

# **The Metaphorical Concept “Life is a Journey” in the Qur’an: a Cognitive-semantic Analysis**

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## **Abstract**

This paper demonstrates how the conceptual metaphor “life is a journey” pervades the Qur’an and how within the same scope we can find some related metaphors, such as “the Straight Way”, “the way of Hell” and “Companions of the Fire”, among others. The metaphor “life is a journey” takes as a source domain the concept “journey” and as a target domain the concept “life”. The other related metaphors are an extension of that metaphor. The instances of the “journey” metaphor with its underlying “path” schema will be analyzed using the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor as created by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and developed later by Lakoff and Turner (1989), and others, e.g. Wreth (1994, 1999). The application of the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor will reveal how this metaphor is used creatively, as it is built on dichotomy or contrast, and how it is widened to cover a broader aspect of life, i.e., life after physical death (the afterlife/hereafter). Meanwhile, the tenets of the theory will be confirmed by experimenting them with the Qur’anic metaphors to show how they are a most effective tool for conducting such an analysis.

Der vorliegende Beitrag zeigt, wie sich die Konzeptmetapher „Leben ist Reise“ durch den Koran zieht und inwiefern dort weitere ähnliche Metaphern wie z.B. „der direkte Weg“, „der Weg der Hölle“ und „die Gefährten des Feuers“ auftreten. Die Metapher „Leben ist Reise“ hat das Konzept „Reise“ als Quellbereich und das Konzept „Leben“ als Zielbereich. Die anderen damit in Verbindung stehenden Metaphern stellen eine Fortführung der Metapher dar. Die Beispiele der Reise-Metapher mit dem ihnen zugrundeliegenden „Weg-Schema“ werden mit Hilfe der von Lakoff/Johnson (1980) begründeten und von Lakoff/Turner (1989), sowie Wreth (1994, 1999) weiterentwickelten kognitiven Metapherntheorie (Lakoff / Johnson, 1980) analysiert. Die Anwendung der kognitiven Metapherntheorie zeigt, inwiefern die Reisemetapher auf kreative Weise verwendet wird, insofern als sie auf Dichotomie oder Kontrast beruht, und wie sie sich auf einen sehr weit gefassten Begriff des Lebens, d.h. auch das Leben nach dem Tod (das Jenseits) umfassend, beziehen lässt. Durch das Experimentieren mit den Metaphern des Koran wird bestätigt, dass die verwendete Theorie ein äußerst effektives Analysewerkzeug darstellt.

## **1. Introduction**

This paper is concerned with applying the cognitive linguistic view of metaphor theory as defined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to the Qur’an. Such an application of the cognitive semantic approach after the manner of Lakoff and Johnson can provide valuable insights. These insights enhance the overall aim of this paper which is to prove the linguistic creativity of the Qur’an through applying the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor to religious metaphor.

The first section of the paper is dedicated to summarizing the framework of the cognitive approach to metaphor as well as deriving certain predictions about the occurrence, frequency,

and conceptual features expected of linguistic metaphors in religious discourse or texts. The section closes with a short explanation of the theoretical focus of the paper.

The main section of this paper is devoted to the conceptual analysis of metaphors taken from the Qur’an. All linguistic examples are quoted from the English translation done by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (New York, 1988) entitled *The Holy Qur’an: Text, Translation and Commentary*. Yusuf Ali’s translation “perhaps the most popular translation, stands as another major achievement in this field [besides that of Pickthall].” (Kidwai: 1987) A semasiological approach is applied to the data where the instances of the “journey” metaphor are singled out. The final section of this study is assigned to the findings where it shows how the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor helps greatly reveal the linguistic creativity of the Qur’an.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 The Cognitive Theory of Metaphor**

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) presents a cognitive assumption which revolves round the existence of a set of metaphorical concepts around which we can conceptualize the world or our worldviews. They asserted that metaphor is rather a matter of experience or everyday life than merely a matter of language: “Metaphor is a tool so ordinary that we use it unconsciously and automatically... it is irreplaceable: metaphor allows us to understand our selves and our world in ways that no other modes of thought can.” (Lakoff and Turner 1989: xi) However, it has a substantial impact on the poetic character of a literary work as such work depends on the imaginative use inferred to it by the writer.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 6) claim that part of “the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined.” Thus, certain aspects of life are conceptualized metaphorically in a systematic way. Meanwhile, Lakoff and Johnson offer a wide range of metaphors covering basic aspects of life by structuring metaphorically one aspect in terms of another. To our surprise, they do not include the metaphorical concept “life is a journey” in their basic metaphors which conceptualize our daily experiences, although the arguments they use for the metaphor “love is a journey”, with regard to the types of journeys made in a love relationship, can easily be applied to the metaphor “life is a journey”. However, Lakoff and Turner (1989: 3) gave a conceptualization of this metaphor later.

We should differentiate between metaphorical concepts, which are restructured metaphorically, and metaphorical expressions, which derive from the metaphorical concept. “Life is a journey” is an example of a metaphorical concept while “He must be well aware in

private that the people need reassurance if they are to travel along the road of reform.” and “...following the Soviet Union along the road of economic reform.” (Deignan 1995: 192) are metaphorical expressions which represent part of the previous metaphorical concept. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) draw a distinction between conventional metaphors and imaginative metaphors. The first group of metaphors is divided into live and dead metaphors while the second is divided into live and novel.

Live conventional metaphors are the used part of a metaphorical concept. Thus, “...following the Soviet Union along the road of economic reform.” is one of the parts commonly used of the metaphorical concept “life is a journey” and therefore it is an example of live conventional metaphor. Dead conventional metaphors are expressions which lost their metaphorical connotations and became common expressions such as “time flies”; “... dead metaphors—metaphors that may have been alive and vigorous at some point out have become so conventional and commonplace with constant use that by now they have lost their vigor.” (Kövecses 2002: ix)

On the other hand, novel imaginative metaphors represent a new way of thinking as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) points out: “It is a metaphor not used to structure part of our normal conceptual system but as a new way of thinking about something”. An example of these is the expression “a grief ago” used by Dylan Thomas to speak about the passing of time in terms of an emotional state. (cf. Leech 1969) Live imaginative metaphors are either (i) instances of the unused part of the literal metaphor; or (ii) extensions of the used part of a metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 53). Thus, going back to the initial conceptual metaphor “life is a journey”, the expression “he had many obstacles on his road to fame” is an example of the unused part of this conceptual metaphor where it flatters the unused correspondence “life has the option of difficult roads”.

### **2.1.1 Imaginative metaphor**

Special attention will be given in this paper to imaginative metaphor with its two subtypes since it reveals the linguistic creativity of the Qur’an. This is not to say that there are not any conventional metaphors in the Qur’an, although the concept of conventionality is relative here. This is due to the fact that the Qur’an has been there for about 1500 years, which gave enough room for its figures of speech to pervade all types of discourse in Arabic and hence, we cannot draw a clear line between imaginative and conventional metaphors in it. This same situation applies also to English translations of the Qur’an where translators tend to

paraphrase the Qur’an in simple language, neglecting its creative metaphors. On this problem of metaphor translation, Alvarez (1993: 479) comments:

“One of the main difficulties a literary translator has to face is metaphorical language. In view of its importance and frequency it constitutes an essential element in translating process, but it has received little attention by translation theorists, perhaps because of the obstacles to reach some kind of theory of metaphor translation”.

It goes without saying that different aspects related to the metaphor in its source language should be taken into consideration on translating it. Recent research in metaphor has emphasized the psychological, social, cultural and linguistic aspects (e.g. Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Murphy 1997, Verbrugge 1984).

Novel metaphors are created from conceptual metaphors in the Qur’an, and hence, the appropriate way of analyzing them is the application of the cognitive model of metaphor since this model is a useful tool for the analysis of novel metaphor, and at the same time, it is coherent with the creativity of the Qur’an.

The cognitive approach to metaphor is used here not only because metaphorical concepts are present in the Qur’an but also because of the creative imaginative use made of these conceptual metaphors. Johnson (1987: 98) comments on this aspect by saying the following:

Metaphors are sometimes creative in giving rise to structure within our experience. That is, they do not merely report pre-existing, independent experience, rather they contribute to the process by which our experience and our understanding [...] are structured in a coherent and meaningful fashion”.

Hence, our metaphorical conception of the world acquires new dimensions and to some extent modified. Such a process results in a type of literary metaphor revealing the author’s own views and belongs to his poetic universe as Boyd (1979: 361) states:

“Typically, a literary metaphor has its *home*, so to speak, in a specific work of a specific author; when the same metaphor is employed by other authors, a reference to the original employment is often implicit”.

Thus we can point, for instance, to the fact that how the creative figures of speech in the Qur’an are used implicitly by countless authors in Arabic to so a great extent that they lose their creativity.

### **2.1.2 Nine hypotheses of the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor**

Jäkel (2002: 20-42) summarizes the basic tenets of the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor in the form of nine hypotheses as follows:

(1) *Ubiquity Hypothesis*

Linguistic metaphor is not an exceptional matter of poetic creativity or excessive rhetoric. In perfectly ordinary everyday language (as well as in highly specialized expert discourse), conventional metaphors are abundant. Therefore, linguists have to face the task of accounting for them as part of our general linguistic competence.

(2) *Domain Hypothesis*

Most metaphorical expressions are not to be treated in isolation, but as linguistic realizations of *conceptual metaphors*: These consist in the systematic connection of two different *conceptual domains*, one of which functions as *target domain* (X) with the other supplying the *source domain* (Y) of the metaphorical mapping. In this manner, X is conceptualized as Y, one conceptual domain is understood by taking recourse to another domain of experience.

(3) *Model Hypothesis*

Quite often, conceptual metaphors form coherent *cognitive models*: complex gestalt structures of organized knowledge as pragmatic simplifications of an even more complex reality. These *idealized cognitive models* (ICMs), which can be reconstructed by means of cognitive linguistic analyses of everyday language, are regarded as cultural models likely to unconsciously determine the world view of a whole linguistic community.

