

God the Exclusively Christian Father:

An Analysis of the Response of Islamic Teenagers to Christian Metaphors Applied to Allah

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Abstract

This study concerns the possible influence of Christian culture on Islamic metaphorical language. In order to reveal whether or not such Christian influence is indeed apparent in the metaphorical language of Dutch Muslims, the responses of Dutch Islamic teenagers to principal Christian metaphors referring to God, which were applied to Allah, were analysed. The main research question was the following: *How do Dutch Islamic teenagers respond to principal Christian metaphors referring to God applied to Allah?* The selected principal Christian metaphors referring to God were the following: GOD IS A MASTER, GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A JUDGE, GOD IS A FATHER and GOD IS A HUSBAND. The analysis showed that the Islamic participants in this study only accepted the metaphors which also occur in the Quran, i.e. GOD IS A MASTER and GOD IS A JUDGE. The metaphor GOD IS A KING also occurs both in the Bible and the Quran, but this metaphor received mixed reactions, as some participants thought it was too 'earthly' to be appropriate when referring to Allah. The exclusively Christian metaphors were rejected by all the Islamic participants in this study. This rejection was based on the notion that these metaphors were too 'earthly' to be appropriate when referring to Allah as well. Thus, no Christian influence on the Islamic metaphorical language was detected in this research. Moreover, based the results in this study, the conclusion is that Christians and Muslims perceive and understand their deity in different terms: God the Father and God the Husband are exclusively Christian.

1. Introduction

Religion is a very complicated concept, as it requires people to believe and trust in something they cannot see and of which they (often) do not have tangible proof. This complexity influences the degree to which divine concepts can be grasped by believers. After all, how could one truly understand a concept which, by definition, has no earthly parallel? Both the Bible and the Quran offer a (partial) solution to this issue of incomprehensibility of divine concepts in the form of metaphor: by means of metaphors believers are guided towards a certain degree of understanding of the divine, as characteristics of earthly concepts are applied to the divine concept. McFague has even argued that *all* religious language is metaphorical (as cited in Creamer, 2006), as we are not able to understand divine concepts in their own terms, since we (presumably) cannot perceive such concepts directly ourselves. In other words, we do not have direct access to the divine reality and metaphors are the only access humans have to this divine reality (McFague, as cited in Bromell, 1993). Presumably, some believers do not agree with the statement that *all* religious language is metaphorical, as they interpret certain religious notions literally rather than metaphorically. For example, some believers argue that Christians are literally, rather than metaphorically, God's children (e.g. Sorensen, n.d.) and, thereby, they deny that *all* religious language is metaphorical. Regardless of whether one agrees or not that *all* religious language is metaphorical, metaphors are of central importance to religion, as they provide a tool by means of which incomprehensible divine concepts can, to a certain extent, be explained and comprehended.

Although metaphors provide a useful tool by means of which divine concepts can be understood in both the Christian and Islamic religion, the choice of the specific metaphors actually used by believers and those used in the Bible and the Quran is likely to vary based on cultural differences. However, as the majority of the population in the Netherlands is Christian (PewResearchCenter, 2012), exposure to the Christian language and the corresponding Christian conceptual framework could have influenced the language used by Dutch Muslims, reducing the

number of differences between the metaphorical language used by Dutch Christians and Dutch Muslims. As a matter of fact, in 2012 there were more than eight times as many Christians as there were Muslims residing in the Netherlands (PewResearchCenter, 2012), which underlines the likelihood that Dutch Muslims have been in contact with Christians and, thus, with Christian language and conceptual frameworks. As a result, the language of Dutch Muslims could have been altered and Dutch Muslims may make use of originally Christian metaphors, perhaps without even being aware of the Christian origin of such metaphors. For example, a Muslim could use the term 'zondebok' ('scapegoat') without even being aware of the biblical origin of this metaphor¹.

In order to reveal whether or not such a Christian influence is indeed apparent in the metaphorical language of Dutch Muslims, the responses of Dutch Islamic teenagers to Christian metaphors referring to God in an Islamic context, that is, Christian metaphors applied to Allah, will be analysed in this research. For example, the Christian metaphor GOD IS A FATHER will be presented to the participants as ALLAH IS A FATHER. This study will reveal to what extent the Islamic participants accept the selected Christian metaphors, which will reflect the degree to which these participants have been influenced by Christian conceptual frameworks. The main research question is the following: *How do Dutch Islamic teenagers respond to Christian metaphors applied to Allah?*

As religion revolves around the deity, the main focus in this study will be on metaphors referring to God and Allah. The main Christian metaphors referring to God will be selected based on the language in the Bible, as the Bible is the foundation on which the Christian religion is built and, therefore, the conceptual frameworks presented in the Bible are presumably incorporated in Christian culture and language. In order to confirm this latter notion, two Christian teenagers from the same age group and school as the Islamic participants in this study will be asked to respond to the selected metaphors, in order to establish if they indeed accept these metaphors as being an appropriate description of God. If the Christian participants do not accept one of the selected

¹ Jewish priests in the Old Testament were accustomed to put all the sins of the Jews on a goat by means of laying their hands on it, after which they would send the goat into the desert to die. This ritual would redeem the Jews from their sins (Leviticus 16:22).

metaphors, then that particular metaphor will be left out of the analysis. After all, if Christians do not even accept the metaphor, the Muslim participants could not have been influenced by that particular Christian metaphor.

In order to provide a sound analysis, the occurrence and use of the selected principal Christian metaphors referring to God in both the Bible and the Quran will be analysed as well. After all, if all of the selected metaphors also occur in the Quran, then the acceptance of the Christian metaphors by the Islamic participants in this study will not reflect the influence of the Dutch Christian culture on Dutch Muslims, but will rather reflect pre-existing similarities between the conceptual frameworks presented in the language of the Bible and the Quran. After all, the chance that the Islamic teenagers in this study will accept the Christian metaphors will be significantly higher if those metaphors are also part of the conceptual frameworks presented in the Quran, in which case those metaphors prove not to be exclusively Christian. Based on the analysis of the occurrence and use of the selected metaphors in both the Bible and the Quran, a hypothesis about the response of the Islamic participants to the Christian metaphors applied to Allah will be formulated.

The main analysis in this study is the analysis of the response of Islamic teenagers to the selected Christian metaphors. Therefore, the selected metaphors retrieved from the Bible will be applied to Allah and presented to the Islamic participants. The main questions here are: Do they accept these metaphors? Do they need an explanation of these metaphors? Or do they simply reject these metaphors? In addition to the analysis of the responses to the Christian metaphors applied to Allah, the metaphors used by the participants when asked general questions about their faith will be analysed as well, in order to establish if the participants use any of the selected metaphors without being prompted to do so by the questions and the presented metaphors.

In the next chapter, the theoretical framework within which the metaphors will be analysed, the possible influence of culture, and prior research on religious metaphors will be elaborated upon. In chapter 3, the selection of the principal Christian metaphors referring to God and the responses of

Christian participants to those metaphors will be described. Then, in chapter 4, the method and results of the analysis of the selected metaphors in the Bible and the Quran will be discussed. In chapter 5, the method and results of the analysis of the interviews with the Islamic participants will be discussed, followed by a discussion and conclusion in chapter 6.

2. Metaphors

2.1 Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Our conceptual system, which is a cognitive system of ideas and concepts, structures what we perceive, how we get around in the world and how we relate to other people and, thus, it plays a central role in defining our everyday realities (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). According to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory as described by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors essentially operate within this conceptual system. Moreover, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) even found that our conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. Metaphors at the level of one's conceptual system are labelled *conceptual metaphors* and these conceptual metaphors reflect how one perceives and understands certain concepts. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) serves as the theoretical framework in the current research, as conceptual metaphor analysis can reveal how the Christian and Islamic participants in this study perceive and understand God and Allah respectively and whether or not their conceptual frameworks differ.

“The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). In the case of conceptual metaphors, one concept is understood and experienced in terms of another concept (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). To illustrate, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) provide the example of the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. Arguments and wars and the corresponding actions performed differ in nature, as an argument is verbal discourse whereas a war is an armed conflict, but the concept ARGUMENT is partially structured, understood, performed and talked about in terms of the concept WAR (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The structure of a conceptual metaphor can best be described in terms of the source domain and the target domain: the source domain is the conceptual domain in which another domain is understood, whereas the target domain is the conceptual domain which is understood in terms of the source domain (Kövecses, 2010). For example, in the case of the conceptual metaphor

ARGUMENT IS WAR, ARGUMENT is the target domain concept, whereas WAR is the source domain concept.

Conceptual metaphors can form a coherent system based on entailment relationships (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Entailment relationships between metaphors are relationships in which one conceptual metaphor entails another, which in turn entails the next conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) give the following example: “TIME IS MONEY entails that TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE, which entails that TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY” (p.9). These conceptual metaphors form a system based on subcategorization and entailment, in which the metaphor TIME IS MONEY is the most specific. This system of conceptual metaphors, based on metaphorical entailments, has a corresponding system of linguistic metaphorical expressions for the relevant concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Thus, the metaphors in one’s language reflect the system of conceptual metaphors.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that, since communication is based on one’s conceptual system, language is a valuable source of evidence for what that system is like. After all, it is impossible to access someone’s conceptual system directly and, therefore, information about this system must be gained from sources such as someone’s language and actions. Moreover, metaphors as linguistic expressions, i.e. linguistic metaphors, are only possible because there are conceptual metaphors, as linguistic metaphors are a reflection of a person’s metaphorical conceptual system (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Thought has primacy over language, in the sense that linguistic metaphors are a reflection of the conceptual metaphors in one’s mind, rather than the reverse. Conceptual metaphors refer, as described above, to the cognitive understanding of one conceptual domain in terms of another, but linguistic metaphors are the actual phrases and words as they occur in a text or speech (Kövecses, 2010). To illustrate, the linguistic phrases ‘we were going in different directions’ and ‘the road to happiness’ both reflect the overarching conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. As linguistic metaphors reflect the conceptual metaphors, conceptual metaphors can be deduced by means of comparing and analysing various linguistic metaphors sharing a source and

target domain, a method which reveals the system of linguistic expressions and, ultimately, the system of conceptual metaphors. Thus, based on linguistic metaphors, information about the conceptual metaphorical system can be gained.

As an example of linguistic expressions reflecting a conceptual metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) provide the following linguistic expressions reflecting the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR:

ARGUMENT IS WAR

“Your claims are *indefensible*”

“He *attacked every weak point* in my argument”

“His criticisms were *right on target*”

(p.4)

Vocabulary from the source domain (WAR) provides a systematic way of talking about the target concept (ARGUMENT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In the current example, the vocabulary of the source domain WAR, e.g. *indefensible*, *attacked every weak point* and *right on target*, forms a systematic way of talking about the battling aspects of arguing, i.e. the target concept ARGUMENT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Thus, as linguistic metaphors reflect conceptual metaphors, one’s conceptual metaphorical system influences one’s metaphorical language.

In conclusion, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) explains that metaphors fundamentally operate at a cognitive level, that is, in one’s conceptual system, and linguistic metaphors are a reflection of those conceptual metaphors. In the current study, the aim is to gain information about the conceptual system of Christians and Muslims with regard to their religion, in particular with regard to God and Allah respectively. Conceptual metaphor analysis can provide such information and reveal differences and/or similarities between the ways in which Christians and Muslims perceive and understand the concept of their deity.

2.2 Processing metaphors

Metaphors can be processed in two manners: first, they can be processed as a comparison (Glucksberg & Haught, 2006). In this case, the metaphor, e.g. TIME IS MONEY, is understood as a simile, e.g. TIME IS LIKE MONEY, and this yields a list of corresponding characteristics between the target and source domain concepts which the metaphor emphasizes, e.g. both are a valuable commodity, etc. The second manner in which metaphors can be processed is as categorizations (Glucksberg & Haught, 2006). In this case, the target and source domain concepts are categorized within one category, e.g. TIME is categorized in the same category as MONEY. A category is often labelled using the most specific source domain concept in the metaphorical system, in this case *money* (Glucksberg & Haught, 2006).

Bowdle and Gentner (2005) state that novel metaphors, i.e. unfamiliar conceptual metaphors, are processed as comparisons and that they are, therefore, understood in terms of their corresponding similes. The Christian metaphors in focus in this study could be novel to the Islamic participants, which means that these participants could process these metaphors as comparisons and, thus, understand them in terms of the corresponding similes. This notion is important, as it also entails that mentioning the corresponding simile could help a participant to understand a metaphor. According to the notion that novel metaphors are processed as similes anyway, such rephrasing will not be in conflict with the aim of analysing the responses to the metaphors. In the next section, theory concerning the identification of linguistic metaphors will be discussed.

2.3 Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP)

In this research, the Metaphor Identification Procedure, or MIP, will be used to identify linguistic metaphors. This Metaphor Identification Procedure, established by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), provides several steps which should be followed when attempting to identify linguistic metaphors:

1. Determine the contextual meaning. What does the term or phrase mean in this particular context?

2. Determine the most basic meaning of the term or phrase, i.e. a more concrete meaning, a meaning related to bodily action, a more precise or a historically older meaning.
3. Compare the contextual and basic meanings of the term or phrase, in order to establish whether or not the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning, but could be understood in comparison with it.
4. Make a decision. If the contextual meaning contrast with the basic meaning, but can be understood in comparison with it, the term or phrase is used metaphorically.

Using these four steps, one can determine whether or not a particular term or phrase is used metaphorically. In order to illustrate this method, the four steps are applied to John 10:11, where Jesus says "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep". Jesus calls himself a *shepherd* in this verse. In order to establish whether or not this term *shepherd* is used metaphorically, the four steps of MIP are followed:

1. In this context, Jesus calls himself a *shepherd* to explain that he takes care of his people.
2. The most basic meaning of *shepherd* is "a person who tends sheep" (Merriam-Webster dictionary).
3. The contextual and basic meanings contrast, as Jesus does not mean that he tends actual sheep. Nevertheless, the contextual meaning could be understood in comparison with the basic meaning, as Jesus tends to and takes care of his people, like a shepherd tends to and takes care of his sheep.
4. As the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning, but can be understood in comparison with it, the term *shepherd* is used metaphorically in John 10:11.

In the next section, the influence of culture on metaphors will be discussed.

2.4 Cultural influence on metaphors

Research has shown that cultural differences can result in differences in the metaphorical language used (Gannon, 2001; Ansah, 2010; Casasanto & Bottini, 2014; Böhle & Friedrich, 2002; Hsieh &

Lu, 2014; Pihlaja, 2011; Littlemore, 2003). More specifically, metaphors can be grounded in either universal cognition or culture-specific cognition (Ansah, 2010), and as a result culture-specific metaphors exist. Ansah (2010) studied the conceptualisation of emotions in English and Akan, and found that, although there are similarities, there are also some differences which are reflected in the metaphors used. For example, skin colour, such as redness around the face and neck area, is used metonymically to conceptualise anger in English, while it is not used in the Akan metonymic conceptualisation of anger (Ansah, 2010). In addition, in English, anger may be contained in the *eyes, face, neck, guts, nerves* and *blood*, whereas it may be contained in the *chest, heart, back of the head* and *stomach* in Akan (Ansah, 2010). Ansah concludes that the differences found can be ascribed to culturally specific embodiment (Ansah, 2010), i.e. culture-specific cognition and conceptualisation, and, thus, this research underlines the notion that cultural differences can influence metaphorical language.

