long been debated. Morphologically, in Semitic languages, there are many cognates of the same root, and it is not unlikely that it is related to the Hebrew verbal form of שאל (request, demand). See: P. Johnston (cf. Johnston, 2002: 77-79).

⁶ Here, only the RSV translates “as wide as Sheol” (הרחיב כשאול), JPS translates: “who enlargeth his desire as the nether-world”.

⁷ Cf. D. Daube, ‘Death as a Release in the Bible’ (NT, 5 1962).

words, the grave and death are considered both as resting places and release. The burial ceremony is the final honour and deed of mercy performed for the deceased, with all due ritual.⁸ Herodotus, for example, reports the traditions of the Trausi, a Thracian tribe:

The Trausi in all else resemble the other Thracians, but have customs at births and deaths which I will now describe. When a child is born all its kindred sit round about it in a circle and weep for the woes it will have to undergo now that it is come into the world, making mention of every ill that falls to the lot of humankind; when, on the other hand, a man has died, they bury him with laughter and rejoicings, and say that now he is free from a host of sufferings, and enjoys the completest happiness (Histories, 5.4)

Similarly, Ecclesiastes expounds on the 'joys' of death, and speaks of it as better than birth:

A good name is better than good ointment, and the day of death than the day of birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, for that is the end of every man, and the living should take it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, because when the face is sad the heart grows wiser...The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. Better is the end of speech than its beginning; better is the patient spirit than the lofty spirit (Eccl 7:1-9) (NAB).

However, this is hardly typical of OT religion. The famous nihilism of Ecclesiastes is no doubt an import from elsewhere, since the Scriptures do not show us death as something to be wished for, or an occasion for joy, least of all in the Psalter. The Bible is clear in differentiating between martyrdom and suicidal acts. Longing for death is not a particularly laudable desire in the Scriptural context, though some characters seem to think it best for them, as a liberation from earthly trials and the weariness of life (as in the cases of Job, Elijah, or even the apostle Paul). When King Saul was

⁸ Almost all Christian rituals relating to dying and services for the dead, (esp. those which developed in the more formal, episcopal structures of the Church), even with the appropriate NT scriptural references, are firmly rooted in the Judaic tradition. For example, the last rites, the final confession of the dying (and anointing of the sick) reflect Midrash Rabbah, Cant. Rabbah. Regarding Prov 28:13, "Who confesses (sins) and forsakes them obtains mercy," Midrash Rabbah (Cant) comments, "The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel, 'My sons, present to me an opening of repentance no bigger than the eye of a needle, and I will widen it into gateways through which wagons and carriages can pass'" (Midrash Rabbah, IX; Cant R.5:2). Earnest confession may effect healing (cf. Jam 5:13f.).

fighting a losing battle and severely wounded, he commanded his armour bearer to “draw the sword, and thrust———— me through with it” (assisted suicide), and after the man refused, “Saul took his own sword, and fell upon it” (suicide) (1 Sam 31:4; cf. 1 Chr 10:4).⁹

However, there is also sufficient evidence in the OT and NT records that death and the grave may be considered as a relief and release. Abraham was told that he would go to his forefathers ‘in peace’, (בשלום) (Gen 15:15), while Job, after all his travails, died ‘old and full of days’ (זקן ושבע ימים) (Gen 25:8; 35:29; Job 42:17). These are examples of people to whom death comes when they are sated with life, having fulfilled all their endeavours. Though death and the grave have never been the friends or particular desires of the fully composed mind in biblical texts, some suicidal expressions caused by depression, disappointment or anger are found (Moses, Elijah, and Jonah).¹⁰ In the NT, Paul declares, “For me to live is Christ, to die is gain” (Phil 1:21). Bockmuehl presents an engaging, detailed discussion on death as a release. In his commentary (The Epistle to the Philippians) he says that 'gain'

Does not mean that like the Stoics, he regards life and death as indifferent, or his present life as mere drudgery and misery. Here, after all, is a man who is uncommonly sure and joyful about his present calling (Bockmuehl, 1997:88).¹¹

Only few paragraphs later, the apostle exclaims, ‘I press on’ (διώκω) (3:12). His sentiments are not those of a morbid, suicidal, religious fanatic, nor of a depressed

⁹ Many commentators consign Saul to eternal damnation for this act.

¹⁰ Daube correctly notes that all this should be viewed within the perspective of the “low expectation of life in that period – most people were carried off by disease or some violence before reaching fifty” (Daube, 1962:82).

¹¹ Cf. Bockmuehl, 1997: 84-94.

man, but rather he is persistent, “forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead” (cf. Phil 3:12-14).

3.1.2. Burying not Burning

Grave and burial rituals are universally important, and the Judaic tradition shows exceptional respect for the dead.

Since it was disgracefully disrespectful not to care for the dead, the instruction of Jesus of Nazareth to leave “the dead to bury their own dead” (Mat 8:21-22) must have sounded unprecedentedly provocative. What he really meant was that following him was an uncompromising endeavour. An indirect reference here may be found in Ps 115 (17), “The dead do not praise the Lord”.

In her study “The Jewish Burial Service”, Thaddea de Sion gives an exceptionally concise and enlightening description of the biblical evidence and Judaic customs regarding Jewish burial services and interment. Several aspects of the reverence for the dead, dead bodies, burial customs, and mourning rites come to the fore, meriting further investigation.¹² The dead always go down to the dust (cf. Ps 22:29), and the placing of the dead body in the grave forms part of the crucial Judaic heritage.¹³ Judaic traditions and OT texts show reverence towards the dead, whether their own, foreigners, or Gentiles (cf. de Sion, 1995:243). Any conduct towards the dead which does not include a grave and burial is considered a disgrace.¹⁴ Being left unburied (even if a criminal) is a curse. Hence, “*a hanged man is accursed by God*” (De 21:23). Another disgrace is burning the body. Sexual sins are to be punished, and fornicators brought to the ‘gate of the city’ and stoned to death (cf. De 22:23-24). In extreme

¹² Cf. de Sion, 1995: 243-255.

¹³ Cf. de Sion: 243.

¹⁴ “Until about a century ago, cremation was looked on with horror, though it was permitted in exceptional circumstances, such as epidemic” (de Sion: 244). Also, burial is to be carried out as soon as possible after death.

cases of prostitution and incest (or the violation of herem), the punishment is burning instead of burial.¹⁵ This refers to cremation, not burning at the stake or death by fire.¹⁶

The burning of the corpse or bones is a sign of utter annihilation. It is an obliteration of any impurity which may defile the community. It designates a public renunciation of deeds of desecration. In his famous religious reforms, King Josiah not only pulled down (נתן) and pulverised (דקק) the desecrated altars, he also ordered the graves around the altars to be opened up and the bones of those buried there to be burned on the altar (cf. 2Ki 23:15-18).¹⁷ In more modern times, the ultimate disgrace for heretics was the Church's practice of burning an apostate's bones, considered the final act of excommunication.¹⁸

The sacrificial burning of children was widespread in the pagan religious practices of the nations which surrounded Israel. The highest proliferation of human sacrifices was in the Molech cult, whose followers made their

¹⁵ Gen 38:24, "About three months later Judah was told, 'Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; and moreover she is with child by harlotry.' And Judah said, 'Bring her out, and let her be burned.'" Cf. Lev 20:14, an incestuous relationship between a man and his mother-in-law and Jos 7:25, a violation of the herem commandment.

¹⁶ Cf. KD, vol.1: 427.

¹⁷ The only grave and bones spared during Josiah's reforming campaign were those of the 'man of God', who many years back, during the rule of Jeroboam, had predicted such developments (cf. 1 Ki 13:31-32). An example of pulverising and burning a dead man's bones occurs as a retributive act in the war between Moab and Judah against Edom. There, after a victorious campaign, the Moabites dug up the bones of the king of Edom and burned them (cf. Am 2:1-3).

¹⁸ One of the most absurd, controversial cases of burning the bones of an apostate happened in the 17th century, to the Croatian Archbishop Markantun de Dominis, Archbishop of Split (1602) at the time of Pope Paul V. During the ecclesiastical squabbles of the day, de Dominis left for Venice, and fearing the Inquisition, due to his friendships with the English ambassador (Sir Henry Wotton), travelled to England and 'changed sides', joining the Church of England. King James I welcomed de Dominis cordially and granted him a pension. His most famous antipapal work was "De Republica Ecclesiastica contra Primatum Papae" (London, 1617; 1620; 1622). As circumstances changed, he took 'flight from Babylon' (i.e. England) and decided to rejoin the Roman Church and renounce everything he had written against the See of Rome. Back in grace, he moved to Brussels and then to Rome, where he retired. However, as a recanting heretic, he was imprisoned in St Angelo Castle. He died a natural death (1623), but was again pronounced a heretic. Eventually (1624), his body was exhumed, burnt, with all his books, and the ashes were thrown into River Tiber.

Sons and their daughters to pass through fire to Molech (להעביר איש את־בנו ואת־בתו באש למלך) (2Ki 23:10).

The central location of the Molech cult was near Jerusalem, in the valley of Hinom, where even King Solomon built a 'bamah' to Molech (1 Ki 11:7).¹⁹ Also recorded in Jer 32:35J.²⁰ The cult probably arose from the Ammonites, because it was called the "abomination of the Ammonites" (1 Ki 11:5-7).²¹

3.1.3. Bizarre Gatherings

The familiar expression 'going down' to the grave has a matching parallel in the idiom 'going to the fathers' (בוא אל־אבת־יך) (Gen 15:15).²² Also, as in Ps 49 the soul "will go to the generation of his fathers" (תבוא עד־דור אבותיו) (Ps 49:20).²³ Whether this means the actual graves of ancestors, or is a general euphemism for the realm of death is irrelevant. Though there are Judaic traditions of taking the deceased to their ancestral home, as with Jacob's explicit instruction to be buried with his fathers (Gen 49:29). The expression 'going to the fathers' may be deemed synonymous with the phrase 'gathered to his people'. However, there is a fine differentiation between 'going' and 'gathering'. However, some, like Job do not seem to go to their fathers or

¹⁹ The precise location is to the east of Jerusalem, next to the 'mount of corruption' (cf. 1 Ki 23:13), south of the Mount of Olives. In the church's tradition it is also known as *Mons Offensionis* or *Mons Scandali* (cf. Keil in KD, vol.3: 171).

²⁰ Cf. Jer 7:31, 19:5; 2 Ki 17:31. "They built the high places of Baal in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did not command them, nor did it enter into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin" (Jer 32:35). Cf. Gray, IDB, vol.3: 422-423.

²¹ The genealogical tree of the Ammonites is goes back to *Ben-ammi*, the son of one of the daughters of Lot (cf. Land of forgetfulness). G.M.Landes provides an extensive discussion on the etymology and the history of Ammon and the sons of Ammon in IDB, vol.1: 108-115.

²² "Gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace" (אספך אל־אבת־יך ונאספת אל־קרבת־יך בשלום) (2 Chr 34:28) .

²³ תבוא here refers to the soul from the previous verse. Explaining it on the bases of Ps 14:5, Dahood translates דור as a circle. The dor in Ps 14 means 'assembly', 'generation' and in that sense may perhaps be translated as circle. (Cf. 'dor' as assembly see: F.J. Neuberg, *JNES* 9, 1950).

people, but to the 'land of gloom' (cf. Job 10:21). Others go to a gathering like Abraham,

Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people (Gen 25:8). (ויגוע וימת אברהם בשיבה טובה זקן ושבע ויאסף אל־עמיו)

Some commentators here contest the expression *gathered to his people* on the basis that it presupposes the notion of an ancestral family grave. But had not the ancestral gravesite already been purchased in Gen 23:17?²⁴

Similar phraseology ('gathered to his people') (יאסף אל־עמיו) or ('breathed his last and died') (ויגוע יצחק וימת) is used repeatedly for all the patriarchs. Isaac was 'gathered to his people' (cf. Gen 35:29), Jacob gave clear instructions; "I am to be gathered unto my people (באסף אל־עמי); bury me with my fathers" (Gen 49:29). Even Ishmael was 'gathered to his people' (cf. Gen 25:17). So the phrase is synonymous with descending to the depths, darkness and silence, where there is no light and the person will never be seen again.

Yet in this gloomy netherworld there is a bizarre reunion of the deceased, gathered (אסף) into the assembly of their forefathers (2 Chr 34:28; Jdg 2:10). The verb (אסף) recurs appearing in these ephemeral settings. It is used dysphemistically when Jacob "gathered his feet and breathed his last" (49:33) before he was "gathered to his people" (49:33b). Jacob insisted on being buried with and gathered to his kin (49:29). Otherwise, the verb is not used in the death setting.

²⁴ Von Rad states that "the expression 'he was gathered to his people' is not correct here, to be sure, and is apparently used with a decidedly hackneyed meaning, for it presupposes the notion of an ancestral family grave" (von Rad, 1972:262). He notes correctly that the report of Abraham's death comes from the P source, so is "accordingly limited to communicating the important objective facts, setting aside everything that a Yahwist could have presented in addition" (von Rad, ib.).

3.2. Silence

3.2.1. Silence of the Grave.

When silence is 'as the grave' or 'deathly' silence, it is actually another characterisation of death: "Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had soon dwelt in silence (שכן דומה)" (JPS) (Ps 94:17).²⁵

Psalm 115 additionally qualifies and locates the silence as being 'down there'. The dead are those who 'go down into silence' (ירדי דומה) (115:17b). Curiously, Dahood here translates as follows, "If Yahweh had not been my help I would have directly dwelt in the Fortress" and quite unusually, argues that דומה comes from the Ugaritic 'dmt' (tower, fortress), on the basis that with שכן there ought to be a place, rather than a condition (silence). This does not make sense, even if only because of the orientation metaphor. Presumably one would go up (עלה) to a fortress, rather than down (ירד).

3.2.2. Silence of Death or Praise

Silence is not just a symbol of the grave. The Psalmist argues that being silent (dead?) is a negation of being alive and praising God. Thus, "the dead do not praise the LORD" (115:17a). That is why the psalmist prays: "Open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise" (Ps 51:17). The restoration of the mouth is also known in the Egyptian ritual of 'mouth opening' in the sense of re-establishing human-divine relationship.²⁶

²⁵ NAB here translates: "If the LORD were not my help, I would long have been silent in the grave" (NAB).

²⁶ In the ancient Egyptian religion, the ritual of mouth opening was for the re-establishment of humandivine communications. In The Papyrus of Ani, the scribe repeatedly asks: "May my mouth be given unto me that I may speak therewith in the presence of the Great God, the Lord of the Tuat" (ch. XXII) and, "Homage to thee, O thou Lord of brightness, Governor of the Temple, Prince of the night and of the thick darkness. I have come unto thee. I am shining, I am pure. My hands are about thee, thou

But silence is not always deadly silence or related to death. There is also a psalmodic motif of silence as resentment towards evildoers, (רעע) in Ps 37 and הלל also in Ps 73, calls for silence and calm. Both psalms begin with the leading verb קנא i.e. 'being envious' of the arrogant and the evildoers (cf. Ps 37:1; 73:3); expressing very strong emotions and turbulent emotional reactions. Furtheron in Ps 37, the Psalmist gets quite upset (חרה), like the barren Rachel. In her bitterness and resentment, when she was not able to bear children and was also envious of her sister, she upbraided her husband, "Give me children, or I shall die!" (Gen 30:1).²⁷ The same verb (חרה) of boiling anger appears in several few biblical reports of strong, emotionally charged feelings. One example, which could have had much worse consequences than it did, was the envy of Joseph's brothers (Gen 37:11).²⁸ In Ps 37:7 the silence and the silencing of the Psalmist: "Be still before the LORD" (דום ליהוה) has a twofold implication. One is that quietening his emotional reactions is a victory over internal struggles. The other is that resignation is not passive, but the victory of faith.²⁹ Weiser puts it concisely: "Faith in the biblical sense requires the utmost exertion of strength and the highest degree of activity" (Weiser, 1962: 318). This is highly applicable to many situations in which the Psalmist finds himself.

hast thy lot with thy ancestors. Give thou unto me my mouth that I may speak with it. I guide my heart at its season of flame and of night" (ch. XXI).

Cf. Budge, *The Book of the Dead*, 1999: 367ff; Chs. 21-24 Giving Ani a mouth or The chapters of giving a mouth to the Osiris Ani, the scribe.

²⁷ It seems that there was a kind of legal procedure for childless women to acquire children, "but the passionate woman has her own way" (cf. von Rad, 1972:294).

²⁸ That the verb is strongly charged with emotions is proved in Eze 35:11, where it appears with אף (לכן חי'אמי נאם אדני יהוה ועשיתי כאפך וכקנאתך).

²⁹ JPS renders: "Resign thyself unto the LORD".

3.3. No name, No monument, No Life

The dead are those who 'live' in the land of forgetfulness; they are ultimately forgotten and gone.³⁰ Once gone, “our place knows (נכר) us no more” (Ps 103:16) (NAB) (cf. Eccl 9:5).³¹ Banishment into oblivion, or being forgotten by God, was one of the Psalmist's fears.

Are your wonders known in the darkness?
Or thy saving help in the land of forgetfulness? (Ps 88:12) (RSV).³²

The phrase ‘land of forgetfulness’ (ארץ נשיה) appears only here in the biblical text.³³ The only other approximation to the idea occurs in Ps 6:6, “In death there is no remembrance of you. Who praises you in Sheol?” The fate of being forgotten by God was infinitely worse than being forgotten by his fellow men, because it meant imminent death and oblivion. “O LORD? Will you forget (שכח) me forever?” (Ps 13:1). This resistance to mortal forgetfulness is expressed via the human need for continuity. There are two manifestations of it. One is rather empirical; the other testimonial and tributary.

Monument and a Name

Escape from the land of forgetfulness can be avoided by setting up an assortment of memorials. After death, all means should be employed to preserve one's name and offspring. The name is the highest proof of existence, or evidence of

³⁰ Cf. death as departure.

³¹ Cf. “For of the wise man, even as of the fool, there is no remembrance for ever; seeing that in the days to come all will long ago have been forgotten. And how must the wise man die even as the fool!” (Eccl 2:16)

³² It is not clear why Mitchell Dahood here translates: “Is your kindness declared in the Grave, your fidelity in Abaddon” (Dah).

³³ From נשה 'forget' or 'deprive'.

character.³⁴ Biological reproduction and propagation also preserve the name.³⁵ The name is not merely appellative (*nomen appellativum*), or nominal (*nomen*).³⁶ As

Pedersen notes:

The name is the appellation characterizing each individual soul. In so far it may be said that the name is part of the soul, seeing that it is possessed by it like the body, and everything wherein it manifests itself. But, fully as much as any other part of the soul, it characterizes the whole of the soul, such as it is. To know the name of a man is the same as to know his essence (Pedersen, 1991:245).

One of the man's first divinely appointed activities was to give names to the creator's creatures. Creation itself was complete only when the name-giving process had been carried out:

So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field (Gen 2:19-20).³⁷

No name, no life. The name is essentially linked with existence (life), but is also vulnerable to utter annihilation (death). There is a fine line between the name and the fact, between existence (life) and annihilation (death). To cut off a name means to impose the cessation of existence, death. But even the dead have an opportunity, in

³⁴ That is why Ecclesiastes says that: "Whatever is, was long ago given its name" (Eccl 6:10) (NAB). Of Jacob's name it has been said "He has been well named Jacob! He has now supplanted me twice!"

³⁵ The creator's very first blessing bestowed on the newly created humans was, "Be fruitful and multiply" (פרו ורבו) (Gen 1:28). There is a graphic portrayal of human propagation in the increase of the Israelites in Egypt, "The Israelites were fruitful (פרה) and prolific (שרץ)" (Ex 1:7) (NAB). So childbearing and the preservation of one's name was crucially important in ancient Israel. The incestuous story of Lot's daughters sleeping with their father was based on the rationale of preserving offspring, "... that we may preserve seed of our father" (cf. Gen 19:32). Also, the idea of redemption (גאול) in the OT was not only about inheritance, but also restoring the name of the deceased (cf. Ruth 4:5).

³⁶ Is there an etymological connection between *nomen* and *omen*?

³⁷ This extraordinary passage also introduces the subject of language in the most comprehensive term. The exercise of name-giving is not simply linguistic, haphazard, or decorative. It is not about inventing words. In an excellent exposition of Gen 2:19-20, G.von Rad provides a good introduction to name-giving and language development (cf. von Rad, 1972: 82-83).

the continuity of their offspring, so “the name of the dead may not be cut off” (cf. Ruth 4:10).

The worst fate the Palmist can wish upon his enemy is that “his memory (זכר) be cut off from the earth!” (Ps 109:15; cf. Ps 9:6). The enemies of the Psalmist and his people are equally fervent: “Come, let us wipe (כחד) them out as a nation; let the name of Israel be remembered no more!” (Ps 83:4) (RSV).³⁸ In contrast to those enemies which intend to wipe out the ‘name of Israel’, in praise of famous men of integrity Ben Sirach affirms their name ‘live to all generations’:

There are some of them who have left a name, so that men declare their praise. And there are some who have no memorial, who have perished as though they had not lived; they have become as though they had not been born, and so have their children after them...Their bodies were buried in peace, and their name lives to all generations (Sir 44:8f).

This directs us to another important aspect of the name, that of sovereignty. The name also signifies being in command and in charge of exercising authority over someone.³⁹ It is crucial for the Psalmist to invoke the divine name, not only the person and existence of God, but also his authority. With authority comes reputation, which is also in the name.⁴⁰ Knowing the name means knowing the very person. The Psalmist will be saved from trials because he knows God's name: “I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name (כִּי־יָדַע שְׁמִי)” (Ps 91:14, cf.9:11).⁴¹ Ought this intimate, personal knowledge of Yahweh be restricted to the temple and the cult, as

³⁸ “Let us cut them off from being a nation” (JPS).

³⁹ In the New Testament it is said of Christ that “God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name” (Phil 2:9).

⁴⁰ Cf. Ruth 4:11.

⁴¹ Dahood translates, “If he acknowledges my name”.

some commentators insist (cf. Briggs, PS II: 282)?⁴² Knowing the name of God presupposes its revelation and a theophanic event. In Gen 32:30, Jacob pleads with a heavenly wrestler who holds him in a theophanic grip, “Please tell me your name” (הגידה־נא שמך).⁴³

The structure of Psalm 91 (v.14) suggests and illustrates that knowing God ought not to be restricted to the sanctuary and its cultic liturgical events:

Because he cleaves to me in love (חשק), I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name (ידע שם) (Ps 91:14).

The verse's parallelism is important. There is not only 'knowing', but also 'loving'. The Psalmist clings (חשק) to God in love, and this love is paralleled to knowing.⁴⁴ The חשק here is paralleled to God's love for Israel, as in De 10:15: “The LORD set his heart in love (חשק) upon your fathers”.⁴⁵ The Psalmist's personal, loving attachment to God may include the cultic-liturgical events in the temple, but not necessarily. This brings us back to one of our presuppositions from the objectives of this work, that the Psalmist as an individual devotee does exist beyond the voices of formal figures (king or poet).

On the other hand, no name, no reputation! In his humiliation and bitterness caused by broken relationships, Job decides to call people names. To him, they are worthless trash, and witheringly, he calls them ‘nameless men’ (בלי־שם) (cf. Job 30:8).⁴⁶

⁴² “Personal acquaintance with the name of God as manifested in the sanctuary” (Briggs). Yet, it is clear that Hebrew ‘knowing’ is much more than ‘personal acquaintance’ or merely being informed about someone. OT vocabulary invariably uses ‘to know’ ידע to mean being on terms of intimacy.

⁴³ There is also to be noted, that unprecedented revelation of the name of Yahweh to Moses in Ex 3, which brings about theological significance of the name, particularly in the Israelite history of religion.

⁴⁴ ‘What is the distance between knowing and loving God’ (489) (B. Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules).

⁴⁵ The root חשק= being attached to someone (in love), cf. Gen 34:8, is to be distinguished from other verbal roots designating love and affection, such as (אהב) (ahab), (אבה) (awa) or (חמד) (hamad).

⁴⁶ This is why it is important to have a ‘good name’ (טוב שם). Ecclesiastes adds a twist, by saying: “A good name is better than precious oil; and the day of death than the day of one's birth” (Eccl 7:1). The might,

Kinship Names and Monuments

As noted, in OT tradition the idea of the name is indicative of character, and as a means of human continuity. But what kind of personal names prevail, and what do they indicate? Philip Johnston, in *Shades of Sheol*, expounds the theory that personal names (apart from those which are clearly Yahwistic-theophoric) which contain kinship terms, mainly *ab* (father), have non-Yahwistic theophoric innuendos. They reflect the nonYahwistic cultic overtones of ancestor worship (cf. Johnston, 2002:190f). Though these may be religious relics, as Johnston proposes, the real question is the extent to which they were still operative in Israelite religion.⁴⁷ There are examples of names being given with no reference to ancestor worship at all. One of Gideon's sons was named Abimelech and the text says that, "his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he called his name Abimelech" (Jdg 8:31).⁴⁸

Further on in our discussing the problem of the psalmist's mood changes (cf. Swings in mood) we shall be addressing the use of the divine Name with all its empowerments and the Name which 'acts'.

The significance of the name goes hand in hand with memorial building, as a way of preserving one's name, that is to say to endow human wish for continuity.⁴⁹ First such attempt of preservation and human continuity is shown in the story of the so

reputation and esteem of the Nephilim was also in the 'name', they were called 'men of renown' (אנשי השרם), literally 'men of the name' (cf. Gen 6:4).

⁴⁷ References to deified family members in ancestral worship are found in van der Toorn (1996b) and Noth (1928), in Johnston, id.

⁴⁸ Delitzsch argues that the expressions שים שם and קרא שם are not identical. The latter phrase probably indicates additional name giving, serving as a cognomen (cf. KD, vol.2: 360). Bearing in mind what follows in Jdg 9, the incident of Abimelech's aspirations to kingship, and the *vox populi* of 8:22-23, his name should not be seen as a sign of ancestor worship.

⁴⁹ For the issues of the memorials in ANE or biblical practices, see D. Sheriffs (2004), 'The Human need for Continuity' (TB 55).

called 'Tower of Babel' (Gen 11) where the 'builders' affirm: "Let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves" (Gen 11:4). It is to have a name and a monument, as the very phrase is found, for several reasons in a captivating text of Isa 56.⁵⁰ The phrase 'monument and the name' is taken from the prophet Isaiah's words: "I will give them, in my house and within my walls, a monument and a name (יָד וְשֵׁם)" (Is 56:5).⁵¹ This Isaianic text is set in an intriguing literary and theological context, referring to the eunuchs (סְרִיסִים) of Israel and even beyond, prompting them not to say, "I am but a dry tree" (56:3b).⁵² Referring to their vitality and/or ability to procreate, the eunuchs were dead men walking. As such, they were excluded from the community of their people, and were even subject to the death penalty (cf. Lev 18).⁵³ Indeed, the eunuchs confirm that Yahweh himself will separate them from their people (Is 56:3a). However, they are promised a monument (יָד), and not just anywhere, but in the house of God. And, not only a monument, but a name (שֵׁם) which is to be everlasting, "better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off" (56:5b). Against the general background, this is a sweeping statement, challenging some very fundamental covenant pledges, particularly those resting on physical predispositions.

⁵⁰ One of the greatest modern memorials to the names, is the holocaust memorial museum in Jerusalem, which actually bears the name *Yad Vashem* ('A Monument and a Name') after Isa 56:5.

⁵¹ יָד also means a 'side' or 'place', as in: "Outside the camp you shall have a place" (וְיָד תְּהִיָּה לָךְ מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה) (De 23:13); Also, in the peculiar case of Absalom raising himself a monument (pillar, מִצְבֵּה) it reads: יָד אֲבִשָׁלִים (2 Sam 18:18).

⁵² Delitzsch here translates: "For this saith Jehovah to the circumcised." (KD, vol.7:362).

⁵³ Sexual wholeness and sexual purity are an important aspect of OT legislation; including the intactness of the sexual organs (cf. Davidson, 2007). And again, Israel, the 'community of the Lord' (עֵדֶת יְהוָה), could not accept the children of incest (מִזְרֵי), eunuchs, or those, "whose testicles are crushed or whose male member is cut off" (פְּצוּעֵי דָכָא וְכָרוֹת שִׁפְכָה) (De 23:1-3).

For the ancient Israelite, the vital fact that made him one of the chosen people was that he had been born into it. What gave him a past and a future were purely physical things – his parents, and the fact that he lived on in his children. To Abraham, the promise made in Isa 56:5b would have been incomprehensible; it would have had no meaning. But here, with Trito-isaiah, the physical and the spiritual have ceased to be necessarily united in this way (von Rad: 314).

Eunuchs are sterile and cannot reproduce. In the Israelite tradition, this was considered next to death. They were unclean and ready to be cut off from the community, like foreigners (בְּנֵי־הַנֹּכְרִי) (Isa 56:3).⁵⁴ How could such people be granted a 'monument and a name', in the house of God, of all places? Though, the same prophet (Isaiah) presents the judgements of Yahweh on the nations (Isa 13-24), there is a clear expression of his passion for them, though it may require a salvific blow, 'smiting and healing' (נִגַּף רְפוּאָה), "the LORD will smite Egypt, smiting and healing, and they will return to the LORD, and he will heed their supplications and heal them" (Is 19:22-23). And then quite unexpectedly, come this; "In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth" (Is 19:23-25).⁵⁵

A unique example of a person who tried to fight off oblivion is Absalom, who during his lifetime raised a monument to himself and to 'his name':

He set up for himself the pillar (מִצְבֵּה) which is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance"; he called the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom's monument (יָד אֲבִישָׁלֹם) to this day (2 Sam 18:18).

⁵⁴ Here and elsewhere in the OT text, the term foreigner (נֹכְרִי) (*nkr*) is not equivalent to (גוֹי) (*goy*) the people(s) i.e. non-jews. While *goy* is somewhat neutral the term *nkr* refers to peoples of idolatric practices (cf. Gen 35:2,4; Josh 24:23; 1Sam 7:3)

⁵⁵ Brueggemann notes intriguingly that "in each of these, Yahweh makes a positive move towards the nations, for which there seems to be no evident motivation" (Brueggemann, 1997:523).

Absalom's actions were more a performance than a successful preservation of his name. It is actually quite a cynical story. Sheriffs is right when he observes that *“the story succeeds where the stones fail”* (Sheriffs, 2004:4).

In the whole Psalter, the psalmist even in the worst of his thanatophobic experiences, show no attempts, signs or plans to preserve his name for times immemorial by erecting a monument. In fact, whenever the word שם ('name') is being used in the Psalter, it is in the context of very personal and close relationship between God and the psalmist. In fact, whenever in his trouble the psalmist will call upon YHWH he will answer and deliver him: “Because he cleaves to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name (כִּי־יָדַע שְׁמִי)” (Ps 91:14). The psalmist is really in no need to contemplate erecting any monuments to himself (his name); for those who put their trust or know His “name” YHWH will never forsake (עָזַב) (cf. Ps 9:11).

3.4. Return to Dust and Back to the Worms

Dust in Scripture carries two opposite meanings; one is positive, that of creation and proliferation, while the other is of mortality and death. Dust is a creational material from which God made human beings, “The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground” (עֹפֶר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה) (Gen 2:7). Dust (עֹפֶר) also becomes a symbol of fruitfulness, as in God's promises of blessing to Jacob, “Your descendants shall be as plentiful as the dust of the earth” (כַּעֲפֹר הָאָרֶץ) (Gen 28:14). Yet, biblical dust refers more to man's final destiny and the affliction of mortality which means he must return to the dust/ground from whence he came:

Return to the ground (אדמה), for out of it you were taken; you are dust (עפר), and to dust you shall return (Gen 3:19).

In relation to the fulfilment of the threat in Gen 2:17, the dust-death motif does not mean glorious return, but a cursed one. Human mortality simply relates to the reality of death and the fact that every living thing returns to dust-death, in von Rad's words: "One cannot say that man lost a 'germ of immortality' any more than one can say that a material modification occurred in him, as a consequence of which he must now fall prey to death" (von Rad, 1972:95).

Indeed, there is a twofold modification of the material in question, of both the moral and religious kind, in relation to his creator, and the transformation of living flesh to the dust of death. It is difficult to see why von Rad and others fail to find a connection between 3:19 and 2:17, pursuant to the difference between, "You will die" in 2:17 and the explicit statement on that day, "You will become mortal" (id. 95-96).⁵⁶

Worshipful Dust

From the Psalmist's point of view, there is another dimension to the dust-death pair, because, "All who have gone down into the dust will kneel in homage" (Ps 22:30).⁵⁷ It is uncertain what is meant here. Will the dead worship God in Sheol? As we already noted, elsewhere the Psalmist is clear on that issue. The dead are no longer

⁵⁶ Referring to death, dust and decay, Paul refers to it as the 'bondage of decay' (Rom 8:21), whereby the whole of creation is 'groaning in travail' (8:22) in expectation of liberation from the decay of death, which is considered futility (ματαιότης) and corruption (φθορά) (cf. Gal 6:8). The author of Acts insistently uses 'corruption' as a synonym for death (Ac 13:34-37), often interchangeably overlapping within the moral, spiritual and material domains. Though it is clear that dust-death refer to the futility and corruption of life, hesitations and explanations that death is not related to the fulfilment of Gen 2:17 do not sound fully convincing. Most commentators see this text as a fulfilment of the curse in Gen 2:17. Others say that it merely denotes the natural order of things; in other words, death is not punishment, but the natural wearing away of all things (Cf. Wenham, 1987:83).

⁵⁷ Cf. Dan 12:2.

able to worship God: “Who praises you in Sheol?”(Ps 6:6) (NAB) or “Will the dust praise thee?” (Ps 30:9) (RSV).

Anderson proposes that this does not relate to the deceased but to those who are near death, or about to descend into the underworld. He then paraphrases the verse: “Even all those who were nearly gone down to the dust will bend their knee before him” (cf. Anderson, PS I: 194). Or does this also wishes to communicate a divine dominion and power extending even to the netherworld and perhaps this is what the Psalmist has in mind? In the NT Paul the apostle (Phil 2:5-11) epitomises this motif of the 'dusty return', saying that “at the name” every knee shall bend in heaven, on earth and under the earth (see here the discussion on the name).⁵⁸

Dust is also the realm of decay and death where, like in the grave, worms reign and produce a bed of maggots⁵⁹, going about their labour of decay. The Psalmist in his thanatophobic mood is already travelling down the path of dust. Even though he is not dead yet, he feels as though he has already been deposited in the dust; “You lay me in the dust of death” (לעפר־מות תשתני) (Ps 22:15). Dahood here translates, “They put me upon the mud of Death”, taking (תשפתני) as the 3rd person singular of (שפת). So does Briggs, arguing on the basis of the context and descriptions of the Psalmist being persecuted by enemies.⁶⁰ Other commentators prefer the 2nd person singular “You have put me”, implying that it was God who actually placed him in this situation.⁶¹

⁵⁸ The Early Church's psalmodic hymn (Phil 2:5-11) is no doubt one of the most studied sections of the NT. Scholarship is divided along the lines of it being 'exemplary' and 'ethical' in practical ecclesial use and context, and/or its 'soteriological' and eschatological significance. For us, the normative nature of this NT passage is of lesser interest. There are also references to Christ's dominion over the realm of the spirits and the dead (cf. Ac 16:8; Eph 4:9; 1 Pe 3:19).

