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**OPEN-MINDEDNESS IN THE  
BIBLE AND BEYOND**

**A Volume of Studies in Honour of Bob Becking**

**Edited by Marjo C. A. Korpel and Lester L. Grabbe**

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## CONTENTS

Contributors	viii
Acknowledgements	x
Introduction (Lester L. Grabbe and Marjo C. A. Korpel)	
Professor Bob Becking	xi
Summaries of Papers	xiv
Bibliography of Professor Bob Becking	xxi
List of Abbreviations	xxxvii
OPEN-MINDEDNESS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE FORMATION OF THE PENTATEUCH: THE CHALLENGE OF EXODUS 19–20	
Rainer Albertz	1
EMPIRE! ‘... AND GAVE HIM A SEAT ABOVE THE SEATS OF THE OTHER KINGS WHO WERE WITH HIM IN BABYLON’: JEREMIAH 52.31–34: FACT OR FICTION?	
Hans M. Barstad	11
BEN SIRA AND SONG OF SONGS: WHAT ABOUT PARALLELS AND ECHOES?	
Pancratius C. Beentjes	25
OPEN-MINDEDNESS AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF ACADEMIC STUDIES IN ANCIENT ISRAEL HISTORY	
Ehud Ben Zvi	37
ISAIAH 24–27: SPACING A PROPHETIC VISION	
Willem A. M. Beuken	45
EINÜBUNG IN DEN AUFRECHTEN GANG: BEISPIELE FÜR ZIVILCOURAGE IN DEN SAMUELBÜCHERN	
Walter Dietrich	57
SWORDS OR PLOUGHSHARES? THE TRANSITION FROM THE LATE BRONZE TO THE EARLY IRON AGE IN NORTHERN JORDAN	
Meindert Dijkstra and Karel Vriezen	69

PENETRATING THE LEGEND: IN QUEST OF THE HISTORICAL EZRA Lester L. Grabbe	97
JOSEPH, THE PASTOR AND THE CONQUEROR OF EVIL BY USING GOOD: OBSERVATIONS ON GENESIS 50.15–21 IN DUTCH CHILDREN’S AND FAMILY BIBLES Cornelis Houtman	111
THE MYTH OF THE REBORN NATION Izaak J. de Hulster	123
LEADING SCHOLARS AND THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: THE CASE OF LXX HAGGAI 2.1–9 Arie van der Kooij	139
MEMORIES OF EXILE AND RETURN IN THE BOOK OF RUTH Marjo C. A. Korpel	151
THE QUESTION OF JOB Peter Machinist	165
THE OPEN MIND OF THE MAN BORN BLIND (JOHN 9) Maarten J. J. Menken	179
JERUSALEM: NIGHTMARE AND DAYDREAM IN MICAH Johannes C. de Moor	191
FOUR NOTES ON THE ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN <i>MARZEAH</i> Nadav Na’aman	215
THE ABOLITION OF THE CULT OF THE DEAD KINGS IN JERUSALEM (EZEKIEL 43.6–9) Herbert Niehr	223
A HUMAN AND A DEITY WITH CONFLICTING MORALS (QOHELET 2.26) Paul Sanders	237
A PROPHET CONTEST: JEREMIAH 28 RECONSIDERED Klaas A. D. Smelik	247
COMPARING THE BOOK OF JUDGES TO GREEK LITERATURE Klaas Spronk	261

SPEAKING OF GODS: DIMENSIONS OF THE DIVINE IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST Karel van der Toorn	273
IS THE CRITICAL, ACADEMIC STUDY OF THE BIBLE INEXTRICABLY BOUND TO THE DESTINIES OF THEOLOGY? Christoph Uehlinger	287
BIBLICAL STUDIES AND THE ART OF CIVILIZATION MAINTENANCE Anne-Mareike Wetter	303
A NEW DIVINE TITLE IN ISAIAH 10.17 H. G. M. Williamson	315
Bibliography	321
Index of Biblical Texts	359
Index of Names and Subjects	373
Index of Names	377

## LEADING SCHOLARS AND THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: THE CASE OF LXX HAGGAI 2.1–9

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In this contribution in honour of Bob Becking, who is well known for his critical attitude towards prevailing paradigms, I would like to deal with a particular passage in the Septuagint (LXX) – LXX Hag. 2.1–9 – from a perspective different from the way it has been discussed so far. The model or paradigm I have in mind is based on an important characteristic of Early Judaism – the study of Scripture by people among the intellectual elite. The essay has five parts: LXX Hag. 2.1–9; Paradigm; LXX Hag. 2.1–9 Again; The Builders; and Herod the Great.