The notion of culture-specific cognition resulting in culture-specific metaphors is underlined by the research conducted by Casasanto and Bottini (2014) as well, who found that participants' mental timelines were rotated after exposure to rotated orthography and that, as orthography is a cultural element, conceptualizations of time are culture-specific. This result underlines the notion that culture influences metaphorical language, as the conceptualisation of time, or any other concept, influences the choice of metaphors. After all, language is the reflection of one's conceptual system. In addition, Böhle and Friedrich (2002) found that "the further culturally distant languages are from one another, the more obvious the culture-boundedness of the metaphors gets" (p. 60), a notion which they illustrate by the Farsi metaphor "*you can't prevent from stepping unto the carpet anymore*" (p. 60) (which means you cannot avoid something unpleasant happening). Thus, culture influences the choice of metaphors.

In addition, cultural aspects of languages can be revealed by means of metaphor analysis (Hsieh & Lu, 2014). Hsieh & Lu (2014) researched Emotional Expressions (EEs) in Chinese, Spanish and German and they found that cultural aspects of the languages, such as the history and

life teachings, are reflected in the EEs used. Such reflection of cultural aspects in the metaphorical language, and the notion that the cultural aspects could be examined by means of analysing metaphorical language is underlined by the research conducted by Pihlaja (2011), who examined how interpretation of metaphor reveals individual user worldviews. Thus, in addition to cultural aspects influencing the metaphorical language, researchers have also studied metaphorical language, or the interpretation of such language, in order to gain information about certain cultural aspects.

As culture influences one's conceptual system and, thereby, one's metaphorical language, cultural differences can account for misinterpretations of metaphors as well (Littlemore, 2003; Pihlaja, 2011). Littlemore researched how Bangladeshi students interpreted metaphors used by their British lecturers and how their interpretation related to their culture. She found that the (mis)interpretations made by the students were in accordance with the differences in the cultural values of the students and the lecturers. Thus, cultural differences can result in differing interpretations of the same metaphors. A similar conclusion is drawn by Pihlaja (2011), who found that Christians and Atheists on YouTube interpreted the same metaphors in a different manner. Moreover, Pihlaja (2011) states that "different users from different ideological positions do not necessarily employ different metaphors to describe and understand the YouTube community, but rather are able to extend, subvert, and reappropriate the same metaphors with different meanings to suit their purposes"(p. 12). Thus, culture can influence the choice, use and interpretation of metaphors and, therefore, it is important to be aware of possible cultural differences when analysing metaphors used by participants from different cultural backgrounds.

Although there may not be a clear-cut list of cultural differences between Dutch Christians and Dutch Muslims, the Bible and the Quran provide information about cultural elements that could influence the metaphorical language of Christians and Muslims. After all, Christian religion is based on the Bible and the Quran (together with the *Hadith*²) forms "the 'culture' of Islamic

² Islamic Prophetic narrations.

thought” (Eweida, 2006, p. 9). However, identifying specific cultural elements that influence metaphorical language requires a full analysis of the metaphorical language and the culture in the Bible and the Quran, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, one point that can be made is that many events described in the Bible and the Quran take place in roughly the same areas. For example, both texts refer to Egypt as the stage for certain important events, such as the Exodus. Moreover, the Bible and the Quran even describe some of the same stories and events, such as the stories about Abraham and his sons Ismael and Isaac, even though details are different. Thus, based on the similarities in the geographical areas and even the very events themselves described in the Bible and the Quran, it seems unlikely that cultural differences based on vast geographical differences would have caused variation in the metaphorical language between both texts. Nevertheless, one should note that other cultural aspects could have influenced the metaphorical language and, therefore, cultural differences are still likely to influence the results in this study. In the next section, prior research on metaphors in the Bible and the Quran and on the metaphorical language of Christians and Muslims will be discussed.

2.5 Religious metaphors

The Bible and the Quran share several conceptual metaphors (Charteris-Black, 2004). Charteris-Black (2004) states that, in comparing the metaphors of the Bible and the Quran, he found that these texts show more similarity than dissimilarity in terms of conceptual metaphors. “In both texts journey, fire and light and weather metaphors are important and are based on conceptual metaphors such as SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE IS LIGHT, GOOD IS LIGHT, DIVINE ANGER IS FIRE and DIVINE PUNISHMENT IS A HOSTILE WEATHER CONDITION” (Charteris-Black, 2004, p. 238). However, there are also various differences between the metaphors used in the Bible and the Quran. For example, metaphors highlighting the power of divine retribution and punishment are more widespread in the Quran (Charteris-Black, 2004). In addition, metaphors based on the conceptual metaphor SPIRITUAL IS NATURAL are more productive in the Bible, although they

do occur in the Quran as well (Charteris-Black, 2004). Interestingly, several words from the lexical fields of food and drink and animals, which are used for numerous metaphors in the Bible, were found to be much more commonly used in the literal sense in the Quran (Charteris-Black, 2004). Thus, the research conducted by Charteris-Black indicates that there are many similarities as well as differences between the linguistic and conceptual metaphors in the Bible and the Quran.

Charteris-Black (2004) has shown that the metaphorical language of the Bible and the Quran differ on specific points. The current study, however, is primarily focussed on the linguistic and conceptual metaphors used by believers themselves. Research has indicated that there are differences in the metaphorical language of Christians and Muslims as well. In the New Testament, the desire to close the distance between God and humanity is emphasized, which is reflected in an increased use of language of close human relationship and intimacy by Christians (Richardson, 2012). This contrasts with the “absolute otherness of Allah expressed in aspects of belief such as the command to never attempt to visually represent him” (Richardson, 2012, p. 255). Richardson found that the metaphors used by Christians and Muslims rely on varying patterns of emphasis, as the Christians focus on a relationship with God and use relatively much language related to intimate human relationships, whereas the Muslims focus on a personal journey of research and reflection (Richardson, 2012).

Based on the research conducted by Charteris-Black (2004) and Richardson (2012), the expectation is that differences will be found between the metaphorical language of the Christians and that of the Muslims in this research and also between the metaphorical language of the Bible and that of the Quran. As this study primarily focusses on the perception and understanding of God and Allah by believers, only metaphors referring to God/Allah, believers, the relationship between God/Allah and the believers and believers’ faith will be analysed. In addition, the Islamic participants will only be asked to respond to metaphors referring to Allah. As mentioned before, the Christian metaphors referring to God will be applied to Allah and the participants will be asked to

respond to those Christian metaphors applied to Allah. In the next chapter, the selection of the principal Christian metaphors referring to God will be elaborated upon.

3. Selection of the principal Christian metaphors referring to God

According to Achtemeier (1992), God has revealed Himself in the Bible by means of five principal metaphors, namely God as a *king, father, husband, master* and *judge*³. Based on this notion, the metaphors GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A MASTER, GOD IS A JUDGE, GOD IS A FATHER and GOD IS A HUSBAND are selected as being the principal Christian metaphors referring to God. However, this study is primarily based on the premise that the language of the Islamic participants could have been affected by the Christian language and conceptual frameworks of Dutch Christians and, therefore, it is of pivotal importance to establish if Christians themselves accept these five selected metaphors. After all, Achtemeier has selected these metaphors based on the Bible and not on the language used by Christians. If Christians do not accept them, these metaphors do not represent the manner in which God is perceived and understood by Christians.

In order to check and confirm that the five metaphors selected as the principal Christian metaphors referring to God are indeed accepted by Christians, two Christian fellow-students of the Islamic participants in this study will be interviewed and asked respond to the five metaphors. Thus, these interviews serve as a small-scale check for whether or not Christians in the same (school) community as the Islamic participants in this study respond positively to the selected metaphors. After all, if the Christians do not even accept the metaphors, the chance that the Muslims in this study will do so will be slim, as these Muslims would not have been in contact with the metaphors by means of the language of the Christian fellow-students. Of course, this small-scale check is by no means an exhaustive measure for the extent to which the Muslim participants could have been in contact with the Christian metaphors, but it could confirm, if the Christian participants accept all of them, that the selection of the five principal Christian metaphors referring to God is indeed justified. If the Christian participants reject one of the selected metaphors, than that metaphor will be excluded from the current research, as the possible acceptance of that metaphor by the Islamic

³ Achtemeier (1992) does not discuss how and why she selected these five metaphors.

participants will probably not reflect Christian influence. The main question here is: *How do Christian fellow-students of the Islamic participants respond to the selected Christian metaphors?*

In addition to the response to the selected metaphors, the metaphors used by the Christian participants in response to general questions will be analysed as well, paying particular attention to the possible occurrence of the selected metaphors. After all, metaphors which they use without being prompted play a more important role in their perception and understanding of God. In the next section, the method and results of this analysis will be described.

3.1 Method Christian response

3.1.1 Materials

In order to establish whether or not the Christian participants used one or more of the selected metaphors without being prompted to do so by presenting the metaphors first, they were first asked some general questions about their faith. Then, they were asked to respond to the five selected metaphors. The interview questions can be found in Appendix A. The MIP method was used to identify linguistic metaphors and, for this purpose, the Van Dale dictionary was consulted.

3.1.2 Participants

Two Christian students attending the same high-school as the Islamic participants, which is described in more detail in chapter 5, were interviewed. The first Christian participant (C1) was male and 16 years old and the second Christian participant (C2) was female and 15 years old. Both participants were Protestant Christians.

3.1.3 Procedure

The interviews took about 10-15 minutes and were held in one of the classrooms in the school. The answers to the general questions were analysed using the MIP method in order to identify linguistic metaphors. Linguistic metaphors reflecting one conceptual metaphor were grouped together. The

conceptual metaphors were deduced from the linguistic metaphors by means of comparison of the linguistic metaphors. In addition, the Van Dale dictionary was consulted in order to find common terms or phrases in the definitions of the linguistic metaphorical terms. These common terms or phrases, if present, were also used to formulate the ‘summarizing’ conceptual metaphor.

With regard to the responses to the five selected metaphors, three types of responses were distinguished: 1) *Acceptance*: the participant thinks that the metaphor is appropriate when referring to God; 2) *Rejection*: the participant does not think that the metaphor is appropriate when referring to God; 3) *Clarification*: the participant requires an explanation of the metaphor. In the case of *rejection* or *clarification*, an explanation was given, after which a secondary response was recorded and analysed, using the same classification system of *acceptance*, *rejection* or *clarification*.

One participant mentioned one of the five selected metaphors (GOD IS A FATHER) in his answer to a general question in such an elaborate manner that the metaphor did not need to be presented again later on in the interview. The category in which the response to this metaphor would have fallen was deduced from his answer to the general questions.

3.2 Results

First of all, the participants used various metaphors referring to God, believers and/or their faith in response to the general questions asked. Table 1 lists both the conceptual metaphors and the linguistic expressions of these conceptual metaphors. The link between the conceptual and linguistic metaphors is rather straightforward for most of the metaphors used (Table 1), but the conceptual metaphor GOD IS A BRIDGE BUILDER might need some clarification. The linguistic metaphors reflecting this conceptual metaphor reflect God’s desire for believers and Himself to approach one another. In Dutch, ‘overbruggen’ (*to bridge*) can be used figuratively to indicate ‘toenadering bewerken’ (*cause an approach*). If God ‘overbrugt’ (*bridges*), He builds a bridge and is, therefore, a bridge builder. Therefore, the linguistic metaphors reflecting that God and

believers approach one another were grouped together as reflections of the conceptual metaphor GOD IS A BRIDGE BUILDER.

Among the metaphors used by the participants in response to the general questions related to God, believers or their faith, two of the selected principal Christian metaphors referring to God occur. First of all, both participants used the metaphor GOD IS A FATHER (Table 1). As both participants used this metaphor, it could be argued that this metaphor was especially important in their perception and understanding of God. In addition, one of the participants used the metaphor BELIEVERS ARE SERVANTS (Table 1), which is linked to the conceptual metaphor GOD IS A MASTER, based on a relationship of entailment.

Table 1: Metaphors used by the Christian participants

Conceptual metaphor	Linguistic metaphors
GOD IS A FATHER	<p>“Vroeger werd er altijd tegen mij gezegd, <u>God is een vader</u>” (C1)</p> <p>“Als ik bid dan.. dan voel ik me daarna ook zo van alsof ik dat <u>vader-zoon gesprek heb gehad</u>” (C1)</p> <p>“Ik zie mezelf nu nog als <u>dienstknecht</u> nog even, maar ik weet wel van binnen dat ik een <u>kind van God ben</u>” (C1)</p> <p>“Ja, echt dat Hij zo <u>een vader is</u>” (C2)</p>
LIFE IS A JOURNEY	<p>“Je hebt andere dingen die je <u>tegenkomt</u> dan iemand die niet geloofd” (C1)</p> <p>“Ja, want wanneer wij <u>het verkeerde pad</u> gaan, dan ehm.. als we er echt om vragen dan zet Hij soms nog wel ons op <u>het juiste pad</u>” (C2)</p>
BELIEVERS ARE SERVANTS	<p>“Ik zie mezelf nu nog als <u>dienstknecht</u> nog even, maar ik weet wel van binnen dat ik een kind van God ben” (C1)</p>
CHRISTIANS ARE A FAMILY	<p>“We [christenen in zijn kerk] zijn gewoon echt <u>een family</u>” (C1)</p>
JESUS IS A SAVIOUR	<p>“Dat je ook accepteert dat Jezus Christus de zoon van God is, dat Hij ook <u>jouw redder is</u>” (C1)</p>
GOD IS A BRIDGE BUILDER	<p>“Ik geloof dat de Heer iedereen <u>heeft geroepen</u> voor het plan in zijn leven” (C1)</p> <p>“Als je ziet dat de Heer weer <u>zijn hand naar jou toereikt</u>” (C1)</p>

The five selected metaphors were also presented explicitly to the participants, unless the participants had already shared their view on a metaphor in previous answers. Table 2 provides an overview of the responses to the five Biblical metaphors referring to God. Example quotes that illustrate the responses are given as well. Table 2 indicates that, basically, all of the five metaphors were accepted by the participants. One of the participants did doubt, however, if he would use the metaphor GOD IS KING himself, even though he agreed that this metaphor is appropriate when referring to God. In addition, the metaphor GOD IS A HUSBAND proved to be difficult to understand for both participants. Nevertheless, as both participants did accept this metaphor, it will still be included in analyses in the remainder of this research.

