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The Old Greek of Isaiah: An Analysis of its Translation of Plant Metaphors

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The Old Greek of Isaiah:
An Analysis of its Translation of Plant Metaphors

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PREFACE

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ABBREVIATIONS

BDAG	Danker, F.W., W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt, and F.W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.</i>
BDB	<i>The Brown Driver Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BIOSCS	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series
DCH	<i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i>
DSS	Dead Sea Scroll
ESV	<i>English Standard Version</i>
HALOT	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JNSL	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
JSOTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series</i>
LSJ	Liddell, H.G., R. Scott, H.S. Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon.</i>
LCL	The Loeb Classical Library
LXX	The Old Greek Septuagint
LXX.D.	Septuaginta Deutsch
LXX.D.E.K.	<i>Septuaginta Deutsch: Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
NETS	<i>New English Translation of the Septuagint</i>
NRSV	<i>New Revised Standard Version</i>
NT	New Testament
OTE	Old Testament Essays
OT	Old Testament
TWNT	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> , G. Kittel, and G. Friedrich, eds.
UBL	Ugaritisch-biblische Literatur
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

In this study, the plant metaphors of the Septuagint of Isaiah will be analyzed in order to gain further insight into the translation technique of this unique book. This introductory chapter begins with a survey of previous scholarship on the metaphors in the LXX. Then a brief introduction to modern views of metaphor is given, followed by a description of the views of metaphor and the rhetorical training that belong to the context in which the LXX-Isa translator worked. Finally, the method this study will follow is described, along with its outline.

1.1. Metaphors in the Septuagint

1.1.1. Metaphors in the Septuagint in General

Scholarship on metaphors in the Septuagint is surprisingly scant. In 1889, Edwin Hatch commented on how differences between Biblical and Classical Greek were in part due to their differences in time, location, and the people using them.¹ These differences among other things, account for the differences in metaphors used.² Regarding special differences between the Greek and the Hebrew of the Old Testament, Hatch noted that the LXX sometimes changes the metaphors, sometimes adds metaphors, and sometimes subtracts them.³

Most scholarship on the rendering of metaphors in the LXX has been centered around the discussion about the translation of anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms. C. T. Fritsch made the argument in 1943 that many anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms were taken into the Greek with few cases of alteration, yet certain expressions were systematically avoided.⁴ Some scholars objected to the idea that the LXX had anti-anthropomorphic tendencies, most notably H. M. Orlinsky.⁵ His studies focus on body parts ascribed to God; he

¹ Edwin Hatch, "On the Value and Use of the Septuagint," in *Essays in Biblical Greek* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1889), 3-4.

² Hatch, "On the Value and Use of the Septuagint," 9.

³ Hatch, "On the Value and Use of the Septuagint," 17-18.

⁴ C. T. Fritsch, *The Anti-Anthropomorphisms of the Greek Pentateuch* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943), 62. He even points out exceptions to both the anthropomorphisms that are retained and to those that are usually removed.

⁵ See for example: H. M. Orlinsky, "The Treatment of Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the LXX of Isaiah," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 27 (1956): 193-200; and H. M. Orlinsky, "Studies in the LXX of the

concludes: "whether he [the translator] did or did not find anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms offensive, he reproduced the Hebrew terms literally and correctly;"⁶ and that what are called anti-anthropomorphisms "are the result of nothing more tendentious than mere stylism, with theology and philosophy playing no direct role whatever in the matter."⁷ Several of his students conducted further studies, such as Bernard Zlotowitz, who concluded regarding the translations that were not literal: "the sole motive was to make the Hebrew phrase intelligible, but not to avoid any anthropomorphism."⁸

In a study along similar lines, Staffan Olofsson researched metaphors and epithets used of God to investigate the theological exegesis of the LXX (mostly focused on the Psalms).⁹ He concludes that most purported examples of anti-anthropomorphisms and "theological toning down" can be otherwise explained.¹⁰ He admits that the LXX seems reluctant to see God literally, but avoiding anthropomorphic metaphors has more to do with the translator's linguistic understanding of the expression than with conscious exegesis.¹¹ His analysis of terms used both metaphorically and non-metaphorically shows that the metaphorical passages were "in most passages not creative, living images, but more or less stereotypes for the protection and help of God. This is further emphasized through the interchangeability of some of the terms."¹² The theological factors he found that influenced changing metaphors include a reluctance to use terms similar to those used of pagan gods and also a desire to emphasize God's transcendence over creation.¹³

Since Olofsson's book, there have been a few studies on metaphors in the LXX without reference to anthropomorphisms or divine language. David A. Baer studied the ideology and theology of LXX-Isa 56-66 and noted an unsystematic tendency to creatively deflect anthropomorphic language about God.¹⁴ Johann Cook has addressed the issue of LXX Proverbs' translations of the strange woman metaphor.¹⁵ He examined the LXX rendering of Proverbs 1-9 and argues that while the Greek in places retains the metaphor of the strange woman, it nuances the translation as a whole to point to the metaphor's interpretation as being

Book of Job. III, On the Matter of Anthropomorphisms, Anthropopathisms, and Euphemisms," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 30 (1959): 153-67; 32 (1961): 239-68.

⁶ Orlinsky, "The Treatment of Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the LXX of Isaiah," 200.

⁷ Orlinsky, "The Treatment of Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the LXX of Isaiah," 194.

⁸ Bernard M. Zlotowitz, *The Septuagint Translation of the Hebrew Terms in Relation to God in the Book of Jeremiah* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1981), 183.

⁹ Staffan Olofsson, *God Is My Rock: A Study of Translation Technique and Theological Exegesis in the Septuagint* (ConBOT 31; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1990).

¹⁰ Olofsson, *God Is My Rock*, 149.

¹¹ Olofsson, *God Is My Rock*, 149.

¹² Olofsson, *God Is My Rock*, 151.

¹³ Olofsson, *God Is My Rock*, 151.

¹⁴ David A. Baer, *When We All Go Home: Translation and Theology in LXX Isaiah 56-66* (JSOTSup 318; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 159. He also notes some translations he classifies as "demetaphorization," 66, 110, 222.

¹⁵ Johann Cook, "אִשָּׁה זָרָה (Proverbs 1-9 Septuagint): A Metaphor for Foreign Wisdom?" *ZAW* 106:3 (1994): 458-76.

foreign wisdom, specifically Greek philosophy.¹⁶ M. V. Fox took up this same issue and argued that the metaphorical or symbolic meanings of the strange woman vary: in chapter two she is demetaphorized simply into bad counsel, in chapter five she is primarily a trollop but also a symbol for folly, in chapter six and seven she again is an adulteress but with no explicit symbolic interpretation, and in chapter nine she can represent not foreign philosophy but foreign thought, religion and ways in general that should be avoided by Jews living in diaspora.¹⁷ Matthew Goff also addressed this issue with his own study of the woman of folly in LXX Proverbs and 4Q184. He believes neither text consistently tries to turn the woman into an abstract symbol, but both do move toward abstraction.¹⁸

Jan Joosten investigated how similes are translated in the Septuagint, focusing on translation technique mostly at the syntactical level.¹⁹ He classifies four types of similes used in Hebrew and adds a catch-all category for other constructions which occur infrequently.²⁰ He concludes that the LXX disregards representing the various types of Hebrew constructions, and opts instead for rendering “accurately the sense of the source text,” largely due to differences in the grammars and syntaxes of the two languages.²¹ He proceeds to show the variety of ways Greek can construct similes (which are not used to correspond to the Hebrew constructions, though some are similar) and gives statistics for which constructions various LXX books prefer.²²

More recently, Antje Labahn researched how the LXX of Lamentations translates and presents the metaphors of 3:1-21.²³ She argues that there is a great variety of how metaphors are translated and that how the translator treats them is integrated into his understanding of the concepts that extend throughout the chapter.²⁴ The main concept is that the LXX understands the song explicitly as that of Jeremiah (LXX-Lam 1:1) and so interprets (including the metaphors) to reflect the experience of Jeremiah, particularly his increasing suffering.²⁵ She makes the observation that the translator both receives the Hebrew metaphors and produces new metaphors in Greek, though it is unclear whether the change in the metaphors he produces are due to his understanding of the Hebrew or his effort to produce a sound Greek

¹⁶ Cook, “הַיָּהוּדָי (Proverbs 1-9 Septuagint),” 474.

¹⁷ M. V. Fox, “The Strange Woman in Septuagint Proverbs,” *JNSL* 22 (1996), 42-43.

¹⁸ Matthew Goff, “Hellish Females: The Strange Woman of Septuagint Proverbs and 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman (4Q184),” *JSJ* 39 (2008), 44.

¹⁹ Jan Joosten, “Elaborate Similes--Hebrew and Greek: A Study in Septuagint Translation Technique,” *Biblica* 77 (1996): 227-236.

²⁰ Joosten, “Elaborate Similes,” 227-29.

²¹ Joosten, “Elaborate Similes,” 230.

²² Joosten, “Elaborate Similes,” 230-36. He distinguishes based on verbal form, since the various comparative particles seem to be nearly synonymous.

²³ Antje Labahn, “Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise – das Leiden Jeremias am Schicksal Jerusalems: Metaphern und Metapher-variationen in Thr 3,1-21 LXX,” in *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Pierre van Hecke; BETL CLXXXVII; Leuven: University Press, 2005): 147-83.

²⁴ Labahn, “Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise,” 147.

²⁵ Labahn, “Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise,” 147-49.

text, and so we must be content with observing the shifts in meaning.²⁶ Also, she points out that the reception process of a metaphor extends its versatility, but once a rendering is given a limited number of meanings (overlapping, no doubt the original meanings to some extent) are carried through to the new text.²⁷

1.1.2. Metaphors in Septuagint Isaiah

Besides Orlinsky's article on the anthropomorphisms of LXX-Isa,²⁸ there are very few works that specifically treat the metaphors of LXX-Isa. G. B. Caird in his book on the imagery of the Bible notes that the LXX occasionally avoids anthropomorphisms that seem irreverent to the translator, such as in Exod 15, 24, and Psa 17.²⁹ He comments specifically about LXX-Isa, saying: "On occasion he will take Isaiah's vigorous metaphors with flat-footed literalness. He turns 'Your silver has become dross, your wine mixed with water' into 'Your money is counterfeit, and the merchants are diluting the wine with water' (1:22)."³⁰ Later he explains that while the Hebrew metaphor is about the general moral state of the nation, the LXX understands them to literally refer to coinage and wine.³¹ Various other scholars have commented on the translation of metaphors in passing,³² but their studies did not set out to investigate them.

Joosten's work on similes in the LXX concludes regarding LXX-Isa, that unlike most LXX translators (which use two or three), LXX-Isa used all four types of syntax to render similes.³³ He says this is yet more evidence for the well-known independence and freedom of the LXX-Isa translator.³⁴

The most extensive work treating metaphors in LXX-Isa is chapter five of Joseph Ziegler's book *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaias*.³⁵ In this chapter, Ziegler argues that the translator considered himself authorized to render the text freely: the Greek of Isaiah removes Hebraisms, is often very literal, and is usually in some way related to the *Vorlage*, but at the same time it is both a translation and an interpretation.³⁶ Ziegler believes

²⁶ Labahn, "Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise," 153.

²⁷ Labahn, "Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise," 153.

²⁸ Orlinsky, "The Treatment of Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the LXX of Isaiah," 193-200.

²⁹ G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 127.

³⁰ Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, 126.

³¹ Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, 185.

³² For example, Isaac Leo Seeligmann, "Problems and Perspectives in Modern Septuagint Research," pages 21-80 in *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies* (eds. Robert Hanhard and Hermann Spieckermann; Judith H. Seeligmann trans.; Forschungen zum Alten Testament 40; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004). Ronald L. Troxel, "Economic Plunder as a Leitmotif in LXX-Isaiah," *Biblica* 83 (2002), 381; and Baer occasionally points out instances of demetaphorization in his book *When We All Go Home*, 66, 110, 222.

³³ Joosten, "Elaborate Similes," 236.

³⁴ Joosten, "Elaborate Similes," 236.

³⁵ Joseph Ziegler, *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaias* (Munster: Aschendorff, 1934): 80-103.

³⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 80.

interpretation occurs most strongly in figurative expressions, allegories, and the like.³⁷ He explains numerous examples to support his argument that metaphors are rendered freely because the translator was interpreting them based on his conception of the passages' meaning and on the context or parallel passages of Isaiah.³⁸ Ziegler does not claim to offer a complete catalogue of the types of metaphor renderings, nor does he treat all of the metaphors in LXX-Isa, he simply offers a few examples of ways metaphors are rendered to support his thesis.

Ziegler points out three specific reasons for metaphors not being rendered literally:

- 1) When the image is too tangible or coarse and so is ameliorated;
- 2) When unknown references or vocabulary are interpreted by the translator;
- 3) When impersonal expressions are rendered personally by the translator.³⁹

He gives several examples for each of these reasons and gives some examples that can be described by multiple of these reasons and others that do not clearly fit into any of these categories.

He also shows that the translator did not feel obligated to render a word or image literally. For example, the translator knew the definition of *כָּלִי*, translating it literally with *σκεῦος* on numerous occasions (10:29(28); 39:2; 52:11; 54:16-17; 65:4).⁴⁰ But in nearly as many places he also translated it freely to fit the (perceived) context: for example, in 13:5, *וְכַלֵּי זַמְנוֹ* becomes *καὶ οἱ ὀπλομάχοι αὐτοῦ*;⁴¹ in 18:2 *וּבְכַלֵּי-גִמְאָא* becomes *καὶ ἐπιστολὰς βυβλίνας*; and in 61:10 *וְכַבְּלָהּ תַעֲדָהּ כְּלֵיהּ* becomes *καὶ ὡς νύμφην κατεκόσμησέν με κόσμῳ*.⁴²

Ziegler finishes the section by discussing Isa 22:15-25 and 27:2-5, passages he describes as characteristic for the translation technique of the LXX-Isa.⁴³ Both of these passages are quite different from the Hebrew, though can be in large part traced back to the Hebrew. Ziegler argues that the metaphors in these two passages are rendered freely because the translator was interpreting in each case based on his conception of the passage's meaning and on the context or parallel passages of Isaiah.⁴⁴

The second part of Ziegler's chapter is on comparisons (*Vergleiche*).⁴⁵ He notes that LXX-Isa usually translates the Hebrew *כ* with *ὡς*, *ὡσει*, or *ὡσπερ*.⁴⁶ When a whole sentence is used as a comparison, *ὃν τρόπον* stands for *בְּאִשֶּׁר*, and also for the Hebrew construction *כ*

³⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 81.

³⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 80-81, 91.

³⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 81.

⁴⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 83-84.

⁴¹ Ziegler points out the same phrase in Jer 27(50):25 is rendered *τὰ σκεύη ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ*. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 83.

⁴² Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 83-84. He also discusses the other occurrences (32:7; 66:20; and the most interesting: 22:24).

⁴³ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 85-91.

⁴⁴ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 85, 87, 91.

⁴⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92-103.

⁴⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

with the infinitive of a verb.⁴⁷ Sometimes כ is read as כ and in one place כִּי is read as כִּי. Also, כ is read for the preposition ל, especially in the construction: לִּיהֵא "to become something."⁴⁸ Often, Ziegler notes, the comparative particle ὡς is interjected where something like the Hebrew כ is absent.⁴⁹

Ziegler treats a plethora of comparisons, each in great detail. He argues that sometimes free translations are the result of a misunderstanding of vocabulary (or due to the difficulty of the Hebrew),⁵⁰ or of a harmonization (or influence of a parallel text),⁵¹ or are expanded based on context,⁵² or to better emphasize a theological point,⁵³ or even to fit the cultural context of the translator's own time.⁵⁴ He argues that the translator at times extended similes or added elements, even adding comparisons,⁵⁵ including negations,⁵⁶ to create a sensible meaning in Greek.⁵⁷

In the other work that specifically addresses the rendering of metaphors in LXX-Isa, Arie van der Kooij shows that the interpretation of metaphors is a characteristic of LXX Isaiah which it shares with Targum Jonathan of the Prophets.⁵⁸ The LXX in general tends to render metaphors literally, but he mentions a few examples of interpretive renderings; LXX-Isa, though, has far more.⁵⁹ He gives various examples of different ways metaphors are interpreted. First, he shows how in Isa 1:25 the LXX interprets the refining metaphor as God removing the wicked.⁶⁰ He shows how in 5:14b the LXX interprets the metaphors personally, as representing specific groups of people, so "dignity" is rendered as "glorious ones," "multitude" is rendered "great ones," and "uproar" is rendered "rich ones;" he points out that this is also how the Targum interprets the passage.⁶¹ Similarly, he shows how Isa 10:33-34 is rendered by the LXX so that the tree metaphors are interpreted as referring to specific people: "the glorious" and "the proud;" similarly, the Targum renders the metaphors personally.⁶² In 1:10, he shows how the LXX has interpreted the metaphor "a signal," a term the translator knows, by substituting the word "to rule."⁶³ The LXX interprets many of the metaphors in Isa

⁴⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

⁴⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

⁴⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

⁵⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92, 96.

⁵¹ e.g. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92-93.

⁵² e.g. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 93-95.

⁵³ e.g. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 96.

⁵⁴ e.g. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 93, 97. cf. "Kapital 8. Der alexandrinisch-ägyptische Hintergrund der Js-LXX."

⁵⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 100-103.

⁵⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 95-96.

⁵⁷ e.g. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 95.

⁵⁸ Arie van der Kooij, "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language: A Characteristic of LXX-Isaiah," in *Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome: Studies in Ancient Cultural Interaction in honour of A. Hilhorst* (eds. F. Garcia Martinez and G. P. Luttikhuis; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 185.

⁵⁹ van der Kooij, "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language," 179-180.

⁶⁰ van der Kooij, "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language," 180-81.

⁶¹ van der Kooij, "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language," 181-82.

⁶² van der Kooij, "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language," 182.

⁶³ van der Kooij, "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language," 182-83.

22:22-24, as van der Kooij describes, often by substituting individual words. In 22:22 the translator connects the idea of a “shoulder” to “leading” (as in 9:6) and so interprets the metaphor as “to rule.”⁶⁴ Similarly, in 22:23, “peg” is interpreted as “a ruler,” and in 22:24 “to hang” on the peg is interpreted as “to trust” in the ruler.⁶⁵ He shows a similar interpretation in 23:17, where “play the harlot” (וּזְנִתָּהּ) is interpreted in the sense of “to trade” (זָנָה) and is rendered that Tyre will be a port of merchandise; this is similar to the Targum’s rendering.⁶⁶ Finally, he gives an example of interpretation, based on similar metaphors in the Hebrew Bible and Mesopotamian literature, where, in 31:9b, “fire” and “furnace” are interpreted by the LXX as “seed” and “kinsmen.”⁶⁷ This tendency to interpret metaphors is typical of the Targum, so it is interesting to see it at work already in LXX-Isa; also of interest are the specific interpretations of metaphors in LXX-Isa that are similar to those of the Targum.

1.1.3. Metaphor Translation Strategies

While Ziegler has offered a few reasons for *why* a metaphor was translated in a special way, in this section we will look at *how* metaphors can be translated. A few studies have pointed out the various metaphor translation strategies used by LXX translators. In the concluding chapter (4.1.) we too will catalogue how LXX-Isa renders metaphors according to various available translation strategies.

Metaphors often depend on cultural perceptions, and different cultures organize concepts differently.⁶⁸ So metaphors can not always be translated literally but require the translator to overcome difficulties both in their source text and also with difficulties in the target text (or culture).⁶⁹

Edwin Hatch noted, in his own words, how differences in culture had an effect on how metaphors were translated in the LXX.⁷⁰ Hatch pointed out three different ways in which the translators modified metaphors in their translations:

- 1) Sometimes metaphors are changed (Micah 3:2: בָּאֵהָבָה “he loved” rendered ζητεῖν “to seek”);
- 2) Sometimes metaphors are “dropped” (Isa 6:6: וַיִּפְּצוּ “then flew” becomes ἀπεστάλη “was sent”);
- 3) Sometimes metaphors appear to be added (Jer 5:17: שָׁרַף “he destroyed” becomes ἀλοῶν “to thresh”).⁷¹

⁶⁴ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 183.

⁶⁵ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 183.

⁶⁶ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 184.

⁶⁷ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 184-85.

⁶⁸ David Punter, *Metaphor* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 104.

⁶⁹ Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1995), 84.

⁷⁰ Hatch, “On the Value and Use of the Septuagint,” 9-10.

⁷¹ Hatch, “On the Value and Use of the Septuagint,” 17-18.

It is noteworthy that his examples are all of substitutions of one word.

More recently, Antje Labahn, in her study of the LXX-Lam 3:1-21, finds six categories into which LXX-Lam's renderings of metaphors fit:

- 1) Retained metaphors;
- 2) Removed metaphors;
- 3) Metaphors changed into similes;
- 4) Interpreted metaphors;
- 5) New metaphors due to intratextual references;
- 6) New original metaphors.⁷²

That such a short passage has so many different strategies for rendering metaphors shows the versatility and skill of the translator, and shows he is willing to reshape the metaphors to serve particular functions in the translated text.⁷³ Ziegler has made nearly the same observation regarding the LXX-Isa translator,⁷⁴ and so we should not be surprised to see a varied and versatile treatment of metaphors in LXX-Isa.

Theo van der Louw has a short excursus on the translation of metaphors in his book that bridges translation studies with Septuagint studies.⁷⁵ He points out that metaphors are often divided into lexicalized metaphors, conventional metaphors, and original metaphors.⁷⁶ He says that original metaphors are often the easiest to translate, since conventional and lexicalized metaphors are often language or culture specific.⁷⁷ He claims that metaphors should not be counted as a separate kind of transformation, but merely a problem area that can be solved in different ways.⁷⁸ Van der Louw shows how the various strategies for translating metaphors are essentially the same transformations that are used to translate any kind of text. The strategies he lists are:

- 1) Reproduction of the same image;
- 2) Reproduction of the same image plus its sense;
- 3) Replacement of a stock metaphor with an established metaphor in the same sphere;
- 4) Translation of a metaphor with a simile;
- 5) Translation of a metaphor with a simile plus its sense;
- 6) Translation of a metaphor's sense;
- 7) Deletion of the metaphor if it is redundant;

⁷² Labahn, "Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise," 147-83. She considers this only five categories, but I have divided "new metaphors due to intratextual references" and "new original metaphors."

⁷³ Labahn, "Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise," 181.

⁷⁴ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 80-81, 91.

⁷⁵ Theo A. W. van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint: Towards an Interaction of Septuagint Studies and Translation Studies* (CBET 47; Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 85-86.

⁷⁶ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 86.

⁷⁷ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 86.

⁷⁸ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 85.

8) Rendering non-figurative language by a metaphor.⁷⁹

From the perspective of descriptive translation theory, Gideon Toury has proposed six ways metaphors could be translated:

- 1) Translating the metaphor into the “same” metaphor;
- 2) Translating the metaphor into a “different” metaphor;
- 3) Translating the metaphor into a non-metaphor;
- 4) Not translating the metaphor but omitting the line;
- 5) Translating a non-metaphor into a metaphor;
- 6) Adding a metaphor where there is no equivalent in the source text.⁸⁰

These six categories seem complete, but each taken individually is somewhat broad. The second category, for example, includes two widely different translation strategies. Using a “different” metaphor could mean using a simile instead of a metaphor (or vice versa) as well as using a completely different metaphor (either a newly invented one for the text or one taken from the common usage of the target language). Likewise the third category includes simple substitutions (“power” for “hand”) or more extended exegetical explanations. In our conclusions (4.1.) we will catalogue the translation strategies used in LXX-Isa along similar lines, though with narrower categories.

1.1.4. Summary

As this survey has shown, the question of the translation of metaphors in the Septuagint as a whole arose as vague observations and was developed primarily in regard to language for God and as an example of theological exegesis. More recently, along with the general interest in metaphors in Biblical scholarship, the translation of metaphors has been considered worthy of study apart from questions of divine language. The situation in the Septuagint of Isaiah is similar, except that Ziegler and van der Kooij were interested in the metaphors as opportunities for the unique qualities of the translator’s ideas and methods to manifest themselves. Recently, van der Louw and Labahn have categorized some translation strategies used in the LXX for rendering metaphors. While much good work has been done on the rendering of metaphors in the Septuagint, there is still room to expand and elaborate, particularly in the case of the unique work LXX-Isa.

⁷⁹ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 86.

⁸⁰ Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, 82-83.

1.2. Modern Views of Metaphor

Metaphor scholarship is a rapidly growing field of study, expanding from literary studies into linguistics, philosophy, psychology, neuro-science and many other areas. While many issues are still being explored and discussed, it is worthwhile to briefly survey the major trends in order to better frame how we will approach thinking and talking about metaphors. This section consists of a brief survey of the history of modern metaphor scholarship as well as a survey of how this scholarship has been adopted in Old Testament studies.

1.2.1. A Brief Survey of Modern Metaphor Scholarship

As we will see, modern metaphor theories claim to describe universally how humans use metaphors, and so some features of these theories should be useful in our analysis of LXX-Isa. Also, these theories provide terminology that will be useful in describing metaphors. Here we will survey the relevant scholarship, and we will outline our own approach to metaphors below (1.4.1.).

Starting with I. A. Richards' lecture series in 1936,⁸¹ metaphor has been widely recognized as an integral part of how we communicate and how we understand the world around us. In his lectures, Richards challenged many of the dominant theories and practices concerning metaphors. He argued that Aristotle is mistaken in his *Poetics* in his assertions that: 1) Having an "eye for resemblances" is a special gift some people have, while in fact this is vital for learning and speaking; 2) Good use of metaphor cannot be taught, but we must somehow learn this; 3) Metaphor is something special and exceptional in the use of language, instead of an "omnipresent principle of language."⁸² To Richards, metaphors are not simply the replacement of one word with another, they are "two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction."⁸³ Metaphors are not a verbal matter, but are an interaction of thoughts; and thought itself is metaphoric.⁸⁴ A further contribution is his attempt to offer vocabulary for analyzing metaphors. He calls the meaning or topic of the metaphor its *tenor* and the image that is used its *vehicle*.⁸⁵ Also, he warns that not being able to describe why or how a metaphor works, does not mean that the metaphor does not work.⁸⁶

Max Black was also an important early contributor to the development of modern metaphor scholarship. He offers terminology for describing metaphors as well, calling the

⁸¹ I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

⁸² Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 89-90.

⁸³ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 93.

⁸⁴ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 94.

⁸⁵ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 101-103.

⁸⁶ Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 118.

image the *focus* and the rest of the statement the *frame*.⁸⁷ He describes two common views of metaphor, and offers his own third view. He calls the first the substitution view, where a metaphor is simply a different way of saying something, so that a metaphor could be paraphrased in literal language.⁸⁸ The second view is a variation of the first; he calls it the comparison view. The comparison view is that metaphor is really just a special kind of simile.⁸⁹ Black calls his own view the interaction view of metaphor. He describes metaphors as highlighting certain commonplaces of the focus and the frame in order to organize our view of the subject of the metaphor; metaphors filter certain aspects, selecting the ones to be emphasized.⁹⁰ A metaphor for Black, then, is more than the transfer of meaning between words, it is a way of filtering an interaction between ideas. In Black's other work on metaphors, he continues to fight the idea that metaphors are a matter of saying one thing and meaning another, as well as the opposite tendency of some to turn everything into metaphor.⁹¹ He also offers further vocabulary for describing metaphors,⁹² though it does not seem to have been adopted by many. He recognizes that metaphors can be restated as similes, but emphasizes that much is lost in this restatement.⁹³ Black critiques attempts to objectively test for the presence of a metaphor, since no test will work all the time, and other rhetorical figures may also be identified by a given test.⁹⁴ He also argues that metaphors can be creative in how they can offer us a new perspective of something that was not previously available, in the same way that cinema could offer a view of a horse running in slow motion, which no one had seen before.⁹⁵

Another important moment in the development of metaphor theory was the work resulting from a 1978 symposium which would become the book "On Metaphor," edited by Sheldon Sacks.⁹⁶ Scholars from a variety of disciplines contributed to the study of metaphors, discussing various aspects of how they are formed and function. For example, Ted Cohen shows how metaphors can create intimacy by using knowledge or experiences common to the speaker and audience.⁹⁷ Wayne C. Booth suggest the evaluation of a metaphor needs to take into account its context, which is not only a literary matter but also cultural.⁹⁸ Paul Ricoeur

⁸⁷ Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), 21.

⁸⁸ Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 33-34.

⁸⁹ Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 35.

⁹⁰ Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 38.

⁹¹ Max Black, "More about Metaphor," in *Metaphor and Thought* (ed. Andrew Ortony; 2nd ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 1993), 19-22.

⁹² Black, "More about Metaphor," 23-30.

⁹³ Black, "More about Metaphor," 30-31.

⁹⁴ Black, "More about Metaphor," 33-35.

⁹⁵ Black, "More about Metaphor," 35-38.

⁹⁶ Sheldon Sacks, ed., *On Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

⁹⁷ Ted Cohen, "Metaphor and the Cultivation of Intimacy," in *Metaphor and Thought* (ed. Andrew Ortony; 2nd ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 1993): 1-10.

⁹⁸ Wayne C. Booth, "Metaphor as Rhetoric: The Problem of Evaluation," in *Metaphor and Thought* (ed. Andrew Ortony; 2nd ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 1993): 47-70.

argues that metaphors convey information in part by stimulating our imaginations and feelings in such a way as to “elicit feelings that we mistakenly hold for genuine information and for fresh insight into reality.”⁹⁹ Many of the articles in this book contributed to the ever growing and ever better stated cognitive view of metaphors.

The most detailed and systematic argument for the cognitive (sometimes called conceptual) view of metaphor is George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s book *Metaphors We Live By*. The idea behind cognitive metaphors is that they are not just a feature of our language, metaphors are how we actually conceive of abstract concepts.¹⁰⁰ For example, Lakoff and Johnson show that we typically conceptualize arguments in terms of war. This is why we use metaphors that say: I won that argument; we got in a fight; she shot down my argument; his claims were indefensible, etc.¹⁰¹ The type of metaphors we use reflect how we conceptualize an idea. They go into great detail showing different types of metaphors (such as orientational, ontological, personification, etc.) and how metaphors find coherence, are structured, and are grounded. They show that many conceptual metaphors are common to many cultures, such as orientational metaphors.¹⁰² Also of note is their assertion that conceptual systems are grounded in our experiences, including physical and cultural experiences.¹⁰³ This last point helps explain why we can understand new metaphors, based on our experiences, and why metaphors from other cultures can be difficult to understand.

The conceptual view of metaphor has become the dominant perspective, though it has been challenged. For example, Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson have tried to put metaphor on a continuum of language somewhere between literal language and hyperbolic language.¹⁰⁴ Also, Donald Davidson has argued that metaphors mean nothing more than what they say literally.¹⁰⁵ The conceptual view has also been expanded in various ways. For example Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner have elaborated the theory by saying cognitive metaphors involved complex integration networks involving more conceptual spaces than the simple pairs (source and target spaces) often given.¹⁰⁶ This theory is often called conceptual blending or mapping, and attempts to describe not only metaphor, but how we think and speak.¹⁰⁷

In the past twenty years another major shift has taken place in the study of metaphors. This shift is well illustrated by comparing the table of contents of the second and third edition

⁹⁹ Paul Ricoeur, “The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling,” in *On Metaphor* (ed. Sheldon Sacks; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 141-42.

¹⁰⁰ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 5-6.

¹⁰¹ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 4-6.

¹⁰² Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 24.

¹⁰³ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 56-60.

¹⁰⁴ Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, “A Deflationary Account of Metaphors,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (ed. Raymond Gibbs Jr.; 3rd ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 2008), 84.

¹⁰⁵ Donald Davidson, “What Metaphors Mean,” in *On Metaphor* (ed. Sheldon Sacks; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979): 29-46.

¹⁰⁶ See Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, “Rethinking Metaphor,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (ed. Raymond Gibbs Jr.; 3rd ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 2008), 53-66.

¹⁰⁷ Gilles Fauconnier, *Mappings in Thought and Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1.

of the *Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. In the second edition, articles are mostly theoretical, written by literary critics, linguists, philosophers, with a few contributions from psychologists and scientists. The third edition, however, only has a few contributions from the traditional fields from the humanities, and is dominated by psychologists, neuroscientists, biologists, and even has many contributions from those studying artificial intelligence, music, art, and dance. The study of metaphor is now inextricably bound to the study of linguistics and cognition, and is benefiting from studies both from the hard sciences and the arts.