⁵⁹ A sign of grieving, mourning or repentance is throwing dust over one's head (cf. Josh 7:6; Lam 2:10).

⁶⁰ Cf. Dahood, PS I:140.

⁶¹ “It is God who is at the root of his dilemma” (Craigie, 1983: 200).

One dies in his full vigour, wholly at ease and content; his body full of fat and the marrow of his bones moist. Another dies in bitterness of soul, never having tasted of good. Alike they lie down in the dust, and worms cover them both (Job 21:23-26).⁶²

One way or the other, the dust of the grave is definitely the realm of decay where worms reign and man in his frailty is compared with them; “What to say about man, who is but a worm (רמה)” (Job 25:6, cf. Ps 22).

3.5. Depths and Darkness

The vocabulary of the depths and the deep is intriguing in itself. The depths are described by an exceptional rich, interesting vocabulary, one of the larger semantic fields in death vocabulary. Is the mortal realm of the depth ‘wet’, ‘dry’, ‘dark’, or all of them? There is (עמק) (depth), then it is said that divine thought is very deep (cf. Ps 92:6), the ocean is deep (צולה) (Ps 69:16) and obviously wet, and then there is the abyss (תהום) of Ps 77:

When the waters saw thee, O God,
when the waters saw thee,
they were afraid,
yea, the deep trembled (רגז) (Ps 77:17).

The Septuagint most frequently renders (תהום) as *abyss*; curiously in the NT, in Lk 8:31, the unclean spirit by the name of Legion requested Jesus to be sent into the abyss (εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσος).⁶³ The primeval face of the earth was “without form (תהו) and void (בהו)” (Gen 1:2).⁶⁴ Although this abyss (emptiness, grave?) is sometimes rendered

⁶² Cf. Job 20:11.

⁶³ Alternatively, *abyss* is translated as hell, as in Rom 10, i.e. the vertical opposite of heaven: “Who will descend into the abyss (εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσος), that is, to bring Christ up from the dead (ἐκ νεκρῶν)?” (Rom 10:7).

⁶⁴ The possible etymology of תהום may be traced to תהו (confusion) or an empty space (cf. Job 26:7), though why confusion should be in an empty space is hard to fathom.

as the ocean depths, it also clearly refers to the (dryness) of the grave as in: “You shall bring me up from the depths of the earth (מתהמות הארץ) (Ps 71: 20b).⁶⁵

Then there is (בור) (the Pit), (אבדון) (Abaddon) and (שאול) (Sheol). In Psalm 30:4, the Pit and Sheol appear in parallel, “LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit”, as well as Abaddon in Ps 88:11. The most noted and probably most frequent term is surely (שאול) (Sheol), for which there are numerous textual references. Mostly, it goes untranslated or is rendered as the 'netherworld'.⁶⁶ There is something curious about the pattern of its use. Sheol barely appears at all in the narrative literature, and when it does, it is mainly in direct speech. It is also absent from the legal material. We can surely agree with P. Johnston in conclusion that,

Sheol is very clearly a term of personal engagement. It is not a concept to be mentioned casually or dispassionately, in simple report of the past or general legislation for present and future. Rather it indicates personal emotional involvement, in apprehension of one's own destiny or anticipation of one's enemies' fate (Johnston, 2002:72).

⁶⁵ The NAB here translates ‘from the watery depths’.

⁶⁶ The pattern of its occurrence is given concisely by P. Johnston in *Shades of Sheol* (cf. Johnston, 2002: 6985).

3.5.1. Wet or Dry

Along with Sheol, the nether-world and the underworld, there are other terms or ideas which might seem synonymous, denoting the realm of death; as for example, the realm of the depths and the deep, and all the lexica relating to them. Though in general terms they may be considered as synonymous there are still question over them. Bearing on the relationship between the waters (מים) and the realm of underworld, Johnston in his overview and discussion fundamentally enquires if the underworld is wet or dry, bearing in mind all the tenets of biblical and Semitic cosmology. He accurately set it in the context of the ancient days and environment. Water and wetness in the environment of aridity ought to be seen as a blessing of life, without which death and sterility reigns. However, water can also be a cataclysm, a deluge and death.⁶⁷ It was already noted here (see here: Hebrew cosmology) that in Hebrew cosmology waters and depth (abyss) were creational dimensions of the so called 'struggle model', i.e. battling between the Creator and the chaos of the deep, thus between life and death. In the end it is the Creator who won and established the world, and "Founded it upon (על) the seas, and established it upon (על) the floods" (Ps 24:2).

Although this על 'upon' can simply mean 'higher than', it also strongly suggests that the underworld, the Sheol is 'under' what God has established. We then reckon that this על does not refer only to a kind of deictic expression relative of the space, rather it denotes the sovereignty over something, in this case the depth and the realms of chaos and death. Furthermore in Psalm 104 the earth (ארץ) is established on

⁶⁷ Cf. Johnston, 2002:114-124.

the foundations *over* the waters, foundations which will not be shaken (Ps 104:5b).⁶⁸

Then comes somewhat unusual expression relative to the realm of death and relates to darkness, in Psalm 18: “He made darkness his covering around him, his canopy thick clouds dark with water (חשכת מים)” (Ps 18:12).

3.5.2. Darkness

The plural of darkness (חשך) and the construct form חשכת־מים (‘darkness of the waters’) in Ps 18:12 intensify the impenetrable blackness of the wet abyss. Thus, along with the dilemmas of the (תהו) being ‘emptiness’ and ‘confusion’, there are now other encounters, that of the ‘light’ vs. ‘darkness’, ‘order’ vs. ‘disorder’, ‘death’ vs. ‘life’, etc.

Night, or darkness, is the force to be reckoned with:

Light is instrumental in causing order, form and life whereas darkness represents chaos, the enemy of God and the element furthest from him. Night remains a survival of this darkness of chaos and is kept within due limits by the ordering of creation (Cox, 1978: 44).

Impenetrable darkness is the oblivion of death and uncreative power contrasting light. So Job longs for the nothingness of darkness and death to overcome creation and light (Job 3:3-9). In his nihilistic, dark mood, wishing for his own death, Job calls continually upon darkness to overcome light and death to swallow life. In the despair of his suffering, he curses the day he was born and resorts to the ultimate oxymoronic expression; “Let the stars of its dawn be dark” (יחשכו כוכבי נשפון) (Job 3:9). So those who go down to their fathers (the dead) will never see the light of life again.

As we explored and enquired the realms of death, it is to be considered as some kind of a preamble to those aspects that relate to our principal motif - that of the verbs of motion and the motion-emotion axis. Namely, some of these realms are locational

⁶⁸ Cf. Johnston, 2002:115.

(grave, depth, dust) other are conceptual (silence, name). But one common denominator for them all is motion. Whether it is 'going down' (ירד): to silence (Ps 115), to the grave (Ps 49) or to depths and darkness (Ps 88). Alternatively, it can be: 'returning' (שוב): to the dust and worms (Ps 90), or in death, the name and memory are being: 'cut off' (כרת) (Ps 109).

We now provided some insights into the five realms of death which we assume to be most frequently disclosed within the Scriptures of the OT. Exploration of motional aspects and motion-emotion axis, as central to this study, will be tackled in the forthcoming sections and chapters; particularly Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

But firstly, as already announced, we now need to enquiring and explore some key issues of the Psalter and psalmodic studies, particularly those themes or motives that will be intertwined throughout the dissertation, such as: Psalms as prayers or Identity of the psalmist as a private individual and so frequently found question of the psalmist's Mood and emotion changes.

4. THE PSALTER AND THE PSALMIST

4.1. Introductory Remarks

Form-critical scholarship in regarding to the actual nature of the Psalter, besides the study of forms and genres, assumes two basic premises.

The first premise is given by Kraus, following von Rad, saying that the Psalter is all about Israel in the presence of Yahweh (cf. von Rad, 1962:355; Kraus, 1992:11). Following this, the Psalms are viewed essentially as a cultic text and the cultic confession of the community. Fundamentally, the confession of faith rests on collective historical memories, from the Abrahamic birth of a nation, to Sinai and Zion, including the birth of Yahwism, cultic festivals and the Temple cult.¹ These cultic activities at the outset imply the collective personality, and may be the inception of overlooking the Hebrew individual in the presence of Yahweh; at least according to Form-critical accounts.

Secondly, and due to the above, being 'in the presence of Yahweh', anticipates an appropriate response. This, as expected, is a response to Yahweh of Israel as the collective entity, and more precisely, to Yahweh's self revelation.² Yahweh's most personal, real presence is found in his sanctuary (ib. pp. 215, 242), which again implies a communal life in acts of worship. Consequently, any personal response to Yahweh may be left aside. Such collectivist interpretations possibly challenge the integral anthropological dimension which presents and represents the Psalmist as a private individual, rather than tendencies to consider only corporate anthropology or at best

¹ Cf. von Rad, 1962:5,10.

² Regrettably, von Rad concludes that "Israel's only response to Jahweh's self-revelation was disobedience" (von Rad, 1962:120).

an 'absolute human' which is at best rather abstract and theoretical. For example, Pedersen presents the anthropological aspect of 'common bones':

When we have thoroughly realized the relation between body and soul, then we also understand what it means to have one flesh, or to have common bones and flesh or blood. If members of one family have common flesh then they also have community of soul (Pedersen, 1991, vol.1: 179).

Such collectivist anthropological interpretations are seriously challenged by different approaches based on the notion that the Psalter is essentially anthropological in nature, accentuating the theological anthropology of the Psalms (cf. Janowski, 2013). As opposed to the anthropology of the 'absolute human', or the anthropology of 'common bones' there are imperatives requiring the 'whole human being' to be taken into account. Janowski, quoting Wiesenhutter and Stokvis, describes an individual, 'holistic' anthropology which purports a real Psalmist, as a private individual:

It is not the senses that sense, it is not the brain that thinks; with the help of senses and organs given to a person, it is the entire human being (*Mensch, ganzer*) that senses, thinks and acts. (Wiesenhutter & Stokvis, *Mensch in der Entspannung*, 43).

It is this *ganzer Mensch* (the entire human) that we wish to look for in the Psalter, to ascertain that there is a Psalmist with real emotions, laments, fears and joys. And as we investigate the Psalmist's fears of death, we do not think of lament as an end in itself. Moreover, laments are powerful channels of prayer by the mortally distressed Psalmist. Janowski is completely right when he says: "Because of this dynamic of prayer, the Psalms of Lament and Thanksgiving of the individual are fundamental texts of a theological anthropology" (Janowski, 2013:45).

However, the two premises (Israel in the presence of Yahweh and an appropriate response) of the traditional *Formgeschichte* approach carry some assumptions or

conclusions. One is that it is the collective (Israel) is contrasted with the private individual. He may ultimately be only an element in the sum total of the collective personality. Examining, as we will, the anthropological dimensions of the Psalter, the option that tallies the collective personality with corporate anthropology in the presence of Yahweh, if taken at length, is not a convincing, viable explanation of the Psalmist as a private individual.³ Such collectivisation and corporate anthropology often uses the so-called 'synecdoche explanation'. This is rather like metonymy where a part, in this case a part of the human body, represents the whole community. At first, the anthropological synecdoche interpretation, which is inclined to explain away the real existence of the Hebrew individual, may be acceptable up to a point, though in terms of some anthropological aspects or anatomical idioms, particularly those of human innards (such as the abdominal region), this explanation seems untenable.

To sum up, the Psalter is not only the cultic community of Israel gathered at the holy place in Jerusalem. It is also about the Hebrew private individual who, as the object of this study, is confronted very personally by mortal threats and the fear of death.⁴ Besides the anthropological dimensions in the Psalter, there is also another point of reference, that of the literary character of the Psalter. As literature, the Psalms are religious in nature, primarily prayers, often of an intimate nature and furthermore, they are poetry. As such, prayers cannot simply be classified as literature or sentences to be examined using linguistic scientific criteria.

³ Some form-critical scholars warn against possible 'collectivisation' of 'being in the presence of Yahweh'. Here von Rad appeals for caution in reference to the anthropological dimension and the collective. "It is doubtful whether with this is a picture of a being made of flesh (בשר) and life (נפש), an embodiment of a collective" (von Rad, 1962:356).

⁴ Although we ought to note that Kraus explicitly states "Here we are only concerned with the people of God in the form of the cultic community" (Kraus, 1992:68).

Before we tackle other issues of psalmodic studies relevant to our investigation, as indicated above, let us address the topic of the Psalms as prayers.

4.2. Psalms as Prayer Utterances

4.2.1. Theopoetics

The language of the Psalms is religious in nature, but not an escape from reality, even though it may not be articulated in precise, 'scientific' forms. Previous explorations of the Psalms, anchored in the critical method, produced a dilemma between the more 'scientific' approach, examining the forms, structures and genres in the Psalter - even 'formulae' - and the reality of the individual and communal experiences that we find so compellingly present in the Psalter. It has been suggested that poetic forms and poetry are closer to the heart in expressing the Psalmist's emotional predicament and his religious devotion, than prose or narration. This implies that instead of taking more 'scientific' approaches (to God or biblical texts), it can be done through poetic articulation. One approach to this dilemma has been proposed. *Theopoetics* suggests that instead of trying to find God; articulate one's experiences by scientific proofs, structuralist investigations or linguistic and literary dogmas, poetic articulation can be used. As a result we have significant use of metaphors (particularly 'ontological' metaphors) aspiring to better understanding of our experiences of orientation in space, physical objects and motion.⁵ The reality of experience is just as relevant as the structure or dogmas of structuralism and scientific proof. The idea of *theopoetics* suggests that language of and about God should be spared from efforts to make it exact and scientific (cf. S.Hopper (2003); A.Wilder (1976)). This approach

⁵ Cf. Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. (2003).

emphasizes that theology and its language are closer to poetry than to physics. So the linguistic representation of emotion in the Psalter is best communicated through poetic articulation (hence *theopoetics*), which depends extensively on metaphors.

4.2.2. Sentences and Utterances

If we assume that the Psalter is actually theopoetic material, then we also want to affirm that the Psalms are essentially prayers expressed in poetic form (cf. Bewer, 1962:359).⁶ Why is this noteworthy at this point? Linguistics differentiates between *sentences* and *utterances* and utterance meaning. Of course, the Psalms are texts written in sentences, but they are also prayers and as such we understand them as utterances.⁷

In the form-critical interpretation of the psalmodic text, there is a tendency to interpret a given text mostly in terms of sentences (structures, forms, and genre) rather than in terms of *utterances* (message, meaning).⁸ The distinction between a *sentence* and an utterance is well defined by Cotterell and Turner in their study *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*:

The term sentence is appropriate to meta-language, language about language, but when a sentence is used in the real world, whether it is spoken or written, it is referred to as an utterance. (Cotterell&Turner, 1989:22).

The Psalmist's experiences and ordeals belong very much to the real world, and so do his utterances, which are designed to direct us to the intended meaning. So

⁶ "In moments of religious experience, whether the soul is at one with God or seeking Him, its utterances often take poetic form; common prose is not adequate to express its joy or its longing; in rhythmic rise and cadence praise and prayer flow forth, revealing man's deepest feelings and desires" (Bewer, id.)

⁷ Can utterances exist in written form, or only their representations? Though utterance is primarily considered to be a vocal expression (speech, speaking), it is also a statement or a manner of speaking, written or otherwise.

⁸ Cf. Cotterell and Turner (1989:18-19).

utterances are “acts of linguistic communication, together with the intended meaning” (Cruse, 2004:22). The totality of what the speaker intends to convey is considered as utterance meaning.⁹ Here, the structure and form of a text may not be sufficient for understanding the “extra linguistic referents intended by the speaker” (cf. Cruse: 346). Contextual conditions, beyond the structure-form axis, are crucially important in order to understand the speaker’s utterance, his intentions and meaning. One of the key tenets of this work is that the Psalmist’s utterance/meaning relies heavily on figurative language and metaphor, particularly metaphors of motion. Some curious linguistic and literary twists will be presented, for example, why death as the ultimate motionless condition is so often represented by motion words and/or intense literary dynamism (cf. the motion-emotion axis). If the Psalms are essentially prayers, and prayers are more than mere sentences (they are utterances), the focus of our interest is to attempt to establish the meaning and the message of the Psalmist’s thanatophobic milieu, in the context of his personal episodes and private manifestations.

4.2.3. Parrhesia of the Psalmist

What mode or manner of language do we find in the Psalmist’s thanatophobic moods or emotional predicaments? We have already noted that his modes are invocative (calling upon God) and evocative (remembering the past). The Psalmist’s language and the way he feels or sees his circumstances are not clandestine, but open, sincere and unhindered. So the language of the Psalmist is *parrhetic* (from: *parrhesia*). *Parrhesia* is speech which has few, if any restrictions, *oratio libera* (lit. ‘free speech’). *Parrhesia* is also a very personal mode, the hallmark of speech which is courageously

⁹ Cf. Cruse:22.

different from that of the majority, and thus potentially risky. Characteristically, it touches directly and openly on subjects that are generally either unpleasant (such as death) or unconventional (such as the existentialist, nihilistic speeches of Ecclesiastes). In the words of Thomas Merton, parrhesia is “our destiny to live out what we think”.¹⁰ The Psalmist is indeed a biblical parrhetic character, though he may seem more timid in his *parrhetic* speech than Job, who displays even more direct, unhindered speech in his *thanatophobic* experiences. Job does not hold back or hide the way he feels about his condition or God’s treatment of him.

The Psalmist produces prime biblical examples of parrhesia. He speaks openly of his displeasure (fear, resentment, anger), or pleasure (joy, hope, gratification). He is direct, open, and at times even excessive. This is particularly true in the imprecatory and selfimprecatory Psalms, which contain the most powerful parrhetic speeches in the Psalter. There, in fear of his life and protesting his innocence, the Psalmist speaks unusually openly about his fate and that of his (or YHWH’s) enemies:

If there is wrong in my hands,
if I have requited my friend with evil
or plundered my enemy without cause,
let the enemy pursue (רָדַף) me and overtake (בָּשַׁג) me.
And let him trample (רָמַס) my life to the ground,
and lay (שָׁכַן) my soul in the dust (Ps 7:4-6).

¹⁰ The term *parrhesia*, referring to a mode of speech, is a collocation of: *pan* (=all) and *rhesis* (=speech/speak). The term is first found in the Hellenistic literature of the 5th century BC. In the NT, it is seen in Mk 8:32, when Jesus begins to predict his forthcoming death, “He spoke this openly (καὶ παρρησίᾳ τὸν λόγον ἐλ ἄλει). Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him” (Mk 8:32). The term then appears in the Gospel of John (Joh 7:4, 13,26; 10:24; 11:14,54; 16:25,29; 18:20). In John 7:13, in reference to Jesus’ person and his deeds, the text says that “no one spoke openly about him” (οὐδεὶς μεύ τοι παρρησίᾳ ἐλ ἄλει περὶ αὐτοῦ). In the same chapter, Jesus taught “openly (ἴδε παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖ) and they said nothing to him” (Joh 7:26). The life and work of Thomas Merton may be easily described as parrhetic. In his *Thoughts in Solitude*, Merton expresses his parrhetic attitude in the following words: “Our destiny is to live out what we think”.

The sentiment here is highly emotionally charged, and the vocabulary is fraught with motion-emotion bindings. The motion may be fictive, but the emotion is very real and intense. In this short passage, verbs accumulate which can be categorised as verbs of motion, e.g. 'surround' (נשג) and 'follow' (רדף) or 'throw' (שלך) and 'fall' (רמס).

The Psalmist's reactions to mortal danger are particularly fascinating. In such situations, the way he speaks of his personal and religious experience is unhindered and direct. The speaker of Ecclesiastes, according to Leupold, displays speech which is 'extravagant' (Leupold, 1952:28).¹¹ The fear of being engulfed (by death) produces the existential *Angst* that is so crippling and frustrating (cf. P.E. Lacocque, *Fear of Engulfment and the Problem of Identity*, 1984) and thus opens up to such parrhetic mode of speech.¹² For "the living know that they will die (שימתו) *but the dead know nothing*" (Eccl 9:5).

Michel Foucault further describes parrhesia as speech whose task is "not to deal with the problem of truth, but with the problem of truth-teller or truth-telling as an activity".¹³ This is fascinating, since the Psalter is the finest example of biblical parrhetic literature-type. Even so, the concluding remarks of the Book of Job is *prima facie* of the parrhetic speech in the whole Bible. There, in his final pronouncements on Job (42:7), God speaks to Job's pious friends, saying, "You have not spoken rightly

¹¹ Leupold rightly notes that Ecclesiastes' (parrhetic) language is borne and upheld by his phrase "under the sun" (cf. Leupold:28).

¹² In his teachings, Jesus unequivocally commands us not to be "afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna" (Mat 10:28). Some authors interpret phobia(s) in terms of the human desire to know and understand the world around us (cf. Fritscher). For the Preacher in Ecclesiastes, death was bitter (מר מות) (7:26), because it was ultimate vanity and hopelessness. NB: the construction (שימתו) is a relatively rare occurrence of the relative particle (אשר) appearing in the abbreviated form.

¹³ See Foucault in, "*Discourse and Truth: the problematization of parrhesia*". This Foucault's elaboration on parrhesia is well presented in his 6 lectures on the topic given at the University of California in 1983. Cf. <http://foucalt.info/documents/parrhesia>

concerning me, as has my servant Job.”¹⁴ His parrhetic speeches incurred their condemnation on Job, and caused Job’s reaction as he pleaded with them, “Be silent, let me alone! That I may speak and give vent to my feelings.” (Job 13:13).

4.3. Psalmodic Issues

In the introduction to this chapter it was noted that in psalmodic studies there are issues which may help us better understand and significantly assist in interpreting the Psalms. Some of these issues have partly lessened in significance (e.g. categorization of the Psalms), while others, like the structural integrity of Psalms, or questions of the identity of the individual in the Psalter, still capture our attention and are open to further investigation. Some issues and questions relevant to this discussion need further consideration. Among these concerns are at least three sets of issues to be investigated: (i) the identity of the individual in the Psalter; (ii) aspects of anthropology of the Psalms and (iii) the problem of the Psalmist’s sudden changes of mood.

Since we are addressing the Psalmist’s distress and his fear of death, it is imperative to investigate the issue of the identity of the individual, i.e. the Psalmist as a private individual. The term ‘Psalmist’, so it seems, is often used habitually without clarifying who it refers to. Alternatively the ‘psalmist’ is used as *terminus technicus*, assuming that it refers to the poet. Can we also assume that there is an individual

¹⁴ The concluding remarks of the book present God speaking to Eliphaz, one of Job’s friends and counsellors. The Almighty pronounces the following verdict on Eliphaz and his friends: “I am angry with you and with your two friends; for you have not spoken rightly (בכונה) concerning me, as has my servant Job” (Jb 42:7), i.e. “rightly” or “sincerely”. Textually, the intensity of the situation is accentuated by niphil ptcp of (כון). For the same niphil ptcp of the verb (כון) (= establish, be certain, truthful), see Ps 5:10: “for there is no sincerity in their mouths”. The grammar of BH in such parrhetic speech is indicative, since in the majority of cases we find the intensive piel or cohortative forms.

Psalmist, a pious man, who as a private individual, during private occasions, exercises personal piety and devotion? Then there is also the question of how far the 'I' language in the Psalms may refer to the cultic mode of speech and is assigned to the collective, the whole of the worshipping community.

Furthermore, there are open questions in relation to the anthropology of the Psalms. In the introductory remarks we noted tendencies which make psalmodic anthropology collective ('common bones', 'absolute human'). On the other hand, there are some well supported suggestions that the whole Psalter is fundamentally an anthropological text, which actually does concern an individual devotee (cf. Janowski, 2013: 36f.). Besides, in so many Psalms, we clearly encounter an individual dimension of anthropology. This is particularly true in relation to the ubiquitous anatomical idioms. If collective anthropology is to be persevered with, or even enforced, it will be difficult to account for some anthropological aspects. A case in point is the use of abdominal anatomical idioms. We can hardly speak of the collective kidneys, or bowels, i.e. the viscera (guts, entrails, and innards). These surely apply to individual human anthropology.

Finally, examining the Psalmist's emotional predicaments in mortal danger, an intriguing topic is his sudden change of mood (within a single Psalm). When the Psalmist feels near death, his emotional reactions are naturally distress and fear, but suddenly, there is a change in mood and intonation. In Psalm 22, for example, the desperate hopelessness of My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? (22:1) (NAB) changes to thanksgiving and praise; I will proclaim your name to the assembly, in the community I will praise you" (22:23). What has happened here?

4.4. Identity of the Individual Psalmist

It is difficult to discuss the emotions and feelings of a person if their very existence is doubtful or disputable. It is important to determine the identity of the Psalmist as a private individual in the Psalms. Though it is customary to speak of the 'Psalmist' or the 'poet', is he an Israelite individual, or would such a private person be 'drowned' in the cultliturgical set-up of the collective of the worshipping community? Is the Psalmist a '*producer*' (professional poet), a '*compiler*' (an editor of existing poetic material), or a '*performer*' (public spokesman or liturgy leader). Can the 'Psalmist' be an individual '*experiencer*'? Different propositions and solutions dominate the discussion on this issue. In deflecting some of the traditional cultic emphasis of Form-critical scholarship Susan Gillingham, in *The Psalmists as Poets* (pp.173-189), looks at the Psalmist as an individual and a poet. She refers to the Psalmists as the poets of life (Gillingham, 186). In reference to the traditional *Formgeschichte* approach and the problem of the identity of the individual in the Psalter, she gives an indicative and interesting conclusion on aspects of the work of Hans Joachim Kraus (*Theology of the psalms*). She says that Kraus is: "A good example of the work of a scholar with a predominantly cult-historical bias who nevertheless wrestles with the problem of the 'life-centredness of the poetry' beyond any one specific cultic context" (Gillingham: 187). Gillingham's presentation offers five aspects or stages of particular focus identifying the Psalmist as an individual:

- (i) the Psalmist as an individual poet (Gillingham: 174).
- (ii) Psalmist(s) as poets serving the community (ib.176-177).
- (iii) Psalmists as liturgical poets serving cultic community (ib.177-184).

- (iv) Psalmists as liturgical poets serving a private cultus (ib.184-186).
- (v) Finally, Psalmists are poets of life (ib.186-189).

This last point deserves more attention. Namely, Gillingham herself observes that the “previous four emphases were each concerned with ‘historicizing’ or ‘particularizing’” (Gillingham, 186). This is in reference to attempts to explain “as many as possible or even all of the Psalms either by the ideology of a specific (and only just discovered) festival, by a cultic schema, etc.” (Gillingham, 187). She concludes that this has “produced meagre results” (ibid). Therefore, the ‘poets of life’ approach opens up new outlooks, with a life-centred approach to the Psalmists. Gillingham then suggests, following Westermann (cf. Gillingham, 188), that it also opens up “prayerful reflection on life” (id.). These considerations clearly open new horizons to the Psalmist who is also a private individual, not only a poet.

4.4.1. ‘I’ and We in the Psalter

The issue of the identity of the individual in the Psalter is often referred to as the problem of 'I' and the 'we' in the Psalms.¹⁵ In reference to the Hebrew private individual, Hans Joachim Kraus notices that: “The subject is not the Hebrew individual, but the individual in Israel, because special interest attaches to the specific problem of how the individual is related to Israel, the people of God” (Kraus:138).

There is absolutely no dilemma that the problem of identifying the individual in the Psalter is of high importance. Our position is and we maintain that the issue should be addressed and examined within anthropological dimensions of the Psalter. While, the anthropological aspect of the Psalter is one of the pivotal pieces of the issue, more

¹⁵ Cf. Mowinckel, vol.1, ch.III, pp.42-46; Kraus, ch.6, pp.137ff.; Pedersen, vol.1 p.56f.

specifically it relates to the ubiquitous 'anatomical idiom'. Anatomical idiom in, more often than not, alludes distinctly to the anthropology of a concrete individual rather than an epitomized 'absolute human', as Kraus and Pedersen seem to persist on (see the discussion on Israel in the presence of YHWH, in 4.1. Introductory remarks).¹⁶ Consequently, one of the challenges of this work is to move away from an overall emphasis placed on the corporate 'body' and cultic performance acts.¹⁷

The problem of the identity of the individual in the Psalms rests on two suppositions. Firstly, how far is the private individual a relevant actor in the Psalms? Secondly, what is the individual's actual identity in the wider context of Old Testament and biblical Hebraic thought?

In *The Psalms in Israel's worship*, Sigmund Mowinckel provides insightful discussions. Mowinckel will not deny that an Israelite as a 'single member', is not conscious of himself.¹⁸ On the other hand, he will also argue that this 'single member' being 'conscious of himself' or being 'original' is more or less a matter of being 'abnormal' or 'arrogant' and a matter of "folly" (Mowinckel's positions and views were discussed in the Introductory section: *The Psalmist as an Individual*). Individual's anthropology, of the Psalms, and particularly 'anatomical idiom' will show that the aforementioned position of the 'absolute human' can hardly be a general rule of the Psalter.

¹⁶ See here: *The Human in the Absolute Sense*

¹⁷ For more on this topic, apart from H.W.Wolff's *Anthropology of the Old Testament* (cf. Wolff, ch. XXIV, pp.214-222 on the *Individual and the Community*), one should consult Aubrey R. Johnson's *The One and the Many in the Israelite conception of God* and *The Vitality of the Individual in the thought of Ancient Israel* or J. Pedersen's *Israel: its life and culture* (vol.1) (esp. section on the Soul: pp.99-181). Pedersen extensively discusses the Hebraic anthropology of the soul (from: Sensation and the idea of soul; the soul as totality and will; Soul, heart and thinking; Hebrew thinking, etc.).

¹⁸ Cf. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's worship*, ch.3, p.43

Another important contribution to the discussion on Hebrew anthropology is Johannes Pedersen's *Israel: its life and culture* (vol.1:99-181).

Majority of these discussions are governed by questions relating to the so-called "I" Psalms. Is the Psalmist a poet serving the community, or as Susan Gillingham puts it, the "poet of life", who may also be a private, pious individual? Following Westermann, she maintains the importance of the nature of the individual's experiences,

According to Westermann, the Psalms are not only important literary poems about individual or the nation (as presupposed in the historical-critical approaches); nor are they simply cultic texts applicable only to a pre-exilic cult (as understood in the cult-functional interpretations); they are also examples of prayerful reflection on life, and as such, they represent the two basic experiences of prayer-praise and lament (Gillingham: 188).

Original, invigorating scholarship and a number of scholars (Westermann, Brueggemann, Gillingham, Berlin) have opened up a fresh approach to the Psalms and psalmodic studies. With a full appreciation of Form-critical scholarship, they also usher in a Hebrew private, pious individual.¹⁹ In such a context, Walter Brueggemann strongly points towards the Psalmist's experience, using the scheme of: 'orientation', 'disorientation' and 're-orientation'. Psalmodic laments are seen as speeches of disorientation, while the "celebrative language of hymns and songs of thanksgiving" (Brueggemann, 1993:14-20) indicate the Psalmist's re-orientation. In *The prophetic imagination* Brueggemann powerfully analyzes the language and consciousness that lie behind this pattern. All said so far, we would advocate that the Psalms and the psalmist, clearly demonstrate a prophetic influence, in content and form. In such

¹⁹ Most has been based on fresh literary approaches towards reading and reading processes (cf. A.Berlin). The development of cognitive linguistics is also due to novel approaches in psalmodic studies. Cognition and cognizing, emotions and the variety of the Psalmist's experiences, all throw a new light on psalmodic poetry.

psalmist's 'prophetic influence', we seriously consider Brueggemann's arguments in his *The Prophetic Imagination*. Brueggemann's argument rests on the concepts of dominant (imperial) and alternative (prophetic) consciousness. Not rarely we can find the psalmist wrestling with same or similar dilemma between the two realities (cf. 'Symmetrical and Asymmetrical World of the Psalmist').

In *Praying the Psalms* (1993) Brueggemann masterfully unwraps the role of language in the Psalms (cf. ch.2 and 3: 'The Liberation of language' and 'Language Appropriate to a Place'). In the *The Message of the Psalms* (1984) Brueggemann well expresses the freshness of approach to psalmodic studies as

a postcritical reading of the Psalms. That is, we shall try to take full account of the critical gains made by such scholars as Gunkel, Mowinckel and Westermann, without betraying any of the precritical passion, naïveté, and insight of believing exposition (Brueggemann,1984:18).

Claus Westermann, with a similar approach and understanding, focuses on life and the lifecentredness of the Psalmist's experiences: "The lament is an inevitable part of what happens between God and man" (Westermann, 1974:22).

This is an apt comment, because "what happens between God and man" is not about the 'absolute human' (as Kraus seems to suggest when discussing Israelite anthropology), but rather the interplay between a specific individual and God. In reference to the Psalms of lament, where some individual validation is expected, Ringgren makes some observations:

We might expect that in order to know the people behind the Psalms it would be appropriate to turn primarily to the psalms of lament; such psalms presumably reflect situations in which a person is likely to disclose his feelings without inhibition. But this expectation is fulfilled only to a very limited extent. As has already been emphasized, these psalms give little or no information concerning the individual destiny of the suppliant, nor do they tell much about the details of his suffering. On the contrary, it may even be said with some justification that the psalms of lament are more stereotyped than any other group, especially where a description of suffering is concerned. Familiar images are chosen, stereotyped phrases used, and everything shaped by the traditional style of the lament. Consequently, it is very difficult to determine what kind of suffering is actually being referred to (Ringgren, 1963:61).

One way or another, psalmodic laments clearly show a strong bond between the Psalmist and God; expressed in different forms or ‘formulae’, and found in most of the Psalter. But this does not nullify the genuineness of the nature of the experiences and situations which befall the psalmist. Of course, one cannot but agree that there are many literary conventions or stereotypes in the Psalms of lament, and “some psalms are laden with stereotypical language” (Alter, 2007: XXIV-XXV). In comparing Job’s and the psalmist’s expressions of personal experiences, Alter maintains that in Job one encounters “an astonishing inventiveness in the use of figurative language”, while the Psalter “draws on its own reservoir of conventional images” (id.). Ringgren on the other hand insists on a lack of details regarding the Psalmist’s needs and sufferings. He concludes that: “There is no actual description of the situation; it is only classified according to the interpretation suggested by the pattern” (Ringgren, 1963:62). This sounds as an unlikely conclusion, particularly in view of Ringgren’s previous observations (see above), where he insists that the Psalmist’s suffering is very vivid “in spite of the stereotyped pattern” (ib.p.63). He refrains from any suggestion or conclusion regarding the illness the Psalmist might be suffering from, or whether he is referring to physical pain at all (ib.p.70), but then concludes that the suffering is psychosomatic in nature (Ringgren, 1963:67-68).²⁰ In any case, the Psalmist is a poet who surely demonstrates admirable artistic capabilities. As for the highly developed artistic structures and devices in the Psalms, we shall pay this extra attention in reference to anthropology in the Psalms and artistic structures.²¹

²⁰ Cf. remarks in this work commenting on Ps 38.