Table 2: Responses of the Christian participants to the selected metaphors

Conceptual metaphor	Participant	Response	Example quotes
GOD IS A KING	C1	(partial) Acceptance	<p><i>“Ja, Hij is alles in één. Dus je zou kunnen zeggen dat Hij een koning is, maar ik weet niet of ik het zou zeggen”</i></p> <p><i>“Ik weet niet of ik echt zou zeggen koning, omdat we hier ook koningen hebben”</i></p> <p><i>“Hij is het uiteindelijk, maar Hij is ook meer dan dat”</i></p>
	C2	Acceptance	<i>“Ja, zo zie ik dat wel. De Koning van het leven”</i>
GOD IS A MASTER	C1	Acceptance	<p><i>“Ja, ik zie dat op zich ook wel zo”</i></p> <p><i>“Ja”</i></p>
	C2	Acceptance	<i>“Ja, want wij aanbidden hem ook.”</i>
GOD IS A JUDGE	C1	Acceptance	<p><i>“Ja uiteindelijk wel, op de Dag des Oordeel”</i></p> <p><i>“Hij is rechtvaardig”</i></p> <p><i>“Ik denk dat Hij gewoon een rechter is, zijn oordeel is gewoon altijd rechtvaardig”</i></p>
	C2	Acceptance	<i>“Ja eigenlijk wel”</i>
GOD IS A FATHER	C1	Acceptance	Based on response to the general questions; see Table 1
	C2	Acceptance	<i>“Ja, wel echt een vader, maar wel een vader die je niet ziet. Hij is wel echt een zorgzame vader”</i>

GOD IS A HUSBAND	C1	Acceptance	<p><i>“Ja, moeilijk...”</i></p> <p><i>“Ja, eigenlijk wel, want ja.. uiteindelijk is het wel zo dat als je gelovig bent dat je luistert naar wat God wil”</i></p> <p><i>“Dus als je dan kijkt naar een huwelijk, dan luistert ook de vrouw... ja tegenwoordig.. maar het is toch nog steeds zo dat de man het hoofd van het gezin is”</i></p>
	C2	Acceptance	<p><i>“Ja, omdat het in de Bijbel staat”</i></p>

3.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the two Christian fellow-students of the Islamic participants in this study accepted all of the five Biblical metaphors, although they did express that the metaphor GOD IS A HUSBAND was somewhat difficult to understand. Moreover, both participants used the metaphor GOD IS A FATHER in answer to the general questions. This indicates that the metaphor GOD IS A FATHER was an important metaphor in the perception and understanding of God for these Christian participants. In addition, one of the participants referred to the metaphor GOD IS A MASTER, by means of the metaphor BELIEVERS ARE SERVANTS.

Based on the results of this small-scale analysis, the conclusion is that the five selected metaphors are indeed deemed appropriate when referring to the God by Christians. Therefore, the metaphors GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A MASTER, GOD IS A JUDGE, GOD IS A FATHER and GOD IS A HUSBAND remain the selected principal Christian metaphors referring to God in this study. Extra explanation for the metaphor GOD IS A HUSBAND to the Islamic participants might be necessary, as even the Christian participants thought that this was a difficult metaphor to understand. In the next chapter, the analysis of the occurrence and use of the five selected metaphors in the Bible and the Quran will be described.

4. Corpus analysis of the selected metaphors in the Bible and the Quran

In this chapter, the occurrence and use of the five selected metaphors referring to God, i.e. GOD IS A MASTER, GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A JUDGE, GOD IS A FATHER, and GOD IS A HUSBAND, in both the Bible and the Quran will be analysed. First, the method and results of the analysis of these metaphors in the Bible will be discussed. Then, the method and results of the analysis of the metaphors in the Quran follow.

4.1 Method Bible analysis

4.1.1 Research question

As discussed before, God has revealed Himself in the Bible by means of five principal metaphors as a *master, king, judge, father, and husband* (Achtemeier, 1992). Based on their conceptual systems and personal experiences, the Islamic participants in this study may interpret these Biblical metaphors in different terms than those in which the metaphors are used in the Bible. Therefore, it is important to first establish how these specific metaphors are used in the Bible, so that proper explanation can be provided if necessary. The research question here is, therefore, the following: *How are the metaphors GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A FATHER, GOD IS A HUSBAND, GOD IS A MASTER and GOD IS A JUDGE used in the Bible, that is, what kind of king, father, husband, master and judge is God according to the Bible?* For each metaphor, several examples of their occurrences in the Bible will be given, after which their use and meaning in the Bible will be elaborated upon.

4.1.2 Materials

In order to analyse the metaphors in the Bible, I used the BibleGateway.com app (Creative Squad, 2014). This app allows its users to search the entire Bible for keywords or key phrases in various Bible translations. For this analysis, the New King James Version was used. The

BibleGateway.com app (Creative Squad, 2014) also lists results of verses that contain the words of the key phrases in deviating order. This allows for an easy search, as one can use rather general phrases, without having to pay attention to a specific word order. For example, the results of a search for the phrase ‘*God is king*’ include all verses in which the words ‘*God*’, ‘*is*’ and ‘*king*’ occur. This was an efficient search method for the present research, as verses only including ‘*king*’, which often refer to the human kings, could be excluded, without being restricted to verses in which the phrase ‘*God is king*’ occurs with that specific word order. The MIP method was used to identify the linguistic metaphors. For this purpose, the online version of the Merriam-Webster dictionary was consulted.

4.1.3 Procedure

Initially, I searched for each of the five metaphors using the source domain term as a keyword. Thus, I searched for linguistic metaphors reflecting the conceptual metaphor GOD IS A MASTER using the keyword ‘*master*’. Dependent on the number and usability of the results of this initial search, related keywords or phrases were used as well. For example, the keywords ‘*lord*’ and ‘*servant*’ were also used in order to find linguistic metaphors reflecting the GOD IS A MASTER metaphor. When necessary, the term ‘*God*’ was added to the keywords, in order to restrict the results to verses concerning God. Table 3 lists all the keywords and phrases used to search for linguistic metaphors in the BibleGateway.com app (Creative Squad, 2014).

Table 3: Keywords/phrases analysis Bible

Conceptual metaphor	Keyword/phrase
GOD IS A KING	‘ <i>God is king</i> ’ / ‘ <i>kingdom of God</i> ’
GOD IS A MASTER	‘ <i>God master</i> ’ / ‘ <i>servant God</i> ’ / ‘ <i>lord</i> ’
GOD IS A JUDGE	‘ <i>God judge</i> ’
GOD IS A FATHER	‘ <i>God father</i> ’ / ‘ <i>God children</i> ’
GOD IS A HUSBAND	‘ <i>God husband</i> ’ / ‘ <i>husband</i> ’ / ‘ <i>wife</i> ’ / ‘ <i>God wife</i> ’ / ‘ <i>divorce</i> ’

One should note that the lists of examples of relevant verses which will be provided are not exhaustive, as not all possible keywords and phrases were used. For each metaphor, several examples of verses reflecting the metaphor will be provided, followed by examples of verses elaborating on and describing the metaphors. Examples were selected based on their context and the extent to which the context also revealed the intended meaning of the metaphor.

Metaphors referring only to Jesus, rather than God, were left out of the analysis. The reason for the avoidance of such metaphors was that Jesus cannot be compared to Allah directly, as Jesus is the son of God and Allah is not and does not have a son. For purposes of scope and clarity, the Christian notion of the Holy Trinity, which states that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are in fact one as well as three, was left out of account.

In the results section, each of the five selected metaphors will briefly be elaborated upon, accompanied by various example verses. In order to underline certain claims or results, secondary literature will occasionally be referred to as well.

4.2 Results Bible analysis

King. The metaphor GOD IS A KING occurs several times in the Bible in various forms. First of all, the phrase '*God is King*' is used explicitly, for example in the following verses: "for God is the King of all the earth" (Psalm 47:7), "for God is my King from of old" (Psalm 74:7), and "for the Lord is the great God and the great King above all gods" (Psalm 95:3). In addition to the occurrence of the explicit metaphor GOD IS A KING, the metaphor '*kingdom of God*', which also reflects the conceptual metaphor GOD IS A KING, occurs numerous times as well, especially in the New Testament. Examples are found in the following verses: "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33), "your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of your kingdom" (Psalm 45:6), and "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14).

Thus, the Bible repeatedly states that God is a king, which reflects the conceptual metaphor **GOD IS A KING**. Moreover, God is presented as a righteous king. This is found in, for example, the following verses: “A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of your kingdom” (Psalm 45:6), and “for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17). In addition, Muis states that “God’s kingship implies his authority and power to fight the forces of evil, to liberate and lead his people and to control the events of history” (2008, 269). Thus, in the Bible, God is presented as a righteous and powerful king, who cares for His people.

Master. The metaphor **GOD IS A MASTER** is not often expressed explicitly in the Bible, that is, at least not in the New King James version. The few examples that could be found occur in the following verses: “as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until He has mercy on us” (Psalm 123:2), and “no one can serve two masters; [...] You cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). Nevertheless, although God is not often referred to as ‘master’ explicitly, the term ‘Lord’ is used numerous times to refer to God. In addition, the related conceptual metaphor, based on a relationship of entailment, **BELIEVERS ARE SERVANTS** occurs more often, for example in the following verses: “these men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation” (Acts 16:17), “let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God”(1 Corinthians 4:1), “praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great” (Revelations 19:5), and “The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build”(Nehemiah 2:20).

As illustrated in the above, God is presented as a master in the Bible. It remains to be clarified, however, what kind of master God is. First of all, God the Master is presented as a good, truthful, merciful, gracious and patient master, as illustrated, for example in Exodus 34 verse 6: “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abounding in goodness and truth”. In addition, God the Master has the best interests of His people at heart as illustrated by the

following verses: “So you shall rejoice in every good thing the Lord your God has given to you and your house” (Deuteronomy 26:11), and “The Lord your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand” (Deuteronomy 30:9). Moreover, God the Master even fights for His people: “You must not fear them, for the Lord your God Himself fights for you” (Deuteronomy 3:22).

However, despite this overall positive representation, God the Master is also presented as someone who needs to be feared and someone who will punish bad behaviour, as illustrated, for example, by the following verses: “therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the Lord your God promised you, so the Lord will bring upon you all harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the Lord your God has given you” (Joshua 23:15), “and the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day” (Deuteronomy 6:24), and “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul” (Deuteronomy 10:12). One should note that the fear of God seems to benefit the believers, as it keeps them from straying from the right path and, thus, from judgement (Deuteronomy 6:24). Moreover, the Book of Hebrews explains that God punishes and corrects the ones He loves, which is in line with the notion that the fear of God is ultimately beneficial to the believers: “For whom the Lord loves, He chastens” (Hebrews 12:6).

In conclusion, God the Master has many characteristics ascribed to Him. Not only is He a good master, who has His people’s best interests at heart, He also corrects and punishes them if necessary, as such chastening might refrain people from sin and, thus, judgement.

Judge. The metaphor GOD IS A JUDGE occurs explicitly in the Bible several times, for example in the following verses: “God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day” (Psalm 7:11), “God the Righteous Judge” (Psalm 50:1), Surely He is God who judges the earth” (Psalm 58:11), and “and to God the Judge of all” (Hebrews 12:23). Thus, both the noun *judge* and the verb *to judge* are used repeatedly in the Bible to express the conceptual metaphor GOD IS A

JUDGE. In addition, various characteristics are ascribed to God the Judge. First of all, the example of Psalm 7:11 given above indicates that God is a *just* judge. This notion is repeated in Psalm 50:1, where God is called the “Righteous Judge” and in 2 Thessalonians 1 verse 5: “which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God”. In addition to these verses, God is referred to as a righteous judge in various other verses as well (among others: Psalm 9:8, 2 Timothy 4:8, Psalms 96:13, and Psalms 98:9). Thus, God is presented as a just and righteous judge.

Father. The metaphor GOD IS A FATHER is “a dominant metaphor that has been used throughout the history of Christianity (from the words of Jesus through to the present day)” (Creamer, 2006, p. 77). This is, for example, reflected in the Lord’s Prayer, which starts as follows: “Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name” (Matthew 6:9). Moreover, the New Testament alone refers to God as a father over 250 times (Perkins, 2002). As *father* might carry a different connotation depending on the participant’s personal experience with fathers, it is important to establish what kind of father is meant in the Bible.

First of all, love seems to be an important characteristic of God the Father (Creamer, 2006). This is made explicit in, for example, the following verses: “behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God” (1 John 3:1), and “for the Father Himself loves you” (John 16:27). In addition, God the Father wants to take care of His ‘children’, i.e. the believers, which is illustrated by the following verses: “Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?” (Matthew 6:26), “if you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!” (Matthew 7:11), and “your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him” (Matthew 6:8). Moreover, God the Father is even referred to as being perfect: “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

Perkins (2002) adds that God demonstrates His fatherhood by defending, disciplining and being devoted to His children, the believers⁴. God as a disciplining Father is underlined by, for example, Hebrews 12:5-7: “My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord [...] If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?”. Perkins (2002) provides Isaiah 54:17 as an example of God the Father defending His children, although, based on this verse, the characteristic *defender* might better suit the metaphor GOD IS A MASTER: “no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from Me” (Perkins, 2002, p. 4). The devotion of God the Father is underlined by the verses provided above regarding God’s love and His desire to care for His children, the believers.

In conclusion, God the Father is presented as a loving father who takes care of His children, the believers, by defending and disciplining them and being devoted to them.

Husband. A perhaps surprising metaphor used repeatedly in the Bible to refer to God is GOD IS A HUSBAND. Long (1991) elaborates on this metaphor and states that this metaphor, first encountered in Hosea, is based on the idea that God and His chosen people have entered into a legal marriage. It is important to note that this marriage is a relationship between God and His people, not God and individual believers. Thus, the entire group of believers would be God’s ‘wife’, rather than individual believers. As this metaphor only applies to the believers as a group, rather than to believers as individuals, it could be difficult to explain and understand, which is indeed confirmed by the analysis of the interviews with the Christian participants. In addition to the understanding that the marriage is a covenant between God and His people, it is important to note that the sexual aspect of a marital relationship is excluded in this metaphor (Long, 1994). Interestingly, this metaphor does not have a parallel in other religions (Long, 1994), and, therefore, I do not expect to find this metaphor in the Quran.

⁴ Note that this statement is part of a sermon, rather than a scientific analysis of the Bible. Perkins does base his statements mainly on the Bible however.

So what kind of husband is God presented as in the Bible? First of all, God the Husband desires a lasting and eternal relationship with His ‘wife’, i.e. the believers, as illustrated in Hosea 2 verse 19-20: “I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in loving kindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord”. This verse also indicates that God the Husband is faithful and shows loving kindness and mercy. This kindness and mercy of God the Husband is also reflected in Isaiah 54 verses 5-8: “For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is His name, [...], But with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you”.

Another important aspect of the marriage metaphor reflected by GOD IS A HUSBAND is that husbands and wives should be faithful to one another. Although God the Husband is faithful to His ‘wife’, several verses indicate that the ‘wife’ has not always been faithful to God the Husband. In the book of Jeremiah, the unfaithfulness of the people to God, as they strayed and started worshipping other gods, is represented as the ‘wife’ being adulterous: “Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce” (Jeremiah 3:8). God’s punishment for this ‘adultery’ is divorce. Thus, faithfulness is of pivotal importance to God the Husband.