It is worth mentioning a few insights metaphor theorists have made regarding the translation of metaphors. Raymond Gibbs Jr. talks about the paradox of metaphor: metaphors can be creative, novel, and culturally sensitive and still be rooted in experiences common to many people.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, certain conceptual metaphors do exist across temporal and cultural boundaries,¹⁰⁹ but this does not mean that conceptual metaphors can always explain how a given specific metaphor is used or understood, particularly when dealing with metaphors from another culture. David Punter goes so far as to say “Metaphors are not universals. They depend upon cultural and social perceptions, but we can also go one stage further than this and say that metaphors *ground* our perceptions.”¹¹⁰ When examining how a metaphor is translated it often becomes clear that different cultures organize concepts differently, as Fauconnier says:

different cultures organize their background knowledge differently. Good translation, then, requires a quasi-total reconstruction of the cognitive configurations prompted by one language and a determination of how another language would set up a similar configuration with a radically different prompting system and prestructured background.¹¹¹

But of course not all translators bother to do this. Translators who lack a theoretical framework have to deal with difficulties of metaphors both in their source text and also have to deal with difficulties in the target text (or culture).¹¹² This is an important point for our study in that the translator had to bring metaphors not only into a new language but into a new culture; to effectively do so, it at times required him to depart from a literal translation technique.

1.2.2. Metaphor Scholarship in Old Testament Studies

Old Testament scholarship has long been enriched by a wide variety of methods taken from other fields. Studies in the rhetorical features of the Old Testament have benefited from

¹⁰⁸ Raymond Gibbs Jr., “Metaphor and Thought: the State of the Art,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (ed. Raymond Gibbs Jr.; 3rd ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 2008), 5.

¹⁰⁹ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 24.

¹¹⁰ Punter, *Metaphor*, 104.

¹¹¹ Fauconnier, *Mappings in Thought and Language*, 188-89.

¹¹² Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, 84.

the on-going discussion of conceptual metaphors, but as Pierre van Hecke notes, studies of biblical metaphor have a large variety of approaches.¹¹³ In this section, we will survey how Old Testament scholars have adopted modern theories of metaphor in order to better contextualize the current study and to introduce some works that will be useful for its analysis of Hebrew Metaphors.

In approaching the metaphors of the Old Testament, one must be aware both of the benefits metaphor scholarship has for our understanding of metaphors, and that the ancient writers of the Old Testament had very different ideas (ideas probably not explicitly developed or articulated) about metaphors. Biblical scholarship tends to take one of two approaches: from the text toward the ancient theory and usage, or from modern scholarship to better understand the ancient text.¹¹⁴

Luis Alonso Schökel in his manual of Hebrew poetics describes imagery in terms that seem to combine traditional views of metaphor with modern theories.¹¹⁵ His approach is mostly from the biblical text itself, and so his categorization is very helpful for Biblical studies. He defines separately metaphor,¹¹⁶ symbol,¹¹⁷ allegory,¹¹⁸ parable,¹¹⁹ and visions.¹²⁰ Of particular interest are his comments describing premetaphor as an opposite extreme of lexicalized images. Schökel notes that what may appear to moderns as a metaphor may have been the way ancients actually thought of things. He gives as examples, that the sun moves across the sky, or that various organs are the seat of corresponding emotions.¹²¹

Another approach to metaphors in the Old Testament is to draw from New Testament scholarship, particularly from discussions of parables. In Kristen Nielsen's book *There Is Hope for a Tree: The Tree as Metaphor in Isaiah*, she profits greatly from scholarship on parables, though she also uses some theory from Max Black.¹²² A benefit to this approach is that it reminds us that so called metaphors in a prophetic book were probably conceived of

¹¹³ Pierre van Hecke, "Introduction," in *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Pierre van Hecke; BETL CLXXXVII; Leuven: University Press, 2005), 1-2.

¹¹⁴ David Aaron describes two main ways Old Testament scholars approach metaphors as being either subject based, or based on Lakoff's theories. David Aaron, *Biblical Ambiguities: Metaphor, Semantics, and Divine Imagery* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 9-11. Another description of OT scholarship's approach to metaphors can be found in Marc Zvi Brettler, "The Metaphorical Mapping of God in the Hebrew Bible," in *Metaphor, Canon and Community: Jewish, Christian and Islamic Approaches* (eds. Ralph Bisschops and James Francis; Oxford: Peter Lang, 1999), 219-22.

¹¹⁵ Luis Alonso Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics* (trans. and revs. Luis Alonso Schökel and Adrian Graffy; Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1988), 95-141.

¹¹⁶ Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 108.

¹¹⁷ Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 110-12. We will discuss these other terms below.

¹¹⁸ Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 109.

¹¹⁹ Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 113-14.

¹²⁰ Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 118-20.

¹²¹ Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 101-2. Cf. Aaron, *Biblical Ambiguities*, 11, who says many OT metaphors are "a modern-made smoke screen to obfuscate truths interpreters would rather not confront when it comes to the religion(s) of biblical literature."

¹²² Kirsten Nielsen, *There Is Hope for a Tree: The Tree as Metaphor in Isaiah* (JSOTSup 65; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 26-68.

quite differently than a modern would conceive of a metaphor. While most metaphors used in a prophetic book are not parables either, they do share in common that they were probably considered to be a *mashal*. A drawback to this approach is that some NT parable discussion seems in a large part concerned with departing from medieval detailed allegorical readings of the parables; this sort of discussion follows a different line than is immediately useful to understanding the nature of metaphors in prophetic discourse.¹²³ However, much discussion of NT parables centers around their nature and that of OT *meshalim*. For example, Stephen Curkpatrick shows how the translation of מִשְׁלָּה with παραβολή is inadequate,¹²⁴ since Aristotle understood παραβολή to have a more specific meaning than the biblical understanding of מִשְׁלָּה.¹²⁵

Some Old Testament scholars have adopted cognitive metaphor theory and integrated it into their work, such as Peter W. Macky who developed a method for interpreting the metaphors in the Bible.¹²⁶ Marjo C. A. Korpel compiled many examples of parallel metaphors for the divine in Biblical and Ugaritic literature.¹²⁷ While she uses cognitive metaphor theory, her work is more of a compilation than a deep analysis, though she offers remarks for further study.¹²⁸ More recently Alec Basson demonstrated how the Old Testament uses the cognitive metaphor “people are plants.”¹²⁹ Eric A. Hermanson offers a summary and critique of other scholars’ approaches to biblical metaphor.¹³⁰ He offers tests to see when metaphors are present and he praises work that not only looks at the metaphors of a given biblical book, but that contribute to our understanding of the conceptual frameworks of the authors of the book.¹³¹ Olaf Jäkel summarizes the main tenants of cognitive metaphor theory and then shows how it can be applied to the OT by analyzing journey and path metaphors.¹³² Similarly, M.

¹²³ Indeed, as Marjo Korpel has shown, the ancients did use “large-scale metaphors approaching purely allegorical composition” as can be seen by early exegesis. Marjo C.A. Korpel, “Metaphors in Isaiah LV,” *VT* 46 (1996), 54.

¹²⁴ Robert Lowth long ago commented on this equivalence, “which in some respects is not improper, though it scarcely comprehends the full compass of the Hebrew expression.” Robert Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (trans. G. Gregory; London: J. Johnson, no. 72, St. Paul’s Church-Yard, 1787), 78.

¹²⁵ Stephen Curkpatrick, “Between Mashal and Parable: “Likeness” as a Metonymic Enigma,” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 24.1 (2002 Je): 58-71. We discuss this further below.

¹²⁶ Peter W. Macky, *Centrality of Metaphors to Biblical Thought: A Method for Interpreting the Bible* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990). For another method for metaphor criticism, see Göran Eidevall, *Grapes in the Desert: Metaphors, Models, and Themes in Hosea 4-14* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1996).

¹²⁷ Marjo Christina Annette Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine* (UBL 8; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1990).

¹²⁸ Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 614-37.

¹²⁹ Alex Basson, “‘People are Plants’: A Conceptual Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible,” *Old Testament Essays* 19 (2006): 573-83. Another recent work dealing with plant metaphors in the Hebrew Bible is Claudia Sticher, “Die Gottlosen gedeihen wie Gras: Zu einigen Pflanzenmetaphern in den Psalmen: eine kanonische Lektüre,” in *Metaphors in the Psalms* (eds. P. van Hecke and A. Labhan; BETL 231; Leuven: Peeters, 2010): 251-68.

¹³⁰ Eric A. Hermanson, “Recognizing Hebrew Metaphors: Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Bible Translation,” *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 22.2 (1996): 67-78.

¹³¹ Hermanson, “Recognizing Hebrew Metaphors,” 75-77.

¹³² Olaf Jäkel, “How Can Mortal Man Understand the Road He Travels? Prospects and Problems of the Cognitive Approach to Religious Metaphor,” in *The Bible through Metaphor and Translation: A Cognitive Semantic Perspective* (ed. Kurk Feyaerts; Religions and Discourse 15; Oxford: Peter Lang, 2003): 55-86. For a

Beth Szlos has shown how cognitive metaphor theory: “offers the philosophical underpinnings that explain where meaning comes from, how meaning develops and is expressed. This approach treats conventional metaphors as powerful tools of expression of thought, whereas other approaches treat the conventional as dead.”¹³³ P. van Hecke has shown how integration networks (conceptual blending) can help us better understand complicated metaphors.¹³⁴ By carefully analyzing a metaphor in terms of its source domain, target domain, the generic domain where certain common elements are focused, and the blended domain where the implications of the metaphor interact, van Hecke shows how biblical metaphors can affect how we think about both the source and target domain.¹³⁵ Andrea L. Weiss has developed a means for identifying metaphor and set to work on studying how metaphors function in the Bible.¹³⁶ Isaak de Hulster has proposed an iconographic approach to biblical metaphors for understanding how the ancients understood imagery and to better understand their mental maps.¹³⁷

There are numerous more studies bringing the treasure of metaphorical theorists into the realm of Old Testament studies,¹³⁸ this brief set of examples has shown the sorts of studies that are being done. It is impossible to evenly adopt a set of theories that are still in development, but OT scholars have been able to profit from these theories none the less.

1.3. Ancient Views of Metaphor

While cognitive metaphor theory undoubtedly describes how ancient people used metaphors unconsciously, to properly study how the LXX translators dealt with metaphors we must also look at what conscious ideas they may have had about metaphors. In this section,

more recent application of cognitive metaphor theory to “way” metaphors in Deuterioisiah, see Øystein Lund, *Way Metaphors and Way Topics in Isaiah 40-55* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007). It is also notable in that he investigates tests for identifying imagery, 45-50.

¹³³ M. Beth Szlos “Body Parts as Metaphor and the value of a Cognitive Approach: A Study of the Female Figures in Proverbs via metaphor,” in *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Pierre van Hecke; BETL 187; Leuven: University Press, 2005), 195.

¹³⁴ Pierre van Hecke “Conceptual Blending: A Recent Approach to Metaphor: Illustrated with the Pastoral Metaphor in Hos 4:16,” in *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Pierre van Hecke; BETL 187; Leuven: University Press, 2005), 215-31. Similarly, Brettler has called for a metaphorical mapping of metaphors for God in the Hebrew Bible, Brettler, “The Metaphorical Mapping of God,” 219-32.

¹³⁵ van Hecke, “Conceptual Blending,” 220-22.

¹³⁶ Andrea L. Weiss, *Figurative Language in Biblical Prose Narrative: Metaphor in the Book of Samuel* (VTSup 107; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 32.

¹³⁷ Izaak J. de Hulster, “Illuminating Images: An iconographic method of Old Testament exegesis with three case studies from third Isaiah” (PhD Diss., Universiteit Utrecht, 2008).

¹³⁸ See especially the scholarship of the European Association of Biblical Studies research group “Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible;” their publications so far are: P. Van Hecke, ed., *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (BETL 187; Leuven: Peeters, 2005); P. van Hecke, and A. Labhan, eds. *Metaphors in the Psalms* (BETL 231; Leuven: Peeters, 2010); and A. Labahn, ed., *Conceptual Metaphors in Poetic Texts: Proceedings of the Metaphor Research Group of the European Association of Biblical Studies in Lincoln 2009* (Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and its Contexts 18; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013).

we will first look at what Greek writers had to say about metaphor (and that it is likely that the LXX translators had some exposure to these ideas), then we will look at what can be said about Jewish views of metaphor at the time of the translator, followed by a summary and conclusions.

1.3.1. Greek Views of Metaphor

In this section, we will first look at what Greek philosophers were saying about rhetoric and metaphor. Second, we will describe Hellenistic education, particularly the place of rhetoric in learning to write and read. Third, we will look at the highest level of education available, the scholarship in Alexandria, to see what the highest levels of education looked like. Fourth, we will show examples of Jews who were highly educated in classical literature and were doing work like that of the scholars in Alexandria, and who were more or less contemporary to the LXX translators. Finally, we will look at internal evidence within the LXX to show how some translators used what they learned from the Greeks in their own work.

1.3.1.1. Greek Rhetoric and Metaphors

In ancient Greece, rhetoric was an important part of education. Without knowledge of rhetoric, effective participation in the democratic process was much more difficult. As a result, there arose many teachers of rhetoric, and eventually books describing it. In this section we will describe what was said concerning metaphor.

The earliest known work on rhetoric, written by Protagoras, no longer exists.¹³⁹ Likewise Antiphon's *The Art of Speaking* is only a short fragment.¹⁴⁰ Part of Isocrates work *Against the Sophists* exists, as does his *Antidosis*, though neither discusses rhetoric and oratory in a technical way that describes tropes and figures of speech. In his *Evagoras*, though, he does list metaphor as one of the devices that poets may use that distinguish poetry from prose.¹⁴¹ The treatise written by Alcidamas, *On Those who Write Written Speeches/On Sophists* likewise is not a technical rhetorical handbook, but an essay about the superiority of being able to speak extemporaneously to the ability to write good speeches. Several of Plato's dialogues touch on issues of oratory, rhetoric, and sophistry, such as *Gorgias*, *Phaedrus*, and *Protagoras*. Plato often uses analogies and models to explain difficult concepts, though is suspicious of imagery and its ability to deceive.¹⁴²

The earliest surviving works that describe metaphor are Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*. These works are to some extent based on the teachings of Gorgias, Antiphon,

¹³⁹ See Cicero, *Brutus* 47, for the claim that Aristotle mentions this book on rhetoric.

¹⁴⁰ It can be found in Ammonius, *περι διαφ. λεξ.* 127.

¹⁴¹ Isocrates, *Evagoras*, 190.

¹⁴² For a systematic analysis of Plato's view of imagery, see E. E. Pender, "Plato on Metaphors and Models," in *Metaphor, Allegory, and the Classical Tradition: Ancient Thought and Modern Revisions* (ed. G. R. Boys-Stones; Oxford: University Press, 2003): 55-81.

Licymnius, Theodorus, Isocrates, and others, and of course include Aristotle's own views.¹⁴³ In *Poetics*, he defines metaphor as "the application of a word that belongs to another thing: either from genus to species, species to genus, species to species, or by analogy."¹⁴⁴ The first three types of metaphor in this definition are more proper to metonymy or synecdoche.¹⁴⁵ Aristotle goes on to talk about good diction; he says that good diction should be clear, but impressive diction should use exotic language, such as loan words and metaphor. If one uses too many metaphors, though, one ends up writing a riddle, and if one uses too many loan words one writes a barbarism.¹⁴⁶ He says riddles "attach impossibilities to a description of real things," in his discussion at achieving clarity and exoticness.¹⁴⁷

In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle adds little to his definition of metaphor, but does define simile and describes how to use each. He says that simile is also a metaphor which has an explanatory word (some form of comparative particle), though is more poetic and should be used sparingly in oratory.¹⁴⁸ The main distinction for Aristotle, apart from the comparative marker, seems to be that metaphors are limited to the exchange of words, while similes are more descriptive, and hence poetic.¹⁴⁹ This may be because by metaphor he has mostly what we would call metonymy and synecdoche in mind, while by simile he has in mind the long descriptive similes of Homer. Later he also calls proverbs (*παροιμίας*) metaphors from species to species,¹⁵⁰ and "approved hyperboles" (*εὐδοκιμοῦσαι ὑπερβολαί*) he also calls metaphors.¹⁵¹

Aristotle is often quoted (and criticized) by modern scholars for his statements that the good use of metaphors can not be taught but requires a natural ability.¹⁵² He does, however, describe how to create good metaphors and how to use them effectively as they are important

¹⁴³ William Bedell Stanford, *Greek Metaphor: Studies in Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1936), 5.

¹⁴⁴ Aristotle, *Poetics*, XXI.7-9 [Halliwell, LCL]. *Μεταφορὰ δὲ ἐστὶν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτρίου ἐπιφορὰ* etc. It may be worth modern metaphor theorists giving Aristotle a second look. It seems to me he is not just substituting words like he is often accused of doing, but brings together names for things, which implies a mixing and association of the things or concepts to which the names normally belong. Also of note in this area are his comments that contemplating images help us gain understanding, *Poetics* IV. Janet Martin Soskice also doubts the typical descriptions of Aristotle's theories. Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphors and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 8-10. Eva Feder Kittay likewise says: "The argument can be made that Aristotle pointed out the cognitive importance of metaphor." Eva Feder Kittay, *Metaphor: Its Cognitive Function and Linguistic Structure* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 2-3. G. Gregory, in an explanatory footnote to his translation of Lowth, seems to approach cognitive metaphor theory in his description of catachresis: "When a savage experienced a sensation, for which he had as yet no name, he applied that of the idea which most resembled it, in order to explain himself. Thus the words expressing the faculties of the mind are taken from sensible images, as fancy from phantasma; idea in the original language means image or picture; and a way has always been used to express the mode of attaining our end or desire...The principle advantage which the Metaphor possesses over the Simile or Comparison, seems to consist in the former transporting the mind, and carrying it nearer to the reality than the latter..." Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (G. Gregory, trans.), 106 nt. 3.

¹⁴⁵ See section I.D.1 below for definitions of terms.

¹⁴⁶ Aristotle, *Poetics*, XXII.1-25.

¹⁴⁷ Aristotle, *Poetics*, XXII.

¹⁴⁸ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.4.

¹⁴⁹ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.4.3.

¹⁵⁰ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.11.14.

¹⁵¹ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.11.15-16, [Freese, LCL].

¹⁵² Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.8. *Poetics* XXII.17. See for example Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 89-90.

to good style. For Aristotle, the virtue of style is clarity. Using words in their proper sense makes for clarity, but using tropes makes the discourse elevated, exotic, and charming.¹⁵³ Metaphors are important to good style because they help people understand things clearly and because they are charming and give discourse a sense of exoticness.¹⁵⁴ He says metaphors need to be appropriate; if you wish to honor something use metaphors that come from something higher (like saying a beggar prays instead of begs), and to insult you use something worse.¹⁵⁵ They should take their language from things proper to the object but not be too obvious, either.¹⁵⁶ Metaphors should not be too farfetched, but the meaning should be recognizable almost immediately. To illustrate this he gives the example of “gluing bronze to bronze with fire.”¹⁵⁷ He also says metaphors should be reciprocal, so that the elements can be interchangeable. For this he gives the example of saying Dionysus’ shield to mean his goblet, or saying Ares’ goblet to refer to his shield.¹⁵⁸ Metaphors should come from things that are beautiful, either in sound, meaning, or to one of the other senses.¹⁵⁹ Using metaphors and epithets to describe things rather than giving their name creates a lofty style, but if used too much the discourse becomes too poetical which sort of breaks the illusion and distracts one’s audience.¹⁶⁰

For Aristotle, bad style is characterized by frigidity (*ψύχρα*). This sort of style uses too many compound words, bad epithets (ones that are too long, unseasonable, or too crowded), as well as inappropriate metaphors.¹⁶¹ Metaphors are inappropriate if they are ridiculous or overly dignified, and so they fail to persuade.¹⁶²

Another function of metaphors, besides aiding in clarity, is that they help learning things easily, which is a pleasant quality of smart and popular sayings.¹⁶³ While similes have the same effect, they are less pleasant for Aristotle because they are longer; also since they do not assert that one thing *is* another, the mind does not examine a simile in the same way.¹⁶⁴ Metaphors must avoid the extremes of being too superficial and so unimpressive or being too strange and so too difficult to understand at once.¹⁶⁵ The best sort of metaphors of the four

¹⁵³ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.

¹⁵⁴ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.8.

¹⁵⁵ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.10. The same is true for epithets.

¹⁵⁶ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.11.5.

¹⁵⁷ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.12. This is more an example of catachresis, giving a name by metaphor to something that is without a name of its own.

¹⁵⁸ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.4.4. This is really an example of what would today be called metonymy.

¹⁵⁹ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.13.

¹⁶⁰ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.6.

¹⁶¹ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.3. An excess of epithets turn the oratory into poetry, which makes the speaker seem ridiculous or else he may just lose his audience as he lacks perspicuity.

¹⁶² Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.3.4.

¹⁶³ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.10. Other qualities of these sayings are antithesis and actuality.

¹⁶⁴ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.10.3. This is a point often omitted by modern scholars who criticize the ancient view that metaphors can be restated as similes. Aristotle does believe something is lost cognitively by using a simile in place of a metaphor! Cf. Max Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 35-37.

¹⁶⁵ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.10.6.

kinds described in *Poetics* for helping in learning things are the proportional (that is, what we would call metaphor, as opposed to metonymy or synecdoche).¹⁶⁶ This sort of metaphor sets things vividly in the imagination, particularly metaphors that describe inanimate things in animate terms, such as Homer often does both with his metaphors and similes.¹⁶⁷

Aristotle's student Theophrastus also wrote about rhetoric. His work (or works) survives only in fragments in other writers.¹⁶⁸ Also, a papyrus fragment of Theophrastus has been found that appears related to Aristotle's *Poetics*.¹⁶⁹ From what can be gathered in these fragments, Theophrastus appears to describe rhetoric in much the same way as Aristotle. According to Pseudo-Longinus, Theophrastus, like Aristotle, says bold metaphors can be softened by adding "like" and similar phrases.¹⁷⁰ One improvement from Aristotle (that has been transmitted to us) is that he gives the name *μετουσία* to metaphors that involve transfers from genus to species or from species to genus.¹⁷¹ Since this work is based largely on Aristotle, and is in turn with Aristotle influential on Demetrius, we will move on to Demetrius' work.

The work *On Style* by Demetrius is now largely recognized as not being composed by Demetrius of Phaleron, Theophrastus' student, but by another Demetrius.¹⁷² Nevertheless, the author of this work appears to have known the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus, though perhaps only through intermediaries.¹⁷³ The work, as the title suggests, is about how to achieve different styles, namely, the Grand, Elegant, Plain, and Forceful styles. In the Grand style, metaphor should be used because it makes the prose attractive and impressive and since they can express some things more clearly.¹⁷⁴ Metaphors that are too bold can be made safe by turning them into a simile, or by adding epithets.¹⁷⁵ Some metaphors, though, can create triviality rather than grandeur.¹⁷⁶ Also, common usage of a metaphor can make it a dead metaphor.¹⁷⁷ Demetrius says that in the Elegant style, metaphors in single words can create charm, and allegories can be used to give a colloquial turn of wit.¹⁷⁸ He also talks about similes, saying they are extended metaphors,¹⁷⁹ but adding more than a comparative marker

¹⁶⁶ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.10.7.

¹⁶⁷ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.11.

¹⁶⁸ William W. Fortenbaugh, Dimitri Gutas, and Andrew Barker eds. and transls., *Theophrastus of Eresus: Sources for His Life, Writings, Thought and Influence: Pt. 2: Psychology, Human Physiology, Living Creatures, Botany, Ethics, Religion, Politics, Rhetoric and Poetics, Music, Miscellanea* (Philosophia Antiqua vol. 54,2; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 508-58.

¹⁶⁹ Fortenbaugh, *Theophrastus pt. 2*, 258-64. For the text and translation, see Appendix 9 in vol 2.

¹⁷⁰ Fortenbaugh, *Theophrastus pt. 2*, 537.

¹⁷¹ Fortenbaugh, *Theophrastus pt. 2*, 615. Fortenbaugh, *Theophrastus vol 8*, 261.

¹⁷² Fortenbaugh, *Theophrastus vol 8*, 6.

¹⁷³ Fortenbaugh, *Theophrastus vol 8*, 6.

¹⁷⁴ Demetrius, *On Style*, 77-79, 82.

¹⁷⁵ Demetrius, *On Style*, 80, 85.

¹⁷⁶ Demetrius, *On Style*, 84.

¹⁷⁷ Demetrius, *On Style*, 87-88.

¹⁷⁸ Demetrius, *On Style*, 142, 151.

¹⁷⁹ Demetrius, *On Style*, 80.

turns the simile into a poetic comparison,¹⁸⁰ which also can add charm in the Elegant style.¹⁸¹ In the Forceful style, varying figures of speech (and presumably tropes) creates forcefulness, as do metaphors and similes, but not detailed poetic comparisons.¹⁸² Demetrius is interesting in that he has clear and prescriptive statements about the use of metaphors to achieve different effects in different styles, yet the selection and use of metaphors is still left to the subjective judgment of the orator.

The discipline of Rhetoric continued to develop, taking its most sophisticated and systematic form in the work of Quintilian. Two additional Greek philosophers are worthy of mention in this development. Philodemus was an epicurean (born around 110 BC) who wrote about the place of rhetoric in *paidea*. He claims to be in line with the founders of his philosophical school, but is himself too late for our interests. He is worth mentioning to show that discussion of rhetoric was not limited to peripatetic circles. Unfortunately his discussion of tropes is too fragmentary to say much about. He does, though, say metaphor is described (by some uncited rhetoricians) by four types: those that compare animate with inanimate, animate with animate, inanimate with inanimate, and inanimate with animate.¹⁸³ While Aristotle makes this distinction, it is not the four types he describes. Philodemus is rather critical of the work of rhetoricians on metaphor; he thinks they fail to describe why the metaphors they ridicule are faulty, and that they do not say how to create a good metaphor or even when exactly to use one.¹⁸⁴ An even later source is Longinus, who mentions not only that you should only use two or three metaphors for emotional effect to achieve the sublime in style; he also mentions Genesis 1 in his work *On the Sublime*.

We can conclude from this survey that in the Hellenistic era there were multiple rhetorical handbooks in circulation that discussed metaphor. Among the Peripatetics, there were at least three authors that dealt with metaphor: Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Demetrius. Perhaps also some of the works or at least the teachings of the Sophists were still in circulation. Philodemus seems to suggest that even the Epicurians were still discussing rhetoric (or perhaps again discussing rhetoric), even if in a mostly critical way.

While terminology for tropes was still developing, we can clearly see distinguished and described in Aristotle what today we would call metaphor, simile, catachresis, metonymy, synecdoche, and hyperbole. Discussion of tropes seems to be concerned mostly with their use in poetry and oratory, though there is acknowledgement of their use in daily life, and their usefulness in teaching. In any case, a person educated in rhetoric in this period should have

¹⁸⁰ Demetrius, *On Style*, 89-90.

¹⁸¹ Demetrius, *On Style*, 160.

¹⁸² Demetrius, *On Style*, 267-71, 272, 272-74.

¹⁸³ Philodemus, *The Rhetoric of Philodemus* (trans. Harry M. Hubbell; Transactions of The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences 23, Sept 1920; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920), 298. This corresponds to Sudhaus' edition vol 1, 171,2 col XII.

¹⁸⁴ Philodemus, *The Rhetoric of Philodemus*, 298. This corresponds to Sudhaus 1. 173 Col XV-1.174 col XV.

had some knowledge of the various types of metaphor and had some instruction in their proper and improper use.

1.3.1.2. Hellenistic Education

As we have seen, the ancient Greek world had many philosophers thinking about metaphors and more generally about rhetoric and its proper use. James K. Aitken has asserted that the LXX translators, along with any literate writer of Greek, would have been exposed to Greek ideas about rhetoric while learning to write.¹⁸⁵ To evaluate this, in this section we will look at what students would have been taught when they learned to write and read Greek.

There were of course various forms of education in the Hellenistic age (including technical and professional training), but our interest is in the *ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία*, or well-rounded education.¹⁸⁶ The main task of this education in the east seems to be about preserving Greek identity, values, language, and literature in the various Greek cities surrounded by barbarian peoples.¹⁸⁷ As Raffaella Cribiore explains it:

Education was based on the transmission of an established body of knowledge, about which there was wide consensus. Teachers were considered the custodians and interpreters of a tradition and were concerned with protecting its integrity. Education was supposed to lead to a growing understanding of an inherited doctrine.¹⁸⁸

So education was not just about preparing a student vocationally but was about preserving a certain kind of culture and identity.

Education was by no means standardized, but it was quite regular in the things that were taught (particularly by the grammarian due to the content of the work studied) and the sort of exercises used.¹⁸⁹ Generally, education was based around individual teachers, who collected students either at his (or occasionally her)¹⁹⁰ house or in the corner of some public building such as the gymnasium or palaistra.¹⁹¹ For the wealthy it was also possible to hire

¹⁸⁵ James K. Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," in *On Stone and Scroll: Essays in Honour of Graham Ivor Davies* (eds. James K. Aitken, Katharine J. Dell, and Brian A. Mastin; Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 20; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 508-509.

¹⁸⁶ Mark Joyal, Ian McDougall, and J.C. Yardley, *Greek and Roman Education: A Sourcebook* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 123-24.

¹⁸⁷ Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 9. This goal corresponds to Jason's goal in building a gymnasium in Jerusalem in 2 Macc 4:7-15; 1 Macc 1:11-15.

¹⁸⁸ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 8. The same could undoubtedly apply to priestly training among the Jews.

¹⁸⁹ See Joyal, McDougall, and Yardley, *Greek and Roman Education*, 124. And Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 2-3, 37.

¹⁹⁰ For women learning to read and write, see Joyal, McDougall, and Yardley, *Greek and Roman Education*, 142-43. That some teachers were women, see Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 47.

¹⁹¹ Joyal et al., *Greek and Roman Education*, 134-38. Joyal et al., say that Gymnasiums were public buildings that had some intellectual activities associated with them, but were not themselves schools. A Palaistra was a private ground that could be rented or lent to various teachers, philosophers, or instructors when it was not being used as a wrestling yard. Joyal et al. also shows some evidence that suggests, at least in some places, at various

tutors (or purchase slaves) to instruct children at home. We can find lists of the various tutors that tormented children in Teles the Cynic and Pseudo-platonic Axiochus, they include: the paidagogos, the paidotribes, the grammatodidaskalos, the music theory teacher, the art teacher, a teacher of arithmetic, of geometry, teachers of literary criticism, and of equestrian skills.¹⁹² It should be noted that it was entirely possible for adults to begin or resume education at various levels, if they had the time and the money.¹⁹³ For our purposes, we will skip the other topics of study and focus on issues related to literary and rhetorical learning.

Literary education can generally be divided into the tasks of three teachers. At the primary level, a didaskalos was concerned with teaching letters and literacy.¹⁹⁴ It seems absurd, but the first thing a student would learn was how to write.¹⁹⁵ Existing student exercises show that students copied their teacher's writing without knowing what it meant.¹⁹⁶ They would do exercises to learn the alphabet involving writing it in reverse order, or skipping letters regularly; after this they moved on to writing various permutations of syllables even those that do not occur in any Greek words.¹⁹⁷ Next they would copy words or passages (mostly from Homer) as they learned to read, and would memorize sections of Homer as well.¹⁹⁸ At first, they would copy texts with various reading aids, such as some space between words, some accent marks, line marks, etc., but would work their way up to reading scriptio continua.¹⁹⁹

By the end of "primary school" a student could recite some texts from memory, copy a short text, sign their name, dictate or copy a phrase, and read documents posted in large clear letters.²⁰⁰ Learning to read Greek, even for a more or less native speaker, involved much more than simply learning the alphabet. As Cribiore says:

The skill of reading was a complex affair, fragmented into a series of acquisitions that aimed at understanding a text thoroughly. Ancient manuscripts did not make many concessions to readers. A passage made of words written without separation in continuous blocks and containing almost no punctuation was only an ensemble of letters in need of interpretation. Reading at first sight was practically impossible: a text needed to be scrutinized beforehand

periods, some degree of public education (or at least funds for teachers) was available: *Greek and Roman Education*, 134-35, 138-39. For more on whether intellectual education took place at the gymnasium, see Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 34-35.

¹⁹² See the relevant passages in translation in: Joyal et al., *Greek and Roman Education*, 128-35. In many cases a single instructor could probably handle several of these topics, particularly at the lower levels.

¹⁹³ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 2, 20.

¹⁹⁴ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 19-20.

¹⁹⁵ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 177-78.

¹⁹⁶ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 133-34.

¹⁹⁷ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 133-34. This was probably for learning to read and for practicing diction. Vocalists and choirs still warm up by singing various syllables (such as "ma me mi mo mu"). As we will see, reading a word aloud properly is the first part of grammar, according to Dionysius of Thrax.