(4) *Diachrony Hypothesis*

Cognitive-semantic studies of metaphor show that even in the historical development of languages, most metaphorical meaning extensions are not a matter of isolated expressions, but provide evidence of systematic metaphorical projections between whole conceptual domains. Therefore a cognitive approach to metaphor can benefit from the integration of the diachronic dimension.

(5) *Unidirectionality Hypothesis*

As a rule, metaphor (“X is Y”) links an abstract and complex target domain (X) as explanandum with a more *concrete* source domain (Y) as explanans, which is more simply structured and open to sensual experience. In this connection, the relation between the elements X and Y is irreversible, the metaphorical transfer having an unequivocal direction. This *unidirectionality* of metaphor is found both synchronically and diachronically.

(6) *Invariance Hypothesis*

In conceptual metaphors, certain schematic elements get mapped from the source domain onto the target domain without changing their basic structure. These preconceptual *image-schemata* provide the experimental grounding of even the most abstract of conceptual domains.

*(7) Necessity Hypothesis*

In general, metaphors have an *explanatory function*. Certain issues could hardly be understood or conceptualized at all without recourse to conceptual metaphor. Abstract conceptual domains, theoretical constructs, and metaphysical ideas in particular are only made accessible to our understanding by means of metaphor. Through relating even the most abstract conceptual thinking to sensual perception, conceptual metaphors supply a bodily, biophysical grounding of cognition, providing coherence and unity of our experience.

*(8) Creativity Hypothesis*

The potential meaningfulness of metaphor does not yield to simple paraphrase, its meaning cannot be reduced to a nonmetaphorical, propositional format without loss. This is the reason for the enormous *creativity* that metaphor displays not only in poetic discourse: In ordinary everyday life it can restructure ingrained patterns of thinking. And in scientific contexts it can have a *heuristic function*.

*(9) Focusing Hypothesis*

Metaphors only supply a *partial* description or explanation of the target domain in question, highlighting certain aspects while hiding others. It is this *focusing* that makes the difference between alternative metaphors for the same target domain.

These nine hypotheses constitute the gist of a refined Cognitive Theory of Metaphor. It should be noted here that not all of them will be of the same concern to the following application of this theory to the Qur’an. Thus, hypotheses (4) and (9) will be largely neglected as the metaphor study neither includes diachronic investigations nor compares the different focusing effects of alternative models. Meanwhile, based on the investigation done by Jäkel (2002), hypothesis (6) i.e. Invariance Hypothesis is simply too vague for application to religious texts to be falsified empirically.

“Further reasons for this vagueness lie in the facts that the inventory of image-schemata is anything but agreed upon, and that not all image-schemata are as clearly delineated in their internal structure as the ‘path’ schema. Different from the other hypotheses central to the cognitive approach, the ‘invariance hypothesis’

is not an empirical hypothesis whatsoever. The Cognitive Theory of Metaphor would be better off without it” (Jäkel 2002: 38).

As for hypotheses (1) and (8), they will be proved valid through the application process. On the other hand, hypotheses number 2, 3, 5, and 7 are more central to the present research as shown in the following section.

### **2.1.3 General predictions related to religious discourse**

According to Jäkel (2002: 22-24), certain predictions, out of this theoretical framework, can be made about the occurrence, frequency, and centrality of linguistic metaphors in religious texts or discourse. Moreover, some of the conceptual characteristics expected from these metaphors may be predicted.

As for the *domain hypothesis* (number 2), these metaphorical expressions should display enough systematization to be accounted for in terms of conceptual metaphors. Moreover, as expressed in the *model hypothesis* (number 3), these conceptual metaphors might even form coherent *cognitive models*.

Due to the unidirectionality hypothesis (number 5), the metaphorical source domains revealed by conceptual analysis should in principle be of a concrete kind which is open to experience through the senses. This hypothesis would naturally exclude a reversal of the direction of transfer where the religious domain functions as a source domain.

With regard to the *necessity hypothesis* (number 7), the domain of the religious should be largely dependent on metaphorical conceptualization. This realization is due to the fact that it is not only a highly abstract domain quite removed from sensual experience, but also its central issues of “God”, “the soul”, “the hereafter”, and “the freedom of moral choice” have traditionally been regarded as the metaphysical ideas par excellence. The conceptualization of metaphysical ideas through metaphor has been observed by Bible commentators such as Platzner (1996) who asserts that “even the most intricate of metaphoric constructions cannot bridge the cognitive distance between language and divine reality.” (9) Thus, religious discourse should abound with metaphorical expressions.

These predictions as well as the tenets of the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor will be examined later in the light of the application of this theory to the Qur’an.

### **2.1.4 The focus of investigation: The “path” schema**

The focus of this paper is on the “journey” metaphors since this focus is advantageous in many respects. In addition to conceptualizing interesting aspects of the target domain such as

the idea of the good life, moral choice, and the relation between God and human beings, the source domain “journey” has at its core one of the most clearly delineated of image-schemata; i.e. the “path” schema. A brief outline of this conceptual building block is in order here.

The “path” schema, which has alternative labels such as “source-path-goal” schema and “motion” schema, has been described in detail in cognitive-semantic literature (cf. Lakoff 1987: 275ff, Johnson 1987: 113ff, and Krzeszowski 1993: 317-18). It is one of the most pervasive of image-schemata with a firm experiential grounding. Its basic structure includes a starting point or “source” of motion, the “path” traversed, and a “goal”. This simple basic structure implies other important notions such as “forward motion” in a certain direction (making “progress”), “distance” traveled, or “speed” of motion. The “path” consists of spatial “points” in linear succession, which may include salient “landmarks”. The “path” may also feature “crossroads” or “forks”. The traveler may be faced with “obstacles” that he has to go around.

The mapping details of this image-schema will be explored in the next section as it is the main section. It should be noted here that all examples chosen for linguistic investigation are taken from the surahs (chapters) of the Qur’an. This choice proves how the conceptualizations analyzed are central to the Islamic faith. Meanwhile, such a bulk of conceptual metaphors shed light on the amazing creativity of the Qur’an, which is rich in overt similes and parables proper. All linguistic examples are quoted from the English translation done by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (New York, 1988) entitled *The Holy Qur’an: Text, Translation and Commentary*. This translation, as mentioned earlier, has been the most popular throughout the whole world due to its clarity and thoroughness.

### **3. The analysis: the “journey” metaphor in the Qur’an**

Before indulging in analyzing the “journey” metaphor in the Qur’an, a brief overview of the structure of that journey, according to Lakoff and Turner, is in order.

#### **3.1 “Life as a journey” metaphor in Lakoff and Turner**

One of the main basic metaphors that Lakoff and Turner use in their guide to poetic metaphor is “life as a journey” whose structure leads one to consider certain correspondences “as a *mapping* between two conceptual domains”, the source domain (‘journey’) and the target domain (‘life’). (1989: 3) Lakoff and Turner (1989: 3-4) enumerate these correspondences as follows:

- (i) The person leading a life is a traveler

- (ii) His purposes are destinations
- (iii) The means for achieving purposes are routes
- (iv) Difficulties in life are impediments to travel
- (v) Counselors are guides
- (vi) Progress is the distance traveled
- (vii) Things you gauge your progress by are landmarks
- (viii) Choices in life are crossroads
- (ix) Material resources and talents are provisions

To clarify these correspondences based on the “life as a journey” metaphor, using “journey” as a source domain and “life” as a target domain, it is possible to see the different mappings that take place and how many of them have at least one well-used metaphorical reference within everyday thought as follows:

<u>Source: Journey</u>	<u>Target: Life</u>
The travelers	The people who are alive
The vehicle	Life itself
The journey	Events in life and the moving from birth to death
The distance covered	The age of a person
Obstacles encountered	General impediments, e.g. illness
Decisions about where to go	Career choices etc
The ultimate destination	Death

Examples of metaphors from the “life as a journey” basic metaphor include “He’s lost his sense of direction” (indicating the decisions about where to go in life in terms of career choices etc being mapped on to the schema) and “He’s getting on in years” (indicating traveling along the path towards death). This leads us to explore the nature of the “journey” metaphor in the Qur’an.

### **3.2 The “journey” metaphor in the Qur’an: a dichotomous structure**

There is no doubt that the “journey” metaphor in the religious context of the Qur’an draws a clear, dichotomous distinction between two ways of life: the good, moral life on the one hand versus the bad, immoral life on the other hand. This dichotomy runs through all the detailed aspects of the metaphorical model. Thus, an introduction is given in section (3.2.1) about the two general kinds of journey. Then, the two types of journeys; moral and immoral, will be

explored in subsection (3.2.1.i.). Next, the two sorts of paths; good and evil, will be examined in subsection (3.2.1.ii.). After that, the two kinds of travelers involved will be highlighted in section (3.2.2.). Finally, God’s role as a guide and misleader in the metaphorical scenario will be investigated in section (3.2.3.). Such a role also comprises two basically different attitudes and ways of acting where God supports the righteous and obstructs the wicked.