²¹ Cf. Gillingham: 176-189.

Gunkel, and more so Mowinckel, insists that the 'I' language in the Psalms is essentially a cultic mode of speech reflecting a living corporate personality (cf. Mowinckel: 43-45). Though he agrees that personal feelings may easily be expressed through formal, structural and conventional presentations, Mowinckel insists that the Psalms ought to be set in relation to definite cultic act(s). Gunkel, on the other hand, believes that most Psalms are personal poems, based on cultic prototypes (cf. Broyles:12). While Mowinckel emphasizes Psalms to be 'made for', i.e. composed and written for cultic performance; Gunkel seems to accentuate a more personal interpretation, saying they proceeded from typical cultic occasions.

Mowinckel has attempted to prove that almost all of the Psalms were composed for the cult. A number of complaint songs, however, argue to the contrary. There are psalms that are clearly sung far from the sanctuary. There are psalms where the one praying finds himself in the diaspora and those which clearly make known the desire for YHWH and his holy mountain (Gunkel: par.6:30, p.195).²²

We can also conclude here that the individual, the Psalmist away from the cultic context, has no 'stage' on which his poetry is to be sung, but rather, makes a 'situational' profession of his faith. Though Gunkel mentions worship activities in such improbable contexts, he acknowledges that he has not found many indications of worship performance for poems of this type (i.e. laments), and states his doubts as to whether these songs were intended for performance (cf. Gunkel: par.6:4, p.124).

The problem of individuality and corporate identity in the Psalms and Psalter may be approached through Mowinckel's statement at the beginning of Chapter III of

The Psalms in Israel's Worship (vol.1):

²² Gunkel gives examples of the following Psalms: Pss 27:4; 42:5; 43:3-4; 61:5. Cf. also Gunkel's discussion on the life-setting of the individual complaint songs in par.6:4, p.123f.

The basic reality in human life is, for the Israelite, not the individual, but the community. The individual had his real existence in the tribe. Outside of that he was nothing, a severed member, whom everyone that findeth him shall slay, as Cain said (Mowinckel: 42).²³

This is a sweeping statement, and Mowinckel affirms it with a more biological nuance, “The species was the original entity, which manifests itself in the single specimen” (id). It also communicates an outlook whereby the individuality in the OT is considered almost unimportant.

4.4.2. Whose Shepherd?

Psalm 23 “The Lord is my shepherd” is clearly a song of confidence, where Yahweh is primarily the “Shepherd of Israel” (Ps 79:13; 80:1) in relation to his people (the flock).²⁴

Shepherd of Israel (רֹאֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל), listen,
and guide of the flock of Joseph!
From your throne upon the cherubim reveal yourself (Ps 80:1) (NAB).

Does this use of the first person singular in reference to the shepherd place the individual and his experience at the centre of the experience, or is it again a representation of the collective and the communal “I”? The comparison is also made between the Psalmist and a sheep from the flock. Not only is the poet familiar with the shepherd’s experience, but also each sheep is familiar with the shepherd’s care. May this not be description of a “serene soul enjoying perfect peace of mind, a peace of mind that flows from an undoubting trust in God” (Weiser: 227)? Is it a scene of

²³ In Cain’s story, there is more to it than his fate of being driven away from the divine presence, which leads to fear of other men and retribution (‘whoever finds me will slay me’), but also the fear of not belonging (‘I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer’).

²⁴ Psalm 79 closes with the words “we, the people the flock of your pasture” (79:13) and Psalm 80 opens with a cry, “Shepherd of Israel, listen” (80:1). Yahweh was always conceived as the shepherd of his flock, taking care of his people (cf. Briggs, PSS I: 208). Yet, it has also been shown in Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern contexts that the imagery of God as the shepherd did not usually refer to his relationships with individuals, but rather to the group/community, i.e. the flock.

intimate communion between the Psalmist and God, or just a preset section of the liturgical song-book?

Although the Old Testament use this picture of God guiding his people, the people of the Covenant, it also follows that

the poet may perhaps have been inspired by a hymn, sung by the congregation in an act of worship and praising Yahweh as the Shepherd of Israel...This is a small and yet significant indication of the way in which the faith of the individual can be kindled anew by the corporative worship of those who are united with him in a community of faith and by the tradition of that community (Weiser: 228)²⁵

It is sometimes suggested that the reference is to a royal figure expressing confidence in Yahweh, but even so, he is a private individual, as well as the leader and representative of the whole people. On the other hand, Psalm 69, an individual lament and a typical "I" psalm, may have been used in a public worship as a "we" psalm. It begins with a very personal experience and "I" language:

"Save me, O God!
For the waters have come up to my neck.
I sink in deep mire,
where there is no foothold;
I have come into deep waters,
and the flood sweeps over me.
I am weary with my crying;
my throat is parched.
My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God." (Ps 69:1-4).

Then the Psalmist turns to praise in public: "I will praise the name of God with a song" (69:30), exhorting the whole community on the basis of his personal experience: "Behold this, you who are humble, and be glad; you, who seek God, let your hearts revive" (Ps 69:33; transl. Weiser: 492). Is the Psalmist leading the community in worship and thanksgiving, or just joining in with the congregation, as in Psalm 22: "I

²⁵ "Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care." (Is 40:11); "I swear I am coming against these shepherds. I will claim my sheep from them and put a stop to their shepherding my sheep so that they may no longer pasture themselves. I will save my sheep, which they may no longer be food for their mouths." (Eze 34:10).

will offer praise in the great assembly; my vows I will fulfil before those who fear him”
(22:26)?²⁶

4.4.3. Who is the Enemy?

In the Psalter, the theme of death is very frequently associated with the Psalmist’s enemy; and in great number of Psalms there is the motif of the Psalmist being pursued by his enemy in a mortal chase. At times, even God himself seems to be the Psalmist’s enemy. In Psalm 35, an individual lament, the Psalmist is in distress, pursued (רדף) by his enemies.

Draw the spear and javelin against my pursuers!
Say to my soul, "I am your deliverance!" (35:3).

A variety of Hebrew terms sets out the different contexts and/or events in identifying the enemy (cf. Kraus, 1992:129-136).²⁷

Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me;
fight against those who fight against me!
Take hold of shield and buckler,
and rise for my help!
Draw the spear and javelin against my pursuers!
Say to my soul, "I am your deliverance!" (Ps 35:1-3).

This particular psalm, with its war-like vocabulary, has been given a military setting by some commentators, depicting a royal figure (royal psalm) threatened by foreign kings.²⁸ However, the diversity of imagery in this psalm goes beyond a military or battle context, to identify the enemy in military conflict between armies and warring kings. There is a hunt (vv.7-8), a court hearing and false witnesses (vv.11, 23-

²⁶ Cf. Weiser: 495, commenting on vss.30-36.

²⁷ There are various Hebrew terms designating enemies (foes, pursuers, the wicked or the evildoers). The enemy (אויב), the foe (צור), evildoers (מרעים), the wicked (רשעים) and the pursuers (רדפים).

²⁸ Cf. Craigie, 1983:285-6.

24), and there are those who mock the psalmist (vv.16, 21).²⁹ Particularly puzzling is the section vv.13-15. There, the Psalmist, perhaps sick himself, recalls his prayers for his enemies, when they were sick. Craigie, insisting on the international military setting, argues that this was the “sickness of a fellow monarch” (Craigie: 287). But bearing in mind the wider context of the psalm, this does not sound convincing.

So, who are all these enemies pursuing the Psalmist, and frequently reappearing in the Psalms? And again, who is the Psalmist in such texts and contexts? Are the enemies national enemies of the whole community, or is a particular individual being pursued (the king, David, a faithful Israelite)? Answers to these questions range from literal to metaphorical interpretations, and even to magic, from enemies of the king, and thus enemies of the country (external enemies), to those within society, the unjust and those who do not fear Yahweh (internal enemies). In the majority of such texts, Mitchell Dahood goes for a metaphorical interpretation, where the enemy is death itself.³⁰

Mowinckel's views on the identity of the enemy in the Psalms pursue a different course. His interpretation speaks of magic and sorcery. First, he argues that “as a rule, the lamentations are directed against the enemies of the people” (Mowinckel: 199-200). The logic of his argument is that the enemies act and speak, “Not only blasphemies against Yahweh (see above), but also evil plans, and scornful and cursing words against Israel, tending to destroy her honour and paralyse her soul” (id.). Mowinckel focuses on the 'speech act' of the enemy, who speaks falsehood and

²⁹ Cf. Broyles, 1989:193-4.

³⁰ See here: 'Mitchell Dahood and death in Psalms'. For the identity of the psalmist's enemy, some suspect even supernatural beings (cf. Gunkel (1987), *The Folktale in the Old Testament*) or interventions by magicians (Mowinckel).

delusion (עיון) against the Israelites and Israel. For Mowinckel, sorcery and evil powers are at work.

All the powerful means of the gentile enemies, their plans and threats and sneers, the 'curses' of their prophets and priests, and all their accompanying ceremonies, in short all their religious and cultic measures and acts and words, in the eyes of the Israelites seemed to be sorcery, 'āwen; when used for the gods of the gentiles the word actually means 'demons', 'devils', 'trolls'. What to one person is cultus, to the person on the other side appears as sorcery. Such powerful words on the part of the enemy are 'falsehoods', 'deceitful words', because they call up the 'false', pernicious power in life, 'the curse', draining and laying waste blessing and happiness. But they are also 'falsehoods', because they will make righteous people 'scoundrels', and because, by Yahweh's help, they shall turn out to be unreal and of no effect, injuring only the mischief-maker" (Mowinckel: 199-200).

This interpretation, though legitimate acceptable up to a point, is also farfetched.

The identity of the Psalmist's enemy is actually far more mundane.

4.5. Anthropology of the Psalms

In addition to the question of the identity of the Psalmist, the issue of the anthropology of the Psalms is inevitable and concomitant to the issue of private individual. We can agree that in the Psalms, anthropology has an amplified aspect, and in the context of the rest of the OT, it is really possible to speak of the 'anthropology of the Psalms'. We agree with Kraus that the Psalms have a 'special' anthropology, but not when he states that they only express the 'human in an absolute sense' (Kraus: 144). This is an overstatement and a simplification which leads to the renunciation of individuality in the Psalter, although Kraus repeatedly urges great care and cautions against potentially 'superficial investigation' or 'erroneous conclusions', and rightly so, as one does not want to create an OT anthropology in vacuo. Indeed, if "anthropology must have a theological orientation" (Kraus: 143), and if the vast majority of the Psalms are the works of priests and temple singers (cf. Kraus: 139), how

can there be a relevant anthropology of the real, non-cultic, Israelite private individual in the psalmodic context?

Clearly, psalmodic anthropology has a theological orientation (i.e. man in the presence of God), but then we ought to insist that the psalmodic individual in his piety and testimony of faith is revealed in real terms and situations, not only in the cultic and liturgical performance of public worship.³¹

4.5.1. The Human in the Absolute Sense

One cannot address the issues of individual and/or corporate personality in the Psalter without addressing the subject of anthropology and anatomical idiom, which appears frequently. However, when discussing the 'heart' in the Psalter, Kraus insists that: "It is astonishing how rare are statements that deal solely with the anthropological aspects"(Kraus: 146). It is indeed astonishing to make such statement, particularly as Kraus later on gives due emphasis to the importance of the anthropological dimension in the Psalter (cf. Kraus: 143-150). When addressing the anthropology of the *ruah* aspect Kraus' critique of H.W.Wolff points out that: "Wolff's undifferentiating explanation is not adequate for an understanding of the Psalms" (Kraus, *Theology*: 146). Further on in reference to the 'heart aspect' of the psalmist's anthropology, Kraus comments on Wolff "*perhaps – Wolff: pp.40ff. notwithstanding – we should not hold that the 'heart' is the representation of 'rational man'*" (ib.). This

³¹ S.J.L. Croft contextualizes the Psalms in the cultic centre. Probably following Birkeland, when discussing the individual as a private person (Ch.4 of 'The Identity of the individual in the Psalms') he repeatedly insists that the Psalms were almost exclusively 'written for', or 'composed for' use within the temple cult (cf. Croft: 133,149). Not much room, outside this context, is left for the actual individual's piety and experience. The Psalms then remain almost exclusively the "cultic repository of the communal faith" (Broyles: 12).

actually does not fully reflect Wolff's section on the 'heart'. In his section (V) entitled 'Reasonable Man' (Wolff, 40ff) Wolff does not unequivocally consider man's heart as a seat of reason.

Equally astonishing is the fact that Kraus and others largely, if not entirely, ignore another important anthropological aspect of the individual, particularly that of the abdominal region, kidneys in particular, where some of the deepest emotional predicaments are located according to the Psalter. An anatomical view inside of human body is one of the crucial aspects of Psalter's anthropology, with the inner organs allocated with various emotional representations. The heart, in the psalmist experience, only in part designates emotions. Kidneys seem to be far more complex as the seat of emotions than the heart. It is God created the kidneys (Ps 139:13) (כִּי־אֵתָהּ) (קִנִּיתִי כְלִי־תִי) and he also examines heart and kidneys (cf. Jer 17:10). Moreover, it is in the kidneys that emotional pain seems to be deepest. When the psalmist's heart became bitter (Ps 73:21) yet his kidneys felt like sharp stabbing (Ps 73:21b). It is indicative here and not only here that, many translators will acquire the 'heart' where indeed the original text has 'kidney'. Kidneys are not only the seat of deepest emotional pains; they also seem to be representative of the deepest human aspects of personality, his conscience, intentions and plans. In his enterprises it is the kidneys, not the heart, that give counsel to the psalmist.

I will praise the LORD, who counsels me;
even at night my kidneys (כליותי) have instructed me (Ps 16:7).³²

Following this, Kraus is wrong when he says that the heart is "the site of all thought, planning, reflection, explanation, and ambition (Ps 4:4; 10:6; 15:2; 20:4;

³² Again, so many translations have 'heart' here (RSV, NAB, NIV), others will have 'reins' (JPS, KJV).

33:11,21, etc)” (Kraus: 145). In his superb *‘Arguing with God: a theological anthropology of the Psalms’* Bernd Janowski develops his theological anthropology on the basis of seven so called ‘anthropological keywords’. In his ‘Anthropological keywords 3’ is ‘Heart and Kidneys’ where he explicates the place and the role of kidneys in the psalmist’s experiences and presenting kidneys as one of the centres of the Psalter’s individual anthropology.³³

Though agreeing with Kraus that biblical anthropology “must have a theological orientation” we cannot go all the way with him and conclude that “concentrating on man himself can only lead to erroneous conclusions” (Kraus: 143). He follows von Rad’s insistence that “man is man only before God and with God” (von Rad, in Kraus: 143). The core issue of psalmodic anthropology in Kraus’ view is his assertion that the Psalms speak of the human in the ‘absolute sense’ (Kraus: 144), i.e. humanity, humankind, and human life, rather than the specific individual and personality. In this view, man means ‘assembled humans’, peoples and nations, as in Ps 9:

Arise, O LORD, let not man prevail;
let the nations be judged in Thy sight.
Set terror over them, O LORD;
let the nations know they are but men (Ps 9:19-20) (JPS).

Likewise:

The LORD looks down from heaven upon the human race (בני־אדם)
to see if even one (היֵשׁ) is wise,
if even one seeks God (Ps 14:2) (NAB).

This anthropology of the ‘absolute human’ or ‘assembled humans’ slowly but surely denies individuality in the context of the Psalter and the psalms. Moreover, it

³³ Cf. Janowski, 2013: 159-162. The rest of the six Janowski’s ‘Anthropological keywords’ are as follows: Anthropological keyword 1: Seeing and Hearing (p.85f.); Anthropological keyword 2: Revenge (p.120f.); Anthropological keyword 4: Vitality (p.155f.); Anthropological keyword 5: Life and Afterlife (p.240f.); Anthropological keyword 6: Gratitude (p.275f.); Anthropological keyword 7: Immortality (p.312f.).

overlooks the crucial importance and ubiquitous appearance of anatomical idioms in the Psalms, with their emotional and psychosomatic aspects.

4.5.2. Anatomical Idioms

In the nature of religious experience, the anthropological aspect and its emotive expression is linked to the psychosomatic dimension of man. With the development of language and linguistic studies (cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics) at one end, and the neurosciences at the other, it has become impossible to speak of religious experience without referring to either field. In the language field, much has been done, and some works are crucial, like Ronald Langacker's *Concept, Image and Symbol: The Cognitive Basis of Grammar* (1991) or Andrew Ortony's *Metaphor and Thought* (1993). A more recent contribution by Patrick McNamara, *The Neuroscience of Religious Experience* (2009) is also important. And we should not omit now the classic work by William James, *The Varieties of religious Experience* (1936).

Anatomical idioms or 'behavioural gestures' are highly expressive of the Psalmist's physical and emotional state.³⁴ A distinct place in the personal anthropological dimension is given to the anatomical idiom of the abdominal region (kidneys, liver, stomach, innards).³⁵ These invariably refer to deep emotions, often with distinctive phraseology or outcomes, and the results of such emotional predicaments. In psalmodic texts where abdominal organs appear, translators are

³⁴ *Gestus* (hence 'gesture') is an embodiment of an attitude, reflecting an overall psychosomatic predicament.

³⁵ The abdominal lexicon is rich and varied. *Btn* (בטן) stomach; *m'a* (מעיים) innards or bowels; *šd* (שד) chest; *rhm* (רהם) womb; *huq* or *heq* (חוק) bosom; *kilya* (כליה) kidneys.

fairly inconsistent. Generally, they tend erroneously, to substitute the abdomen with the heart. This is mistaken for several reasons.

Firstly, in the sacrificial systems of religious practices, the abdominal organs (kidneys, liver) held an important place. Divination and reading for omens were performed using these organs. The most important decision-making took place after examining the abdominal organs of a sacrificial animal (cf. Ez 21:26).³⁶ For the Israelites, in the sacrificial system, the abdominal organs of sacrificial animal were not to be eaten.³⁷ The reason for this being is that the blood was where the seat of life was presumed to be.

Anatomical idioms referring to abdominal organs in the Psalter (or elsewhere in the OT) typically reflect a wide range of strong, deep emotions, mental states, or religious experiences. The heart is the most important organ (as we know today), but it cannot be equated with the abdominal organs or their anatomical idioms as we find it in biblical texts and anthropology.³⁸ The heart in the OT is the instrument of volitional and intellectual activity (cf. Johnson: 77), but the chest area, including the heart, does not correspond to the abdomen in idiomatic use. For example, in the lament of Lam 2:11, we read: “my bowels are poured out on the ground” (מעני נשפך לארץ). Some translations render, “my heart is poured out” (RSV) or “my gall is poured out” (NAB) or

³⁶ Cf. Smith, 1998:430-431.

³⁷ Cf. “And from the sacrifice of the peace offering, as an offering by fire to the LORD, he shall offer the fat covering the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver which he shall take away with the kidneys. Then Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt offering” (Lev 3:3-5).

³⁸ Apparently, the heart (לב or לבב) is mentioned at least 850 times in the OT. Cf. Johnson, 1949:75f.

even, “my liver is poured upon the earth” (JPS). In Ps 22:15, the Psalmist's heart is like wax, melted in his innermost parts.³⁹

An incident during the Maccabean revolt is indicative of the strength of emotion associated with the abdominal organs. The priest Mattathias was so upset with his compatriots who concurred with sacrifices upon pagan altars that his kidneys started to tremble in anger. Seeing a fellow-Jew offering a sacrifice at the pagan altar, his reaction was deeply emotional:

When Mattathias saw it, he burned with zeal and his heart was stirred (ἐτρόμησαν οἱ νεφροί). He gave vent to righteous anger; he ran and killed him upon the altar (1Macc 2:24).

In fact, it was not his heart, but his νεφροί (kidneys) that were so stirred up in him. His reaction was so fierce that his guts shook (τρομέω).

4.5.3. Physiology and Synecdoche

The anatomical language of the Psalms may be accounted for by the so-called *synecdoche* explanation, according to some commentators. Synecdoche is a device whereby one part (organ) of the body represents or acts for the whole person. For example, the common Hebrew anatomical term נפש (neck) can stand for the whole 'self' or the whole 'person'.⁴⁰ Hence the Psalmist often lifts up his 'soul' (Ps 25:1; 86:4; 143:8) or his 'eyes' (Ps 121:1; 123:1) to God, meaning his whole self. There are clearly cases in which the text will allow us to reason in this way. However, any attempt to make a general rule would be faulty and erroneous. Anatomical idioms, used to express the Psalmist's emotional experiences, are more complex than that, particularly

³⁹ “it is melted within my breast” (RSV) (נמס בתוך מעי) or “it melts away within me” (NAB).

⁴⁰ As a literary device, synecdoche may be sometimes identified or even equated with *metonymy*.

those referring to the internal and abdominal organs, where the most powerful emotions reside.

Following the 'synecdoche' explanation, Mayer Gruber also observes that any part of the body can be used in ancient Semitic languages to denote the emotional state of the whole (person). He quotes McCurley:

The device called synecdoche, by which any one part represents and acts for the whole. This explanation is consistent with the notion of ancient mentality and expression... that any part of the body may represent the psychosomatic unity called the 'self' or the 'person' (McCurley in Gruber, 1983:252).

This is obviously in line with an anthropological approach to the Psalter in which the personal anthropology of a private individual is largely replaced by the 'human in the absolute sense'. However, the synecdoche approach fails to account for many anatomical idioms (see above), or detailed, intensive descriptions of emotion. Anatomical idioms referring to the physical and physiological aspects of the individual ought to be seriously considered before concluding that psalmodic anthropology concerns only the corporate body.⁴¹ And that is certainly true, not only of the angst of the collective, but also as the fear of the individual. We have already seen that body parts and bodily functions signal a range of emotions and a multiplicity of emotional states crucial to understanding the Psalmist's fears and anxieties. Physiology is very apparent in the Psalms, via body parts, internal organs or gestures.⁴² Mayer Gruber (1980) investigated and examined the non-verbal aspects of emotional expressions in the OT (cf. *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication in the Ancient Near East*). In his short, but detailed study (VT 1990 40/4) Gruber also discusses one of the basic emotions,

⁴¹ Cf. Collins, *CBQ* 33; Smith, *JBL* 117; Boyle, *JBL* 120; Driver, *ZAW* 65.

⁴² The relationship between the physiology and emotions of the Psalmist will be examined further in this work as we deal more particularly with his emotions (cf. 'The psalmist and his emotions').

that of fear (ירא), and its relationship to reverence.⁴³ He argues that the Hebrew verb ירא can mean both 'be frightened' and 'revere'.⁴⁴ He goes on to say:

The Hebrew verb *yir'*, which is commonly rendered "to fear", may refer either to virtuous feelings and behaviour, which are *prescribed*, or to non-virtuous feelings and behaviour, which are *proscribed* (Gruber, 1990:411-12).

Psalm 34 provides a context in which reverence and fear feature alongside each other: "O fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him have no want!" (Ps 34:10).

Many other psychosomatic aspects of the Psalmist's emotive expressions are also common us all, whether physical restlessness (pacing), aspects of breathing and respiration (sighing or panting), one's insides churning, etc. The Psalmist displays restlessness typical of a disturbed or depressed person, 'psychomotor agitation' in psychological terminology (cf. Barre, JNES 60 2001), for example in Ps 35:14, where he says he is "going about as one who laments his mother". The psalmist then goes on saying:

For my life is spent with sorrow,
and my years with sighing (אנה);
my strength fails because of my misery,
and my bones waste away (Ps 31:10).⁴⁵

Some of the psychosomatic portrayals in psalmodic texts are relatively straightforward, while other textual representations are more demanding and less clear. For example, how are we to understand כבוד and נפש in the self-imprecatory Psalm 7?

⁴³ Cf. Fear, anxiety and reverence in Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew and other North-west Semitic Languages (VT, 1990).

⁴⁴ In Akkadian it is *palahu*, and Aramaic it is *dhl*.

⁴⁵ Apart from the verb אנה ('to sigh'), there is also the verb 'to pant' (שאף) which can also mean to swallow, cf. Ps 56:2-3, Ps 57:3.

Let the enemy pursue me (נפש) and overtake me,
and let him trample my life (חיים) to the ground,
and lay my soul (כבוד) in the dust (Ps 7:6).

The Psalmist's glory (כבוד) or soul will “lay in the dust” (JPS/RSV). The NAB here translates that he will be “left dishonoured in the dust”. Similarly, in Ps 16: “Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth” (JPS), or “Therefore my heart is glad, my soul rejoices” (NAB) (Ps 16:9) (לכן שמח לבי ויגל כבודי).

Either way, the Psalm powerfully portrays the psalmist's emotional state through anatomical idioms.⁴⁶ In the penitential Psalm 38, the anthropology gives us little room to ignore an intense personal and individual experience. This clearly goes beyond the public performance of a professional poet.

In Psalms 10 and 38, the powerful physiological expressions used can hardly be attributed to poetic convention, and certainly not transferred to the corporate community.

I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
all the day I go about (קדר) mourning.
For my loins are filled with burning,
and there is no soundness in my flesh (Ps 38:7-8) (cf. Ps 35; 42; 43).

It would be extremely implausible to substitute the singular with the plural.⁴⁷ Surely, this “going about” (קדר) is the gloomy pacing up and down of an individual; either in mourning or resentment (cf. Job 30:28).

There is no need to be weighed down by psalmodic anthropology or the issue of humanity vs. individuality in the Psalms, since both aspects are present. Problems only arise when one aspect is brought to the fore and accentuated over the other. An

⁴⁶ On *kbd* as ‘liver’, see Smith, 1998.

⁴⁷ It is noticeable and indicative when reading some parts of Gunkel’s analysis of the individual’s complaint songs how often ‘he’ and ‘him’ are found, cf. Gunkel: 155.

example of this is the one-sided, oversimplified approach to idioms referring to the innards. It is true that “life cannot be grasped by means of a theory” (Kraus: 150). The corporeality and individuality of the anthropology of the Psalter must both be considered, if one is not to be in danger of grasping life by means of a theory – even one as good as the criticism of literary forms.

We shall focus in more detail on the subject of the physiology and psychology of emotions in the Psalter in the chapter entitled ‘Motion and emotion in the Psalms’.

4.6. Swings in Mood

This issue, how the Psalmist’s mood and emotional predicament can change within the same psalm, sometimes more than once, has been a bewildering problem for quite a while. In Psalm 6, for example, in a thanatophobic mood, he is completely disorientated and the dread of death hangs over him:

In utter terror (בהל) is my soul and you,
LORD, how long...? (עד־מתי).
Turn, LORD, save my life;
in your mercy rescue me.
For who among the dead remembers you?
Who praises you in Sheol? (Ps 6:4-6) (NAB).

He is weary of groaning, his eyes waste away with weeping (6:8) - then the Lord hears his prayer and his mood suddenly changes. Psalm 22 is another example. It opens with the well-known cry of the petitioner who feels abandoned by God, “My God, my God why have you abandoned me?” (v.1, NAB), and “Why so far from my call for help” (רחוק מישועתי) (v.1b). Throughout the first part of the psalm (vv. 1-22), the mood is desperate, and there are terrible, immediate threats (bulls, lions and preying dogs). And then, in the second half of the psalm (vv. 23-31) the Psalmist becomes

assured of and is granted divine help. His disposition changes from desperation to joyful worship.⁴⁸ He also exhorts the congregation to glorify God,

You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you sons of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you sons of Israel! (Ps 22:24).

Kraus for example (Kraus, 1988a: 142) suggests two possible dimensions in solving this change of mood of the psalmist. One dimension is cultic, the other is purely personal. In case of the former, the petitioner received assurance of being heard by God by priests or cultic prophet or having a theophanic experience in the sanctuary during the temple service. The latter explanation would be that after his prayer a sign was given to the petitioner and his fate has changed.

Sudden changes in mood and the whole emotional construct of an individual psalm can be confusing and pose a demanding problem in psalmodic studies, particularly in the swing from thanatophobic sentiments to a laudatory disposition. How can we then account for the Psalmist travelling the full circle from lament to thanksgiving and back within a single psalm? How can his mood and emotional predicament change so abruptly within the same poem? A great number of psalms display this axis of motional-emotional outbursts, which result in unusual, atypical *swings in the Psalmist's mood*. It can be quite confusing.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Kraus (cf. Kraus, Psalms: 142) suggests two possible dimensions in resolving this change of mood. One is cultic, the other is purely personal. In case of the former, the petitioner receives assurance of being heard by God from the priests or cultic prophet, or has theophanic experience in the sanctuary during the temple service. The second is that after prayer, a sign is given to the petitioner and his fate changes.

⁴⁹ One suggestion is that it happens in the Psalmist's heart during prayer in the Temple (cf. Ps 12 or Ps 60:6f.) (cf. Weiser, 1962:79).

Psalm 69, the most frequently quoted in the New Testament in a Messianic context, also portrays such a sudden change of mood.⁵⁰ The first half (69:1-29) is a lament and complaint, saturated with motional-emotional language:

I have sunk (טבע) into the deep mire (צולה),
where there is no foothold (69:3).

I am weary (יגע) with crying out;
my throat is parched“ (69:4).

For your sake I bear insult (כִּי־עֲלִיךָ נִשְׂאתִי חֲרָפָה) (Ps 69:8).⁵¹

I have wept and fasted (69:10).

I am afflicted and in pain (וְאֲנִי עֲנִי וְכוֹאֵב) (Ps 69:30).⁵²

Then, with a masterly stylistic instrumentary, the Psalmist enters a completely different mood of praise and thanksgiving:

I will praise the name of God with a song (אֶהְלֵלָה שֵׁם־אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁיר) (Ps 69:31).
This will please the LORD more than an ox (וְחֵיטֵב לַיהוָה מִשׁוֹר) (69:32).
The LORD hears the needy (69:34).⁵³

Does this mean that the Psalmist was led by God himself from lament and complaint to praise and thanksgiving, as in Ps 22:26, “From thee comes my praise”? The divine conduct is portrayed again in Psalm 73. Here, the Psalmist finds it hard and wearisome (עמל) to ponder on the struggles caused by injustice. His faith is tested, as he expresses typical theodicy questions. Then he is led to the “sanctuary of God” (אֵל־מִקְדָּשֵׁי־אֱלֹהִים) (Ps 73:16). There he did not just feel better, nor the problems disappear, but

⁵⁰ When Jesus expelled the traders from the Temple, it is said that the “disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for thy house will consume me, (Joh 2:17); cf. Ps 69:9. A Messianic interpretation of 69:21 is given in Mat 27, where Jesus on the cross was given vinegar to drink, “They offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it” (Mat 27:34), cf. “Instead they put gall in my food; for my thirst they gave me vinegar” (Ps 69:21).

⁵¹ Cf. Ps 74:10, where in parallelism we find חָרַף 'scorn' and נָאץ 'despise'.

⁵² Cf. Ps 70:6.

⁵³ Apart from the stylistic word play in v.31 and v.32: שִׁיר ('song') and שׁוֹר ('bull'), the Psalmist also communicates an important message. Why is the 'song' more valuable than the sacrificial 'bull'? As in similar psalmodic situations, the form (material sacrifice) is subordinated to the content (represented by the heart of the worshipper) (cf. Ps 40:7; 51:18-19).

what really happened in the sanctuary is that he was actually led to 'understanding' (בין) (73:17).⁵⁴ He concludes, "You guide me with your counsel (עצה)" (73:24). What happened was more than the return of emotional stability – it was ultimately cognition. In the Psalter the triad or axis of motion-emotion-cognition is frequently operational. Yahweh does not only work on the emotions but also on cognition. This is why the favourite verbal pair for the author is: (זכר) (remember) and (ידע) (know).⁵⁵

In terms of the Psalmist's mood swings, what is really happening - is he moody or simply emotionally unstable? If a person is constantly subject to mood changes, they may be pronounced emotionally unstable. Yet emotions are more complex responses (to certain objects, events or agents), than feelings or moods. Being moody often has no particular object or specific cause. Depression and fear are frequent occurrences in the Old Testament and the Psalmist often exhibits symptoms of depression, expressed through motional verb structures, postures and general spatial orientation.⁵⁶

The Psalmist's swings in mood, which are a notable feature of his emotional thanatophobic framework, show a consistent literary pattern: (i) *invocation* of the name of God, followed by (ii) prayer and *expectation*. The psalmist typically begins with an invocation or complaint to YHWH; "O LORD, how many are my foes!" (Ps 3:2) or, "O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled!" (Ps 6:2). Then comes prayer as an

⁵⁴ Predictably, Dahood's interpretation here is again eschatological. 'God's sanctuary', Dahood reckons, is the celestial sanctuary. The Psalmist found it all "too difficult for his understanding, the glaring inconsistencies of this life will become intelligible to the psalmist in thereafter. The poet, it will be seen, repeats his belief in a blessed existence after death". Dahood also deduces that this means heaven and the hereafter, on the basis of Ps 68:35-36, where the divine majesty, might and sanctuary reside in the clouds (שחק) (cf. Dahood, PS II: 192).

⁵⁵ Cf. De 8, "You shall remember (זכר) all the way which the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness...be careful not to forget (שכח) the LORD, your God" (De 8:2).

⁵⁶ Cf. Kruger, P. 'Depression in the Hebrew Bible: an update' (JNES, 2005).

accompanying element, “Heal me, I cry aloud to the Lord”. Invocations are usually vocatives, while prayers are in the imperative mood, “Heal me, be gracious to me...” In fact, there is usually an emotional concoction, containing obvious elements of complaint, imprecation, self-imprecation and praise. Interpretations or possible solutions to the problem of the Psalmist’s mood changes have been suggested.

Some are concerned with the human psyche, others focus on the cultic aspect and the invocation on the divine name. In “A study in the form criticism of individual complaint psalms” Wevers (VT 6 1956:80-96) presents the basic pattern evident in the complaint-lament psalms with a mixed mood ambience. He offers several possible solutions to the problem.