### *LXX Hag. 2.1–9*

The passage as transmitted in MT contains a prophecy, dated the twenty-first day of the seventh month, i.e. the last day of the Festival of Tabernacles. Haggai, the prophet, addresses the leaders of the Jewish people, Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, and Joshua, the high priest, as well as the remnant of the people. It is about the temple which is going to be rebuilt, but many appear to be sceptical on the outcome of the whole project, because as is stated in v. 3: ‘Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory’, i.e. the temple before its destruction by the Babylonians? ‘How do you see it now? Is it not in your sight as nothing?’ It reminds one of a passage found in Ezra (3.12), according to which many of the priests, Levites and heads of fathers’ house, who had seen the first temple, cried when they saw the foundations of the second. In what follows in Hag. 2, the prophet bids Zerubbabel, Joshua and all the people of the land (v. 4) to take courage, and to carry on the work of rebuilding. He does so by announcing a perspective of glory, wealth and peace:

- 6 For thus says the LORD of Hosts: In a little while from now I shall shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land;

- 7 and I shall shake all nations, and the treasure of all nations will come here, and I shall fill this house with splendour, says the LORD of Hosts.  
 8 Mine is the silver, and mine is the gold, says the LORD of Hosts,  
 9 and the splendour of this latter house will surpass the splendour of the former, says the LORD of Hosts. In this place I shall grant prosperity and peace. This is the word of the LORD of Hosts. (REB)

The Old Greek version of this passage represents, as a whole, a fairly literal rendering, but compared to MT there are some divergences, which have drawn the attention of scholars. These are the following:

- v. 2 MT Zerubbabel [...] governor (פּחַד) of Judah  
 LXX Zorobabel [...] from the tribe of Judah (Ζοροβαβελ [...] ἐκ φυλῆς Ἰουδα)
- v. 3 MT How do you see it now? Is it not (אִלֵּה) in your sight as nothing (יִכְאֵז)?  
 LXX And how do you see it now? As though it does not exist before you? (NETS)  
 (καὶ πῶς ὑμεῖς βλέπετε αὐτὸν νῦν; καθὼς οὐχ ὑπάρχοντα ἐνώπιον ὑμῶν)
- v. 5 MT as to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt  
 LXX (no equivalent)
- v. 6 MT In a little while from now (הֵי טַעַם תַּחַת מֵעַד) I shall shake the heavens and the earth  
 LXX Once again I will shake the sky and the earth (NETS)  
 (Ἔτι ἄπαξ ἐγὼ σεισῶ τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν)
- v. 9 MT In this place I shall grant peace (שָׁלוֹם), says the LORD of Hosts  
 LXX and in this place I will give peace, says the Lord Almighty even peace of mind for an acquisition to everyone who creates, to raise up the shrine (NETS)  
 (καὶ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ δώσω εἰρήνην, λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ, καὶ εἰρήνην ψυχῆς εἰς περιποίησιν παντὶ τῷ κτίζοντι τοῦ ἀναστήσαι τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον)

These differences are both interesting and challenging. Due to the constraints of this essay I shall concentrate on the readings in vv. 3, 6 and 9. In this section, I will note the comments made by scholars.

The last clause in v. 3 (καθὼς οὐχ ὑπάρχοντα ἐνώπιον ὑμῶν) raises the question whether it should be read, just as the preceding one, as a question like in MT, or not, because it does not offer an equivalent of Hebrew אִלֵּה. In the editions of Rahlfs and Ziegler this part of the verse is presented without question mark,<sup>1</sup> but others consider it to be an interrogative sentence. So, for example, NETS quoted above, although in a note to the translation it also offers the possibility not to read it in that way. Schenker argues that the clause is best understood as a complaint

1. Cf. BdA ('Comme si elle n'existait pas face à vous').

(‘Anklage’): ‘And how do you see it now like nothing before you?’ (‘Und wie seht ihr es jetzt wie nichts vor euch?’). He paraphrases the tenor of the passage as follows: ‘you could have known how beautiful the previous temple has been. [...] How can you regard the new temple to be built [...] like nothing? [...] How could you be satisfied with such a miserable project that looks like nothing?’ (‘ihr konntet wissen, wie prachtvoll der vorherige Tempel war. [...] Wie könnt ihr den neu aufzubauenden Tempel [...] als nichts betrachten? [...] Wie könnt ihr euch beim Tempelneubau mit einem so armseligen Projekt zufrieden geben, das nach gar nichts aussieht?’ (2011: 180). LXX.D provides a translation in line with the interpretation by Schenker but does so without a question mark: ‘(Just like this) as if it were not standing before you’ (‘[Gerade so,] als stünde es nicht vor euch’).