The following diagram shows how the course of the “journey” metaphor in the Qur’an is taken:

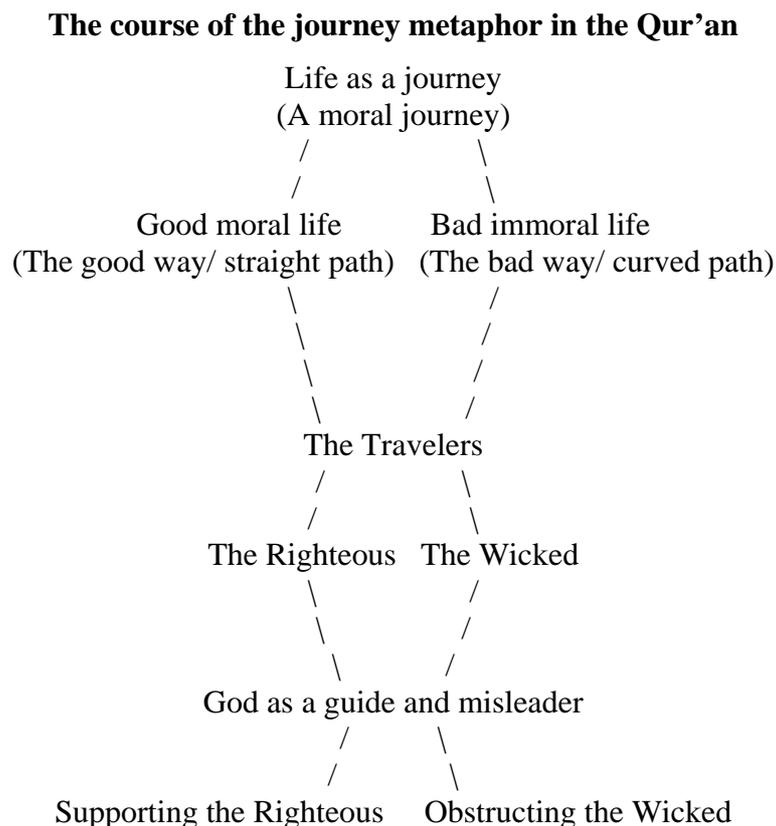


Figure (1)

### 3.2.1 The moral journey

In this section, there are two phases: the first phase is the journey of life as a moral journey, and the metaphors related to it will be investigated, then the second phase which is the two paths of this moral journey; the good way and the bad way, and the metaphors connected with both ways will be examined.

#### 3.2.1.i The journey of life as a moral journey

The moral journey of life is discussed in the Qur’an on two levels; the good moral life and the bad immoral life. The good moral life includes the following points: how God’s instructions are embodied in the good way, how sticking to these instructions lead people to the good way,

how people follow one god in the good way, the possibility of repentance for sinners and accepting them on the good way, and finally man is free to choose between the good way and the bad way. On the other hand, the bad immoral way includes the following points: how the Devil’s seduction is embodied in his way, how the deviation of people from God’s instructions lead to their taking to the road of sin, how people follow different fake gods on the evil way, the persistence of sinners, and finally man is free to choose the bad way but he has to bear the consequences of his choice.

The structure of the “life as a journey” metaphor involves a clear moral imperative: Leading a moral life is making a journey on God’s way. This imperative is crystal-clear in the following verses:

- (1) Verily, this is My way, leading straight: follow it: follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (great) path: thus doth He command you that ye may be righteous. (surah 6: verse 153)
- (2) Whoever holds firmly to Allah will be shown a way that is straight. (surah 3: verse 101)
- (3) Allah sets forth (another) Parable of two men: one of them dumb, with no power of any sort; a wearisome burden is he to his master; whichever way he directs him, he brings no good: is such a man equal with one who commands Justice, and is on a Straight Way? (surah 16: verse 76)

As example (1) shows, the imperative itself is God-given, consisting in the command to follow God’s way exactly and without turning aside (to other paths). In example (2), he who follows the instructions of God will be led to the right path. This ethical conduct, which belongs to the issue of the target domain, is confirmed by example (3) where those who command justice will be on the straight way. Thus, God’s way is kept by doing what is right.

The following verses exemplify an ontological metaphor in which the path itself represents God and his instructions, where God’s instructions are embodied in the path:

- (4) And those to whom knowledge has come see that the (Revelation) sent down to thee from thy Lord - that is the Truth, and that it guides to the Path of the Exalted (in might), Worthy of all praise. (surah 54: verse 6)
- (5) For they have been guided (in this life) to the purest of speeches; they have been guided to the Path of Him Who is Worthy of (all) Praise. (surah 22: verse 24)
- (6) And thus have We, by Our Command, sent inspiration to thee: thou knewest not (before) what was Revelation, and what was Faith; but We have made the (Qur’an) a Light, wherewith We guide such of Our servants as We will; and verily thou dost guide (men) to the Straight Way,- The Way of Allah, to Whom belongs whatever is in the Heavens and whatever is on earth. Behold (how) all affairs tend towards Allah! (surah 42: verses 52-53)

The opposite of the above metaphor, i.e. the good path itself represents God and his instructions where God’s instructions are embodied in the path, is correct as well with regard to the evil path which represents the Devil and his temptations where these temptations are personified in that path:

- (7) Those who reject Faith and do wrong,- Allah will not forgive them nor guide them to any way- Except the way of Hell, to dwell therein for ever. And this to Allah is easy. (surah 4: verses 168-169)
- (8) "Bring ye up", it shall be said, "The wrong-doers and their wives, and the things they worshipped- "Besides Allah, and lead them to the Way to the (Fierce) Fire!" (surah 37: verses 22-23)

It is noteworthy here that the Devil’s way is not named after him in the Qur’an but rather after the destination of following his temptations i.e. Hell or the Fierce Fire. As a way of despising the Devil and not to put him on equal footing with God, the way he leads the wicked to is not named after him, unlike the way God leads the righteous to, which is named after Him as we have seen in the examples. Rather, the way led to by the Devil is named after the catastrophic consequence of such leading or guiding. It is the way of Hell where the wicked will stay for good. Meanwhile, those who follow God’s way are called “friends of Allah” (surah 10: verse 62) while those who follow the Devil’s way are called “friends of Satan” (surah 4: verse 76).

As a consequence of this general model of good life, violations of God’s instructions are conceptualized as a kind of straying, a deviation from God’s way, where sinning is deviating or straying from God’s way:

- (9) Those who reject Faith and keep off (men) from the way of Allah, have verily strayed far, far away from the Path. (surah 4: verse 167)
- (10) Those who will be gathered to Hell (prone) on their faces,- they will be in an evil plight, and, as to Path, most astray. (surah 25: verse 34)
- (11) Seest thou such a one as taketh for his god his own passion (or impulse)? Couldst thou be a disposer of affairs for him? Or thinkest thou that most of them listen or understand? They are only like cattle;- nay, they are worse astray in Path. (surah 25: verses 43-44)

Thus, those who have not followed God’s instructions, and consequently have taken to the road of sin, stray now from God’s path and therefore become most or worse astray.

This metaphorical swerving of the sinner may result in a complete change of route, where the sinful traveler follows other fake gods:

- (12) If anyone contends with the Messenger even after guidance has been plainly conveyed to him, and follows a path other than that becoming to men of Faith, We shall leave him in the path he has chosen, and land him in Hell,- what an evil refuge! Allah forgiveth not (The sin of) joining other gods with Him; but He forgiveth whom He

pleaseth other sins than this: one who joins other gods with Allah, Hath strayed far, far away (from the right). (The Pagans), leaving Him, call but upon female deities: They call but upon satan the persistent rebel! (surah 4: verses 115-117)

While the Qur’an condemns severely those who follow other gods, it emphasizes the worship of God the One and following His way and denounces those who follow fake gods and turn back i.e. go in the opposite direction:

- (13) Say thou: "I am but a man like you: It is revealed to me by Inspiration, that your Allah is one Allah: so stand true to Him, and ask for His Forgiveness." And woe to those who join gods with Allah,- (surah 41: verses 6)
- (14) Say: "What has come to me by inspiration is that your Allah is One Allah: will ye therefore bow to His Will (in Islam)?" But if they turn back, Say: "I have proclaimed the Message to you all alike and in truth; but I know not whether that which ye are promised is near or far. (surah 21: verses 108-109)

But this desertion from God’s way and the sinner’s following of a bad path is not necessarily irreversible. The next two verses (15 and 16) exemplify the metaphorical conceptualization “repenting is returning”:

- (15) If two men among you are guilty of lewdness, punish them both. If they repent and amend, Leave them alone; for Allah is Oft-returning, Most Merciful. (surah 4: verse 16)
- (16) "Our Lord! Thy Reach is over all things, in Mercy and Knowledge. Forgive, then, those who turn in Repentance, and follow Thy Path; and preserve them from the Penalty of the Blazing Fire!" (surah 40: verse 7)

In the above two examples (15 and 16), we find the sinners return to God as they turn in repentance after they have turned away from His path. It is a situation where one feels as if God were waiting for His creatures at the very end of His path welcoming them with wide-open arms. Thus, God asserts his extreme care for his creatures and that He is always looking forward to receiving them on His path despite their disobedience and willful alienation from Him.

If on the other hand, the sinner does not repent and his immoral conduct remains persistent, he is conceptualized as a traveler walking on evil ways, where leading an immoral life is walking in the footsteps of the mischievous or ignorant, as it is the road of evil or an evil road:

- (17) and follow not the way of those who do mischief. (surah 7: verse 142)
- (18) and follow not the road of those who have no knowledge. (surah 10: verse 89)

Thus, we have seen the two basic alternatives offered by the “journey” model: The traveler can either follow God’s way and be a moral person, or he can walk off to travel on evil ways and be an immoral person. The choice is his, and this aspect is demonstrated in the metaphorical model “Moral choice is choice of path” as in the following examples:

- (19) Who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to Allah, does good, and follows the way of Abraham the true in Faith? For Allah did take Abraham for a friend. (surah 4: verse 125)
- (20) Some He hath guided: Others have (by their choice) deserved the loss of their way; in that they took the evil ones, in preference to Allah, for their friends and protectors, and think that they receive guidance. (surah 7: verse 30)
- (21) The day He will gather them together as well as those whom they worship besides Allah, He will ask: “Was it ye who let these My servants astray, or did they stray from the Path themselves?” They will say: “Glory to Thee! not meet was it for us that we should take for protectors others besides Thee: But Thou didst bestow, on them and their fathers, good things (in life), until they forgot the Message: for they were a people (worthless and) lost.” (surah 25: verses 17-18)
- (22) Say: “O ye men! Now Truth hath reached you from your Lord! those who receive guidance, do so for the good of their own souls; those who stray, do so to their own loss: and I am not (set) over you to arrange your affairs.” (surah 10: verse 108)
- (23) The Hypocrites - they think they are over-reaching Allah, but He will over-reach them: When they stand up to prayer, they stand without earnestness, to be seen of men, but little do they hold Allah in remembrance; (They are) distracted in mind even in the midst of it,- being (sincerely) for neither one group nor for another whom Allah leaves straying,- never wilt thou find for him the way. (surah 4: verses 142-143)
- (24) Those who believe, then reject faith, then believe (again) and (again) reject faith, and go on increasing in unbelief,- Allah will not forgive them nor guide them on the way. (surah 4: verse 137)
- (25) Say: “Shall we indeed call on others besides Allah,- things that can do us neither good nor harm,- and turn on our heels after receiving guidance from Allah? - like one whom the evil ones have made into a fool, wandering bewildered through the earth, his friends calling, come to us’, (vainly) guiding him to the path.” Say: “Allah’s guidance is the (only) guidance, and we have been directed to submit ourselves to the Lord of the worlds;-(surah 6: verse 71)

As we can see, in verse (19), the good way is chosen; where the faithful choose God’s path willingly, while in verse (20), the bad way is chosen; where people follow Devils and stray from the right path of their own free will. The verses (21) and (22) state clearly that people go astray or follow the good way at will. The final examples (number 23, 24 and 25) show the state of those who cannot decide which path to choose and keep moving from the bad way to the good and vice versa. These three examples express severe criticism of rather unsettled and dubious moral conduct, typical of the hypocrites, which is conceptualized as a distraction in mind, fluctuation and bewilderment, resulting in God’s decision never to help them find His way; since He has shown them signs to His way from the very beginning through His prophets. Thus, those hypocrites are lost travelers.