The *psychological* explanation states that repetitive pleas and prayers effectuate an ‘unconscious metamorphosis’ in the petitioner’s mind. Utter despair and uncertainty changes into an outburst of praise within just a few lines in the same psalm, moving swiftly from “disgrace breaks my heart” to “I will glorify the name of Yahweh” (Ps 69:20,30). The repeated petition which triggers the metamorphosis shows the power of the spoken word (cf. *illocution*), (as in Gen 1:3ff for example), and is efficacious, resulting in a change in mood.⁵⁷ Most lament-complaint psalms contain this basic pattern of the invocation of Yahweh’s divine name, and the illocutionary power of the spoken word (prayer), with the sudden change in the Psalmist’s overall mood.

⁵⁷ The ‘speech-act’ theory has been examined by several scholars, such as Duranti, Hornsby or Tsohtzidis.
Cf. Hornsby, (1998) pp.21-37; Hornsby, 1994:187-207.

The cultic explanation, supported by both Mowinckel and Gunkel is set in the supposed cultic complaint ritual, followed by an oracle of blessing officiated by the priest, upon which a divine response comes, restoring the petitioner (cf. Wevers: 81).

The change in emotional disposition comes after petitionary prayer to God. The Psalmist's cry to God for help is in effect an invocation of the name of God. He "calls upon the Lord" (אקרא יהוה) (Pss 18:3; 55:17; 88:9; 145:18). He admires the name of God (השם) (cf. Pss 8:10; 18:49; 34:4 etc). The Name is a warranty of protection, as in: "The name of the God of Jacob protect you" (ישגברך שם אלהי) (Ps 20:1). The Name is to be feared (יראי שמך) (Pss 15:4, 22:24, 61:5, 115:11, 13).

At this point, we need to consider briefly the prohibition issued against using the name of YHWH in vain in the third commandment of the Decalogue:

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain (De 5:11).

This was a serious warning about the magical use of divine names, typical of early religious practices. In divination practice, invoking the names of gods or angels was a regular part of casting spells.⁵⁸

In the Psalmist's invocation of the divine Name, there is a twofold order. First comes in the vocative, then the imperative. It has been observed that the use of the divine Name in the vocative+imperative combination is almost exclusive to the Psalmist in his troubles. The reason for this is "To be sought in the Israelite concept of the name. The name among primitive peoples was a magical power" (Wevers, 1956:82).⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Cf. Duffy, 2009:164-167.

⁵⁹ For more on the invocation of the word *shem* (name) in the Psalter see: Wevers: 83-85.

In surveying our brief treatment of the psalmist's mood changes and outlining some of the explanations of this phenomenon, perhaps the most capturing and most intriguing, deserving further studies, is the psalmist's invocation of the divine Name. The Psalmist's emotional disposition changes whenever he invokes the Name of God; whereas there seem to be the power attached to the pronunciation of the Name. The word שֵׁם (*shem*), Name (of God) and its invocation in the Psalter becomes a shield in distress, the king is supported by the Name: "The LORD answer you in the day of trouble! The name of the God of Jacob protect you!"(Ps 20:1) one can simply say: "the name acts" (cf. Pedersen,1991,1:246). Israelites successfully fight their adversaries in the Name (בשם) (cf. Ps 44:6). Notably, this does not simply mean that they fight and win by YHWH's approval, it is that their strength *is* in the Name. Thus the young David in fighting the Philistine Goliath, goes against him "in the Name of the Lord" (בשם יהוה).

The whole issue of the swings of the psalmist's mood deserves further investigation, and certainly an important discussion on the use of the divine Name and the peculiarity of its power. As already noted a useful if not referential examination of the issue is found in Johannes Pedersen's *Israelite life and culture* (vol.1:245-258).

5. THE PSALMIST AND HIS EMOTION

In addition to this, almost omnipresent, subject of emotional vacillating of the psalmist, there are other more specific emotional or emotive reactions of the psalmist in relation to mortal threats and his general distress.

5.1. Ambivalent Emotions

Biblical authors, particularly in wisdom traditions and poetic literary material show certain *ambivalence* in relation to death; in the texts this ambivalence is displayed in circumlocutions from comforting *euphemism* to somewhat cynical *dysphemism*. What in modern languages and cultures is represented in the well-known expression: *'Rest in peace'* there are texts and contexts where it appears to be the thin borderline between euphemism and dysphemism.

Declaration of death as rest, or deliverance from death, in the Psalter's vocabulary ranges from 'peace' (שלום) (Ps 55:19), 'rest' (נוח) or 'silence' (דומיה); also the 'sleep' (ישון), as already been noted, is a metaphor for death (Ps 13:3; 76:5). The ambivalence is particularly alleged in the term 'silence' (דומיה). Silence can refer to silent and peaceful resting in God: "Only in God is my rest" (אך אל־אלהים דומיה נפשי) (Ps 62:1, 6), but also as the eternal silence, i.e. 'death' as the abode where the eternal silence rules. The psalmist was just about to die, he was only little (מעט) away from it, and "Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had soon dwelt in silence" (כמעט שכנה) (Ps 94:17) (JPS). Somewhat cynical or apprehensive was the psalmist's confirming that there is no praise of God among the dead, for "The dead do not praise the LORD, nor do any that go down into silence" (ירדי דומה) (Ps 115:17).

The suffering Job's feeling about death, discloses more sceptical or cynical view of death as rest. The dead are really not so much resting, which may imply rejuvenation, it is rather a decomposing of bodies,

I should have lain down and been *quiet* (שקט)
I should have *slept* (ישן)
then I should have been at *rest* (נוח)
with kings and counsellors of the earth
who rebuilt ruins for themselves (Job 3:1314).

Therefore, for him there is a marked difference between 'rest' (נוח) as divinely appointed cessation from labour which renews strength and vital forces. This continuum, though often blurred, between the literal and non-literal, between euphemism and cynicism, is often found in biblical texts. One example is the oxymoron of light becoming dark (Job 18):

The light of the wicked is put out,
and the flame of his fire does not shine.
The light is dark (חשך אור) in his tent,
and his lamp above him is put out.
His strong steps are shortened
and his own schemes throw him down (שילך) (Job 18:5-7).

The complexity of emotion theories in relation to the Psalmist, who manifests a spectrum of emotional states and moods, has already been noted. There are emotional concoctions, particularly the blend of fear and anger (see: Introductory remarks). Yet, it is not always easy to decode the level or intensity of an emotional reaction. For example, the Hebrew (חרה) means to be angry. In Gen 4:6, Cain's anger it may be translated as 'rage' or 'burning anger'. But in 2 Sam 6:8, the same verb appears in the context of David's displeasure at the death Uzzah, who only wanted to help.

David was disturbed because the LORD had vented his anger on Uzzah
(ויחר לדוד על אשר פרץ יהוה פרץ בעזה) (2 Sam 6:8) (NAB).

Was David annoyed, shocked or angry, maybe even furious with God? The text tells us decidedly that David was angry (חרה) with God.

5.2. Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms

Some of the more familiar anthropomorphisms speak of God as having ears, eyes and hands, walking and descending.¹ Correspondingly, human emotions are also applied to God (*anthropopathism*). Perhaps Arthur Soffer's "The Treatment of Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Septuagint of Psalms" (*HUCA*, 1957:85-107) may be useful and appropriate as we consider which part is appear to be of God and his 'emotions' in reference to the psalmist's experiences.² Soffer concludes that,

Because so many of the Psalms are highly personal prayers directed at a God who is felt to be near, and because they include some of the most poetic passages in the Bible, the Hebrew text of the Book of Psalms abounds in anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms (ibid.p.86).

Perhaps the most 'cutting edge' of all the anthropomorphisms in Biblical Hebrew is the 'face of God' (פני אלהים); seeing God 'face-to-face' (פנים אל פנים). Moses speaks to God 'face-to-face' (Gen 33:11), i.e. not from an earth-to-heaven distance, but as friends, directly and unmediated. Jacob sees God 'face-to-face' (Gen 32:30). But the face is not only an anthropomorphic term; it is also anthropopathic. In Ps 31, the Psalmist urges God to let his face shine on his servant: "Let thy face shine on thy servant (האירה פניך על עבדך)" (Ps 31:17).

¹ Cf. "The LORD came down to see the city," (Gen 6:5; 11:5).

² Though Soffer addresses only the '*Septuagint of Psalms*', he also follows the Masoretic texts, particularly when addressing borderline cases which swing between anthropomorphism and anthropopathism.

It has already been pointed out that the manifestation of basic emotions is rare; there is often an emotional blend. The wider context of Psalm 31 displays exactly that. The Psalmist's emotional concoction here is made up of fear and anger. In fear for his life he cries out to God, "Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I call on thee" (31:18a), but then, in anger and an imprecatory mood, also prays for the death of his enemies: "Let the wicked be put to shame, let them go dumbfounded to Sheol" (31:18b).

The Aaronic blessing proclaims, "May his face shine upon you," (cf. Gruber, 1983). This reveals the conjunction of the *anthropomorphic-anthropopathic* pairing. Nostrils and anger consistently appear together; as well as the face and the sadness (or joy) are commonly paired.

The anthropomorphic-anthropopathic organs or features are the seats of emotion and psychological manifestations, both in human and divine agents.³ In the Psalms, they facilitate the discussion in this work. They show that (i) conventionality and conventional semantics have roots which go deeper than pragmatic, accepted linguistic figures, and (ii) that the identity of the individual(s) in the Psalms is designated by real events and very real personal, one-to-one experiences, between the Psalmist and his God. The "I" language (first person singular) of the Psalms is not merely a convention, like the English 'royal we'.

Face is then the clearest location for displaying emotions; it can be 'smiley' (up), or 'grumpy' (down), facial expressions show favour or disapproval. The intriguing text

³ Cf. Soffer, 1957.

of Psalm 82 and its scenography tells of the gods who in their misguided execution of justice they are, in effect, putting a smile on the faces of unjust men,

God has taken his place in the divine council;
in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:
How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked? (פני רשעים תשאור) (Ps 82: 1-2).

Literally, “The faces of the wicked are lifted up”; that is to say that they feel good in their misdeeds. Since the psalmist’s God also has a face, this will naturally include eyes, ears, and a mouth. God even has a nose with which to smell the “sweet-smelling offerings” (Lev 26:31). And the psalmist let us know that as opposed to his God, the idols “have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell” (Ps 115:6). But God's nose, just like ours, is not only for detecting odours and scents; it is also an instrument of emotional display (anger). Thus, “Smoke went up from his nostrils and devouring fire from his mouth”(Ps 18:9) (עלה עשן באפו ואש־מפיו) or “The bed of the sea appeared; the world's foundations lay bare, at the roar of the LORD, at the storming breath of his nostrils” (מנשמת רוח אפך) (Ps 18:8, 16).

Consequently, emotions are implicated, for “the front side of the head is the most expressive of emotions” (Yu, 2002:343). That is why the cries of the helpless need to reach God's ears, “My cry to him reached his ears” (Ps 18:6, 7). Scripture repeatedly reminds us that idols may indeed “have ears, but do not hear”, they may have “noses, but do not smell” (Ps 115:6; 135:17).⁴ Indeed, “Does the one who shaped the ear not hear? The one who formed the eye not see?” (Ps 94:9).

⁴ This is presented as a “satire of divine images as dumb, blind, deaf and devoid of any powers their personal form might indicate. Yahwism was unique in the Near East as an aniconic religion...It is an implicit testimony to the power of the true God and to the potential of those who trust in him” (Allen, 1983:110).

Kruger ('The Face and Emotions in the Hebrew Bible'; *OTE* 18 3 2005) and Gruber ("The Many Faces of Hebrew 'nasa panim': lift up the face"; *ZAW* 93 1983), among others, have made valuable contributions to the subject of the pairing of the face and the emotions. As for God, he is attributed a plethora of anthropopathic emotional states, often expressed through anthropomorphic words and expressions, from the benevolent (love, zeal), to other, less attractive emotions (anger, jealousy). Often, these are a mirror of or response to the Psalmist's emotional condition. At times, we are even served up an anthropopathic emotional concoction, such as that in Ps 79,

How long, O LORD, will you be angry (אָנֵף) forever?
How long will your jealousy (קִנְיָא) burn like fire? (Ps 79:5).

Yahweh's self-portrait of that of a jealous God (Ex 20:5). His very name is 'jealous God': "The LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (יהוה קנא שמו אל קנא הוא) (Ex 34:14).⁵ Indeed God can be sorry, deeply grieved or angry. He was sorry 'in his heart' as noted in Gen 6:6. All this leads to the conclusion that in the Old Testament, human organs, which feature in anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms, stand for particular psychological and psychosomatic conditions, for example, a text which refers literally to God's nostrils (אָף) is rendered in translation, "The anger of the Lord blazed hotly" (וַיִּהְיֶה אֵף) (Nu 11:10) (cf. Soffer, 1957:85).

⁵ Some biblical texts present anthropopathic aspects of the divine character, e.g. God's parental love in Hos 12. Divine zeal for his people and the king is one of the underlying anthropopathic divine characteristics. In the classical Messianic text of Is 9:6, the establishment and upholding of the Messianic royal type will be due to "the zeal of the Lord of hosts (who) will do it" (cf. 2 Ki 19:31). Along similar lines is Is 26:11, "Let them (i.e. the wicked and enemies) see thy zeal for thy people". In times of despair, the prophet asks, "Where is your zealous care and your might, your surge of pity and your mercy?" (Is 63:15). The wrath of God is well covered, with a substantial bibliography in U. Berges, 'Der Zorn Gottes in der Prophetie und Poesie Israels auf dem Hintergrund altorientalischer Vorstellungen' (*Bib* 85:2004, p.3 05-330).

5.3. Fear and Anger

Anger and fear are probably the most frequent emotions present in the Psalter. Paul Kruger rightly notes that, “The emotion of anger is one of the most frequently experienced emotions in the Hebrew Bible” (JNSL, 2000:181).⁶

Another recurrent emotion type in the Psalter is fear. Its object is often God himself, enemies or death; all of these are frequently, present.⁷ Where does the Psalmist’s mortal fear come from? What has actually brought him to the valley of death (Ps 23), or who placed him at the bottom of the pit (Ps 88:7)? Is it a physical foe or his religious experience?

Anger towards Yahweh is recorded by other biblical authors (cf. Gen 4; 1Ki 19; Jer 20:7-9; Jonah 4), using emotion type compounds which show that the actual lexemes ‘anger’ or ‘angry’ need not be used to describe the emotion.

The nature of these emotion types and experiences in the linguistic representation of emotion is most frequently described in thermodynamic terms, i.e. the ‘heat of anger’ (or ‘burning with anger’), alternatively it is the coldness of fear (‘frozen with fear’) (cf. Berkowitz: 12).⁸

⁶ Kruger provides ten terms describing anger in biblical literature (זעמזף, חמהחרה, כעס, עברה, קצף, רגז) (אף, ררה). This is not an exhaustive list and we have noted others. The vocabulary, etymology, literature and variety of aspects of anger in biblical texts are dealt with by Angela Thomas, in her doctoral dissertation, with an excellent overview of terminology and phraseology.

⁷ Although the most obvious and perhaps the most familiar term ירא, there is a whole range of words taking the biblical fear lexicon much further. On the motif of the fear emotion and how the psalmist overcomes it, Daniel Estes (*BibSac*, 161/2004,) exploits the verb ירא and argues that Ps 49 is an exemplary, instructive text. However, he fails to note the psalms which are just as instructive and richer on fear lexica (Pss 6; 38; 48; 88; 104). Cf. Table: ‘Hebrew cognition and emotion verbs’.

⁸ Most criticism of religion accuses it of being a rule of fear, emotional manipulation and a major source of human anxiety.

5.3.1. The Explosive Container

Anger, as an emotion, comes in varying degrees and intensity. Its spectrum ranges from being displeased (with something or somebody) to full rage and 'burning' anger. The higher the degree or intensity, the more 'heat' is engendered in the human 'container' (see: The nature of experience), and calamitous consequences are more likely. This is evident in the story of Cain's anger with his brother Abel. Cain was described as being angry to the point of fury (חרה מאד) (cf. Gen 4:5). When his wife Rachel complained about her childlessness and exclaimed, "Give me children or I shall die!" Jacob became extremely angry (חרה אף) (Gen 30:1-2).⁹ The same word חרה is reserved for Yahweh and frequently describes divine anger, as in Psalm 88:

Smoke went up from his nostrils,
and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him
(עלה עשן באפו ואש־מפיו תאכל גחלים בערו ממנו) (Ps 18:8).¹⁰

This is followed in the next verses by: "The heat of your anger (חרוניך) came over me; your dread (בעת) destroys me (צמת)" (Ps 88:17).¹¹ God's angry, fiery breath will flow vengefully like brimstone (נחל גפריית), and rain (מטר) on the wicked.¹²

On the wicked he will rain (מטר) coals of fire (פחים אש) and brimstone (גפריית);
a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup (Ps 11:6).

Anger is most extensively described as heat in a container. Container metaphors represent an activity, emotion, or idea. They relate to emotion theories, particularly in

⁹ The phrase חרה אף (blaze with anger), appears fairly frequently in the Old Testament. Although it relates to men as well, the expression and especially the lexeme חרה is directly associated with divine anger, as in "the wrath of the Lord" חרה אף יהוה. Certain Bible characters also display blazing anger, for example Moses, on his return from Sinai; his "wrath flared up" (NAB) or "Moses' anger burned hot" (RSV) (cf. Ex 32:19).

¹⁰ Cf. Ps 106:40.

¹¹ The verb is חרה, and its nominal form is חרון ('heat') and the phrase is חרון אף־יהוה (Lord's blazing anger) (cf. Nu 25:4; 32:14; Ps 78:49).

¹² Cf. Isa 30:33; "a burning place has long been prepared".

reference to anger. A container has an inside and an outside, and is capable of containing something. In the examples given, the container is the body, which behaves rather like an emotional pressure-cooker. If the heat and pressure become too intense, it is likely to 'explode' (Cf. Kruger, 2000:185).¹³

5.3.2. Psalm 39 and Jeremiah 20

The initial invocation of the name of Yahweh is characteristic of the psalmodic complaint songs (individual and communal). The first words include vocatives such as, "Help, O Lord" (Ps 12:1), or "O God, why did you reject us?" (74:1). Often, these invocations are appositionally expanded to 'God of hosts' or 'God of Israel' (cf. Ps 69:7) or 'my God'. The reason behind this is the importance of liturgical clarity in a polytheistic environment, i.e. naming the actual god the worshipper is addressing. However, in the Yahwistic context, invocations are expressed so as to convey, "What Yahweh means for the one praying. For this reason, one frequently finds that the first person suffix and comparative words are selected that express protection and help" (Gunkel, par.6/10:153).

There are complaints, such as in Psalm 39, where the Psalmist goes straight in without the initial invocative component.¹⁴ We should consider whether this is indicative of a particular emotive state. In Ps 39, the Psalmist's heart burns within him

¹³ Cf. Z. Kovecses (2000), *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling*; CUP). Also Lakoff-Kovecses' cognitive model of anger with the following elements (i) physiological effects, (ii) if anger increases, its physiological effects increase, (iii) there is a limit to normal functioning.

¹⁴ Though he includes it later in the psalm; "Hear my prayer, O LORD" (39:13).

(חַמָּם).¹⁵ Is it burning with anger, as indicated by the anger-heat representation and if so, why has the human container been brought to the boil?

My heart burned within me,
when I thought about it, a fire blazed (חַמָּם לְבִי בְקִרְבִי בְהִגִּי תִבְעֵר־אֵשׁ) (Ps 39:4) (Dah).¹⁶

The pressure grows too strong to bear, and the container is about to explode. The Psalmist decides to hold it in, as far as he can, by controlling or muzzling (חַסֵּם) his speech (mouth and tongue).¹⁷ But his efforts are to no avail, the container explodes, “and I broke into speech” (NAB) (39:4b), releasing deep disappointment and anger. Similarly, in his trials, Jeremiah becomes an emotional pressure-cooker:

It becomes like fire burning in my heart,
shut up in my bones;
I grow weary holding it in,
I cannot endure it (וְהָיָה בְלִבִּי כְאֵשׁ בְּעֵרַת עֵצֶר בְּעִצְמֹתַי וְנֹלֵאִיתִי כִלְכַל וְלֹא אוֹכֵל) (Jer 20:9b) (NAB).

The prophet was weary and exhausted from holding it in (כֹּוֹל).¹⁸ He was emotionally uptight, locking up his passion in his ‘bones’. The psycho-somatic concept of Jewish anthropology frequently uses the terminology of internal body parts. So the ‘bones’ are frequently used to express the Psalmist’s emotional condition, especially distress and fear. These make his bones soft (עֲשֵׂשׁ), or they shrivel (בִּלְהָ) and shake (בְּהִלָּ) (cf. Pss 31:11; 32:3; 6:3).¹⁹ Jeremiah is filled (מִלֵּא) with the compressed anger of the

¹⁵ Cf. Jer 17:8, “When the heat comes,” (כִּי יָבֵא חַמָּם) and Jb 24:19, “Drought and heat (צִיָּה גַם־חַמָּם) snatch away the snow waters; so does Sheol those who have sinned”.

¹⁶ “As I mused, it burned like fire” (Weiser, A.). Cf. (וְהָיָה בְלִבִּי כְאֵשׁ) (Jer 20:9).

¹⁷ Gunkel translates here: “I am mute. I do not open my mouth, for you have done it” (Gunkel: 176).

¹⁸ The verb כֹּוֹל has the primary meaning is to contain like a vessel (כֵּלִי). A clay vessel is also a metaphoric expression for the human body and the entire people (cf. Jer 18; 19). Death is thus a ‘broken vessel’. The Psalmist says, “I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind; I am like a shattered vessel” (Ps 31:13). The verbal and nominal cognates of the verb כֹּוֹל are: accomplish, and consume (כִּלְהָ) and vessel (כֵּלִי). Cf. Ps 2:9, “You will shatter them like a clay vessel” (כַּכֵּלֵי יִצֵר תִּנְפֹּם).

¹⁹ Cf. A. Johnson, 1949:66-68. A magnificent portrayal of thanatophobic condition is presented in the psalm in Isa 38:10-15, which is clearly psychosomatic, as the bones of the prophet are crushed.

Lord (חמה יהוה), can hardly keep it in, and becomes totally exhausted (Jer 6:11).²⁰ Since the consequences of the divine wrath are so dangerous for the people, he finds it terribly difficult to pronounce or act accordingly.²¹

5.3.3. Physiology of Anger

The burning heat of anger or rage (חרה) is of course associated with physiological effects. Facial expressions in particular betray the state of the 'container'. Thus with the heat (of anger) comes redness (in face) as a result of the enlarged blood vessels and capillary pressure. Intense anger (rage) or sadness is experienced as a burning sensation. Jeremiah says, "Mine inwards burn" (חמררו מעי), or "Within me all is in ferment" (NAB) (Lam 1:20).²² Job's face betrays his emotions; "My face is red (חמררה) with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death (צלמות)" (Jb 16:16).²³ Anger is described as the burning nostril (חרה אף) of God (cf. Psalm 85):

Thou didst withdraw all thy wrath;
thou didst turn from thy hot anger (השיבות מהרון אפך) (Ps 85:4).

Next to חרה rage, the most frequent term, almost exclusively an *anthropopathic* expression, is the anger of God אנה (be angry) with the cognate term אף (nostril). However, there is a unique appearance by another expression, זלעפה (raging heat), in relation to man. In Psalm 119 the Psalmist is seized by furious anger against evildoers

²⁰ The anger here is Yahweh's wrath, rather than "holy ardour for Yahweh" (cf. Keil in KD, vol.8:140)

²¹ Cf. Eze 22:31: "I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath" (באש עברתי כליתים).

²² For more on the face and facial expressions, see: 'Psycho-physiology of motion-emotion' here in 'Motion and Emotions in the Psalms'.

²³ The verb here is (חמר) (to ferment, boil). Hence the masculine noun (חמר) (bitumen), probably the same material as mortar or a kind of reddish smear, found next to the Dead Sea, as described in Gen 14:10; "The Valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits". Also (חמר) (cement), red clay material, mostly used by potters (cf. Isa 29:16). C. F. Keil takes it as coming from 'to ferment' or 'rise into froth', rather than glowing red (KD, vol.8:376).

and the godless, “I am seized with passionate fury” (L. Allen) or “A burning wind has seized me”.²⁴

Burning indignation (זלעפּה אהזתני) hath taken hold upon me,
because of the wicked that forsake Thy law (Ps 119:53) (JPS).

Paul Kruger (JNSL, 2000:186-191) provides a helpful list of examples from Hebrew Bible passages on anger as heat and anger as a container metaphor. It also flames up in smoke and can even be represented as an animal.²⁵ What is significant and worthy of note from the above textual evidence is that the Psalmist is in a private setting, perhaps even solitude, when he experiences suppressed anger. It is a response to his personal trials and an expression of his individuality. Even his notorious mood swings are absent, replaced by the prevalent emotion of anger (cf. Ps 39). There is no reference to any (public) worship activities. Instead of the Temple setting, only the explosive human container is left.²⁶

5.3.4. Shivers of Deadly Fear

While anger is an explosive container of heat ready to blow up, palpitating motion and shuddering is a characteristic representation of fear. It is represented by tremors and trembling, even shrivelling up. In the colloquial phraseology of many languages and cultures, fear is often the thermodynamic opposite of anger.

²⁴ “As the scorching coming from the wicked is compared to the Sirocco, a burning, enervating wind which enfeebles and afflicts him” (C. Briggs, PSS II: 425). Also in Ps 11:6, as a manifestation of the divine anger, it is a ‘burning wind’ (רוח זלעפּות) which will sweep over the wicked. (Cf. Craigie, 1983: 134 and Weiser, 1962: 157).

²⁵ Anger is heat and fire; anger is like an animal (Gen 4); the body is a container for anger which can barely endure it (cf. Jer 10:10), so it flares up (Ps 78:21) or begins to smoke (Ps 74:1).

²⁶ Similarly, the ‘container’ image is present in Ps 69, where the Psalmist’s zeal for God’s house is, killing him, eating him up (אכל). Cf. Ps 32:3.

Fear can make a person 'freeze', i.e. be unable to move, as in the English expression 'scared stiff'.²⁷ Apart from frigidity and stiffness, cold leads to eventual death, so fear is represented by the bodily response to cold of trembling and shaking. Shivering is a thermodynamic response, but in Biblical Hebrew fear vocabulary, it has an acoustic element. Lexically, in Biblical Hebrew trembling fear is represented by (היל) (הול) (lit. 'whirl', or 'dance', and רגז 'tremble', 'shake').²⁸ God's divine majesty and power causes people to tremble in fear,

The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble (רגז)!
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake! (Ps 99:1).²⁹

Then there is fear of the numinous, the *mysterium tremendum*, which Rudolf Otto describes as closest to *awe* or *dread*. In Job (cf. Job 9:34) and elsewhere it is אימה (dread).³⁰ Job pleads, "Let him take his rod away from me, and let not dread (אימה) of him terrify me" (9:34) (cf. Job 13:21).³¹ For this is no ordinary fear of the 'known' kind. It is something 'supernatural', 'shivers down the spine', such as Isaiah felt during his vision of God, where supernatural beings were calling "Holy, holy, holy" (Is 6:3-4). In chapter four of his book, Otto (2004) examines and explains in detail the notion of

²⁷ In fear idiom phraseology, thermodynamic English expressions include 'frozen on the spot', 'in a cold sweat' or one's 'stomach turns to ice'. Many other languages and cultures have equally representative idioms for fear, relative to trembling or the inability to move.

²⁸ For other Biblical Hebrew lexica on fear, see Table: 'Hebrew cognition and emotion'.

²⁹ Cf. Ps 114:7.

³⁰ Cf. Rudolf Otto (2004), *Das Heilige-über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationale*.

³¹ German has *grauen* ('to shiver'). In English it carries a notion of unpleasantness, as in 'uncanny'. See above: 'Religion and emotion'.

mysterium tremendum, at one point referring to the experience of St Augustine (Conf. 11,9,1).³²

5.3.5. Physiology of Fear

Motional vocabulary used to draw an emotional picture is physiologically based, like anger, though with fewer thermodynamics. Trembling is a regular occurrence in the representation of fear. A fine example with obvious thanatophobic overtones is Job's experience in Job 37. At the sound of Yahweh's thunderous voice, trembling fear results:

At this also my heart trembles (הרד), and leaps out (נתר) of its place. Harken to the thunder of his voice and the rumbling that comes from his mouth. Under the whole heaven he lets it go, and his lightning to the corners of the earth. After it his voice roars; he thunders with his majestic voice and he does not restrain the lightning when his voice is heard. God thunders wondrously with his voice; he does great things which we cannot comprehend. (Job 37:1-5).³³

In the face of death the Psalmist is deeply disturbed (בהל) (Ps 6). He believes that in the realm of death, God cannot be reached or remembered.

My soul also is sorely troubled (בהל).
But thou, O LORD -- how long?
Turn, O LORD, save my life;
deliver me for the sake of thy steadfast love.
For in death there is no remembrance of thee;
in Sheol who can give thee praise?
I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping (Ps 6:4-6) (RSV).

This is also a good example showing that the Psalmist was not participating in public worship, but practising personal and private devotion, presumably in his bed. In a very similar thanatophobic ambience, the Psalmist laments in Ps 88, "I am afflicted

³² In St Augustine's words; *"Quid est illud quod interlucet mihi et percutit cor meum sine laesione! Et inhorresco, et inardesco. Inhorresco in quantum dissimilis ei sum. Inardesco in quantum similis ei sum"*. (Conf. 11).

³³ Cf. Job 4:14; 36:33.

(ענה) and at the point of death” (88:15). The condition has lasted “from my youth up” (88:16), so even as a young man (מנער), he felt he was dying more than living.

We also ought to differentiate between the emotion types of ‘fears’ in the Old Testament, along the lines of conventional gradation and degrees of intensity (higher and lower).³⁴ Careful observation of how fear is represented linguistically is important. Some verbs of the fear emotion type, depending on whether they are associated the human or divine relationships, differ in degree. One example is the most popular of the OT fear verbs, ירא, which, though morphologically the same, bears different nuances in the didactic and wisdom traditions, from theophanic or thanatophobic contexts.³⁵ There are clear distinctions between (i) *thanatophobic* fear, (ii) *awe*, one of the most fundamental fears in the Israelite experience of God, and (iii) *fear of God*. Though there is some lexical overlapping in terminology, the thanatophobic lexicon is pretty well organised and differentiated from the rest of the fear emotion vocabulary (cf. Table Hebrew cognition and emotion).

Clearly, the biblical author’s ability to understand the world and deal with it effectively in emotional terms does not necessarily comply with modern linguistic and psycholinguistic systems and interpretations, or the usual cognition-emotion dividing lines.³⁶ So far, what has been discussed in relation to interpreting of the psalms does

³⁴ Cf. Table: ‘Hebrew cognition and emotion’.

³⁵ The verb ירא in the popular biblical phrase ‘fear of God’ (ירא יהוה) has a place in a proverbial and wisdom-didactic context (cf. Pro 1:7 etc.), or experience of the world, as in Jonah 1:9.

³⁶ “Cognition is often narrowly conceived. Perhaps nowhere does this problem stand out more clearly than when cognition is contrasted with affect. Affect is supposed to deal with feeling and not with knowing, while cognition supposedly deals with knowing and not with feeling. If such distinctions were simply theoretical conveniences, they might not cause as much practical mischief. The mischief stems from the fact that the distinctions are reified and practically applied. The cognitive and the affective

not rely greatly on the form critical method and literary conventionality. We have noted certain methodological aberrations. In fact, while some commentators, strictly adhering to literary and form criticism methods, invest their interpretations almost exclusively with the public, cultic use of the Psalms, though at times, and without due warning, they switch to a psychological analysis of the Psalmist's emotional states.

Perhaps we can generally observe and agree that in Biblical Hebrew, emotion vocabulary, at least in relation to two emotion types (fear, anger) appears regularly in a higher degree of intensity. If these are the basic emotions, then in the Psalter there are other emotional variables (resentment, weariness, distress). It is interesting to note that a number of commentators refrain from noticing anger in the Psalmist. Some scholars go as far as to say there is none in the Psalter (cf. Kraus). It is hardly possible not to note that the distress of the Psalmist frequently turns into anger.³⁷

How does motion vocabulary in Biblical Hebrew of the Psalter associate with emotion? How is that represented in terms of horizontal and vertical motion or posture? This and more will be our next investigation. There we will also give some attention how does all this reflect in purely grammatical forms.

are all too often regarded as distinct and independent states of the human organism. " (Eisner, 1996:20).

³⁷ Cf. Ortony, 1988: 151-153, on distress turning into anger, and the tabular presentation of compound emotions (Ortony: 148).

6. HEBREW MOTION VERBS AND GRAMMAR OF DEATH

6.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to examine Hebrew verbs of motion and the way they correspond to language of death in the Psalter; following generally adhered threefold motional pattern: *general* motion, *directed* motion and the *manner* of motion.

Before addressing the Hebrew motion we ought to provide an overview of studies and literature in the area of Hebrew motional vocabulary. This though may not be an exhaustive literature reviews it will give a picture of how far and in what directions investigation of motion and emotion has been going in the past 40 or so years.

Following literature overview, we shall add some basics of 'Hebrew cosmology', particularly with aspects that relate to conceptualization of motion and space, as we find it in the Bible and the Psalms; with several notes on various circumlocutions in regarding the language of death.

Main section of this chapter concentrates on motion words verbs in the context of the language of death and the psalmist's fear of death. In the motion vocabulary, we shall focus mainly on the manner of motion and analyze them, bearing in mind that the directional motion has been covered in many other parts of the thesis. We shall address three of manner of motion groups, that of: (i) words of haste, (ii) words of surrounding and following, and (iii) words of stumbling and wandering.

Concluding section of this chapter focuses on the grammatical processes, known as grammaticalization. Grammaticalization is a linguistic process when words or grammatical markers (prepositions, pronouns and particles) in syntactic situations

acquire new functions.¹ Often these are so called ‘function words’ with little or no lexical meaning (often prepositions+nouns). Examples in Hebrew may be a volitional particle **נָא** (a prompting particle) or **עֵתָהּ** (adverb). Some of these particles in the text will play an important role as macrosyntactic signs. Their role will often be to emphasize or point out to a climax or a conclusion.² For example, in such processes of grammaticalization, even the ubiquitous Hebrew waw (ו) will be a factor that will make a framework to motionemotion axis in the context of the language of death; as for example, the so called ‘*waw of emotion*’.

6.2. Literature Overview

Relatively small number of scholars has given their attention to the subject matter of biblical Hebrew emotion language and far less, if any attention, has been given to biblical motion vocabulary. Only sparse and scarce short studies are dedicated to Biblical Hebrew motion words, several of those may be listed.³ On the other hand, no study, shorter or comprehensive of motion vocabulary in relation to language of death has been carried out. There are several short works on some of Hebrew motion words.