In v. 6 LXX reads, ‘Once again,’ whereas MT has the phrase ‘In a little while from now.’<sup>2</sup> How to explain the difference between both texts? It has been argued that LXX, not displaying the notion of a little (while), points to a more remote future than is the case in MT. ‘The omission in Greek of the “short delay” removes the idea of threat’ (‘L’ omission en grec du “bref délai” supprime l’idée d’imminence’, BdA, 82).<sup>3</sup> For Schenker the reverse is the case: LXX reflects a ‘Nächsterwartung’ (‘noch eins’, in the sense of ‘nur noch eins’), whereas MT, as he puts it, ‘with the words “there is very little” postpones the shock a little bit further’ (‘schiebt mit den Worten “es ist nur wenig” die Erschütterung um ein wenig weiter hinaus’) (2011: 182).

Verse 9 in Greek contains a long plus which is not easy to interpret. One of the issues involved concerns the meaning of the phrase εἰρήνη ψυχῆς. It is usually taken in the sense of inner peace,<sup>4</sup> but according to Schenker it is not about ‘inner peace of mind, but personal peace, assigned to the individual’ (‘innerer Seelenfriede, sondern persönlicher, dem einzelnen verliehener Frieden’, 2011: 187). Dogniez too is in favour of interpreting ψυχή in the sense of ‘the “life” of the individual’ (‘la “vie” de l’individu’), and if so ‘peace of soul’ would denote then a life in peace and prosperity, comparable to Zechariah 8.12 (2005: 210).

Opinions also differ on the question of how to understand περιποίησις in the plus. It can be used in the sense of ‘preservation’, but it can also have the meaning of ‘gaining possession’, ‘acquisition’. Some think the latter meaning fits the plus well (Muraoka; NETS), while others prefer the former one – ‘preservation’ (BdA [‘sauvegarde’]; LXX.D [‘Bewahrung’]).

Finally, the way κτίζω has been rendered varies a bit: ‘to build’ (Dogniez 2005: 209; BdA), or ‘to create’ (NETS; LXX.D). Schenker (2011: 186) believes that the verb in our text should be understood as having the temple as its object (‘den Tempel errichten’), analogous to LXX Lev. 16.16, which refers to ‘the tent of witness’ as ‘having been established’ [ἐκτισμένη] among the Israelites. Since the

2. For this interpretation of MT, see also Mitchell 1937: 61, Barthélemy 1992: 929 and Kessler 2002: 160.

3. Cf. Kessler 2002: 160 (‘possibly’); LXX.D EK (Pola). Barthélemy (1992: 929) on the other hand regards the Greek text an abbreviated rendering (of MT) for reasons of style.

4. Cf. Petersen 1985: 70; Kessler 2002: 161 (note).

next verb too has the temple as its object (τοῦ ἀναστήσαι τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον) the question arises how to interpret this part of the plus. In this case he interprets the plus not as it stands in Greek but by first reconstructing the supposed Hebrew text (לְהִקָּח). He then interprets this infinitive with לְ as ‘by raising’, and not as ‘in order to raise’ (‘dadurch, dass er ihn [aus den Ruinen neu] aufführt’).

On the assumption that the plus goes back to a Hebrew text, attempts have been made to reconstruct this text, either the clause as a whole (Mitchell) or a few words only (Dogniez, Schenker). As to περιποίησις Schenker opts for הַגְלִיט because of the equivalence of both words in Mal. 3:17. Others however believe that it is based on מַחִיָּה (cf. 2 Chron. 14:12).<sup>5</sup> In the case of κτιζω Schenker is not sure what might have been its Hebrew counterpart; other scholars think of טִיב.<sup>6</sup>

If the plus goes back to a parent text in Hebrew, the next question is whether it was part of the original prophecy or not. In general scholars believe that this is not very likely. So for example Mitchell: ‘These words, however, cannot be a part of the original prophecy’ because Haggai is predicting prosperity and peace whereas the plus is about ‘inward and spiritual tranquillity’ (1937: 65).<sup>7</sup> Dogniez is of the opinion that the plus testifies to ‘deux éditions’ of Haggai (2005: 213), thus leaving open the question regarding the ‘original’ text. Schenker on the other hand argues that the plus (in Hebrew) is part of an older and more original text of Hag. 2.9 (2011: 190).