¹⁹⁸ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 133-34. Elsewhere Cribiore says, based on the papyriological evidence, most of the passages they practiced with came from Iliad books 1-12. Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 194.

¹⁹⁹ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 140-41, 172-74. Here Cribiore mentions that the exercises with syllables probably also were used for training them to read scriptio continua.

²⁰⁰ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 184.

to identify the relationship between the elements of a sentence and to understand their function in conveying meaning.²⁰¹

Those who did not go on to study with a grammarian, then, could only read with great difficulty and only the shortest and simplest of texts. It is difficult to imagine someone producing a Greek translation of a Hebrew text with such a basic proficiency in writing.

At this stage a student was handed over to the grammarian (if the first teacher's expertise had reached its limit). At this level the curriculum was roughly what was described by Dionysius of Thrax.²⁰² He defines grammar as "the empirical knowledge of what is for the most part being said by poets and prose writers."²⁰³ What we consider grammar today (parts of speech, paradigms etc.) was a science still in development, and largely did not enter curriculums until the first century AD.²⁰⁴ Dionysius of Thrax lists six parts to this knowledge: how to read the text aloud properly (in terms of clause and word division, accents, and diction), the meaning of tropes, the meaning of obscure words, the subject matter (for example, who the people mentioned are, their family, place of origin, etc.), the etymologies of words and the setting out of analogy (*ἀναλογία, ἐκλογισμός*), and literary criticism (this last part was done more extensively under the tutelage of the rhetor).²⁰⁵ To master these six parts, students would mostly copy and memorize excerpts from literature, mostly Homer but also Hesiod, Euripedes (particularly his *Phoenissae*), Meander, and the gnomic sayings of Isocrates.²⁰⁶ The teacher would explain the difficult terms, using synonyms (metalepsis was also practiced by students) and etymology.²⁰⁷ They would also explain and discuss the figures and tropes the text presented.²⁰⁸ The subject matter (*historia*) was also taught, so students would know all about the various characters and places discussed in their literature, both actual and mythological (though these were not necessarily distinguished).²⁰⁹ At this level, knowledge of literature was more important than original writing, though they did do some composition exercises.²¹⁰ Students would have copied hundreds of passages of Homer and been thoroughly drilled in interpreting the various grammatical elements of his text.²¹¹ As Criore says:

²⁰¹ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 189-90.

²⁰² Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 185-86. Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1968), 272.

²⁰³ Translation from Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 268.

²⁰⁴ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 210.

²⁰⁵ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 185-86. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 268-70.

²⁰⁶ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 194-202.

²⁰⁷ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 206-07, 209-10. For the relationship between synonyms and etymology and their didactic uses, see Helen Peraki-Kyriakidou, "Aspects of Ancient Etymologizing," *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 52, No. 2 (2002), 481-82, 489.

²⁰⁸ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 206.

²⁰⁹ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 206, 208-09.

²¹⁰ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 215.

²¹¹ Folker Siegert, "Early Jewish interpretation in a Hellenistic style," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Interpretation: Vol 1 From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages (Until 1300)* (ed. Magne Sæbø; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 130-31. As Siegert explains, Homer was used not only as an

the practice of reading texts closely and of reaching a deep textual experience through careful verbal analysis, as learned in the school of the grammarian, gave students a sound knowledge of language and the ability to use words with dexterity.²¹²

Once a student was handed over to a rhetor the focus of his or her studies shifted from reading to composition and speaking. What they read, copied, and memorized was more focused on authors to be imitated. From the rhetors this meant Isocrates, Hyperides, Aeschines, and Demosthenes (and the teacher himself, no doubt), and from the historians this meant Herodotus, Theopompus, Xenophon, Philistus, Ephorus, and of course Thucydides.²¹³ The writing exercises, or progymnasmata, were already done under the grammarian, but now became longer and more elaborate. They were aimed at letting the student apply what they had learned and to prepare the way for larger compositions, chiefly speeches.²¹⁴ The sort of exercises done included writing fables, simple narratives, writing a discussion about a famous action or quote (from the literature they had previously studied), writing a confirmation or refutation that a story happened based on possibility and probability, writing summaries of common opinions about stock characters (such as the murderer, the tyrant, etc.), writing praise or blame of some action, comparing various characters or their actions, writing imagined speeches of a character at some event, and describing an event vividly.²¹⁵ Students would be corrected on these exercises and some times would spend considerable effort revising and refining their work.²¹⁶ Creativity and originality was not valued as much as careful planning and organization of the work.²¹⁷ The goal of these exercises was to build the ability to properly and persuasively use rhetoric in writing and in delivering speeches in court, in municipal councils, or in other public venues.²¹⁸

Few except the most elite would make it all the way through the education described. Only two years (out of the full course of six years) with the rhetor would be sufficient to argue at a court.²¹⁹ Many were not able to complete the tutelage of the grammarian. Ancient sources show the existence of “slow writers” who could write little more than their name, and read only enough to see if a document was formatted properly.²²⁰ But among the elite,

instructor for reading and grammar, but was searched for insights into every subject of learning and science. Epicureans, on the other hand, thought it was best to not know any Homer. See Elizabeth Asmis, “Basic Education in Epicureanism,” in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (ed. Yun Lee Too; Leiden, Brill: 2001), 215.

²¹² Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 248.

²¹³ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 234-35.

²¹⁴ Ruth Webb, “The Progymnasmata as Practice,” in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (ed. Yun Lee Too; Leiden, Brill: 2001), 282-90.

²¹⁵ Webb, “The Progymnasmata as Practice,” 294-95.

²¹⁶ Webb, “The Progymnasmata as Practice,” 297-98.

²¹⁷ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 231.

²¹⁸ For some of the possible venues for showing off one’s rhetorical ability, see Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 239.

²¹⁹ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 224.

²²⁰ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 176.

education continued beyond the school days; they would often continue to read whatever they could, and listen to the rhetors or philosophers.²²¹ Some even went on to write their own books and conduct their own scholarship.

This shows, as Aitken has said,²²² that anyone who was competent enough to compose a Greek text (either original or a translation) would have had rigorous training in reading and writing and would have had some exposure to classical ideas of rhetoric in general, including some discussion of tropes.

1.3.1.3. Scholarship in Alexandria

The center of scholarship in the Hellenistic age was Alexandria, and more specifically, the institutions of the Mouseion and the Library.²²³ Neither institution was entirely unique or original, but what they became were to be models for similar institutions elsewhere, such as in Pergamum and Ephesus.²²⁴ The Mouseion was started under Soter,²²⁵ and the Library under Philadelphus,²²⁶ both under the influence of Peripatetic scholars.²²⁷ The influence of Demetrius of Phaleron, Theophrastus' student and former tyrant of Athens, on the founding of the Mouseion is nearly certain.²²⁸ The library was an institution based on the practice of peripatetic scholars; as Fraser argues, Aristotle himself collected a library at the Lyceum.²²⁹

Indeed the Peripatetic influence was so great in Alexandrian scholarship that the terms Peripatetic and Alexandrian became synonymous.²³⁰ That is not to say that they were all rigidly Aristotelian. Callimachus and his followers, for example, were somewhat anti-Aristotelian in their poetic sensibilities, rejecting "unity, completeness, and magnitude" and aiming "at a discontinuous form."²³¹ Even if Aristotle's poetic sensibilities were not always followed, his influence can not be denied. Indeed, Ptolemy I tried hard to get one of Aristotle's students to come to Alexandria, Theophrastus refused, Strato came only for a short time, but Demetrius came and stayed once he had to flee Athens.²³² In addition, it seems not

²²¹ Criore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 249.

²²² Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," 508-509.

²²³ Pfeiffer seems to suggest the Library was a part of the Mouseion. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 98. And distinguishes this library from that of the Serapeum built by Ptolemy II. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 101-102.

²²⁴ P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1972), 312-14.

²²⁵ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 315.

²²⁶ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 321.

²²⁷ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 320.

²²⁸ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 315. Pseudo-Aristeas par. 9-11 claims that Demetrius of Phaleron, was the first librarian, but this is very unlikely, since Philadelphus' first act as king was to exile Demetrius for advising Soter to appoint his other son as king. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 321.

²²⁹ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 320.

²³⁰ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 320.

²³¹ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 137.

²³² Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 95-96.

only plausible but highly likely that the Library had as many of Aristotle's and his follower's works as they could get a hold of in its collection.

In the Library, one of their most important tasks of these scholars was to collect and preserve texts. Perhaps related to or based on a catalogue of books, Callimachus wrote his *Πίνακες*.²³³ This monumental work involved organizing all the books by genre (lyrical poetry, epic poetry, comedy, tragedy, etc), and in the case of prose writers, organizing them by topic (botany, mathematics, paradoxical writings, geography, etc.) and author.²³⁴ In the Mouseion they were often concerned with studying the ancient poets in order to produce good poetry themselves.²³⁵ Alexandrian scholarship was by no means limited to literary studies, mathematics and what today is called natural science also flourished there.²³⁶ Eratosthenes, for example, besides an impressive amount of original poetry and literary criticism, was an accomplished mathematician, geographer, and chronographer, to name just the fields in which he was widely acclaimed.²³⁷ Another genre many worked on was paradoxical writings, which addressed such things as foreign customs, local names for things, and geography.²³⁸

The most famous work done in Alexandria was its Homeric Scholarship. In many ways it was an advanced continuation of the work done under the instruction of the grammarian in secondary school. Critical work on Homer, of course, predates the establishment of the Mouseion and Library; Aristotle and Heraclides Ponticus both wrote books dealing with various problems and solutions in Homer.²³⁹ These books were largely only concerned with interpretive questions, as was Demetrius of Phaleron's books on the Iliad and the Odyssey.²⁴⁰ To deal with the growing number of textual variations, the first librarian, Zenodotus of Ephesus, edited Homer's texts to produce what we would call a critical edition (*ἐκδόσις* or *διορθώσεις*).²⁴¹ He included critical marks for passages he believed should be atheticized. Several other major Alexandrian scholars worked on Homer's (as well as Pindar's and other poets') texts critically, including Apollonius,²⁴² Callimachus,²⁴³ and Aristophanes of Byzantium.²⁴⁴ But the most important editor of Homer was Aristarchus of Samothrace, who appears to have made an impact on many manuscripts of Homer²⁴⁵ and also greatly developed

²³³ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 127-31. Fraser insists it was not a catalogue for the library, Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 453.

²³⁴ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 129-32. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 452-53.

²³⁵ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 88.

²³⁶ See "Ch 7: Alexandrian Science," in Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*. He says that biology and botany appear to have been essentially the same as what was said by Aristotle and Theophrastus, Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 337-38.

²³⁷ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, chapter IV.

²³⁸ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 134-35. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 453-55.

²³⁹ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 448-49.

²⁴⁰ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 448-49.

²⁴¹ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 449-50. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 107-20.

²⁴² Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 452.

²⁴³ For Callimachus' scholarship see Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 124-40.

²⁴⁴ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 459.

²⁴⁵ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 446-47.

Zenodotus' text-critical sigla.²⁴⁶ Many of the scholars doing text-critical work would explain their sigla, as well as the text of Homer in a separate commentary (ὕπόμνημα).²⁴⁷ These commentaries would not only discuss text critical issues,²⁴⁸ but other difficulties such as strange words and Aristarchus even made comments about the function of particular metaphors and other tropes.²⁴⁹ Aristarchus is also famous for his hermeneutical methods, particularly the maxim “Ὁμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου” or “Interpret Homer from Homer.”²⁵⁰

As mentioned earlier, many of the other scholarly works done in Alexandria were related to Homer scholarship, such as geographies, and the paradoxologies, since they shed light on places mentioned (even mythical places) and on the at times obscure or obsolete vocabulary used by Homer (and other poets). Callimachus,²⁵¹ Aristophanes of Byzantium,²⁵² and Aristarchus are all important also for their work with words and grammar.²⁵³

While Alexandria was the center of scholarship, it did crop up in other places as well, though not as much under the influence of the peripatetics. For example, Antiochus the Great started a library in Antioch, with Euphorion of Chalcis as librarian.²⁵⁴ Pergamum, though, was the biggest rival to Alexandria, both in terms of its influence and in its scholarly positions. Pergamum was dominated by Stoic scholars, who were generally more interested in the history and topography of Homer, than the philology or literary features.²⁵⁵ Regarding grammar, they bitterly opposed the idea of analogy, arguing declensions and verb forms were all anomalous.²⁵⁶ When they interpreted Homer, they often used allegory so that Homer taught all their philosophical ideas, particularly their views of physics.²⁵⁷ Another method that allowed them to advance their own philosophy through Homer was through etymology.²⁵⁸ Etymology was not strictly a stoic practice, it was dealt with in Plato's *Cratylus*, and was still being employed in the scholia of Homer.²⁵⁹ Etymology was not about finding the origin or preceding form of words, but was largely a didactic exercise aimed at explaining why something has a given name; it is about “binding of the meaning of a certain word with cluster(s) of other meaning(s).”²⁶⁰

²⁴⁶ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 463-65.

²⁴⁷ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 447.

²⁴⁸ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 447.

²⁴⁹ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 232.

²⁵⁰ Pfeiffer believes that Aristarchus never said this, but that it does reflect his method. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 225-27.

²⁵¹ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 460.

²⁵² Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 197-200. Aristophanes studied a word's force and meaning.

²⁵³ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 462-63. He is particularly noted for his ideas about grammatical analogy, as opposed to the Stoic idea of anomaly.

²⁵⁴ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 122.

²⁵⁵ Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 251.

²⁵⁶ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 465-66.

²⁵⁷ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 465-66.

²⁵⁸ Siegert, “Early Jewish interpretation in a Hellenistic style,” 139-40.

²⁵⁹ For an example see Peraki-Kyriakidou, “Aspects of Ancient Etymologizing,” 484.

²⁶⁰ Peraki-Kyriakidou, “Aspects of Ancient Etymologizing,” 480-82.

As even this superficial survey has shown, in Hellenistic times, particularly in Alexandria, textual, literary, grammatical, and lexical studies were highly developed and a dominant force in education at all levels. Homer's work was the focus of study, regardless of the philosophical leanings or a particular place or teacher. While we do not know exactly what was said about tropes in the various levels of education, we do know that they were discussed in some detail, and there is reason to believe it was discussed largely in Aristotelian terms.

1.3.1.4. Jews Educated in Classical Literature

It is plausible that there were a fair number of Jews with some degree of Hellenistic education, who worked in courts and as magistrates in Egypt, and who were among the elite in Judea. Chaim Rabin thought the Egyptian Jews of the third century BCE would certainly not have had access to schools and so had no practice in writing educated Greek, but suggests that some of them were literate.²⁶¹ As we have seen, most education started with writing before reading, so if they were literate, they undoubtedly could also write to some degree. The question of access to schools is anachronistic since education was typically about hiring a teacher (which required only money), not being accepted into some institution. We will briefly give some known examples of Jews in Egypt and Judea who received sufficient education to compose in Greek and who were interested in similar scholarly questions to the scholars of the Museum.

The earliest known such writer is Demetrius the Chronographer.²⁶² His concern for chronology and various logical problems is consistent with the methods and the work done by Eratosthenes.²⁶³ Maren Niehoff has argued that Demetrius quotes from earlier Jewish commentators on the Bible who apply Aristotelian methods of Homer scholarship.²⁶⁴ This includes using question and answers, as described in Aristotle's fragmentary *Aporemata Homerica*,²⁶⁵ finding contradictions and filling in gaps in the text,²⁶⁶ and resolving problems of verisimilitude in the text.²⁶⁷ These un-named scholars also used methods similar to Aristarchus to resolve the problems they found in the biblical text.²⁶⁸

Several known Jewish authors were interested in historical and textual issues of the Bible, and even tried to argue that various aspects of science and learning had their origin in

²⁶¹ Chaim Rabin, "The Translation Process and the Character of the Septuagint," *Textus* 6 (1968), 21-22.

²⁶² Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983), 51-52.

²⁶³ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 691-92.

²⁶⁴ Maren R. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 38-39.

²⁶⁵ Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 39-43.

²⁶⁶ Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 45-46.

²⁶⁷ Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 46-49.

²⁶⁸ Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 55-56.

Moses. These include Pseudo-Eupolemus (probably a Samaritan),²⁶⁹ Artapanus,²⁷⁰ Cleodemus Malchus²⁷¹ (whose existing fragments also glorify the patriarchs while connecting them with Greek heroes: he has Abraham's granddaughter marrying Hercules),²⁷² Pseudo-Aristeas (who wrote "Concerning the Jews"²⁷³ and about Job),²⁷⁴ and Pseudo-Hecataeus.²⁷⁵

An interesting example of a Jewish historian is Eupolemus son of John, who probably wrote in Judea. He is mentioned as one of the envoys sent to Rome in 1 Macc 8:17-32 by Judas.²⁷⁶ He was sent, no doubt, along with Jason, because he had some education and could deliver a speech and make negotiations before the Roman senate. He was from the elite, a member of a priestly family, with his father on the council of elders (the gerousia) and may have served on it himself.²⁷⁷ The existing fragments of his work describe the history of Israel in exaggerated terms: David's conquests are much larger and Solomon's temple is much more wealthy than seems probable.²⁷⁸ Moses is given credit for inventing the alphabet and giving it to the Jews, who in turn gave it to the Phoenicians who then gave it to the Greeks.²⁷⁹ His Greek writing, from the fragments that have survived, seems crude and unusual in its features and constructions, according to Holladay,²⁸⁰ which should not be surprising if Greek were his second language. Despite this, he was well educated, since his work shows knowledge of the writings of Ctesias and Herodotus.²⁸¹ Particularly telling is his use of etymology; he tells us that Jerusalem is named for its temple, and so is called Ἱερουσαλημ.²⁸²

Aristeas should also be mentioned as he was likely a Jew in a high position in the Ptolemaic court, who writes in late Hellenistic style comparable to Polybius.²⁸³ Without diving into the many issues this work has,²⁸⁴ it is interesting to note that in par. 120-122 he presents the seventy elders as pious and wise Jews who had carefully studied both Jewish and

²⁶⁹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 158, 170-75.

²⁷⁰ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 189-90, 192, 208-211. Fraser believes he was a Jew of mixed descent, living in an urban center outside Alexandria where there was more tension between Jews and locals. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 706.

²⁷¹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 245-46.

²⁷² Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 255.

²⁷³ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 261-62.

²⁷⁴ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 261.

²⁷⁵ For the discussion of Pseudo-Hecataeus' identity, number, and date, see: Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 277-90.

²⁷⁶ For a discussion that they are indeed the same person, see Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 2.962 nt. 101.

²⁷⁷ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 93-95, 100 nt.6.

²⁷⁸ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 114-31.

²⁷⁹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 112-13.

²⁸⁰ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 95.

²⁸¹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 95.

²⁸² Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors: vol. 1: Historians*, 128-29.

²⁸³ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 699, 703.

²⁸⁴ For a recent discussion of the value of this work for LXX origins, see Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship* (London: Routledge, 2003). And the extended review: Arie van der Kooij, "The Septuagint and Alexandrian Scholarship," in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* LXVIII,5-6 (2011): 492-509. An alternative explanation for the origin of the LXX is offered in van der Kooij, "Chapter 2: The Septuagint of the Pentateuch," in Johann Cook and Arie van der Kooij, *Law, Prophets, and Wisdom: On the Provenance of Translators and their Books in the Septuagint Version* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology 68; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 15-62.

Greek literature. Whether or not this is true of the translators, it does show that the author thought it was plausible that these pious Jewish elders could be knowledgeable in Greek literature. This idea of a bilingual Jewish scribe is true of Jesus ben Sirach's grandson.²⁸⁵ Niehoff has argued that Aristeas attempts to make the case that the methods of Homeric scholarship should not be applied to the LXX, since the text is pristine,²⁸⁶ and even goes so far as to curse those who would suggest emendations using the signs of Aristarchus.²⁸⁷

The greatest Alexandrian scholar (critic or *grammatikos*) of Jewish stock (before Philo) was Aristobulus. His principle known work is "Explanation of the Book of Moses," of which only a few fragments survive and may not all be from this book.²⁸⁸ All of his fragments show a scholar well versed in Greek learning and literature. In the first fragment Holladay provides, Aristobulus makes rather precise astronomical descriptions of the position of the sun and moon during Passover.²⁸⁹ In the third fragment, he shows knowledge of various Greek philosophers in that he argues that the ideas of Plato and Pythagoras were derived from the law of Moses.²⁹⁰ In the fourth fragment we can see more of this argument based on specific ideas, such as the idea of the divine voice which is read about in Genesis, but Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato claim to have heard by examining the cosmos.²⁹¹ He also argues that the law of Moses agrees with the philosophers regarding such things as devotion to God, piety, and justice.²⁹² In the fifth fragment this theme is also seen, as he quotes classical texts, including Homer, Hesiod, and Solon, that agree with Moses on the holiness of the seventh day.²⁹³ While Clement and Eusebius claim Aristobulus was peripatetic, these fragments show a much more eclectic influence.²⁹⁴ As Holladay argues, Aristobulus offers a definition of wisdom that sounds similar to what the Stoics would say, his interest in the number seven in the fifth fragment shows signs of Pythagorean influence, and the way he talks about the unity of man and deity sounds similar to Cynic doctrine.²⁹⁵ Niehoff, however, makes a strong case that he is best understood primarily as belonging to the peripatetic tradition.²⁹⁶ In any case,

²⁸⁵ See van der Kooij, "The Septuagint and Alexandrian Scholarship," 503.

²⁸⁶ Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 21-24, 33-34.

²⁸⁷ Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 27-30, 37.

²⁸⁸ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 694. For the fragments, see: Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*.

²⁸⁹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 128-33.

²⁹⁰ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 150-61.

²⁹¹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 163. He also quotes at length an alleged poem of Orpheus.

²⁹² Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 174.

²⁹³ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 176-97. His quotes have various difficulties including that some cannot be found in the authors they allege to be from or have been altered. These alterations or perhaps even fabrications may have been done by Aristobulus or his sources or by Polyhistor or Eusebius who preserved his fragments. See Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 694-95.

²⁹⁴ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 46-47. Niehoff makes the case that his methods are Aristotelian both directly and in following the model of Aristarchus and style of Apollodorus. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 74, 60.

²⁹⁵ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 72-73.

²⁹⁶ Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 58-74.

this shows he was well versed in classical thought and literature. The second fragment of Aristobulus found in Holladay is particularly interesting, in that Aristobulus explains to king Ptolemy (probably VI Philometer) why the law of Moses uses hands, arms, visage, feet, and walking to signify (σημαίνεταί) divine power.²⁹⁷ We will discuss this passage below (1.3.2.2.).

According to 2 Macc 1:10, Aristobulus was from the family of the priests. Whether this is true or not is not as important as that it is perfectly plausible to the writer of 2 Macc that someone from the priestly family would have learned Greek literature so well and would write the sorts of books Aristobulus wrote.²⁹⁸

Philo of Alexandria should also be mentioned as a very well educated Jew, though he comes from a later period. Maren R. Niehoff has argued that in some of Philo's writings there is evidence of earlier Jewish scholars who were doing Alexandrian style philology on the LXX, excising texts they thought did not meet certain poetic and ethical standards for being authentic.²⁹⁹ Unfortunately no fragments of these authors exist outside of Philo to see what they actually said.

Besides engaging in Hellenistic style scholarship, some Jews were sufficiently educated to compose literary texts in verse. Some fragments of Theodotus survive which show his work on the Jews was written in imitation of Homer's epic style, though still biblical in content.³⁰⁰ Philo the epic poet, on the other hand, wrote his epic praising Jerusalem in a style more like late Hellenic poets, such as Apollonius of Rhodes and Rhianus of Bene.³⁰¹ Ezekiel the Tragedian's play about the Exodus, written in iambic trimeter, shows his "thorough familiarity with classical authors, most notably Euripides and Aeschylus...Homer, Sophocles, and Herodotus."³⁰²

Other Jewish poets wrote pseudepigraphal texts in Homeric style, claiming to be Greek religious texts that advocate Jewish religion. One example of this is the rather complicated texts of Orphic literature from the second century BCE written in hexameters.³⁰³ Another example is the third book of Sibylline Oracles, which is associated with the party of Onias, sometime around 155-161 BCE.³⁰⁴ Without discussing their manifold difficulties and complexities, we can conclude from them that there were educated Jews in the second century BCE, able to write in high registers of Greek and to harmonize Greek myth with the Bible in extended poetic works.

²⁹⁷ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 134-35.

²⁹⁸ For discussion of the accuracy of this statement, see: Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. 3: Aristobulus*, 46 nt. 3, 74.

²⁹⁹ Maren R. Niehoff, "Homeric Scholarship and Bible Exegesis in Ancient Alexandria: Evidence from Philo's 'Quarrelsome' Colleagues," *The Classical Quarterly* 57:1 (2007): 166-82. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship*, 77-129.

³⁰⁰ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol.2 Poets*, 61-75.

³⁰¹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol.2 Poets*, 205-9.

³⁰² Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol.2 Poets*, 301-3.

³⁰³ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol.4 Orphica*.

³⁰⁴ James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Vol.1: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983), 355.

The examples of authors we have surveyed show that various facets of Alexandrian scholarship had well educated Jews participating with them or at least imitating them. If the top Hellenistic scholarship had a Jewish counterpart, it is fair to assume there were many more Jews who had received some Hellenistic schooling but had ceased their education at various levels. The nature of many of these texts shows that it was not just overly Hellenized Jews who were highly educated, but also pious Jews dedicated to preserving and even promulgating their ancestral traditions (some living in Judea). The apologetic character of the histories they were writing may have made Greek literature safe for Jews with the claim that they are derived ultimately from the wisdom of Abraham and Moses.

It would appear, then, that it is perfectly plausible that the translator of Isaiah had received a fair amount of Greek education, though perhaps not enough to compose in verse or harmonize Hesiod to the Torah. It would be much more unexpected for such a large project as translating Isaiah into Greek, that it would be done by someone, even if bilingual, who had no training in writing or Greek literature if someone with training was available. Even composing a work in Greek that closely follows a Hebrew original requires a fair amount of education, so that the text can be legible, have proper spelling, and follow the rules of grammar enough to be intelligible.

1.3.1.5. Evidence of a Hellenistic Education in the Septuagint

James K. Aitken has demonstrated that the translators of the Pentateuch appear to have attained at least the education of one of the more skilled Egyptian bureaucratic scribes.³⁰⁵ He gives examples that show that the translators paid attention to the genre of their text, and so were more inclined to use rhetorical figures for poetic passages, like Exod 15.³⁰⁶ There are some examples, as Aitken shows, of rhetorical figures used in prose passages.³⁰⁷ Aitken compares these examples of the translators' skill to use rhetorical figures with contemporary bureaucratic and official texts from the papyri that show that their authors could use rhetorical devices to some degree.³⁰⁸ He concludes that the translators were well educated in Greek and so could use Homeric vocabulary or a rhetorical figure here and there.³⁰⁹ He also admits this evidence could suggest the translators were much more educated, but their choice in translation style restrains them from using more Greek rhetorical figures and style.³¹⁰

LXX-Isa is a more free rendering than the Pentateuch, so there is more potential evidence of the translator's rhetorical knowledge and ability. Various scholars have shown evidence within LXX-Isa that suggest the translator had received some degree of Hellenistic education and was concerned about rhetorical issues.

³⁰⁵ Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," 520.

³⁰⁶ Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," 512-15.

³⁰⁷ Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," 512-13.

³⁰⁸ Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," 517-18.

³⁰⁹ Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," 520.

³¹⁰ Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," 521.

G. B. Caird, who shared the older view that the LXX-Isa translator was unskilled or incompetent, is surprised by the occasional use of rare words from Homer and Herodotus; he marvels: “It is as though he had learnt his Greek from a manual containing selections from great authors.”³¹¹ Based on what we have seen, it is indeed likely that the translator read Homer as he learned to read and write. It should not be surprising that he picked up some high vocabulary from reading the great authors.³¹²

Theo van der Louw calls the translator a man of learning, but does not go so far as to specifically claim the author was familiar with classical rhetoric.³¹³ When he discusses the rhetorical style of LXX-Isa 1 he frames it as how it would have been understood, not as deliberately put into a certain style.³¹⁴ He points out some features of this chapter that explicitly go against what rhetorical handbooks require: namely, the translation contains several *clausulae* (ending a clause or sentence with a poetic foot) which is considered bad form for prose texts.³¹⁵ Van der Louw says the translator was not following the rules of a rhetorical handbook, but was making common sense changes to make the text natural and understandable.³¹⁶ But, he also points out some examples where the translator has made changes that show a concern for eloquence, such as avoiding repeating lexemes in 1:9 and 26, in accordance to Greek style.³¹⁷ Van der Louw believes the translator stays close to the Hebrew text as a part of his translation method, not because he is incompetent.³¹⁸

Ronald L. Troxel has examined the scholarship of Alexandria to better understand how the scholarship of the Museum gives insight into LXX translation.³¹⁹ He says the translator appears to be well educated, since he knows enough about Greek literature to write in its style.³²⁰ Troxel prefers the view that the LXX-Isaiah translator is best understood in terms of a dragoman,³²¹ but does not discuss what this entails about the probable education level of the translator, or whether features in LXX-Isaiah reflect this. He does, however, discuss some methods used in the translation that are parallel to those used by Alexandrian scholars (*γραμματικοί*). Troxel talks about etymology and analogy, using the terms nearly synonymously,³²² as van der Kooij has pointed out, these are two different techniques used by

³¹¹ Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, 125-26.

³¹² More recently Baer has commented on LXX-Isa’s large and diverse vocabulary, which seems to exceed that of other LXX translators. Baer, *When We all Go Home*, 281.

³¹³ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 246.

³¹⁴ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 155-57.

³¹⁵ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 156.

³¹⁶ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 244-45.

³¹⁷ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 244.

³¹⁸ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 246.

³¹⁹ Ronald L. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation: The Strategies of the Translator of the Septuagint of Isaiah* (JSJSup 124; Leiden: Brill, 2008). See especially Chapter Two: “Alexandria and the LXX.”

³²⁰ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, 132.

³²¹ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, 71.

³²² Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, 107-13.

Alexandrian γραμματικοί.³²³ Another method Troxel describes which is parallel to those of the Alexandrian scholars is the principle of *adagium* or “Ὁμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου, interpreting a text in light of the text or analogous textual parallels.”³²⁴ He says:

The form of contextual interpretation we have seen him [the LXX-Isa translator] engage in by drawing on passages in the Torah is quite explicable under the hypothesis of his familiarity with the work of the Alexandrian γραμματικοί and accords with the use of intertextuality as an interpretative ploy in other Jewish compositions of the Hellenistic era.³²⁵

So, Troxel too thinks the translator was well educated, and that he employed some of the methods used by the Alexandrian γραμματικοί in his translation.

Another hint of this is pointed out by van der Kooij, namely, that LXX-Isa 33:18 uses the unusual equivalent γραμματικοί for פִּרְשֵׁי.³²⁶ This shows the translator’s familiarity with these elite scholars, and van der Kooij suggests that the translator thought of himself as an expert like the Alexandrian γραμματικοί, except he was an elite expert of the Jewish writings.³²⁷ This is similar to how LXX-Dan portrays the training of Daniel and the three youths, they are described as γραμματικοί in Dan 1:4 and in 1:17 are said to be blessed in their ability with the γραμματικῆ τέχνη, a technical Alexandrian term for expertise in reading and interpreting texts.³²⁸

Mirjam van der Vorm-Croughs’ exhaustive study of pluses and minus in LXX-Isa has shown many examples where the translator’s concern for good style can be clearly seen.³²⁹ She carefully notes all the pluses that improve rhetorical figures, such as: inclusio, anaphora, epiphora, reduplicatio, annominatio, polyptoton, synonymia, and so forth.³³⁰ While many of these rhetorical figures described with classical terminology also exist in the Hebrew Bible and could have been known simply through knowledge of Biblical literature, the minuses of LXX-Isa more clearly suggest the translator was influenced by Greek rhetorical sensibilities. As van der Vorm-Croughs points out, Greek rhetoric tended to avoid over-ornamentation

³²³ Arie van der Kooij, “Review of Ronald L. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation etc.*,” *BIOSCS* 42 (2009), 148.

³²⁴ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, 150-51.

³²⁵ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, 151.

³²⁶ Arie van der Kooij, *Textzeugen des Jesajabuches: Ein Beitrag zur Textgeschichte des Alten Testaments* (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 35; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 63. Arie van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre: The Septuagint of Isaiah XXIII as Version and Vision* (VTSup LXXI; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 115.

³²⁷ van der Kooij, “The Septuagint and Alexandrian Scholarship,” 502. van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 63-65.

³²⁸ Arie van der Kooij, “The City of Alexandria and the Ancient Versions of the Hebrew Bible,” *JNSL* 25.1 (1999), 142. van der Kooij, “The Septuagint and Alexandrian Scholarship,” 502. van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 63-65. van der Kooij, *Oracle of Tyre*, 115.