So far, we have investigated the first phase of the “life as journey” metaphor which is “the moral journey”. It is a moral journey in the sense that those who walk on the straight path

(God’s path) will lead a morally right life. On the other hand, those who go astray will lead an immorally bad life. Those who disobey God’s instructions deviate from His straight path. Moreover, they become disbelievers and take other routes as they follow other fake gods. In the meantime, they might repent and return to God’s straight path. If they do not repent, they will walk on evil ways where they lead an immoral life. However, man is the master of his own will as it is up to him to decide whether to choose the good road or the bad one. There is no obligation or compulsion. Man is free to choose which way to take. But of course he has to bear the consequences of his choice.

The salient points of the two roads of the moral journey discussed in the above subsection can be summed up in the following table which shows the contrastive features of the two types of life adopted during this journey:

**The moral journey**

Good moral life	Bad immoral life
1-Follow God’s way	Follow other paths
2-God’s instructions are embodied in his path, therefore this path is called God’s way	The Devil’s seduction is embodied in this way, therefore this path might be called the way of Hell indicating the final destination of it
3-People are guided to the good way because they stick to God’s instructions	People deviate from God’s way because they violate his instructions and take to the road of sin
4-Those who choose the good way follow one God	Those who choose the evil way follow other gods
5-Sinners may repent and follow the righteous on the good way	Sinners might remain persistent and follow the mischievous and ignorant on the evil way
6-The choice is yours: you may choose to follow god’s prophets and the righteous on the good way	The choice is yours: you may choose to follow the Devil’s disciples on the evil way
Those who are distracted and fluctuate between the two choices are severely criticized as hypocrites and totally unworthy of any guidance from God	

Figure (2)

Now we move on to the second phase of the “life as a journey” metaphor. This phase deals with the two paths; the good one and the bad one. What are the features of both ways? And where do they lead to? These questions will be answered in the following subsection.

### **3.2.1.ii Paths; the good path versus the bad path**

The present section is dedicated to a closer inspection of the “paths” on which the good and bad journeys are located. The metaphorical expressions employed in this regard show the features of two kinds of paths; one good and one bad. The good side of this dichotomy will be explored first.

#### **3.2.1.ii.a God’s way – The good way**

The only good way in the present metaphorical religious model is that of God. The most distinctive feature of this way is its straightness; “God’s way is a straight path”, as seen in the following examples:

(26) Show us the straight way (surah 1: verse 6)

(27) And We guided them to the Straight Way. (surah 37: verse 118)

We can see that the definite article is used in the phrase “the straight way” to indicate that God’s way is known to all human beings and thus, their deviation from it is totally unjustified. Although this same phrase occurs in several verses in the indefinite case, it is used in the indefinite to highlight human beings’ intentional ignorance of God’s way as they deny their faith in Him and His Messenger as seen in the following example:

(28) And how would ye deny Faith while unto you are rehearsed the Signs of Allah, and among you lives the Messenger? Whoever holds firmly to Allah will be shown a way that is straight. (surah 3: verse 101)

It should be noted here that the number of occurrence for the phrase “straight path” in the indefinite exceeds its occurrence in the definite by far. This fact implies that human beings tend to ignore God’s path purposefully as they cannot distinguish it among a number of fake paths opened to them by the Devil and his disciples. Although God’s path is shown to all humans, they consider it just another path among a number of Devilish paths.

Our source domain knowledge about journeys and their paths tells us that a straight path is usually directed towards a specific goal. If we inquire about the destination of God’s way, we are faced with its supernatural character. Unlike every ordinary path in our experience, God’s way does not reach an end i.e. it is everlasting; it leads to the hereafter, as seen from example number (29) below:

(29) Nor did We send before thee (as messengers) any but men, whom we did inspire,- (men) living in human habitations. Do they not travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those before them? But the home of the hereafter is best, for those who do right. Will ye not then understand? (surah 12: verse 109)

Thus, those who “travel through earth” in the journey of life can see that God’s way leads to “the home of the hereafter” i.e. eternal life. This eternal life is realized through the journey of life as it is the final goal of that journey.

Moreover, to be precise, God states that the final destination of the followers of the good way in the hereafter is Heaven where they will live forever in happiness and comfort as a reward for following the straight path:

- (30) But Allah doth call to the Home of Peace: He doth guide whom He pleaseth to a way that is straight. To those who do right is a goodly (reward)- Yea, more (than in measure)! No darkness nor shame shall cover their faces! they are companions of the garden; they will abide therein (for aye)! (surah 10: verses 25-26)

Heaven is referred to in the above example as “the Home of Peace” and “the garden” as it is the place where the righteous will enjoy peace of mind and live peacefully among the fruits and scenic routes of “the garden”.

Meanwhile, this metaphorical journey towards eternal life in Heaven has an “upward” orientation: “God’s way leads upwards”:

- (31) Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might and main, in Allah's cause, with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of Allah: they are the people who will achieve (salvation). (surah 9: verse 20)
- (32) Verily he who comes to his Lord as a sinner (at Judgment),- for him is Hell: therein shall he neither die nor live. But such as come to Him as Believers who have worked righteous deeds,- for them are ranks exalted,- (surah 20: verses 74-75)

Thus, those who walk through the journey of life on God’s way will occupy higher ranks than those who deviated from that way and walk on other ways.

The final feature of the good way is that it is full of peace and safety:

- (33) O people of the Book! There hath come to you our Messenger, revealing to you much that ye used to hide in the Book, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary): There hath come to you from Allah a (new) light and a perspicuous Book, - Wherewith Allah guideth all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety, and leadeth them out of darkness, by His will, unto the light,- guideth them to a path that is straight. (surah 5: verses 15-16)

There is neither fear nor grief on the good way as well:

- (34) Verily those who say, "Our Lord is Allah," and remain firm (on that Path),- on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. (surah 46: verse 13)

Thus, this conceptualization focuses on the comfort which the traveler feels on God’s way .

To round up, we can see how the good way has various positive features. It is only one clear way. It is straight. It leads definitely to Heaven in the hereafter. It leads upwards as those who

walk on it will occupy exalted ranks in Heaven. Finally, the good way is full of peace and safety and there is no fear nor grief. Now, it is time to turn to the evil ways chosen by human beings to pass through.

### **3.2.1.ii.b Evil ways**

Whereas there is only one good way, namely God’s way, in the religious journey model, the ways of evil may be manifold; “this is My way, leading straight: follow it: follow not (other) paths” (example 1, surah 6: verse 153). Thus, if the good way is straight, the opposite is true of the bad ways; where “evil ways are crooked”:

- (35) Say: “O ye People of the Book! Why obstruct ye those who believe, from the path of Allah, Seeking to make it crooked, while ye were yourselves witnesses (to Allah’s Covenant)? But Allah is not unmindful of all that ye do.” (surah 3: verse 99)
- (36) "And squat not on every road, breathing threats, hindering from the path of Allah those who believe in Him, and seeking in it something crooked; But remember how ye were little, and He gave you increase. And hold in your mind's eye what was the end of those who did mischief. (surah 7: verse 86)
- (37) Who doth more wrong than those who invent a life against Allah? They will be turned back to the presence of their Lord, and the witnesses will say, "These are the ones who lied against their Lord! Behold! the Curse of Allah is on those who do wrong!- "Those who would hinder (men) from the path of Allah and would seek in it something crooked: these were they who denied the Hereafter!" (surah 11: verses 18-19)

In the above three examples, God stresses that the crookedness of the road is not an inherent feature of it as it is done intentionally by many parties such as People of the Book (i.e. Christians and Jews) (example 35), and people of Madyan to whom Prohet Shu'aib was sent by God (example 36), and those who lie against God and invent stories about Him (example 37). Logically speaking, we can see that this intentional crookedness proves the fact that there is actually one clear way open to all human beings, that is, the straight path which is God’s way. It is a tangible way. But evil ways are just the outcome of the crookedness done by men to the good way. They are fake ways and are found only in the illusions haunting men who share lack of faith and therefore deviate from the good way:

- (38) But verily thou callest them to the Straight Way; And verily those who believe not in the Hereafter are deviating from that Way. (surah 23: verses 73-74)
- (39) But the Unbelievers. - their deeds are like a mirage in sandy deserts, which the man parched with thirst mistakes for water; until when he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing: But he finds Allah (ever) with him, and Allah will pay him his account: and Allah is swift in taking account. (surah 24: verse 39)

In addition to their crookedness, evil ways are also characterized by darkness. The following example (number 40) confirms this feature; where “evil ways are dark”:

- (40) A. L. R. A Book which We have revealed unto thee, in order that thou mightest lead mankind out of the depths of darkness into light - by the leave of their Lord - to the Way of (Him) the Exalted in power, worthy of all praise!- (surah 14: verse 1)

The darkness of evil ways is even profound and that makes the travelers wander aimlessly; unable to find the straight way:

- (41) Those who reject our signs are deaf and dumb,- in the midst of darkness profound: whom Allah willeth, He leaveth to wander: whom He willeth, He placeth on the way that is straight. (surah 6: verse 39)

It is obvious in the above example that the profound darkness which envelops the evil ways is done intentionally by God as a punishment of the deviant for turning away from God’s straight path. It should be noted here that this darkness is not real but rather psychological, i.e. it is the darkness of ignorance and narrow-mindedness.