### *Paradigm*

Before dealing in more detail with the differences noted above, a few words are in order to make clear from which perspective I will do so. This perspective relates in particular to the figure of the translator, the crucial issue being the relationship between the translator and scholarship within Jewish society and culture in antiquity.

Schenker subscribes to the view that books like LXX Twelve Prophets represent a faithful and quite literal version of its parent text (‘getreu und oft literaristisch’ [2011: 40]; gewissenhaft). Hence, specific variants conveying a meaning different from MT, so-called ‘literary’ variants, do reflect a different Hebrew text. In her discussion of the minus in v. 5 and the plus in v. 9 Dogniez holds a similar view: if the translator had left out the plus in v. 5, ‘the translator would have given up the general principle that underlies all his work: to restore the sacred text in full and as accurately as possible’ (‘le traducteur aurait renoncé au grand principe qui sous-tend tout son travail: restituer dans son intégralité et le plus fidèlement possible le texte sacré’, 2005: 205). This type of approach is marked by a prescriptive element: a translation being in general quite literal should also be

5. Mitchell 1937: 65; LXX D. EK.

6. See e.g. Mitchell 1937: 65.

7. Commentators tend to agree with Mitchell; see Kessler 2002: 161.

considered that way in cases where it provides remarkable divergences from MT. A translation being both literal and free does not fit this model.

In current LXX research new approaches are being developed on the basis of modern translation theories.<sup>8</sup> The theory of Toury (1995) should be mentioned here in particular because it is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather descriptive. Its main components are, first, to study the acceptability of a translation in the target culture, and second, an analysis of the adequacy of the translation by comparing the source and the target text. As to the second aspect it is important to look for problems in the source text, which have been 'solved' in some way by the translator. This approach being marked by a focus on the translation process on the one hand, and on the translation as a product on the other, has the great advantage that a given translation can also be taken seriously in its own right by paying attention, among other things, to the meaning of words and phrases in their own context. Rather than looking at shifts as cases where the translator failed, or made a mistake, divergences not due to linguistic reasons can be considered as relevant in uncovering elements of the translator's approach.

This and other modern translation theories are very helpful as they provide an approach for analysing a translation from different angles.<sup>9</sup> Whereas Toury is emphasizing mainly the linguistic aspects of a translation, other scholars such as Chesterman (2000) have pointed out that also the translator's social and cognitive environment should be taken into account. This implies that a translation may reflect an ideology by way of shifts of meaning. Mention should also be made of the *skopos* theory as applied by O'Hare (2010) in his study on LXX Ezekiel 40–8.

However reading contributions to LXX studies, one often has the feeling that the field of LXX studies is an isle within the sea of Jewish culture and literature in antiquity. How to build bridges? Several issues are involved here such as to look, in more detail, for data of a lexical and exegetical nature in literature of the time to see whether it may provide any help in understanding specific renderings in LXX. A crucial issue, in my view, concerns the figure of the translator. Who were the ones able to make a translation of 'biblical' books? With regard to this question I would like to make the following remarks.<sup>10</sup>

(1) In the light of what we know about the Jewish society in antiquity, the translator of a part of Scripture must be looked for among the intellectual elite. The 'ancestral' books (Sir. Prol.), making up the textual heritage of the Jewish nation, were literary texts, to be distinguished from documentary texts. The ability of reading and studying the former required other skills, skills of a higher level,<sup>11</sup> than was required for persons dealing with texts of the latter type. It is likely

8. See in particular Boyd-Taylor 2011.

9. For a survey of modern translation theories, see Van der Louw (2007: 12–23).

10. See also Van der Kooij 1998: 112–23; *idem* 2010: 55–71; Cook and Van der Kooij 2012: 59–62; Van der Kooij 2013: 33–9.

11. On this issue of a 'higher level' education, see e.g. Buitenwerf 2003: 323.

that only highly educated people, ‘scholars,’<sup>12</sup> were able and authorized to make a translation of literary texts. The grandson of Jesus Sirach, who produced a translation of the work of his grandfather, may serve as an example.