¹ Definition of the term grammaticalization varies greatly since it has been coined by the French linguist Antoine Meillet (1866-1936) in his work *L'évolution des Formes Grammaticales* (1912). His initial definition of grammaticalization says, it is: "the attribution of grammatical character to an erstwhile autonomous word. One of very rare works on grammaticalization in relation to Biblical Hebrew is unpublished doctoral dissertation: Hardy, H.H. (2014) Diachronic development in Biblical Hebrew prepositions: a case study in grammaticalization (Chicago University, Chicago).

² Cf. Waltke, B.K. and O'Connor, M. (1990), *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 38.1e.

³ More investigation has been done in modern Hebrew. Cf. Hataav, G. (2000), ‘Time Movement in Biblical Hebrew’ (*HL*, 47); Uziel-Karl, s. (2000), ‘Motion Verbs in the Developing Lexicon of Hebrew-speaking Children’.

Broznick in his short note (VT 35 1985) examines הלך (go) verb of general motion; particularly analyzing the phrase *hlk 'l* (go in to) (Am 2:7), as a matter of sexual intercourse: “and a man and his father go unto the same maid” (JPS) or “Son and father go to the same prostitute” (NAB) (ואיש ואביו ילכו אל־הנערה) (Am 2:7).

In his JBL article (12/3, 1962), Mowinckel discusses the verb רכב (*rkb*) with its primary meaning ‘to ride, mount’ with a dilemma whether to translate it as ‘drive’ or ‘ride’ since the nominal form means ‘vehicle’ (e.g. 2 Sam 8:4 מאה רכב ‘thousand chariots’).

Van Dijk (1968) deals with possible connotations of the motion verb *sim* as ‘to throw’ or cast from Eze 26:12 although the primary meaning of שים is ‘to place or set’. The only closer reference of motion verbs to death (and sexuality) appears in Andrew’s short study, “Moving from death to life: Verbs of motion in the story of Judah and Tamar in Gen 38” (ZAW 105 2 1993). All of these several examples are short studies or notes on motion verbs, the rest of motion verbs are left to dictionaries and lexicons to refer to.

On the other hand, tackling subject matter of emotion in biblical texts, things are somewhat better. Most productive and prolific in the area of emotion in the Bible in the past decade was Paul Kruger (1996, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005a,b). Kruger also observes that ‘the subject of emotions in the Hebrew Bible is a most neglected theme and deserves an extensive treatment’ (JNSL 26/1 2000:181). Kruger in his studies on emotion often focuses on a group of emotions (anger, shame and fear) and particularly on *anger*: ‘A cognitive interpretation of the emotion of anger in the Hebrew Bible’ (JNSL 26/1 2000:181-193); or *shame*: “The Psychology of Shame” (JNSL 22/2 1996:79-

88) and *fear*: “A Cognitive Interpretation of the Emotion of Fear in the HB” (*JNSL* 27/2 2001:77-89).⁴

In relation to emotions in the Bible a major contribution we find with Mayer Gruber. Gruber's particular contribution is on the *non-verbal* or psychosomatic aspects of emotional dimensions and these studies are quite invaluable (1978, 1980, 1983, 1987, and 1990). Perhaps his classic work now is *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication in the Ancient Near East* (Rome, 1980). Though relatively short study, Gruber's contribution on “The Many Faces of Hebrew נשא פנים ‘lift up the face’” (*ZAW* 93 1983:252-260), is valuable particularly as it touches emotion and verb of motion; and to find the two as they relate is an extremely rare occurrence in biblical studies.

Before Gruber and Kruger, on the place of emotions in OT, valuable is G. R. Driver's ‘Some Hebrew Medical Expressions’ (*ZAW* 65 1953:252-262). Driver there focuses on physiology of emotion, often referring to verbs of motion. There he then proposes some unexpected solutions and intriguing aspects, analyzing several Hebrew verbal roots. One of these are the root זרם (‘pour forth’, ‘flood’) and תרר or תר (‘palpitate’, ‘tremble’). Namely, as Driver analyzes, in circumstances of utter fear physiology begins functioning, and an involuntary wetting oneself may happen, as example from Eze 7: “All hands shall be slack, and all knees shall drip with water” (כֹּל הַיָּדַיִם תִּרְפִּינָה וְכָל הַבְּרָכִים תִּלְכָּנָה מֵיִם) (Eze 7:17).

More recently than Driver, physiology of emotions was focus of several studies by Terrence Collins on ‘The Physiology of Tears’ (*CBQ*,1971). Further on the subject of

⁴ In Kruger's particularly valuable study on anger, this emotion in Biblical context Kruger likens to a container of heat; anger=heat or redness or fire and steam; but also as a dangerous animal.

physiology and emotions is Smith focuses on the 'innards' of the experience, ('The Heart and Innards in Israelite Emotional Expressions', *JBL*, 1998). While Michael L. Barre (2001) focused on the psychomotor agitation of the emotionally disturbed biblical characters. Terrence Collins' (1971) work on the physiology of tears is invaluable as it links the external and the internal bodily functions of the emotionally disturbed biblical characters. Lately, following the above mentioned works and authors, more extensive work, in form of an unpublished PhD thesis, is Angela Thomas' work on the parts of the body as they reflect emotional condition of an experiencer in the OT context.

6.3. Hebrew Cosmology and the multi-tier heaven and hell

Biblical writer's concept of the world and the cosmos may not be always consistent and in its primitive ancient cosmology certainly not in correlation or comparison with modern scientific perspectives; however many are still eager in interpreting the Bible to 'resolve conflicts between science and the Bible'. As if the Bible's integrity is dependent on its updating with modern science because, "to some people the Bible seems oddly outdated" (Hummel, 1986:166). This may be a futile apologetic endeavor.

What we know from the biblical writers the universe of the ancient Israelites was flat-disc shape with the 'firmament' (Gen 1:6) or a 'dome' (רקיע) over the waters. Even if the primitive cosmology may not always be consistent there are two established and constant aspects of God the creator of 'heaven and earth'. One is the so called 'speech model', God creates by the 'word', He speaks and effectively things come into being (ויאמר אלהים ויהי) (Gen 1:3,5,6,7,8 etc.). The other aspect, complementary to the

‘speech model’, is God the warrior and the ‘struggle model’, whereas God battles the powers of chaos (תהו ובהו) and the ‘deep’ (תהום) as it is indicated in Gen 1:2.⁵ In the Psalms these aspects of creation and the world is presented in several Psalms, as for example in Psalm 33,

By the word (בדבר) of the LORD were the heavens made (עשה),
their starry host by the breath of his mouth (ברוח פיו).

He gathers (כנס כנל) the waters of the sea into jars;
he puts the deep into storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the LORD,
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

For he spoke and it came to be (כי הוּא אמר ויהי);
he commanded, and it stood forth. (Ps 33:6-9).

What interests us more than the details of primitive Israelite cosmology is how the psalmist finds his way in the motion-space pattern reflected in those biblical Hebrew cosmological models as mentioned above. The vertical dimension of motion and space in Hebrew cosmology has an important place, and often it holds its emotive overtones as well as conceptual aspects. There are even indications that there some constructs of a multi-tier heaven and hell.

From the primeval depth (תהום) in Gen 1 it is not only referring to the cosmic abyss in its spatial dimensional association, or simply as the ‘deep waters’. It also gives picture of the primeval condition as that of chaos (תהו ובהו), therefore it is also conceptual in nature; possible mythological aspects of these terms (תהום and תהו ובהו) is not relevant for this discussion.⁶

The psalmist seemingly moves within several layers of the earth. So much so that the Ps 86 speaks of the ‘lowest nether-world’ (שאול תחתיה) (Ps 86:13). Texts like this

⁵ In this model the seas are portrayed as primordial forces of the Sea, the Deep and Death.

⁶ Cf. von Rad, 1972:49.

some interpret and suggest that there must be a multi-tier vertical space; such as hell (nether-world), upper and lower (cf. St. Augustin, *Exposition of the Psalms*). In establishing such multi-tier heaven and earth, some quizing theology and soteriology are being brought forth. It becomes a matter of somewhat obscure holy geography.

Augustine, concludes:

since scripture, which cannot be contradicted, says, 'You have delivered my soul from a deeper hell, we infer that there must be two hells, an upper and a lower, for how could a hell be called deeper unless there is another one higher up? (St. Augustin, *Exposition of the Psalms*, pp.73-98).

St Augustin then goes on explaining the heavenly regions as the abode of angels, and the lower regions, the home of 'flesh and blood' of human abodes. He asks:

Where shall we go when, after death, we depart from this place? Surely to a yet deeper region, below this lower part where we live in the flesh in the time of our mortality. The apostle tells us that the body is a dead thing by reason of sin (Rom 8:10). So if people are dead even here, small wonder that our world, overflowing with dead people, is called a hell. Lower again than this underworld of ours there is another, and to it travel the dead (ib.p.237).

Then St. Augustin brings it to a close by getting through with his argument concluding that 'within hell there is still deeper region':

I have another opinion to put before you. Possibly within hell there is another still deeper region, into which wicked people who have sinned most gravely are pushed, for we cannot say with any certainty whether there may not have been some places in hell where Abraham had not been. It may be, then, that the psalmist who is praying here found himself poised between these two hells, in one of which the souls of the just have found peace (id).

If we now move shortly to the world of NT, we will again encounter some cosmological obscurities. St Paul's holy geography is somewhat similar to St. Augustin's cosmogony. Perhaps the 'third heaven' is a metaphorical number, for the number three was, in the Pauline days, recognized as a number of perfection.⁷ Let us now move towards examining more closely the vertical and horizontal plane.

⁷ In the NT St Paul gives further indication of such primitive beliefs of multi-tier cosmology. He witnesses to have met someone who "I in Christ fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven (τρίτου οὐρανοῦ) -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows" (2Cor 12:2).

6.4. Horizontal and vertical motion

6.4.1. Right and Left

The conceptualization of the horizontal plane of biblical Hebrew motion-space pattern, may not be so graphic and vivid as the vertical one. Yet, in the psalmist's experience it has its relevance, particularly in relation to the right and left orientation.

If in the vertical plane, up is better than down; the stronger and more positive side is that on the right, while the left bears negative connotations.⁸ Generally the right hand-side (or the right hand) is the more favorable side than the left. The right hand carries out actions (cf. Soggin, 1990:101). In literal terms the 'right' can indicate that something or someone is located to the right side (cf. Zec 4:3) or to the south (cf. 1Sam 23:19).

However, Scriptural text and context provides clear indications that between the left (שמאל) and the right (ימין) it is the right that grants safety, security, protection and authority (cf. Ps 16:8). In this the right or the right hand is a conceptual metaphor which more accentuated than physical or geographical positioning. It refers to God's power of creation who created the "north and south" (Ps 89:13), where ימין (right) refers to south.⁹ So, the divine right hand is also a conceptual metaphor of his sovereignty and power (cf. Ps 80:18). In fact, this metaphor of the 'right hand' in the sense of might and power, has been in use from ancient times. As conceptual metaphor it also serves in distinguishing the right from wrong (left?). It is said that the Ninivites were not able to "know their right hand from their left" (Jon 4:11).

⁸ In NT, Mt 25:33 the sheep will be sided on the right while the goats on the left.

⁹ cf. Ps 89:12; Ps 78:26

Security of life against the threats of death is granted at the side of strengths and it is positioned to the right. The psalmist feels secure for he keeps Yahweh always in sight and he is always (תמיד) at his right (ימינך).

I have set the LORD always before me;
surely He is at my right hand (מימיני),
I shall not be moved (מוט) (Ps 16:8) (JPS).

In his utter desperation for his life Job cannot find God neither on his left or his right (cf. Jb 23:9). The right side is also the side of authority and honour. In the Messianic Psalm 110 the messianic figure will be set on the right side of Yahweh,

The LORD says to my lord:
"Sit at my right hand (שב לימיני),
till I make your enemies your footstool (Ps 110:1) (RSV).

Thus, in the horizontal plane of Hebrew cosmology, moving or positioning on the right side one find life's security.

6.4.2. Vertical Motion and Posture

In our general discussion (cf. Motion and Space) we dealt with issues of orientation metaphors and the way it relates to concepts and conceptualization. In reference to vertical spatial orientation and its polar opposites of (down-up), it has been observed that the erect posture is the 'canonical position of human beings' (cf. Verticality and Horizontality). It also purports that vertical posture of humans (up, upright, standing up) is rudimentary to living, while the downward motion and posture (lying down, sleep) is a disposition of a weakening of life's forces and momentum. Conferred as conceptual metaphors of downward motion or falling, often associate with weakness, ailment or death and dying; while the upward posture or upward motion is

ascribed to vigour, good health and well-being. Thus one *rises* from death to life, while in its polar opposite one *drops* dead or going down to the grave (Sheol, Pit etc.).

Following these discussions on the vertical scale movements that in the context of the Psalter and the psalmist's experiences we note two basic propositions. One is that in the psalmist's conceptualization the position of life is to be UP while death and dying is DOWN and downward motion. Secondly, motion along this fictive and conceptual vertical plane, the psalmist's experience is accompanied by his emotive or emotional reactions.¹⁰

As for the verbal representation along the vertical plane, such motion is regarded as directed motion (up-down), to differentiate it from the manner of motion which is, as we shall see in the forthcoming pages, far more diversified. Since we already covered vertical motion to some degree in our general discussion (see: Verticality and Horizontality and Motion and Space) it will now be necessary to tackle some more notable and important Hebrew motion verbs and observe how these relate to the psalmist's personal experience.

6.4.2.1. Going down (ירד) and fall (נפל).

The verbal root ירד, with its variants, appears in the Psalter over 50 times, most commonly in the context of 'going down' into the realm of death. It is going down to Sheol (Ps 55:16), the Pit (Ps 28:1; 88:4; 143:7), the grave (Ps 49:15) or the dust (Ps 22:30). The silence is yet another dimension of death that the psalmist fears to tread (Ps 115:17).

¹⁰ See previous discussions over the distinction between the 'emotive' and 'emotional'.

Most often this is all permeated with intense emotional expressions; not rarely with imprecatory overtones. The psalmist wishes his enemies or the evildoers “go down (ירד) straight to the grave” (ישרים לבקר) (Ps 49:15); and when they do ‘go down’, their wealth will not ‘go down’ after them (Ps 49:18). As we will shortly discuss the verbal root נפל (fall), the psalmist prays that: “death come upon them (נשא)” and “let them go down to Sheol alive” (ירדו שאול חיים) (Ps 55:16).¹¹ Here, Dahood well notes about that characteristic change from the singular subject (cf. Ps 55:13-15) to the plural, “death come upon them”.¹²

Downward motion, in reference to death, is characterised by the verb נפל (to fall); though with some variance to the verb ירד (going down). Alongside the imprecatory overtones in the psalmist’s craving for his enemies to die, with נפל, we find literary tool, sometimes referred to as ‘precative perfect’ (perhaps to be read as jussive) which intensifies the whole scenery. The psalmist prays (precation) that his enemies all fall (נפל) into the net (Ps 141:10) or the pit (Ps 57:7).¹³ Death preying upon the psalmist and mortal danger, this whole experience is highly emotionally charged. His heart pounds (חיל or חול) as the anguish of death threatens him.

My heart is in anguish within me,
the terrors of death have fallen upon me (Ps 55:5)
(לבי יחיל בקרבי ואימות מות נפלו עלי).

Although his enemies dug a pit for him to fall in, it is them who actually have fallen into it themselves.

¹¹ Cf. Ps 52:7; they are to be uprooted (שרש) from the land of their living.

¹² Cf. Dahood, II:34.

¹³ On the aspects of the precative perfect see: Waltke/O’Connor: 8.4a and 36n34, also: Dahood, II:53-54. Grammatically, somewhat similar in explanation is Jouon’s *perfectum confidentiae*, that is the action which is durative but also considered at its first moment (cf. Jouon:par.112fN).

Yet, we ought to note that the going down (ירד) is not only and always associated with descending to death and the grave. It also signify theophanic descent of YHWH in his sovereignty when He “bowed the heavens, and came down” (יט שמים וירד) (Ps 18:9).

6.4.2.2. Being high (רום) and arise (קום).

Primary literary context for both רום (be high) and קום (arise) converges either on YHWH being exalted (רום) or being invigorated in his mighty salvific acts (קום). The whole disposition of moving up (or down) ought to be viewed in the context of the established perception that a vertical posture of the human being is a canonical posture implying well-being, health and life.¹⁴ In such vertical and upward motion YHWH is a key player. Hence, the psalmist in Ps 21:14 invites YHWH to arise in his power and intervene:

Be exalted (רומה), O LORD in thy strength (בעזך)!
We will sing and praise thy power (Ps 21:14).

YHWH's exaltation (רום) is not only a matter of his supremacy or transcendence, there is clearly his salvific intervention involved. While the exaltation of humans ultimately may prove to be a matter of arrogance, the supremacy of YHWH's exaltation serves to intervention and deliverance of the 'lowly':

For though the LORD is high (כי־רם יהוה),
he regards the lowly;
but the haughty he knows (ידע) from afar (Ps 138:6)

Here on the nuances of *yada* (to know) and *yasar* (to discipline) Rashi comments that YHWH will in fact discipline the haughty (cf. Gruber, 2007:730).¹⁵ Likewise, Terrien

¹⁴ See here: Up is Good, Down is Bad (cf. 2.6.2.)

¹⁵ Cf. De 8:5

comments that the divine deliverance actually “prefigures salvation in the totality of its sweep from terrestrial existence to eternal life”(Terrien:870). Though this may sound somewhat farfetched conclusion; in the overall context of the psalm there is a strong nuance of the eternal salvation of the psalmist, beyond momentary terrestrial deliverance.

These mighty salvific acts of YHWH, are represented by the vertical motion episodes and activities. In Ps 118:16 we find these vertical motions accompanied by the horizontal plane anthropomorphism. While YHWH is exalted (רוממה) up on high, his right hand (ימין) “does valiantly”. Hence,

the right hand of the LORD is exalted (רוממה),
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly (חיל)(!) (Ps 118:16)

(ימין יהוה רוממה ימין יהוה עשה חיל)

It is noteworthy, in this section, how the vertical and horizontal plane interact. It is the threefold repetition of ימין יהוה (“the right hand of the Lord”) (vss. 15-16), which reflect the threefold repetition of בשם יהוה “in the name of the Lord” in vss.10-12. The psalmist was brought face to face with death (118:5-6); being spared, by the intervention of the might “right hand of the Lord”, he triumphantly and confidently cries out:

I shall not die, but live (לא אמות כי־אחיה)
and recount the deeds of the Lord

The LORD has chastened me sorely,
but he has not given me over to death
(יסר יסרני יה ולמות לא נתנני) (118:17-18)

When the psalmist is faint-hearted it is God who hears his cry and raise him up (רום) to the solid ground. Even if the psalmist’s prayer for help comes “from the end of the earth” (מקצה הארץ) (cf. Ps 61:3). There are suggestions that the phrase ‘end of the

earth' refers to the brink of death, or the very treshold of the 'nether world'. It has been suggested with some certitude that the word ארץ in some OT contexts carries the nuance of the underworld and consequently the brink of death.¹⁶ Although such alternative interpretation of ארץ has been around for quite some time, it does not seem to be adequately taken in account. One posible evidence for such interpretation is the text from 1Sam 28:13 where the medium of Endor passes a message to Saul, where the medium comes up from the earth (מִן־הָאָרֶץ), i.e. the underworld.¹⁷

With the verb (קום) verticality and horizontality continue to play an important role, including all its emotive or theological nuances. In the Psalter the verb confers three aspects. One is in respect of the psalmist's cry for God's decisive action to come to his help, expressed in the imperatival mood (קומה). The other is in reference to God's sovereignty and his judgmental capacity. The third aspect concerns the rising up from the dead (ressurrection).

In mortal dangers the psalmist cry for help and deliverence.

Arise, O LORD! Deliver me (קומה יהוה הושיני) (Ps 3:8)

and again in imperatival mood:

Rise up (קומה) come to our help (עזרתה לנו) (Ps 44:27).¹⁸

These invocations employ double grammatical tool: *paragogic heh* and *precativ perfect*. The *paragogic heh* (קומה) in its imperatival mood ('Arise!') is used as emphatic augmentation, and the final *heh* bears a honorific tone in addressing God ('O, Lord').¹⁹

The other structural tool is the psalmist's precativ employing the so called 'precativ

¹⁶ Cf. Holladay,1969:123-124; Dahood,I:106; Koehler&Baumgartner,1958:705.

¹⁷ "a godlike being coming up out of the earth" (1Sam 28:13).

¹⁸ "Draw near to me, redeem me" (Ps 69:19). Cf. Ps 7:7; 9:20; 10:12; 17:13 etc.

¹⁹ Dahood refers to this form as 'energetic imperative' (cf. Dahood,I:58). Cf. Jouon,par.48d (p.143).

perfect'.²⁰ Dahood well points out that the “imperative *qumah* semantically and structurally balances precative perfect” (Dahood, I:59).

Secondly, the verb (קום), apart from rising to help, refers to arising of YHWH in taking his position in the affairs of this world. Even when rising in judgmental sovereignty it is not simply to establish His divine judgment. In essence His theophanic acts are salvific in nature: “when God arose to establish judgment (בקום־למשפת) to save all the oppressed of the earth” (להושיע כל־ענוי־ארץ) (Ps 76:10).

Last but not least, vertical motion with the verb קום indicate rising up from the dead, the resurrection. While looking at קום as ‘ressurrection’, we ought to be mindful of context analysis as well as situational contexts of קום. While traditional semantic-lexicon oriented approach tend towards precise lexicographical definitions of a word, the verb קום (as resurrection) is a good example where situational context as well as associative field of a word is important to be aware of. In this John Sawyer’s discussion on the ‘Hebrew Words of Resurrection of the Dead’ addresses the issues of biblical semantics and the importance of the situational context and what he calls an ‘associative field’ of a word. For Sawyer, “An ‘associative field’ would include all the words associated in any way with a particular term” (Sawyer, 1973:30).²¹ It seems that רום (be high) and קום (rise) clearly belong to such ‘associative field’ and in many ways they appear in very similar situational contexts of the psalmist.

We find an example of such situational in Ps 73 where even though there are no vertical motion verbs present, it clearly exhibits the psalmist’s emotive experience of

²⁰ Cf. Dahood, I:20

²¹ Cf. Sawyer, 1973

being 'up' in heavenly divine residence with his God (Ps 73:23-25), when the psalmist says "when I am with you" (עמך) (73:25) I have no delight (חפץ) in earth.

As for the resurrection and arising up (קום) from the realm of death, there are textual indications that those who have gone down (ירד) to the netherworld (death) do not rise קום and come up again. In his emotive mood, the psalmist poses a rhetorical question: "do the shades rise up (אם־רפאים יקומו)?" (Ps 88:11) alluding to the rising of the dead for those who have gone down (ירד). But, he seems to deny this rising up, resurrection, only to the wicked. He appeals that the arrogant should not rise again: "Let them be cast into pits, no more to arise (בל־יקומו)" (Ps 140:11).²² The evildoers will fall and die and "not be able to rise" (ולא־יכלו קום) (Ps 36:13).²³ Similarly, Isaiah pronounces all the enemies of Israel and of YHWH are dead and will not rise again,

They are dead, they will not live; they are shades, they will not arise (בל־יקומו); to that end thou hast visited them with destruction and wiped out all remembrance of them (Isa 26:14).

The whole issue of resurrection of those who have gone down (died) and then rising from the dead is introduced in the Scriptural texts, but followed and accentuated in rabbinic debates where resurrection of the dead is clearly advocated.²⁴ Sawyer also well points out, that we ought to be paying attention to historical contexts and periods to be able to establish linguistic criteria on that issue.²⁵

Both of these terms of vertical motion (רום and קום) in their situational and associative contexts suggest motion from death to life or to well-being.

²² Or: "May they have no resurrection" (cf. Dahood, III:305).

²³ Cf. Ps 1:5

²⁴ Cf. Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin: 90b

²⁵ Cf. Sawyer, 1973:218-219

We now want to look more into motion-emotion axis, and those Hebrew motion terms, which in their linguistic environment and situational contexts, connect to and display emotional reactions or emotive moods of the psalmist.

6.5. Hebrew Motion and Emotion

Particularly great repository of motional vocabulary pertinent to death language is the manner of motion verb group. It has been classified here in four subgroups of motion verbs:

- (i) verbs of haste (ברח, בהל, חוש, חפז, מהר, נוס, עוף, רויץ).
- (ii) verbs of surrounding and following (אסף, כתר, נקף, סבב, רדף, נשג).
- (iii) verbs of stumbling and wandering (דחי, כשל, חול, מוט, נדד, נוע, צלע, רוד).²⁶
- (iv) verbs of throwing and falling (טול, זנה, רמס, שוח, שלח, שלך).

6.5.1. Haste and Hurry

The verbs of haste and hurry are especially prominent in the psalter's emotional make up. These signify running away from enemies which chase the faithful, such as David in his running away (ברח) from Saul (בברחו מפני־שאול) (Ps 57:1) or denote the psalmist's prayer and a plea for a speedy divine help from the terror of death (cf. Ps 6:3, 104:29). In the motion-emotion pair this manner of motion is notable in circumstantial events of either running *away* or of pleading for help and a haste of calling *in*: "I am driven (חפז) far from thy sight" (Ps 31:23), or calling in, "Hurry (חוש) to help me, O Lord" (Ps 38:23), or, "Make haste (מהר) to answer me" (Ps 69:18). Both

²⁶ Morphological variants: דחה (of דחי), נודד (of נדד).

situations prove to be emotionally salient. In the haste and a need for help two verbs (מהר, חוש) are notably present.²⁷

I am poor and needy;
hasten to me (חוש־לי), O God!
Thou art my help and my deliverer;
O LORD, do not tarry! (Ps 70:6).

His running away may be from the enemy or from an unpleasant situation as in Absalom's flight for his life (cf. 2Sam 13:34, ברה). Or as in Jonah's flight from God, „he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD“ (מלפני יהוה הוא ברה) (Jon 1:10). The urgency of escape and its emotional charge is often presented by the familiar intensive grammatical constructions. It is accentuated by the familiar construction of the same verb in a grammatical collocation of: infinitive absolute followed by imperfect. As in Job 27:22 where a wicked will have to flee from God's anger:

This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage which oppressors receive from the Almighty. It hurls at him without pity; he flees from its power in head long flight (ברוה יברה) (Job 27:13, 22).

In the urgency of mortal dangers and fleeing away is grammatical construction the so called *dativus ethicus*. Jacob fleeing away from his brother Esau, he was advised to „flee at once“ (ברה־לך) (Gen 27:43), and so was David running away from Saul for his life.²⁸

Hurry as an emotion. The motion verb חוש in the Psalms in most cases practically becomes an emotion word. In mortal danger as shown in the Psalms the urgency for help often comes with the verb חוש. In all but two cases (Pss 18:35 and 141:1), it

²⁷ Cf. Also the verb (ברה) in the situations of running away from (mortal) danger.

²⁸ The same verb is being used in the Hagar's fleeing away from her mistress Sarai (Gen 16:8). In mortal danger David was fleeing away from the king Saul; „David fled and escaped“ (ודוד ברה וימלט) (1Sam 19:18).

appears with the noun עזרה (help) and the verb נצל (to be delivered). In Ps 38:23 it is: “Make haste to help me”(JPS) (חושׁה לעזרתִי) and in Ps 70:2: “O God, deliver me, O LORD, to help me, make haste”(JPS) (אלהים להצילני יהוה לעזרתִי חושׁה). In such circumstances grammatical conventions and constructions distinctly come to light. Firstly, it is the use of vocative+imperative collocations, such as: “O God deliver me”(Ps 70). In this, the imperatival form almost invariably come augmented with paragogic *he* (חושׁה), adding to honorific tone of the psalmist’s addressing God. Similar use of paragogic *he* as for example in Ps 69:19 “Draw near to me, redeem me”(קרבה אל־נפשי גאלה) we find in majority of cases in the Psalter within such contexts.²⁹

In addition to the vocative+imperative collocations followed by the paragogic *he*, another grammatical augmentation in situations of distress is the use of the so called ‘double-duty preposition’. For example, it is the repetition of the preposition ל, as above in Ps 70: “to deliver me” (להצילני) and “to help me” (לעזרתִי).³⁰

The verb חושׁ, outside the Psalter, as in Job 20:2 shows an emotional turbulence. For Job it all boils within him: „my thoughts answer me, because of my haste within me (חושִי בי)“ (Job 20:2). It is now commonly reckoned that חושׁ though a motion verb is clearly also refering to emotion (cf. Clines,1989:473).³¹

Days flee away. Job will note that his days „flee away (ברח) and see no good“ (Job 9:25), in fact they fly away so fast, faster than a swift runner (רוץ) (9:25a). This is emotionally intense context of the mortal fear, and God is being so distant that Job

²⁹ On the endings with the paragogic *he* see Jouon, par.48d (Jouon,p.143).

³⁰ Cf.Dahood,I:201,237

³¹ Clines translates this as „because of the feeling within me“, Clines then comments: “it is still an open question whether it means ‘feel painful’ (Clines, 1989:471). In Eccl 2:25 an obvious sense is ‘feel joyful’” (Clines, 1989:473 FN).

leaves out any more personal encounter with God, in his monologue (cf. Clines: 239). Apart from the speedy fleeing away from danger in haste (ברח), in the motion-emotion vocabulary impeached with emotion there is also verb בהל (= haste in terror or from terror) which fascinates in its motional and emotional capacity. In some textual instances this reflects physical illness as well as spiritual travail. Evident is this double use of the same verb (בהל) and in the context it is evident that the psalmist's bones (body) and the soul (inner being) are deeply disturbed.³²

Have pity on me, LORD, for I am weak;
heal me, LORD, for my bones are trembling (בהל).
In utter terror (בהל) is my soul and you, LORD, how long...?" (Ps 6:3-4) (NAB).

The verb seems to primarily refer to terror of a supernatural nature and source.³³

There are also nominal forms of the verb the בהלה (= sudden terror) which respectively refer to a swift end. In Psalm 78 it is Yahweh's anger turning against his own, but faithless people that stormed down in בהל.

He ended their days as a breath,
and their years in terror
(ויכל בהבל ימיהם ושונותם בבהלה) (Ps 78:33) (JPS).

The context of the first part of the Psalm (78:9-20), and here the use of the verb (בהל), is even more dramatic when considering the God's mercies granting requests and desires with no gratitude.³⁴ The same motion-emotion verb for the psalmist also signifies the fear of death and its terror when being abandoned by God: "When you hid your face I was struck with terror" (הסתרת פניך הייתי נבהל) (Ps 30:8 (7) (NAB)).³⁵

³² Cf. Craigie, 1983:92-93.

³³ Most of the biblical appearances is in niph'al (24x), chiefly referring to a state caused by a threat (cf. TDOT, vol. II:3-5).

³⁴ Cf. Weiser, 1962:541.

³⁵ Cf. Ps 90:7; 104:29.

6.5.2. Surrounding and following.

Psalm 18 describes David in his fearful danger after being persecuted by king Saul. His cry for help (אקרא יהוה) begins in vv.5-6 followed by a series of expressions vividly describing the way he feels.

It is the 'cords of death' (חבלי־מות), the 'floods of Belial' (נחל בליעל), the 'cords of Sheol' (חבל שאול) and finally the 'snares of death' (מוקשי מות). In this couple of verses the nature of his experience and his mortal fear is underlined by two synonymous motion verbs אפך and סבב, with the meaning of 'going around' (surround) (cf. אופך a wheel).³⁶

The cords of death encompassed (אפך) me,
the torrents of perdition assailed me,
the cords of Sheol entangled me (סבב),
the snares of death confronted me (Ps 18: 5)(RSV).

Both of these verbs are the double ayin verbs and most frequently appear in situations of mortal danger and high emotional and thanatophobic charge of the experiencer (see here: 'Grammar of emotion'). And while in Ps 18 it is the cords of Sheol that bind him in Ps 22:13 it is many bulls that surround him (סבב). In Johna's prayer from the bottom of the sea, it is the waters that encompass him (אפך) but also the sea grass (סוף) that wrap around (סבב) his head. All of this situation fundamentally describes a near death experience.

Death danger is not only encompassing the psalmist, but it also goes after him, following him (רדף). Mostly it is in the form of his enemies pursuing him (cf. Pss 7;31;35;69, etc). Such pursuing is often aimed towards the poor and the needy by the

³⁶ A nominal form אפך meaning proper time, circumstance (cf. Prov 25:11) and אפונה in the phrase of Ps

godless and the creditors (גשה cf. 109:11) and ceases only after the death takes its toll.

The psalmist's pursuer,

Did not remember to show kindness,
but pursued the poor and needy (יִרְדֹּף אִישׁ־עֲנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)
and the broken hearted (וְנִכְאָה לִבָּב) to their death (Ps 109:16)(RSV).

It is noteworthy here that the verb רדף (go after, follow, pursue) is almost exclusively used in a negative context of persecution or following after a prey. However, in Psalm 23:6 it is God's goodness and mercy that will follow רדף up the psalmist "all the days" of his life.

6.5.3. Stumbling, Wandering and Trembling

Several verbs of wandering, morphologically centre around the extraordinary selection of double ayin or ayin waw verbs (רוד, נוד, נדה, דדה) most of which in a variety of situations in BH texts adhere to motion-emotion axis.³⁷ In Psalm 55 v.3b for the expression: „I am overcome by my trouble (אֲרִיד בְּשִׂיחִי)“ (RSV) or with NAB „I rock (רוד) with grief“(NAB), from the root רוד, wander restlessly, which can also follow the roots: נוד or נדה. It may also be translated here as: „I am wandering around in my grief“ (cf. Barre, M.L. 2001:177f.).³⁸

Wandering around. There is also the root דדה (= move slowly) that belongs to the same group of motion-emotion verbal axis. Though in some textual appearances of this verbal root there may be some textual corruptions (cf. Barre,2001 :185).

³⁷ More attention to the use and significance of this Hebrew verb groups will be given in the forthcoming pages.

³⁸ An interesting proposal comes from Michael Barre and John Kselman connecting the root רוד (wander restlessly) with ירד (going down), cf. M.L. Barre & J.S. Kselman 'Psalm 55: problems and proposals', (CBQ 60 1998:445).

Another example of the considered verbal root (דדה) which emphasize motion and emotion is the king Hezekiah of Judah (Is 38) in his desperation. As he got seriously and terminally ill (חלה חזק) in his soliloquious thoughts, over the remaining years of his life, prays:

What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me,
and Himself hath done it;
I shall go softly (אדדה)
all my years for the bitterness of my soul (Is 38:15).