³²⁹ Mirjam van der Vorm-Croughs, “The Old Greek of Isaiah: An Analysis of its Pluses and Minuses” (PhD diss., Universiteit Leiden, 2010). See especially chapter 7. A short version of this research can also be found in the article: Mirjam van der Vorm-Croughs, “LXX Isaiah and the Use of Rhetorical Figures,” in *The Old Greek of Isaiah: Issues and Perspectives* (eds. Arie van der Kooij and Michaël N. van der Meer; Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology 55; Leuven: Peeters, 2010): 173-88.

³³⁰ For the section on pluses that improve the rhetorical style, see van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 142-75.

(κακόζηλια), particularly repetition (*homoeologia*), and likewise the translator has removed many examples of different sorts of repetition.³³¹ Hebrew poetic and rhetorical assumptions, on the other hand, rather like repetition of all sorts. Van der Vorm-Crouchs only goes so far as to say that this evidence supports the assumption that the translator had some familiarity with classical rhetoric, as he was a learned man.³³²

All these studies taken together suggest there is good reason to believe that the LXX-Isa translator (and many of the other LXX translators) received a solid Hellenistic education. They also appear to show he was even able to apply some of the techniques used by the Alexandrian γραμματικοί in order to understand his Hebrew text, to express its meaning more clearly, and to improve the style of his translation.

1.3.2. Jewish Views of Metaphor

Older scholarship thought the LXX-Isa translator's understanding of Hebrew was quite bad, but this view has been reevaluated in light of our knowledge of scribal culture and exegetical practices.³³³ In this section we will first briefly describe Jewish scribal culture and its exegesis, and second, we will discuss evidence for how different types of metaphor were understood and interpreted in Early Judaism.

1.3.2.1. Jewish Scribal Culture

Just as in Hellenistic culture, there must have been various degrees of literary or scribal skill in Jewish circles. Some may have had to learn the Hebrew language before learning to read it, and others progressed enough to even write in Hebrew. Since we have even less data about Jewish education at this time period, we will touch on it only briefly before shifting focus to the best and most authoritative scribes in our brief discussion.

How exactly reading Hebrew was being taught at this time is worthy of further research. Studies addressing the issue typically survey information from the Talmud and Josephus and assume it applies to this earlier period.³³⁴ Applying this information to the situation in Egypt is even more difficult. The typical description of learning to read Hebrew is that after learning the alphabet backwards and forwards they would then begin learning to read words and sample exercises, such as the Shema and Hallel, learning to read words in their contexts to pick the proper meaning, and also memorizing the sentence, its meaning, and translation.³³⁵ Then they would move on to reading the Pentateuch, either Genesis 1-5 or

³³¹ van der Vorm-Crouchs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 203.

³³² van der Vorm-Crouchs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 204, 409.

³³³ See van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 66.

³³⁴ Nathan Drazin, *History of Jewish Education from 515 B.C.E. to 220 C.E.: (During the Periods of the Second Commonwealth and the Tannaim)* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940). And Eliezer Ebner, *Elementary Education in Ancient Israel: During the Tannaitic Period (10-220 C.E.)* (New York: Bloch, 1956).

³³⁵ Drazin, *History of Jewish Education*, 81-82. Ebner, *Elementary Education*, 75-77.

Leviticus 1-8, again learning the meaning and to translate it, and learning the grammar as they proceeded.³³⁶ This seems feasible for boys who spoke Aramaic, heard Biblical Hebrew in Synagogue each week, and perhaps knew some Late Hebrew as well. But it seems doubtful this pedagogy would have worked very well in Egypt if conducted in Greek.³³⁷ A Greek speaking student lacking knowledge of Aramaic would have a much more difficult time learning vocabulary and understanding how the grammar and syntax worked, since there probably was no systematic description of Hebrew Grammar.

The question of how Jews in Egypt could have learned to read the Hebrew Bible has provided the context for a model of the origin of the LXX. This model, known as the “Interlinear Paradigm,” suggests that the LXX is dependent and subservient linguistically to the Hebrew text, and that it arises out of the need for a crib translation to aid in learning Hebrew.³³⁸ To support this theory, bilingual Greek-Latin texts used in schools in antiquity are described.³³⁹ The Interlinear Paradigm has been criticized on several grounds.³⁴⁰ Relevant to the topic of education, Troxel points out that the bilingual texts mentioned are not explanations of the parent text, but are rhetorical exercises in expressing the same thoughts in vernacular language.³⁴¹ Joosten says we have no evidence of any Greek-Hebrew texts, but on the contrary, the earliest Hellenistic Greek writers we know about living in Egypt are already reading the LXX as a text in its own right.³⁴² Another problem Joosten describes, is that if the LXX is a crib for learning the Hebrew, how is it that in some places the Greek is unintelligible on its own (as Pietersma likes to point out)³⁴³ and is dependent on the Hebrew to be understood?³⁴⁴

³³⁶ Drazin, *History of Jewish Education*, 81-82. Ebner, *Elementary Education*, 77-78.

³³⁷ Drazin assumes the situation in Egypt was the same as in Palestine, only in Greek instead of Aramaic. He even thinks Philo knew Hebrew but quotes the LXX because it is more convenient as he is writing in Greek. Drazin, *History of Jewish Education*, 84.

³³⁸ Albert Pietersma, “A New Paradigm for Addressing Old Questions: The Relevance of the Interlinear Model for the Study of the Septuagint,” in *Bible and Computer: The Stellenbosch AIBI-6 Conference. Proceedings of the Association Internationale Bible et Informatique “From Alpha to Byte”*. University of Stellenbosch 17-21 July, 2000 (ed. Johann Cook; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 350, 360.

³³⁹ Pietersma, “A New Paradigm for Addressing Old Questions,” 346-48.

³⁴⁰ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 65-71. Jan Joosten, “Reflections on the ‘Interlinear Paradigm’ in Septuagint Studies,” in *Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Raija Sollamo* (eds. Anssi Voitila and Jutta Jokiranta; Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 126; Leiden: Brill, 2008): 163-78. And Takamitsu Muraoka, “Recent Discussions on the Septuagint Lexicography with Special Reference to the So-called Interlinear Model,” in *Die Septuaginta—Text, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 20.-23. Juli 2006* (eds. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008): 221-35. Pietersma’s response to Muraoka can be found at: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/discussion/pietersma-re-muraoka.html>

³⁴¹ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 68.

³⁴² Joosten, “Reflections on the ‘Interlinear Paradigm,’” 170-71.

³⁴³ Pietersma, “A New Paradigm,” 350-51.

³⁴⁴ Joosten, “Reflections on the ‘Interlinear Paradigm,’” 172-73. Pietersma strongly states that the Greek in places only makes sense in light of the Hebrew. For example, see Pietersma, “A New Paradigm,” 350-51.

Cameron Boyd-Taylor has delineated the presuppositions of the Interlinear Paradigm and provided a theoretical framework for it.³⁴⁵ He clarifies that the paradigm is not meant to propose the actual existence of an interlinear text, but to be a way of conceptualizing the Greek's dependence on and subservience to the Hebrew.³⁴⁶ He argues that the translators used norms of translation proper to school texts,³⁴⁷ but unfortunately does not take Troxel's criticism into account, that the bi-lingual texts referred to by proponents of the Interlinear Paradigm were written by the students, not used by them as cribs.³⁴⁸

Muraoka objects to the theory on lexicographical grounds; he jests that he does not assume the LXX was meant to be read as an aid in learning Hebrew, as in a modern university;³⁴⁹ which raises an important issue: can we assume Jews in Alexandria would have learned to read Hebrew with Greek instruction (and also already know how to read Greek)? It seems more logical that they would have learned the language (if they did not know even Aramaic) before learning to read it.³⁵⁰ In the case of the LXX translators, they appear not only to have knowledge of Biblical Hebrew, but also of Aramaic and Late Hebrew, since they sometimes give definitions from these languages for Biblical Hebrew words.³⁵¹ But for the general Jewish population in Egypt, we do not know if they even learned Hebrew; the success of the LXX is generally believed to be based on the fact that Egyptian Jews mostly could not read Hebrew.

More can be said regarding the elite Jewish scribal culture in this period. Whereas there was a religious element to the literary studies of the Alexandrian scholars,³⁵² for them the texts they studied were not normative the way the biblical books were for the Jews. Arie van der Kooij has shown that in the second century BCE "the law, prophets, and other books," as ben Sirach calls them, were highly regarded as the ancient and ancestral basis for the Jewish religion and culture.³⁵³ Van der Kooij shows that part of why these books were held in

³⁴⁵ Cameron Boyd-Taylor, *Reading Between the Lines: The Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies* (Biblical Tools and Studies 8; Leuven: Peeters, 2011). Unfortunately, it does not address the criticism of the Interlinear Paradigm.

³⁴⁶ Boyd-Taylor, *Reading Between the Lines*, 52-4, 91.

³⁴⁷ Boyd-Taylor, *Reading Between the Lines*, 317, 327, 341-352. This as opposed to the norms used by dragoman or legal/official translators.

³⁴⁸ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 68.

³⁴⁹ Muraoka, "Recent Discussions on the Septuagint Lexicography," 226.

³⁵⁰ Quintilian 1.1.12-14 assumes Latin speaking students learn not just to read Greek but to speak it.

³⁵¹ For the use of Aramaic definitions of Hebrew words see van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 69. For Late Hebrew definitions of Biblical Hebrew words see Jan Joosten, "The Knowledge and Use of Hebrew in the Hellenistic Period Qumran and the Septuagint," in *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (eds. Takamitsu Muraoka and J.F. Elwolde; Studies in the Texts of the Desert of Judah 36; Leiden: Brill, 2000): 115-30.

³⁵² Remember the Museum was a shrine for the Muses.

³⁵³ Arie van der Kooij, "Authoritative Scriptures and Scribal Culture," in *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism* (ed. Mladen Popović; Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism Vol 141; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 55-56.

high esteem is because they were regarded as ancestral and were kept in the Temple.³⁵⁴ In addition, he shows that these books were regarded as objects of study.

To begin studying these books, the reader would need to have some knowledge of Biblical Hebrew and some training besides just how to pronounce the alphabet to make sense of and interpret the unpointed text.³⁵⁵ Reading, it must be noted, does not mean just understanding what the text says, but is about understanding the text from careful study and being able to read it out loud so that those who hear can understand.³⁵⁶ This means the reader is not stumbling over words, trying different possible parsings until it makes sense, they can read clearly putting the pronunciation, pauses, accents, and punctuations where they belong.³⁵⁷ Van der Kooij shows that this is the case for the Levites reading the Torah in Neh 8:8 and for Jesus ben Sirach (Wisdom of ben Sirach ln. 7-11), who developed a thorough knowledge of the ancestral books by reading them.³⁵⁸ According to the Letter of Aristeas par. 305 the translators read the law and interpreted it, which van der Kooij has argued, is likely a prerequisite for anyone who would be accepted to translate the Jewish scriptures.³⁵⁹

Developing a familiarity and knowledge of a text naturally means they developed an interpretation of the text, which requires some sort of authority. Van der Kooij argues that there was a hierarchy of authority in interpreting the scriptures, so that the head of the community (someone like Ezra, the High Priest, or the Teacher of Righteousness at Qumran) was the leading scholar who had the authority to say what the text means, whereas at lower levels they could teach this interpretation to others.³⁶⁰ It makes good sense to suppose that the LXX-Isa translator belonged to the Jewish religious elite and had the authority to interpret the meaning of the text as he translated it. As we have seen above, the Greek interest in Homer was largely in its cultural value, and its study in Greek education was in order to hang on to a sense of Greek identity.³⁶¹ The added religious element in the Hebrew classics required not just a skilled critic but someone who had some religious authority.³⁶²

³⁵⁴ van der Kooij, "Authoritative Scriptures and Scribal Culture," 56-57.

³⁵⁵ van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre*, 113. Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 108-9. For Seeligmann's suggested sources of Hebrew knowledge see Isaac Leo Seeligmann, *The Septuagint of Isaiah: A Discussion of its Problems* (eds. Robert Hanhard and Hermann Spieckermann; *Forschungen zum Alten testament* 40; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 195-96 [50-51].

³⁵⁶ van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre*, 112-13.

³⁵⁷ van der Kooij argues that in Neh 8:8, "reading clearly" refers to pronouncing and "giving the sense" refers to intonation and marking clauses and punctuation, van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre*, 116.

³⁵⁸ van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre*, 113.

³⁵⁹ van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre*, 114-15.

³⁶⁰ van der Kooij, "Authoritative Scriptures and Scribal Culture," 61-66.

³⁶¹ Criboire, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 8-9.

³⁶² That this authority could have been the Oniads in Leontopolis, see van der Kooij, "Chapter 3: The Septuagint of Isaiah," in *Law, Prophets, and Wisdom*, 63-85.

1.3.2.2. Metaphor in Early Judaism

As far as we know, there was no Early Jewish handbook on rhetoric. In this brief survey we gather some evidence of ideas about metaphor, or at least their use, from the writings of the contemporaries of the LXX-Isa translator and in the following generations.

First, it is worth discussing how the Hebrew Bible understands metaphors; but unfortunately, not much can be said about this. The closest thing to a word for metaphor we know of is **לְשׁוֹן**, but this term is too broad and covers too many quite different phenomena to be very enlightening. Stephen Curkpatrick says **לְשׁוֹן** is used to describe allegory, simile, parable, proverb, riddle, taunt, irony, aphorism, fable, apocalyptic revelation, riddle, similitude, symbol, pseudonym, example, theme, argument, apology, refutation, jest, sovereign saying, and/or word of power.³⁶³ The term at least shows an understanding of the distinction between literal speech and symbolic or representative speech.

The LXX translation of **לְשׁוֹן** complicates rather than clarifies the issue. Most often it is rendered with *παραβόλη* (27x), the first occurrence being in reference to Balaam's "curse" in Num 23:7. Aristotle describes examples (*παράδειγματα*) as either coming from things that have happened (such as Persian kings always securing Egypt before attacking Greece) or from things invented.³⁶⁴ Invented examples can be either *παραβόλη* which are situations that could happen in real life or fables (*λόγος*) which are completely made up.³⁶⁵ This understanding of parable is much more narrow than a *mashal*, and fits quite poorly the situation in Num 23:7. In Stephen Curkpatrick's study showing how unsuitable the translation of *mashal* with parable is, he comments that: "Unlike the Hebrew *mashal* comparison, the rhetorical use of *παραβολή* does not appear to have the same density or resistance to transparent interpretation as the *mashal*. While the *mashal* as simile encompasses metonymic opacity, the rhetorical use of *παραβολή* as simile seeks analogical clarity."³⁶⁶ A parable should be used to explain and illustrate an idea, whereas a *mashal* is an encoded idea that requires consideration to unravel. This translation equivalent is adequate if both terms are understood to be "similitudes," but given the range of meaning *mashal* has, and the rather specific definition parable has, the equivalence is questionable. The LXX-Isa translator, at least, in the one place **לְשׁוֹן** occurred (Isa 14:4) rendered based on what exactly it meant in that particular context: *θρήνος*, a dirge (this of course does not mean he was aware of or concerned about the problems in translating **לְשׁוֹן** with the rhetorical term *παραβόλη*).

For Ben Sirach too, the *παραβόλη* is not a trope that illustrates or communicates an idea but one that encodes and hides an idea and must be engaged and interpreted. This is seen especially in 39:1-3, where the study of the Law of God by a sage is described. The sage must seek out the wisdom of the ancients, occupy himself with prophecies (*ἐν προφητείας*

³⁶³ Curkpatrick, "Between Mashal and Parable," 58-59.

³⁶⁴ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 2.20.2-3.

³⁶⁵ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 2.20.4-5.

³⁶⁶ Curkpatrick, "Between Mashal and Parable," 67.

ἀσχοληθήσεται), treasure the sayings of the famous, penetrate the intricacies of parables (ἐν στροφαῖς παραβολῶν συνεισελεύσεται), search out the hidden meanings of proverbs (ἀπόκρυφα παροιμιῶν ἐκζητήσεται), and engage with the enigmas of parables (ἐν αἰνίγμασι παραβολῶν ἀναστραφήσεται). This study of the ancestral books is very different from what was done by the Greeks in Alexandria. Ben Sirach does not talk about textual criticism, the poetics or rhetoric, the history, chronology, or other matters that the grammatikoi of Alexandria were concerned with (and even the Jewish Hellenistic writers we saw above). For Ben Sirach, the study of these books is a search to understand the meaning and wisdom, not that has been lost to time, but has been preserved by the wise and is gathered by those who seek to be wise. The αἰνίγμασι παραβολῶν (see also the similar phrase in 47:15) is not a trope but a mystery or riddle; Siegert shows that in Hellenistic interpretation, αἰνίγμα is a riddle where “the words do not mean what they seem to mean, but are there for the sake of a hidden meaning to be found through some art of decoding.”³⁶⁷ In Num 21:27 the authors of an ancient song about Heshbon are referred to as מְלִי־שִׁבְנֵה which the LXX renders as οἱ αἰνιγματισταί. While this is a literal rendering, it suggests that the song in the following verses was not understood by the translators simply as a fragment of epic poetry but as some kind of riddle containing a hidden meaning.³⁶⁸

Another informative piece of information comes from Aristobulus. It should be admitted that the fragments that have come down to us are related by Eusebius of Caesarea, Clement, and Anatolius who may have paraphrased or adjusted the quotes.³⁶⁹ According to Siegert, Aristobulus uses μεταφέρειν in the sense of the solutions to tropes, and not allegorization, and uses other vocabulary to talk about allegorical and higher meanings.³⁷⁰ In fragment two, Aristobulus explains to the king why Moses talks about divine power in terms of hands, arm, visage, feet, and the ability to walk.³⁷¹ He warns that these things should be interpreted in their natural (φυσικῶς) sense, and not in a mythical or common way of thinking.³⁷² While he could, in theory, have explained these things rhetorically, as metaphors or anthropomorphisms (cf. Adrian, who describes these metaphors as stylistic peculiarities characteristic of Hebrew thought),³⁷³ perhaps because it is a religious text or due to his purpose in writing this book, he explains them in allegorical terms, saying they signify

³⁶⁷ Siegert, “Early Jewish Interpretation in a Hellenistic style,” 139.

³⁶⁸ Cf. Psalms 78(77), which describes itself as a mashal (parable in Greek) yet is essentially a rehearsal of history from the Exodus to the building of the temple.

³⁶⁹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. III: Aristobulus*, 43-45. Niehoff accuses Eusebius and Clement of introducing the term “allegory” to the fragments, Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis*, 59.

³⁷⁰ Siegert, “Early Jewish interpretation in a Hellenistic style,” 161.

³⁷¹ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. III: Aristobulus*, 135. This fragment comes from Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, 8.9.38-10.18a.

³⁷² Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. III: Aristobulus*, 135. *Praeparatio Evangelica* 8.10.2. See note 31 for Holladay’s explanation of his translation (which I follow) of φυσικῶς.

³⁷³ Adriani, *ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΗ ΕΙΣ ΤΑΣ ΘΕΙΑΣ ΓΡΑΦΑΣ*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus Series Graeca* 98, (ed. J.P. Migne; Paris 1865).

(σημαίνεται) divine power.³⁷⁴ He then explains how even in common speech the hands of a king can be used to refer to his power; he says that we can think metaphorically of all men's strength and actions in their hands.³⁷⁵ Aristobulus then says that Moses did well in speaking metaphorically in an expanded sense, talking about God's deeds as his hands (διόπερ καλῶς ὁ νομοθέτης ἐπὶ τὸ μεγαλεῖον μετενήνοχε, λέγων τὰς συντελείας χείρας εἶναι θεοῦ).³⁷⁶ So it seems in some ways the difference for Aristobulus between metaphor as simply a way of speaking (a trope) and the words of a text having a spiritual or allegorical meaning is slight; or at least that the relationship between the text and its allegorical meaning is analogous to how metaphors function. In fragment five, after saying the seventh day of rest can be understood in a deeper sense as the first day, since it is the origin of light through which all things are seen, he says that the same can be applied metaphorically to wisdom, since light issues from it.³⁷⁷ So again a higher, allegorical sense is spoken of next to the possibility of speaking metaphorically in the same terms.

While Aristobulus explains what moderns might call anthropomorphisms as allegories, Aristeas sees allegories where no modern would see any sort of trope. In par. 143 he says that the dietary laws were given for a deep or profound reason (λόγον βαθύν) and proceeds to explain how the different sorts of animals permitted or prohibited symbolize (par. 148, σημειοῦσθαι), for men of understanding, how to live morally.³⁷⁸ He also says in par. 150 that the regulations concerning what can be eaten are put forth by way of allegory (τροπολογῶν ἐκτέθειται).³⁷⁹ Aristeas, then, seems to be in line with the sage of Ben Sirach, and is searching out hidden meanings, but he is seeing symbols where no rhetorical device is being employed.

Aristobulus, Ben Sirach, and Aristeas were all likely Jews who attained a high level of Hellenistic education, undoubtedly at least as high as the LXX translators. Yet in the material we have from them, they do not approach the Hebrew Bible (or the Greek, as the case may be) with rigid Hellenistic ideas about tropes but with an interest in hidden allegorical meanings to the various symbols used. Metaphors, then, may not have always been understood as tropes (even by those well trained in rhetoric) but as symbols encoding a hidden meaning.

³⁷⁴ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. III: Aristobulus*, 135. Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, 8.10.1. That this refers not to a trope but to an extended meaning, or sensus plenior, see Siegert, "Early Jewish interpretation in a Hellenistic style," 156-57, 161. Niehoff, however, believes Aristobulus is in fact interpreting it as metaphorical speech, and is not interpreting allegorically. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis*, 68-71.

³⁷⁵ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. III: Aristobulus*, 139. *Praeparatio Evangelica* 8.10.8.

³⁷⁶ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. III: Aristobulus*, 138-39. *Praeparatio Evangelica* 8.10.9. In note 38, page 209 Holladay explains that Aristobulus uses τὸ μεγαλεῖον to refer to a greater, that is allegorical, sense.

³⁷⁷ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol. III: Aristobulus*, 178-79. *Praeparatio Evangelica* 13.12.10 and 7.14.1.

³⁷⁸ See also in par. 150-51.

³⁷⁹ For more on the exegesis of this letter, see Siegert, "Early Jewish interpretation in a Hellenistic style," 143-54.

This search for hidden meanings could be connected to some Hellenistic ideas, such as stoic allegorical exegesis,³⁸⁰ but it also has strong affinities with the pesher interpretations of Qumran and the explicating tendencies of the Targumim. Michael Fishbane has shown that the interpretive techniques used in pesher material are similar to those used for interpreting oracles, scripture, and dreams,³⁸¹ and have similar hermeneutical features to those used both in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia as well as within the Hebrew Bible itself.³⁸² One technique important in the context of metaphors is that in pesher Habakkuk symbols are interpreted typologically; for example לבנון is interpreted as referring to the sect.³⁸³

Similar to pesher, as mentioned above, is the exegesis of the Targum.³⁸⁴ Unlike the documents so far addressed, the Targum is a translation (of sorts) of the Hebrew Bible and so provides data on how specific metaphors were understood. The metaphors in Targum Jonathan of the Prophets, to which we will frequently refer to compare alternate translation strategies, have been studied by Pinkhos Churgin.³⁸⁵ He concludes: “The targumist made it a principle to render not the metaphor but what it represents, the event described and not the description. It is the purpose which is of chief import to him.”³⁸⁶ This feature of Targum Jonathan is well known, that it aims to explain the meaning of the text and not simply to translate it. When discussing metaphors, then, we should expect the Targum to translate the metaphor with a non-metaphor, that is, with what the metaphor represents. But Churgin shows how the Targum still takes up various strategies to render metaphors.

Parabolic metaphors, he says, are stripped of their parabolic nature by having their “underpoetical parallels” rendered,³⁸⁷ that is, the Targum substitutes the vehicle³⁸⁸ for what it represents; sometimes both are given, the vehicle being introduced by the phrase דמהו דמא: “which is equal.”³⁸⁹ He provides as examples Ezek 19:3, 6, where lions are replaced in the

³⁸⁰ For an introduction to stoic allegorical exegesis see: Siegert, “Early Jewish interpretation in a Hellenistic style,” 131-35. On Aristobulus’ allegorical method’s similarity to stoic thought, see Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors Vol.3*, 178f.

³⁸¹ The similarity of pesher to oracle and dream interpretation is also pointed out by Johann Maier, “Early Jewish Biblical Interpretation in the Qumran Literature,” in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Interpretation: Vol 1 From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages (Until 1300)* (ed. Magne Sæbø; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 127-28; and William H. Brownlee, *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk* (Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 24; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979), 26-31.

³⁸² Michael A. Fishbane, “The Qumran pesher and traits of ancient hermeneutics,” in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies, vol 1, held at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1973* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1977), 97-98. The six features Fishbane points out can undoubtedly be found in LXX-Isa as well, with the exception of gematria.

³⁸³ Fishbane, “The Qumran pesher and traits of ancient hermeneutics,” 99. This interpretation occurs in 1QpHab XII:3f.

³⁸⁴ On the possibility that they both have their root in orally explaining scripture as it is read, see Brownlee, *The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk*, 34.

³⁸⁵ Pinkhos Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927).

³⁸⁶ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 85.

³⁸⁷ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 85.

³⁸⁸ We will describe terminology below. *Vehicle* refers to the language adopted in a metaphor, whereas *Tenor* is what the vehicle represents.

³⁸⁹ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 85.

Targum by kings, and Ezek 23:2, 5 where daughters and lovers are replaced by cities, and playing the harlot by erring from God's worship.³⁹⁰

Churgin shows how the comparative metaphor, or similitude, in Ezek 31:3-15, which compares Assyria to a cedar in Lebanon, is rendered by the Targum as a description of the greatness and strength of Assyria.³⁹¹

The poetical metaphor, "forms of expression given in objects of nature," again has the tenor rendered instead of the vehicle.³⁹² Sometimes a simile is still present to give the vehicle, though not usually.³⁹³ An example, without simile, is Isa 2:13, where cedars and oaks are rendered as princes and tyrants.³⁹⁴

The simile is usually rendered with what it is thought to represent, followed by a translation of the simile (Isa 8:6, 7; cf. van der Louw strategy number 5).³⁹⁵ Sometimes the Targum assumes a passage is a comparative metaphor, so renders in this same way (Ezek 2:6).³⁹⁶

Symbolic expressions (Isa 6:6; Ezek 2:8) are rendered literally, yet some metaphors are rendered as if they were allegories in a Midrashic way (Amos 4:14).³⁹⁷ Another common Targum strategy is to add exegetical complements to clarify terse metaphoric speech (Mal 1:4, Jer 17:4).³⁹⁸

Churgin also points out how certain words, "though not metaphorical, bear a poetical stamp, and in reality convey more or less the **idea** of the meaning than the meaning itself."³⁹⁹ These words, which seem to be sort of dead metaphors, typically have their underlying value rendered, rather than their surface meaning. The examples given are "bring" becoming "exile" in Ezek 12:13; and "therefore the land will mourn" becoming "therefore the land will be laid waste" in Hos 4:3, etc.⁴⁰⁰

Comparing these translations to other versions, Churgin says that the LXX does not practice the allegorical or metaphorical strategies the Targum uses.⁴⁰¹ But it does, at times, use exegetical complements as well as the lexical principle (giving the idea of the meaning rather than the word's surface meaning).⁴⁰² Further research is needed to determine to what extent the interpretation of metaphors in the Targum is a separate activity or in continuity with

³⁹⁰ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 86.

³⁹¹ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 86.

³⁹² Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 86.

³⁹³ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 86-87.

³⁹⁴ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 87.

³⁹⁵ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 87.

³⁹⁶ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 87.

³⁹⁷ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 88.

³⁹⁸ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 88-89. He goes on to describe how this principle is also applied to repetition.

³⁹⁹ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 90.

⁴⁰⁰ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 90.

⁴⁰¹ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 90-91.

⁴⁰² Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 91.

how the prophecies themselves are interpreted. Perhaps when the language of the metaphor is preserved in a simile the translator shows he considers the rhetorical figure important though still in need of clarification.

To conclude our brief look at metaphor in early Judaism, it would appear that it did not hold its own place. If we consider deciphering symbols or unraveling mysteries in the context of interpreting a prophetic book, then actualizing exegesis (typology as Fishbane calls it) and giving the meaning of a metaphor could operate along the same continuum of the sage's searching out the meaning of enigmas. An example, which will be discussed below, is the interpretation of the vineyard in Isa 5 verses the interpretation of the vineyard in Isa 27; the first works on the metaphorical level and is explained already in the Hebrew, while the later is deciphered in the Greek to represent Jerusalem under siege. Making explicit what a metaphor says is an easier riddle than giving what contemporary event the prophet is thought to predict (even if the prophet did not know the *true* interpretation of his prophecy). The Targum's tendency to interpret and make explicit both metaphors and the referents of prophecies are likely two closely related parts of the same impulse or interpretive program. As stated above, מִשְׁלָּה is much broader than the idea of metaphors or tropes, but in practice seems to govern how tropes were understood and interpreted as well as proverbs, allegories, parables, riddles, taunts, irony, aphorisms, fables, apocalyptic revelations, riddles, similitudes, symbols, etc.

1.3.2.3. Early Jewish Views of Metaphor in LXX-Isaiah

It is undoubtedly possible to find examples in LXX-Isa of metaphors treated in ways consistent with the methods used in Qumran,⁴⁰³ by Hellenistic Jews,⁴⁰⁴ or even within the Hebrew Bible itself. But here we will content ourselves with the comparison of LXX-Isa to the Targum. This is a more suitable comparison in that both texts are translations (of sorts) and since the Targum represents a more developed stage of Jewish exegesis and its interpretive tendency is very well known. In addition, van der Kooij, as we have shown (1.1.2.), has already pointed out various similarities between how LXX-Isa and the Targum render metaphors.⁴⁰⁵ In this section, then, we will show a few examples van der Kooij has pointed out to demonstrate how the LXX at times translates metaphors in a Targumic fashion.

The method described by Churgin, where the translator gives the object represented by the metaphor yet stays close to the words of the original, is particularly striking.⁴⁰⁶ In 1:25 the LXX stays close to many of the words of the Hebrew and yet interprets the imagery, giving instead what he thinks the refining metaphor represents: burning to bring purity and to remove

⁴⁰³ We will mention the similarity between LXX-Isa 10:33-34 and Damascus Document II.19 in section 2.6.2.

⁴⁰⁴ Such as interpreting the metaphor in 10:12 by metonymy as does Aristobulus of the hand metaphor in fragment 2.

⁴⁰⁵ van der Kooij, "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language," 179-85.

⁴⁰⁶ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 86. See below in IV.B.1.c. for more examples of LXX-Isa using this method.

the wicked.⁴⁰⁷ To do this, he adds a phrase in the first part of the verse that is suggested in the Hebrew (the destruction of the disobedient), and also adds a clause in the second part of the verse that explains what he thinks will happen to the wicked. As van der Kooij points out,⁴⁰⁸ the Targum has a similar interpretation to the passage: that God will cleanse them of the wicked and remove their sinners, though it uses a different method of rendering the metaphor. A similar translation technique can be seen in LXX-Isa 8:6-8, where the rendering is close to the Hebrew, but certain words have been interpreted to give the meaning of the metaphor.⁴⁰⁹ This is seen particularly in 8:7, where once the rising river is said to represent the king of Assyria in both the Hebrew and the Greek, the LXX interprets the bursting of the river banks as the king walking over every wall. In the next verse, the water rising to the neck is interpreted in the LXX as the king removing everyone “who can lift his head,” and the Targum interprets as the king passing over everything, even the head of the country: Jerusalem. We have already seen the example of 22:22-25 which van der Kooij analyzed (1.1.2.),⁴¹⁰ here again, though, the translation stays close to the Hebrew while interpreting the metaphors so as to give their meaning. The Targum gives a similar interpretation, that the peg represents authority.

These examples demonstrate van der Kooij’s assertions that LXX-Isa and the Targum share a similar approach to metaphors and sometimes even make similar interpretations of them. This positions LXX-Isa within the tradition of Jewish interpretation of metaphors, anticipating some methods to be used more extensively later. We will discuss further similarities in section 4.2.1.

1.3.3. Summary and Conclusions

This brief survey of ancient views of metaphors has attempted to show some of the Hellenistic and Jewish context of LXX-Isa’s translator. Here we will summarize what we have seen, first for the Hellenistic context, then the Jewish, and will draw some conclusions about what sort of assumptions we can make about how the translator probably thought about metaphors.