(2) As a Jewish scholar of the time, the translator had recourse to a set of devices by which he was able to interpret words and phrases in a way that is, in some respects, incompatible with our modern philological approach. It is therefore plausible to regard specific renderings, which differ from MT (e.g. different vocalization, ‘etymological’ exegesis), as being due to the interpretation of the text by the scholar-translator rather than to regard these cases as misunderstandings or errors. This does not exclude the possibility of a different Vorlage, but so-called ‘non-obligatory’ shifts should first of all be examined in order to see whether they reflect any interpretation. Obviously, it would be of great help if other literary sources of Jewish provenance provide any evidence that could shed light on such cases in LXX.

(3) Scholars being members of the intellectual elite belonged to the upper class in Jewish society – the priestly aristocracy (e.g. Josephus) and the lay nobility (e.g. Jesus Sirach<sup>13</sup>). They were people having great authority who could be ‘sought out for the council of the people,’ or for a position ‘in the assembly’ (Sir. 38.32–33), and act as leaders of the Jewish nation. A clear example is the High Priest who, as a scholar and primary exegete of the Law, was also heading the Jewish nation. The figure of the Teacher of Righteousness is yet another example of the close relationship between leadership and scholarship. Hence the expression ‘leading scholars’ in the title of this essay.

These comments should make it clear which image of the translator I have in mind.<sup>14</sup> The basic idea is that LXX books, as well as books of the other ancient versions, were not produced by a translator in the modern sense of the word, but by people like Jerome – bilingual scholars who were not only able to produce a translation, but also familiar with the study and interpretation of Scripture. Jewish and Christian scholars in antiquity were not interested in the original meaning of the ‘biblical’ text in a way typical of modern scholarship, but rather in an interpretation of it considered relevant in some way for readers of their own time. It is therefore understandable that they tried to introduce a specific interpretation in places which were held important for one reason or another.

As we know from reception history, not every passage in Scripture was that important and crucial (e.g. in the sense of serving the ideology of a given group), and this also applies to the ancient versions in general. Apart from this aspect

12. I prefer the term ‘scholar’ to ‘scribe’ because the latter term is ambiguous as it can refer to a scholar (cf. Ezra, ‘the scribe’) but can also point to a secretary.

13. On Jesus Sirach as a layman, see Van der Kooij 2010: 68.

14. I leave aside the question of whether a translation was produced by leading scholars themselves, or by literate people of a lower rank who acted on their authority.

though, the extent of exegesis in the ancient versions, particularly the ‘higher level’ interpretation, depends on the choice made regarding the style of translation. To give a few examples, the Vulgate version of Isaiah as well as the Peshitta version of the same book, both containing some interesting renderings due to a Christian reading, attest to a translation style which leaves little room for exegesis. They are fairly modest in introducing specific interpretations compared to the ‘rich’ Targum version of the same book. As to the pre-*kaige* LXX, most books are likewise fairly modest in this regard,<sup>15</sup> while others such as Isaiah, Daniel and Job attest an approach which leaves more room for stylistic improvements and interpretive renderings.

### *LXX Hag. 2.1–9 Again*

We now return to LXX Hag. 2.1–9 in order to discuss the readings in vv. 3, 6 and 9, from the perspective of the paradigm outlined above.

The last clause of v. 3 in Greek (καθὼς οὐχ ὑπάρχοντα ἐνώπιον ὑμῶν) could be read as a question, but since LXX does not contain an equivalent of הלוה in Hebrew, it is more likely to regard it as an answer to the preceding clause (‘And how do you see it now?’): ‘How [...]?’ (πῶς) – ‘As [...]’ (καθὼς). The use of the participle (ὑπάρχοντα) evoking the idea of a situation (‘as not existing’) fits this reading. Note the passages elsewhere in the Twelve Prophets containing the same expression: Amos 5.5 (καὶ Βαιθηλ ἔσται ὡς οὐχ ὑπάρχουσα) and Obad. 16 (καὶ ἔσονται καθὼς οὐχ ὑπάρχοντες). So, according to v. 3, for now the temple is not magnificent in its appearance as was the former one.

