
FIGURES OF SPEECH IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS-VOLUME II

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Abstract

The objectives are to identify the figures of speech found in the Book of Psalms-Volume II and to find out the meaning of figures of speech in the Book of Psalms-Volume II. The writer collects the data from the volume II of the Book as the source. The writer used the theory from Thomas, W.R. and F.J. Wright (1937). The writer used the qualitative method with a descriptive approach. A qualitative approach is defined as a description of observations, which is not ordinarily expressed in quantitative terms. Through the data analysis we can find the result that figures of speech used in the Book of Psalms-Volume II is metaphor the highest and followed by simile and personification. Meanwhile, the existence of hyperbole is the lowest.

Keywords: Approach; Descriptive; Expressed; Figures of Speech; Hyperbole; Metaphor; Ordinarily; Personification; Qualitative Method; Simile.

INTRODUCTION

In communication with someone, we need language. We can communicate with other people who speak the same language, but we also can speak to those who speak in different languages if we know the meaning of the words they use and vice versa. Language is a tool of communication and it is the most important thing in human life. We need language to share our ideas, thoughts and wishes, also to express our reactions to situations. So, people use language as the media to express what they have in mind. Language can be divided into oral and written language.

Figures of Speech are modes of expression in which words are changed from their literal meaning or usage. When people want to express an idea by using figures of speech, it can be performed in various ways, such as metaphorically, exaggeratedly. Murthy (1998: 548) states: figures of speech are extensively and effectively used in poetry to express the ideas and feelings in an impressive manner. It is very common in poetry, but it is also used in prose and nonfiction writings as well. The use of figures of speech in writing will make the language more interesting.

Figure of speech is also known as figurative expression. Figurative expression is a way of saying something to express opinion that uses words or expressions

with a meaning that is different from the literal meaning. When people want to express their idea, they can express it figuratively. It can be performed in various ways, such as metaphorically. Figurative language creates figures (pictures) in the mind of the reader or listener. These pictures help convey the meaning faster and more vividly than words alone. We use figurative language to add color and interest, and to awaken the imagination. Figurative language is everywhere, from works like the Bible, to everyday speech, pop music and television commercials. It makes the writer or listener use their imagination and understand much more than the plain words. In this study, the writer takes the Bible, specifically the book of Psalms volume II as the object.

By doing this study, the writer wants to find out the figures of speech in the book of Psalms-Volume II. The book of Psalms is part of the Bible in the Old Testament. It is often called Psalms. Psalms are classified into five volumes. Volume I consist of Psalms 1-41, volume II consist of Psalms 42-72, volume III consist of Psalms 73-89, volume IV consist of psalms 90-106, volume V consist of Psalms 107-150. This volume consists of 41 songs that were given by David to God. Therefore, in writing these Psalms, David often used figures of Speech. It is hard to understand the figurative meaning. So, the writer is interested to know what kinds of figurative language in the Book of Psalms-volume II which David wrote. And also the writer wants to help the readers who want to understand the figurative meaning of each word in most of the verses in this book.

In this thesis, the writer restricts the problems as in the following:

1. What kinds of figures of speech are found in the book of Psalms-Volume II?
2. What does figures of speech found in the book of Psalms-Volume II mean?

METHOD

1. Research Design

The study is conducted by using a qualitative method with descriptive approach. A qualitative approach is defined as a description of observations, which is not ordinarily expressed in quantitative terms. Descriptive design is a research design which is intended only to describe only the variable.

2. The Source of the Data

The writer will take the data from the King James Version Bible. King James Version Bible published in 1982 and the book of Psalms published in 1980. The data will be taken from the book of Psalms-Volume II, chapter 42-72, there are 31 chapters in the book of Psalms.

3. The Procedures of Data Collection

In doing this study, the writer will do some steps, which would be taken in collecting the data. They are as follows:

- The writer will read the Book of Psalms-Volume II
- Then, the writer will make a list of sentences that contain of Figures of Speech
- Also, the writer writes the sentences that have Figures of Speech in the notebook.

4. The Procedures of Data Analysis

The writer will do the procedures of analyzing the data in some steps.

- Read the data

- Identifying all the data based on the kinds of figures of speech.
- Classifying all the data according to their kinds of figures of speech.
- When all the data have been classified, the writer will describe the meaning of each of the figures of speech.