The Greeks had sophisticated descriptions of tropes and metaphors in several schools of philosophy, which remained stable (apart from elaboration of details and a refinement of distinctions) at least from Aristotle through the time period of the LXX-Isa translator. Based on what we know about the process of learning to read and write Greek at this time period, it is likely that the LXX-Isa translator was exposed to these descriptions of tropes throughout

⁴⁰⁷ For Ziegler’s analysis of this passage, see *Untersuchungen*, 81.

⁴⁰⁸ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 181.

⁴⁰⁹ For Ziegler’s analysis of this passage, see *Untersuchungen*, 62.

⁴¹⁰ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 183. For Ziegler’s analysis of this passage, see *Untersuchungen*, 86-87.

his Greek education.⁴¹¹ In addition, in Hellenistic education, the processes of reading was inextricably bound with the process of interpretation at a certain level; the LXX translators would have been trained to read very closely, looking at entire sentences and passages as well as at its individual parts to find the intended meaning. They would have been trained to notice tropes and to interpret their meaning and evaluate their use. They would have learned how to find the meaning of obscure words by examining their context and usage in other passages, and would have been used to having difficult words explained by etymology and synonyms. Then, on top of this training just to read, some students had some further training in literary criticism so that they could proficiently read literary and poetic works.

We have also looked at the most elite Greek intellectuals of the time and at the sort of scholarship that was being done, and showed some of the known examples of Jews who did similar work and operated in the same circles. That there were Jews in the most elite scholarly circles suggests that there were many more who attained various levels of education short of reaching the white halls of the Museum. We also collected some observations that have been made by LXX scholars which point out features that betray the translators' knowledge of Hellenistic literature and stylistic sensibilities. We can conclude, based on external evidence, that the LXX translators in general would have had access to high levels of Hellenistic education, and, based on internal evidence, that the translator of LXX-Isa in particular had a solid Greek education.

Having a Greek education entails some knowledge of Greek literature. In this study we will at times compare specific plant metaphors to those found in Classical Greek works. We do not intend to imply that the translator necessarily knew these particular pieces of literature, though he may have, but only to show that a given metaphor would not have sounded too absurd or strange in Greek, since a renowned native speaker used a similar metaphor. Likewise we will often mention Theophrastus' works on botany; our intention is not to suggest that the translator had read Theophrastus (though if he had wanted to read a book on botany, Theophrastus would have been the most readily available and complete work), but we refer to it as a source for plant terminology and as an insight into the ideas people in that day had about various plants.

What ideas about tropes and metaphors the LXX-Isa translator may have had from his Jewish context is a more complex question and requires further research to clarify. Not much is known about Jewish education or how people learned to read Hebrew at this period. We saw that the highly educated Jewish scribes also read their texts very closely, had extensive knowledge of their texts (and their meaning), and some even had the authority to offer interpretations of the text. Within the Bible and its early interpretive traditions, there appears to be a distinction between literal and representative ways of speaking. Interpreting symbols was very much a part of Jewish scribal culture, even if the difference between a symbolic

⁴¹¹ As claimed in Aitken, "The Significance of Rhetoric in the Greek Pentateuch," 508.

literary device (or trope) and a symbolic enigma or allegory was not explicitly described. Based on some examples comparing how LXX-Isa and the Targum interpret metaphors, we saw that LXX-Isa fits within the trajectory of later Jewish interpretive traditions.

The attempt to contextualize the possible ideas about metaphor to which the translator may have been exposed, has provided some information about what sort of person the translator may have been. The older view, that the translator was some enthusiastic and determined amateur who managed to produce (and have accepted and copied by others) a complete translation of Isaiah, despite having a rather poor knowledge of Hebrew, has rightly been rejected.⁴¹² Also, it should be considered anachronistic to suppose that the LXX translators approached the Hebrew text one word at a time with no regard for the meaning of the sentence or the passage as a whole; this goes against the way they were trained to read Greek and there is no evidence that this is the way people were being trained to read Hebrew.⁴¹³ Likewise the dragoman model has been rightfully criticized;⁴¹⁴ while it helps explain some of the literal translation techniques, a dragoman presumably would have avoided creating difficulties in his translation.⁴¹⁵ Troxel's suggestion that the LXX-Isa translator should be understood in the milieu of Alexandrian scholarship is helpful.⁴¹⁶ As we have seen, the LXX-Isa translator appears to have received a good Hellenistic education. We have also seen examples of Jews writing books similar to those written by the elite Alexandrian *γραμματικοί*, such as the historical and textual investigations written by Demetrius the Chronographer, Eupolemus, Cleodemus Malchus, and the others. But LXX-Isa, on the other hand, is a translation of a book of prophecy, a very different genre than what interested the Alexandrian *γραμματικοί*, who were generally not interested in oracles or translation but focused on studying and writing literary and historical texts and commentaries.

Regarding the LXX-Isa translator's knowledge of tropes, we should expect him to know a fair amount about Greek rhetoric, but not be surprised if he does not explicitly use it, but rather works like the other Hellenistic Jews we surveyed. If the translator were to think explicitly about metaphors, it is likely that he would think about them in the Hellenistic terms of his time, but he would not have felt compelled to rigidly follow rhetorical handbooks when preparing his translation. He probably had some concern for Greek style, but interpreted primarily as a Jewish scribe. In the conclusions of this study we will gather some examples

⁴¹² Ottley held that the translator's knowledge of Hebrew was deficient. R. R. Ottley, *The Book of Isaiah According to the Septuagint (Codex Alexandrinus)* (London: C. J. Clay and Sons, 1904), 1.49-50.

⁴¹³ Nor does it accord with later methods for reading Hebrew.

⁴¹⁴ For discussion of the LXX translators working like dragoman, see Rabin, "The Translation Process and the Character of the Septuagint," 1-26; and Elias Bickerman, "The Septuagint as a Translation," in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History part 1* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 9; Leiden, Brill, 1976): 167-200.

⁴¹⁵ For this critique, see Pietersma, "A New Paradigm for Addressing Old Questions," 343-44. Another problem with the dragoman suggestion is the wide range of competency dragomen had; some could barely read and write, others could use sophisticated literary devices.

⁴¹⁶ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 20-25, 38-41.

that could show the translator was following the suggestions of Greek rhetorical handbooks (4.3.). Also, we will give some examples of the translator using methods or making interpretations that place him within the stream of Jewish exegetical tradition (4.2.).

1.4. The Method and Outline of this Study

In this section, first we will describe the terminology adopted in this study. Then we will delimit the scope of the present study. Third, our method will be described, and finally, we will sketch the outline of this study.

1.4.1. Terminology

Having already attempted to describe the context from which the LXX-Isa translator most likely derived his understanding of metaphor (to whatever degree he actively engaged in thinking about it), we must now turn to how we will discuss metaphor. We will draw our terminology and framework for understanding what is happening in the texts from the stream of cognitive metaphor theory (see 1.2.1.), even though the translator undoubtedly did not explicitly think in these terms. Ancient terminology is not completely adequate since Aristotle's definition of a metaphor as the use of a word that belongs to another thing (*Poetics* XXI.7-9) is broad enough to refer to all the figures defined below.

Metaphor: For this study, we will use Janet Soskice's definition of metaphor, which appears to be a nuanced restatement of Aristotle's definition. A metaphor is "speaking about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another."⁴¹⁷ The parts of a metaphor will be described using Richards' terms: the vehicle and the tenor.⁴¹⁸ The *vehicle* is what Aristotle calls the word that belongs to another thing, it is the figurative language used in a metaphor. The *tenor* is the other thing, what the metaphor refers to and what the vehicle represents. For the purposes of this study, metaphor will be described primarily as a rhetorical figure.

Lexicalized Metaphor: A lexicalized or dead metaphor is one that is used so often it has largely lost its metaphorical value and become an extended meaning of the word. Soskice says dead metaphors can be recognized in that there is less tension or dissonance in them than a

⁴¹⁷ Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 49, 53. This is close to the definition in Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 108. He says of metaphor: "it says one thing, it means another."

⁴¹⁸ I use Richards' terms because I find them clear and describe the parts of the metaphor that need to be discussed in this study. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 96-97. Black's terms, "focus" and "frame," are not as useful since they do not address what is meant by the metaphor. Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 28. For a critique of Black, see Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 38-43.

living metaphor, they are more easily paraphrased, and are further removed from the models or cognitive metaphors from which they come.⁴¹⁹

Simile: While similes often lack the force of metaphors, they operate in a similar way, except they offer both the tenor and the vehicle linked in some way, often by a comparative marker.⁴²⁰ In the Hebrew Bible it is difficult to separate metaphors from similes, as D. F. Payne has pointed out. That in Hebrew poetry comparative markers can be dropped by ellipsis does not make matters easier.⁴²¹ Aristotle did not think metaphors and similes were terribly different,⁴²² and Soskice says they can have the same function and differ primarily in grammatical form.⁴²³ It is of note and worthy of further research that the LXX-Isa translator tends to insert a comparative marker if a parallel clause has a simile.⁴²⁴ In general we will identify similes primarily on the basis of whether there is a comparative marker or not.

Metonymy: I use metonymy broadly to include synecdoche. Metonymy uses a word that belongs in some relationship to the thing it is used for, that is, the vehicle has some kind of relationship to the tenor. This relationship could be such things as giving a part for a whole, source for a product, means for an end, an action for its result, and so forth.

Imagery: For the sake of simplicity, imagery will be used to refer to the tropes in general present in a given text unit, as well as, at times, to the domain from which vehicles are drawn.

These definitions are crude, but should provide clear terminology for describing what is happening in the text. Having an overly refined terminology may not be useful in that the translator probably was for the most part working intuitively, unconcerned with whether he was dealing with a dead metaphor or catachresis. Likewise, even if he very carefully followed Aristotle's ideas about rhetoric, it should be remembered that most of Aristotle's examples of metaphor are more properly metonymies or synecdoches.

1.4.2. Scope

The scope of this research is to expand on the findings of Ziegler and van der Kooij by taking a different cross section of metaphors from LXX-Isa. Ziegler noted that the translation

⁴¹⁹ Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 73-74. Kövecses, on the contrary, thinks they are deeply entrenched and closer to how we conceptualize things. Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (2nd ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), xi.

⁴²⁰ Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 106-7 shows that some comparisons can be linked in other ways, such as repeating a word in the two halves.

⁴²¹ D. F. Payne, "A Perspective on the Use of Simile in the OT," *Semitics* 1 (1970), 114.

⁴²² Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 3.4.1.

⁴²³ Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 59.

⁴²⁴ See van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 132-33.

of metaphors is often literal,⁴²⁵ but since he aimed to show how the translator felt free to interpret, the metaphors he presented are mostly those that feature interpretation in their translation. His treatment of similes is more complete, but again his examples focus on the more unexpected renderings. Van der Kooij pointed out some interesting similarities between how the LXX and the Targum of Isaiah interpret metaphors,⁴²⁶ which warrants further investigation.

The cross section of metaphors in LXX-Isaiah that this study takes will be conducted in order to see primarily what can be observed about the translation strategies used for different sorts of metaphors, and what can be observed about how the translator seems to think about metaphors. To accomplish this, a vehicle based approach has been adopted that focuses on plant imagery. The advantage of this approach is that all figurative language concerning different kinds of plants or their parts will be examined, so that how the translator understands the source domain of plants can be seen against how he understands metaphors drawing vehicles from this source domain. Focusing on plant imagery will also allow for gaining insight into how the translator may understand one plant metaphor in light of a similar metaphor elsewhere in the book. This approach should produce an even treatment of metaphors, showing many of the different translation strategies used by the translator, rather than focusing only on the more interpretive renderings.

To build on van der Kooij's work with the metaphors of LXX-Isa, this study will also briefly note how the Targum has rendered each metaphor under consideration. This provides a sort of second opinion for how a metaphor could have been rendered or understood when it differs from the LXX, and where they agree it helps place LXX-Isa within the trajectory of early Jewish interpretative tradition.⁴²⁷ In addition, we will attempt to place LXX-Isa's treatment of metaphors within its Hellenistic context by comparing in the last chapter some of its renderings to the guidelines laid out in Greek Rhetorical handbooks.

1.4.3. Method

In this section we will clarify some principles that guide this study. First we will discuss the assumptions concerning the translator that are adopted. Then we will describe the guiding principles for the analysis of the passages that will be treated.

This study will refer to the translator as "he." This is because it seems most likely that the LXX-Isa translation was done by a man. The singular is used so that it is not thought that

⁴²⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 80.

⁴²⁶ van der Kooij, "The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language," 179-85.

⁴²⁷ Olofsson regarding LXX-Isa (and LXX-Lam) maintains Swete's view that the translators were not acquainted with Palestinian Jewish interpretations of difficult words and contexts. Staffan Olofsson, *The LXX Version: A Guide to the Translation Technique of the Septuagint* (ConBOT 30; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990), 30. Comparing LXX-Isa with the Targum can aid in evaluating this assertion.

we hold to the view that LXX-Isa was translated in parts by different translators.⁴²⁸ While this may have been the case, or a team may have been at work in the translation process like described by van der Louw,⁴²⁹ this study assumes that the book as a whole was translated as a unified project and has common translation techniques and interpretation throughout, and so refers to a singular translator for convenience.

Since this study is about the translation strategies used for metaphors, we seek to compare the Hebrew and Greek texts in order to understand how the translator read the Hebrew text and understood it. In addition to this comparison, we seek to investigate how the translator communicates what the metaphor was thought to represent.⁴³⁰ The question, as each metaphor is analyzed, is: has the translator modified the metaphor in some way, and if so, why?

To analyze the various passages, first of all, we consider what the translator thought the Hebrew meant. At this level we consider possible differences in *Vorlage*. It should be stated that this study approaches the question of *Vorlage* from the perspective that, in general, differences between the LXX-Isa and MT should first be investigated as the possible result of the translator's activity before positing a different *Vorlage*.⁴³¹ Relevant differences from the Dead Sea Scrolls will be noted and places where the LXX may have had a different Hebrew *Vorlage* will be pointed out as we come across them. If a different Hebrew text was read, or the translator understood it differently than modern scholarship understands the text, then we must be careful in evaluating the metaphor as a translation.

In the second place, we must consider why the Greek translation may have deliberately adjusted a metaphor. On this side, there could be cultural or environmental differences, such as different flora or agricultural practices, which prompted the translator to make his metaphors match what his audience would recognize.⁴³² This is why it is at times necessary to see what the translator does both for literal passages involving the terms examined as well as the metaphors that use the terms. An underlying issue is whether the translator identified the Hebrew term as having the same meaning we consider it to have and to what extent his own knowledge of the plant may have affected how he understood the meaning of the metaphor. At this level, whether a metaphor "works" or makes sense in Greek must be taken into account.

⁴²⁸ For an early exponent of multiple translators, see G. Buchanan Gray, "The Greek Version of Isaiah: Is it the Work of a Single Translator?" *The Journal of Theological Studies* 12 (1911): 286-93. For a more recent discussion, see van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 30-31, who argues for one translator.

⁴²⁹ Theo A. van der Louw, "Dictation of the Septuagint Version," *JSJ* 39 (2008): 211-29.

⁴³⁰ This method is adapted from Arie van der Kooij, "Accident or Method? On "Analogical" Interpretation in the Old Greek of Isaiah and in 1QIsa," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* XLIII (1986): 366-76.

⁴³¹ See Emanuel Tov, *The Text-Critical use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* (2nd Ed.; Jerusalem biblical Studies 8; Jerusalem: Simor, 1997), 18, 39-40.

⁴³² LXX-Isa's tendency to update to match the culture of his time is the topic of Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, "Kapital 8. Der alexandrinisch-ägyptische Hintergrund der Js-LXX."

In the third place, theological or hermeneutical considerations should be addressed regarding the translations made. At this level, we look at how a given metaphor was understood in light of a similar or the same metaphor used elsewhere in Isaiah. Also at this level, the function of a metaphor in its context is examined, since a literally translated metaphor could easily become a bizarre non-sequitur if not translated thoughtfully. But on the other hand, how the translator shapes a metaphor reflects his interpretation of the passage in which it occurs.

It is not always possible to understand the translation on all these levels, but they must be considered if we are to attempt to distinguish the translator's reception of a metaphor from his production of metaphors in his translation. Often there will be numerous issues affecting how a metaphor was translated. We must practice caution in discussing how a particular metaphor is rendered. For example, in Isa 10:33-34 a description of trees being cut down is rendered as high people falling by the sword; is this a metaphor being explicated as a rhetorical device, or is it a prophetic enigma being interpreted? In other places it would be easy to purport evidence for the translator's ideas about metaphor, such as claiming that rendering a metaphor as a simile, like in Isa 50:3, is evidence he had a comparison view of metaphor; or that rendering אֲרָבִים הָרָהֳרָה with ἐθυσμῶθη ὀργῆ in 5:25 shows he held the substitution view of metaphor. Caution, then, is key.

The Greek rendering of the metaphor in each passage will then be compared to how the Targum rendered the metaphor. At the end of sections, the different ways metaphors are rendered by the LXX will be summarized and discussed to see how the various vehicles are understood and used by the translator.

1.4.4. Outline for the Study

The second and third chapters are a vehicle based study of plant imagery in LXX-Isa, as described above. In the second chapter metaphors with vehicles from the various parts of plants will be examined, and in the third chapter metaphors that use different kinds of plants as vehicles will be examined. The chapter division between parts of plants and kinds of plants is logical and for simplicity's sake, not because the situation between these kinds of metaphors are drastically different. Nevertheless, this division does allow for some interesting observations. Parts of plants are used in metaphors from many different cultures, as Kövecses pointed out,⁴³³ and so we will make observations at the end of chapter two about how these metaphors should easily cross from Hebrew into Greek. On the other hand, metaphors can be culturally specific, and so the conclusions to chapter three, dealing with kinds of plants, will remark on how differences in ecology and flora effect how the metaphors cross from Judea into Egypt. A drawback to this vehicle based approach is that it atomizes the text into verses

⁴³³ Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 19.

that use plant language; ideally each metaphor should be taken in the context of the entire textual unit in which it is used. The conclusions to chapters two and three will contain other general remarks about LXX-Isa's approach to metaphors.

In the concluding chapter, more global remarks will be made and the various translation strategies used to render metaphors will be catalogued. In addition, a comparison with the Targum's treatment of the metaphors examined will be made to position the LXX-Isa translator's understanding of metaphors in Jewish tradition. Then we will list possible evidence for the translator complying with Hellenistic rhetorical sensibilities regarding the use of metaphors.

CHAPTER 2

PARTS OF PLANTS

The cognitive metaphor “people are plants” is well known, and can be observed in many cultures. Kövecses points out that in English literature, plants commonly provide the vehicle for metaphors by their various parts, how we cultivate them, and their different stages.¹ More specifically, plant terms are commonly used in metaphors for human relationships.² This can also be seen in Biblical and Greek literature, as this chapter will show.³

First we will discuss how “seed,” a common lexicalized metaphor, has been translated. Second, we will discuss another common lexicalized metaphor: “fruit.” While similar, these two lexicalized metaphors are treated quite differently by the LXX-Isa translator. Third we will look at metaphors using words for “root,” and discuss whether LXX-Isa understands them the same way the Hebrew does. Fourth we will discuss metaphors using “flowers,” then fifth, “leaves.” Sixth we will look at metaphors using words for “branch.” Finally, we will draw some general observations about the LXX-Isa translator’s understanding of these metaphors.

2.1. Seeds

The metaphor “seed” standing for offspring is a lexicalized metaphor both in Biblical Hebrew and classical Greek.⁴ Indeed, in lexicons the meaning “offspring” is given both for *זרע* and *σπέρμα*.⁵ We will begin our discussion with two extended meanings given by BDB: First, that it can stand for “offspring;” second, for “family” or “pedigree;” third, for an individual; and fourth, we will look at original uses of “seed” metaphors introduced by the

¹ Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 19.

² Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 25.

³ Basson “‘People Are Plants,’” 573-83. For humans described metaphorically as plants, see Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 590-91. Though the greater section is about plant imagery used of God and Ugaritic deities (587-94).

⁴ To stay focused on plant imagery, this analysis will skip occurrences of verbal forms, except where they come from or are translated as nouns. While sowing is closely related to seed, it is used in quite different metaphors. Agricultural metaphors are worthy of an independent study.

⁵ The word *σπόρος* occurs twice in LXX-Isa (28:24 for *זרע*; 32:10 with no clear equivalent), both times in the contexts of sowing. In 28:24 it occurs in an analogy from agricultural activities and is mentioned in the context of the proper order of farming (we discuss the rest of this passage in the section on grain). In 32:10 it is mentioned as an agricultural activity (sowing) which will cease.

translator. At the end of the section, conclusions will be drawn about the metaphors mentioned.

Before looking at the metaphorical uses, how the LXX understands seed in non-metaphorical places is worth mentioning. The noun זָרַע is commonly translated with σπέρμα in LXX-Isaiah, as in the rest of the LXX.⁶ In Isaiah it is only used to refer to actual seed a couple of times: 19:7; 23:3; 30:23; 55:10; and 5:10. In 5:10 the noun becomes the substantive participle ὁ σπείρων for the sake of style.⁷ In Isaiah 55:10 the phrase זָרַע לְזָרַע וְנָתַן זָרַע לְזָרַע is translated literally as καὶ δὲ σπέρμα τῶ σπείροντι. Both are within the analogy or poetic comparison that God’s word does not return to him without achieving its purpose, just as water does not return to the heavens without providing food through agriculture. In 30:23 the phrase אֲשֶׁר־תִּזְרַע אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה זָרַע מִטֶּר וְנָתַן מִטֶּר זָרַע is rendered τότε ἔσται ὁ ὑετὸς τῶ σπέρματι τῆς γῆς σου, probably for style. In both cases seed is associated with rain as the source of grain and food; rain being an important gift from God necessary for food (Cf. 19:7).

2.1.1. Seed as Offspring

As mentioned above, σπέρμα in classical Greek is also a metaphor for offspring. Two examples from LSJ are interesting to note:

In Sophocles, *The Philoctetes*, 364, Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, is addressed as the “seed of Achilles,” ὦ σπέρμ’ Ἀχιλλέως. In Aeschylus, *Promethius Bound*, 705, Io, the daughter of Inachus, is addressed as “Inachus’ seed,” Ἰνάχειον σπέρμα.⁸ In both of these examples, someone is called the seed of their ancestor, rather like the common address to the seed of Abraham or seed of Jacob found in the Hebrew Bible (though there it refers to a nation not an individual). The use of this metaphor we examine in this section is often used differently in that the context is talking to someone about their seed, rather than talking about someone as the seed of their ancestor.

Four good examples of the LXX translating this metaphor literally are Isa 53:10, 54:3, 66:22, and 61:11.⁹ E. König has claimed that the move in meaning from “seed” to “offspring” is by metonymy.¹⁰ In this section we will look at the more interesting renderings of seed metaphors in LXX-Isa.

⁶ Two notable exceptions are Num 23:10, where σπέρμα is used for the Hebrew אֶתְרִית, and Deut 25:5 where it is used for בֶּן.

⁷ Here and in the parallel clause, the LXX adds agents.

⁸ Cf. Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*, 600, though the situation is more complicated. Seed may refer to the city; his sons did not drive him away but they did nothing to prevent it. According to line 765-70 it was his brother-in-law/uncle who drove him from the city.

⁹ In 61:11 the noun זָרַע (sowing, thing sown) occurs. The LXX translates with a plural since the Hebrew is plural. This passage is discussed below in the section on flowers (II.D.2.). Cf. Lev 11:37.

¹⁰ E. König, *Stylistik, Rhetorik, Poetik in Bezug auf die Biblische Literatur* (Leipzig: Weicher, 1900), 17-19.

Isa 44:3

<p>For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my spirit upon your <i>seed</i>, and my blessing on your offspring.¹¹</p>	<p>כִּי אֶצְקֶה מַיִם עַל- צְמָא וְנִזְלִים עַל- יְבֹשֶׁה אֶצְקֶה רוּחִי עַל- זְרַעְךָ וּבְרַכְתִּי עַל- צְאֲצָאִיךָ:</p>	<p>ὅτι ἐγὼ δώσω ὕδωρ ἐν δίψει τοῖς πορευομένοις ἐν ἀνύδρω, ἐπιθήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου καὶ τὰς εὐλογίας μου ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα σου,</p>	<p>because I will provide water in their thirst to those who walk in a dry land; I will put my spirit on your <i>seed</i> and my blessings on your children.¹²</p>
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The imagery of this verse creates some interesting blended spaces. God giving water to the thirsty is parallel to giving his spirit and blessing to their seed,¹³ as can be seen by the repetition of **יצק**. While “seed” and “produce” are lexicalized metaphors, the fact that they are objects of the verb **יצק** in parallel to discussions of water makes for a lively image. There is an element of merism at work as well, since “seed” and “produce” stand at opposite ends of an agricultural cycle (though of course this is the same place in a cycle).

The Greek aims to be literal, though many of the above nuances are lost in the translation. Rendering **אֶצְקֶה** with *δώσω* and *ἐπιθήσω* is appropriate for the individual contexts but weakens the connection of the two images. Perhaps Greek stylistic sensibilities preferred to use synonyms to repeating the same word. The translator seems to have read **וְנִזְלִים** as if it were from the Aramaic **אזל** and so rendered it *τοῖς πορευομένοις*.¹⁴

The Greek also tries to make the image clear by rendering **צְאֲצָאִיךָ** with *τέκνα σου*.¹⁵ Usually this root is rendered with the slightly more generic *ἐκγονος*, as in 48:19 and 61:9 where **זרע** and **צאצאים** again appear in parallel.¹⁶ In 48:19 **זרע** is translated literally. The passage references Gen 22:17 as how things would have been, if Israel had been obedient.

In 44:3, 48:19, and 61:9 the Targum renders **זרע** as “sons,” and **צאצאים** as “your sons’ sons.”¹⁷

Isa 65:23

<p>They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be <i>seed</i></p>	<p>לֹא יִיגְעוּ לְרִיק וְלֹא יִלְדוּ לְבִהְלָה כִּי יִרַע בְּרוּכֵי יְהוָה הֵמָּה</p>	<p>οἱ δὲ ἐκλεκτοὶ μου οὐ κοπιήσουσιν εἰς κενὸν οὐδὲ τεκνοποιήσουσιν εἰς κατάραν, ὅτι</p>	<p>And my chosen ones shall not labor in vain, nor bear children for a curse,</p>
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¹¹ All MT translations come from NRSV; italics denote changes I have made to the translation.

¹² All LXX translations come from NETS; italics denote changes I have made to the translation.

¹³ Cf. 40:24 where “seed” is blasted by the wind.

¹⁴ Martin Karrar, and Wolfgang Kraus, eds., *Septuaginta Deutsch: Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011), 2653 (we abbreviate this work as LXX.D.E.K.).

¹⁵ This equivalence is seen elsewhere only in Job 5:25 and 21:8.

¹⁶ Two things to note of these passages: 1) In 48:19 **בְּמַעֲתוֹ** is rendered *ὡς ὁ χοῦς τῆς γῆς*. 2) In 61:9 there is no rendering of the phrase **בְּתוֹךְ הָעַמִּים**, as often done by the translator, the indirect object of the parallel clause is understood distributively. See van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 78-79.

¹⁷ “For just as waters are provided on the land of a thirsty place, and flow on the dry ground, so I will bestow my Holy Spirit upon your sons, and my blessing upon your sons’ sons.” All Targum quotations are from Bruce D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum* (The Aramaic Bible vol 11; Edinburgh: Clark, 1987). The italics are his.

blessed by the LORD-- and their offspring as well.	וְצִאָאִיהֶם אֲתָם:	σπέρμα ἠύλογημένον ὑπὸ θεοῦ ἔστι.	because they are <i>seed</i> blessed by God.
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The Greek οἱ δὲ ἐκλεκτοὶ μου comes from בְּחִירֵי in verse 22.¹⁸ Here again זרע and צאצאים occur in parallel. One could think of “seed” being connected to refer to agricultural work, and “offspring” being connected to children, though they both seem to refer to children. The Greek omits the phrase וְצִאָאִיהֶם אֲתָם, probably for style, since σπέρμα clearly refers to the children that are born and implies their offspring.¹⁹

Here the Targum renders using the Aramaic cognate זרע, but צאצאים is again בני בניהון.²⁰ It would have been redundant to render זרע with בנין in a clause that is already clearly describing children.

Isa 59:21

And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the LORD: my spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouths of your <i>seed</i> , or out of the mouths of your <i>seed's seed</i> , says the LORD, from now on and forever.	וְאֲנִי זֹאת בְּרִיתִי אוֹתָם אֶמַר יְהוָה רוּחִי אֲשֶׁר עָלְיָךְ וּדְבָרֵי אֲשֶׁר-שָׂמַתִּי בְּפִיךָ לֹא-יִמָּוְשׁוּ מִפִּיךָ וּמִפִּי זֶרְעֶךָ וּמִפִּי זֶרַע זֶרְעֶךָ אֶמַר יְהוָה מֵעַתָּה וְעַד-עוֹלָם:	καὶ αὕτη αὐτοῖς ἡ παρ' ἐμοῦ διαθήκη, εἶπε κύριος· τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐμόν, ὃ ἔστιν ἐπὶ σοί, καὶ τὰ ῥήματα, ἃ ἔδωκα εἰς τὸ στόμα σου, οὐ μὴ ἐκλίπη ἐκ τοῦ στόματός σου καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ σπέρματός σου, εἶπε γὰρ κύριος, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.	And this is the covenant to them from me, said the Lord, my spirit that is upon you and my words that I have put in your mouth shall not fail out of your mouth or out of the mouth of your <i>seed</i> , for the Lord has said it, from now on and for ever.
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It would appear the Greek is smoothing the style. The unusual Hebrew syntax is rendered with a more stylistically pleasing Greek word order, with the eloquent phrase ἡ παρ' ἐμοῦ διαθήκη, as opposed to the more literal possible rendering διαθήκη μου. The emphatic Hebrew reference to both their seed and their seed's seed is rather well rendered with the strong future negation οὐ μὴ ἐκλίπη and a reduction just to “seed,” since this term already includes the seed's seed.²¹ Here the meaning is clearly to future generations. The Targum renders each occurrence of “seed” with “son.”²²

¹⁸ For the rendering εἰς κατάραν, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 133. LXX.D.E.K, 2689 says it is an intensification of the Hebrew.

¹⁹ Symmachus and Theodotion, however, have the phrase καὶ τὰ ἔκγονα αὐτῶν μετ' αὐτῶν ἔσονται, and it is marked with an asterisk in the Syrohexapla. See Ziegler's critical apparatus.

²⁰ “They shall not *be weary* in vain, or *bring up* children for *death*; for they shall be the *seed which* the LORD *blessed*, and their *sons' sons* with them.”

²¹ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 365 suggests the clause is omitted because it was “cumbersome” and “virtually implied.” van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 69, calls it the reduction of a nearly identical adjacent phrase. IQIsa^a agrees with MT, except it omits יהוה אֶמַר.

²² “And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the LORD, my *holy* spirit which is upon you, and *the* words *of* my *prophecy* which I have put in your mouth, shall not *pass* out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your *sons*, or out of the mouth of your *sons' sons*, says the LORD, from this time forth and for evermore.”

In Isa 57:3-4 “seed” is used in parallel with “son.”

<p>But as for you, come here, you children of a sorceress, you <i>seed</i> of an adulterer and a whore.</p>	<p>וְאַתֶּם קְרִבּוֹ-הֵנָּה בְּנֵי עֲנֻנָּה זֶרַע מְנַאֲף וְתַזְנָה:</p>	<p>ὕμεις δὲ προσάγαγετε ὧδε, υἱοὶ ἄνομοι, σπέρμα μοιχῶν καὶ πόρνης·</p>	<p>But as for you, draw near here, you lawless sons, you <i>seed</i> of adulterers and of a whore.</p>
<p>Whom are you mocking? Against whom do you open your mouth wide and stick out your tongue? Are you not children of transgression, the <i>seed</i> of deceit--</p>	<p>עַל-מִי תִתְעַנְּגוּ עַל-מִי תִרְחִיבוּ פֶה תִאֲרִיכוּ לְשׁוֹן הַלֹּא-אַתֶּם יְלִדֵי-פֶשַׁע זֶרַע שֶׁקֶר:</p>	<p>ἐν τίνι ἐνετρυφήσατε; καὶ ἐπὶ τίνα ἠνοιξάτε τὸ στόμα ὑμῶν; καὶ ἐπὶ τίνα ἐχαλάσατε τὴν γλῶσσαν ὑμῶν; οὐχ ὑμεῖς ἐστε τέκνα ἀπωλείας, σπέρμα ἄνομον;</p>	<p>In what have you indulged? and against whom have you opened your mouth wide? And against whom have you let loose your tongue? Are you not children of destruction, a lawless <i>seed</i>?</p>

Often the word בֶּן is followed by an attribute or characteristic to poetically refer to people by this attribute.²³ In 57:4 it would appear that this is how the synonyms of בֶּן (לֵד) and זֶרַע are being used. The translator seems to have seen no reason to explain or remove this Hebrew idiom (or understood it literally). The renderings of the adjectives are of note, in that the Greek has made them more commonly condemned crimes. In particular, עֲנֻנָּה was either read as a form of עֲנֵן,²⁴ or interpreted to refer to general turning from Torah. The rendering μοιχῶν καὶ πόρνης may come from reading the ת before instead of after the conjunction ו.²⁵ Note that in the Greek both “son” in verse 3 and “seed” in verse 4 are described with the adjective ἄνομος.