This no doubt expresses his forthcoming days or years in depression and wandering around in agitation of bitterness, waiting for death to come. Similarly, to the root (רוד), in Isaiah 58 the prophet addresses Israel's misunderstanding of devotion and warns against their hypocritical piety, as opposed to a sincere devotion. Amongst other things, the prophet instructs for the genuine piety to „bring the homeless poor (עניים מרודים) into your house“ (Is 58:7). Here, the מרודים comes from the root רוד and refers to the homeless who aimlessly wander around.³⁹ Wandering around aimlessly is a portrayal of a depressed (or scared) person that manifests itself as 'psychomotor agitation' i.e. repetitive locomotion.⁴⁰

Stumbling. As for the stumbling or the palpitating motion there is grammatically and syntactically intriguing fairly polysemous verb of movement חול (חיל). Its polysemy is expressed in meanings such as: 'travail', 'fear', 'dance' or 'whirl'. It often describes a woman in anguish of birth pains (cf. Ps 48:7), but also a palpitating restless heart of the

³⁹ There are some alternative interpretations of this text (cf. Delitzsch, Isaiah). Delitzsch (KD, Isaiah, vol.7:389) assumes that the רוד refers to the homeless as those who are expelled from their homes; coming from the secondary form of .

⁴⁰ Cf. Barre, 2001:177f.

sufferer. In death terrors and the anguish of the psalmist, it is described by this verb as:

My heart pounds (חולל) within me;
death's terrors (אימה מות) fall upon me.
Fear and trembling overwhelm me;
shuddering sweeps over me (Ps 55:5-6) (RSV).

Staggering and trembling

Staggering (מוט), with other synonymous verbs (כשל, נוע, צלע) is another motion verbal form adjacent to thanatophobic experiences and fears.⁴¹ There were times when the psalmist was fairly close to the netherworld, his feet were on the verge of slipping and in his inward struggles he (his soul) travelled the way of death. In mortal dangers, in Psalm 94 (v.16) the psalmist asks (in retrospect) a rhetorical question „who will stand up for me“ (מי־יקום לי) against those who seek his life. But in his prayerful encounter with God he recalls that Yhwh always held him up. His foot was staggering or slipping (מוט), with Dahood we can agree that the poet is referring here to „sinking into the netherworld“ (Dahood, PSSII:350).⁴² The psalmist concludes that him (his soul) would have taken his permanent abode in the grave (i.e. the land of silence) should it not be for God's help. In fact, he has thought that he has already fallen,

If the LORD had not been my help,
my soul would soon have dwelt in the land of silence.
When I thought, "My foot slips," (מוט)
thy steadfast love, O LORD, held me up (Ps 94:17-18) (RSV).

⁴¹ כשל (stumble, weaken): "my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails (כשל) because of my misery, and my bones waste away." (Ps 31:11).

⁴² On the basis of Ps 66:9, Dahood here insists that *mot* and *matah* are poetic names for Sheol (id.).

Another example of the tottering psalmist reaching the edge of falling is Psalm 38, one of the seven penitential psalms. There is this 'thematic trilogy' of (sickness, sin, enemy), and the 'limping' psalmist (cf. Gen 32:32) is brought to the edge of falling. He is in a dire condition, right at the death gates: „I am ready to fall (צלע), and my pain is ever with me (Ps 38:18) (RSV). He is in deeply depressive mood „stooped and deeply bowed“ and walking around like mourning (קדר הלכתי) (38:7) (see here: 'Psalmist and his emotion'). This motif of mortal danger and the feeling of abandonment from God and illness, as a result of one's sin is ubiquitous to OT. Furthermore this was also an "unexcelled opportunity to the psalmist's enemies, ever eager to slander, to speculate on the nature of his guilt" (Dahood, PS I:234).⁴³

6.5.4. Falling and Throwing

Being cast off (זנה) or thrown away (שלך) often designates mortal threat by being sent away from God's presence or favour. Without God's favour, the psalmist is consigned to draw near to Sheol, where his bed seems to be ready (cf. Ps 88:4-6). That is why he asks:

O LORD, why dost thou cast (זנה) me off?
 Why dost thou hide thy face from me?
 Afflicted and close to death from my youth up,
 I suffer thy terrors; I am helpless (Ps 88:15-16) (RSV).

On the other hand, quite differently from the psalmist, in his desperation Job is almost cynically looking forward to this death-bed. For him death ceases to be an enemy. For Job it meant peace and rest, or rest-in-peace. As it was promised to

⁴³ „The poet of Psalm 38 was a victim of both ill health and social ostracism. A fervent believer in Yahweh, he felt that he had incited the wrath of his dearest and supreme friends. Like many sufferers (cf. Psalm 6; 22; 35), he uses traditional formulas of self-condemnation similar to those of Jeremiah (Ps 38:2; cf. Ps 6:2; Jer 10:24). The imagery of walking like a mourner (Ps 38:7) is expressed by the rare word that appears three times in Jeremiah (4.28; 8:21; 14.2)“ (Terrien, 2003:327-328).

Abraham that he will eventually „go to your fathers in peace (בשלוים); you shall be buried in a good old age“ (Gen 15:15). However, it would be wrong to read in these that death is a friend. For Job it was only an escape from the suffering which was a greater evil than being dead and at rest. In that sense „death is preferable than disgrace“ (cf. Daube,1962). There are several biblical evidences where honorable death is preferred to dishonorable life (Abimelech, Saul).⁴⁴ This however, we hardly find in the Psalter, perhaps apart from the few self-imprecatory psalms, where the psalmist calls upon death rather than continuing dishonorable life. Although even this seem to be more for the sake of the argument (professing his innocence) rather than being a particularly heroic death wish. This is evident in the psalmist's resentment over his terminal fate expressed in the selfimprecatory psalms, it only sounds as if he is volunteering to be trampled down (רמס) to death. (cf. Ps 7:6).

6.6. Grammar of Death

Some grammatical observations to motional Hebrew verb groups, and syntactical forms, are also necessary. Some of these examinations relevant to our subject matter add to the emotional dynamics and salience. Philip King (2012) gives some useful insights into semantic and syntactic schemes of some of these verbal groups, relative to emotional experiences, particularly distress.⁴⁵ In the emotive distress and its grammar, King examines several roots of double-ayin verbs.

⁴⁴ Cf. Jdg 9:53-54; 1Sam 31:4.

⁴⁵ P. King (2012), *Surrounded by bitterness:Image Schemas and Metaphors for Conceptualizing Distress in Classical Hebrew*.

6.6.1. Ayin Waw and Double Ayin Verbs

In relation to motion-emotion dynamics, some verb groups take more important role and deserve an extra attention. For example *ayin-waw* (middle waw) and *ayin-yod* (middle yod) verbal groups seem to be particularly affiant in the emotional-motional vocabulary pairs. Notably, more than one third of motion-emotion verbal pairs belong to either of these two verbal groups. (cf. Appendix. Tables of verbs: 'Hebrew motion verbs and Hebrew cognition and emotion').⁴⁶ Verb groups with the repetition of its second radical actually reflect and signify repetition and continuance of action with intensification, often followed by the emotive intensity; particularly so in the manner of motion aspects.⁴⁷ For example, in the motional realm of horizontal (בוא, שוב, סור, סוג) and vertical movements (רום, קום) or posture (שית, עוה, דלל, שים), a distribution and relative representation of the manner of motion verbs makes the whole thing even more evident.

This further includes the motional manner subgroups of stumbling and staggering (שוה, רוד, נוע, גוד, נדד, מוט, חול, סבב, רוץ, עוף, חוש נוס, רוץ, סבב, חול, מוט, נדד, גוד, נוע, רוד, שוה). Verbs of surrounding are almost exclusively belong to double ayin verbal group (סבב, אפף). The cognitive-emotive verbs and its representation are also evident in reference to these verbal groups. For example, weakness and weariness in grammatical verbal terms is notably, and almost undividedly verbalized via ayin-yod (or ayin-waw) verbal groups (, צרר, פוג ,

⁴⁶ Also, the Ayin Yod group verb roots frequently alternate with the ayin-waw verbs.

⁴⁷ In Waltke/O'Connor, par.35.3.2b-c. Waltke/O'Connor it is discussed about the meaning and the role of the constructions of the two consecutive infinitives expressing continuance, continuous action, or repetition of action (see the above).

שוע (נוח, שיח, הום, פון עיף, דקק, דכך אטט עוף, חול שוע)⁴⁸ In distress and semantically significant is the root צרר (be narrow, distressed).⁴⁹ It was already noted that these verbs happen to have a particular place and a considerable role in the motion-emotion verbal pairs. It ought to be examined or give some indications what causes these grammatical occurrences.⁵⁰

6.6.2. Double Ayin Verbs

Double ayin verbs are verbs with two root equal consonants in the second and third radical position, eg. סבב, אפף. Apparently these verbs seem to be originally bilateral, becoming triradical by a repetition of the second radical. Emil Kautzsch provides a detail discussion on these grammatical developments between the trilateral and bilateral Hebrew verbs (cf. GK: par.67a). A correspondence and synonymy between the ayin-waw and ayin-yod verbs (eg. חול, חיל) have been noted.⁵¹ What is noteworthy is how a considerable number of double-ayin motion verbs also pertain its role in cognitive and emotive dimension. The familiar double-ayin motion verb of surrounding סבב in Ecclesiastes acquire decidedly cognitive dimension. Qoheleth ('the preacher'), for example, toils in investigating events, asking himself questions what is

⁴⁸ There are also suggestions that in places possible scribal errors might have occurred confusing a double ayin and ayin waw verbs. M.L.Barre indicate such a possibility with the root nwd and ndd (Barre:181:n.25). However, in this particular case semantically there is little difference between the two roots. There might be similar situation with the roots hwl and hyl.

⁴⁹ In lexicons the root צרר have several homonymous meanings, yet most of these occupy one fundamental semantic field, in the sense of: 'enmity', 'hostility', even 'war' or 'rivalry'. Cf. Koehler & Baumgartner:799f., 818.

⁵⁰ Extensive discussions on grammatical, syntactic and stylistic attributes of both verb groups can be found in Kautzsch and Jouon. Kautzsch: GK, par.67 (Double Ayin); par.72 (Ayin Waw verbs) and Jouon: par. 80r (on middle Waw as action verbs) and par. 82a (on three states of), then par. 82d (on stative and active aspects of Ayin-Ayin verbs).

⁵¹ Kautzsch, with other scholars contends this to be development from bilateral roots (cf. Kautzsch in GK, 73a n1).

good. The intensity of this searching is in 'turning things around' (סבב) to find out solutions (cf. Leupold, 1952:172f.),

I turned my mind (סבב) to know and to search (תור) out and to seek wisdom and the sum of things, and to know the wickedness of folly and the foolishness which is madness (Ecc 7:25)⁵²

The variants of the root דכה (to crush) (דק, דקק, דקה, דוך, דכא, דוכ) is fascinating example of the linguistic and morphological metamorphosis of Double Ayin verbs in its motion-emotion capacity.⁵³ All of the variant forms belong to the same semantic field, i.e. with the meanings of: 'crush', 'oppress', 'break', 'pulverize'. Their use and literary contexts are unmistakably with emotional overtones, eg.

Have regard for thy covenant;
for the dark places of the land (מהשכי־ארץ) are full of the habitations of violence.
Let not the downtrodden (דך) be put to shame;
let the poor and needy praise thy name (Ps 74:20) (RSV).

Here the “dark places of the land” (מהשכי־ארץ) signify either wholesome national corruption, the wicked of his own people or threats from the heathen. Either way, it is where the poor and the needy are oppressed (cf.v.19). It does resound the similar wording in Is 29:15: “Woe to those who hide deep (במהשך מעשיהם) from the LORD their counsel”. The crushed in the spirit, the dispirited, in the phrase דכאי־רוח is nominal form of the verb דכא (Ps 34). But the “LORD is close to the brokenhearted, saves those whose spirit is crushed” (Ps 34:19).⁵⁴ It is the nearness of God as a living experience

⁵² On double ayin verbs we find an extensive discussion in Jouon, par.82. It is regarded that there are three states of the double ayin verbs (long, normal and reduced). See the discussion in Jouon par 82; esp. 82a on the *normal* and *reduced* state of the double ayin verbs, with an apt example of the verb 'sbb' (= surround), which is also highly relevant to the motional-emotional lexicon.

⁵³ *dqq* (cf.KB.216) 'being small', 'crush to pieces' (cf. De 9:21: „grinding it very small until it was fine as dust“

(עד אשר־דק לעפר). Also *dwk* (cf.BDB:188) 'beat', 'pound' (cf.Nu 11:8 „beat it into mortar“ (דכו במדכה). There are however also forms, like *dkh* or *dka* which are derivative from the basic double ayin roots. H.F.Fuhs provides a useful discussion on different variant forms of the root *dk* in TDOT (III:195-208).

⁵⁴ קרוב יהוה לנשברי לב ואת דכאי רוח יושיע

towards those who are downtrodden and suffering. Though some suggest that suffering is almost an essential part of the righteous. In a way in opposition to somewhat utopist reckonings of Psalm 37 (see here: 'Mundus inversus' and 'Topsy turvy world')

I have been young, and now am old;
yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken
or his children begging bread (Ps 37:25).

or

But the meek shall possess the land,
and delight themselves in abundant prosperity (Ps 37:11).

The psalmist here expresses his feelings and experience which goes beyond the cult, attesting that the communion with God cannot be limited only to the cultic formats.⁵⁵ The divine presence clearly goes beyond that:

The true happiness of a godly life consists in the nearness of God and in the living experience of his help and not in being spared suffering and affliction..Only he who is brokenhearted and crushed in spirit will experience what nearness of God and his help can really come to mean (cf.Weiser:299).

And that is most certainly not simply limited by the liturgical spectacle. Indeed the concept of holiness is more than sacredness and separateness. It is somewhat in revolutionary manner when the crushed psalmist proceeds and proclaims: "were I to give a burnt offering, thou wouldst not be pleased"? On the contrary he concludes:

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite (דכה) heart,
O God, Thou wilt not despise (Ps 51:19).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Cf. Ps 73:17,23.

⁵⁶ On the other hand, pondering over the hiddenness of God, Kraus seemingly wishes to highlight the divine transcendence in the Psalter, referring to commentaries of von Rad and Barth. However, and at times, some of these explications may be somewhat questionable. Of course, with due regard and with no single doubt to the mentioned authorities, here are some quotes, which Kraus no doubt found crucial for the problems of the divine transcendence, as he wishes to present in the Psalter: re.hiddenness of God, the truism that there is abundantly familiar fact that God is hidden, but "precisely where he reveals himself, where he personally encounters a man, conceals himself from the man in that very act. In his

Using very similar psalmodic phraseology prophet Isaiah, clearly showing that Yahweh's loftiness is by no means cultic entrapped (Isa 57). His transcendence most certainly does cloister Him from his immanence. Isaiah twice uses the verbal root דכא.

thus says he who is high and exalted,
living eternally, whose name is the Holy One:
On high dwell, and in holiness,
and with the crushed (וְאֵת־דָּכָא) and dejected in spirit,
to revive the spirits of the dejected (רוּחַ שְׁפִיל),
to revive the hearts of the crushed (לֵב דָּכָא) (Isa 57:15).⁵⁷

The דכא root and its derivatives (see above) most often apply to people, and relevant to the motion-emotion meaning pair. Although some maintain that mostly these stems are used in poetry, the semantic field actually belong to crushing to fine powder, to pulverize; therefore it is more akin to grinding or threshing. These verbs are used both literally and figuratively. Figuratively, as already noted, it denotes emotiv condition, quite close to thanatophobic predicament, as in Ps 143.

The enemy hath persecuted (רָדַף) my soul;
he hath crushed (דָּכָא) my life down to the ground (נִפְשִׁי דָּכָא לְאָרֶץ חַיְתִי)
and made me dwell in the darkness with those who are long dead (עוֹלָם כְּמֵתִי) (Ps 143:3) (RSV).

Apart from the fact that the psalmist feels as being at the very entrance of the realm of the dead, and the feeling of being 'crushed'; confused, and in every way hopeless and helpless, he feels free to complain to God about the way he feels.⁵⁸ He feels numb (פּוֹגֵג) and completely crushed (בְּדָכִיתִי עַד־מָאֵד) (cf. Ps 38:9). One can agree

self-revelation God judges and destroys all our ideas about God, all the principal images and criteria of value that we accept about him. We can, on our own, imagine only idols" (von Rad in Kraus:40).

⁵⁷ The root דכא no doubt relates to the stativ verb literal stem דָּךְ.

⁵⁸ In fact he pretty well feels the same as Job did when he said: „I look for the netherworld as my dwelling, if I spread my couch in the darkness" (Jb 17:13). Typical of the Israelite percieving of death as: „unity being shattered" (cf. Johnson, 1949:95).

with Dahood (1968), that the crushing (synonymous with עפר) refers to netherworld and connotes the proximity of the underworld, or at least a foretaste of it.⁵⁹

Ayin Waw/Ayin Yod

Ayin Yod verbs in many ways may be regarded as a byforms or a development of Ayin-Waw, and Ayin-Ayin verbs. It is suggested that both stem from biliteral roots (cf. GK:73a). An example of the coexistence of the ayin yod/ayin waw verbs, which is also motional-emotional polysemous, is the verb חול and חיל, both with the meaning, to be in *anguish* or *whirl*. Although there are far fewer Ayin-Yod verbs, some of them, like עיף (to faint, exhausted) powerfully portray the psalmist's weariness, yet also as a prayer and the condition of yearning for God (cf. Ps 63:1; 143:6) (cf. Jouon: 81a).⁶⁰

Activity and Intensity

What is characteristic of motion-emotion verbal pairs of these verbal groups is that the external behavior or activities are highly indicative of inner emotions. These *action verbs* often express activity, and almost as a rule they come with an accentuate intense activity related to emotional states (cf. GK: par.67a; 72n; Jouon: par.80r).⁶¹ Jouon proposes that for these verbs (apart from the medial waw/yod) typical it is the vowel of action. And not only in perfect, but also in future (imperfect). In the 'reduced

⁵⁹ Cf. Dahood, PSSII:323.

⁶⁰ In many cases the two forms mediae Waw and Yod seem to have coexisted, i.e. the „two vocalic consonants w and y are analogous, the transition from the one to the other is easy“ (Jouon:81a). Interesting is the example in this respect of some verbs: רוח (to breath) and ריח (to smell, eg.Gen 8:21). Also with לון and לין (spend the night, lodge), cf.Ps 91:1 (Jouon:81a). Or שום and שים, cf.De 17.15. On the other hand, corresponding to Ayin-Waw (consonantal Waw) there are also Ayin-Yod verbs with consonantal Yod, like איב (be an enemy)(cf.GK:73c; 72gg).

⁶¹ There are only very rare cases of stative verbs of the Ayin-Waw/Ayin-Ayin verbs (cf.Jouon, par.41f and par.80q-r). Even when some of the Ayin-Ayin verbs may be of stative form, like *dll* (be small) in perfect intransitive will have an active rather than stative meaning: „And the rivers shall become foul“ (דללו) (Is 19:6), also cf. Jb 28:4 (GK,par.67cc).

state' (biliteral form) it is typical of perfect where the so called 'vowel of action' is dominant (Jouon: par. 80r).⁶²

The intensity expressed by these verbs in motion-emotion pair, appears as they undergo 'mutation' between: *Ayin-Waw* to *Ayin-Yod* or *Ayin-Ayin* verbs. An exemplary illustration of the intensification in the literary setting and scenery achieved by using the verb groups in question we find in Eccl 1:6.

The wind blows to the south, and goes round (סובב) to the north; round and round (סבב סובב) goes the wind, and on its circuits (סביבתיו) the wind returns (Eccl 1:6).

Though in the typical mood of vanity the author here went for an impressive accumulation of motion verbs, which again served to intensify his emotional state of affairs.⁶³ Psalm 118:11 illustrate how for the emphasis and intensity, the *Ayin-Ayin* verbs can come in both shortened (biliteral), followed by full (trilateral) form.⁶⁴ As the heathen and the psalmist's enemies assail him,

They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side (סבּוּנִי גַם־סַבּוּמִי);
in the name of the LORD I cut them off! (Ps 118:11) (RSV).⁶⁵

At times the *Ayin-Waw* form will alternate with *Ayin-Yod* form of the same verb (cf. Ps 71:12. It can even come, in participle, as biliteral form. Divine punishment and mortal danger comes swift, for Israelites in the guise of Chaldeans in Hbakkuk 1. In this

⁶² The so-called 'Barth-Ginsberg law' argues the case of this, so called, 'vowel of action', in contrast of stative verbs, is the vowel *a* typical of action. The vowels 'i/e' are typical of stative verbs. Although there would also be „primitive *a* of stative verbs“ (cf. Jouon: par. 41e).

⁶³ Robert Alter (Alter, 1985) thoroughly examines intensifications in poetic imagery, and in detail he analyzes the structure of Psalm 39 as the psalm in its narrative-poetry form builds up momentum and intensifies the 'story'. Particularly vividly Alter also illustrates this in the first speech of Job (Job 3:326)(Alter:76f.).

⁶⁴ Cf. GK, par. 67cc.

⁶⁵ Similar example for of *ayin-ayin* verb for emphasis in juxtaposition, this time both times in trilateral form, in Hos 4:16: „Israel is stubborn like a stubborn heifer“ (כי כפרה סררה סרר ישראל).

thanatophobic context the verb *חוש* (haste) appears as participle *חש*, as in Hab 1: “Their horsemen come from afar; they fly (*עוֹף*) like an eagle swift (*חש*) to devour” (Hab 1:8).

The role of Ayin-Waw (Yod) and Ayin-Ayin verbs appear to have an important place in the motion-emotion axis.

6.6.3. Stative Verbs and Emotion

Another verbal group which contributes to better understanding of the grammar of death are the statives. General grammatical characteristics of Hebrew verbal system rests on the two temporal forms, perfective and imperfective (*tenses*). Perfect, which is essentially indicative and imperfect which, apart from its temporal aspect, has important modal and volitive nuances (imperative, jussive, cohortative) and atemporal (infinitive, participle). But then there is a verbal class which indicate the state of being (*stative verbs*), sometimes regarded as 'conjugated adjectives' (cf. Jouon, par.41b).⁶⁶ Its very designation 'stative', as in the 'state of being' reveals the focal relevance to the emotive elements. One ought to be observant to the fact that even an active verb may have a stative nuance,

it is not enough that a verb be logically or morphologically stative for it to be treated as a stative verb; it must also be taken in a purely stative sense (Jouon, par.111h).⁶⁷

Stativity and ergativity. As for the verbal 'stativity' of emotions, it may be stative predicament, grammatically conveyed by a stative verb, but emotions are also

⁶⁶ These verbs come in two basic vowel forms. While the active verb is designated with the typical *a* vowel (usually patah); stative verbs are characterized in their basic *e* and *o* vocalic form in the second syllable. Eg. *כבד* 'being heavy' (he was heavy), and *קטן* 'being small' (he was small).

⁶⁷ Jouon provides illustrative examples of verbs which though active in meaning can also have a quasistative meaning. Like (*ידע*) (cf. Ps 18:44) or (*קוה*) (Ps 130:5); and the verb *עמד* to stand; can be treated as a stative form when its meaning is 'to be in a standing position', or in the sense of being 'next to' (cf. Ps 23:4). (cf. Jouon, par.112 a-b).

exceptionally dynamic reactions to events and agents. Hence imparted by the verbs of motion. (cf.Ortony, 1988: chp.5-8, pp.85ff). Jouon says that at the earliest stage

All stative verbs must have expressed what, from the point of view of the Semites, was conceived as a state or an attribute rather than an action (cf.Jouon, par.41b).

A number of statives eventually and effectively express an action, and purely stative verbs and their meanings, may well come close to the notion of action. Hence, Juoun notes that: "In general terms one could say that the stative verbs tend to become action verbs whether in terms of meaning or in terms of vocalisation" (id.).

It is only understandable and to be expected that grammarians see things through their grammatical spectacles. But it is also indicative, (from a grammarian point of view) to note and conclude, relationship between the stativity and ergativity. In Jouon's words: "The only certain thing that can be said is that the use of the adjectival verb is obligatory for expression of dynamism" (Jouon, 41n2).

The morphem מות

The other reason for tackling these, seemingly, non-motional and non-action verb group is that in differentiation between, emotions and moods, as 'states', and the more reactionary affective feelings as immediate reactions, hence belonging to the action verbal nuance. In Eccl (2:18, 22;3:9;4:8;9:9) the active (עמל) ('to labor') also appears as verbal adjective (stative) (עמל) ('being weary'). Classic example of verbal and adjectival aspects is the verb ('to die') מות its stative aspect ('being dead') מת. It is fascinating and curious to note that we do not find this stative form in the Psalter at all? Even the nominal form מות ('death'), is not found as frequently as we might expect it in the Psalter. And mainly, when it does appear, it is in the sense of the realm of

death. As in ישן מות ('the sleep of death', Ps 13:4), or in dust of death עפר מות (Ps 22:16). Further in the death realm it is צל מות (or (צלמות) ('shadow of death') (Ps 23:4; 44:20) or a very unusual expression רעה מות ('death-shepherd', Ps 49:15). The latter, Dahood explains as euphemism (Dahood, PS I: 301). We believe on the contrary this to be a dysphemistic expression. And when the psalmist does use the verbal form of the root מות he thinks of his enemy, when he asks: "when will he die" (מתי ימות) (Pss 41:6; 49:18; 78:50).⁶⁸

6.6.4. Verbless Clauses

Verbless clauses (nominal sentences) are entirely at odds to motional verbal structures and generally to the prevalent dynamics of verbs and verbal structures. Verbless clauses are common and an exceptionally important grammatical form of expression in BH (cf. Jouon, par.154a).⁶⁹ Verbless clauses have an important articulation of expressiveness in BH and the psalter where they purport emotional salience of the psalmist's experience. In that verbless clauses are not only 'identificatory', but are also 'descriptive', indicating in what state and condition a

⁶⁸ On the morphem מות we find an unknown technical term in the title of Ps 9:1: למנצח עלמות לבן. There are all sorts of possibly speculative explanations. Dahood simply transliterates this to: 'Muth Labben' (Dahood, I:55). Weiser translates this as: "According to 'Die for the son'" (Weiser:146). LXX gives an 'interpretative' translation: ὑπὲρ τῶν κρυφίων τοῦ υἱοῦ (according to the secrets of the son ?), probably from תעלמה 'hidden thing', 'secret', and the stative verbal form עלם (cf. Ps 44:22). See Delitzsch on the variety of explanations and interpretations here (Delitzsch, vol.5:159). Also, an unusual and unique expression is: בני תמותה ('the children of death') (Ps 79:11). Cf. 82:7 with paragogic nun.

⁶⁹ Pentateuch, for example include about two thousand verbless clauses (cf. Andersen, F.I. 1970:17). An important linguistic observation on the grammatical nature of the verbless clauses in relation to ordinary use of auxiliary verbs (to be) is made by John Lyons: „Any verb equivalent to 'to be' is not itself a constituent of deep structure, but a semantically-empty 'dummy verb' generated by the grammatical rules.“ (in Waltke/O'Connor:4.5c). In other words if I am to say: 'I good', it is semantically equally understandable as if I say; 'I am good'.

subject is found.⁷⁰ In reference to emotional salience and frequency of its appearance, verbless clauses in BH may require a separate study. We found it at least worthwhile to give some indication of the potential research subject in the Psalter. Sometimes it appears in a participial clause, with the subject pronoun omitted as in Ps 22:29: “kingship (belongs) to the LORD, (כי ליהוה המלוכה) the ruler over the nations”, or as we find it in Ps 16:8: “because (he is) at my right hand, I not (be) moved” (כי מימיני בל־אמוט)⁷¹

To indicate its expressiveness, may we be allowed to give few random examples of the verbless clauses in the Psalter.⁷²

Psalm 38

In Psalm 38, already mentioned on several occasions, we find a string of verbless clauses set in the context of the fear of death. Here underlined with adverbial (צלע לצלע, to limp, stumble and fall). The situation is more serious than just a case of the psalmist limping; he 'limps' (slipping) to death (Cf. Craigie: 304).⁷³

Psalm 73

⁷⁰ Nominal, or verbless clause is: „every clause the predicate of which is not a verb“ (Jouon:par.154a) or „where a noun (or its equivalent) is juxtaposed with the subject“ (Waltke:par.8.3a). The usage of nominal clauses in Hebrew and Semitic languages is quite extensive and important. On the subject matter, principal and referential works have been presented by F.I.Andersen and T.Muraoka (cf.Jouon,par.154a). Cf. F.I.Andersen (1970), *The Hebrew verbless clause in the Pentateuch, and* (1974) *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*. Also works of T.Muraoka: *Emphasis in Biblical Hebrew*,(PhD), and the *Four views of the verbless clause in BH*, and *On the nominal clause in LBH and MH*.

Identificatory verbless clauses appear with (personal) pronouns, as in: אני יוסף (I am Joseph) (Gen 45:3), or in emphatic form: אני הוא (I am he) (De 32:39), also in: מה שִׁמְךָ (what is your name) (Gen 32:27) (cf.Jdg 13:17) or מי אתה (who are you) (Gen 27:18).

⁷¹ Cf. Jouon, par.154 b3.

⁷² Cf. Table of verbless clauses; relating to the emotional states of the fear of death in psalter.

⁷³ It is variously translated as: „near to falling“ (NAB) or „ready to fall“ (RSV). Craigie translates this somewhat clumsy: “I am prepared for limping” (Craigie:301). Cf. “I (am) near to falling” (אני לצלע נכון) (Ps 38:18).

The psalm is a complaint psalm of an individual one of the best portrayals of the pious and his crisis of faith in the face of for him incomprehensible injustice. The pious psalmist is confused and disorientated, in the distress there is the anxiety of the question - "why"?

When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart.
I was stupid and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward thee.
Nevertheless I am continually with thee;
thou dost hold my right hand (Ps 73:21-23)

After all the doubts and irritation with injustice and arrogance of the godless, the psalmist understands that the nearness of God is most precious possession, and simply states: "Who (have I) in heaven but thee?" (מִי־לִי בַשָּׁמַיִם) (Ps 73:25).

Psalm 115

An apt grammatical, emotively expressive example of verbless clauses is densely provided in Ps 115:5-6. The psalmist, in honor to God, argues against the pagan idols and displays a string of verbless clauses:

"They (have) *mouths but do not speak*" (v.5a) (פִּה־לֵהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ)
"They (have) *eyes but do not see*" (v.5b) (עֵינַיִם לֵהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ)
"They (have) *ears but do not hear*" (v.6) (אָזְנוֹתֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ)

Though the nominal sentences is not our subject matter here, for the sake of its, not only grammatical and syntactical but equally so its important expressive nuances, we give this brief overview (cf.GK, par.140; Jouon, par.154; esp.par. 154n1).⁷⁴

⁷⁴ In the strict sense biblical Hebrew has no tenses as such and uses a variety of other means, including a variety of syntactic means to express time relations (cf.Waltke /O'Connor,20.2e). In this respect, even the 'verbless sentences', sometimes called 'noun-clauses', are not at all unusual in (biblical) Hebrew. Francis Andersen (1970) in *The Verbless Clause in the Pentateuch* and particularly in (1974) *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, apart from an overview of the previous studies on the subject matter, in a concise and well articulated manner, Andersen helps us to understand better the sentence in Hebrew. „The

6.6.5. Waw of Emotion

Macrosyntactic sign. The ubiquitous connecting waw (*waw consecutive*) frequently adds to the overall changes of mood and tone in a literary section (thus: *macrosyntactic sign*). Two types of occurrences and placements of this waw in a literary subsection produces this overall change,

- (i) Conjunction with the temporal particle ועתה+ו = ועתה ('and now').
- (ii) Conjunction with the 2nd sg. personal pronoun ואתה+ו = ואתה ('but you').

Such conjunctions and positioning of the waw in biblical texts is recognized as macrosyntactic sign, as a major textual marker. But this does not only serve to mark out major textual divisions. Namely, besides its linguistic function, it marks a transition and modification or change in emotive framework within the larger textual unit or narrative. Most of the time it functions as a climactic change of mood.⁷⁵ In fact its role is often as a theological-grammatical switch.

For the psalmist and his experience it is usually also a sign of his change of mood and an overall atmosphere; whatever might be to cause this (see: *Swings in mood*). In Psalm 27, in the psalmist's testimony of distress and the evildoers who threaten him,

term sentence has been used in linguistics in several different ways. The traditional definition of a sentence as a complete thought expressed in words fell on evil times when description of language data began with forms rather than ideas. It was easier to observe a sound than a thought, and it was impossible to tell when a thought was complete" (Andersen,1974:21; cf. ch.2 on The Sentence in Hebrew). Andersen, in this sense, although elucidating on the syntactic matters in fact also promotes cognitive aspects of gramatical units.

⁷⁵ Cf. Waltke / O'Connor, 38.1 e: „If we seek to systematize our understanding of textual organization, we need to introduce the notion of different levels and types of organization. Not every verse, for example, works in the same way in itself and in relation to the verses around. We recognize a class of major textual markers or macrosyntactic signs“. Wolfgang Schneider (in Waltke / O'Connor) describes macrosyntactic signs as: „words, particles, and expressions which serve..to mark out the major divisions of a text..The speaker inserts such macrosyntactic signs in order to highlight for the hearer...“. (WO:634).

there is a change of mood and he states: “And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies, who surround me” (ועתה ירום ראשי על איבי סביבותי) (Ps 27:6). It is not only a sign of triumph (cf. Dahood, PSS I:168), as Weiser notes: “The psalm goes beyond the external scope of the cult's conventions...it implies more than merely the performance of a cultic observance” (Weiser: 249).

This is fully in accord with our view that often in the psalter we meet more than a 'liturgical spectacle' and rather as Weiser expresses it a: 'sacrifice of joy'.⁷⁶ It also shows the familiar structure of moving from complaint and petition to the certainty of being heard (cf. Gunkel, 6:23). Thus the ubiquitous waw conjunction (whether in its conjunctive or disjunctive grammatical role) goes beyond merely formal grammatical logical link.⁷⁷ Thus, Jouon notices that it 'expresses a nuance of emotion'. Hence he term 'waw of emotion', as Kautzsch notes, it often is due to, “Passionate excitement or haste, which does not allow time for full expression” (cf. GK, par. 154b). Waw of emotions also appears before the imperatives or in rhetorical questions (cf. Jouon, par. 177m).⁷⁸

In the previous chapters of this dissertation we embraced some general discussions (Linguistic Considerations and Realms of death), we then turned to more specific, though still somewhat preliminary issues (The Psalter and the Psalmist). These

⁷⁶ Others here prefer to give emphasis to the liturgical proceedings and the background of the royal victorious affairs underlined with the sacrificial offerings, „the immediate sense of 'now' emerges in the liturgical context; the king was now about to offer sacrifices and praise to God as a part of the liturgical proceedings“ (cf. Craigie:233).

⁷⁷ This Waw is often referred as Waw Consecutive and have been thought of only as the connecting Waw (ו) in the consecutive narratives, thus Waw Consecutive (cf. Weingreen:91).