In conclusion, God is a loving, kind and merciful Husband, to whom faithfulness is of pivotal importance. He will not stand for ‘adultery’ and cheating on God with other gods will be punished.

4.3 Method analysis Quran

4.3.1 Research question

As the Islamic participants are more likely to accept a metaphor which also occurs in the Quran, and, thus, one that is not exclusively Christian, it is important to establish if the five selected principal Christian metaphors also occur in the Quran or not. In addition, if the metaphors do occur in the Quran, are they used in roughly the same manner as in the Bible? In this section, the

occurrence and use of the five principal Biblical metaphors, i.e. GOD IS A MASTER, GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A JUDGE, GOD IS A FATHER, and GOD IS A HUSBAND, in the Quran will be analysed. Naturally, these metaphors will be applied to Allah in order to be able to analyse their occurrence and use in the Quran. The research questions here are the following: *Do the metaphors ALLAH IS A MASTER, ALLAH IS A KING, ALLAH IS A JUDGE, ALLAH IS A FATHER and ALLAH IS A HUSBAND occur in the Quran, and, if so, how are they used and how does this use compare to the Bible?* Based on the results, a hypothesis about the response of the Islamic participants in this study to the specific metaphors will be formulated.

4.3.2 Materials

I searched for linguistic expressions of each of the five conceptual metaphors using a digital English translation of the Quran (Yusuf Ali, 1934). As with the BibleGateway.com app (Creative Squad, 2014), this digital search-engine allows one to search multiple words without being restricted to a specific word order. Thus, results include all verses that include the words of the key phrase. The MIP method was used to identify linguistic metaphors. For this purpose, the online version of the Merriam-Webster dictionary was consulted.

4.3.3 Procedure

Initially I used the source domain term as a keyword (i.e. *king, master, judge, father and husband*). Table 4 provides an overview of all the keywords and phrases used to search for the metaphors in the Quran. For each metaphor that occurs in the Quran, some example verses will be provided in the results section below. In addition, the manner in which the metaphors are used will be elaborated upon, accompanied by examples. Based on the results, the occurrence and use of the metaphors in the Quran were compared to the occurrence and use of these metaphors in the Bible. In addition, based on that comparison, a hypothesis about the responses of the Islamic participants to the Christian metaphors in the interviews discussed in chapter 5 was formulated. Note that further

research is required in order to provide a full list of the occurrences and characteristics of the metaphors in the Quran, as not all possible keywords and phrases were used in this analysis.

Table 4 Keywords and phrases analysis Quran

Conceptual metaphor	Keywords/phrases
ALLAH IS A KING	'king'
ALLAH IS A MASTER	'master' / 'servant'
ALLAH IS A JUDGE	'judge'
ALLAH IS A FATHER	'father'
ALLAH IS A HUSBAND	'husband' / 'wife'

4.4 Results analysis Quran

King. A search for the keyword 'king' rendered 16 results, of which 4 verses refer to Allah: "I seek refuge with the Lord and Cherisher of Mankind, the King (or Ruler) of Mankind" (*Surah* 114 An-Nas (the Mankind) verse 2), "the day We shall gather the righteous to (Allah) Most Gracious, like a band presented before a king of honours," (*Surah* 19 Maryam (Mary) verse 85), "therefore exalted by Allah, the King, the Reality: there is no god but He, the Lord of the Throne of Honour!" (*Surah* 23 Al-Mumenuon (the Believers) verse 116), and "High above all is Allah, the King, the Truth!" (*Surah* 20 Taha (Taha) verse 114). Thus, the Quran does refer to Allah as a king. Based on the verses given above, Allah is presented as a king of honour, the true king and as a king with whom people can seek refuge. In the Bible, God is presented as a righteous and powerful king. Although the characteristics are not exactly the same, both Allah and God are presented as kings in a positive light: both seem to care for Their people. As the metaphor GOD IS A KING also occurs in the Quran and as the use of this metaphor does not vastly differ between the Bible and the Quran, the hypothesis is that the Islamic participants will accept this metaphor.

Master. The search for the keyword 'master' yielded about 100 results, among which numerous verses which refer to Allah as a master, such as the following: "Master of the Day of Judgment" (*Surah* 1 Al-Fatiha (the Opening) verse 4), "for verily it is thy Lord who is the Master-

Creator, Knowing all things” (Surah 15 Al-Hijr Valley (Al Hijr) verse 86), “I am a messenger of the Lord of the Worlds” (Surah 43 Az Zukhruf (Ornaments of Gold) verse 46), “O mankind! Do your duty to your Lord” (Surah 31 Luqman (Luqman) verse 33), and “And He is the Oft-Forgiving, Full of Loving-Kindness, Lord of the Throne of Glory” (Surah 85 Al-Burooj (the Mansions of the stars) verse 14-15). Thus, the metaphor GOD IS A MASTER also occurs in the Quran. In addition, the corresponding metaphor BELIEVERS ARE SERVANTS occurs as well, for example in the following verses: “We should certainly have been Servants of Allah, sincere (and devoted)!” (Surah 37 As-Saaffat (Those who set the ranks) verse 169), “For Allah is never unjust to His servants” (Surah 8 Al-Anfal (Spoils of war, booty) verse 51), and “for Allah (ever) watches over His Servants” (Surah 40 Ghafir (the Forgiver) verse 44).

As illustrated by the examples given above, Allah is presented as a just and kind master, who cares for His servants. In the Bible, God is presented as a master who cares for His servants as well. However, in the Bible, God is also presented as a master who chastens, although He does so with His servants’ best interests at heart, and this characteristic of God the Master is not ascribed to Allah by the example verses given above. Nevertheless, the use of the metaphor GOD IS A MASTER does not vastly differ between the Bible and the Quran, as both God and Allah care for Their servants. The fact that this metaphor also occurs in the Quran leads to the hypothesis that the Islamic participants will accept this metaphor.

Judge. The metaphor GOD IS A JUDGE occurs in the Quran as well, for example in the following verses: “Is Allah not the wisest of Judges?” (Surah 95 At-Tin (the Fig) verse 8), “the god (or judge) of Mankind” (Surah 114 An-Nas (the Mankind) verse 3), “Allah will judge with (justice and) Truth” (Surah 40 Ghafir (the Forgiver) verse 20), and “Allah will judge between you on the Day of Judgment concerning the matters in which ye differ” (Surah 22 Al-Hajj (the Pilgrimage) verse 69). Moreover, Allah is presented as a just judge and as the best of judges in the following verses: “Thou art the justest of Judges!” (Surah 11 Hud (Hud) verse 45), and “He is the best of judges” (Surah 6 Al-Anaam (the Cattle) verse 57).

In the Bible, God is presented as a just and righteous judge. Thus, the metaphor GOD IS A JUDGE is used in a similar manner in the Bible as it is in the Quran. Again, as this metaphor occurs in the Quran as well and as it is used in a similar manner in the Bible and the Quran, the hypothesis is that the Islamic participants will accept this metaphor.

Father. The search for the keyword '*father*' yielded about 100 results, but none of those verses refer to Allah. Moreover, the Quran even emphasises that Allah is *not* a father, contrary to what the Christian tradition claims: "That they should invoke a son for (Allah) Most Gracious. For it is not consonant with the majesty of (Allah) Most Gracious that He should beget a son. Not one of the beings in the heavens and the earth but must come to (Allah) Most Gracious as a servant" (Surah 19 Maryam (Mary) verse 91-93).

Thus, in addition to the fact that Allah is never referred to as '*father*' in the Quran, the verse given above even emphasises that Allah is *not* a father. Therefore, the hypothesis is that the Islamic participants will reject this metaphor.

Husband. The search for the keyword '*husband*' yielded 13 results, none of which referred to Allah. In addition, the keyword '*wife*' yielded no results referring to the believers. Thus, based on this limited analysis, the metaphor GOD IS A HUSBAND does not occur in the Quran. Therefore, the hypothesis is that the Islamic participants will reject this metaphor.

4.5 Conclusion

Further research is required in order to provide an exhaustive list of the metaphors referring to God and Allah in the Bible and the Quran respectively and the characteristics describing those metaphors. Based on the results described above, the metaphors GOD IS A MASTER, GOD IS A KING and GOD IS A JUDGE do occur in the Quran as well as in the Bible. Therefore, the hypothesis is that the Islamic participants will respond positively to those metaphors and that they will accept them. The metaphors GOD IS A FATHER and GOD IS A HUSBAND, however, do not occur in the Quran and, moreover, the former is even rejected explicitly in the Quran. Therefore,

these metaphors are expected to be rejected by the Islamic participants. In the chapter 3, it became apparent that the metaphor GOD IS A FATHER was of particular importance to the Christian participants. Therefore, if the Islamic participants do accept this metaphor, or the metaphor GOD IS A HUSBAND, then that acceptance is possibly a result of Christian influence.

The result that not all of the five principal Biblical metaphors referring to God occur in the Quran as well leads to the main hypothesis that not *all* of the five selected Christian metaphors applied to Allah will be accepted by the Islamic participants in this study. In the next chapter, the method and results of the analysis of the interviews with the Islamic participants will be discussed.

5. The response of Islamic teenagers to the Christian metaphors

In this chapter, the analysis of the interviews with the Islamic participants will be discussed. First, the method will be elaborated upon, after which the results follow. The results are divided into two sections: 1) the results of the analysis of the metaphors used by the participants themselves in response to general questions, and 2) the results of the analysis of the responses of the participants to the five Christian metaphors applied to Allah.

5.1 Method

5.1.1 Research question

The main aim of the current research study is to establish to what extent Dutch Islamic teenagers accept Christian conceptual metaphors, so that possible Christian influence on their conceptual system can be detected. Therefore, the main research question is the following: *How do Dutch Islamic teenagers respond to Christian metaphors referring to God applied to Allah?* For the purpose of answering this research question, the responses of Islamic teenagers to Christian metaphors referring to God in Islamic context, that is, applied to Allah, were analysed. In addition, in order to answer the main research question, the following sub questions were considered:

1. Which metaphors, if any, do the Islamic participants use when describing Allah, Muslims, the relationship between Allah and Muslims and/or Islamic faith itself?
2. Do these metaphors used by the participants themselves include any of the five selected metaphors?
3. How do the Islamic participants respond to the Christian metaphors in Islamic context? Do they accept or reject them or do they require explanation?
4. Is the secondary reaction, i.e. the reaction after explanation, different from the primary reaction?

As indicated in chapter 4, not all of the five selected Biblical metaphors, i.e. GOD IS A MASTER, GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A JUDGE, GOD IS A FATHER, and GOD IS A HUSBAND, occur in the Quran, and, therefore, the hypothesis is that the Islamic participants will not accept all of these five metaphors. More specifically, the hypothesis is that the participants will respond more positively to the metaphors GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A MASTER and GOD IS A JUDGE, than to the metaphors GOD IS A FATHER and GOD IS A HUSBAND, as the former three metaphors do occur in the Quran, whereas the latter two do not.

5.1.2 Participants

The primary language in the Islam is Arabic, and, therefore, the participants might have been required to translate certain ideas which they would normally express with Arabic terms into Dutch in this study. Therefore, a good proficiency in Dutch was of pivotal importance and, therefore, Islamic teenagers were selected for this study. After all, many Dutch Islamic teenagers were born in the Netherlands and have, thus, gone through the Dutch educational system from a young age onwards, which has, presumably, resulted in a good proficiency of Dutch.

The participants were 8 Islamic high school students between the ages of 15 and 18, who attended a Christian high school in Rotterdam in the Netherlands. The participants were selected based on their personal commitment to their religion and their willingness to participate. The Theology teacher was asked for advice as to which students were Muslims, as well as which of those students practiced their religion seriously. Based on the advice of the Theology teacher, as well as on my personal experience with specific students as a teacher, several students were selected and asked to participate in this study. There was no division made between various Islamic denominations in selecting the participants and in the analyses. As the participants were underage, their parents were asked for permission for their participation. The participants and the school will remain anonymous.

The participants were divided into three groups (G1, G2 & G3), based on their availability and their familiarity with one another, as it was of pivotal importance that the participants felt at ease with one another, as they were asked to talk about their personal experiences and beliefs. In Table 5, an overview of the gender, age and level of education is given for each of the participants.

Table 5: Overview characteristics Islamic participants

Group	Gender	Age	Level of education
G1	Female	15	VMBO 4
G1	Female	15	VMBO 4
G1	Female	16	VMBO 4
G2	Male	16	VMBO 4
G2	Male	16	VMBO 4
G3	Female	18	HAVO 4
G3	Male	17	HAVO 4
G3	Male	18	HAVO 4

The high school the participants attended was a high school in the south part of Rotterdam. A significant number of its students was Muslim or had Islamic parents. The school was located in a so-called APC area (*armoede-probleem-cumulatie gebied: a poverty-problem-accumulation area*), which entailed that a significant number of students came from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The school itself was a Christian high school and about half its teaching staff was Christian, whereas the other half was either Atheist or Muslim. All students were exposed to the Christian religion regularly, for example by means of the Morning Prayer or the various (mandatory) Christian holiday celebrations held at the school.

5.1.3 Materials

The participants were interviewed by means of a semi-structured interview. The interview questions are provided in Appendix B. In these interviews, the following four general questions were of central importance: 1) Who is Allah? 2) Who are believers? 3) What kind of relationship do the believers and Allah have? 4) What does your faith mean to you [i.e. the participant]? As the divine is abstract, participants were expected to use metaphors in their responses to these questions. In

addition to these four questions, the participants were asked to respond to the five principal Christian metaphors applied to Allah. For example, the participants were asked to respond to the statement ‘Allah is a king’. In order to keep the interview more dynamic, the metaphor GOD IS A FATHER was presented by means of a series of short questions (Appendix B).

In order to establish whether or not the interview questions were clear and easy to understand, a pilot study was conducted in which two Islamic fellow-students of the participants, within the same age group, were interviewed. Based on this pilot study, the interview questions were altered: the question ‘what is Allah/God’ proved to be a problem, as Muslims are not allowed to make an image of Allah or even think of Allah in terms of His physical appearance and it proved to be difficult for the participants to answer this question without thinking about Allah’s physical appearance. For this reason, this question was excluded from the main interviews.

5.1.4 Procedure

In addition to the presentation of the Christian metaphors applied to Allah, participants were asked some general questions about their faith and their relationship with Allah. The metaphors used by the participants in response to these general questions were analysed as well, in order to determine whether or not the participants used any of the five selected metaphors without being prompted to do so by the questions. After all, if the participants used any of the metaphors themselves, that metaphor could have been more important in their perception and understanding of Allah. The analysis of the interviews resulted in a list of linguistic metaphors used by the Islamic participants and an overview of the responses to the Christian metaphors in Islamic context, including both the primary and, when applicable, the secondary responses. In addition, the corresponding conceptual metaphors were formulated.