The Targum renders “seed” literally with its Aramaic cognate in 57:4, but in 57:3 it expands the second part of the verse into: “*whose plant was from a holy plant, and they are adulterers and harlots.*”²⁶ This is undoubtedly from the idea of the Holy Seed (Ezra 9:2; Isa 6:13). Similarly, the eternal plant is an important metaphor in the Qumran community for showing that they are God’s holy nation.²⁷

²³ See BDB, s.v., paragraph 8. LXX sometimes renders this idiom literally, as in 1 Sam 14:52; 2 Sam 2:7; 2 Sam 13:28; 17:10; Psa 79(80):11; 102(101):21; etc. but not in Isa 5:1 or 14:12.

²⁴ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 355.

²⁵ LXX.D.E.K., 2678.

²⁶ “But you, draw near hither, people of the generation whose deeds are evil, whose plant was from a holy plant, and they are adulterers and harlots. Of whom are you making sport? And before whom will you open your mouth and continue speaking great things? Are you not children of a rebel, the offspring of deceit,”

²⁷ Paul Swarup, *The Self-Understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls Community: An Eternal Planting, a House of Holiness* (Library of Second Temple Studies 59; London: T&T Clark, 2006).

2.1.2 Seed as Family or People

Another metaphorical use of the vehicle “seed,” found in Classical Greek as well as Biblical Hebrew, is for pedigree, family, or one’s descent.²⁸ This meaning is related to the above meaning; it implies the seed from which one grew or whose seed one is. The classical examples above already generally pointed back to the ancestors of the person addressed. Here are some more clear examples given by LSJ:²⁹

Aeschylus, *Suppliants*, 289-290:

διδαχθεῖς <δ’> ἂν τόδ’ εἰδείην πλέον, ὅπως γένεθλον σπέρμα τ’ Ἀργεῖον τὸ σόν.
If you explain to me, I may understand better how your birth and descent can be Argos.³⁰

In this example, the king is trying to find out how the women can be from Argos, since they appear to be a different race, such as Libyan or Egyptian.

Aeschylus, *Libation-Bearers*, 503:

καὶ μὴ ἕξαλείψῃς σπέρμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε· οὕτω γὰρ οὐ τέθνηκας οὐδέ περ θανῶν.
And do not wipe out this Pelopid seed; for then, even though dead, you will not have perished.³¹

Sophocles, *Antigone* 981:

ἃ δὲ σπέρμα μὲν ἀρχαιογόνων <ῆν> ἄντασ’ Ἐρεχθειδᾶν,
She by birth was a princess of the ancient house of the sons of the Erechtheids.³²

In this case, seed is somewhat collective in that it meets the Erechtheids, as opposed to saying she is their seed, or they are her seed.

Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*, 214-15:

τίνος εἶ σπέρματος, <ῶ> ξένε, φώνει, πατρόθεν;
Tell us from what seed you come, stranger, on your father's side!³³

Pindar, *Olympian*, 7.93:

μὴ κρύπτε κοινὸν σπέρμ’ ἀπὸ Καλλιάνακτος
Do not bury in obscurity the shared seed of Callianax.³⁴

In these last two examples we again see seed as family as in Oedipus, as well as of a city that is made famous by the athlete’s victory. “Seed” stands, then, for extended family and

²⁸ BDB, s.v.; LSJ, s.v.

²⁹ Another example given is from Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyranus*, 1077.

³⁰ Aeschylus, *Suppliants* [Sommerstein, LCL 145].

³¹ Aeschylus, *Libation-Bearers* [Sommerstein, LCL 146].

³² Sophocles, *Antigone* [Lloyd-Jones, LCL 21].

³³ Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus* [Lloyd-Jones, LCL 21].

³⁴ Pindar, *Olympian* [Race, LCL 56].

for a broader group identity, such as tribe or city. As we will see, LXX-Isa uses “seed” for some of these broader family and ethnic relations.

These examples are most similar to Biblical uses of the metaphor in phrases like **זֶרַע אֲבֹתֶיךָ**, rendered σπέρμα Αβρααμ, in 41:8, and **זֶרַע יַעֲקֹב** rendered τῷ σπέρματι Ιακωβ in 45:19. A variation is found in 65:9 where **זֶרַע מִיַּעֲקֹב יְהוֹצֵאֵתִי** is translated καὶ ἐξάξω τὸ ἐξ Ιακωβ σπέρμα.

In 45:25 “seed of Israel” seems to represent the people of Israel, while the Greek makes it to represent their offspring.

Isa 45:25

<p>In the LORD all the <i>seed</i> of Israel shall be justified and glory.</p>	<p>בִּיהוָה יִצְדָּקוּ וַיְתַלְּלוּ כָּל־זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>	<p>ἀπὸ κυρίου δικαιωθήσονται καὶ ἐν τῷ θεῷ ἐνδοξασθήσονται πᾶν τὸ σπέρμα τῶν υἱῶν Ισραηλ.</p>	<p>By the Lord shall they be justified, and all the <i>seed</i> of the sons of Israel shall be glorified in God.</p>
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The Greek alters this verse, adding the phrase ἐν τῷ θεῷ, to create the rhetorical figure synonymia.³⁵ Of note for our discussion is that the LXX feels the need to explain **כָּל־זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל** by adding “sons:” πᾶν τὸ σπέρμα τῶν υἱῶν Ισραηλ. This addition could simply be a plus, or could be a second rendering of **זֶרַע**.³⁶ The addition of “sons” adjusts the metaphor. Rather than the poetic “the seed of Israel,” a reference to the nation as the descendents of their progenitor, the LXX makes the reference simply to the descendents of the current son’s of Israel. Perhaps υἱῶν was added because of the common phrase υἱῶν Ισραηλ, which occurs two hundred seventy-five times in the Hebrew Bible.³⁷ This change could be to make the promise more immediate to the audience. A similar phrase with an added term for children can be found in 4 Mac 18:1: Ὁ τῶν Αβραμιαίων σπερμάτων ἀπόγονοι; it may reflect an attempt to modify and make interesting commonly heard phrases. The Targum of 45:25 is literal, except it is in the Memra of the Lord that they are justified.³⁸

Isa 43:5

<p>Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your <i>seed</i> from the east, and from the west I will gather you;</p>	<p>אַל־תִּירָא כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי מִמְּזֶרֶחַ אָבִיא זֶרְעֶךָ וּמִמַּעַרְב אֶקְבְּצֶךָ:</p>	<p>μὴ φοβοῦ, ὅτι μετὰ σοῦ εἰμι· ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν ἄξω τὸ σπέρμα σου καὶ ἀπὸ δυσμῶν συνάξω σε.</p>	<p>Do not fear, because I am with you; I will bring your <i>seed</i> from the east, and from the west I will gather you;</p>
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While to call offspring “seed” is nearly a lexicalized metaphor, in this verse it is given new life by making it parallel with **אֶקְבְּצֶךָ**, which has connotations of harvesting. The Greek is quite literal (קבץ and συνάγω are common word equivalents); συνάγω also can connote

³⁵ Van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 168.
³⁶ Van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 34.
³⁷ This is according to a BibleWorks 7 search.
³⁸ “In the Memra of the LORD all the seed of Israel shall be justified and glorified.”

harvesting. Within LXX Greek it takes various words for crops and straw as an object (Exod 5:2; 23:10; Lev 25:3, 20; Hab 1:15; Mic 7:1; Isa 17:5), as Muraoka shows.³⁹ In the Hebrew and the Greek, the second person singular pronouns refer to Israel or Jacob from 43:1. They can be taken as referring to the person or as metonymies for the people, either way, their seed is their offspring, the people of Israel. The question is: is the “you” referring to the current people, so that the seed are a future people, or is the “you” general (or addressed to the person Israel), so that the seed are the current population? In the next verse God talks of bringing His sons and daughters from the north and the south. Given the general context and that future events are undoubtedly meant, the latter interpretation seems preferable. The Targum renders “seed” with “your sons” and in the last clause it is “your exiles.”⁴⁰

In 1:4 the “seed” refers to the current nation and is used negatively.⁴¹

Isa 1:4

Ah, sinful nation, people laden with iniquity, <i>evil doing seed</i> , children who deal corruptly,	הוֹי גְּוֵי הַטָּא עַם כִּבְדָּ עוֹן זָרַע מְרַעִים בְּנִים מְשַׁחֲתִים	οὐαὶ ἔθνος ἀμαρτωλόν, λαὸς πλήρης ἀμαρτιῶν, σπέρμα πονηρόν, υἱοὶ ἄνομοι·	Ah, sinful nation, people full of sins, <i>evil seed</i> , lawless sons,
who have forsaken the LORD, who have despised the Holy One of Israel, who are utterly estranged!	עֲזַבוּ אֶת־יְהוָה נְאֻצּוּ אֶת־קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל נָזְרוּ אַחֲזֹר:	ἐγκατελίπατε τὸν κύριον καὶ παρωργίσατε τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ Ἰσραηλ.	You have forsaken the Lord and provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel!

The expression זָרַע מְרַעִים is found in 14:20, with the same Greek rendering.⁴² These negative uses of seed as a reference to the people as a whole are probably meant to function in contrast to the idea of them being the seed of Abraham (Gen 9:9; Isa 41:8) and seed of Jacob (45:19; 65:9), and the seed of Israel (as we saw in 45:25, above).⁴³ According to Muraoka’s lexicon, “seed” in 1:4 and 14:20 has a weakened sense of ‘descendants’ and is almost equivalent to λαός or ἔθνος.⁴⁴

The Targum adds positive epithets to contrast with those occurring here.⁴⁵ The seed becomes the positive “beloved seed” but have done evil.

³⁹ Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain: Peeters, 2009), s.v. Also the participle is used for “harvesters” in Isa 62:9.

⁴⁰ “Fear not, for my Memra is your help; I will bring your *sons* from the east, and from the west I will bring near your *exiles*.”

⁴¹ See also 17:10-11 below.

⁴² Isaiah 57:3 also uses seed in a negative context, though the Greek simplifies the construction considerably. Also 57:4 is negative, but the Greek alters the syntax slightly and changes the quality of the seed from “deceit” to “lawless.”

⁴³ Cf. also the holy seed in Ezra 9:2 and Isa 6:13.

⁴⁴ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

⁴⁵ “Woe, because they were called a holy people, and sinned; a chosen congregation have multiplied sins; they were named as a beloved seed and they acted wickedly, and it was said of them, “Cherished sons”, and they corrupted their ways! They have forsaken the service of the LORD, they have despised the fear of the Holy One of Israel, because of their wicked deeds they are turned about and backwards.”

2.1.3. Seed as an Individual

It is also possible for “seed” to refer to an individual:⁴⁶

Pindar, *Olympian Odes*, 9.61:

ἔχεν δὲ σπέρμα μέγιστον ἄλοχος, εὐφράνθη τε ἰδὼν ἥρωσ θετὸν υἱόν,

But his spouse was bearing the greatest seed, and the hero rejoiced to see his adopted son;

The reference to “evil seed” in LXX-Isa 14:20 could be read as an epithet for an individual.

Isa 14:20

<p>You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land, you have killed your people. May the <i>seed</i> of evildoers nevermore be named!</p>	<p>לֹא־תִתְּחַד אִתָּם בְּקִבּוּרָהּ כִּי־אַרְצָךְ שָׁחַתְּ עַמְּךָ הַרְגַתְּ לֹא־יִקְרָא לְעוֹלָם זֶרַע מְרָעִים:</p>	<p>οὕτως οὐδὲ σὺ ἔσῃ καθαρός, διότι τὴν γῆν μου ἀπώλεσας καὶ τὸν λαόν μου ἀπέκτεινας· οὐ μὴ μείνης εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον, σπέρμα πονηρόν.</p>	<p>so neither will you be clean, because you have destroyed my land and killed my people. You will not remain forever, you evil seed!</p>
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The Greek changes this passages in a few ways. Of note for the present study is that the wish/curse has been rendered as a sort of declaration or judgment. Troxel understands the *σπέρμα πονηρόν* as an epithet for the king of Babylon, explaining why the sons must die not for the evil king’s deeds but his father’s sins, they are a wicked dynasty.⁴⁷ Another perspective sees this passage as actualizing exegesis, referring to Antiochus IV.⁴⁸ According to this reading, the evil seed is not just the king but can refer to his whole family. That the grandchildren are to be punished for their grandfather’s sin in the next verse may not necessarily be due to a specific historical crime, but a way of framing the evil of the king in question and the completeness of his punishment by an oblique reference to Num 14:18, where the third and fourth generation of sinners are said to be punished. The three generations mentioned show the completeness of the punishment, as does 14:22, where they are left with neither name, remnant, nor seed.⁴⁹ Also in 14:29 “root” is rendered as “seed” with the apparent meaning of a family.

The Targum renders the metaphor literally: **לֹא יִתְקִיִּים לְעוֹלָם זֶרַע מִבְּאֲשֵׁיךְ**.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Cf. Galatians 3:16.

⁴⁷ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 222.

⁴⁸ Seeligmann, “Problems and Perspectives,” 79-80 [230-32]. See Also van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 39-43.

⁴⁹ We discuss 14:22 below.

⁵⁰ “You will not be *as one of* them in *the* sepulcher, because you have destroyed your land, you have slain your people. May the seed of evildoers nevermore be *established!*”

2.1.4. Original Seed Metaphors

By original seed metaphors we refer to places where the LXX has “seed” but the MT does not. These places feature either words with the letters זרע, places where the translator uses “seed” for other terms, and places where there is no clear Hebrew equivalent.

The word σπέρμα is used in a two cases (33:2 and 48:14) where the Hebrew has זרע (arm, shoulder). This is not surprising since the text the translator worked from was unpointed and may have had many defective spellings.⁵¹ We will discuss 17:5 below in the section on grains (3.3.1.1.); there, rather than an arm gathering ears, we find “reaps the seed of the ear,” probably due to defective spellings or ו/ו confusion.

Isa 33:2

<p>O LORD, be gracious to us; we wait for you. Be our arm every morning, our salvation in the time of trouble.</p>	<p>יְהוָה חַנּוּן לָךְ קִיִּינוּ הִיָּה זְרַעַם לְבִקְרִים אֲף־יְשׁוּעָתָנוּ בְּיַעַת צָרָה:</p>	<p>κύριε, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, ἐπὶ σοὶ γὰρ πεποιθήσαμεν· ἐγενήθη τὸ σπέρμα τῶν ἀπειθούντων εἰς ἀπώλειαν, ἢ δὲ σωτηρία ἡμῶν ἐν καιρῷ θλίψεως.</p>	<p>O Lord, have mercy on us, for we trust in you. The seed of the disobedient came to destruction, but our salvation came in a time of affliction.</p>
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The middle clause is quite different in the Greek. It is clear and unsurprising that זרעם was rendered with τὸ σπέρμα τῶν ἀπειθούντων; 1QIsa^a also has a defective spelling here. The LXX has interpreted the pronoun to be the disobedient.⁵² The genitive article is noteworthy as it is not used in similar constructions, such as in 57:3-4. Seeligmann questions whether there was a textual variant here that read לרגעים instead of לבקרים.⁵³ Ottley suggests that if בקרים was read as a participle, it could have the opposite meaning from the Greek and that antithetical renderings are sometimes made in the LXX.⁵⁴ LXX.D.E.K. seems to suggest it is a free rendering, as the adjective ἀπώλεια also shows up in Isa 1:23, 25.⁵⁵ Perhaps בקרת (punishment), which only occurs in Lev 19:20, was thought, and rendered as εἰς ἀπώλειαν.⁵⁶ It is difficult to tell where the rest of the clause comes from in the Greek. Reading אף as אך may have suggested there needed to be a contrast, and so those who did wrong but suffered no wrong from the previous verse here meet their end. The Targum gives the meaning of the metaphor “arm” as “strength:” תוקפנא.⁵⁷

⁵¹ In most cases context makes it obvious which word is meant. The LXX translates appropriately זרע in Isa 30:30; 40:10-11 (it is spelled defectively here in the MT); 44:12; 51:5, 9 (it is spelled defectively twice in 51:5, but is full in 51:9 in MT); 52:10; and 63:12.

⁵² LXX.D.E.K. 2592 suggests these are the same as the ἀπειθούντες in verse 1.

⁵³ The equivalents in Job 20:5 and Ezek 26:16 are based on these words, and the two Hebrew roots are parallel in Job 7:18. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 219 [67/68].

⁵⁴ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 268-69. He also suggests that perhaps a form of מרה was read.

⁵⁵ LXX.D.E.K., 2592.

⁵⁶ Though LXX-Lev does not understand this word this way.

⁵⁷ “O LORD, be gracious to us; we wait for your Memra. Be our stronghold on every day, our saviour in the time of trouble.”

The context of 48:14 almost seems to suggest the translation “seed.”⁵⁸

Isa 48:14

<p>Assemble, all of you, and hear! Who among them has declared these things? The LORD loves him; he shall perform his purpose on Babylon, and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans.</p>	<p>הַקְבִּיצוּ כְּלֶכֶם וּשְׁמָעוּ מִי בְהֵם הַגִּיד אֶת־ אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה אֲהַבּוּ יַעֲשֶׂה חֶפְצוֹ בְּבָבֶל וְזָרְעוּ כְּשָׂדִים:</p>	<p>καὶ συναχθήσονται πάντες καὶ ἀκούσονται. τίς αὐτοῖς ἀνήγγειλε ταῦτα; ἀγαπῶν σε ἐποίησα τὸ θέλημά σου ἐπὶ Βαβυλῶνα τοῦ ἄραι σπέρμα Χαλδαίων.</p>	<p>And all of them will be gathered and hear. Who has declared these things to them? Because I love you, I have performed your will on Babylon, to do away with the seed of the Chaldeans.</p>
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Here the LXX shapes the second part of the verse by altering the main verb and turning 3rd person pronouns into 2nd person. It is interesting that the translator, having read וְזָרְעוּ as זָרַע, did not make “seed of Chaldea” parallel to Babylon, but adds a verb to complete the phrase.⁵⁹ Here “seed of Chaldea” seems to refer to the people (like in 15:9), though it could refer to an individual, such as the evil seed of 14:20. It is unlikely that this passage or 33:2 was read differently to avoid attributing arms to God, since in 48:13 hands are attributed to God.

The Targum understands the Hebrew to mean arm (זָרַע), though it expands to make clear it refers to strength.⁶⁰

In Isa 17:10 the verb זָרַע becomes a noun, and in 17:11 the noun becomes a verb. In this passage seed is used in imagery that does not represent offspring.

Isa 17:10-11

<p>For you have forgotten the God of your salvation, and have not remembered the Rock of your refuge; therefore, though you plant pleasant plants and set out slips of an alien god,</p>	<p>כִּי שָׁכַחְתָּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֶךָ וְצֹר מֵעֵד לֹא זָכַרְתָּ עַל־כֵּן תִּטְעִי נְטֵעֵי נְעֻמִּים וְזָמַרְתָּ זֶרַע תִּזְרַעְנֻ:</p>	<p>διότι κατέλιπες τὸν θεὸν τὸν σωτήρᾶ σου καὶ κυρίου τοῦ βοηθοῦ σου οὐκ ἐμνήσθης. διὰ τοῦτο φυτεύσεις φύτευμα ἄπιστον καὶ σπέρμα ἄπιστον·</p>	<p>Because you have abandoned the God your savior and not remembered the Lord your helper, therefore you will plant an unfaithful plant and an unfaithful seed.</p>
<p>though you make them grow on the day that you plant them, and make them blossom in the</p>	<p>בַּיּוֹם נִטְעֶךָ תִּשְׁגִּישְׁגִּי וּבְבֹקֶר זָרַעְךָ תִּפְרֹחֵי גֵד קָצִיר</p>	<p>τῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ, ἣ ἂν φυτεύσης, πλανηθήσῃ· τὸ δὲ πρωί, ἐὰν σπείρης,</p>	<p>But on the day that you plant them, you will be led astray, and if you sow in the morning, it will</p>

⁵⁸ Similarly, the comparison in Isa 17:5 speaks of harvesting and so renders זָרַע with σπέρμα. Ralfs follows L^{xx}, S*, A', etc. where the root was doubly translated: καὶ σπέρμα σταχῶν ἐν τῷ βραχίονι αὐτοῦ ἀμῆση.

⁵⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 75.

⁶⁰ “Assemble, all of you, and hear! Who among them has declared these things? The LORD, because he has compassion on Israel, shall perform his pleasure on Babylon, and the strength of his mighty arm he shall reveal against the Chaldeans,”

<p>morning that you sow; yet the harvest will flee away in a day of grief and incurable pain.</p>	<p>בַּיּוֹם נִחְלָה וּכְאֵב :אָנוּשׁ</p>	<p>ἀνθήσει εἰς ἀμητὸν ἢ ἂν ἡμέρα κληρώση, καὶ ὡς πατὴρ ἀνθρώπου κληρώση τοῖς υἱοῖς σου.</p>	<p>blossom for harvest in whatever day you take possession of it, and like a man's father you will take possession of it for your sons.</p>
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Commentators appear to agree that this passage is alluding to the Adonis/Naaman cult to show the futility of this idolatry.⁶¹ A part of this cult was to plant in a pot plants that quickly spring up and just as quickly die, in order to symbolize the fertility cycles over which Adonis was god. The Hebrew then, contrasts this transience with the LORD who is a rock.

The LXX has interpreted this passage. The rendering καταλείπω for שכח is also found in 23:15.⁶² The rendering of וְצוֹר with καὶ κυρίου is considered an anti-idolatry polemic by Seeligmann.⁶³ It is noteworthy that the translator does recognize וְצוֹר מְעֻזָּה as a name for God and so renders it as such.⁶⁴ The parallel clauses וְצוֹר מְעֻזָּה וְצוֹר מְעֻזָּה has become two objects φυτεύσεις φύτευμα ἄπιστον καὶ σπέρμα ἄπιστον.⁶⁵ The term זמר branch or twig only occurs here in Isaiah. The LXX has not rendered this word, or at least has taken its meaning from the verb to match the previous clause.⁶⁶ The word וְצוֹר is understood as having a negative connotation, and so is interpreted as meaning ἄπιστον.⁶⁷ Troxel says וְצוֹר was read as נאמנים,⁶⁸ though that both this and וְצוֹר are rendered with the same word, suggests that the translator was rendering freely for the sake of his new text.

In 17:11 several of the words have been read differently. Ottley suggests πλανηθήση is the result of reading וְשָׁגַי as a form of שגה or שגג, meaning “to err.”⁶⁹ 4QIsa^a has what appears to be hitpilpel form: וְשָׁגַי and 1QIsa^a וְשָׁגַי, both of these forms could be scribal errors. Ottley also suggests that κληρώση is from reading נחלה as נחל; that καὶ ὡς πατήρ comes from וכאב; and ἀνθρώπου from אנוש.⁷⁰

⁶¹ See Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (The Anchor Bible 19; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 305-6. George Buchanan Gray and Arthur S. Peake, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah* (The International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: Clark, 1912), 301-3. Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (The Old Testament library; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 137.

⁶² LXX.D.E.K., 2548. LXX.D.E.K. also points out that this unfaithful plant contrasts with the plant God plants in 60:21 and 61:3.

⁶³ Seeligman, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 265 [100]. The reason for κύριος instead of θεός is because the later is already in close proximity, as is the usual practice for the translation of this metaphor, according to Olofsson, *God is My Rock*, 44-45; cf. 38, 58. Cf. LXX.D.E.K., 2548.

⁶⁴ Olofsson, *God is My Rock*, 58. Here the rendering of מְעֻזָּה with τοῦ βοηθοῦ σου is explained. Cf. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 245, who comments on the translator's resistance to using צוֹר as an epithet for God.

⁶⁵ LXX.D.E.K., 2548.

⁶⁶ See LXX.D.E.K., 2549.

⁶⁷ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 94-95.

⁶⁸ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 94-95, 125.

⁶⁹ Cf. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 94, 112.

⁷⁰ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 192. For the last two, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 65, 95. Cf. LXX.D.E.K., 2549.

The meaning of the Greek seems to have a bad result (being led astray by the false seed) and a good result (passing an inheritance on to sons). It is unclear if “sowing” and “seed” are meant to be metaphorical or if they refer to actual agricultural activity.

The Targum sees the planting motif and interprets the passage explicitly in the terms of the conceptual metaphor “Israel is God’s special plant,” Exod 15:17.⁷¹ The same idea is behind the Targum of 1:4 where it adds an adjective to describe **בזרעא רחימא**.⁷² In 17:10-11 it maintains the idea, though, of Israel cultivating idolatry and producing bad works.

LXX-Isa also uses *σπέρμα* where nothing like the root **זרע** occurs. We will discuss Isa 37:30-31 (where **פרי** is rendered *σπέρμα*) and 14:29-30 (where **שרש** is rendered *σπέρμα*) in the respective sections below.

In two places, the LXX uses “seed” for a term for “remnant.”

In **Isa 1:9** “seed” is used instead of **שְׂרִיד**.

If the LORD of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we would have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah.	<p>לֹאֲלֵי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הוֹתִיר לָנוּ שְׂרִיד בְּמַעַט בְּסֻדָּם הָיִינוּ לְעַמָּה דְמִינוּ:</p>	<p>καὶ εἰ μὴ κύριος σαβαωθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα, ὡς Σοδομα ἂν ἐγενήθημεν καὶ ὡς Γομορρα ἂν ὠμοιώθημεν.</p>	And if the Lord Sabaoth had not left us <i>seed</i> , we would have become like Sodoma and been made similar to Gomorra.
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The word **שְׂרִיד** occurs only here in Isaiah,⁷³ though its synonym **שָׂרָא** occurs often. The word **שְׂרִיד** is rendered in the LXX with nearly as many different words as there are occurrences, though most have a sense of being saved or left, escaping, or fleeing. The only other place it is rendered with *σπέρμα* is in Deut 3:3. There the phrase **וַנִּבְהוּ עַד-בְּלֹתֵי שְׂרִיד** is rendered *καὶ ἐπατάξαμεν αὐτὸν ἕως τοῦ μὴ καταλιπεῖν αὐτοῦ σπέρμα*. LXX-Isa could be following LXX-Deut’s precedent or perhaps in both cases they thought the Hebrew implied the idea of having a surviving heir.

The Targum expands and clarifies the passage, but understands remnant as a deliverance (**שיזבא**) which God left for them.⁷⁴

In 15:9 a synonym of **שְׂרִיד** is also rendered with *σπέρμα*.

Isa 15:9

For the waters of Dibon are full of blood; yet I will	<p>כִּי מִי דִּימוֹן מְלֵאוֹ דָם</p>	<p>τὸ δὲ ὕδωρ τὸ Ρεμμων πλησθήσεται αἵματος·</p>	And the water of Remmon will be filled with blood, for
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⁷¹ “For you have forsaken the God of your salvation, and you have not remembered the fear of the strong one whose Memra is your help; for you were planted, as a select plant, and multiplied corrupt deeds, in the place where you were sanctified to be a people, there you corrupted your deeds, and even when you went into the land of my Shekhinah’s house, where it was fitting for you to serve, you forsook my service and served idols; you put off a day of repentance until the day of your breaking came, then your sorrow was inconsolable.”

⁷² This is turning a negative image into a positive one. In contrast, the Targum of 14:20 is very literal: **זרע מבאשין**.

⁷³ Aquila translates: *λεῖμμα*.

⁷⁴ “Had the abounding goodness of the LORD of hosts not left us a remnant in his mercies, then our sins would have been with us, so that as the men of Sodom we should have perished, and as the inhabitants of Gomorrah we should have been destroyed.”

bring upon Dibon even more-- a lion for those of Moab who escape, for the remnant of the land.	כִּי־אָשִׁית עַל־דִּימוֹן נוֹסְפוֹת לְפִלִּיטַת מוֹאָב אֲרִי־הָ וְלִשְׂאֲרֵית אֲדָמָה:	ἐπάξω γὰρ ἐπὶ Ρεμμων ἼΑραβας καὶ ἀρῶ τὸ σπέρμα Μωαβ καὶ Αριηλ καὶ τὸ κατάλοιπον Ἀδαμα.	I will bring Arabs upon Remmon, and I will remove the <i>seed</i> of Moab and Ariel and the remnant of Adama.
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There are several significant differences in this verse. The place name has changed due to reading the ט as a כ, and Αραβας are mentioned, probably under the influence of 15:7.⁷⁵ In that passage, עַל נַחַל הָעֲרָבִים יִשְׂאוּם is rendered ἐπάξω γὰρ ἐπὶ τὴν φάραγγα ἼΑραβας, καὶ λήμψονται αὐτήν. Troxel suggests that the translator read in נוֹסְפוֹת a form of אֲרִי־הָ which he rendered with ἀρῶ.⁷⁶ The name Αριηλ probably comes from reading the subsequent ל.⁷⁷ But, what is important for the present study is that מוֹאָב אֲרִי־הָ appears to be rendered with τὸ σπέρμα Μωαβ.⁷⁸ Perhaps reading אֲדָמָה as the proper name of the city was influenced by Hosea 11:8, where its fate is compared with that of Ephraim.

One explanation for the rendering in 1:9 was offered by F. Wutz. He believes the LXX was based on a Greek transcription of the Hebrew, and so here the transcription σαρειδ was corrupted into σαρε.⁷⁹ This explanation is problematic both due to it being unlikely that the translation was made from a transcription, and since it would be odd to find a Greek word in a transcription of Hebrew. In TWNT another explanation is given: that the change was made for dogmatic reasons or as a stage in Biblical interpretation where the phrase “holy seed” became important to the ideology of the people of God.⁸⁰ This is not an adequate explanation, since it does not explain 15:9 where it is the seed of the Moabites who are facing God’s judgment.

In both 1:9 and 15:9 it is unclear if σπέρμα is not used with its regular extended meaning “offspring” but means something more like “race” or “tribe,” like we saw in Aeschylus, *Suppliants*, 289-290 and Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*, 214-15. In 15:9 σπέρμα is parallel to κατάλοιπον, in 14:22 it is parallel with κατάλειμμα, and in 1:9 it is the object of ἐγκατέλιπεν which shows the association of these ideas to the translator.⁸¹ Remnant and seed both refer to a living group of people with some shared ethnic or familial identity. A similar idea of remnant and offspring is at work in 1 Esd 8:78, 87, 88, and 89, where פְּלִיטַת is

⁷⁵ Cf. 10:9 and 11:11. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 135-36. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 248-49 [88/89-89/90] thinks this addition is due to actualizing exegesis.

⁷⁶ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 110. Also LXX.D.E.K., 2545.

⁷⁷ For LXX-Isa’s understanding of Ariel as associated with Moab, see: Seeligman, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 234 [78/79]; Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 68; Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 135-36. LXX.D.E.K., 2545 mentions Jerome’s commentary which identifies the city Areopolis.

⁷⁸ Symmachus translates τῷ διασώσματι.

⁷⁹ Franz Wutz, *Die transkriptionen von der Septuaginta bis zu Hieronymus* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1933), 76.

⁸⁰ TWNT, VII 541. Also it is odd that this theology would be present but the phrase “holy seed” would still be absent from 6:13.

⁸¹ This is the case in Deut 3:3 also.

rendered with ῥίζα.⁸² In LXX-Isa 14:30 “root” is rendered “seed” in a parallel clause to שֶׁאֵר in the Hebrew and κατάλειμμα in the Greek; we will discuss this below.

The Targum of 15:9 is close to the Hebrew, except the lion is interpreted as a king (מלך) with his army.⁸³

In one case, Isa 6:13, the Hebrew זרע occurs referring to a stump as the “holy seed” in reference to a small remnant, but the Greek does not render it. Since “seed” does not occur in the LXX of this passage, we discuss it below in the section on trees (3.6.2.2.) which do occur.

In Isa 14:22 “seed” is used instead of a more specific equivalent for the terms for family relations found in the Hebrew and is parallel with “remnant.”