Moreover, there is another sharp contrast to the good way, where one feels safe and enjoys peace of mind without any fear or grief, as God makes those who choose to walk on the evil ways feel narrowness and constriction in their breasts, metonymic of fear and worry, during their journey on that road as if they were climbing up an extremely steep mountain, as a worldly penalty for their deviation:

- (42) Those whom Allah (in His plan) willeth to guide,- He openeth their breast to Islam; those whom He willeth to leave straying,- He maketh their breast close and constricted, as if they had to climb up to the skies: thus doth Allah (heap) the penalty on those who refuse to believe. This is the way of thy Lord, leading straight: We have detailed the signs for those who receive admonition. (surah 6: verses 125-126)

And while the final destination of the journey on the good way is eternal life in Heaven, all evil ways end in eternal life also but in a totally different place, i.e. Hell:

- (43) When angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls, they say: "In what (plight) Were ye?" They reply: "Weak and oppressed Were we in the earth." They say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (From evil)?" Such men will find their abode in Hell,- What an evil refuge! – (surah 4: verse 97)

- (44) But those who reject Faith and treat Our Signs as falsehoods, they will be Companions of the Fire, to dwell therein for aye: and evil is that Goal. (surah 64: verse 10)

Thus, the disbelievers will end their journey in Hell where they will become its companions.

Meanwhile, this metaphorical journey towards eternal life in Hell has a “downward” orientation: “Evil ways leads downwards”:

- (45) Among them is (many) a man who says: "Grant me exemption and draw me not into trial." Have they not fallen into trial already? and indeed Hell surrounds the Unbelievers (on all sides). (surah 9: verse 49)

The above example refers to those who refrain from going with Prophet Muhammad to war and present unjustified excuses. They ask the Prophet to give them permission to stay at home or they will fall into trial i.e. disobey him and leave for home by themselves. However, God asserts that they have already fallen into trial since by refusing to support him in war, they declare their disbelief in him and his message. Thus, they have fallen in a great sin.

In the meantime, those disbelievers have surely committed a huge number of sins greater by far than their good deeds and thus on the Day of Reckoning, they will abide in Hell which is described as follows:

(46) But he whose balance (of good deeds) will be (found) light,- Will have his home in a (bottomless) Pit. And what will explain to thee what this is? (It is) a Fire Blazing fiercely! (surah 101: verses 8-11)

In the above example, God stresses that those whose bad deeds outnumber their good deeds will be thrown in Hell; which is a bottomless pit of blazing fire.

Thus, this sinful journey has indications of this downwardness where the wicked fall in the pit of Hell—the exact opposite of the upward direction reserved for the choosers of the good way towards life.

To wrap up, in this subsection, we have explored the features of the evil ways. These ways are several, in contrast to God’s one straight path, due to the several sources of temptations presented to men by the Devil and his disciples. Meanwhile, these ways are crooked. They lead to Hell in the hereafter. They lead downwards. They are dark and cause constriction and narrowness in one’s breast.

The components of the above two subsections dealing with the two paths taken during life journey can be summed up in the following table which shows the contrastive features of both paths:

Paths	
The good way	Evil ways
1-It is one way	They are several ways
2-It is a straight way	They are crooked ways
3-It leads to Heaven in the hereafter	They lead to Hell in the hereafter
4-God’s way leads upwards	The Devil’s ways lead downwards
5-The good way is full of peace and safety and there is no fear nor grief	The evil ways are dark and cause constriction and narrowness in one’s breast

Figure (3)

Now we turn to the travelers and how they are depicted in this moral journey. Those travelers are of course divided into two groups according to the road chosen by each group. We will see that the characteristics of the members of each group conform logically to the road they have chosen.

### **3.2.2 The Travelers**

In this section, we turn to the travelers who take part in the moral journey described in the metaphorical model. There is again a dichotomy of two kinds: the good or righteous on the one hand, and the bad or wicked on the other. We will start with the righteous.

#### **3.2.2.i The Righteous**

Within the framework of the metaphorical model of the good life, a number of characteristics are assigned to the righteous people who lead a good moral life. First, the righteous tread the good way and follow the truth from their Lord on a clear path from Him as well. Meanwhile, the wicked tread evil ways where they follow vanities, their lusts, their friends, their protectors, Satan, evil ones, and their leaders:

- (47) This because those who reject Allah follow vanities, while those who believe follow the Truth from their Lord: Thus does Allah set forth for men their lessons by similitudes. (surah 47: 3)
- (48) Is the one who is on a clear (Path) from his Lord, no better than one to whom the evil of his conduct seems pleasing, and such as follow their own lusts? (surah 47: verse 14). Shakir : (lusts = low desires)
- (49) But after them there followed a posterity who missed prayers and followed after lusts soon, then, will they face Destruction,- Except those who repent and believe, and work righteousness: for these will enter the Garden and will not be wronged in the least,- (surah 19: verses 59-60). Shakir: (lusts = sensual desires)
- (50) Follow (O men!) the revelation given unto you from your Lord, and follow not, as friends or protectors, other than Him. Little it is ye remember of admonition. (surah 7: verse 3)
- (51) O ye who believe! follow not Satan's footsteps: if any will follow the footsteps of Satan, he will (but) command what is shameful and wrong : and were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, not one of you would ever have been pure: but Allah doth purify whom He pleases: and Allah is One Who hears and knows (all things). (surah 24: verse 21)
- (52) And yet among men there are such as dispute about Allah, without knowledge, and follow every evil one obstinate in rebellion! (surah 22: verse 3)
- (53) And we sent Moses, with Our Clear (Signs) and an authority manifest, Unto Pharaoh and his chiefs: but they followed the command of Pharaoh and the command of Pharaoh was no right (guide). He will go before his people on the Day of Judgment, and lead them into the Fire (as cattle are led to water): But woeful indeed will be the place to which they are led! (surah 11: verses 96-98)

It is remarkable that the righteous and the wicked are mentioned side by side in almost every verse in the above seven examples. This is done intentionally to draw the attention of the reader to the obvious contrastive features of both types of travelers. While the righteous are determined and faithful as they follow the truth revealed to them from God on His clear path, the wicked are distracted, bewildered and lost as they follow different sources of deviation, whether it is their vanities, their lusts, their friends, their protectors, Satan, evil ones, or their leaders.

It should be noted here also that Yusuf Ali uses one word, i.e. “lusts”, in examples (48) and (49) to translate two totally different Arabic words in their meanings and connotations. On the other hand, M.H. Shakir, in his translation of the Qur’an entitled *The Koran* (New York, 1983), retains the right equivalents for both words where the first one is translated as “low desires”; referring to their favorite mental choices, while the second is translated as “sensual desires”; referring to their favorite physical choices. This difference is recorded here for clarification.

The second characteristic of the righteous is that they admit that God is the One who can stray or guide men and he is their Protector. Therefore, they turn into Him, believe in His signs, and follow the light sent with his Prophet:

- (54) He prayed: "O my Lord! if it had been Thy will Thou couldst have destroyed, long before, both them and me: wouldst Thou destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us? this is no more than Thy trial: by it Thou causest whom Thou wilt to stray, and Thou leadest whom Thou wilt into the right path. Thou art our Protector: so forgive us and give us Thy mercy; for Thou art the best of those who forgive. "And ordain for us that which is good, in this life and in the Hereafter: for we have turned unto Thee." He said: "With My punishment I visit whom I will; but My mercy extendeth to all things. That (mercy) I shall ordain for those who do right, and practise regular charity, and those who believe in Our signs;- "Those who follow the messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures),- in the law and the Gospel;- for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So it is those who believe in him, honour him, help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him,- it is they who will prosper" (surah 7: 155-157).

Thus, the righteous know that they take part in this moral journey in order to be tried by God who can guide them to the right path or let them go astray. Therefore, they turn into Him, believe in His signs, and follow the light sent with his Prophet. They do that out of their deep conviction that God’s way is the right way. They are neither stubborn nor arrogant as the wicked but they are rather submissive to God’s will and take refuge in Him as their Protector.

The third characteristic of the righteous is that they will not be tempted by the wicked as they have clear signs from God to guide them to His straight path and not to stray from it:

- (55) Say: "I am forbidden to worship those - others than Allah - whom ye call upon." Say: "I will not follow your vain desires: If I did, I would stray from the path, and be not of the company of those who receive guidance." Say: "For me, I (work) on a clear sign from my Lord, but ye reject Him. What ye would see hastened, is not in my power. The command rests with none but Allah: He declares the truth, and He is the best of judges." (surah 6: verses 56-57)

In this way, the righteous will not definitely follow the wicked since they are on a clear sign from God. Hence, they can resist the temptations of the wicked and their attempts to obstruct them from the good way.

The fourth characteristic of the righteous is that they are sure of meeting God at the end of the road and therefore wish for death for His cause:

- (56) Nay, seek (Allah's) help with patient perseverance and prayer: It is indeed hard, except to those who bring a lowly spirit, - Who bear in mind the certainty that they are to meet their Lord, and that they are to return to Him. (surah 2: verse 45)
- (57) but those who were convinced that they must meet Allah, said: "How oft, by Allah's will, Hath a small force vanquished a big one? Allah is with those who steadfastly persevere." (surah 2: verse 249)
- (58) Ye did indeed wish for death before ye met him: Now ye have seen him with your own eyes, (And ye flinch!) (surah 3: verse 143)

As we can see in the above examples (number 56, 57 and 58), the righteous believe in returning to God at the end of the road. Consequently, they keep worshipping him faithfully and are eager to die for His cause as sooner or later, they will go back to Him.