In v. 6, the phrase ‘Once again’ (Ἔτι ἄπαξ) is part of vv. 6–9 representing the promise of a temple that will be full of splendour. Unlike MT (‘In a little while from now I shall shake [מרעיש]’) the text of LXX does not contain the notion of ‘a little while’ as in MT,<sup>16</sup> hence it does not convey the idea of something that will happen soon.

Reading the two verses together the following picture emerges: the temple being rebuilt in the time of Zorobabel and Joshua is quite modest, but at some time in the future it will be again full of splendour, and even more so than the former temple. Interestingly, this picture is also attested in another writing of the time – Tob. 14.3–5. It reads in translation as follows (according to the longer version<sup>17</sup>):

- (3) When he [Tobit] was dying, he sent for his son Tobias and gave him these instructions:

15. This also applies to LXX Twelve Prophets. Cf. Glenn 2009 as far as LXX Amos is concerned.

16. For this notion in LXX, see Isa. 10.25 (ἔτι μικρόν).

17. Cf. the evidence from Qumran: see e.g. 4Q198 (4QTobit<sup>a</sup>), a fragment containing a few words of Tob. 14.2–6. See DJD XIX: 57–9.

- 'My son, you must take your children  
 (4) and be off to Media with all haste,  
 for I believe God's word spoken against Nineveh by Nahum.  
 [...]  
 Our countrymen who live in Israel will all be scattered and carried off into  
 captivity out of that good land. The whole of Israel's territory with Samaria  
 and Jerusalem will lie waste; and for a time the house of God will be in  
 mourning, burnt to the ground.  
 (5) But God will have mercy on them again and will bring them back to the  
 land of Israel. They will rebuild the house of God, yet not as it was at first,  
 until the time of fulfilment comes. Then they will all return from their  
 captivity and rebuild Jerusalem in splendour; then indeed God's house will  
 be built in her, as the prophets of Israel spoke concerning it.' (REB, slightly  
 modified)

According to this passage after the time of the destruction of Nineveh (fulfilment of the prophecy of Nahum), and after the time of the exile and of destruction in the land of Israel, the rebuilding of the temple (v. 5a), presumably under Zerubbabel and Joshua, is not regarded as the fulfilment of prophecies: it was rebuilt at that time, but 'not as it was at first' (καὶ οὐχ ὡς τὸν πρῶτον).<sup>18</sup> The fulfilment will come at a later date: 'Then' (μετὰ ταῦτα), at the time when *all* will return, the city of Jerusalem will be rebuilt 'in splendour', and then the temple will be built in her 'as the prophets of Israel have spoken concerning it (the city)'. As may be clear, in distinguishing two stages in history Tob. 14 provides a nice parallel of the picture embedded in LXX Hag. 2.3, 6, in this way lending support to the interpretation of the verses given above.<sup>19</sup>

We now turn to the plus in v. 9, which is fairly enigmatic (καὶ εἰρήνην ψυχῆς εἰς περιποίησιν παντὶ τῷ κτίζοντι τοῦ ἀναστήσαι τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον). What does it mean to say, and how does it function in the immediate context? As we have seen, opinions differ regarding the interpretation of most of the words or phrases employed ('peace of soul', περιποίησις and κτίζω). The final part of the whole clause on the other hand is not that difficult to translate – 'to raise up this temple'. If read in light of our interpretation of vv. 3 and 6 this part of the plus makes perfect sense: it does not refer to the rebuilding of the temple by Zerubbabel and Joshua, but to the magnificent and glorious temple to be built at a later date (cf. Tob.15.5b [according to the shorter version the temple will be built 'as a glorious building']).

How to interpret the rest of the clause? 'God will give peace of soul [...] παντὶ τῷ κτίζοντι'. In view of the building theme in the context I agree with those scholars who take κτίζω here in the sense of 'to build' (see above; cf. Muraoka). In Greek literature the verb can denote the 'founding' of a country by building

18. Cf. Ezra 3.12.

19. *Pace* Hicks-Keeton who does not distinguish between the two stages concerning the rebuilding of the temple (2013: 99).

houses and cities in it (e.g. Herodotus 1.149), but is more often used in the sense of ‘to found, or build a city’ (e.g. Herodotus 1.167, 168). These usages are hardly attested in the LXX. The former occurs in Exodus 9.18 (referring to the time when the country of Egypt was ‘founded’), while the latter is attested in 1 Esd. 4.53 (κτίσαι τὴν πόλιν, ‘to build the city [of Jerusalem]’). The way the verb is used in LXX Leviticus 16.16, on the other hand, is a bit different because it here conveys another shade of meaning, namely, the setting up, establishing or planting (of the tent of witness).