⁷⁸ The use of Waw in conjunction with personal pronoun or its theological-grammatical role has been discussed to some greater extent in the Chapter: 'Some special psalms' and 'More on emotional swings'.

were followed by more focused and more central points of the thesis (The Psalmist and His Emotion, Hebrew Motion Verbs and Grammar of Death).

In the final chapter of this dissertation we opted for several groups of Psalms which we named Some Distinct Psalms. At the end of the next chapter and in our conclusion, we shall answer and account for this particular choice of Psalms which we examine more closely.

7. SOME DISTINCT PSALMS

There are several groups of Psalms that deserve particular attention, owing to their distinct emotional charge and thanatophobic tendencies. Three groups of psalms form subgroups of the complaint psalms: 'penitential', 'imprecatory' and 'self-imprecatory'. We shall not be able to give detailed coverage of each of these 17 or so psalms, but will consider the ways in which they are exemplary.¹ Psalmic categorisation requires no further debate, but let us note that Gunkel observes that these particular Psalms, relative to the rest of Gattungen, "Allows one to divide the various moods more clearly and to isolate them more sharply" (Gunkel, par. 6-22, p.180).

With these particular psalms (in which sudden changes of mood are common), matters become even more intricate, with elaborate (e)motional concoctions and a peculiar range from blessing to curse. These, as Weiser notes,

do not occur in the psalms as an independent 'type', but appear in different contexts and in different psalm types either in the form of an utterance of blessing (baruk = blessed)... and less frequently as an utterance of curse and a petition for cursing. Blessing and curse originate in the magico-dynamistic sense of being alive; originally they were conceived to be magical charms capable of producing an effect by their own inherent power and had the purpose of increasing or decreasing the vitality of human beings.. (Weiser, 1962: 86-88).

Most psalms of lament or complaint songs, apart from bearing the main motifs of complaint, confession or protestations of innocence, include a factor of confidence and the certainty of being heard, as in Ps 6: "Depart from me, all you workers of evil; for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping. The LORD has heard my

¹ Penitential Psalms (7): Psalm 6; 32; 38; 51; 104; 130; 143. Imprecatory Psalms (10): Psalm 7; 35; 55; 58; 59; 69; 83; 109; 137; 139. There are sections of imprecatory Psalms: Ps 7:4-6; Ps 137:5-6.

supplication; the LORD accepts my prayer” (Ps 6:10).² When confidence is attached to complaint, then “a very peculiar effect arises with the polarity that is created” (Gunkel, 1998:182). Psalm 6 is an apt example of this. At first, the Psalmist drenches his bed with tears (Ps 6:7) and resentfully comments: “For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in Sheol who can give thee praise?” (6:6). Suddenly, he changes his mood and vociferously exclaims: “Depart from me, all you workers of evil; for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping” (Ps 6:9).

7.1. Penitential Psalms

The ecclesial titular designation for this seven penitential psalms (Pss 6; 32; 38; 51; 104; 130; 143) is *septem psalmi paenitentiales*. The psalms grouped under this name are expressive of sorrow for sin and repentance. The name 'penitential psalms' probably dates back only to 5th or 6th century, and is taken from the opening verses of Psalm 51, “Have mercy on me, God, in your goodness” (הגני אלהים כחסדך), or after the Vulgate, “*Miserere mei Deus*”.³ Enemies, foes or illness are common in these Psalms. Some of the interpretations and identifications of these enemies are somewhat unusual. Such is Mowinckel's proposal rather unusual in identifying the foes and evil-doers in these psalms as magic and magicians. Many of the laments in these Psalms which include enemies are accompanied by illnesses inflicted upon the pious (cf. Gunkel, 143-145). In psalmodic studies these are categorised as individual complaint

² Gunkel provides a detailed discussion on how the contents and motifs of the songs of complaint relate to the forms and grammar in these psalms (Gunkel: 181-186).

³ As early as St. Augustine and Cassiodorus, the psalms were grouped in this way. It has been said that Augustine had them placed next to his deathbed. The penitential psalms were popular in '*Books of Hours*' (medieval devotional books), especially in the sections devoted to meditation on the Passion of Christ.

songs, which “form the basic material of the Psalter” (cf. Gunkel. par.6: 121-122). He also states that they “found their way into the worship service of the royal temple in Jerusalem”. He reasons their poetry was so popular and moving that they simply could not be omitted from the Temple. This is also where Gunkel, in his appreciation of lively, individual poetry, opposes (though indirectly) Mowinckel's insistence on the collective “I” in the Psalms (ib.). But neither author, nor indeed many others, give due attention to the penitential psalms.

7.2. Imprecatory Psalms

Both blessing and curse formulae in the Old Testament and Psalms are attributed to what Weiser calls 'magical efficacy', in reference to the increase or decrease in vital powers by virtue of the proclaimer's own strength (cf. Weiser, 1962:86). Of course, it is not really his own power, since the crucial element is the invocation of Yahweh' name. However, Weiser only touches on this very briefly, though invocation of the divine name is such a vital topic; nevertheless, he does provide a good introduction.⁴

Blessing (cf. the Aaronic benediction in Nu 6:23-27) and curse formulae (cf. Jdg 5:23; Deu 27:12f) were clearly associated with liturgical and cultic practices (cf. Isaac's formula of blessing and curse over Jacob). An exemplary benediction practice in psalmodic texts is Ps 128:5, “The LORD bless you from Zion!”⁵ Curse formulae are also cult and liturgy based, as “means of the self-purification of the Yahweh community”

⁴ In linguistic terms, what Weiser calls 'magical efficacy' is an act of illocutionary speech (on illocutionary speech, see: J. Hornsby (1994), *Illocution and its Significance*). According to J. L. Austin, every linguistic expression has a performative aspect. It is worthwhile here to give attention to the subject matter of invocation of the divine name (see J. Wevers, *VT*, 6 1956).

⁵ Utterances like 'Blessed is the man', as in Ps 1:1, are more attuned with the Wisdom tradition, so Weiser suggests that it was uttered as a petition by the laity (cf. Weiser: 87).

and directly linked to the Covenantal requirements (cf. Weiser: 87-88).⁶ Weiser notes that “in the psalms the curse is of lesser importance than the blessing”, and that “the utterance of a curse is attested only in Ps 129:5f, a petition for cursing occurs in the exilic Psalm 137” (ib.88).

We may imply that he is referring to a formulaic utterance of a curse, which is not the case in the previously mentioned texts. In fact, we do not find the most frequently used language and terminology typical of curse forms in the Psalter.⁷ Oddly enough, the decidedly legal and cultic term אָרַר only occurs once, in Ps 119:21.

Yet, there is an abundance of curse modes of speech in psalmodic genres, which are not necessarily cultic or covenantal. This clearly indicates and reflects emotional strain on the part of the Psalmist. What Brueggemann calls, ‘language adequate to experience’ and ‘language appropriate to a place’ is typical of the disorientation experience (cf. Brueggemann, 1993:14). The question is whether the above conclusions in relation to the psalmodic context are relevant only to the cult-liturgical base framework, i.e. the corporate, or may they be read as individual experiences?

“Let death come upon them” (Ps 55:15(16)) or “Let death take them by surprise” (NAB).⁸ Here, the notion is of the suddenness, i.e. death coming swiftly upon the psalmist and indeed God's enemies. C. A. Briggs renders, “Let death come

⁶ Cf. “For those blessed (בָּרַךְ) by the Lord will possess the land, but those accursed (קָלַל) will be cut off” (Ps 37:22).

⁷ The most ‘technical’ term for ‘curse’, within the cult context, is the verb (אָרַר) (cf. De 27). But other verbs are used, especially in the Psalms, e.g. (קָלַל) (Ps 62, Ps 109) with the primary meaning, ‘to be slight’ (i.e. of little importance): “I am of small account” (Job 40:4) (cf. KB: 839-841). Another more intriguing term is (שָׁבַע), often used as an oath (Ps 102:9) (on שָׁבַע, see: TDOT, Kottspier).

⁸ Dahood has, “May death overcome them”, as in ‘being successful’. Following the Ugar. tšyt (victory, success) and Heb. (יָשָׁע) (an assumed root of (תוֹשִׁיעָה) ‘wisdom’ and ‘success’ (also = ‘working effectively’), “that their hands achieve no success” (ולֹא תִעֲשֶׂינָהּ יְדֵיהֶם) (Job 5:12). Cf. BDB:1064 and KB:1025.

treacherously upon them,” emphasising the arrival of death when least expected. Typical for the imprecatory mode, the psalmist wishes their death to be unannounced, for them to be swallowed up alive by the underworld. Weiser and others (C. A. Briggs) compare it with the fate of the sons of Korah (Nu 16) (cf. A. Weiser, 1962:4120).⁹

7.3. Self-imprecatory Psalms

There is a relatively small number of psalmodic self-imprecatory texts (Ps 7:4-6; Ps 137:5-6), and even these do not contain easily recognisable forms and formulae of self-imprecation, like the rest of the Old Testament self-imprecatory texts. However, it is notable how emotionally intense these psalmodic texts are, and they include the motionemotion axis. Self-imprecation is typical of an oath form, for example, “Now swear to me here by God” (השבעה לי) (Gen 21:23), where the verb שבע is an oath 'carrier'.¹⁰

The most frequent opening line for a 'self-imprecatory' oath formula takes the form “May God do so to (me)” (כה ישה לי). The difficulty is that the direct object is missing, so it is difficult to know what exactly God is going to do to the self-

⁹ Nu 16:30: ירדו חיים שאלה. And in Ps 55:15 jussive meaning: ירדו שאול חיים (vqi Jm).

¹⁰ Cf. I. Kottspier in TDOT, vol.14 on self-imprecatory oath formulae involving שבע. Koehler and Baumgartner (cf. KB: 942) give as the primary meaning of שבע (I): 'to swear' in a sense of making a statement or a promise with an oath by invoking God. In a feud over the wells, Abimelech requested Abraham to 'swear' before God: ועתה השבעה לי באלהים to which Abraham emphatically promised: אנוכי אשבע ('I will swear') (Gen 21:23-24). Equally, even the Almighty 'swears' (promises) to Abraham the gift of the land, so Abraham reminds his servant of that promise: נשבע לי (Gen 24:7). Etymologically its primary meaning is 'to be full', 'to be satisfied', 'filled'. The same is true in most cognate languages. The Arabic is 'shabi'a' (= he satisfied his appetite) (cf. Klein: 636). In the sense of being filled, it seems to appear only in Job 31:31: “Who is there that has not been filled with his meat?” (מבשרו לא נשבע).

pronounced oath taker (cf. Ziegler, 2007:62). In its basic form, the phrase appears twelve times in the Old Testament (Cf. Ziegler, JBL 126).¹¹

7.4. Psalm 6

Psalm 6 is the first of the seven penitential psalms according to ecclesial traditions. It is an individual 'psalm of lament', though some categorise it as a 'psalm of sickness' (Craigie: 91) or a 'psalm of complaint' (Gunkel: 181f.).

The title of the psalm (בנגינות על־השמינית) "the octave" (lit. eight, שמנה and שמיני eighth) denotes that the psalm was used in public worship and sung in a deep voice, with musical accompaniment (נגינה).¹² It is no coincidence that in the Psalter it is followed by the powerful imprecatory and selfimprecatory Psalm 7. Both psalms are highly emotionally elevated with clear characteristics of thanatophobia (6:5-6; 7:3,6).

7.4.1. Setting and Vocabulary

As for the psalm's settings, commentators are divided. Some insist that it is clearly a communal psalm, not concerned with the private individual. Briggs, for example, comments that the psalm, "Was composed for the congregation, and there is no trace in it of the experience of an individual" (Briggs, PSS I: 46).

¹¹ Other self-imprecatory texts are found in: Ruth 1:17 (Ruth vows loyalty to Naomi); 1 Sam 3:17 (Eli to Samuel); 1 Sam 14:44 (Saul to Jonathan, after he tasted forbidden honey); 1 Sam 20:13 (Jonathan swears allegiance to David); 1 Sam 25:22 (David vows to destroy Nabal's sheep for his evildoing); 2 Sam 3:9 (Abner to Ishbosheth); 2 Sam 3:35 (David fasts after Abner's death); 2 Sam 19:14; 1 Ki 2:23; 1 Ki 19:2; 1 Ki 20:10; 2 Ki 6:31. Cf. Ruth 1:17 (כה יעשה יהוה לי וכה יסוף כי המות יפריד ביני ובינך)

¹² Some commentators believe it was sung "with the bass voice...peculiarly appropriate to the musical expression of penitence" (Briggs, PSS I: 46). F. Delitzsch translates the title of the psalm as, 'To the Precentor, with accompaniment of stringed instruments, upon the Octave' (Delitzsch, vol.5: 131).

The meaning of על־השמינית is not entirely certain, but a passage in 1 Chr 15:21 ("with harps on the Sheminith" (JPS); "the chant on lyres set to "the eighth" (NAB)) indicates that it is a distinct voice type, rather than an instrument. However, it might also refer to an eight stringed musical instrument.

He also concludes that in reference to v.4 (“Return, O LORD, deliver my soul”) it is the “life of the congregation that is in peril” (ib.47). Such an interpretation fails to account for the intense personal anthropological vocabulary (bones, soul, death, eyes). For example, ‘bones’ are often brought up in the times of the psalmist’s turbulent experiences, when his “bones are out of joint”(Ps 22:15) or he can „count all his bones“ (22:18). These and similar texts cannot but be seen as clear references to individual's rather than collective and corporate anthropology. On the other hand, it is true to say that such corporate dimensions of anthropology can be found and the synecdoche explanation has its place. For example, when the expression 'all my bones' (כל עצמות) denote the 'whole person' (cf. Ps 35:10), but from a 'situational context' it can be distinctly evident whether we face personal or corporate anthropology.

In reference to Ps 6 Briggs’ view is countered by Craigie's position when he says that, “The contents of the psalm do not give any explicit clues as to its initial association with the cult or formal worship in Israel” (Craigie: 91). However, the superscription shows that the psalm became part of the temple hymnal, and so part of Israel's communal worship. Initially, it may not necessarily have been the product of a professional poet, and it can be argued that there was no actual individual whose experience preceded the communal use of the psalm. Clearly, the Psalmist's sufferings are emotional and spiritual; he is weak, weary and afraid (כעס, עשש אמל,) (vv.3, 8). Several aspects must be considered. The Psalmist is:

Emotionally exhausted (vv.7-8) and that the enemies are involved (vv.8-9, 11), but precisely how they are involved and whether any suggestion is made regarding the psalmist's physical condition (v.3, 6) are questions to which this psalm is particularly elusive. The only other feature which can be stated with certainty is that the distress is a prolonged one (v.4) (Broyles: 179)

His inward struggles are indicated by motional vocabulary (שוב, סור) (vv.5, 9). One particular verb has dual semantic value, motion and emotion; the verb בהל (I) 'lost', 'vanish' as in Ps 104:29, and בהל (II) 'be disturbed', 'terrified' as in Ps 6:3. In 6:4 the same verb is used with the bones, "My bones are trembling" (נבהלו עצמי).¹³ The meaning of v.6 here ("Who among the dead remembers you?") is unclear, as Broyles notes: "Does the psalmist here indicate that he is actually at death's door, or is he simply comparing himself to the dead" (Broyles: 179)? Others think the vocabulary is of a picturesque oriental style, with exaggerated, figurative language (cf. Weiser: 132). Similarly, Kraus argues that it is a case of, "Metaphors derived from the widespread concept in the ancient Near East of chaotic, primeval waters, which swallow up all life" (Kraus, Theology: 65).¹⁴

A metaphorical explanation is in line with the linguistic conventionality approach. In our preceding discussion on conventionality (see: 'Linguistic considerations') it was indicated that though conventionality is in many ways a *sine qua non* of any literature, it can also hinder a complete interpretation, as it tends to ignore cognitive, as well as physical and physiological aspects (cf. Craigie: 93).¹⁵

¹³ Cf. Broyles: 179.

¹⁴ In relation to the emotional states and the thanatophobic experiences of the psalmist, Kraus seems to insist on metaphorical perspectives and the general and widespread concept(s) of the ancient Near East (cf. Kraus, Theology of Psalms: 65f.). He also rightly notes that the death experience in the Psalter is often related to the Psalmist's impression that death (and Sheol) is the realm and state far from Yahweh (cf. Ps 6:5). "Praise is the characteristic mode of life, so too the silencing of praise is characteristic of the realm of death" (Kraus: 65). Again and again, exclusively cultic interpretations ignore the Psalmist's real experience; "... with death the individual's participation in the cult was extinguished" (von Rad in Kraus: 65). The metaphoric interpretation is widespread and popular, but frequently disregards any authentic, emotional and psychosomatic experience (cf. Brown: 26).

¹⁵ On the physiology of the emotive states, see the works of Gruber, Collins and Kruger.

7.4.2. Innocent or Penitent?

Though Psalm 6 is penitential, obvious elements of penitence are lacking. Instead, there are traces of the confessional, “Do not rebuke me in your anger” (v.1). In the Psalter, the confession of sins is usually couched in clearer, stronger petitionary forms, such as those found in psalms that are not traditionally classed as penitential. Some examples of non-penitential psalms which accentuate the Psalmist's penitence are Pss 25, 69 and 40.

For the sake of your name, LORD, forgive (סלח) my guilt (און), though it is great (Ps 25:11).

God, you know my folly (אול); my faults (אשם) are not hidden from you (Ps 69:6).

My sins so overcome me I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head (Ps 40:13).

Evidently, as Gunkel observes, the rationale of the innocent and the penitent in the song of innocence sometimes follows the extraordinarily impressive form of a qualified self-curse (cf. Gunkel: par.6-26: 187).¹⁶ This rationale and scenography will be examined in self-imprecatory Ps 7. The very emotional intensity and the actuality of the events suffered are an indication of something more than mere literary form or 'formulaic' criticism.

7.4.3. Weak, Weary and Afraid

Like some other psalms, Psalm 6 is an intricate concoction of recurring motifs and moods. Though short, its contents, tones and motifs are densely accumulated and varied, mostly highlighted by the emotive predicaments of fear, resentment and anger. The spectrum ranges from divine retribution, “Lord do not rebuke me in your anger”

¹⁶ Gunkel points out that at one point the rationale of the innocent disappears, with a complete lack of worship activities: “The psalmist portrays his humility: 'I am mute. I do not open my mouth'”. The innocent then expects a deserved outcome (cf. Gunkel: par.6-21).

(vv.1-4), to weariness and moaning because of the evil ones and his enemies (פעל און) (v.9), with a clear element of anger, and the Psalmist feels completely 'wasted away' (עשש) (v.8a). Then come the typical mood and tone changes, from v.9, "Depart from me all you workers of evil", to the granting of divine favour, "The LORD accepts my prayer". As already noted (see: Interpreting the Psalms), the identity of these 'workers of evil' (פעל און) is often interpreted (after Mowinckel) as evil demonic 'powers', rather than human beings. Mowinckel sets this interpretation of the Psalmist's enemies in the context of the struggle between the powers of life and the powers of death. For him, the temple rites are the actualisation of Yahweh's acts:

Their inner meaning is that the powers of death are overcome by the powers of life, by the Life-giver himself, by Yahweh, the living and life-giving God. Thus they symbolize a *struggle*. In the festival Yahweh comes and *conquers* the evil powers, and establishes 'the world' of his people anew, with 'peace' (*šlôm*), new life and blessing and happiness. (Mowinckel, vol.1:19).

The Psalmist, worn out by weeping and fear of his enemies (Ps 6:7-8) suddenly changes his mood to one of triumph, launching a counter assault on them, "Away from me!" (סורו ממני) (Ps 6:9). Terrien (2003:114), along the lines of the magical interpretation of enemies concludes:

At last the enigma is solved. The poet is the victim of sorcerers. The 'doers of evil' or 'workers of naught', are necessarily professional magicians. Popular mentality, still influenced by Canaanite culture, believed that hostile words or gestures could impair the health of their adversaries (Terrien: 114).

The wavering of the Psalmist and the emotional discontinuity in the psalm are not necessarily subversive to its structural integrity. That is more of a spiritual, emotional and theological issue. Most psalms of lament or complaint songs, apart from

displaying complaint, confession or songs of innocence as the main motifs, almost universally include the motif of confidence and the certainty of being heard.¹⁷

Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing (אמל);
O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled (בהל).
My soul also is sorely troubled (בהל).
But thou, O LORD – how long?
Turn, O LORD, save my life (חלץ);
deliver me for the sake of thy steadfast love. (Ps 6:3-5).

The use of the motion-emotion verb בהל haste-trouble needs some attention. Namely, its appearance here and elsewhere in the Psalter is indicative. The verb refers primarily to ‘terror’ (mostly of a supernatural nature and origin).¹⁸ It has two meanings, one motional (I) ‘hasten’, and the other (II) ‘to be terrified’. Both aspects have been discussed but it seems they are complementary rather than mutually exclusive (cf. Otzen, B in TDOT, vol. II:3-5). Some nominal forms (בהלה) (sudden terror) refer to a swift end, often brought about by being abandoned by God, as in Ps 78: “So he made their days vanish like a breath (הבל), and their years in terror (בבהלה)” (ויכל־בהבל ימיהם ושנותם) (בבהלה) (Ps 78:33).¹⁹

The enemies of Yahweh (also the Psalmist’s enemies) vanish in a vapour, their lives are as fleeting as breath (cf. Ps 37:20b, ‘in smoke’ בעשן). Similarly, in life-threatening despair, the Psalmist compares the transitory nature of his life with the same expression as in Ps 37: “For my days pass away like smoke (כי־כלו בעשן ימי) and my bones burn like a furnace” (Ps 102:4).

¹⁷ Gunkel provides a detailed discussion on how the contents and motifs of the songs of complaint relate to their forms and grammar (Gunkel, 181-186).

¹⁸ Most biblical occurrences are in the niphal (24) referring to a state caused by a threat. Cf. Ps 30:8 (7) (הסתרת פניך הייתי ובהל), or, “We are consumed in Thine anger, and by Thy wrath are we hurried away” (נבהלנו) (Ps 90:7) (JPS). All living beings vanish (בהל) and die (גוע) when Yahweh hides his face (cf. Ps 104:29).

¹⁹ Note the verbal root play between הבל (haste-terror) and בהל (vapour, breath).

7.4.4. The theology of Suffering and Illness

Enemies, foes and illness often come together in the Psalter. There are suggestions that the link between illness and enemies is due to magicians and pagan sorcery (see above: 'Who is the enemy?').²⁰ However, Mowinckel's interpretation that magic is the source of the Psalmist's illness is not fully viable, so we ought to refer again to the frequent use of the verb בָּהַל in the Psalter, and its concomitant context of the Psalmist's illness and fears.

Suffering, illness and eventually death are seen as in a causal relationship to divine retribution for sin, as is well attested in the Bible (cf. Berges, U. 'Der Zorn Gottes in der Prophetie und Poesie', *Biblica*, 85(2004)). The motif is carried over from the Old Testament (cf. the Book of Job) to the New Testament (cf. Joh 9:2, Lk 13:1).²¹ The Psalmist's suffering reiterates the perpetual question of theodicy, i.e. the suffering of the innocent. His claim of innocence clearly comes to the fore in the self-imprecatory psalms ("If I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands..." 7:4).²²

"Do not reprove me in your anger, LORD, nor punish me in your wrath", (v.1) is neither a protestation of innocence nor a forthright penitential proclamation. However, suffering is more than a mere possibility or threat. The powerful language

²⁰ Gunkel discusses Mowinckel's proposal that the foes and evil-doers relate to magic and magicians, so many of the laments in Psalms which include enemies also mention illnesses inflicted upon the pious (cf. Gunkel, 143-145).

²¹ At the sight of the blind man who seeks healing from Jesus of Nazareth, his disciples asked: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?" (Joh 9:2).

²² Although the suffering and punishment of the innocent was always a problem; the traditional view is that suffering is probably deserved. In NT times the issue was continued (cf. Ex 20:5 – see preceding note). Similar reasoning is shown in Lk 13: "The people who were present there told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans?" (Lk 13:2). The details of this event are not known, but a good guess is that some Galileans came down to Jerusalem to worship and perform sacrifices, which instigated Pilate's anger.

used describes actual circumstances and very personal experiences, which affected both the soul and the body, moving beyond literary form and formulaic poetic constructions. The complaint, “O, Lord, how long?” which uses the same construction (עַד־מָה יְהוָה) as in Ps 79:5 and Pss 74; 79; 80; 82; 90; 94), is important, as the only insistence in the psalm is that the psalmist's chastening will not last beyond what he can endure (vv.3-4). The sorry state of the Psalmist is comparable to Ps 38; however in the latter, the penitential element is quite clear.²³

Suffering and Illness – God or Magic?

The Psalmist's illness and symptoms are only a reflection of the fact that his life is in danger. His enemies are after his life ('soul') (בְּקִשׁ נַפְשׁ) (cf. Ps 38:13; 40:14; 54:5). While they seek (בְּקִשׁ) his life, Yahweh is the one who ought to deliver him, snatch or pull him back (נִצַּל) from them: “Once you have snatched me from death, kept my feet from stumbling” (Ps 56:14) (הַצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמּוֹת הַלֵּא רַגְלִי מִדְּחִי) .

The verb נִצַּל (deliver, rescue) is not only a conceptual, soteriological and metaphysical term with spiritual meanings of salvation; it has a literal physical denotation.²⁴ Another is נִצַּל, like בְּהַל (terrify, hurry), which serves two purposes along the motion-emotion axis, physical *motion* and the precept for *emotion*.

The Psalmist is weary of feeling ill. Many attempts have been made to analyse the symptoms and diagnose the illness(s) indicate by the symptoms described in the psalms. So many commentators have recognised that the expressions used are more

²³ We observe the caution expressed by Broyles, that “the absence of a confession of sin or of any allusion to sin should caution the exegete from reading this simply as a psalm of penance” (Broyles: 181).

²⁴ “Pull me out from the mire” (Ps 69:15). Cf. 2 Sam 20.6.

than simply formulaic or metaphoric poetic embellishment. But where did the Psalmist's suffering come from? Gunkel maintains that, "a number of passages reveal no concern for the origin of the illness...it does not matter to the psalmist whether the illness stems from himself or has no connection to him" (Gunkel: par. 66:135).

In view of this statement, it is fascinating that he then continues investigating several possible causes of illnesses and shows that the Psalmist is indeed bothered by the possible roots of his suffering.

The self-imprecatory psalms are evidence of this. Indeed, the Psalmist lists the possible causes of his sorry state, which fall into two main categories: (i) the enemies (or probable curse or magic worked by his enemies) and (ii) his sin and divine retribution. The latter results in Yahweh's distancing himself from the Psalmist, causing his thanatophobic, anxious condition. In fact, even his enemies seem to be instrumental (v.9) in the divine chastening, and he cries out, "Depart from me... for the Lord has heard my weeping".

7.4.5. Thanatophobic Elements

An emphatic and heightened awareness of (human) mortality comes to the fore with additional force when illness or inner consternation affect the Psalmist, often portrayed as a state of limbo, neither fully alive, nor yet dead. The grammaticalisation of these experiences and moods is achieved via motional and emotional language. We have noted how the same or similar words (verbal roots) work towards, or indicate a change in the emotional status of the Psalmist.²⁵ Such emotional switches are conveyed by motionemotion verb pairs, as in Psalm 6. So motion verbs are the

²⁵ Cf. Craigie: 91.

prerequisites of mood changes, from despair to confidence and the certainty of being heard by Yahweh.

The thanatophobic element is clearly present (6:5-6), with the recurring motif of Yahweh's remoteness and the Psalmist's prayer, "Return, O Lord" (שובה יהוה). If Yahweh turns or hides his face away (סתר or סור), this is the preface to emotional turmoil and near-death experiences.²⁶ Thus, the vicinity and the juxtapositioning of motion-emotion verbs greatly determine the overall change(s) in the emotional scenery, which bears a strong emotional weight, and can hardly be viewed as the mere product of well devised formulaic literary forms stitched together. Authentic distress, rather than a formulaic poetic construction, is well described in Broyles' words:

The chief concern of this psalm is not with the mere fact of chastisement but with its persistence (v.4) and its intensity (v.2). Verse 6 makes clear that it is the psalmist's conviction that Yahweh should preserve his worshippers from premature death (Broyles: 181).²⁷

Since so many psalms contain strong, clearly emotive language, we agree with the 'sickness interpretation' (suffering is psychosomatic in nature), rather than a reductionist metaphorical or cultic interpretation.

²⁶ See comments on Ps 104. Cf. Job 13:24: למה פניך תסתיר.

²⁷ As already indicated in this work, there are commentators who like to emphasise the use of regular phraseology and the structural elements of the Psalms. So, Weiser in reference to Ps 6: "The style of the psalm is characterized by the use of traditional phrases, as can be gathered by the number of sayings which are similar to those used in other psalms and partly even verbally accord with them" (Weiser: 130).

7.5. Psalm 7

Psalm 7, is an example of self-imprecation, it is also of special interest to our topic as it demonstrated an additionally intense motion-emotion axis in the face of mortal danger. Traditional classification puts the psalm in the lament category.

In the psalm, mood swings, as in many other psalms, are shown through its strong motion-emotion language. Some scholars suggest the setting may be a trial in a religious court, with the Psalmist appearing in the dock: "Before the priestly judges representing Yahweh he testifies that the accusations laid against him are unwarranted and false" (Allen, 1983:76). Essentially self-imprecation and imprecation are invocations of divine judgment on his own and Yahweh's (mortal) enemies, calling for retribution to be exacted (cf. Harrison, 1969:997), while protesting innocence.²⁸ In fact, the imprecatory element is crucial in the Psalmist's argument with Yahweh. It is also a recurrent biblical form,²⁹ of which several of the more renowned examples occur in the Psalter, for example:

If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither!
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
if I do not remember you,
if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy! (Ps 137:5-6) (RSV).

A more gruesome example of imprecation is found in Ps 109:

Appoint a wicked man against him;
let an accuser bring him to trial.
When he is tried, let him come forth guilty;
let his prayer be counted as sin!
May his days be few;
may another seize his goods!
May his children be fatherless,
and his wife a widow!

²⁸ On imprecation and self-imprecation, see: Laney (1967) and Day (2002). Laney lists nine imprecatory/self-imprecatory Psalms (Pss 7; 35; 58; 59; 69; 83; 109;137; and 139) (Laney:36).

²⁹ Moses uttered an imprecatory speech every time the Ark was to move on, cf. Nu 10:35-11:1.

May his children wander about and beg;
may they be driven out of the ruins they inhabit!
May the creditor seize all that he has;
may strangers plunder the fruits of his toil! (Ps 109:6-12) (RSV).

Mitchell Dahood makes some helpful comments in this instance. Firstly, he notes that it is not easy to identify the *dramatis personae* in this personal lament. He also notes that there is 'an aged man' who seems to be a skilled poet (cf. Dahood, PSS III: 99). Dahood is right to criticising Briggs regarding 'friendliness' in the context of the trial (cf. Briggs, PSSII: 366). The New Testament often displays the same form of imprecation, for example the curse upon Judas in Acts (Ac 1:20) is a quote from Ps 69:26.

Brethren, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David, concerning Judas who was guide to those who arrested Jesus...For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'Let his habitation become desolate, and let there be no one to live in it'; and 'His office let another take.' (Ac 1:16-20).

Although imprecation and self-imprecation are common in biblical texts, in some psalms they are sustaining motifs in a thanatophobic context. One example is Psalm 7, where the Psalmist is being chased by pursuers and calls for divine intervention; "Save me from my pursuers" (רדפי. קטפ.) (7:1). At the same time, he is not quite certain whether he might not be undergoing divine punishment for his own misdeeds. He asks for refuge (הסה) (7:2), but also professes his innocence; "If I have done this..." (אם־עשיתי) (7:4), followed by strong, self-imprecatory language; "... let my enemy pursue and overtake me, trample my life to the ground" (7:6).

7.5.1. Self-imprecation

Does the self-imprecatory context presuppose a cultic situation, or the institution of the court of God in the Temple (cf. 1 Ki 8:31)? If so, the petitioner is fleeing to the

sanctuary for protection, i.e. the place where God is present (cf. Kraus, 1992: 169). Rather than the using recognisable self-imprecatory formulae of other Old Testament texts (כִּהַּ יַעֲשֶׂה לִּי) (= “so God do to me”) (cf. Ruth 1:17, 1 Sam 14:44, 2 Sam 3:35) the Psalmist's self-imprecation rests on the three jussives: (ישג) (ירדף) and (ישכן). He presents a unique, powerful, threefold self-imprecation: (i) let the enemy pursue (ירדף) him and overtake him (נשג), (ii) let them trample (רמס) his life, and (iii) may his soul (glory?) (כבוד) lie in the dust (Ps 7:6).³⁰

Oaths of Innocence

The fundamental idea behind the self-cursing expressions of the Psalmist is the profession of innocence. In many psalms, the struggle to have a ‘clean heart’ means finding a place where God is present. In contrast, distance from God is marked by persecution, illness, and eventual death. Yahweh’s verdict should be that the Psalmist is innocent (cf. Ps 34:15, “The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous”, and he “tests the righteous and the wicked”, (Ps 11:5).³¹ In his oath of innocence, or as Weiser puts it, “excessive self-confidence” (Weiser, 1962: 137), the Psalmist goes as far as proposing that his body be mutilated (7:6). In view of his otherwise thanatophobic sentiments, this seems excessive.

³⁰ NAB translates, “Leave me dishonored in the dust” (7:6c).

³¹ This reverberates in the NT Pauline exclamation: “Who shall bring any charges against God’s elect?” (Rom 8:33) (cf. Kraus, 1992: 170-1).

7.5.2. Enemies: Natural or Supernatural?

We have already discussed the identity of the Psalmist's foe(s) and suggested that they may be something more than human entities.³² In many psalms, the foes (whether of the individual or the nation) occupy a very prominent role. However, in Psalm 7, the Psalmist is not only chased by his enemies, but surprisingly, invites them to pursue him.

There is a common denominator defining the enemies. Since the nation (Israel) and the individual (each Israelite) are chosen by God, any foes who persecute individuals are automatically the enemies of God. Enemies represent more than mere human agents. To use the New Testament terminology of the apostle Paul, they are also 'principalities and powers' (cf. Kraus, 1986: 125-6).³³

³² Can we accept the suggestions of Mowinckel, Gunkel, Begrich, Birkeland, who in Ps 7 detect in the psalmist's foes more than human agents (mythology and/or the occult)? If so, it is not quite clear why the Psalmist invokes them. Bearing in mind the strong self-imprecatory element, it seems he that invokes the powers of death, though he is generally terrified of them, to overcome the powers of life. If we accept 'superhuman' foes as an option, this may explain the amplification of his oath of innocence (cf. Kraus: 126,131; Mowinckel: 18-20).