The fifth and final characteristic of the righteous is that they live in light; indicating that they are spiritually seeing and morally alive, in contrast to the wicked who are spiritually deaf, dumb, blind, and morally dead:

- (59) Can he who was dead, to whom We gave life, and a light whereby he can walk amongst men, be like him who is in the depths of darkness, from which he can never come out? Thus to those without faith their own deeds seem pleasing. (surah 6: verse 122)

The light here signifies the teachings included in the Qur'an while the darkness indicates ignorance. Thus, the righteous are morally alive as they have a light guiding them in their walk while the wicked are morally dead as they live in the depths of darkness, i.e. complete ignorance.

The contrast between the righteous seeing and the wicked blind is repeated throughout the Qur'an. This conclusion results from the fact that the righteous follow God's way, through

what He reveals to them, while the wicked follow Devilish ways, through the Devil’s misguiding:

(60) Say: "I tell you not that with me are the treasures of Allah, nor do I know what is hidden, nor do I tell you I am an angel. I but follow what is revealed to me." Say: "can the blind be held equal to the seeing?" Will ye then consider not? (Surah 6: verse 50)

In the above example, the wicked are thus considered spiritually blind while the righteous are considered spiritually seeing as they follow what is revealed to them by God.

To round up, a number of characteristics have been assigned to the righteous people who lead a good moral life. First, the righteous tread the good way and follow the truth from their Lord on a clear path from Him as well. Second, the righteous admit that God is the One who can stray or guide men and He is their Protector. Therefore, they turn into Him, believe in His signs, and follow the light sent with his Prophet. Third, the righteous will not be tempted by the wicked as they have clear signs from God to guide them to His straight path and not to stray from it. Fourth, the righteous are sure of meeting God and therefore wish for death for His cause. Fifth, the righteous live in light; indicating that they are spiritually seeing and morally alive.

Now we turn to the wicked who are assigned certain characteristics as well. These characteristics are certainly contrary to those of the righteous.

### **3.2.2.ii The Wicked**

As we have seen, the righteous were metaphorically ascribed certain actions and attitudes. In their turn, the wicked, or the persons who lead immoral lives, are assigned a number of characteristics indicative of them as well in the “journey” model.

The first characteristic is that the wicked tread evil ways where they follow vanities, their lusts, their friends, their protectors, Satan, evil ones, and their leaders. We have seen in the previous section (examples 47-53) how this characteristic is highlighted through contrast with the righteous to show the great difference between the two groups.

The second characteristic is that the wicked persist in deviating from God’s way arrogantly and obstinately preferring to wander in distraction:

(61) My Signs used to be rehearsed to you, but ye used to turn back on your heels-"In arrogance: talking nonsense about the (Qur'an), like one telling fables by night." (surah 23: verses 66-67)

The above example shows how the wicked used to turn back on their heels on hearing the Qur’an and moreover, they are blasphemous. These actions are a clear sign of their arrogance as they turn away from God’s straight path.

Meanwhile, the wicked’s persistence in deviation is deeply rooted in them despite the fact that God might have mercy on them as He says in the following example:

(62) If We had mercy on them and removed the distress which is on them, they would obstinately persist in their transgression, wandering in distraction to and fro. (surah 23: verses 75)

Thus, the above example reveals how the wicked are so stubborn since they insist on their transgression and deviation despite God’s willingness to have mercy on them. Their preference to wander in distraction proves their arrogance and obstinacy.

The third characteristic is that the wicked tempt the righteous to deviate from the good way and obstruct them from it as well:

(63) And the Unbelievers say to those who believe: "Follow our path, and we will bear (the consequences) of your faults." Never in the least will they bear their faults: in fact they are liars! (surah 29: verse 12)

The wicked tempt the righteous to deviate from the straight path by saying that they would be responsible for their deviation. God interferes here to show how the wicked are so weak and deceitful that they cannot even carry the responsibility for their own deviation.

Meanwhile, the wicked dispute about God ignorantly and disdainfully so as to lead men astray from His path:

(64) Yet there is among men such a one as disputes about Allah, without Knowledge, without Guidance, and without a Book of Enlightenment,- (Disdainfully) bending his side, in order to lead (men) astray from the Path of Allah: for him there is disgrace in this life, and on the Day of Judgment We shall make him taste the Penalty of burning (Fire). (surah 22: 8-9)

In the above example, the wicked uses their disdain of God’s way to lead men astray from it. They ridicule God in the eyes of men to drive them to disobey Him and turn away from His way.

Moreover, the wicked use their oaths to convince men that they are honest and trustworthy and thus seduce them to desert God’s way:

(65) They have made their oaths a screen (for their misdeeds): thus they obstruct (men) from the Path of Allah: truly evil are their deeds. (surah 63: verse 2)

Here, in the above example, the hypocrites swear that the Prophet is truly the Messenger of God. Meanwhile, they work in secret to obstruct men from God’s way. Thus, they use double standards to realize their goals.

The fourth characteristic is that the wicked do not believe in meeting God at the end of the road and even flee from death:

(66) Those who reject the Signs of Allah and the Meeting with Him (in the Hereafter), - it is they who shall despair of My Mercy: it is they who will (suffer) a most grievous Penalty. (surah 29: verse 23)

(67) Assuredly those will be lost who denied the meeting with Allah and refused to receive true guidance. (surah 10: verse 45)

As seen in the above two examples, the wicked deny meeting God because they reject His Signs and refuse to receive His true guidance. Such behavior shows their despair, arrogance and obstinacy.

Logically speaking, one will meet God when he dies. Thus, the wicked think they can flee from death or avert it from themselves in order to avoid meeting God; as they will be punished for disobeying Him:

(68) Say: "The Death from which ye flee will truly overtake you: then will ye be sent back to the Knower of things secret and open: and He will tell you (the truth of) the things that ye did!" (surah 62: verse 8)

(69) Say: "Avert death from your own selves, if ye speak the truth." Think not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord; They rejoice in the bounty provided by Allah (surah 3: verses 168-170)

God asserts to the wicked that they will definitely meet Him since, sooner or later, they will die. He also declares that those who were killed defending His cause are not dead. There is a hidden contrast here between the living wicked who are alive physically but dead morally and the dead righteous who are alive morally but dead physically. It is rather a subtle oxymoron where the dead are alive and the living are dead.

The fifth and final characteristic is that the wicked live in darkness; indicating that they are spiritually deaf, dumb, blind, and morally dead:

(70) Those who reject our signs are deaf and dumb, - in the midst of darkness profound: whom Allah willeth, He leaveth to wander: whom He willeth, He placeth on the way that is straight. (surah 6: verse 39)

It should be noted here that the profound darkness in which the wicked live is the result of their spiritual deafness and dumbness as they reject God’s signs.

To summarize what has been mentioned in this subsection, a number of characteristics have been assigned to the wicked people who lead a bad immoral life. First, the wicked tread evil ways where they follow vanities, their lusts, their friends, their protectors, Satan, evil ones, and their leaders. Second, the wicked persist in deviating from God’s way arrogantly and obstinately preferring to wander in distraction. Third, the wicked tempt the righteous to deviate from the good way and obstruct them from it as well. Fourth, the wicked do not believe in meeting God at the end of the road and even flee from death. Fifth, the wicked live in darkness; indicating that they are spiritually deaf, dumb, blind, and morally dead.

The components of the above two sections dealing with the two types of travelers, i.e. the righteous and the wicked, taking part in the life journey can be summed up in the following table which shows the contrastive features of both types:

The travelers  
The righteous and the wicked

The righteous	The wicked
1-The righteous tread the good way and follow the truth from their Lord on a clear path from Him as well	The wicked tread evil ways where they follow vanities, their lusts, their friends, their protectors, Satan, evil ones, and their leaders
2-The righteous admit that God is the One who can stray or guide men and he is their Protector. Therefore, they turn into Him, believe in His signs, and follow the light sent with His Prophet.	The wicked persist in deviating from God’s way arrogantly and obstinately preferring to wander in distraction
3-The righteous will not be tempted by the wicked as they have clear signs from God to guide them to His straight path and not to stray from it	The wicked tempt the righteous to deviate from the good way and obstruct them from it as well
4-The righteous are sure of meeting God and therefore wish for death for His cause	The wicked do not believe in meeting God at the end of the road and even flee from death
5-The righteous live in light; indicating that they are spiritual seers and morally alive	The wicked live in darkness; indicating that they are spiritually deaf, dumb, blind, and morally dead

Figure (4)

Now we move on to explore God’s role in this journey: what does God do to the righteous who believe in Him and follow His way? Meanwhile, what is His stance towards the wicked who disobey Him and follow other ways? These questions, among others, will be answered in the following section which shows that God is a guide and misleader at the same time.

### 3.2.3 God as a guide and misleader

It goes without saying that God has an essential part in the religious concept of the good life as he is the One who guides men to it. Here we will investigate the role played by God as an agent in this metaphorical scenario. Before we explore the dichotomous pattern displayed by God’s different attitudes and actions towards the two kinds of travelers, we can start with one divine feature relevant to every person irrespective of their ethical conduct; that is “God observes all human ways” as seen in the following examples:

- (71) Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do. (surah 4: verse 135)
- (72) O ye who believe! follow not Satan's footsteps: if any will follow the footsteps of Satan, he will (but) command what is shameful and wrong: and were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, not one of you would ever have been pure: but Allah doth purify whom He pleases: and Allah is One Who hears and knows (all things). (surah 24: verse 21)
- (73) Those who pervert the Truth in Our Signs are not hidden from Us. Which is better?- he that is cast into the Fire, or he that comes safe through, on the Day of Judgment? Do what ye will: verily He seeth (clearly) all that ye do. (surah 41: verse 40)

Thus, God warns human beings against following their lusts or Satan’s footsteps as well as perverting the truth in His Signs since He is well-acquainted with all what they do as He hears, knows and sees everything.