Data analysis

The strategic analysis of figurative language within the Book of Psalms, Volume II, is paramount for delineating the linguistic depth and hermeneutic complexity of the King James Version. Comprising 59 poems, this collection serves as the definitive repository for the pith and quintessence of Christianity. By scrutinizing how figures of speech encapsulate divine truths, this study elucidates the nuanced semiotic mapping between spiritual concepts and human experience. The scope remains strictly confined to the identification and interpretation of these devices as they appear within the parameters of this specific volume.

The methodology necessitates a rigorous differentiation between literal and figurative denotations. To uncover the intended messages, a process of establishing logical associations and contextual explanations is employed. This involves mapping the "vehicle" of the figurative image—such as a "rock" or "fortress"—to its "tenor," the underlying functional reality of divine protection. Furthermore, an analytical economy is maintained through a representative data approach: where the same figurative image recurs across multiple verses, a single instance is utilized as a representative for the entire data set to ensure clarity and avoid redundancy.

The linguistic data is categorized into four primary figures of speech: Metaphor, Simile, Personification, and Hyperbole. These classifications provide the structural framework for evaluating how the psalmic text manipulates language to enhance its theological resonance. The following analysis transitions from this methodological foundation to the specific quantitative patterns identified within the text.

FINDINGS

The distribution of figurative elements across these 59 poems reveals a calculated application of literary devices to fortify the biblical narrative structure. Identifying specific instances of metaphor, simile, personification, and hyperbole is essential for understanding how the text transmutes abstract theological tenets into tangible, relatable imagery. The frequency of these devices indicates a stylistic preference for direct identification and comparative association.

The aggregated quantitative results of the analysis are as follows:

- Metaphor: 18 verses
- Simile: 17 verses
- Personification: 14 verses
- Hyperbole: 10 verses

These findings demonstrate that metaphorical language serves as the predominant stylistic tool in Volume II, whereas hyperbole, while vital for conveying emotional intensity, is utilized most sparingly. This quantitative summary establishes the basis for the granular inventory of sub-findings provided in the subsequent section.

Sub findings

Categorizing the identified verses into structured inventories allows for a rigorous examination of the prominence and frequency of specific literary devices. This systematic classification facilitates a deeper understanding of the recurring patterns and stylistic choices within the text.

1. Metaphorical Inventory

Table I delineates the 18 verses identified as metaphors, where two distinct entities are treated as one to convey a deeper spiritual reality.

Psalms 42:3	Psalms 46:11	Psalms 59:17
Psalms 42:9	Psalms 48:3	Psalms 61:3
Psalms 43:2	Psalms 57:4	Psalms 62:2
Psalms 45:6	Psalms 59:9	Psalms 62:6
Psalms 46:1	Psalms 59:11	Psalms 62:7
Psalms 46:7	Psalms 59:16	Psalms 71:3

Table I : Data Concerning Metaphor

2. Simile Inventory

Table II details the 17 verses containing similes, which utilize function words such as "like" or "as" to establish comparative relationships.

1. Psalms 42:1	2. Psalms 42:10	3. Psalms 44:11	4. Psalms 44:22
5. Psalms 48:6	6. Psalms 49:14	7. Psalms 52:2	8. Psalms 52:8
9. Psalms 58:4	10. Psalms 58:7	11. Psalms 58:8	12. Psalms 59:6
13. Psalms 59:14	14. Psalms 64:3	15. Psalms 68:2	16. Psalms 72:6
17. Psalms 45:1			

Table II : Data Concerning Simile

3. Personification Inventory

Table III presents the 14 verses in which inanimate objects, ideas, or animals are attributed with human qualities or actions.

1. Psalms 42:2	8. Psalms 63:1
2. Psalms 48:2	9. Psalms 63:5

3. Psalms 48:11	10. Psalms 65:8
4. Psalms 50:3	11. Psalms 65:12
5. Psalms 51:8	12. Psalms 65:13
6. Psalms 51:17	13. Psalms 68:16
7. Psalms 55:21	14. Psalms 72:3

Table III : Data Concerning Personification

4. Hyperbole Inventory

Table IV catalogs the 10 verses identified as hyperbole, employing intentional exaggeration to emphasize the magnitude of a given state or event. The frequency of these devices leads directly into a qualitative evaluation of their spiritual and literal functions.