As described in the above, alterations were made to the interview questions based on the pilot interviews. In addition, the pilot interviews led to the decision to interview the participants in groups, as the pilot interviews revealed that the teacher-student relationship of the researcher and

the participants caused the participants to hold back somewhat. Participants in the pilot interviews indicated that they would feel more at ease when interviewed in groups, as, then, they could support one another. In addition, the pilot study revealed that the metaphor GOD IS A HUSBAND was (too) difficult to understand. This was also found in relation to the responses of the Christian participants to this metaphor. Therefore, this metaphor was explained directly after first presenting it in the main interviews, in order to prevent participants from misunderstanding the metaphor in a negative sense. As a result of the explanation being provided instantly, only a primary response was recorded with regard to this metaphor.

The participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format (Appendix B). The interviewer asked each participant at least the four central questions. If a participant used an interesting metaphor in one of his or her answers, the interviewer asked for elaboration on that specific metaphor. The interviews took about 30 minutes on average and were held in a classroom in the school.

The participants were underage and, therefore, their parents were asked to sign a consent form. This form clarified that the students would remain anonymous and, thus, that the recorded interviews would be stored anonymously. The participants and their parents were only informed about the general aim of this research, namely that of analysing the language of Islamic students. One parent insisted to be provided with the questions at least a day in advance to the interview, as he expressed the concern that his child would not be prepared sufficiently and might answer incorrectly as a result. As this study focusses primarily on the language used, rather than the actual content, the questions were provided to the parent. Nevertheless, the participant in question related that they had not had the chance to study the questions prior to the interview and, thus, providing the questions did not have any influence on the participant's answers.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed, after which they were analysed in terms of the metaphors used and the responses given to selected Christian metaphors applied to Allah. The transcribed interviews were analysed using the MIP method, only taking the relevant metaphors

into account, i.e. metaphors referring to Allah, Muslims, the relationship between them, and the participants' faith itself. In order to identify the linguistic metaphors, the Online Van Dale Dictionary was consulted. The linguistic metaphors found were divided into four groups: 1) metaphors identifying Allah, 2) metaphors identifying Muslims, 3) metaphors reflecting the relationship between Allah and Muslims, and 4) metaphors reflecting the participants' faith. In addition, linguistic metaphors reflecting one conceptual metaphor were grouped together. The conceptual metaphors were deduced from the linguistic metaphors, by means of comparison of the linguistic metaphors. In addition, the Van Dale dictionary was consulted in order to find common terms or phrases in the definitions of the linguistic metaphorical terms, which were, if present, also used to formulate the 'summarizing' conceptual metaphor.

In addition to the analysis of the metaphors used by the participants themselves, the responses to the Christian metaphors in Islamic context were analysed and categorized in one of three categories: *acceptance*, *rejection* or *clarification*. The category *acceptance* entailed that participants responded positively to a metaphor and expressed that they thought the metaphor was appropriate when referring to Allah. The category *rejection* entailed that participants responded rather negatively to the metaphor and expressed that they did not think the metaphor was appropriate when referring to Allah. After a *rejection* response, an explanation of the metaphor was given in order to make sure that the participants did not reject the metaphor based on misinterpretation. The category *clarification* entailed that participants asked for explanation or were given an explanation as a result of their apparent misinterpretation of the metaphor. In the case of responses in the *rejection* or *clarification* category, a secondary response of the participants, i.e. the response after explanation, was recorded and analysed as well, using the same categorization system. Thus, primary responses, i.e. the responses after first presenting the metaphor, and secondary responses, i.e. the responses after the explanation of the metaphor, were distinguished as well. This distinction revealed possible changes in the response of the participants as a result of the explanation of the metaphor.

5.2 Results: Metaphors used by the Islamic participants

5.2.1 Metaphors identifying Allah

In this section, several metaphors used by the participants when referring to Allah are discussed.

First of all, Allah was identified as a “steun” (*‘support’*). As the dictionary states the basic meaning of ‘steun’ (*‘support’*) is “iets om op te steunen, synoniem: schoor, stut” (*‘something to lean on, synonyms: stanchion, support’*), the word ‘steun’ (*‘support’*) is used metaphorically when used to refer to Allah. After all, the term ‘steun’ (*‘support’*) was used to indicate that the believers are supported by Allah in the sense that He helps them. The conceptual metaphor reflected by this metaphorical term is ALLAH IS EEN STEUN (*ALLAH IS A SUPPORT*) and this conceptual metaphor was only reflected once in a linguistic metaphor used by the participants. This conceptual metaphor and the corresponding linguistic metaphor are reported in Table 6 below.

Allah was also referred to as “het uitgangspunt” (*‘the starting point’*). The basic meaning of ‘het uitgangspunt’ (*‘the starting point’*) is, according to the dictionary, “beginpunt, vertrekpunt” (*‘starting point, endpoint’*), meaning a specific place from which one start or ends a journey of some kind. In this case, the term ‘uitgangspunt’ (*‘starting point’*) was used to indicate that one should rely on and consult Allah first, before doing or thinking about anything else. Thus, this term was used metaphorically by the participants and it reflects the conceptual metaphor ALLAH IS EEN UITGANGSPUNT (*ALLAH IS A STARTING POINT*). This conceptual metaphor was only reflected in a linguistic metaphor used by the participants once, as reported in Table 6 below.

Allah was also referred to as “de grootste” (*‘the greatest’*). This term was used metaphorically, as, in this context, it was used to indicate that Allah is the most important and most powerful being of all, whereas the basic meaning of ‘groot’ (*‘great’*) is “meer dan middelmatige afmeting” (*‘more than average size’*). The linguistic occurrence of the conceptual metaphor ALLAH IS DE GROOTSTE (*ALLAH IS THE GREATEST*) is listed in Table 6. In addition to ‘grootste’ (*‘greatest’*), Allah was also referred to as the “verhevene” (*‘exalted one’*). The basic meaning of ‘verhevene’ (*‘exalted one’*) is “boven de omgeving uitstekend” (*‘elevated above the*

surroundings’). In this context, however, ‘verhevene’ (*‘exalted one’*) was used metaphorically, as it was used to indicate that Allah is the most important and holy being. The metaphorical term ‘verheven’ (*‘exalted one’*) occurs twice. As both linguistic metaphors formulate that ‘Allah is de verhevene’ (*‘Allah is the exalted one’*) explicitly, these linguistic metaphors were grouped together as a reflection of the conceptual metaphor ALLAH IS DE VERHEVENE (*ALLAH IS THE EXALTED ONE*), as reported in Table 6 below.

In addition, Allah was referred to as “leider” (*‘leader’*). The most basic meaning of ‘leider’ (*‘leader’*) is “paal, stijl, lat, stang, enz. die iets in de goede richting geleid houdt” (*‘a rod, pipe or something of the sort that keeps something guided in the right direction’*). In this case, however, ‘leider’ (*‘leader’*) was used to indicate that Allah leads the believers on the ‘right path’, i.e. He helps them and shows them what the right thing to do is. In addition, it was used to indicate that Allah governs certain events, such as the Day of Judgement. The reference to Allah as a leader occurs several times, both in the explicit form ‘Allah is a leader’ and through the use of the verb ‘to lead’. The linguistic metaphors were grouped together as reflections of the conceptual metaphor ALLAH IS EEN LEIDER (*ALLAH IS A LEADER*), as listed in Table 6. The metaphorical use of the ‘right path’ and the ‘right direction’ in which Allah leads His people will be elaborated upon in section 5.2.4.

One of the participants referred to Allah as a “rechter” (*‘judge’*). The most basic meaning of ‘rechter’ (*‘judge’*) is “persoon die uit hoofde van een overheidsambt rechtspreekt, rechterlijk ambtenaar met de rechtspraak belast” (*‘person who judges as part of a government position, a government official of law in charge of law administration’*). In this context, however, the term ‘rechter’ (*‘judge’*) was used to indicate that Allah is the only one who can judge people, especially in the context of the Day of Judgement. This linguistic metaphor reflects the conceptual metaphor ALLAH IS EEN RECHTER (*ALLAH IS A JUDGE*), as is reported in Table 6.

In addition to the metaphors discussed above, Allah was also referred to as being ‘buitenaards’ (*‘extraterrestrial’*). As the participant did not intend to refer to Allah’s actual location,

but rather to the notion that Allah cannot be compared to earthly concepts, this expression is metaphorical and reflects the conceptual metaphor ALLAH IS EEN BUITENAARDS WEZEN (*ALLAH IS AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEING*), as reported in Table 6. Also, Allah was referred to as being ‘licht’ (*light*). This term was used metaphorical as well, as, in this context, the speaker did not intend to say that Allah is literally a ‘light’, but rather intended to say that Allah guides the believers and shows them what to do, as light illuminates a dark path. This linguistic metaphorical use of ‘licht’ (*light*) reflects the conceptual metaphor ALLAH IS LIGHT, as reported in Table 6.

Table 6: Metaphors identifying Allah

Conceptual metaphor	Linguistic metaphors
ALLAH IS EEN STEUN (<i>ALLAH IS A SUPPORT</i>)	“[Allah is] gewoon je <u>steun</u> ” (G1)
ALLAH IS EEN UITGANGSPUNT (<i>ALLAH IS A STARTING POINT</i>)	“Allah moet altijd je <u>uitgangspunt</u> zijn want dan krijg je ook alle antwoorden op je vragen” (G1)
ALLAH IS DE GROOTSTE (<i>ALLAH IS THE GREATEST</i>)	“Ja [Hij is] de verhevene, <u>de grootste</u> ” (G2)
ALLAH IS DE VERHEVENE (<i>ALLAH IS THE EXALTED ONE</i>)	“Hij is de <u>verhevene</u> ” (G2) “Ja [Hij is] de <u>verhevene</u> , <u>de grootste</u> ” (G2)
ALLAH IS EEN LEIDER (<i>ALLAH IS A LEADER</i>)	“Hij is <u>de leider</u> ” (G1) “Ik snap wel wat je bedoeld, als ik zeg maar ga afdwalen dan is Allah eigenlijk wel <u>een leider</u> ” (G1) “Hij <u>leidt</u> hun” (G2) “Hij <u>leidt</u> ons” (G2) “Hij heeft ons met zijn boodschappen heeft Hij ons <u>geleid</u> , ja <u>leider</u> ” (G2) “Dat Hij gewoon degene is die de Dag des Oordeel <u>leidt</u> ” (G2)
ALLAH IS EEN RECHTER (<i>ALLAH IS A JUDGE</i>)	“Allah is gewoon God [...] en Hij is de enige <u>rechter</u> eigenlijk” (G3)
ALLAH IS EEN BUITENAARDS WEZEN (<i>ALLAH IS AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEING</i>)	“Het [Allah] is inderdaad eigenlijk wel.. eh.. <u>buitenaards</u> ” (G3)
ALLAH IS LICHT (<i>ALLAH IS LIGHT</i>)	“Ja [Hij is] het <u>licht</u> . Dat donkere pad en dan alsnog het <u>licht</u> om er doorheen te komen” (G3)

5.2.2 *Metaphors identifying Muslims*

In this section, the metaphors used by the participants to describe Muslims themselves are discussed. First of all, metaphors reflecting the conceptual metaphor MUSLIMS ARE A FAMILY occurred various times and these linguistic metaphors were used to indicate that all Muslims share a special bond and connection, as one that is shared by family. The participants repeatedly used the terms ‘broers en zussen’ or ‘broeders’ (*‘brothers and sisters’ or ‘brothers’*) to refer to their fellow believers. As the basic meaning of ‘broer/ broeder’ (*‘brother’*) is “mannelijk person beschouwd in betrekking tot zijn bloedverwantschap tot andere kinderen van dezelfde ouder” (*‘male person seen in relation to his blood-relation to other children of the same parent’*), it was used metaphorically by the participants, as they used it to refer to a fellow believer, rather than an actual blood-relative. The same applies to the female variety ‘zus’ or ‘zuster’ (*‘sister’*), of which the dictionary states that the basic meaning is “vrouwelijk person beschouwd in betrekking tot andere kinderen van dezelfde ouder” (*‘female person regarded in relation to other children of the same parents’*). Table 7 lists all the linguistic metaphors reflecting the conceptual metaphor MUSLIMS ARE A FAMILY.

The second metaphorical term used by the participants to refer to Muslims is ‘dienaren’ (*‘servants’*). The most basic meaning of ‘dienaren’ (*‘servants’*) given by the dictionary is that a ‘dienaar’ (*‘servant’*) is “persoon die iemand of iets dient, arbeid daarvoor verricht, maar niet in het beroep of bedrijf van de meester” (*‘person who serves someone or something, does labour for that someone or something, but not in the profession or company of the master’*). In this case, the participants used this term metaphorically, as they did not use it to indicate that they were doing labour for Allah, but more so to indicate that Allah is their leader and that they worship Allah. Moreover, Allah does not have a concrete company or profession in which the believers would labour if this term were used literally. The linguistic metaphors including the term ‘dienaren’ (*‘servants’*) were grouped together as reflections of the conceptual metaphor MOSLIMS ZIJN DIENAREN (*MUSLIMS ARE SERVANTS*) (see Table 7).

Table 7: Metaphors identifying Muslims

Conceptual metaphor	Linguistic metaphors
MOSLIMS ZIJN EEN FAMILIE (MUSLIMS ARE A FAMILY)	<p>“We [moslims] zijn allemaal <u>broers en zussen</u>” (G1)</p> <p>“We zeggen toch alle moslims zijn <u>broers en zussen van elkaar</u>” (G1)</p> <p>“Moslims zijn <u>broeders van elkaar</u>” (G2)</p> <p>“Moslims <u>broeders</u> bijvoorbeeld tegenover elkaar, wij willen elkaar helpen, als het moeilijk gaat met je <u>moslim broeder</u>” (G2)</p>
MOSLIMS ZIJN DIENAREN (MUSLIMS ARE SERVANTS)	<p>“Wij zijn wel <u>dienaren van God</u>” (G1)</p> <p>“Wij zijn <u>dienaren</u>” (G2)</p> <p>“Wij zijn Zijn <u>dienaren</u>” (G2)</p> <p>“Wij zijn <u>dienaren van Hem</u>” (G2)</p> <p>“Wij zijn <u>dienaren</u>” (G2)</p> <p>“Ons kun je zien als <u>dienaren van Allah</u>” (G2)</p> <p>“Hij geeft liefde, aan Zijn eh.. aan Zijn <u>dienaren</u>” (G2)</p>

5.2.3 Metaphors reflecting the relationship between Allah and Muslims

This third section elaborates on the metaphors used by the participants which reflect the relationship between Allah and Muslims. First of all, participants stated that Muslims have a “band” (*bond*) with Allah. The most basic meaning of ‘een band’ (*a bond*) is “langwerpige strook stof die dient om te binden, te verbinden, vast te maken” (*an oblong piece of fabric that it used to tie, bind, or secure*), but the participants used this term to indicate that they have a spiritual connection and a relationship with Allah. Thus, ‘band’ (*bond*) was used metaphorically in this context. The linguistic expressions using the term ‘band’ (*bond*) or the phrase ‘verbonden zijn met Allah’ (*being connected with Allah*) were grouped together as reflections of the conceptual metaphor DE RELATIE TUSSEN MOSLIMS EN ALLAH IS EEN VERBINDING (*THE RELATIONSHIP*

BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND ALLAH IS A CONNECTION), as these linguistic metaphors indicate that Muslims are connected with Allah (see Table 8).