It is to be asked how the phrase ‘to everyone who builds’ is related to what follows, ‘to raise up this temple’. As noted above Schenker interprets both verbs as relating to the temple. However, the participle of the verb κτίζω being used here without explicit object rather points to building activities in general, which may of course include the raising up of the temple. One is inclined to think of the building of the city of Jerusalem as being the implied meaning here because of the reference to this city (‘I will give peace in this place’) in the beginning of the verse.

The remaining part of the plus reads καὶ εἰρήνην ψυχῆς εἰς περιποίησιν. What to make of this? The notion of ‘peace’ as such is of course related to the preceding part of the verse, God ‘will give peace in this place’. At the same time, however, the motif of peace is specified here, as it reads God will give ‘peace of soul’. One wonders what kind of peace is meant here. As we have seen, most scholars think of inner peace, whereas Schenker and Dogniez argue that the term ‘soul’ should be taken here in the sense of ‘person’ (personal peace, a life in peace and prosperity). Compared to the ‘peace’ in the preceding part of the verse, referring to a situation of peace in general terms, the phrase ‘peace of soul’ seems to point to something more specific. Instead of inner peace, or personal peace, I would argue that the phrase ‘peace of soul’ is better understood in the sense of a peaceful disposition. The Letter of Aristeeus (LA) is important in this regard. In para. 273 the reader is told that the king asked the eleventh guest, ‘How can one be peacefully disposed at heart even in war (Πῶς ἂν κατὰ ψυχὴν καὶ ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις εἰρηνικῶς ἔχοι)?’ The guest, one of the Jewish scholars, replied: ‘By the knowledge that no evil has been committed upon any of his subjects [...]. You do not cease helping everyone, for God has given you the gift of kindness (καλοφροσύνην)’ (para. 273–4). This passage favours the idea that the ‘peace of soul’ conveys the meaning of ‘peaceful disposition’.<sup>20</sup>

How then to interpret the remaining phrase (εἰς περιποίησιν)? Roughly speaking the choice is between ‘preservation’, on the one hand, and ‘acquisition’, or ‘possession’, on the other. The phrase in some way qualifies the expression ‘peace of soul’. In light of LA para. 273 I would suggest the following interpretation: ‘a peaceful disposition for preservation’, that is to say, a peaceful disposition of rulers in order to save and preserve others, namely, their subjects. This interpretation also fits Mal. 3.17, the only other occurrence of the phrase in LXX Twelve Prophets: ‘And they (i.e. those who fear the Lord) shall be mine, says the Lord

20. Compare also LXX 1 Chron. 12.39 (ἐν ψυχῇ εἰρηνικῇ [LXX.D: ‘mit einer friedlichen Gesinnung’]).

Almighty, in the day which I appoint for preservation (εις περιποίησιν), that is to say, for preservation of those who fear the Lord.

The readings in LXX Hag. 2 dealt with so far turn out to make up a coherent picture conveying a prophetic message, which differs from that contained in MT. In line with the paradigm outlined above, I regard these readings as modifications being introduced by the scholar-translator for the sake of a particular interpretation. They provide a window on the interest among leading scholars in studying ancient prophecies. As is clear from Tob. 14, the issue at stake here is the question of the reliability and fulfilment of prophecies. The prophecy concerning the glorious temple had not yet been fulfilled, and therefore the text of vv. 3 and 6 was slightly modified in order to make clear that it will come true at a date later than the time of the prophet himself.

The plus in v. 9 seems to be part of the same strategy because it makes explicit the idea that the rebuilding of the temple as a glorious one will be carried out by builders ('everyone who builds') in a period later than the time of Zerobabel and Joshua. As noted above, scholars have argued that this plus goes back to a Hebrew Vorlage, but this is questionable. It is not only difficult to reconstruct the underlying Hebrew, but it is also far from certain that the resulting Hebrew text is plausible from a textual or lexical point of view (e.g. the phrase 'peace of soul' is not attested in Classical Hebrew). Moreover, the fact that the gloss in Greek is marked by expressions ('peace of soul', the usage of κτίζω) reflecting Greek culture of the time is not in favour of a Hebrew text. True, from the perspective of a prescriptive type of 'translation technique' it would be plausible to claim a Hebrew text underlying the plus (cf. Dogniez, Schenker). Things are different however if, in line with the paradigm outlined above, one regards, as I do, the translator as a scholar who felt free to add a gloss deemed necessary for a proper understanding of the text.