In other words, there is no way of hiding from the divine observer who keeps track of every single human traveler whether that traveler chooses the good way or the evil ways. But God’s role is not only restricted to being an all-perceiving spectator, as he is also conceptualized as a major participant in this journey where He supports the righteous and obstructs the wicked. Thus, He is a guide and misleader at the same time.

It should be mentioned here that God’s support of the righteous is mentioned side by side with His obstruction of the wicked in most of the verses dedicated to that topic. This rhetorical parallelism aims at drawing the attention of all human beings to the fairness of God: God strengthens His believers and at the same time gives the disbelievers their due amount of moral and physical punishment in this world before they abide forever in Hell in the afterworld.

The first characteristic of this divine role is that God guides the believers to the straight path while He leaves the disbelievers to stray:

(74) Allah by His Grace Guided the believers to the Truth, concerning that wherein they differed. For Allah guided whom He will to a path that is straight. (surah 2: verse 213)

(75) Thus doth Allah leave to stray such as transgress and live in doubt,- "(Such) as dispute about the Signs of Allah, without any authority that hath reached them, grievous and odious (is such conduct) in the sight of Allah and of the Believers. Thus doth Allah, seal up every heart - of arrogant and obstinate Transgressors." (surah 40: verses 34-35)

God leaves the wicked to stray because they are arrogant and obstinate transgressors. They are, moreover, do not believe in His Truth and live in doubt. Therefore, their punishment is not to be guided to the Straight Path at all.

The second characteristic is that God makes the righteous stand firm on His way while He hinders the wicked from the straight path:

(76) O ye who believe! If ye will aid (the cause of) Allah, He will aid you, and plant your feet firmly. But those who reject (Allah),- for them is destruction, and (Allah) will render their deeds astray (from their mark). That is because they hate the Revelation of Allah; so He has made their deeds fruitless. (surah 47: verses 7-9)

God helps the righteous by planting their feet firmly on His way while He brings utter destruction on the wicked. Meanwhile, He renders their deeds fruitless and astray.

(77) Allah will establish in strength those who believe, with the word that stands firm, in this world and in the Hereafter; but Allah will leave, to stray, those who do wrong: Allah doeth what He willeth. (surah 14: verse 27)

God will support the righteous by giving them moral strength through providing them with sound evidence that they are on the right path. This evidence will stand firm beyond any doubts from the wicked, whether in this world or in the Hereafter. Thus, the firmness of the righteous is the result of the firmness of the evidence, that they are on the right way, given to them by God.

(78) Thus was made alluring, in Pharaoh's eyes, the evil of his deeds, and he was hindered from the Path; and the plot of Pharaoh led to nothing but perdition (for him). (surah 40: verse 37)

God hinders the wicked and their leaders, represented here by Pharaoh, from the straight path. Here, such a hindrance takes the form of making the evil deeds of the wicked look alluring, i.e. attractive and desirable, in their eyes. This method is repeated in the following example:

(79) Nay! to those who believe not, their pretence seems pleasing, but they are kept back (thereby) from the path. And those whom Allah leaves to stray, no one can guide. (surah 13: verse 33)

God keeps the wicked back from the right path by making their pretence look pleasing. Thus, God misleads them as a punishment for their arrogance and obstinacy.

- (80) Those who behave arrogantly on the earth in defiance of right - them will I turn away from My signs: Even if they see all the signs, they will not believe in them; and if they see the way of right conduct, they will not adopt it as the way; but if they see the way of error, that is the way they will adopt. For they have rejected our signs, and failed to take warning from them. (surah 7: verse 146)

All in all, the wicked will be hindered or kept back or turned away from the right path due to their arrogance and defiance. On the other hand, the righteous will stand firm on the right path due to their belief in God and aiding His cause.

The third characteristic is that God helps the righteous by being their Protector and Intercessor but the wicked have no protector nor intercessor except the Devil and his progeny, and the other fake gods they have followed; where God mocks all those useless protectors who cannot help them at all:

- (81) Behold! We said to the angels, "Bow down to Adam": They bowed down except Iblis. He was one of the Jinns, and he broke the Command of his Lord. Will ye then take him and his progeny as protectors rather than Me? And they are enemies to you! Evil would be the exchange for the wrong-doers! called them not to witness the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor (even) their own creation: nor is it for helpers such as Me to take as lead (men) astray! (surah 18: verses 50-51)

The above example includes a rhetorical question where God mocks men's choice of the Devil and his progeny as their protectors. God shows how such fake protectors are enemies to men. They were also created by Him and therefore He cannot take them as His helpers. Thus, they are misleaders of men.

- (82) Say: "Who is the Lord and Sustainer of the heavens and the earth?" Say: "(It is) Allah." Say: "Do ye then take (for worship) protectors other than Him, such as have no power either for good or for harm to themselves?" Say: "Are the blind equal with those who see? Or the depths of darkness equal with light?" Or do they assign to Allah partners who have created (anything) as He has created, so that the creation seemed to them similar? Say: "Allah is the Creator of all things: He is the One, the Supreme and Irresistible." (surah 13: verse 16)

In the above example, there is a series of rhetorical questions where God mocks the other gods taken by the wicked as their protectors as these gods are powerless and cannot even protect themselves. God also shows that those who follow these useless gods are like blind people walking on a dark road and this proves how miserable they are.

Thus, the Devil and the other gods will not help the wicked unless God helps them as those who are left by God to stray will never find the right way:

- (83) Behold! Truly the Wrong-doers are in a lasting Penalty!" And no protectors have they to help them, other than Allah. And for any whom Allah leaves to stray, there is no way (to the Goal). (surah 42: verses 45-46)

After mocking the fake protectors of the wicked, God proclaims that He is definitely the Protector of the righteous or believers and thus He will help them in part and parcel:

- (84) Then We put thee on the (right) Way of Religion: so follow thou that (Way), and follow not the desires of those who know not. They will be of no use to thee in the sight of Allah: it is only Wrong-doers (that stand as) protectors, one to another: but Allah is the Protector of the Righteous. (surah 45: verses 18-19)

God also considers the protectors of the wicked as non-existent:

- (85) Do they not travel through the earth, and see what was the End of those before them (who did evil)? Allah brought utter destruction on them, and similar (fates await) those who reject Allah. That is because Allah is the Protector of those who believe, but those who reject Allah have no protector. (surah 47: verses 7-11)

Meanwhile, on the Day of Judgment, at the very end of the road in the hereafter, none but God will be the Protector and Intercessor for men:

- (86) Give this warning to those in whose (hearts) is the fear that they will be brought (to judgment) before their Lord: except for Him they will have no protector nor intercessor: that they may guard (against evil). (surah 6: verse 51)

Those who fear the Day of Judgment, when they are brought back before God, will not have a Protector nor Intercessor except Him. God is the exclusive Intercessor as He controls Heavens and earth. Meanwhile, all human beings will be brought back before Him:

- (87) What! Do they take for intercessors others besides Allah? Say: "Even if they have no power whatever and no intelligence?" Say: "To Allah belongs exclusively (the right to grant) intercession: to Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: In the End, it is to Him that ye shall be brought back." (surah 39: verses 43-44)

The fourth characteristic is that God gives the righteous a criterion to judge between right and wrong as well as shows them the way of the sinners very clearly. Thus, when the wicked plot and plan against them, they become aware of their machinations. Meanwhile, God discloses the ways of the wicked as well as excels them in planning:

- (88) O ye who believe! if ye fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion (to judge between right and wrong), remove from you (all) evil (that may afflict) you, and forgive you: for Allah is the Lord of grace unbounded. Remember how the Unbelievers plotted against thee, to keep thee in bonds, or slay thee, or get thee out (of thy home). They plot and plan, and Allah too plans; but the best of planners is Allah. (surah 8: verses 29-30)

- (89) Those that lay Plots of Evil,- for them is a Penalty terrible; and the plotting of such will be void (of result). (surah 35: verse 10)

- (90) Thus do We explain the signs in detail: that the way of the sinners may be shown up. (surah 6: verse 55)

- (91) Did they then feel secure against the plan of Allah?- but no one can feel secure from the Plan of Allah, except those (doomed) to ruin! To those who inherit the earth in

succession to its (previous) possessors, is it not a guiding, (lesson) that, if We so willed, We could punish them (too) for their sins, and seal up their hearts so that they could not hear? (surah 7: verses 99-100)

Thus, God helps the righteous by giving them a criterion to judge between right and wrong in order to be aware of the machinations of the wicked as well as showing them the way of the sinners very clearly. These machinations will be used by the wicked against the righteous while they are traveling on the right way in order to deviate them from this way. However, the righteous will be well-prepared in advance for the plots and plans of the wicked, but in case such plots and plans are about to affect the righteous, God will intervene with counter plots and plans which excels the plotting and planning of the wicked.

The fifth characteristic is that God ordains that the righteous would be leaders guiding others to His way while He ordains that the wicked would be leaders guiding others to Hell:

(92) And We appointed, from among them, leaders, giving guidance under Our command, so long as they persevered with patience and continued to have faith in Our Signs. (surah 32: verse 24)

(93) And we made them (but) leaders inviting to the Fire; and on the Day of Judgment no help shall they find. (surah 28: verse 41)

The ironic contradiction here lies in the fact that both groups, the righteous and the wicked, will have leaders among their followers but the leaders of the first group will lead or guide men to the right way which ends naturally in Heaven while the leaders of the other group will lead men to Fire or Hell. It should be highlighted here that the leading or guiding done by the wicked leaders is summed up in its final destination, which is Hell. Their leading to evil ways is not mentioned since the mentioning of the final destination is more impressive to those who will follow such leaders. On the other hand, the final destination of those who lead to the right way, which is Heaven in this case, is not mentioned since it can be simply and naturally guessed. This is just a distinctive example of the rhetorical creativity of the Qur’an with regard to the life journey metaphor.