³³ In his *Theology of the Psalms* (Ch.5), H. J. Kraus calls the topic 'The Enemy Powers'. The enmity of these foes impinges on the area of 'principalities and powers' in the spiritual realm. Kraus says of the portrayal of the enemies includes demonic elements (cf. Kraus: 131). On the other hand he also states: "It must be stressed above all that the foes of the individual are human (Ps 9:19; 10:18; 12:8; 56:1; 76:10; etc.)" (ib.132-33), yet, "Nevertheless, in contrast both to the sacral institutions of the sanctuary and to the poor and weak existence of their victims, but especially in relation to the God who judges and saves, the hostile powers have eerie, demonic attributes" (id.).

7.6. Psalm 16

The thanatophobic pattern (mortal threat / seeking refuge / calling upon God / God answering) in this psalm raises the issue of whether the Psalmist is in mortal danger, or has it already passed. The psalm seems to support the view that the immediate danger has passed (cf. Anderson, 1972: 140). Again, the issue of rigid psalm categorisation is pertinent, but we ought to note and concur with Wevers that, “the tone of the psalm is so much more ‘spiritual’ than the usual complaint psalm, that Gunkel was misled into considering it a psalm of trust” (Wevers, 1956).

The words of the psalm (esp. 16:8-10) are very personal (“I have set the LORD always before me”, v.8, JPS) and emotive (“Therefore my heart is glad”, v.9). The wider context is his fear of death and the threat it poses (“My body also dwells secure (בטח)”, (v.9). Kraus comments that the Psalmist was in “great danger” because “sudden death” was lying in wait to sever “his connection with God”.³⁴ Throughout, he keeps his God in sight. Moreover the Psalmist blesses the Lord (אברך את־יהוה) (16:7), probably as an invocation to the one who has power to save him from imminent death.³⁵ Significantly, these words are quoted in the New Testament in a very similar context, where the setting is Messianic deliverance from death, also with a thanatophobic motif.³⁶

That is why he also says in another psalm, ‘You will not suffer your holy one to see corruption’ (Ac 13:35) (cf. Ps 16:10).

Anderson thinks setting “the LORD always before me” (שויתי יהוה לנגדי תמיד) (16:8) relates to observing the Lord's commands (cf. Anderson, PSI: 145). Here, his

³⁴ Kraus: 240.

³⁵ Rather than the traditional etymological understanding of ‘bless’ (ברך). Kraus here interprets ברך as magnification of the power of the gods (cf. Kraus, *Theology*: 238), also referring to Horst’s ‘Segen und Segenshandlungen in der Bible’ (*EvTh* 1-2, 1947: 31).

³⁶ Cf. Ac 2:25; 13:35.

interpretation differs from the majority of other commentators, who favour the context of a more personal communion with God, beyond the cult-liturgical context. Though we may not concur with Anderson's interpretation, we agree that there may be a glimpse, rather than a fully-fledged doctrine of life after death.³⁷

Briggs interprets (16:8) the Psalmist's keeping Yahweh continually in his mind as being mindful of his nearness to help (cf. Briggs, PS I: 121).³⁵⁰ Craigie thinks it describes God's immediate, protective presence.³⁸ While the Lord is at the Psalmist's right hand, he sustains him "through the tremors that seek to shake him into death" (Craigie: 157).

Weiser notes that this is

the result of the vivid experience of the impression made on him by God's presence that the poet continually concentrates his thoughts on God and sees himself confronted by God in whatever he experiences or does (Weiser:176).

In the 'Identity of the individual and Who is the Psalmist?' we argued for a less formal identification of the Psalmist, and would prefer *'the psalmist'* to stand for 'the poet', since the confidence of Yahweh's nearness and presence demonstrates a very personal relationship (cf. Dahood, PS I: 90-91; Anderson, PSS I: 145-6).

³⁷ Some commentators do not see any clear doctrine of resurrection (Gunkel, Kraus, et al), while others favour the life beyond the grave theme in Ps 16 (Dahood, Weiser). Gunkel comments on 16:10: "The interpretation of a hope and a desire for a life beyond death and the grave that is often attempted would be a foreign concept introduced into the complaint songs" (Gunkel: par.6:5). While, Dahood comments on 16:10: "The psalmist firmly believes that he will be granted the same privilege accorded Enoch and Elijah; he is convinced that God will assume him to himself, without suffering the pains of death. The sentiment is also expressed in Pss 49:16 and 73:24" (Dahood, Ps I: 91).

Gunkel's comments are discordant and not really convincing. He thinks the soul's journey to the underworld is clearly recognised and accepted, but at the same time, "The petition for liberation from Sheol does not mean life after death, but a return to earthly life upon which the psalmist hangs every fibre of his being" (cf. Gunkel, par.6:5: p.132). He refers to Jonah 2:5 and Isa 38:11: "I said, 'I shall see the LORD no more in the land of the living. No longer shall I behold my fellow men among those who dwell in the world'" (NAB). Gunkel further discusses the theme of the soul's journeys, asking: "How did the poetry choose specifically this image of the Hades journey?" (id.).

³⁸ But in mentioning the Psalmist's "obedience to the divine law", he obviously follows Anderson (cf. Craigie: 157).

7.7. Psalm 38

7.7.1. Illness and Punishment

This is the third in the collection of seven penitential psalms. The opening is almost identical to Ps 6:

Punish me no more in your anger;
in your wrath do not chastise me! (יהוה אל־בִּקְצָפְךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי) (Ps 38:1) (NAB)

Do not reprove me in your anger, LORD,
nor punish me in your wrath. (יהוה אל־בִּאֲפֶךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי) (Ps 6:2).

Like Ps 6, it deals with the issue of the Psalmist's sickness and its possible relation to sin (cf. Ps 6:1; 39:9, etc).³⁹ But the language of Psalm 38 and the psalmist's suffering and his utter despair are much harsher than in Ps 6 and depiction of his psychosomatic condition is much more detailed (vv.3-4, 6-9, 11). Clearly, he infers that it is all a result of sin; since Yahweh's hand is heavy upon him (עֲלֵי יָדְךָ) (v.3b) and his arrows "have sunk deep into me" (v.3a), "there is no health in my bones because of my sin" (v.4). The phrase "hand coming down (upon me)" is a synonym for power. Furthermore, the hand can also refer to a purpose.⁴⁰ In other words, Yahweh's hand comes down purposefully on the Psalmist in a retributive action. This is how he feels and interprets his desperate state. His laments and despair does not arouse the compassion of his fellow men, but actually make them wonder or even gloat over him (cf. 38:17 NAB). So his affliction provides an opportunity to muse over the causes of his suffering: "The common belief that illness was a punishment for sin was an unexcelled opportunity to

³⁹ "Do not reprove me in your anger, LORD, nor punish me in your wrath" (Ps 6:1); "Deliver me from all my transgressions. Make me not the scorn of the fool!" (Ps 39:9). Cf. Dahood, PS I: 234.

⁴⁰ The hand does not operate independently, Johnson notes that the hand: "appears to be recognised from the first as controlled by its owner... it is also idiomatic to speak of someone's hand as being laid upon one in judgment" (Aubrey Johnson, 1964:54-55).

the psalmist's enemies, ever eager to slander, to speculate on the nature of his guilt". (Dahood, PS I:234).

For the actual psychosomatic scenography of the Psalmist's state, various expressions are used in relation to his sickness or physical weakness. The symptoms described in vv.4 and 6 are often due to leprosy.⁴¹ In 38:6, his wounds "grow foul (מקק) and fester", which may also be an allusion to leprosy (צרע).⁴² Anderson is reluctant, however:

It would be pointless to speculate about the nature of the illness; it could have been leprosy, but this is more than a guess. It is possible that what appear as the details of the misfortune are simply part and parcel of the established pattern (Anderson PS I:301).

Briggs, on the other hand, examines the psychosomatic state of the Psalmist in detail, but then concludes that it, "Describes a terrible condition of suffering, which may have been individual, but more probably was national" (Briggs, PSI: 338).

This conclusion is at odds with the detailed anthropological description of the Psalmist's sufferings.

7.7.2. Psychomotor Agitation

The psalmist's fears and emotive predicaments are aptly described by his behaviour in his depressed state, which is typical of mental disturbance. Motional-emotional language is depicted in his aimless walking around,

I am bent and bowed down greatly (נעויתי שחתי);
all the day I go about mourning (הלכתי קדר) (Ps 38:7) (JPS).

⁴¹ See the description of the illness in Lev 13:1-17. Cf. Briggs PS I: 338; Kraus PS I: 411; Weiser: 324; Anderson PS I: 304-5; Delitzsch PS II: 22; Craigie:302).

⁴² M. D. Grmek (Grmek, 1989: 175, Croatian translation) in *Les maladies...* (1983) rightly observes that leprosy in such context need not be a medical concept, but rather a sign of divine anger and retribution (see his discussion in Ch.6 on: 'Leprosy with Hebrews and the Persians').

The juxtaposition of the two verbs הלך (walk) and קדר (gloomy), accentuates his sorry state. The primary meaning of קדר is 'to be dark' and relates to the outward expression of mourning. Anderson (1972), following S. R. Driver and G. B. Gray (*The Book of Job*, ICC, 1921), concurs with their interpretation that קדר really mean 'to be dirty' and refers to a person with filthy robes (cf. Anderson, PSI: 281-282). Alternatively, M. L. Barre quite convincingly argues the case that קדר also involves gloomy walking around (Barre, 2001: 182) (cf. Ps 42:10).⁴³

7.7.3. Carefully Composed Prayer?

The text of this psalm takes us back to the ongoing debate on the identity of the individual in the Psalter and issues regarding the cultic, performative nature of the Psalm(s). Mays, commenting on Psalm 38, describes it as a "prayer for help composed for use by the sick". He continues:

Its language and agenda are formulaic and typical. These features show that the psalm is a carefully composed prayer rather than an impromptu utterance. But the composer's skill has captured and expressed the anguished predicament of those for whom it was prepared (Mays:162).

This view basically covers the Psalter's artistic role, rather than the Psalmist's real experience or events.⁴⁴ Croft's formulation of the psalms and his idea of 'criteria of excellence' are along the same lines (Croft: 133), focusing on poetic production and the process of incorporating individual psalms in the final product, the Psalter. As for Psalm 38, it is a conventional picture of trouble (cf. Anderson: 301). Several commentators refer to its language, calling it 'stereotyped' (Anderson); 'carefully

⁴³ Barre rightly observes, "Delekat correctly maintains that no occurrence of Biblical Hebrew q-d-r has reference to clothing. Rather, the root means either 'to be dark', referring to heavenly bodies, or to be 'gloomy', referring to facial expression and hence mood" (Barre: 182).

⁴⁴ Cf. Kraus, 1992:15.

composed prayer' (Mays) or 'a comprehensive list of bodily and mental afflictions' (Mays: 162).

Common to them all is a general, rather abstract understanding of what is sometimes deemed the 'absolute human' (see here: 'Anthropology of the Psalms'). The argument rests on the assumption that poetry was, 'written for' public use, rather than 'written from' real events or personal experiences. Curiously, the proponents of the collective anthropological view are also inclined to pursue the very personal experiences and real event aspects.⁴⁵ In our discussions so far, in reference to poetic conventionality and narrative poetic imagery, and regarding the identity of the private individual in the Psalms, we have demonstrated the weaknesses of an exclusive public-performative approach to the Psalms. Sometimes, an insistent *Formgeschichtliche* approach may bypass the obvious in the text, compromising it with ready-made literary conventions. But Psalm 38 shows us afresh how motional and emotional language can accumulate through the interaction of specific motion verbs with the appropriate emotion verb groups.

⁴⁵ An example is Mays' analysis of Pss 38-40. He frequently points to expressions like "My God" (Ps 38:21). Commenting on Ps 39 he notes that it is "a strange prayer. It has the principle features of the prayer for help in first person singular style" (Mays: 165).

7.8. Psalm 22

Psalm 22 is one of the best known psalms, since it features in the New Testament context of the Gethsemane agony of Jesus of Nazareth, in which he quotes from it directly, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me” (Mt 27:46). Although it does not belong to any of the previously mentioned three psalmodic subgroups, it is special for many reasons, and has been described as “one of the most touching portions of the Psalter” (Weiser: 220). It also exhibits strong emotional “multi-stage ordering” not least in reference to its thanatophobic undertones. Many scholars from both Jewish and Christian traditions have wrestled with it.⁴⁶ From Rashi (cf. Gruber ed., 2007: 256-262) to DeWette, Calvin and Luther, Ewald, and others.⁴⁷ But there are other reasons why we ought to grapple with the psalm, not least the Psalmist’s “apparent contradiction between theology and experience” (Craigie: 199), there Craigie continues:

Theology based on the tradition and experience of the past, affirmed unambiguously that trust (the verb is used three times, for emphasis in vv 5-6) resulted in deliverance. Indeed it was of the essence of the covenant faith that those who trusted in the holy God would not be disappointed—hence the praise of Israel upon which God was enthroned (v 4). But experience was altogether at odds with theology; whereas the fathers trusted and were delivered, the essence of the psalmist’s complaint (“my moaning”, v 2) was ‘the distance of my salvation’. The God of covenant, who was believed not to have deserted his faithful people, appeared to have forsaken this worshiper who, in sickness, faced the doors of death. And it was the sense of being forsaken by God that was fundamental problem (Craigie, id.).

⁴⁶ Cf. R.D. Patterson, ‘Psalm 22: from trial to triumph’ (*JETS* 47 2 2004:213-233). Patterson addresses the psalm with a fourfold approach, which he calls ‘the chair of biblical hermeneutics’ in grammatical, historical-cultural, literary and theological perspectives. In his text he offers a concise list of works that tackle Psalm 22.

⁴⁷ The name Rashi (רשי) is the acronym for Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki. Some interpret his name to mean Rabban shel Yisrael (‘the Teacher of Israel’). The date of Rashi’s birth is uncertain, perhaps the 16th century according to R. Solomon b. Jehiel Luria, but it is more likely to have been around 1030 C.E. at the time around the death of Rabenu Gershom b. Judah.

Craigie notes many of the critical issues emphasised in this work. He proposes that the psalm should be primarily interpreted as “individual psalm, though the liturgy sets the problem of the individual in the context of the community” (Craigie: 198).⁴⁸

Again, there are swings in mood, God’s distance is seen as mortal danger, and the Psalmist is in an emotionally desperate state. Yet he moves elegantly from lament and complaint to prayer and praise, and back again. Most of the problems regarding the structural integrity of the psalm are due to the Psalmist’s emotional vacillations.

7.8.1. Laid in the Dust of Death

The psalm opens with a prayer of desperation and abandonment, “My God, why (למה) have you abandoned me?” (22:1). As noted before, abandonment by God has a thanatophobic dimension and is the first step towards annihilation. The underlying question here is ‘why?’ Why is he abandoned, and why is his cry not heard?⁴⁹

Now, we ought to give some attention concerning Ps 22:1 in reference to the ‘why?’ question, and the way it may make a difference. There are two grammatical forms for the ‘why?’ question (למה and מדוע). There seem to be certain distinctions in the manner and the rationale these are being used. Janowski (cf. Janowski, 2013:334) maintains that the former (למה) suggests: ‘for what reason?’ (in the sense of its purpose, in future terms), while the latter (מדוע) refers to the past (and what is already

⁴⁸ Cf. Craigie: 197; Broyles: 187. The structural integrity and setting are reflected in at least three different moods and material composed of: ‘lament’ (2-22), ‘prayer’ (12, 20-22), and ‘thanksgiving’ (23-32); as well as the sharp distinctions between the two sections of the psalm: v 2-22 and v 23-32. The setting also moves from private, emotional tumult to public, liturgical invocation, “You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you sons of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you sons of Israel!” (v. 24).

⁴⁹ Kraus's hesitation regarding lament in psalms generally is not supported by texts such as Ps 22. Gunkel's views on differentiating between laments and the thanksgiving songs, and how the Psalmist expresses his fears, complaints or thanksgiving, in reference to journeying to the underworld is suggestive, and has already mentioned at the beginning of this work (cf. Gunkel: par.6-5, pp.1 32-134).

known).⁵⁰ Rashi also interprets this למה (in Ps 22) along the same line as questioning the future purpose (cf. Gruber, 2007: 256-259). All this then adds certain weight to the appropriation of this Psalm by Jesus of Nazareth.

The Psalmist states expressly that it is God who has set him on the way to death, “You lay me in the dust of death” (ולעפר־מות תשפּתני) (Ps 22:16). It is worth noting here that the Jewish interpretation assumes the Psalmist is the whole congregation of Israel. According to this exegesis, the nation is going into exile, and David is predicting future events (cf. Gruber, 2007: 256, 259 n. 4).

The verb שפה (שפת) (lit. put on), as in Is 26:12, “Lord, you will establish peace for us” (JPS) (יהוה תשפת שלום לנו), is translated by Dahood as, “And they put me upon the mud of Death” (Dahood, PSI: 137).⁵¹ He argues that תשפּתני is the “third-person feminine collective with plural subject” (id. 140). In which case it is his enemies who set the Psalmist on the way to death, and God has simply left him in the lurch. However, in effect, there is little difference.

7.8.2. But you - But I

The emotional to-and-fro of mood swings, especially in this group of psalms, is grammatically easier to identify from the Psalmist’s distinct use of 1st and 2nd singular personal pronouns. The former relate to the Psalmist, and the latter to Yahweh, and they clearly serve as emotional switches in the text. The speaker moves from confidence (or thanksgiving) to complaint with (ואני or ואנכי), from lament to invocative expressions of confidence, or from pleading to assurance (with אתה). He employs the

⁵⁰ Cf. Janowski, 2013: 334 n. 56. Incidentally, the Psalter does not seem contain מְדוּעַ questions.

⁵¹ Cf. Gruber, 2007: 260 n. 22.

invocative 'but you' (ואתה) (Ps 3:4; 6:4b; 22:4, etc.) and the lamental (or confident) 'but I' (ואנכי) (Ps 22:7; 31:32, 38:14 etc).⁵² Gunkel notes that ואנכי: "Accents the transition to a new component. It leads from the portrayal of hostile proceedings to the expression of confidence" (cf. Ps 13:6). Alternatively, movement occurs: "From the petition and the confidence motif back to the bitter complaint" (cf. Ps 22:7) (Gunkel, 1998: 179).⁵³

Whichever the turn, whether from lament to confidence, or from confidence (and assurance) to lament, a significant emotional shift takes place. Often, emotional movements within the same psalm occur more than once (e.g. Ps 22; 59; 69; 88; 102; 109; 140) (cf. Gunkel, par. 6-22). Within this psalm, there are at least two shifts from complaints (laments) to confidence (thanksgiving). Gunkel's structural arrangement of the multiple emotional stages in the psalm is as follows: "In Ps 22:2-12 the complaint, confidence, and reasons for comfort dominate while in Ps 22:13-22 the deep, doubting complaint has control" (Gunkel, par. 6-22, p.180).

We can agree with this, though with somewhat different accents if we follow the alternations in the ואתה - ואנכי pattern in the same range of verses. Soon, the emotional struggle is represented by ואתה ('but you') followed by ואנכי ('and I'), pointing to the marked polarity between the Psalmist's being merely human (or less than human, a mere worm) while Yahweh is the Holy one, 'qadoš'.

⁵² The 'switch' is amplified grammatically, when the poet uses accentuations and punctuations as literary tools to highlight alterations in mood and emotional shifts; conjunctives and the punctuations (e.g. atnah) with the personal pronouns 1 sg. and 2 sg., e.g. ואתה יהוה (Ps 3:4) (munah and atnah); and ואתה קדש (Ps 22:4) (with merekha and atnah). The result is short, emphatic clauses produced by accentuation and punctuation, achieving the effect of emotional despair. Also with, "But I; I am a worm not a man" (Ps 22:7) (on accentuation and personal pronouns, see: Jouon, par. 32f).

⁵³ There are shifts from 'hostile' – 'confidence' situations with ניוא : Pss 5:8; 13:6; 26:11; 30:7; 31:7; 31:15; 41:13; 52:10; 55:23; 59:17; 69:14; 71:14; 73:2; 73:23; 73:28; 75:10; 88:14; 109:4; 118:7 and shifts from 'confidence' – 'lamental' setting with ניוא Pss 22:7 (ואנכי עני) 6:07 (ואנכי עני), 03:96 (ואנכי עני); 81:04; 41:83; 22:13 (ואנכי עני); 102:12; 109:25.

ואתה קדוש יושב תהלות ישראל (Ps 22:4).
ואנכי תולעת ולא אִישׁ חרפת אדם ובזוי עם (Ps 22:7).

Here, he reveals his turbulent emotions and complains:

All who see me mock me;
they curl their lips and jeer;
they shake their heads at me:
"You relied on the LORD-- let him deliver you;
if he loves you, let him rescue you" (Ps 22:8-9).

While Job, for example, enters readily into controversy with God, the Psalmist simply implores him, "In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted and you rescued them. To you they cried out and they escaped; in you they trusted and were not disappointed", 22:46). The complaint is enveloped in narrative poetry and praise, praising Yahweh's majesty.⁵⁴ So we assign the setting to the cultic community, and the "content centre, and object of all praise sung by the people of God" (Karus: 53), then we may ignore the individual in his suffering.

Those were several psalms, that we explored more closely, and designated them as 'distinct psalms'. Surely, though there are many more exceptional psalms in the Psalter which one can look into more closely, there are several reasons for our choosing this particular selection. For one, these complaint psalms are widely recognized to compose three particular groups of psalms with common thematic focal points, that of: 'penitence', 'imprecation' and 'self-imprecation'. Apart from being fairly focused psalms, some of them their distinct leitmotiv (eg. 'self-imprecation') they are highly emotionally charged and vindictive (cf. Ps 7:4-6). Finally, these psalms well represent that dilemma of the psalmist's vacillating moods. On top of all that, in some

⁵⁴ The Psalmist obviously does not wish to be like Job. Arguing the legal case with God does not seem to be an option for him (compare Job 9:29-31) (cf. Clines, 1989:242). However, the emotional 'pull' is very similar.

of these psalms, one cannot be altogether certain whether the psalmist concedes his innocence or declares his penitence?

8. CONCLUSION

Has this dissertation fulfilled its main objectives, in full or in part? What new insights or new findings can we acclaim? How many or what previous explorations have been successfully revisited or upgraded?

Prior to answering those questions, there are two referential points of departure that we want to address before we fully unravel our findings. The two referential departure points were also the setting off points in our Introduction. One is the call for *appropriation*, and the other is an inquiry into the *(a)symmetrical world of the psalmist*.

Firstly, as a matter of stipulation, we strongly adhere that a successful and unimpaired examination of the Psalter for an attentive and authentic reader and researcher is the issue of *appropriating* the Psalms. In several places we already prompted our firm belief that an attentive and authentic reader-investigator will have to appropriate the Psalms (this is our call for self-identification). When through researching of the Psalter, we familiarize ourselves with the situational contexts of the psalmist as a private person, we also perceive that the Psalter is not 'reducible to text only' (cf. Context based approach). This is also our assurance for more objective examination of the Psalter. To accomplish that task we had to address several key issues in psalmodic studies, to be able to withstand this tendency of the 'long entrenched objectivism' as the final solution for meaning and understanding. In this, chiefly there is a question of the identity of the psalmist as a private individual (cf. Chapter 4). While the Psalter is a testimony of faith and often accentuated as the acknowledgement of the communal faith; the Psalter is also a testimony of distress of

the psalmist as a private individual. This has been implied and argued through this dissertation as one of its chief objectives.

Secondly, to be able to self-identify (appropriation) with the psalmist as a private individual, one has to engage and discern, what is the psalmist's world like. Section entitled 'Symmetrical and Asymmetrical World of the Psalmist', follows Brueggemann's threefold scheme of orientation-disorientation-reorientation. We demonstrate that the psalmist's world as seen throughout the Psalter, is not always as 'symmetrical' (orderly, logical and well-proportioned), as one may perhaps hastily conclude. Quite on the contrary, often we find his world lacking this orderliness and symmetry. We find the psalmist often being overwhelmed to the point of destruction and death, even when he professes his innocence and righteousness. Through many exemplifications provided from lamental Psalms, imprecatory and self-imprecatory Psalms, this asymmetrical world of the psalmist is well disclosed. We witness that in such asymmetrical world, great number of Psalms mark distinct emotional oscillations of the psalmist. This subject matter has been recognised as another major issues in psalmodic studies. This has been addressed in Chapter 4. in the section 'Swings in Mood'. We revisited this topic and underlined our possible inclination among several interpretations offered (psychological, liturgical or invocation of the divine Name). Acceptable are suggestions that among these interpretations there is certain convergence; though we are inclined to take on the approach of the 'invocation of the divine Name' as a conceivable interpretation. Perhaps with one reservation or slight hesitation, as it inevitably takes up several pressing issues from that approach which focuses on the history of religions (Religionsgeschichte), which at times becomes a

challenging issue in the scope of OT religion and Yahwism. This issue of the psalmist's emotional swings could not be addressed further and more thoroughly. No doubt, the issues of the psalmist's mood wavering is open for further and more meticulous investigation. What are other outcomes of this dissertation?

Firstly, this thesis has shown that the Psalter is not only linguistic texts of sentences. In several places in this dissertation ('Religious language and conventions', 'Psalms as prayer utterances', 'Parrhesia of the psalmist') we accentuate the fact that the Psalter cannot be seen only as a piece of literature, linguistic text or as a 'collection of sentences' in a prayer book. We argue that the Psalter, and for that matter the whole Scripture, is not 'reducible to text only'. What is more, the Psalms are essentially prayers and in that they are utterances of prayers. This is easily attested through the linguistic differentiation between *sentences* and *utterances*, what is in semantics sometimes designated as 'utterance meaning'. Interpretations given solely in terms of sentences (structures, forms, and genre), and not really accounting for *utterances* and utterance meanings (message, meaning) may be missing the message of the text. This has been commonly acceptable in the Form Criticism, accentuating the historical-context, and abating on the literary-context or context based approach.

Moreover, if prayers, particularly those written for the 'prayer book' and public use rest on religious language, how is it that the parrhetic language of the psalmist is so pervasive? It is hardly typical of traditionally acknowledged religious language.

The distress, as exemplified in the Psalter, clearly brings to the fore dimensions of the individual anthropology, which at places can hardly be a matter of communal or some kind of collective anthropology. This thesis has shown, by examining the

anthropological dimensions of the Psalter, that there is a psalmist as a private individual that should be accounted for. By investigating individual anthropology (eg. body parts and internal organs) we contest that tendency, of collective anthropology of the *Formgeschichte* traditions, to present the psalmist in terms of the human in the 'absolute sense', 'assembled humans' or even as 'common bones'? To alleviate for the psalmodic texts that clearly show personal anthropological nuance, the so called *synecdoche* interpretation was envisaged; whereas one part of human body represents and acts for the whole corporate and collective self. In the thesis, this interpretation, when it assumes a 'high hand' has been successfully challenged.

One of the incentives and the drivers behind this work was a 'motion' that motion as a concept, an inherent aspect of living (life), curiously also describes the uttermost immobility dying (and death). In such psalmodic portrayals of dying (represented by motional vocabulary) we often find the psalmist in emotional distress of fearing his death. A pattern of the psalmist's disorientation and re-orientation has been noted, his emotional predicament is particularly accentuated when he feels being far away or even abandoned by God (cf. *Deus absconditus*). And while he is still disoriented, soon he will be in a different mood of praise, thanksgiving, confidence and trust (cf. Swings in mood). The thesis has shown that in literary and linguistic terms there is an exceptional presence of motional vocabulary and concomitant phraseology associated with the psalmist's emotional turmoils, at times showing even phobic elements.

Last but not least, in terms of method and analysis this dissertation rests on the context based approach, in understanding of the multiplicity of contexts. The

proposition is that we accept the fourfold scheme composed of: 'internal' and 'external' contexts, at one end; and 'literary' and 'historical' contexts at the other. These four in most cases interact or overlap, rather than exclude each other. In our approach, and in this dissertation, we wish to accentuate and focus more on the internal-literary context and internal literary criteria, as Adele Berlin proposes and develops.

Finally, in this dissertation, what may be considered as new findings, the unique contributions or perhaps areas for further inquiry? Let us daringly itemize some of these: (i) death as a common motif in the Psalter, (ii) motion and motion verbs, as conceptual metaphors, denoting also emotional predicament of the psalmist construing a model of motion-emotion axis, (iii) grammatical dimension of the motion-emotion axis; whereas amongst other matters, we ascertain that there are Hebrew some motion verbal groups which highly more frequent more prone towards emotional axis.

Firstly, principal proposition of this dissertation is that death is so common motif in the Psalter, that it emerges even in such psalms where the psalmist's declaration of his confidence and trust is prevalent (cf. Ps 23). While discussing that, we had to alert against, not an uncommon, but mistaken idea, that the theme and motif are synonymical notions.

Secondly, motion and space, as conceptual metaphors have been widely investigated, and as we noted in the dissertation, this would not be a novel or unique contribution. On the other hand, this dissertation explores motion verbs in the Psalter

(and motion as a concept), being a part of motion-emotion composition. Such motion-emotion axis, show that motion verbs, particularly in the context of the psalmist's fear of death, frequently have emotion words in their linguistic neighbourhood. Moreover, sometimes motion verbs themselves can assume emotive or emotional features and effectively become 'emotion' words, eg. verbs בהל (haste in terror) or ברה (fleeing away).

Thirdly, grammatical and syntactical dimension of motion-emotion axis has been hardly addressed by scholarship. In the dissertation we noted that Philip King relatively recently (2010) gave some grammatical and syntactical notes and contribution in relation to distress 'grammar' in classical Hebrew. In the dissertation we offer several prospective insights in relation to grammatical aspects of motion vocabulary and how it correlates to emotion. For example, we noted that a particular Hebrew verbal group(s) –*ayin waw* and *ayin yod* – seem to be appearing more frequently than any other Hebrew verbal groups in the motion-emotion linguistic compositions. Establishing and observing the frequency of these verbal groups, we conclude that this should not be perceived as coincidental. However, our examination, particularly of *ayin waw* and *ayin yod* groups, can serve more as an opening for further studies in this respect. In this grammatical explorations, we find it useful to give our attention to the so called 'waw of emotion'. This being a frequent stylistic tool and in syntactic framework also an important macrosyntactic sign within the text.

Finally, classifying the selected Hebrew motion verbs in subgroups is a composition and a decision of this author. Particularly this is true for the manner of motion subgroup as represented in tabular form (see Tables: Manner of Motion).

Should the proposed composition be acknowledged and be acceptable, there is still much more room for further exploration.

In addition to what has been said above, we wish to re-emphasize our concern of this thesis over that an authentic approach to the Psalter and psalmodic studies should take into account the importance of appropriation of the Psalter. This has particularly been noted while analyzing some psalmodic texts (see the discussions in 7.8. and 7.8.1.).

TABLES

MANNER OF MOTION

WORDS OF HASTE

בהל	haste (II), terror (I)	Ps 104:29 (I)
ברח	flee, run away	Ps 3:1; 57:1; 139:7 (cf. Jb 9:25; 14:2)
חוש	hurry; חיש	Ps 38:23 (22:20); 70:5(6)
חפז	haste, flee (fear)	Ps 31:22
מהר	haste	Ps 69:17
נוס	flee (<i>intr</i>) cf. Nu 10:35	Ps 142
עוף	fly, חיש	cf. Ps 90:10
רוץ	run	Jb 9:25

WORDS OF SURROUNDING & FOLLOW.

אפק	surround	cf. Ps 18:4(5), 116:3; (Jonah 2:6)
כתר	surround (hostility)	Ps 22:13
נקף	go round, surround	Ps 22:17
סבב	turn around	Ps 17:12, 18:6; 22:13,17; 118:10-11
רדף	follow after	Ps 23:6; 7:6
נשג	chase, catch up	Ps 7:5(6) (Ps 23)

WORDS OF STUMBLING & WANDERING

דחי	stumbling, (w. רגל.)	cf. Ps 56:13(14) (Ps 116:8)
דחה	push down, falling, trip	cf. Ps 118:13 (36:13)
חול	whirl, dance cf. GK73b emot.	Ps 55:5(6); Ps 114:7
כשל	stagger, totter	
מוט	totter, slip; (lat. 'motus')	cf. Ps 94:18
נדד	wander, depart	Ps 55:8 (Dah: PS II:162, compassion)
נוד	wander נוד	Ps 69:20(21) (cf. Gen 4:12)
נוע	wander, stagger	(Gen 4:12) נע ונד
צלע	limp, stumble	Ps 35:15; Ps 38:18 (cf. Gen 32:32)
רוד	wander restlessly	Ps 55:2(3) (cf. Lam 3:19)

WORDS OF THROWING & FALLING

זנח	cast off, reject	Ps 88:15
טול	cast (out)	Ps 37:24 (cf. Is 22:17); Jona 1:5
רמס	trample	Ps 7:5(6) (self-imprecation)
שוח	sink (<i>intr</i>)	
שלח	send (<i>tran</i>)	
שליך	throw (<i>tran</i>)	Ps 51:11(13), fc. Ps 71:9

WORDS OF CRAWLING

זחל	crawl	Mic 7:17 (De 32:24)
רמש	creep	
שרץ	crawl	
שחה	swim	Ps 6:6(7)

DIRECTED MOTION

HORIZONTAL MOTION

ENTER

בוא	go in, enter (intr)	Ps 69:2 (66:11)
יצא	come out	
נסע	set out, dep (intr/tran)	cf.Nu 10:35 imprecat.
נדה	drive away, (cf. דחה)	cf.Ps 5:11
רחק	move away (intr)	Ps 22:12

TURN

סוג	turn back, go (astray)	cf.Ps 53:3 (4), GK 72ee
סור	depart, go away	Ps 6:9 (104:29; 102:3)
פנה	turn (towards)	cf. Pss 25; 69; 86
שוב	return (back)	Ps 6:5 (Ps 104:29), Ps 116:7-8

VERTICAL MOTION

UP

חלץ	pull up, out	Ps 116:8
נטל	lift, bear	
נצב	stand (up), set up	cf.Ps 39:5(6),cf.Nifal, TWOT
נצל	pull up, remove	Ps 69:1-15 (cf. 2Sam 20:6 - הצייל עיינו)
נשא	lift, carry	Ps 4:7; 24:4; 25:1; 86:4; 143:8
עלה	go up, ascend	
קום	stand, rise	Ps 35:2; 41:9; 44:27; 88:11; 140:11
רום	rise up, be high (tran)	Ps 61:3; 138:6 (Ps 21:14; 57:6,11; 108:5; 113:4)

DOWN

ירד	go down (intr/tran)	Ps 22:30; 28:1; 49:15,18; 55:16; 88:4; 115:17; 143:7
טבע	sink	Ps 69:15
נחת	go down, sink in	Ps 38:2 (Jb 17,16)
נטה	bend, bow d., stretch	cf.Ps 40:2;cf. נטה cf.88:2
נפל	fall	Ps 55:5; 57:7
שחה	bow down (w. עוה)	Ps 38:7 (42:7)

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