The next metaphor found was that Allah can be “dichtbij” (*‘nearby’*). As the participants used this term to indicate a spiritual proximity rather than a physical proximity, the term was used metaphorically. In addition, the term ‘dichtbij’ (*‘nearby’*) was used to indicate that the relationship between Allah and Muslims is very intimate. Moreover, the participants also used the metaphor ‘dichtbij’ to indicate that they could approach Allah, for example by means of prayer. The notion that Allah is approachable is also reflected in the linguistic metaphor “aankloppen” (*‘knock on something, especially on a door’*), as the participant meant that he could approach Allah, that is, ‘knock on His door’, if he had a problem. Therefore, the linguistic expressions including terms such as ‘dichtbij’ (*‘nearby’*), ‘bij’ (*‘with’ or ‘near’*), and ‘aankloppen’ (*‘knock’*) were grouped together as reflections of the conceptual metaphor *ALLAH IS EEN BENADERBAAR WEZEN (ALLAH IS AN APPROACHABLE BEING)* (Table 8).

Allah was also described as knowing the intentions and motivations of Muslims by looking into their hearts: “Allah kijkt naar je hart” (*‘Allah looks at your heart’*). In this case, the participants meant that Allah knows what your real intentions, feelings and motivations are and, as they did not intend to say that Allah literally looks at their physical heart, this phrase was used metaphorically. In addition, ‘hart’ (*‘heart’*) was used to indicate that one’s real intentions, feelings and motivations are normally hidden, except from Allah, like one’s physical heart is normally hidden from human eyes. Therefore, the linguistic metaphors referring to the notion that ‘Allah looks at hearts’ reflect the conceptual metaphor *ALLAH IS EEN ALWETEND WEZEN (‘ALLAH IS AN OMNISCIENT BEING’)*, as He knows all hidden thoughts, feelings and intentions.

Allah was also described as judging the Muslims. This was expressed by means of two linguistic metaphors. First of all, Allah was described as ‘weighing’ (*‘wegen’*) the good deeds and the bad deeds at the Day of Judgement. The literal meaning of ‘wegen’ (*‘to weigh’*) is “de zwaarte, het gewicht resp. de massa onderzoeken van” (*‘investigating the weight or mass of something’*), but,

as good deeds and sins do not have an actual weight, it was used metaphorically by the participants to indicate that Allah will judge whether the number of good deeds a person has done in life is higher than the number of sins, or rather the other way around. Another participant illustrated this process of ‘weighing’ the sins and good deeds on the Day of Judgement by indicating that Allah uses some kind of point system to determine whether one has done more good or more bad deeds. As “strafpunten” (‘*penalty points*’) has the most basic meaning of “(sport, spel) eenheid waarin de zwaarte van overtredingen van de spelregels of tekortkomingen worden uitgedrukt” (‘*unit in which the weight of the violation of the rules or shortcoming are expressed (sport and games)*’), and as this term is, thus, used for sports and games, this notion of points was used metaphorically by the participants, as they did not consider the judgement as part of sport or games. Both of these linguistic metaphors reflect the conceptual metaphor ALLAH IS EEN RECHTER (*ALLAH IS A JUDGE*), as both indicate that Allah judges the Muslims (see Table 8).

To summarize, the metaphors reflecting the relationship between Allah and Muslims reflect various characteristics. First of all, Muslims have an intimate relationship and connection with Allah (*THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ALLAH AND MUSLIMS IS A CONNECTION*). Second, Allah is within close spiritual proximity of Muslims (*ALLAH IS AN APPROACHABLE BEING*). Third, Allah knows everyone’s true intentions and feelings (*ALLAH IS AN OMNISCIENT BEING*). Last, Allah judges Muslims (*ALLAH IS A JUDGE*). Table 8 provides an overview of all the linguistic metaphors and the corresponding conceptual metaphors which illustrate the relationship between Allah and Muslims.

Table 8: Metaphors reflecting the relationship between Allah and Muslims

Conceptual metaphor	Linguistic metaphors
DE RELATIE TUSSEN MOSLIMS EN ALLAH IS EEN VERBINDING (<i>THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSLIMS</i>)	<p>“Nou je hebt wel een <u>soort van band</u> met Hem, dat zeker wel, maar vader kan ik niet zeggen” (G1)</p> <p>“Maar van binnen voel je dat niet, <u>die band met God</u>, en je doet het eigenlijk alleen voor de mensen [en dat is bedrog dan]” (G1)</p>

<p>AND ALLAH IS A CONNECTION)</p>	<p>“Je krijgt echt <u>een band</u> gewoon” (G1)</p> <p>“Er is rust in je leven als je <u>met God verbonden bent</u>” (G3)</p> <p>“Je moet gewoon echt <u>verbonden blijven</u> [met Allah]”(G3)</p>
<p>ALLAH IS EEN BENADERBAAR WEZEN (ALLAH IS AN APPROACHABLE BEING)</p>	<p>“In de Koran staat dat je <u>dicht bij Allah bent</u> wanneer je bid” (G1)</p> <p>“Wij denken juist dat het [de relatie met Allah] nog <u>dichter bij is</u>” (G1)</p> <p>“Ja we zijn eigenlijk nog <u>dichter bij Allah</u>” (G1)</p> <p>“Hij is wel altijd <u>bij</u> je maar qua aards is Hij dat niet te vertellen” (G2)</p> <p>“Als je een probleem hebt kun je altijd bij Hem <u>aankloppen</u>” (G2)</p> <p>“Je moet gewoon echt verbonden blijven [met Allah], heel <u>dichtbij</u>” (G3)</p> <p>“Hij komt <u>dichtbij</u>. zolang jij eigenlijk maar die eerste stap zet zeg maar” (G3)</p>
<p>ALLAH IS EEN ALWETEND WEZEN (ALLAH IS AN OMNISCIENT BEING)</p>	<p>“Ja want God <u>ziet alle harten</u> en Hij weet hoe jij je voelt en het is gewoon.. ja.. je moet gewoon oprecht zijn.” (G1)</p> <p>“Hij <u>kijkt</u> naar jouw binnenste <u>naar je hart</u> en wat je hebt aangericht en met wat voor intentie je iets hebt gedaan en daarom wordt jij beloond of gestraft” (G2)</p>
<p>ALLAH IS EEN RECHTER (ALLAH IS A JUDGE)</p>	<p>“In de Islam krijg je bijvoorbeeld Dag des Oordeel, dan wordt iedereen veroordeeld en dan wordt zeg maar <u>gewogen</u> van hoeveel zijn je zondes en je goede daden zeg maar en goede daden, als die hoger zijn dan ga je naar de hemel en als die niet hoger zijn dan ga je niet naar de hemel”. (G1)</p> <p>“Als ik nu zeg [...] ik ga iets goed doen [...], dan krijg ik daar wel zeg maar <u>punten</u> voor, maar als ik zeg [...] ik zeg maar wat, ik ga iemand vermoorden en ik doe het daarna niet dan geeft Allah daar geen <u>strafpunten</u> voor.” (G1)</p> <p>“Hij kijkt naar jouw binnenste naar je hart en wat je hebt aangericht en met wat voor intentie je iets hebt gedaan en daarom wordt jij <u>beloond of gestraft</u>” (G2)</p>

5.2.4 *Metaphors reflecting participants' faith*

The last category of metaphors that is discussed here, is the category of the metaphors that reflect how participants perceive and understand their faith. First of all, conversion to the Islam was described as 'het licht zien' (*'seeing the light'*). As the participants did not mean that one sees a physical light, but rather that one gains knowledge and learns the truth, it was used metaphorically. The linguistic metaphor 'het licht zien' (*'seeing the light'*) reflects the conceptual metaphor BEKEREN IS HET LICHT ZIEN (*CONVERTING IS SEEING THE LIGHT*), as participants indicated that someone converts to the Islam when he or she sees the light, i.e. understands and accepts the truth of the Islam. The conceptual metaphor and the corresponding linguistic metaphor are listed in Table 9.

In addition, *believing* was described by metaphors within the framework of the conceptual metaphor FAITH IS A JOURNEY. First of all, the life of a believer was described as going down 'de weg van de Islam en de Koran' (*'the path or the Islam and the Quran'*). As the participants meant a spiritual path, rather than a physical path, this phrase was used metaphorically. Moreover, the participants mentioned 'het slechte pad' (*'the evil path'*), with which they referred to the way of life of a non-believer. Moreover, people who distance themselves from the Islamic faith were described as 'afdwalen van het juiste/goede pad' (*'straying from the right/good path'*), in the sense that they do not follow the Islam anymore. Again, 'afdwalen' (*'to stray'*) was used to indicate a spiritual distancing from the faith, rather than a literal movement away from a path, and it was, thus, used metaphorically. In addition, participants stated that Allah would push the one who strays from the faith into the right direction, i.e. back onto the right path. The linguistic metaphors that refer to such a path and/or journey in one way or another reflect the conceptual metaphor GELOOF IS EEN REIS (*FAITH IS A JOURNEY*). This conceptual metaphor and the corresponding linguistic metaphors are listed in Table 9.

The Islamic faith was also described as being "alles" (*'everything'*). The participants used this term metaphorically, as they did not intend to say that the faith is literally everything, i.e. all the

trees, birds, etc., but more so that faith is the most important aspect in their lives. The linguistic metaphors reflecting that faith is ‘alles’ (*everything*) reflect the conceptual metaphor GELOOF IS ALLES (*FAITH IS EVERYTHING*) (see Table 9).

Faith was also described as ‘taking away question marks’ (*het haalt vraagtekens weg*). This phrase was used metaphorically, as the participant did not mean that faith literally erases question marks from somewhere, but rather intended to say that faith provides believers with answers. Thus, this linguistic metaphor reflects the conceptual metaphor GELOOF IS EEN ANTWOORD (*FAITH IS AN ANSWER*). This conceptual metaphor and the corresponding linguistic metaphor are listed in Table 9.

As was Allah, the Islamic faith itself was described as being the “uitgangspunt” (*starting point*) as well. Again, this phrase was used metaphorically and the conceptual metaphor that was reflected by this linguistic metaphor is GELOOF IS EEN UITGANGSPUNT (*FAITH IS A STARTING POINT*). In addition to this metaphor, one participant mentioned “Ik vind ook mijn toevlucht bij mijn geloof” (*I also find my refuge with my faith*). This expression is metaphorical, as the participant did not literally go to a place to find shelter and refuge, and it reflects the conceptual metaphor GELOOF IS EEN TOEVLUCHTSOORD (*FAITH IS A REFUGE*). The conceptual and linguistic metaphors described above are listed in Table 9.

The last metaphor reflecting faith itself found was the conceptual metaphor GELOVEN IS RICHTING ALLAH BEWEGEN (*BELIEVING IS MOVING TOWARDS ALLAH*), which was reflected in several linguistic metaphors (see Table 9). This conceptual metaphor indicates that faith bridges the distance between Muslims and Allah, in the sense that Muslims have to have faith or do an act of faith before Allah approaches them. For example, the participants used the phrase ‘een stap naar Allah zetten’ (*to take a step towards Allah*) to indicate that actions of faith, such as prayer, close the distance between themselves and Allah. However, the participants did not mean one must literally take a step, but rather aimed for the metaphorical meaning of making some effort and investing time and attention. Moreover, the result of ‘taking a step towards Allah’ is that Allah

‘naar je toe rent’ (*‘runs towards you’*), which was used metaphorically as well, as Allah does not literally run, but closes the spiritual distances between the believer and Himself. These linguistic metaphors reflect the conceptual metaphor GELOVEN IS RICHTING ALLAH BEWEGEN (*BELIEVING IS MOVING TOWARDS ALLAH*), as they all reflect that faith and acts of faith close the distance between Muslims and Allah.

Table 9: Metaphors reflecting the participants’ faith

Conceptual metaphor	Linguistic metaphors
BEKEREN IS HET LICHT ZIEN (<i>CONVERTING IS SEEING THE LIGHT</i>).	“Als iemand zich bekeerd dan heeft hij <u>het licht</u> gezien, dat noemen we zo” (G1)
GELOOF IS EEN REIS (<i>FAITH IS A JOURNEY</i>)	<p>“Als je zegt, ik ben moslim, dan is het eigenlijk dat je gewoon de Koran, <u>de weg</u> van de Koran en de Islam volgt”. (G1)</p> <p>“Stel je voor dat je een beetje <u>afdwaalt</u> van je geloof” (G1)</p> <p>“Als ik zeg maar ga <u>afdwalen</u> dan is Allah eigenlijk wel een leider” (G1)</p> <p>“Hij kan je wel helpen door bijvoorbeeld je Imaam of vriendinnen die zeggen van, ja, je <u>dwaalt af</u>” (G1)</p> <p>“Hij <u>duwt</u> je eigenlijk <u>in de goede richting</u>, Hij kan niet gelijk tegen je zeggen van ja je <u>dwaalt af</u>, maar Hij <u>duwt</u> je gewoon een beetje <u>in die goede richting</u>” (G1)</p> <p>“Wij geloven dat we ook hulp krijgen van Allah dat we <u>de goede richting</u> op gaan maar zoals zij het zegt je krijgt reden ... als je <u>het slechte pad</u> in gaat dan heb je altijd nog kansen om weer terug te gaan.” (G1)</p> <p>“Hij heeft <u>het goede pad</u> zeg maar gevonden” (G1)</p> <p>“Als wij van Allah <u>afdwalen</u>, dan kunnen wij ook nergens heen”(G3)</p> <p>“[afdwalen] van het <u>rechte pad</u>”(G3)</p> <p>“Ja van het <u>rechte pad</u> ja”(G3)</p>