To sum up, God’s role is crucial in the life journey metaphor as He supports the righteous and obstructs the wicked in that journey. First, He guides the believers to the straight path and leaves the disbelievers to stray. Second, God plants the righteous’ feet firmly on His way while He hinders the wicked from the straight path. Third, God is the Protector and Intercessor of the righteous while the wicked have no protector nor intercessor. Fourth, God gives the righteous a criterion to judge between right and wrong as well as shows them the way of the sinners very clearly. Thus, when the wicked plot and plan against them, they become aware of their machinations. Meanwhile, He discloses the ways of the wicked as well

as excels them in planning. Fifth, God ordains that the righteous would be leaders guiding others to His way. In the meantime, He ordains that the wicked would also be leaders but guiding others to Hell.

The elements of the above two attitudes expressed by God in relation to the righteous and wicked, where He supports the former and obstructs the latter, can be summed up in the following table which shows the contrastive characteristics of both attitudes:

God as a guide and misleader

Supporting the righteous	obstructing the wicked
1-God guides the believers to the straight path	He leaves the disbelievers to stray
2- He plants their feet firmly on His way	God hinders the wicked from the straight path.
3- He helps the righteous by being their Protector and Intercessor	The wicked have no protector nor intercessor except the Devil and other fake gods who cannot help them at all
4-God gives the righteous a criterion to judge between right and wrong as well as shows them the way of the sinners very clearly. Thus, when the wicked plot and plan against them, they become aware of their machinations.	He discloses their ways as well as excels the wicked in planning.
5- God ordains that the righteous would be leaders guiding others to His way	He ordains that the wicked, at the same time, would also be leaders but guiding others to Hell

Figure (5)

As we have seen, a cognitive-semantic analysis of a religious model of the good life has been presented in the previous sections. This model conceptualizes metaphorically such fundamental human issues and perennial questions as the meaning of life and death, the relationship between human beings and God, how God watches over the deeds of humans, and the general rules for moral conduct. All in all, these issues converge in the question “What is the good life?”, which the metaphorical model answers from a religious perspective.

Thus, our analysis in terms of conceptual metaphors may go some way towards a better understanding of religious reasoning. But we will now turn back to the central tenets of the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor as explained above (see section 2.2.2.) to see if they stand up in the light of the empirical evidence. In this, we will pay attention to the predictions made in section (2.2.3.) above.

#### **4. Testing the tenets of the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor**

Most of the theoretical tenets of the cognitive approach to metaphor are actually proved by the empirical findings of the present application. Though the presentation in section 3 could only feature a relatively small excerpt of the whole Qur’anic corpus, the *ubiquity hypothesis* (number 1) as well as the prediction derived from the *necessity hypothesis* (number 7) can be confirmed. Linguistic metaphors were found to be abundant in the texts investigated, even though they sometimes would not be classified as overt similes, parables, or other sorts of euphemism. The fact that metaphorical expressions like those analyzed above constitute the ordinary Qur’anic ways of expressing central religious ideas strongly suggests that the ubiquity of linguistic metaphors is here due to the necessity of metaphorical conceptualization.

Our investigation also revealed a high degree of systematicity in the linguistic metaphors. Not only could the semantic motivation of many metaphorical expressions be justified by reconstructing the underlying conceptual metaphors but also these conceptual metaphors fitted neatly into the overall holistic structure of a cognitive or cultural model of “life as a journey” with its inbuilt good-bad dichotomy. Thus, both the *domain hypothesis* (number 2) and the *model hypothesis* (number 3) are clearly proved by our results.

Ample evidence was collected of the systematic linkage between the two domains “life” and “journey”, the first functioning as the target domain with the second supplying the source domain of the metaphorical mapping. The image of “the good life” is intensified through the domain of “traveling” which provides a good connection between the domains of “life” and “journey”. And of course, not only was the corpus investigated devoid of any examples of a reversal of source and target domains, but such a reversal of direction seems indeed improbable. It is possible theoretically to talk about simple *traveling* in terms of *life, death, hereafter, moral choice, or God*. Thus, the *unidirectionality hypothesis* (number 5) and its predictions were confirmed to hold true of the metaphors investigated.

One further aspect of the necessity of metaphors in religious discourse is the issue expressed in the *creativity hypothesis* (number 8), which is also proved by the present investigation. Though all the linguistic examples were justified by assigning them to systematic conceptual metaphors forming coherent parts of an overall cognitive model, most of the metaphorical expressions would indeed be almost impossible to paraphrase literally without loss. The meaning of particular metaphorical expressions in religious contexts may be characterized as either too rich or too vague to yield to simple paraphrase. The choice between the two

probably depends on one’s religious persuasion as much as on one’s personal appreciation of metaphor as a linguistic and conceptual tool.

As for the *invariance hypothesis* (number 6), in contrast to the other tenets of the theory, it appears not to be borne out by the data. According to this hypothesis, the structures mapped from the source domain “journey” to the target domain “life” should be that of the “path” schema which is at the heart of the “journey” domain. This claim seems problematic since there is a number of central aspects of the “path” schema (see section 2.1.4. above) that appear not to be mapped in the religious application of the conceptual metaphor.

Jäkel (2002) clarifies this point by asserting that the central schematic element of spatial “distance” has no part in the religious model. Meanwhile, the religious model has no need for any “stages”, physical “landmarks” or other “salient points” on the “path” to conceptualize target domain issues. Moreover, there are no “intermediate destinations” on the religious “journey”, but just “one” final “goal” on which the whole model focuses: (eternal) life in Heaven (cf. section 3.2.1.ii.a. above). Thus, mapping differences occur even within the small set of structural elements of the “path” schema. This indicates that there must be something wrong with the invariance hypothesis. Apparently the target domain, i.e. “life”, has a greater role to play in constraining the mapping than the invariance hypothesis admits. There are different ideas and knowledge about aspects of life in other models away from the religious model. These differences in target domain knowledge must be responsible for the different “choices” made by various models, including the religious model, from the basic structure of the “path” schema.

Thus, the invariance hypothesis cannot be confirmed in the light of the aforementioned data. Judging by the diverse versions of this hypothesis (e.g. Lakoff 1990, Brugman 1990, Turner 1990, Turner 1993, Lakoff 1993), this hypothesis is simply too vague to be confirmed. Further reasons for this vagueness lie in the fact that the inventory of image-schemata is anything but agreed upon, and that not all image-schemata are as clearly delineated in their internal structure as the “path” schema. It should be noted here that Jäkel (1997), section 9.2. in particular, gives a more comprehensive criticism of the invariance hypothesis.

## **5. Conclusion**

The present paper has tackled the metaphor “life is a journey” in the Qur’an within the theoretical framework put forward by Lakoff and Turner (1989), known as the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor, where it has shown how the Qur’an is structured around the idea of the

life process and how every correspondence between the two domains of “life” and “journey” can fit there. The idea of life conceived in terms of a journey pervades the Qur’an where the use of such a metaphor makes the reader clarify and define the relationship between object and image. Meanwhile, this process serves two purposes: first, it forces the reader to participate actively in the Qur’an i.e. consider its message and follow its teachings, and second, it gives him knowledge about something he did not know or only partly knew by making it analogous to something he can imagine.

The conventional conceptual metaphor ‘life is a journey’, where both domains are explicit (‘life’ as a target domain, and ‘journey’ as a source domain), is traditionally used to cover the concept ‘human life’ from birth to death. Human life is viewed in the Qur’an as a journey in which the departure is birth and the final destination is an unknown place that is never reached i.e. the afterlife. Thus, life in the Qur’an is an endless journey in which death is only one of the stages of the trip as we have seen. The basic metaphor “life is a journey” is a point of departure in the Qur’an as certain novel metaphors are created from it. This is a fairly common resource in literary language as Lakoff and Turner (1989: 26) admits:

The number of *basic* metaphorical conceptions of life and death turns out to be very small. Though these can be combined and elaborated in novel ways and expressed poetically in an infinity of ways, that infinity is fashioned from the small set of basic metaphors.

Lakoff and Turner go on to assert that such basic metaphors may be composed or elaborated in new ways, but the same basic conceptual resources available to us all are still used. If this is not done, we would not understand them. Thus, as we have seen, the linguistic creativity of the Qur’an is extraordinary as such basic metaphors are used in novel unprecedented ways.

The “journey” metaphor in the religious context of the Qur’an is based on dichotomy where there are two kinds of life: the good, moral life on the one hand versus the bad, immoral life on the other hand, two paths: the Straight Path; God’s way or the good way, and the crooked path with its evil ways, two kinds of travelers: the righteous and the wicked, and finally, two attitudes and ways of acting adopted by God regarding the two kinds of travelers where He supports the righteous and obstructs the wicked i.e. God plays the role of a guide and misleader at the same time. This dichotomy runs through all the detailed aspects of the metaphorical model e.g. with reference to the two paths of the journey, they lead to two different places in the hereafter i.e. Heaven and Hell. Meanwhile, one path is comfortable while the other is frightening.

Metaphorical usage in the Qur’an shows the imaginative use of conventional metaphors where we have novel metaphors offering us “new ways and possibilities in the form of new unconventional conceptual metaphors to see the world around us.” (Kövecses 2002: 32) One outstanding example of this imaginative use is making God’s way leads upwards while the Devil’s ways lead downwards. Thus, the sinful journey has indications of this downwardness where the wicked *fall* in the *pit* of Hell; which is the exact opposite of the upward direction we found for the good way towards life.

Meanwhile, most of the theoretical tenets of the cognitive approach to metaphor have been actually confirmed by the empirical findings of the present application. As we have seen, a cognitive-semantic analysis of a religious model of the good life, based on this cognitive approach to metaphor, has been presented in the previous sections. This model conceptualizes metaphorically such fundamental human issues and perennial questions as the meaning of life and death, the relationship between human beings and God, how God watches over the deeds of humans, and the general rules for moral conduct. All in all, these issues converge in the question “What is the good life?”, which the metaphorical model answers from a religious perspective. Thus, the present analysis in terms of conceptual metaphors may go some way towards a better understanding of religious reasoning.

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