I will rise up against them, says the LORD of hosts, and will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, offspring and posterity, says the LORD.	<p>וְקָמְתִי עֲלֵיהֶם נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְהִכֹּתִי לְבַבָּל שֵׁם וְשֶׁאֵר וְנֵין וְנָכַד נְאֻם יְהוָה:</p>	<p>Καὶ ἐπαναστήσομαι αὐτοῖς, λέγει κύριος σαβαωθ, καὶ ἀπολώ αὐτῶν ὄνομα καὶ κατάλειμμα καὶ σπέρμα· τὰδε λέγει κύριος.</p>	And I will rise up against them, says the LORD Sabaoth, and will destroy their name and remnant and seed. This is what the Lord says:
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The Greek has collapsed the synonyms וְנֵין וְנָכַד to σπέρμα.⁸⁴ This is reminiscent of Isa 59:21 where in the Greek it is also used once for two terms for relatives (though in that case, offspring), and similarly in 65:23, where the offspring of the seed is removed. In Gen 21:23 נֵין is also rendered with σπέρμα but נָכַד is rendered with ὄνομα.⁸⁵ There is a conceptual relationship between having descendants, a remnant, and a name (cf. 2 Sam 18:18 where Absalom builds a pillar to carry his name since he lacked a son). In the Greek of Sir 47:23, we find the phrase καὶ κατέλιπεν μετ’ αὐτον ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτου,⁸⁶ which shows even more clearly the relationship of having a remnant and a seed. The later recensions of Isaiah, as is no surprise, revert to a literal translation: Aquila has γονήν and Symmachus has ἀπόγονον. In the Old Greek it is no longer the name and remnant of Babylon, but the sons mentioned in 14:21. Babylon has become the region Babylonia in 14:23.⁸⁷

The Targum renders וְנֵין וְנָכַד as ובר ובר בר.⁸⁸

In two places, LXX-Isa replaces an original metaphor with the metaphor “seed.”

⁸² See below how “root” may be an image for offspring.

⁸³ “For the waters of Dimon are full of the blood of those slain; yet I will appoint upon Dimon a gathering of armies, a king with his armies will go up for those of Moab who have escaped and to plunder the remnant of their land.”

⁸⁴ That this refers to the sons of Antiochus IV, see van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre*, 99-100.

⁸⁵ Cf. Job 18:19, the third place where both terms occur together. In the LXX, נֵין is not rendered, and נָכַד is rendered with ἐπίγνωτος.

⁸⁶ Sir 47:23 only occurs in the Hebrew Ben Sirach Manuscript B, which lacks a Hebrew equivalent, according to the text in Pancratius C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew* (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 68; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 85.

⁸⁷ See van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre*, 99-100.

⁸⁸ “I will be revealed to take retribution from them,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I will destroy from Babylon name and remnant, son and son’s son, says the LORD.””

Isa 31:9

<p>His rock shall pass away in terror, and his officers desert the standard in panic," says the LORD, whose fire is in Zion, and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.</p>	<p>וְסִלְעוֹ מִמְּגוֹר יֵעָבֹר וְחֲתוּ מִנְּסֵי שָׁרֵי נְאֻם־ יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־אֹר לֹ בְצִיּוֹן וְתִנּוֹר לֹ בִירוּשָׁלַם:</p>	<p>πέτρα γὰρ περιλημφθήσονται ὡς χάρακι καὶ ἠττηθήσονται, ὁ δὲ φεύγων ἀλώσεται. Τάδε λέγει κύριος Μακάριος ὃς ἔχει ἐν Σιων σπέρμα καὶ οἰκείους ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ.</p>	<p>for they shall be encompassed by a rock, as with a rampart, and they shall be defeated, and the one who flees will be caught. This is what the Lord says: "Happy is the one who has a seed in Sion and kinsmen in Ierousalem."</p>
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The entire verse was interpreted differently by the translator,⁸⁹ but the correspondences between elements in the two versions are easy to see. Here an unusual metaphor is replaced with an easy to understand metaphor.⁹⁰ The word אֲשֶׁר has been translated twice, once as Μακάριος (reading אֲשֶׁר־י) and once as ὃς.⁹¹ The translator then introduces a metaphor describing the object of the beatitude. If the phrase has to apply to people, it makes sense for “furnace” to stand by metonymy for the family that surrounds it. Most often, οἰκεῖος is used for אֲשֶׁר in the LXX, though three times it is used for בֵּית. Perhaps the analogy of a flame to a furnace being equivalent to offspring from a family led to the translation of אֹר with σπέρμα. As van der Kooij has pointed out, the idea of a furnace or oven representing family is common to the Ancient Near East and a last remaining child is represented as a coal in 2 Sam 14:7.⁹² A similar image is that of a lamp representing offspring or a remnant. This image is only associated with David. In 1 Kgs 11:36 God says He will leave one tribe to Solomon’s son, so that: הִיזִיתִי נֵיר לְדָוִד־עֶבְדִּי כָּל־הַיָּמִים לְפָנַי בִּירוּשָׁלַם.⁹³ “Lamp” represents David’s offspring or a remnant of his royal line; a similar image is used of David in Psa 132:17.⁹⁴ The idea of having a remnant being a kinsman or offspring is easy to understand, especially now that we have seen several examples.

⁸⁹ Otley, *Isaiah*, II 263 says the translator interpreted, not misread. Seeligman, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 149 [17/18], 284 [113/114] says the translator paraphrased and expresses a longing of Zion prevalent among the Alexandrian Jewry. For an analysis of the first half of the verse, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 102; LXX.D.E.K. 2588.

⁹⁰ In Num 23:10 the odd metaphor “dust of Jacob” is translated as the more familiar “seed of Jacob.”

⁹¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 69.

⁹² Arie van der Kooij, “The Septuagint of Isaiah and the Issue of Coherence. A Twofold Analysis of LXX Isaiah 31:9B-32:8,” in *The Old Greek of Isaiah: Issues and Perspectives* (eds. Arie van der Kooij and Michaël N. van der Meer; Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 55; Louvain: Peeters, 2010), 36. Cf. van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 184-85.

⁹³ The LXX interprets: ὅπως ἢ θέσις τῷ δούλῳ μου Δαυιδ πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ. The same image is used in Hebrew in 1 Kgs 15:4 (where LXX has κατάλειμμα); see 2 Kgs 8:18; and 2 Chr 21:7 for David’s heirs. In Job 18:6, 21:17 and Prov 24:20 “lamp” could have the meaning of offspring as it is quenched, though it more likely stands for the common image of lamp being related to “paths” and how one lives their life morally, as in Prov 6:23 and 13:9. An alternative metaphorical meaning for נֵיר has to do with the eyes: Prov 21:4.

⁹⁴ In 2 Sam 21:17, David’s troops urge him not to go out to battle anymore, lest he extinguish the lamp of Israel.

The Targum interprets the rock as his princes (שלטונוהי) but is literal about the furnace (ותנור בער ליה דאישא בירושלם), adding clauses for whom the miracle is done and whom the furnace is for.⁹⁵

In Isa 58:7 the translator uses “seed” as a vehicle, since a literal translation of the Hebrew metaphor’s vehicle would have been odd in Greek.

<p>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own <i>flesh</i>?</p>	<p>הֲלוֹא פָּרַס לְרַעֲב לַחֲמֵךְ וְעֲנִיִּים מְרוּדִים תָּבִיא בְּיַתְּךָ עֲרֵם וְכִסִּיתוֹ⁹⁶ וּמִבְּשָׂרְךָ לֹא תִתְעַלֵּם:</p>	<p>διάρυπτε πεινῶντι τὸν ἄρτον σου καὶ πτωχοὺς ἀστεγούς εἷσαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου· ἐὰν ἴδῃς γυμνόν, περίβαλε, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων τοῦ σπέρματός σου οὐχ ὑπερόψη.</p>	<p>Break your bread with the one who is hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; if you see one naked, clothe him, and you shall not neglect any of the relatives of your seed.</p>
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Here again we see in close proximity the words οἰκεῖος and σπέρμα; here they constitute a sort of explanatory double translation of מִבְּשָׂרְךָ. It seems as though using either term alone would have been sufficient, though together it makes clear that there is both a relationship of having a common household and a direct biological relation.⁹⁷ Ziegler points out a similar translation in Lev 18:6 where אֶל-כָּל-שָׂאֵר בְּשָׂרוֹ becomes πρὸς πάντα οἰκεῖα σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ; he suggests the phonetic relationship between בשר, שאר, and זרע may have contributed to the rendering.⁹⁸ It is interesting that these two words are also used in parallel to interpret the image in 31:9, as we have seen. Elsewhere, other LXX translators had no problem translating “flesh” literally, as a metaphor for family.⁹⁹ For example, in Lev 25:49 the phrase וְיִגְאָלוּנֹוּ מִמִּשְׁפַּחַתוֹ בְּשָׂרוֹ אִוִּם-שָׂאֵר is translated ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων τῶν σαρκῶν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς αὐτοῦ λυτρῶσεται αὐτόν. In LXX-Isa also, we usually find this translation equivalent. The exceptions are where “flesh” refers to meat, such as Isa 22:13; 44:19; 65:4; and 66:17, in which case the LXX has κρέας.¹⁰⁰ Where it does not refer to the flesh of horses (31:3) and men (49:26), it is typically qualified as “all flesh,” and so is more clearly describing all people (40:5; 49:26; 66:16; 66:23-24). The other place בשר occurs is in 10:18, where it is used together with נפש; the LXX translates them both literally with σάρξ and ψυχῆ respectively. The meaning of σάρξ in this contrast or merism would have been familiar from Greek literature. If the metaphor “flesh” in 58:7 was objectionable to the translator, it seems

⁹⁵ “His rulers shall pass away before terror, and his princes break up before the standard,” says the LORD, whose splendour is in Zion for those who perform his law, and whose burning furnace of fire is in Jerusalem for those who transgress his Memra.”

⁹⁶ 1QIsa^a here has the plus בגד.

⁹⁷ Seeligmann believes since the two terms are parallel in 31:9 they may represent two variant readings of 58:7. Seeligman, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 173 [34/35]. For LXX-Isa’s tendency to explicate, see van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 85-110.

⁹⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 130.

⁹⁹ Neither LSJ nor TWNT have examples of a classical usage of σάρξ to represent a kinsman or relation.

¹⁰⁰ In 44:16 it appears as though בשר was rendered with ἄρτος, and its parallel צֵלִי was rendered with κρέας.

softening or qualifying it with “household/kinsman” would have been sufficient. The Targum does just this, rendering it: *ומקריב בסרך לא תכבוש עינד*.¹⁰¹ Another possibility is that the translator was concerned that if he translated “flesh” literally, the passage would say to clothe the naked and do not overlook your own body. Symmachus and Theodotion, however, had no problem translating it with *καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς σαρκός σου*.¹⁰² The only other place *בשר* was interpreted in LXX-Isa is 17:4, where the phrase *וּמִשְׁמֶן בְּשָׂרוֹ יִרְיָה* is rendered *καὶ τὰ πύονα τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ σειςθήσεται*. LXX.D.E.K. says that the LXX of 58:7 restricts the meaning of the MT to refer just to progeny.¹⁰³

The Targum renders with an Aramaic cognate for flesh, but likewise adds another term to restrict the reference: *ומקריב בסרך לא תצבוש עינד*.

2.1.5. Summary

As we have seen, that “seed” was a lexicalized metaphor in both Hebrew and Greek made the work of the LXX translator quite easy in many places. In two cases “seed” is preferable to the translator rather than saying “remnant.” The idea of offspring, an individual in relation to another or a group, a remnant, and a familial or ethnic community are closely related. The metaphor “seed” in Greek had all these nuances and could be easily used by the translator. It is interesting that the translator preferred to move to a dead metaphor, rather than render some of the passages we have discussed literally. The use of “seed” by the translator could be because it has more “charm” to say *σπέρμα* than simply “children” or “kinsman” in 14:22, 31:9, and 58:7. While we do not know how the translator or his readers would have understood *σπέρμα*—whether they thought it was a dead metaphor, just a term, or a metaphor—it represents enough different words in Isaiah to suggest it is not simply a literal explanatory interpretation of the meaning of the Hebrew’s imagery but a metaphor in its own right.

Looking at the passages where the LXX adds the word “seed,” in 33:2 and 48:14, where the Hebrew had “arm,” the LXX seems to describe a wicked group (or ruler) in the former, and in the later, the seed of Chaldea. In 48:14 we should probably think of the seed of Chaldea as the people (or offspring) as is the case with the seed of Moab in 15:9.¹⁰⁴ In both 1:9 and 15:9, where terms for “remnant” are rendered “seed,” it is unclear whether *σπέρμα* is used with the meaning “offspring” or something more like “race” or “tribe.” In 14:22 it seems most likely that offspring is meant by the translator, and in 31:9 and 58:7 more generally a relative.

¹⁰¹ “Will you not nurture from your bread the hungry, and bring needy outcasts into the midst of your house; when you shall see the naked, cover him, and not suppress your eye from a relative of your flesh?”

¹⁰² See Ziegler’s apparatus.

¹⁰³ LXX.D.E.K. 2680.

¹⁰⁴ In theory, “seed of Moab” could mean the offspring of an individual (Gen 19:37) like “seed of Israel.”

The Targum's approach is quite different. Although lexicons list “offspring” as a definition of Aramaic זרע, the Targum of Isaiah will often interpret the meaning of this metaphor. For example, in 43:5, 44:3; 48:19; 53:10; 54:3; 59:21; and 61:9 it is rendered with בנין. Though in several places it is rendered with זרע: 57:4; 65:9; and 66:22. This different technique between the LXX and the Targum is probably due to the translators' differing purposes. The Targum translator strove for clarity and so was free to explain his text, while the LXX translator was also concerned about style while staying as close to the Hebrew.

2.2. Fruit

In the LXX, the word פְּרִי is rendered with καρπός (or words derived from that stem) the vast majority of the time (82x out of 101 occurrences, according to Bibleworks). To most LXX translators, it does not matter if actual fruit is being referred to or if it is mentioned metaphorically (or metonymically), it is still translated καρπός. There are some exceptions to this way of translating, they occur almost entirely in Deut 7, 28, 30, and in the book of Isaiah.¹⁰⁵ As we will see, these exceptions in Isaiah are alarming, not only since most other LXX translators did not mind preserving the Hebrew metaphor but since classical authors also used similar fruit metaphors. In this section we will examine the three ways “fruit” is used metaphorically in Isaiah. First, we will look at its use as metonymy for produce; second, we will examine it as a metaphor for offspring; third, we will examine it as a metaphor for the results of actions; finally, we will draw together some conclusions.

2.2.1. Fruit as Metonymy for Produce

The only place in Isaiah where the word καρπός is used for פְּרִי can be found in Isa 37:30.¹⁰⁶ Here and in the next verse פְּרִי occurs twice, once as a metonymy for various agricultural crops, and once as a metaphor for the people. The LXX uses a different word for each occurrence.

Isa 37:30-31

And this shall be the sign for you: This year eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that;	וְזֶה-לְךָ הָאֵוֶת אֲבֹל הַשָּׁנָה סְפִיחַ וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית שְׁחִים	τοῦτο δέ σοι τὸ σημεῖον· φάγε τοῦτον τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν ἃ ἔσπαρκας, τῷ δὲ ἐνιαυτῷ τῷ δευτέρῳ τὸ κατάλειμμα,	“And this shall be the sign for you: This year eat what you have sown, and in the second year what is left;
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¹⁰⁵ The other three exceptions occur in Lev 25:19, Deut 28:11 (which we will discuss below), and Ezek 19:12 where ἐκλεκτός occurs, possibly reading בַּד; see Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Greek~Hebrew/Aramaic Two-Way Index to the Septuagint* (Louvain: Peeters, 2010), 37.

¹⁰⁶ LXX-Isa only uses the word καρπός twice, once here and once in 27:6 as we will see.

then in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit.	וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית זָרְעוּ וְקָצְרוּ וְנָטְעוּ כִרְמִים וְאָכּוּל פְּרִים:	τῷ δὲ τρίτῳ σπείραντες ἀμήσατε καὶ φυτεύσατε ἀμπελῶνας καὶ φάγεσθε τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῶν.	then in the third year sow, reap, and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit.
The surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward,	וְיִסְפָּה פְּלִיטַת בֵּית יְהוּדָה הַנִּשְׁאַרָה שָׂרֵשׁ לְמַטָּה	καὶ ἔσονται οἱ καταλειμμένοι ἐν τῇ Ιουδαίᾳ φυήσουσι ρίζαν κάτω	And those that are left in Judea shall take root downward
and bear fruit upward;	וְעָשָׂה פְּרִי לְמַעְלָה:	καὶ ποιήσουσι σπέρμα ἄνω.	and bear seed upward,

In 37:30 פרי refers not just to the fruit of the vineyards but also to what is sown; it is lacking in 4QIsa^b. Unlike the passages mentioned above, here the Greek translates the metonymy literally with *καρπός*. The translator interprets several other terms in this passage as well. The word סְפִיחַ is rendered with *αὐτομάτος* in its occurrences elsewhere (Lev 25:5, 11; 2 Kng 19:29). Perhaps the translator has the Sabbath and Jubilee years from Lev 25 in mind, and so says they can eat what they have sown (*ἔσπαρκας*) in the first year and it is just the second year that they eat the remnant without sowing or reaping, and in the year after they can sow and reap again normally. The rendering of שְׂחִים with *κατάλειμμα* may show the translator had the harvest of the previous year in mind; the parallel passage in 2 Kings 19:29 has סְחִים (rendered with *ἀνατέλλω*), rather than שְׂחִים, and 1QIsa^a has שעיס.

In the next verse, there has been some condensation: the reference to פְּלִיטַת בֵּית יְהוּדָה הַנִּשְׁאַרָה is reduced simply to οἱ καταλειμμένοι ἐν τῇ Ιουδαίᾳ.¹⁰⁷ LXX.D.E.K. suggests *φυήσουσιν* comes from reading הַנִּשְׁאַרָה as a form of שָׂגָא,¹⁰⁸ but this unique rendering does not need to be posited, the translator probably provided the verb to make the passage clear. In this verse פרי is used metaphorically to describe the remnant of Judah. In the Greek, though, we find *σπέρμα* which still fits the plant language of the metaphor. The avoidance of *καρπός* in verse 31 may be to distinguish the literal reference to actual produce in 37:30 and the metaphorical reference to fruit in 37:31. In contrast, 2 Kings 19:30-31 uses *καρπός* in both verses. Using *γένημα* in the first instance could have served the same purpose, but it makes more sense to eat “fruit” (cf. Amos 9:14) than to eat “produce.” The LXX-Isa translator elsewhere often preserves and even improves renderings of various figures of word repetition.¹⁰⁹ While it appears that “seed” is a synonymous metaphor for “fruit” meaning “descendent,” it could also be an interpretation of שָׂרֵשׁ. In Isa 14:29-30 שָׂרֵשׁ is twice

¹⁰⁷ For other examples of synonymous elements reduced, see van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 67-68.

¹⁰⁸ LXX.D.E.K. 2604. Cf. 1QIsa^a which has the synonym וְהַנְּמָצָא instead.

¹⁰⁹ See van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 142-75.

rendered with σπέρμα.¹¹⁰ By using what is usually a lexicalized metaphor, σπέρμα, the translator makes much more clear that offspring is meant.

The Targum in 37:30 is specific about what is meant specifying that this current year they will eat freegrowth (כתין), and in the second year the freegrowth of the freegrowth (כתתין).¹¹¹ Fruit is translated literally in 37:30 with אב, but in 37:31 it appears to read פרה since it renders it גופיה,¹¹² though this could be a harmonization in that it may be a more logical counterpart to שרש since it has made explicit that it is a comparison with a tree (כאילן).

In two other places, where the root פרי occurs, it refers specifically to the fruit of vines, and LXX-Isa uses γένημα. In these contexts, though, פרי is not used metaphorically, but as a metonymy of the genus. The Greek preserves the metonymy by using another general word for produce, rather than the specific produce of vines such as σταφυλή (as in Isa 5:2, 4) or ῥώξ (Isa 65:8).

Isa 32:12¹¹³: עַל־שָׂדִים סְפָדִים עַל־שְׂדֵי־חֶמְדַּם עַל־גִּפְנֵי פְרִיָּה: καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μαστῶν κόπτεσθε ἀπὸ ἀγροῦ ἐπιθυμήματος καὶ ἀμπέλου γενήματος.

Isa 65:21¹¹⁴: וּבְנֵי בָתַיִם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ וְנִטְעוּ כִרְמִים וְאָכְלוּ פְרִיָם: καὶ οἰκοδομήσουσιν οἰκίας καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐνοικήσουσι, καὶ καταφυτεύσουσιν ἀμπελῶνας καὶ αὐτοὶ φάγονται τὰ γενήματα αὐτῶν.

It seems odd for LXX-Isa to use a general term for a specific fruit, particularly an even more general term than the Hebrew uses. The reason for this cannot be that it is a Hebraism or that it would be odd in the target language, since in classical literature also a general term is used by metonymy for grapes. Homer uses καρπός in apposition to wine, in *Iliad* III.245-246:

Κήρυκες δ' ἀνὰ ἄστῃ θεῶν φέρον ὄρκια πιστὰ,
 ἄρνε δῶν καὶ οἶνον εὐφρονα, καρπὸν ἀρούρης,
 Meanwhile the heralds were carrying through the city the oath offerings to the gods,
 two lambs and, in a goatskin bottle, wine that gladdens the heart, the fruit of the
 earth.¹¹⁵

Also grapes are referred to with καρπός in *Iliad* XVIII.565-568:

¹¹⁰ The analysis of “root” imagery will be dealt with elsewhere.

¹¹¹ “And this will be the sign for you: *in this* year eat free growths, and in the second year *growth of free growths*; then in the third year sow and reap and plant vineyards and eat their fruit. And the *delivered* of the house of Judah will continue *and will* be left as a tree which sends its roots downward, and raises its top upward.”

¹¹² IQIsa^a has פרי.

¹¹³ In this example it is actually the participle פרה, though it is rendered as a noun. The same can be seen in Ezek 19:10. Targum: “They beat upon breasts for *the* pleasant fields, for *bearing* vines (גופנין טענין).”

¹¹⁴ Targum: “They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit (אברהון).”

¹¹⁵ Homer, *Iliad* [Murray and Wyatt, LCL 170].

μία δ' οἴη ἀταρπιτὸς ἦεν ἐπ' αὐτήν,
 τῇ νίσοντο φορῆες, ὅτε τρυγῶφεν ἀλωήν.
 παρθενικαὶ δὲ καὶ ἡῖθεοι ἀταλὰ φρονέοντες
 πλεκτοῖς ἐν ταλάροισι φέρον μελιηδέα καρπὸν.

...and one single path led to it by which the vintagers went and came whenever they gathered the vintage. And maidens and youths in childish glee were carrying the honey-sweet fruit in wicker baskets.¹¹⁶

Thucydides in his *The Peloponnesian War* likewise after saying it was in summer before the vintage, refers to grapes by saying “fruit” in 4.84.1-2 and also in 3.88.1.

LXX-Isa, however, does not understand the fruit of the vine to be grapes, per se, but speaks generally about its produce, probably meaning wine. In the papyri we find the word γένημα used in connection with wine regarding on how many years of vintage taxes are owed:

...ὑπ(ερ) ὧν ὀφείλ(ετε) δημοσί(ο)υ
 οἶνον [-ου] κολοφώ(νια) δύο γενή(ματος)
 ἰβ (ἔτους) δι' ἡμῶν τῶν ἐπιτ(ηρητῶν).¹¹⁷

...concerning the wine which you owe the district: two kolfonia, the products for 12 years through our tax assessor.

κατάγοντι εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν τὸν ἐκ Φιλ(αδελφείας) οἶνον, τὸν ἐκ τῶν γεν(ημάτων)
 τοῦ δ (ἔτους).

bring to Alexandria from Philidelphia wine, from the produce of 4 years.¹¹⁸

LXX-Isa, it would seem, is using appropriate legal terminology to talk about the produce of vineyards.

Another, more common metonymic use of פרי in the Hebrew Bible is in the phrase פרי הארץ and its synonyms. This expression does not refer to fruit specifically, but to all kinds of agricultural products.¹¹⁹ In the one place where the phrase פרי הארץ occurs in Isaiah (4:2) it does not simply refer to produce but has a metaphorical meaning.¹²⁰

Isa 4:2

On that day the branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious,	בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה צֶמַח יְהוָה לְצַבִּי וּלְכִבְדֹּד	Τῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἐπιλάμψει ὁ θεὸς ἐν βουλήῃ μετὰ δόξης	But on that day God will gloriously shine on the earth with counsel,
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¹¹⁶ Homer, *Iliad* [Murray and Wyatt, LCL 171].

¹¹⁷ o.bodl.2.1693, ln 4-6.

¹¹⁸ P.col.4.89. See also p.oxy.8.1141 for an order of wine and P.Oxy. 64 4436 for an account of money and wine; in both sources wine is measured as the “produce” of a certain number of years.

¹¹⁹ See Num 13:26 and Deut 1:25 as well as Deut 26:2 and Mal 3:11 for literal renderings using καρπός. Similar phrases can be found in Homer *Iliad* III.245-246; Euripedes, *Ion* 303; and Herodotus, *History*, 4.198.2.

¹²⁰ See Hans Wildberger, *Jesaja 1-12* (Biblicher Kommentar Altes Testament 10; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972), s.v.

and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and glory of the survivors of Israel.	וּפְרֵי הָאָרֶץ לְגֵאוֹן וּלְתִפְאֵרַת לְפִלִּיטָה יִשְׂרָאֵל:	ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τοῦ ὕψῳσαι καὶ δοξάσαι τὸ καταλειφθὲν τοῦ Ἰσραηλ,	to uplift and glorify what remains of Israel.
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The rest of LXX-Isa 4 is translated quite literally (except for 4:6), so this verse's rendering stands out as special in some way. This verse is not particularly difficult in its language or meaning, but the translator is intent on having his translation say something specific here.

The verb ἐπιλάμπω appears only here in the LXX, while λάμπω appears three times (rendering נגה in Prov 4:18 and Isa 9:1, and rendering צהה in Lam 4:7). The Isa translator knows the meaning of צמח, translating it in Isa 61:11 with ἀξάνω (to grow, cause to grow), in 55:10 with ἐκβλαστάσω (to shoot, sprout), and in 42:9, 43:19, 44:4, 45:8, and 58:8 with ἀνατέλλω (to spring forth, rise).¹²¹ Here, however, the translator seems to have taken it as the Aramaic verb חמץ and so translated it ἐπιλάμψει, meaning “he will shine.”¹²² As Ziegler and Ottley rightly pointed out, the translator probably read the Aramaic צב (desire) and so translated it with βουλή;¹²³ these renderings are unique.¹²⁴ Ottley suggests that ἐπί comes from reading וּפְרֵי as פני,¹²⁵ but this would be a unique equivalence. The preposition probably comes from the prefix of the verb, repeated for the sake of style; the translator simply does not render וּפְרֵי. The nouns לְגֵאוֹן וּלְתִפְאֵרַת are read as infinitives, probably due to the prefix ל. But for this reading we would need something like לְגֵאוֹן וּלְתִפְאֵרַת. The change from “escaped” לְפִלִּיטָה to the “remnant” τὸ καταλειφθὲν is not uncommon, but is a clear choice of the translator, and is consistent with his theological concerns.¹²⁶

The Targum interprets the metaphor “branch” as “messiah” and “fruit of the earth” as “those doing the law” and instead of “a remnant of Israel,” it is “to save Israel.”¹²⁷ The LXX, though, does not understand “branch” but reads a verb. Seeligmann suggests the translator was paraphrasing a text that gave him some difficulty.¹²⁸ But it seems the translator understood the passage in a certain way, and modified this verse to more clearly express his understanding.

¹²¹ σ', θ', α' have at Isa 4:2 ἔσται ἀνατολή.

¹²² Ottley believes it was read as יצח like in Lam 4:7. Ottley, *Isaiah* II, 121. LXX.D.E.K. 2515.

¹²³ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 107. He gives the example of a similar rendering for a verbal form of the Aramaic in Dan 5:19.

¹²⁴ צב translated: ἐλπίς Isa 24:16; 28:4, 5; ἔνδοξος Isa 13:19. βουλή translates עצה in Isa 5:19; 8:10; 11:2; 14:26; 19:3; 19:11; 19:17; 25:1; 29:15; 30:1; 44:26; 46:10; 47:13; מושבה in Isa 55:7; 55:8 2x; דעת in Isa 44:25; יעץ in Isa 9:5; כלי in 32:7, and כלי in 32:7; תבלית in 10:25; עצמה in 41:21; מסכה in 25:7; נדיבה in 32:8; צאה in 28:8.

¹²⁵ Ottley, *Isaiah* II, 121. Ziegler suggests פני הארץ (על), *Untersuchungen*, 108.

¹²⁶ See Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 286-89 [115-17].

¹²⁷ “In that time the Messiah of the LORD shall be for joy and for glory, and those who perform the law for pride and for praise to the survivors of Israel.”

¹²⁸ Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 287 [115/116].

In one place, 29:1, *γένημα* occurs as a plus referring to produce gathered.¹²⁹ Troxel suggests it is from reading ספו as פרי,¹³⁰ though it seems more likely the translator was simply adding an object for this verb (which he understood as אסא instead of יסא) for the sake of clarity.¹³¹ The object in the Hebrew is “year upon year.” Similar to the Greek, the Targum understands אסא and makes the verb reflexive (דמתכנשין) in order to provide an object.

2.2.2. Fruit as Metaphor for Offspring

The Hebrew Bible uses פרי as a metaphor for offspring, often in the phrase פרי־בטן. This phrase occurs once in Isaiah at 13:18.

<p>Their bows will slaughter the young men; they will have no mercy on the fruit of the womb; their eyes will not pity children.</p>	<p>וְקִשְׁתּוֹת נְעָרִים תִּרְטֹשְׁנָה וּפְרִי־בֶטֶן לֹא יִרְחֲמוּ עַל־בָּנִים לֹא־תַחֲוֶיּוּ עֵינָם:</p>	<p>τοξεύματα νεανίσκων συντριψουσι καὶ τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν οὐ μὴ ἐλεήσωσιν, οὐδὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς τέκνοις οὐ φείσονται οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν.</p>	<p>They will crush the arrows of the young men, and they will have no mercy on your children, nor will their eyes be sparing upon the children.</p>
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In this case, the translator abandons the language of the metaphor “fruit of the womb,” and simply writes “your children.” Also, “son” in the parallel phrase is rendered with the same word τέκνον. The translation is appropriate, it captures well the meaning of the metaphor, but there is no clear reason to abandon the imagery. It could be a matter of style, since the passage as a whole does not use much metaphorical language, but rather uses several similes. It also is unlikely that the translator had a problem with the phrase פרי־בטן, not only because it is rendered literally elsewhere in the LXX, but because elsewhere in LXX-Isa parts of the typical rendering appear.

The Hebrew phrase פרי־בטן is typically translated with καρπὸν κοιλίας, as in Gen 30:2; Mic 6:7; and Psa 132(131):11. In Lam 2:20 the phrase אִם־תֵּאכְלֶנָּה נְשִׁים פְּרִים is rendered with this typical translation εἰ φάγονται γυναῖκες καρπὸν κοιλίας αὐτῶν. A variation is used for פרי־הבטן in Psa 127(126):3 where the LXX has καρποῦ τῆς γαστρούς. Likewise in Psa 21(20):11, where פרי occurs parallel to זרע, both referring to children, καρπός and σπέρμα are used. In general, then, the LXX does not mind using the metaphor “fruit of the womb.”

The exceptions to this, outside of Isaiah, come from Deuteronomy. Several times in Deuteronomy, the translation of פרי with καρπός is avoided where פרי is used in different metaphors in close proximity. Take, for example, Deut 28:11:

<p>The LORD will make you abound in</p>	<p>וְהוֹתִרְךָ יְהוָה לְטוֹבָה</p>	<p>καὶ πληθυνεῖ σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου εἰς</p>	<p>And the Lord your God will make you</p>
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¹²⁹ For other features of this verse see LXX.D.E.K., 2579.

¹³⁰ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 109-10.

¹³¹ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 246.

prosperity, in the fruit of your womb, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground	בְּפִרְיִי בְטֶנְךָ וּבַפֶּרִי בְּהֶמְתְּךָ וּבַפֶּרִי אֲדָמָתְךָ	ἀγαθὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐκγόνοις τῆς κοιλίας σου καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς γενήμασιν τῆς γῆς σου καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐκγόνοις τῶν κτηνῶν σου	abound with good things, in the progeny of your belly and in the progeny of your livestock and in the produce of your land
in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give you.	עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאַבְתָּיִךְ לְתַת לְךָ:	ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἧς ᾤμοσεν κύριος τοῖς πατράσιν σου δοῦναί σοι.	in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give you.