### *The Builders*

In Early Judaism the ancient prophecies were considered a source of hope, which was based on a study of these texts by leading scholars in order to find out whether 'history was unfolding as has been foretold by the prophets' (Collins 2010: 211). As we know from Daniel and the *pesharim* the basic pattern is that, if part of the prophecies was regarded to have been fulfilled, not only in the past but also, and particularly so, in contemporary history, the other part was believed to come true soon.

Like Tob. 14 our text presents a picture of the post-exilic age, which is marked by two stages. Both texts share the hope that the second temple, being rebuilt as a modest building in the Persian period, will be rebuilt in full glory at a later date. This picture is not found in other presentations of the post-exilic period in Jewish writings dating to the Hellenistic era (e.g. Sir. 49.11–13; Dan. 9.24–27; and SibOr 3.280–94). On the contrary, according to Sir. 49.11–12 (H) the holy temple being rebuilt by Zerubbabel and Joshua has been 'established for everlasting

glory'. So the question arises what might have triggered the two-stage view of history? Which events in the second century BCE might have fostered the hope of a rebuilding of the temple in its former glory?

The plus in v. 9 contains a reference to the builders ('everyone who builds'). One could think here, with Schenker and other scholars, of the Jews in general.<sup>21</sup> However, in line with the interpretation of the phrase 'peace of soul for preservation' given above, I regard the builders a reference to rulers.

As to events in the time of the translator, I would like to suggest the following. Hasmonean rule marked a new stage of history – Jerusalem became the capital of an independent state, which expanded greatly, encompassing an area roughly the size of the kingdoms of David and Solomon. The city of Jerusalem grew five-fold. According to 1 Maccabees it was Jonathan who 'began to build and renovate the city' (1 Macc. 10.10), and it was Simon who 'completed the walls of Jerusalem and fortified it all around' (1 Macc. 13.10; see also 14.37; 15. 7). It is likely that 'the city's extended boundaries under Jonathan and Simon' were due 'to the aspirations of these Hasmonean rulers to re-create a city similar to what they believed had existed in the days of David and Solomon' (Levine 2002: 109). The reign of Simon (143–135 BCE) is described, in 1 Maccabees, as a time of peace and prosperity, as well as a time of recognition by the nations, similar to the reign of Solomon as depicted in 1 Kings 5. In addition, it is also presented as a time in which prophecies of salvation came true (1 Macc. 14.4–15). Notably, two verses in this passage correspond to the wording found in LXX Twelve Prophets: v. 9 ('Old men sat in the streets'), cf. LXX Zechariah 8.4, and v. 12 ('And everyone sat under his vine, and under his fig tree, and there was no one making them afraid'), cf. LXX Mic. 4.4.

Read in the light of all this, it would make perfect sense to interpret the phrase 'everyone who builds' as a reference to Hasmonean rulers like Jonathan and Simon as the 'builders' of the city. Also the gift of 'peace of soul for preservation' fits this leadership well, because, according to 1 Maccabees, someone like Simon was able to save and preserve Israel. If so, part of the prophecies had come true (the rebuilding of Jerusalem in its former glory, and the people living in peace) and this may have nourished, in line with the logic of the fulfilment interpretation (Collins 2010: 216), the hope for a rebuilding of the temple in its former glory, by the Hasmoneans.<sup>22</sup>

### *Herod the Great*

As a final remark the following may be added. The Hasmoneans did not rebuild the temple in full glory, but someone else did. According to Josephus, Herod, in

21. According to Tob. 14.5b all the Jews that will return will rebuild Jerusalem. This focus is in my view part of the message of the book urging Jews living in the diaspora to return to the 'good land' (Tob. 14.4).

22. For the view of LXX Twelve Prophets as relating to Hasmonean leadership, in particular Simon, see also Van der Kooij 2003: 62–3.

telling the people of his plan to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, explains why he would like to do so. The temple that was built after the return from Babylon was 'smaller' than the temple built by Solomon. He would try 'to restore the temple to its former size' because 'by the will of God, I am now ruler and there continues to be a long period of peace and an abundance of wealth and great revenues [...]' (Ant. 15.386–7). And so he did.

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