	<p><i>“Een <u>pad</u>.. dan bijvoorbeeld een <u>hele moeilijke pad</u>, om te <u>betreden</u>, om langs te gang. Maar hoe meer je zeg maar <u>door dat pad heenloopt</u>, hoe makkelijker het wordt omdat je al steeds moeilijke dingen hebt gehad, waardoor je je ogen steeds meer opent. En dan heb je een <u>ander pad</u>, dat is heel makkelijk te <u>bewandelen</u> en dan ben je er ook best snel uit, maar eh.. je hebt niets geleerd en je hebt niets gezien van het waarde van het leven” (G3)</i></p> <p><i>“Als ik terecht kom bij het einde, dan <u>kijk ik achterom</u> en dan zie ik al die moeilijkheden, maar dan zijn het niet eens meer moeilijkheden” (G3)</i></p> <p><i>“Dat <u>donkere pad</u> en dan alsnog dat licht om er doorheen te komen”(G3)</i></p> <p><i>“Jij zet <u>die eerste stap op een donkere weg</u> en Allah geeft jou gewoon licht daarvoor”(G3)</i></p>
<p>GELOOF IS ALLES (FAITH IS EVERYTHING)</p>	<p><i>“Geloof is eigenlijk voor mij, eh, <u>alles</u>” (G2)</i></p> <p><i>“Geloof in mijn leven.. eh.. eigenlijk voor mij, het is gewoon <u>alles</u>”(G3)</i></p>
<p>GELOOF IS EEN ANTWOORD (FAITH IS AN ANSWER)</p>	<p><i>“Die [ongelovige] heeft altijd <u>vraagtekens in zijn hoofd</u>, maar ik heb geen <u>vraagtekens in mijn hoofd</u> dankzij mijn geloof” (G2)</i></p>
<p>GELOOF IS EEN UITGANGSPUNT (FAITH IS A STARTING POINT)</p>	<p><i>“Het is een beetje je <u>uitgangspunt</u> van hoe je alles doet” (G1)</i></p> <p><i>“Als jij de Islam als je <u>uitgangspunt</u> neemt, dan heb je een antwoord voor alles” (G1)</i></p>
<p>GELOOF IS EEN TOEVLUCHTSOORD (FAITH IS A REFUGE)</p>	<p><i>“Ik vind ook <u>mijn toevlucht bij mijn geloof</u>” (G3)</i></p>
<p>GELOVEN IS RICHTING ALLAH BEWEGEN (BELIEVING IS MOVING TOWARDS ALLAH)</p>	<p><i>“Ja, er wordt gezegd van <u>als jij een stap naar God zet dan rent Hij naar jou toe</u>” (G1)</i></p> <p><i>“Allah roept je om 5 keer per dag te bidden en als jij dat dan doet dan <u>zet jij ook een stap naar hem toe</u>” (G1)</i></p> <p><i>“Ze zeggen ook van eh.. in de Koran is zeg maar een vers van.. als jij <u>één stap zet naar God toe</u>, dan <u>zet Hij tien stappen naar jou</u>. Op het moment dat jij gaat <u>wandelen naar God toe</u>, dan komt Hij <u>rennend naar jou</u>”(G3)</i></p>

5.3 Results: Responses to Christian metaphors in Islamic context

In this section, the analysis of the responses to the Christian metaphors in Islamic context, i.e. applied to Allah, is elaborated upon. As described before, three types of responses were distinguished: *acceptance*, *rejection* and *clarification*. In case of the latter two types of responses, a secondary response was recorded as well. Each of the five metaphors are discussed separately and example quotes that illustrate the response category are given as well.

5.3.1 ALLAH IS A MASTER

The responses of the three groups (G1, G2 and G3) to the metaphor ALLAH IS A MASTER were rather similar (see Table 10). G1 was divided at first, as some interpreted the term ‘meester’ (*‘master’*) as referring to a teacher, rather than a master in the sense of *lord*. Thus, a clarification was given, after which the participants agreed that the metaphor ALLAH IS A MASTER worked for them (see Table 11). Groups 2 and 3 (G2 and G3) accepted the metaphor in their primary responses. All groups seemed to understand the metaphor ALLAH IS EEN MEESTER (*ALLAH IS A MASTER*) better once the corresponding metaphor MOSLIMS ZIJN DIENAREN (*MUSLIMS ARE SERVANTS*) was mentioned, as the latter gave the participants a better idea of what was meant by the term ‘meester’ (*‘master’*). Table 10 provides some quotes that illustrate the response category for each group. Table 11 provides example quotes that illustrate the category in which the secondary response of Group 1 falls. There was no secondary response recorded of the other two groups, as they accepted the metaphor instantly.

Table 10: Primary response ALLAH IS A MASTER

Group	Primary response	Example quotes
1	Clarification	[Researcher: “Oh ja, dus dan vat je meester eigenlijk op in de zin van leraar. En als je meester bekijkt meer in de zin van meester/dienaar, zo van Hij is de meester en Moslims zijn dienaren, snap je wat ik bedoel?”]
2	Acceptance	[Researcher: “En dan de volgende stelling: ‘Allah is een meester’. Ik had er nog achter gezet ‘moslims zijn dienaren’, maar dit is dan meer wat past?”] “Ja” “Ja”
3	Acceptance	“Ja.. ja.. dat is ook een eigenschap” “Ja” “Ja we zijn ook dienaren van eh..” “We zijn ook dienaren”

Table 11: Secondary response ALLAH IS A MASTER

Group	Secondary response	Example quotes
1	Acceptance	“Ja dat is wel zo toch? Wij zijn wel dienaren van God, dat is wel zo” [Researcher: “Dus in die zin van meester is het Allah en in de zin van leraar is het Mohammed?”] “Ja” “Ja”
2	Not applicable	
3	Not applicable	

5.3.2 ALLAH IS A KING

The metaphor ALLAH IS A KING was received somewhat differently by the three groups. Group 1 rejected the metaphor at first, based on the fact that they did not want to give names to Allah. Even after clarification, emphasizing that the relationship between a king and his servants was the focus of this metaphor, rather than the material wealth of a king, the participants rejected the metaphor. The second group partially accepted the metaphor, by stating that the Quran does mention the term *king* when referring to Allah, but that one should not see Allah as one would usually envision a king. The participants elaborated somewhat on the ways in which Allah could and could not be seen as a king. The third group, however, accepted this metaphor in their primary response. Example

quotes illustrating the primary and secondary responses to the metaphor ALLAH IS A KING are given in Table 12 and Table 13.

Table 12: Primary response ALLAH IS A KING

Group	Primary response	Example quotes
1	Rejection	<i>“Nee, wij geven niet echt namen aan Allah. Allah is gewoon Allah”</i> <i>“We geven gewoon een bepaalde waarde aan Hem”</i>
2	Partial acceptance	<i>“Hij is wel de Koning der werelden, maar niet zo van.. letterlijk.. iemand die op een stoel zit, niet zo 'n koning. Maar de koning die de werelden heeft geschaapt, op zo 'n manier is Hij wel de koning. Maar niet de koning van hoe wij het voor ons zien.”</i> <i>“Hij is de Koning van de Dag des Oordeel. Het woord koning wordt wel gebruikt, maar het is meer om duidelijk te maken, zoals hij zegt van Hij is de koning van de Dag des Oordeel, dat Hij gewoon degene is die de Dag des Oordeel leidt, maar of Hij zichzelf een koning noemt.. daar kan ik echt niet op antwoorden.”</i>
3	Acceptance	<i>“Ja, dat is een van Zijn eigenschappen”</i> <i>“Koning van alles. Je hebt een koning van een land en die heerst over dat land. En Allah heerst zeg maar over alles, dus Koning van alles”</i>

Table 13: Secondary response ALLAH IS A KING

Group	Secondary response	Example quotes
1	Rejection	<i>“Ja Hij heeft wel veel macht en zo maar niet als koning. Ik weet niet..”</i> <i>“Nee zo kunnen wij Hem niet aanbeelden ja..”</i>
2	Not applicable	
3	Not applicable	

5.3.3 ALLAH IS A JUDGE

The metaphor ALLAH IS A JUDGE was responded to in a positive manner, as all three groups accepted this metaphor. Group 1 did mention, however, that Allah is a different judge than ‘earthly’ judges, as He can also forgive someone. In addition, they noted that Allah is also more than a judge. Example quotes of the responses to this metaphor are listed in Table 14. As all three groups accepted this metaphor, no secondary responses were recorded.

Table 14: Primary response ALLAH IS A JUDGE

Group	Primary response	Example quotes
1	Acceptance	<p>“Ja ergens wel, Dag des Oordeel.”</p> <p>“Ja, op de Dag des Oordeel wel”</p> <p>“Ja je kan het wel eigenlijk een klein beetje zo zien, bijvoorbeeld Hij ziet ook echt alles wat je goed doet en ook echt alles wat je fout doet en ja, Hij is toch ook wel meer dan een rechter want..”</p> <p>“Rechters bijvoorbeeld in het echt, die zijn, bijvoorbeeld als je iets fout doen van oké fout, straf maar Allah kan je dan wel weer vergeven”</p> <p>“Ja dat is het verschil”</p>
2	Acceptance	<p>“Ja Hij beoordeelt alles met oordeel”</p> <p>“God die alles met de juiste oordeel beoordeelt gewoon”</p>
3	Acceptance	<p>“Ja, dat is ook weer een eigenschap. [...] rechtvaardige rechter, beoordelaar”</p> <p>“Rechtvaardige, meest rechtvaardige rechter”</p>

5.3.4 ALLAH IS A FATHER

The metaphor ALLAH IS A FATHER was not accepted by any of the participants. Group 1 even noted that they thought one was not even allowed to think of Allah in such a manner. After clarification Group 1 did state that Muslims have a connection with Allah, but that they would not call Him *father*. Group 2 also rejected the metaphor. After clarification, they also mentioned that some characteristics of *father* mentioned in the explanation of the metaphor might be applicable to Allah, but that they would never use the term ‘father’ to describe Allah themselves. Group 3 also rejected the metaphor, both in their primary and secondary response. Example quotes illustrating the primary and secondary responses to the metaphor ALLAH IS A FATHER are given in table 15 and Table 16.

Table 15: Primary response ALLAH IS A FATHER

Group	Primary response	Example quotes
1	Rejection	<p>[Researcher: “Zien jullie Allah nou als vader?”]</p> <p>“Nee!”</p> <p>“Nee..”</p> <p>“wij zien Hem als schepper, Hij is gewoon..”</p> <p>“Het mag toch ook niet?”</p> <p>“Nee het mag gewoon niet bij ons.. er wordt gewoon gezegd Hij heeft Hij heeft geen kinderen, Hij heeft geen man, geen vrouw sorry, geen vader geen moeder. Hij is gewoon helemaal anders dan ons. Nee, mag niet bij ons.”</p>
2	Rejection	<p>“Nee, Hij is mijn schepper, hij is mijn oordeler. Wij zijn dienaren van Hem.”</p> <p>“Ik zou niet zeggen Hij is me vader, want dan zeg je echt, de woorden al dat is bespottelijk, dat zou gewoon zo zwak zijn Hij is niet mijn vader. Hij heeft iedereen gemaakt, Hij heeft heel het universum gemaakt Hij is geen, Hij heeft geen kind nodig. Hij is niet iemand die kinderen maakt. Het logisch vader zijn dat zou je ook nooit kunnen zeggen want hoe ga je dat nou weten?”</p>
3	Rejection	<p>“Nee”</p> <p>“Wij zijn allemaal de zonen, kinderen, van Adam. Van Adam en Eva. Wij zijn niet de zoon van God, want God heeft.. schepsel. Als jij iets uitvind bij wijze van, je vind een pen uit, dan ben je niet de vader van die pen.”</p>

Table 16: Secondary response ALLAH IS A FATHER

Group	Secondary response	Example quotes
1	Rejection	<p>“Nou je hebt wel, een soort van band met Hem, dat zeker wel, maar vader kan ik niet zeggen.”</p> <p>“Ja moslims zeggen niet echt van ja Allah is mijn vader. Dat gebeurt ook niet.”</p> <p>“We kijken ook niet op zo'n manier naar Hem.”</p>
2	Rejection	<p>“Nee”</p> <p>“Ja we zijn afhankelijk, maar we zijn geen kinderen, ons kun je zien als dienaren van Allah”</p>
3	Rejection	<p>“Het is ook gewoon een hele andere band. De band die je hebt met je vader.. als je het bijvoorbeeld niet eens bent met je vader, je kan wel respect hebben voor hem, maar dan heb je tegenspraak, tegen woord en dat kan gewoon niet bij God. Je bent het er gewoon altijd mee eens. Het kan niet zo zijn dat je het niet eens bent.”</p>

5.3.5 ALLAH IS A HUSBAND

The last metaphor presented to the participants was ALLAH IS A HUSBAND. This is a complicated metaphor, as the pilot interviews and the interviews with Christian participants revealed, and, therefore an explanation was provided when the metaphor was first presented to the participants. Therefore, only a primary response was recorded. All three groups rejected the metaphor. Some participants mentioned that this metaphor is similar to the ALLAH IS A FATHER metaphor, in the sense that it is a very ‘earthly’ metaphor, which did not work for them at all. All three groups responded surprised to this metaphor and thought it was somewhat strange. Moreover, Group 1 and Group 2 emphasized that the Quran states that Allah does not have a wife or children. One participant (G2) stated that one cannot compare Allah to earthly concepts, a notion which was expressed by participants in all three groups on several occasions throughout the entirety of the interviews. Table 17 provides some example quotes of the responses to the metaphor ALLAH IS A HUSBAND.

Table 17: Primary response ALLAH IS A HUSBAND

Group	Primary response	Example quotes
1	Rejection	<p><i>“Nee, nee echt niet”</i></p> <p><i>“Nee wij kunnen zelfs die relatie met onze vader niet eens aanpassen zeg maar vergelijken met Allah en dat kunnen wij totaal niet doen met een echtgenoot”</i></p>
2	Rejection	<p><i>“Nee, ik denk het niet. Man en vrouw die eh.. hebben een andere soort liefde, andere behoeftes”</i></p> <p><i>“Nee helemaal niet. Nee die stelling is al helemaal zeg maar.. eh.. het is een hele rare stelling. God Allah die een man is en Zijn volk is zeg maar.. het is eigenlijk dezelfde vraag als vader en zoon.”</i></p> <p><i>“Je kan het niet met wereldse gaan vergelijken”</i></p> <p><i>“Want Hij heeft nooit gezegd dat het een mens is of dat het een, je weet het niet dus. Het is echt moeilijk om zon vraag te beantwoorden”</i></p>
3	Rejection	<p><i>“Liefdesrelatie tussen man en vrouw, daar kunnen ook conflicten ontstaan en ik denk niet dat eh.. ja.. een conflict met God dat kan gewoon niet.”</i></p> <p><i>“Het is niet echt een liefdesrelatie tussen man en vrouw, want daar kunnen conflicten komen”</i></p>

5.4 Summary

The participants used various metaphors in response to general questions, which were divided into four groups: 1) metaphors identifying Allah, 2) metaphors identifying Muslims, 3) metaphors reflecting the relationship between Allah and Muslims, and 4) metaphors reflecting participants' faith. The conceptual metaphors found in each group are listed in Table 18.