1. Psalms 42:7	6. Psalms 57:4
2. Psalms 44:19	7. Psalms 61:2
3. Psalms 44:25	8. Psalms 66:12
4. Psalms 51:7	9. Psalms 68:13
5. Psalms 53:5	10. Psalms 69:4

Table IV: Data Concerning Hyperbole

DISCUSSION

The strategic impact of figurative language on the psalmic message is profound, as these linguistic tools transform abstract spiritual concepts into tangible realities. By analyzing these devices, we gain insight into the emotional and theological depth of the text.

1. Evaluation of Metaphorical Functions

The analysis reveals a recurring theme of God as a "rock," "fortress," "refuge," and "shield." These metaphors treat divine protection and physical defense as one. In Psalms 42:9 and 62:2, the "rock" symbolizes a big, strong shelter. Psalms 59:11 identifies the Lord as a "shield," meaning the Lord is the protector who repels the attacks of enemies. These metaphors express a full belief and confidence in divine aid. Conversely, metaphors illustrate human misery; in Psalms 42:3, "tears as food" indicates that suffering and misery are consistently filling a life. Furthermore, Psalms 57:4 utilizes metaphors of weaponry—spears and swords—to describe the lethal nature of teeth and a deadly tongue.

2. Analysis of Simile Comparisons

Similes illustrate the human condition and the nature of the wicked through vivid comparisons. In Psalms 44:11, the people of God are compared to "sheep for

slaughter," signifying they are offered as sacrificial offerings to God while being far from Him. In Psalms 52:2, the "sharp razor" represents a clever tongue where all words are a lie. The wicked are also compared to "dogs" (Psalm 59:6) to reflect their selfish nature, and to "poisonous snakes" (Psalm 58:4) who refuse to listen to divine counsel. Conversely, Psalms 52:8 describes one who is "like a green olive tree," producing consistent goodness.

3. Interpretation of Personification

Personification attributes human qualities to objects to represent internal spiritual states. In Psalms 42:2 and 63:1, the "thirsty soul" denotes a deep longing for God. The logic of personification is specifically seen in Psalm 65:12; while the belt is an item of human attire that hills cannot wear, the text describes hills "girding themselves with joy" to signify God's blessing and human thanksgiving. Similarly, "rejoicing bones" (Psalm 51:8) represent humans filled with joy. Mount Zion is personified as "glad" (Psalm 48:11), identifying it not merely as a place, but as the holy heaven where God dwells.

4. Assessment of Hyperbolic Intensity

Hyperbole conveys extremes of despair, joy, or purification. To be "whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:7) conveys a state of perfect, holy life. Enemies are described as being "more in number than the hairs of my head" (Psalm 69:4) to emphasize that they are countless. Moments of distress are highlighted by being "covered with deep darkness" (Psalm 44:19) or suffering "waves and billows" (Psalm 42:7), representing deathly danger. Notably, the "tip of the earth" in Psalm 61:2 is interpreted as a state of great joy, prompting the subject to seek God.

5. Comparative Significance

The data indicates that metaphor is the predominant figurative style in the Book of Psalms-Volume II (18 verses), while hyperbole is the least frequent (10 verses). This suggests a textual reliance on direct identification with tangible symbols of strength over extreme exaggeration. These figures of speech collectively encapsulate the essential message of the text, bridging the gap between divine attributes and human understanding based exclusively on the provided textual analysis.

CONCLUSION

Having analyzed the data concerning the kinds of figures of speech in the Book of Psalms-Volume II, the writer would like to draw some conclusions. To begin with, David often used figures of speech in writing his psalms in the book of Psalms-Volume II.

Then, the writer found that there were 18 verses containing metaphors. As we know that metaphor is an implied simile in which the two things are treated as one. There were sentences that employ simile as the expression in which something is compared to something else by the use of a function word such as like, or as. The writer found that there were 17 verses concerning simile. Moreover, the writer found that there were 14 verses concerning the personification. As mentioned in chapter II, personification is the figure of speech in which an idea, object or animal

is given qualities of a person. Furthermore, there were 10 verses concerning the hyperbole.

Finally, the writer also concludes that the meaning of figures of speech in the Book of Psalms-Volume II is to make the sentences more vivid, colorful and more effective. This is because the sentences can attract her attention since they sound unusual. And also to make the readers easy to understand and know about the meaning of the verses in the Book of Psalms-Volume II.

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