Table 18: Conceptual metaphors used by participants

Category	Conceptual metaphors	English translation
1) Metaphors identifying Allah	ALLAH IS EEN STEUN ALLAH IS EEN UITGANGSPUNT ALLAH IS DE GROOTSTE ALLAH IS DE VERHEVENE ALLAH IS EEN LEIDER ALLAH IS EEN RECHTER ALLAH IS EEN BUITENAARDS WEZEN ALLAH IS LICHT	<i>ALLAH IS A SUPPORT</i> <i>ALLAH IS A STARTING POINT</i> <i>ALLAH IS THE GREATEST</i> <i>ALLAH IS THE EXALTED ONE</i> <i>ALLAH IS A LEADER</i> <i>ALLAH IS A JUDGE</i> <i>ALLAH IS AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEING</i> <i>ALLAH IS LIGHT</i>
2) Metaphors identifying Muslims	MOSLIMS ZIJN EEN FAMILIE MOSLIMS ZIJN DIENAREN	<i>MUSLIMS ARE A FAMILY</i> <i>MUSLIMS ARE SERVANTS</i>
3) Metaphors reflecting the relationship between Allah and Muslims	DE RELATIE TUSSEN MOSLIMS EN ALLAH IS EEN VERBINDING ALLAH IS EEN BENADERBAAR WEZEN ALLAH IS EEN ALWETEND WEZEN ALLAH IS EEN RECHTER	<i>THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND ALLAH IS A CONNECTION</i> <i>ALLAH IS AN APPROACHABLE BEING</i> <i>ALLAH IS AN OMNISCIENT BEING</i> <i>ALLAH IS A JUDGE</i>
4) Metaphors reflecting the participants' faith	BEKEREN IS HET LICHT ZIEN GELOOF IS EEN REIS GELOOF IS ALLES GELOOF IS EEN ANTWOORD GELOOF IS EEN UITGANGSPUNT GELOOF IS EEN TOEVLUCHTSCoord GELOVEN IS RICHTING ALLAH BEWEGEN	<i>CONVERTING IS SEEING THE LIGHT</i> <i>FAITH IS A JOURNEY</i> <i>FAITH IS EVERYTHING</i> <i>FAITH IS AN ANSWER</i> <i>FAITH IS A STARTING POINT</i> <i>FAITH IS A REFUGE</i> <i>BELIEVING IS MOVING TOWARDS ALLAH</i>

The metaphors GOD IS A JUDGE and GOD IS A MASTER are reflected in the metaphors used by the participants themselves, as the participants used the conceptual metaphors ALLAH IS A JUDGE and MUSLIMS ARE SERVANTS.

The metaphors ALLAH IS A JUDGE and ALLAH IS A MASTER were, overall, accepted instantly by all three groups of participants. There was some doubt and discussion with regard to the metaphor ALLAH IS A KING: G1 did not accept the metaphor at all, G2 more or less accepted it, although after some discussion, and G3 accepted this metaphor instantly. The metaphors ALLAH IS A FATHER and ALLAH IS A HUSBAND were rejected by all three groups, both in their primary and secondary responses. Table 19 provides an overview of the responses to the five Christian metaphors by each group of participants.

Table 19: Summary of the responses to the Christian metaphors in Islamic context

Metaphor	Group	Primary response	Secondary response
ALLAH IS A MASTER	1	Clarification	Acceptance
	2	Acceptance	-
	3	Acceptance	-
ALLAH IS A KING	1	Rejection	Rejection
	2	(Partial) acceptance	-
	3	Acceptance	-
ALLAH IS A JUDGE	1	Acceptance	-
	2	Acceptance	-
	3	Acceptance	-
ALLAH IS A FATHER	1	Rejection	Rejection
	2	Rejection	Rejection
	3	Rejection	Rejection
ALLAH IS A HUSBAND	1	Rejection	-
	2	Rejection	-
	3	Rejection	-

An interesting point was made by various participants in their responses to the metaphors, namely that they felt that Allah could not and should not be compared to such earthly concepts. This notion is also reflected in the metaphor ALLAH IS AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEING, as listed in Table 18 above, which the participant used to indicate that Allah could not be compared to

earthly concepts. This notion that Allah should not be compared to earthly concepts was mentioned particularly in response to the metaphors ALLAH IS A FATHER and ALLAH IS A HUSBAND, as the participants felt that the concepts FATHER and HUSBAND were very 'earthly'. Moreover, this notion could account for the discussion concerning the metaphor ALLAH IS A KING. Thus, out of the five metaphors, FATHER and HUSBAND seemed to be perceived as the most earthly concepts, possibly followed by KING. In the next chapter, a discussion of the results and a conclusion will be given.

6. Discussion and conclusion

6.1 Overview and main findings

The current study consists of several components. First of all, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), which functioned as the theoretical framework for the analyses in this research, was discussed, followed by a discussion of research on the influence of culture on metaphorical language and of research on religious metaphors, particularly on the metaphorical language of the Bible and the Quran and the metaphorical language of Christians and Muslims. Next, the principal Christian metaphors referring to God were selected. This selection was primarily made based on the notion that God has revealed Himself in the Bible by means of five principal metaphors, namely as a *king*, *father*, *husband*, *master* and *judge* (Achtemeier, 1992). Based on this notion, the metaphors GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A MASTER, GOD IS A JUDGE, GOD IS A FATHER and GOD IS A HUSBAND were selected. In order to confirm that these five metaphors were deemed appropriate and acceptable by Christians, a small-scale analysis of the responses of Christian participants to these metaphors was conducted. This analysis confirmed that the Christian participants indeed deemed the use of the five metaphors when referring to God appropriate. After all, this study is primarily based on the premise that the language of Islamic teenagers could have been affected by Christian language and conceptual frameworks. Thus, if the Christians had not even accepted the selected metaphors themselves, one could hardly have expected the results to reflect any Christian influence.

After the selection of the five principal Christian metaphors referring to God, the occurrence and use of those metaphors in both the Bible and the Quran were analysed and compared. Based on those comparisons, the hypothesis was formulated that the Islamic participants would respond more positively to the metaphors ALLAH IS A KING, ALLAH IS A MASTER and ALLAH IS A JUDGE, than to the metaphors ALLAH IS A FATHER and ALLAH IS A HUSBAND, as the former three occur in the Quran, whereas the latter two do not.

Next, the interviews with the Islamic participants were analysed. This analysis was twofold: first of all, the metaphors used by the participants themselves in response to general questions were analysed, in order to establish whether or not the participants used any of the five selected metaphors. Second, the responses to the Christian metaphors applied to Allah were analysed, using the categorization system of *acceptance*, *rejection* or *clarification*.

With regard to the analysis of the metaphors used by the participants themselves, only two of the five selected metaphors were used, namely GOD IS A JUDGE and GOD IS A MASTER. As the participants used these metaphors without being prompted to do so by the questions, these metaphors are, presumably, important in their conceptualisation of Allah. This result differs somewhat from the metaphors used by the Christians, as they used the metaphors GOD IS A FATHER and GOD IS A MASTER without being prompted to do so, as described in Chapter 3. This result seems to be in line with the research conducted by Richardson (2012), who found that Christians, compared to Muslims, emphasize a relationship with God and use relatively much language related to intimate human relationships. The metaphor GOD IS A FATHER reflects such a relationship.

With regard to the responses to the principal Christian metaphors applied to Allah, the metaphors ALLAH IS A JUDGE and ALLAH IS A MASTER were accepted by all three groups, which is in line with the hypothesis. However, the metaphor ALLAH IS A KING was not accepted by all groups, which is somewhat surprising as this metaphor also occurs in the Quran. The discussion about the acceptability of the metaphor ALLAH IS KING could have been caused by the fact that the Netherlands is a monarchy and, thus, by the fact that the Islamic participants had cultural knowledge of 'earthly' kings. The concept KING could have been linked to their perception of Dutch politics and nationality, rather than to their religion. This is reflected in the concern expressed by several Islamic participants that the concept KING is too earthly for it to be appropriate when referring to Allah. The fact that the Netherlands is a monarchy and that the Islamic participants had been in contact with the concept KING as it being a state official,

especially related to ceremonial and festive occasions, could have caused the participants to perceive the concept KING as being an earthly concept. Possibly, the concepts JUDGE and MASTER were accepted more easily as these concepts were perceived to be more abstract and as the participants had had less contact with judges and masters. Thus, the discussion with regard to the metaphor ALLAH IS A KING could have been caused by the cultural knowledge of the concept KING of the Islamic participants, which resulted in them linking this concept to the earthly kings, such as the Dutch king, and, consequently, deeming the metaphor inappropriate and too earthly to refer to Allah.

Interestingly, such cultural knowledge of the concept KING did not prompt the Christian participants to reject the metaphor GOD IS A KING. This difference between the Islamic and Christian participants could have been caused by the fact that Christians generally compare God and their relationship with God to human concepts and human relationships (Richardson, 2012). Thus, in the case of the Christian participants, the very fact that the concept KING is linked to concrete cultural knowledge of the earthly (Dutch) king could have enhanced the acceptability of the metaphor, as it makes the metaphor more understandable and as it is in line with the apparent tradition of using human concepts and human relationships to conceptualise the divine.

The metaphors ALLAH IS A FATHER and ALLAH IS A HUSBAND were rejected by all three groups, which is again in line with the hypothesis, as these metaphors do not occur in the Quran. The fact that the Islamic participants rejected these metaphors, one of which had proven to be especially important in the Christian understanding of God (GOD IS A FATHER), reflects cultural differences in the perception and understanding of God and Allah and the concepts FATHER and HUSBAND. Based on the interviews, it seems likely that the main cultural aspect that has caused this difference is the fact that the Islamic participants did not think it was appropriate to compare Allah to earthly concepts, whereas the Christians emphasized the comparison to human concepts and human relationships in their understanding of God. Thus, the rejection of these exclusively Christian metaphors could have been caused by the cultural

differences in the perception of God and Allah respectively, especially by the position on whether or not the deity should be compared to earthly concepts in the understanding and perception of that deity by the believers.

As discussed above, the Islamic participants indicated that they felt that Allah should not be compared to ‘earthly’ concepts, which is illustrated by the metaphor ALLAH IS AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEING (Table 18). The Islamic participants expressed this notion particularly in response to the metaphors ALLAH IS A FATHER and ALLAH IS A HUSBAND, and to some degree also to the metaphor ALLAH IS A KING. Thus, the concepts FATHER and HUSBAND appear to be too ‘earthly’ to refer to Allah for these Islamic teenagers. In addition, the discussion and the variation in the responses to the metaphor ALLAH IS A KING were possibly (partially) caused by the relative ‘earthliness’ of the concept KING, compared to the concepts JUDGE and MASTER. This feeling and notion expressed by the participants that Allah should not be compared to earthly concepts is in line with the notion of the “absolute otherness of Allah” (Richardson, 2012, p. 255) mentioned in chapter 2.

6.2 Limitations and further research

There were various limitation in this research. First of all, there was no distinction made between various denominations of both the Islam and Christianity. It is possible that the various denominations rely on different conceptual frameworks and, therefore, further research should take the denominations into account. In addition, only one age group was interviewed. Different results could be found when participants from various age groups are included. In addition, the number of participants was rather small and further research should include more participants. Also, the selection of the principal Christian metaphors referring to God was based on the Bible and the appropriateness of this selection was confirmed based on a brief analysis of interviews with two Christian fellow-students of the Islamic participants, rather than selecting the principal metaphors based on Christian speech. Further research is required to reveal whether or not the five principal

Biblical metaphors referring to God are the principal metaphors used by Christians themselves as well. The current research relied on the premise that the Biblical language is reflected in Christian language and thought, as the Bible is the foundation of Christian faith. In addition, the analysis of the interviews with the Christian participants indicated that they did use two of the five selected metaphors themselves and accepted all five.

6.3 Research questions revisited

In this section, the sub questions formulated in chapter 5 and the main research question are revisited. The sub questions can be answered as follows:

1. *Which metaphors, if any, do the Islamic participants use when describing Allah, Muslims, the relationship between Allah and Muslims, and/or Islamic faith itself?*

The Islamic participants used various metaphors. The results section in chapter 5 provides an overview of the conceptual metaphors used, along with the corresponding linguistic metaphors.

2. *Do these metaphors used by the participants themselves include any of the five selected metaphors?*

Two of the five metaphors were reflected in the metaphors used by the participants themselves, namely ALLAH IS A JUDGE and ALLAH IS A MASTER.

3. *How do the Islamic participants respond to the Christian metaphors in Islamic context? Do they accept or reject them or do they require explanation?*

- The metaphors ALLAH IS A MASTER and ALLAH IS A JUDGE were accepted.
- The metaphor ALLAH IS A KING was not accepted by *all* groups.
- The metaphors ALLAH IS A FATHER and ALLAH IS A HUSBAND were rejected.

4. *Is the secondary reaction, i.e. the reaction after explanation, the same as the primary reaction?*

Explanation changed only one reaction, namely the reaction of G1 to the metaphor GOD IS A MASTER, as this group misinterpreted the term 'meester' (*master*) at first.

The main research question was the following: *How do Dutch Islamic teenagers respond to Christian metaphors referring to God applied to Allah?* Based on the current research, the conclusion is that Dutch Islamic teenagers respond rather positively towards metaphors which also occur in the Quran, but reject other metaphors, that is, they respond negatively to the exclusively Christian metaphors. Surprisingly, the metaphor ALLAH IS A KING received mixed reactions, even though this metaphor also occurs in the Quran. Participants expressed that they thought that Allah should not and could not be compared to 'earthly' concepts, such as FATHER and HUSBAND, and, to some extent, KING.

6.4 Conclusion

Based on the current research, the conclusion is that the language of the Islamic participants has not been influenced by Christian language and Christian conceptual frameworks, as the Islamic participants rejected the exclusively Christian metaphors. Participants expressed the notion that Allah should not be compared to 'earthly' concepts and, apparently, the concepts FATHER and HUSBAND are too 'earthly' to be appropriate when referring to Allah. Thus, although GOD IS A KING, GOD IS A MASTER and GOD IS A JUDGE are Christian as well as Islamic metaphors, the metaphors GOD IS A FATHER and GOD IS A HUSBAND are exclusively Christian.

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Interview Questions Christians

Wat betekent het geloof in jouw leven? (Hoe komt het tot uiting etc.?)

Wie is God voor jou? (Wat betekent Hij?)

Wat voor relatie heb jij met God?

Wanneer is iemand christen?

Wat is de belangrijkste eigenschap van een christen?

Zie je God als een vader? Zo ja, wat voor vader, zo nee, waarom niet?

Zijn christenen kinderen van God?

Zijn christenen onderling een familie? (Broeders en zusters?)

Welke rol speelt God in die familie?

Bespreek de volgende stellingen:

God is een Koning

God is een Rechter

God is een Meester → zijn christenen dienaren?

God en christenen hebben een 'liefdes relatie' vergelijkbaar met die van een getrouwde man en vrouw → God is een echtgenoot

God is liefde

Appendix B

Interview Questions Muslims

Wat betekent het geloof in jouw leven? (Hoe komt het tot uiting etc.?)

Wie is Allah voor jou? (Wat betekent Hij?)

Wat voor relatie heb jij met Allah?

Wanneer is iemand moslim?

Wat is de belangrijkste eigenschap van een moslim?

Zie je Allah als een vader? Zo ja, wat voor vader, zo nee, waarom niet?

Zijn moslims kinderen van Allah?

Zijn moslims onderling een familie? (broeders en zuster?)

Welke rol speelt Allah in die familie?

Bespreek de volgende stellingen:

Allah is een Koning

Allah is een Rechter

Allah is een Meester → zijn moslims dienaren?

Allah en moslims hebben een 'liefdes relatie' vergelijkbaar met die van een getrouwde man en vrouw → Allah is een echtgenoot

Allah is liefde