The LXX renders פרי in the same way in Deut 7:13; 28:4, 18, 42, 51, 53, and 30:9 where different kinds of offspring (human, animal, and vegetative) are referred to as “fruit” in the Hebrew.¹³² In the case of human offspring, LXX-Deut prefers to say τὰ ἔκγονα τῆς κοιλίας “the offspring of the womb,” as in Deut 7:13; 28:4, 11, 18, 53; and 30:9. This Greek phrase appears twice in LXX-Isa, though not for the same Hebrew phrase. In Isa 48:19, a passage which references God’s promise to Abraham, and seems to reflect the background of the Deuteronomic blessings for obedience, the phrase וַיְהִי כְחֹל זֶרְעֶךָ וַיִּצְאָצְאֵי מֵעֵיךָ כְּמַעֲתִי becomes καὶ ἐγένετο ἂν ὡσεὶ ἡ ἄμμος τὸ σπέρμα σου καὶ τὰ ἔκγονα τῆς κοιλίας σου ὡς ὁ χοῦς τῆς γῆς. This is the usual word equivalent for צאצאים in LXX-Isa,¹³³ the rendering τῆς κοιλίας is probably to tighten the connection to Deuteronomy. In 44:3 צאצאים again occurs parallel to זרע, but this time is rendered with τέκνον, probably for the sake of clarity in light of the subsequent context which describes the offspring in metaphorical botanical language. The second place LXX-Isa has the phrase τὰ ἔκγονα τῆς κοιλίας is Isa 49:15, where the Hebrew says בֶּן־בְּטִנָּה. Again, the translator probably wanted to use the familiar phrase. The closest parallel to the unique Hebrew phrase is in Prov 31:2, where בֶּרֶב־בְּטִנִּי is translated with τέκνον ἐμῆς κοιλίας. In the Proverbs context, this is a better translation (than say, υἱός or ἔκγονος) because of the anaphora created by the repetition of τέκνον.

The Targum renders the phrase וּפְרִי־בְטֶן with וּלְדָ מֵעֵין.¹³⁴

Rather than shedding light on the rendering of Isa 13:18, the matter is more obscure. There seems to be no reason the translator could not have rendered the phrase with something like ἔκγονα τῆς κοιλίας. As we have seen, elsewhere the translator does not mind referring to the womb when talking about offspring. And as we will see, he also does not mind using καρπός metaphorically to refer to offspring. In Isa 27:6 we find this word, though it is a rendering of תְּנוּבָה.

¹³² Though the order of these three “fruits” is not consistently changed, like in this passage. Also, in Deut 7:13 τὸν καρπὸν τῆς γῆς σου is specified as referring to grain, wine, and oil in both versions.

¹³³ Isa 48:19; 61:9; 65:23. A rendering of צאצאים in Isa 22:24 is lacking and in 34:1 it is paraphrased to make the text more clear.

¹³⁴ “And their bows will cut young men asunder, and they will have no mercy on the offspring of the womb, and their eyes will not pity children.”

Isa 27:6

In days to come Jacob shall take root, Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots,	הַבָּאִים יִשְׂרָשׁ יַעֲקֹב וְיִצְיָן וּפְרַח יִשְׂרָאֵל	οἱ ἐρχόμενοι, τέκνα Ἰακωβ, βλαστήσει καὶ ἐξανθήσει Ἰσραηλ,	Those who are coming are the children of Iakob; Israel shall bud and blossom,
and fill the whole world with fruit.	וּמְלֵאוּ פְּנֵי-תֵבֶל תְּנוּבָה:	καὶ ἐμπλησθήσεται ἡ οἰκουμένη τοῦ καρποῦ αὐτοῦ.	and the world will be filled with his fruit.

Chapter 27 has many interesting renderings. We will discuss the rendering of **יִשְׂרָשׁ** below in the section on roots (2.3.2.). The rendering of **יִצְיָן** with *βλαστάνω* is unique, but appropriate; its most common equivalent is *ἐξανθέω*, which was used in this verse for **וּפְרַח**, as it is its most common equivalent.¹³⁵ The rendering of **תְּנוּבָה** with *καρπός* is unique; its meaning would be better expressed with *γένημα*, which is used in all the other places where **תְּנוּבָה** occurs: Deut 32:19; Jdg 9:11; Lam 4:9; and Ezek 36:30. Perhaps *καρπός* was more appropriate here since it refers to the fruit of a specific tree (or plant) and not produce in general. Also, since the idea of “children” was already explicit in the passage, perhaps there was no need to interpret the fruit metaphor.

The Targum, by contrast, interprets **פָּרַח** as becoming numerous (**וּיִסְגֹּן**), and **תְּנוּבָה** as meaning grandchildren (**בְּנֵי בְנֵי**).¹³⁶

According to LSJ, *καρπός* can be used figuratively to represent children in classical literature.¹³⁷ The example they give is Euripedes, *Ion* 919-922:

μισεῖ σ' ἄ Δᾶλος καὶ δάφνας
ἔρνεα φοίνικα παρ' ἄβροκόμαν,
ἔνθα λοχεύματα σέμν' ἔλοχεύσατο
Λατῶ Δίοισί σε καρποῖς.

This example, though, is difficult, since the meaning of the phrase is not universally accepted. Some believe the text is corrupt and should read *Λατῶ Δίοισί σε κάποις*.¹³⁸

The LXX of Isaiah is unique in that it avoids literally rendering **פָּרַי** with *καρπός* when representing children, except where the context makes it entirely clear children are referred to (Isa 27:6). While the phrase **פְּרִי-בְטֵן** is not rendered following the precedent in LXX-Deut, similar phrases are harmonized to match the rendering of the phrase. When **פָּרַי** is used to refer to the offspring of animals LXX-Isa also follows the LXX-Deut precedent.

¹³⁵ For LXX-Isa's use and non-use of synonyms, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 17-21.

¹³⁶ “They shall be gathered from among their exiles and they shall return to their land, there those of the house of Jacob will receive (children), those of the house of Israel will grow and increase, and sons’ sons will fill the face of the world.”

¹³⁷ LSJ, s.v.

¹³⁸ Euripedes, *Ion* (trans. K.H. Lee; The Plays of Euripides 11; Warminster: Aris & Phillips Ltd, 1997), 110-111, 264.

Fruit as a metaphor for the offspring of animals only occurs in Deut 28:4, 11, 51; 30:9 and Isa 14:29. The same phrase as we saw in Deut 28:4 above (וּבְפִרְיָ בְהִמָּתֵךְ rendered καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐκγόνοις τῶν κτηνῶν σου) occurs in the Hebrew and Greek, respectively, in all the listed places in Deuteronomy.¹³⁹ **Isa 14:29** likewise avoids the language of this metaphor using the same word equivalent for offspring, though the animal is different and is itself a metaphor for a king or ruler:

Do not rejoice, all you Philistines, that the rod that struck you is broken,	אֶל-תִּשְׂמְחִי פְלִשְׁתִּי כִּלְדָּךְ כִּי נִשְׁבַּר שֵׁבֶט מִכָּדָךְ	Μὴ εὐφρανθείητε, πάντες οἱ ἀλλόφυλοι, συνετρίβη γὰρ ὁ ζυγὸς τοῦ παίοντος ὑμᾶς·	May you not rejoice, all you allophytes, for the yoke of him who struck you is broken,
for from the root of the snake will come forth an adder, and its fruit will be a flying fiery serpent.	כִּי-מִשְׂרֹשׁ נָחָשׁ יֵצֵא צִפְּעֵ וּפְרִיזוּ שָׂרָף מֵעוֹפֵף:	ἐκ γὰρ σπέρματος ὄφειων ἐξελεύσεται ἔκγονα ἀσπίδων, καὶ τὰ ἔκγονα αὐτῶν ἐξελεύσονται ὄφεις πετόμενοι.	for from the seed of snakes will come forth the offspring of snakes, and their offspring will come forth as flying snakes.

This passage has been shaped to offer an interpretation in a few ways. One thing of note is that פְּלִשְׁתִּי has been generalized to refer to οἱ ἀλλόφυλοι.¹⁴⁰ The plus ἔκγονα could be to signify that τὰ ἔκγονα αὐτῶν is the same as the ἔκγονα ἀσπίδων, so only two generations are spoken of, not three, but this is not obvious. Regarding the plant metaphors of this verse, note that the metaphor “root” has been replaced with “seed” and “fruit” has been replaced with “offspring.” It is not certain that “root” and “seed” really are comparable metaphors, but in this case the reference is the same, namely, that the “snake” will come from the same ancestry. Compared to this transformation between metaphors, the change from “fruit” to “offspring” is really an explanation of the metaphor. It is interesting that like in Isa 44:3 and 48:19, “seed” and “offspring” occur together. Apart from the usual aversion to “fruit” imagery, perhaps in this verse the translator wanted to move away from mixing botanical and animal imagery. While we still have “seed” mentioned in the translation, it is a common enough metaphor for offspring that it is nearly dead.¹⁴¹

The idea of “fruit” representing the offspring of animals may not have been completely foreign to the Greek world. According to Kittel, καρπός in Classical Greek can be figurative for the young of animals.¹⁴² The example he gives is, Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 1.1.2:

¹³⁹ The LXX lacks a translation for the phrase in Deut 28:4.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Isa 2:6. LXX.D.E.K. 2543. This passage will be discussed further in the section on roots. For the “flying snake” and Herodotus 2.75 and 3.107-109, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 191.

¹⁴¹ The first occurrence of ἔκγονα in 14:29b could be an explication, or along with ἐξελεύσεται a double rendering of יֵצֵא since this is a term used to render יֵצֵא elsewhere in LXX-Isa: 48:19; 61:9; 65:23.

¹⁴² TWNT, III 617.

καὶ τοῖς καρποῖς τοίνυν τοῖς γιγνομένοις ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐῷσι τοὺς νομέας χρῆσθαι οὕτως ὅπως ἂν αὐτοὶ βούλωνται. ἔτι τοίνυν οὐδεμίαν πώποτε ἀγέλην ἡσθήμεθα συστᾶσαν ἐπὶ τὸν νομέα οὔτε ὡς μὴ πείθεσθαι οὔτε ὡς μὴ ἐπιτρέπῃ τῷ καρπῷ χρῆσθαι,
 They allow their keeper, moreover, to enjoy, just as he will, the profits (καρποῖς) that accrue from them. And then again, we have never known of a herd conspiring against its keeper, either to refuse obedience to him or to deny him the privilege of enjoying the profits (καρπῷ) that accrue.¹⁴³

Here “fruit” could mean their offspring in particular, but seems also to mean any profit they provide, such as young, milk, meat, wool, skin, etc. So Miller’s English translation “profit” is appropriate. Perhaps LXX-Deut is too restrictive in rendering פרי with ἔκγονος, though in the Isaiah context young or offspring is certainly meant.

The Targum also interprets this passage, so that the rod is a ruler (שלטון), the root of the snake is interpreted as the sons of the sons of Jesse (מבני בנוה דישי), the viper (צפע) is the messiah (משיחה), and its fruit are his works (עובדותיה).¹⁴⁴

2.2.3. Fruit as Metaphor for the Results of Actions

Another metaphorical use of פרי is as a metaphor for the results of actions.

Isa 3:10

Tell the innocent how fortunate they are, for they shall eat the fruit of their labors.	אִמְרוּ צְדִיק בְּיָטוֹב בְּיַפְרֵי מַעֲלָלֵיהֶם יֵאָכְלוּ:	εἰπόντες Δήσωμεν τὸν δίκαιον, ὅτι δύσχρηστος ἡμῖν ἐστι· τοίνυν τὰ γενήματα τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν φάγονται.	saying, “Let us bind the just, for he is a nuisance to us.” Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their works.
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The first half of this verse is quite different in the Greek. The word אִמְרוּ appears to have been rendered twice, the second time as the root אסר, becoming Δήσωμεν.¹⁴⁵ Ottley suggests δύσχρηστος comes from טוב in implying the sense that “their goodness is no good to us,” and so is an ironic or antithetical rendering.¹⁴⁶ The LXX reading would not be possible from a text like 1QIsa^a which has לצדיק.

In the second half of the verse. The metaphor is preserved in the Greek using agricultural terminology, that the results (produce, crops) of one’s actions will be enjoyed (eaten). But the translator instead of using “fruit” as a metonymy for all types of agricultural products uses a general term (γένημα) with that meaning.

¹⁴³ Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* [Miller, LCL].

¹⁴⁴ “Rejoice not, all you *Philistines*, because the ruler who was subjugating you is broken, for from the sons of the sons of Jesse the Messiah will come forth, and his deeds will be among you as a wounding serpent.”

¹⁴⁵ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 117. See Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 166 [29-30], 211[61-62] nt. 38.

¹⁴⁶ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 117 and LXX.D.E.K., 2513 see it as understanding the Hebrew as irony, while others see it as an antithetical rendering: Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 204 [56/57]. Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint*, 138-39. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 97 lists 3:10 with a few other examples of antithetical renderings.

The phrase פרי מעללים occurs five other times in the MT. In Jer 21:14 and 32(39):19 it is not rendered. In Micah 7:13 מפרי מעלליהם is rendered ἐκ καρπῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων αὐτῶν and in Jer 17:10 כפרי מעלליו is rendered καὶ κατὰ τοὺς καρποὺς τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων αὐτοῦ. In Psa 104(103):13 the similar phrase מפרי מעשׂיך is rendered ἀπὸ καρποῦ τῶν ἔργων σου. Isa 3:10, like 65:21 where “fruit” is also said to be eaten, has again shown preference for using the word γένημα. Hos 10:12 also uses γένημα as the products of something abstract: instead of עֲדֵי-בֹא וְיָרָה צֶדֶק לְכֶם the LXX has continued the agricultural metaphor of the verse and rendered ἕως τοῦ ἐλθεῖν γενήματα δικαιοσύνης ὑμῖν.

The Targum leaves the metaphor fruit, translating with the cognate פירי, but interprets “eat” as them being recompensed (ישתלמון).¹⁴⁷

Fruit is used as a metaphor for the results of a more abstract action in two places in Isaiah.

Isa 27:10(9)

Therefore by this the guilt of Jacob will be expiated, and this will be the full fruit of the removal of his sin:	לְכֵן בְּזֹאת יִכָּפֵר עֲוֹן־יַעֲקֹב וְזֶה כָּל-פְּרִי הַחֶסֶד חֲטָאתוֹ	διὰ τοῦτο ἀφαιρεθήσεται ἡ ἀνομία Ιακωβ, καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν ἡ εὐλογία αὐτοῦ, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι αὐτοῦ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν,	Because of this lawlessness of Iakob will be removed. And this is his blessing, when I remove his sin,
when he makes all the stones of the altars like chalkstones crushed to pieces, no sacred poles or incense altars will remain standing.	בְּשׂוּמוֹ כָּל-אַבְנֵי מִזְבֵּחַ כְּאַבְנֵי-גֹר מִנְפָצוֹת לְאִי-קָמוּ אֲשֵׁרִים וְחֲמָנִים:	ὅταν θῶσι πάντα τοὺς λίθους τῶν βωμῶν κατακεκομμένους ὡς κονίαν λεπτὴν. ¹⁴⁸ καὶ οὐ μὴ μείνη τὰ δένδρα αὐτῶν, καὶ τὰ εἴδωλα αὐτῶν ἐκκεκομμένα ὥσπερ δρυμὸς μακράν.	when they make all the stones of the altars broken pieces like fine dust, and their trees will not remain, and their idols will be cut down like a forest far away.

The Hebrew phrase כָּל-פְּרִי הַחֶסֶד חֲטָאתוֹ is difficult in terms of how it relates to the surrounding clauses. The metaphor, though, seems to refer to the fullness of the results of the removing of his sin. The Greek translation of the entire chapter is full of interpretation; for more on this verse see the section on trees (3.6.4.). Here it seems to be making a theological judgment, that the results (fruit) are a blessing (εὐλογία); Ottley calls this “a natural interpretation of ‘fruit.’”¹⁴⁹ There is no clear lexical warrant for this rendering.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ “Tell the righteous, “*You are blessed,*” for the fruits of their deeds will *be repaid.*”

¹⁴⁸ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 235 points out the phrase ἐν λεπτῇ κονίῃ in Homer, *Iliad*, XXIII. 505.

¹⁴⁹ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 235.

¹⁵⁰ For more on this verse, see LXX.D.E.K., 2573. For the two similes in 27:10(9)b see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 101-2.

The Targum interprets פרי as works (עובדי) of the removal, but the clause is otherwise rendered literally.¹⁵¹

The second place פרי is used as the result of an abstract action is Isa 10:12.

Isa 10:12

<p>When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he will punish the <i>fruit of the greatness of heart</i> of the king of Assyria and his haughty pride.</p>	<p>וְהָיָה כִּי-יִבְצֵעַ אֲדֹנָי אֶת-כָּל-מַעֲשָׂהוּ בְּהָר צִיּוֹן וּבִירוּשָׁלַם אֶפְקֹד עַל-פְּרִי-גִדְלֵי לִבָּב מִלְדֵּ-אֲשׁוּר וְעַל- תַּפְאֲרַת רוּם עֵינָיו:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔσται ὅταν συντελέσῃ κύριος πάντα ποιῶν ἐν τῷ ὄρει Σιών καὶ ἐν Ιερουσαλημ, ἐπάξει ἐπὶ τὸν νοῦν τὸν μέγαν, τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν Ἀσσυρίων, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ὕψος τῆς δόξης τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ.</p>	<p>And it shall be that when the Lord has finished doing all the things on Mount Sion and in Ierousalem, he will bring his wrath against the great mind, the ruler of the Assyrians, and against the loftiness of the glory of his eyes.</p>
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It probably cannot be called removing a metaphor that **יִבְצֵעַ** is rendered *συντελέσῃ*, since this is the single most common word equivalent. The Hebrew “heart,” standing for the center of thought, is rendered by *νοῦς*, an equivalent found also in Isa 10:7 and 41:22.¹⁵² The Greek removes **פרי** which stands as an image for the results of the king’s thoughts. The ESV and NRSV understand this to mean speech and boasting. The LXX is not concerned with the idea of the results of the king’s mind, but with the mind itself. He finds no reason to interpret the phrase, since the parallel clause makes it clear enough that “great mind” refers to pride or arrogance.

The Targum understands it as the works of his lofty heart (על עובדי רם ליבא).¹⁵³

Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible **פרי** is used for actions such as the fruit of righteousness (Psa 58(57):12; Prov 11:30; Amos 6:12; cf. LXX-Hos 10:12), fruit of paths (Prov 1:31), and fruit of hands (Prov 31:16; 31).¹⁵⁴ In all these cases **פרי** is rendered with *καρπός*.

Classical literature likewise uses “fruit” metaphorically as the results of actions. For example, take Aeschylus, *Seven Against Thebes*, 599-600:

ἐν παντὶ πράγῃ δ’ ἔσθ’ ὀμιλίας κακῆς
κάκιον οὐδέν, καρπὸς οὐ κομιστέος.

In every activity there is nothing worse than evil company; it is a crop best not reaped.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ “Therefore by this the *sins of the house* of Jacob will be *forgiven*, and this will be the full *effectuation* of the removal of his *sins*: when he makes all the stones of *the* altar like chalkstones crushed to pieces, no Asherim or sun pillars will *be established*.”

¹⁵² Also in Exod 7:23; Josh 14:7; and Job 7:17.

¹⁵³ “And it will come to pass when the *LORD* has finished *doing* all that *he promised* on the Mount of Zion and in Jerusalem I will punish the *deeds* of the *high* heart of the king of Assyria and the *celebrity* of his haughty eyes.”

¹⁵⁴ See BDB s.v. for a more complete listing of this metaphorical use of **פרי**.

¹⁵⁵ Aeschylus, *Seven Against Thebes* [Sommerstein, LCL 145].

Fruit can also be used as the action itself as the cause or source of the results, as can be seen in Plato, *Phaedrus* 260c-d:

ποιόν τινα οἶει μετὰ ταῦτα τὴν ῥητορικὴν
καρπὸν ὧν ἔσπειρε θερίζειν;
what harvest do you suppose his oratory will reap thereafter
from the seed (καρπὸν) he has sown?¹⁵⁶

LXX-Isa, then, departs from the typical translation technique used in the rest of the LXX in rendering fruit metaphors representing the results of actions. LXX-Isa avoids using καρπός in these contexts despite it being a metaphor known in Greek literature.

2.2.4. Summary

One of the difficulties in translating metaphors has to do with whether the language of the metaphor is meaningful in the target language. As we have seen in the case of “fruit” imagery, most LXX translators thought they could translate these images literally, preserving the vehicle “fruit.” There seems to be good reason for this, since there are some similar uses of fruit imagery in classical literature. Why, then, does LXX-Isa consistently avoid using “fruit” as a vehicle?¹⁵⁷

Part of the answer seems to lie in the precedent set by LXX Deuteronomy. In chapter 28, fruit is repeatedly used to represent the offspring or produce of people, cattle, and fields. LXX-Deut wants to be precise here, and so interprets each occurrence in light of what it references: children, young cattle, and crops. In most cases in Isaiah, though, fruit imagery is used for only one reference in a passage, but the translator still follows the Deuteronomy precedent of interpreting what exactly the reference is. In Isa 32:12 and 65:21, LXX renders with γένημα for the fruit of vines, even though Homer himself can refer to grapes with καρπός. On the other hand, in Isa 37:30 the produce of vineyards is preserved with the rendering καρπός, while a verse later פֶּרִי is rendered with “seed” in reference to children. In 13:18, where fruit is again used in a metaphor for children, the LXX renders פֶּרִי־בְטָן with ἐπὶ τοῖς τέκνοις. In Isa 27:6 a synonym of “fruit” occurs parallel to a reference to children, so the LXX renders the metaphor using καρπός; to interpret the meaning of the metaphor here would have been redundant. In 4:2 the “fruit of the land” is used as a metaphor, probably for the people of the land, but the LXX understands the phrase quite differently. Also following the precedent in LXX-Deut 28, in 14:29, where “fruit” is used to refer to the offspring of snakes, LXX-Isa

¹⁵⁶ Plato, *Phaedrus* [Fowler, LCL].

¹⁵⁷ Concern about confusion with the homonym καρπός meaning “wrist, hand” is not likely, as this word is only used 3x in the LXX and the contexts of the Isa passages we have discussed would make it clear that “hand” was not meant.

renders with ἔκγονος. In 3:10 where the “fruit of works” are mentioned, the LXX uses γένημα instead of καρπός, even though similar uses of καρπός occur in Greek literature. The preference for using γένημα in LXX-Isa may also in part be because it was a more common term for agricultural produce at the time in Egypt,¹⁵⁸ so while καρπός was appropriate, γένημα was in more common use.¹⁵⁹

Two original uses of “fruit” metaphors are interpreted, more based on the translator’s ideas about the passage than based on the context of the passage itself. These occur in 27:10(9) and 10:12. To properly understand the rendering of these metaphors a more thorough investigation of the passages in their full contexts is needed.

For the Targum we see a variety of translations, but the three categories of produce, offspring and results are generally seen. In 32:12 the literal reference to vines is preserved, though with the adjective “bearing” instead of a construct phrase, and in 65:21 they still literally eat the vines’ fruit. In 37:30, fruit is still mentioned but in the next verse, since trees are explicitly added in the translation, it is the roots and the top rather than roots and fruit that are used in the merism. In 4:2, the metaphorical usage of the common phrase “fruit of the land” is interpreted as referring to “those who perform the law.” For the metaphors that refer to offspring in Hebrew, the Targum renders 13:18 with “offspring of the womb” much like LXX of other books, and in 27:6 fruit is rendered as “sons’ sons,” as opposed to just “sons” where the Hebrew has “seed” as we have seen above. In 14:29 the fruit of the serpent becomes his “deeds,” and in 3:10 the phrase “fruits of their deeds” is rendered literally. Where fruit metaphors occur as the results of actions, the Targum is more original. In 27:10(9) “the full fruit of the removal of their sins,” “fruit” is rendered as “works/effectuation.” The king’s “great fruit” in 10:12 is rendered as the deeds of his high heart, as above.

2.3. Root

The word שֶׁרֶשׁ (root) is used figuratively in the Hebrew Bible to refer either to people denoting their permanence and firmness in tree related imagery (Amos 2:9; Hos 9:16; 14:6; Mal 3:19),¹⁶⁰ or to familial stock (Dan 11:7), or the source or cause of something (e.g. Deut 29:17), or to the bottom of something such as a mountain (Job 28:9) or a sea (Job 36:30).¹⁶¹ In

¹⁵⁸ James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and other Non-Literary Sources* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1949), 123-24. They note that most occurrences of γένημα come from Egyptian sources.

¹⁵⁹ If the preference of using γένημα instead of καρπός has to do with the Egyptian convention, perhaps an analogy could be imagined if an American translator wanted to resist calling dessert “pudding” unless he was certain it was actual pudding that was meant.

¹⁶⁰ In some of these examples children or family could be meant.

¹⁶¹ BDB, s.v. Cf. HALOT, s.v.

classical Greek literature many of these metaphorical uses can also be found; we will discuss some relevant examples below.

Outside of Isaiah, the LXX always translates שֶׁרֶשׁ with ῥίζα when used metaphorically with the exception of Judges 5:14 (where it is rendered with the verb ἐκριζόω) and Job 8:17 (where the entire verse is rendered quite differently). In Isaiah, it is usually rendered literally with ῥίζα but often with a different metaphorical meaning.

2.3.1. Root as Family or Familial Stock

One use of metaphors using “root” as a vehicle in Isaiah seems to intend something like family or familial stock as the tenor.¹⁶² It is not always clear if the idea of a family’s source is intended, but this is certainly the case in the Hebrew of Isa 11:1.

Isa 11:1

<p>A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.</p>	<p>וַיֵּצֵא הַטֶּרֶם מִגִּזַּע יֵשׁוּ׃ וַיִּנְצֵר מִשְׂרָשׁוֹ יִפְרֶה׃</p>	<p>Καὶ ἐξελεύσεται ῥάβδος ἐκ τῆς ῥίζης Ἰεσσαί, καὶ ἄνθος ἐκ τῆς ῥίζης ἀναβήσεται.</p>	<p>And a rod shall come out of the root of Iessai, and a blossom shall come up out of his root.</p>
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The word ῥάβδος is used for הַטֶּרֶם (which only occurs here in Isaiah); this equivalence may be under the influence of 10:5, 15, 24 where a “rod” (though here it is שֶׁבֶט) is mentioned. While in Ezek 37:16-20 עֵץ is repeatedly rendered with ῥάβδος, the meaning is clearly some sort of “stick,” “staff,” or “rod.” Also of note is Ezek 19:11-14, where מִטָּה is repeatedly rendered with ῥάβδος. The only other occurrence of הַטֶּרֶם is in Prov 14:3, where it is rendered with βακτηρία, meaning “staff,” or “cane.” It appears that the LXX-Isa translator meant something like “stick” or “staff” and so was interpreting the passage in terms of the coming authority from Jesse. However, there is a chance he was simply using precise botanical terminology, as was the translator of Ezek 19. Theophrastus in his botanical works uses ῥάβδος to refer to date palm branches. For example:

μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα περιτέμνουσιν, ὅπταν ἀδρός ἤδη γένηται καὶ πάχος ἔχη. ἀπολείπουσι δὲ ὅσον σπιθαμὴν τῶν ῥάβδων.

At a later stage they prune it, when it is more vigorous and has become a stout tree, leaving the slender branches only about a handsbreadth long.¹⁶³

It appears as though the rendering of הַטֶּרֶם with ῥάβδος could be an appropriate use of botanical terminology.¹⁶⁴ According to Ziegler’s apparatus, Eusebius mentions that Aquila

¹⁶² For a classical Greek use of this metaphor, see Euripides, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, 609-10.

¹⁶³ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants* [Hort, LCL 70], 2.6.4. See also 2.1.4, see also Theophrastus, *De Causis Plantarum* 1.2.1.

here has ῥαβδίον, which means “little branch,” perhaps since he felt the need to clarify the LXX word.

The rendering of מגזע with ἐκ τῆς ῥίζης may be due to the parallel מִשְׁרָשֵׁי or perhaps to the similarity in assonance. The only other place this root occurs in Isaiah, 40:24, it is rendered the same way.¹⁶⁵ This change in 11:1 moves the metaphor away from referring to Jesse as the familial source (stock or stump as the Hebrew says) and instead allows the “root of Jesse” to potentially be an individual, as is made clear later. The Greek ἄνθος may sprout from יִפְרֶה, which is a root that could mean blossom (ἄνθος is equivalent to פרה in Isa 5:24 and 18:5).¹⁶⁶ Also, this rendering could be partly under the influence of 5:24, where in the Hebrew root and flower are parallel. Ottley points out that ἄνθος is used for a twig or shoot in the *Odyssey* IX.449: πολὺν πρῶτος νέμειαι τέρεν’ ἄνθεα ποίης, so it is a high register rendering of נצר.¹⁶⁷ This equivalence also occurs in the Theodotion’s version of Dan 11:7, which describes a king that will be born from a particular daughter of a king: שְׂרָשֵׁיָהּ כְּנֹן וְעַמְדַּת מְנַצֵּר is rendered καὶ στήσεται ἐκ τοῦ ἄνθους τῆς ῥίζης αὐτοῦ τῆς ἐτοιμασίας αὐτοῦ.¹⁶⁸ The word ἀναβαίνω is only here in Isa 11:1 an equivalent to פָּרַה, though their meaning is similar. The association with Num 17:8(23), where Aaron’s staff sprouts flowers to show he is the rightful high priest, could be what the translator intends with this verse’s rendering, having both a rod and a flower coming from the root. If the translator really was using an obscure word for branch (ῥάβδος) and a Homeric definition of ἄνθος to create an allusion to Num 17:8(23), then it was a brilliant conceit, the sort that the Alexandrian Grammatikoi loved.¹⁶⁹

While the translator appears to have taken some liberties, or at least misidentified some roots, the translation of שְׂרָשֵׁי is literal (though it is rendered in the singular and the pronominal suffix is dropped), and a word in a parallel clause not meaning “root” but “stump” has also been rendered with ῥίζα. The translator seems to believe this metaphor could be easily understood and needed no explanation beyond what already appears in the context. In the Greek it is not clear in this verse whether the root of Jesse is the stock from which the ruler described in the passage comes or is the person himself who will have kingly functions, establishing justice, etc. It is not until 11:10 where it is made clear that the “root of Jesse” is a person (a ruler).

¹⁶⁴ Moulton does not list a meaning like shoot or branch for ῥάβδος in his lexicon of Papyri, nor does Friedrich Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden mit Einschluß der griechischen Inschriften, Aufschriften, Ostraka, Mumienschilder usw. aus Ägypten*. 4 vols. (Berlin : Selbstverlag der Erben, 1925-2000).

¹⁶⁵ The third place עג appears, Job 14:8, it is rendered στέλεχος (stump, crown of the root).

¹⁶⁶ For more on the rendering of this word, see the passage in the section on “flowers” below (2.4.1.). LXX.D.E.K. suggests this root was read, 2535.

¹⁶⁷ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 166.

¹⁶⁸ See LXX.D.E.K., 2534, which points this out and the connection to Aaron’s staff in Num 17:23. The LXX of Dan 11:7 has φυτὸν ἐκ τῆς ῥίζης αὐτοῦ.

¹⁶⁹ See Stanford, *Greek Metaphor*, 31.

The Targum interprets the rod as a king (מלכא), the stump as sons, the shoot as a Messiah (משיחא) and the root as grand children (מבני בנוהי).¹⁷⁰

Isa 11:10

<p>On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.</p>	<p>וְהָיָה בְיוֹם הַהוּא שֶׁרֶשׁ יִשְׂי אֲשֶׁר עִמָּד לְגַם עַמִּים אֱלֹו גוֹיִם יִדְרָשׁוּ וְהִיְתָה מְנַחְתּוֹ כְּבוֹד: פ</p>	<p>Καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἡ ῥίζα τοῦ Ιεσσαὶ καὶ ὁ ἀνιστάμενος ἄρχειν ἐθνῶν, ἐπ’ αὐτῷ ἔθνη ἐλπιούσιν, καὶ ἔσται ἡ ἀνάπαυσις αὐτοῦ τιμῆ.</p>	<p>And there shall be on that day the root of Iessai, even the one who stands up to rule nations; nations shall hope in him, and his rest shall be honor.</p>
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The Greek, like 11:1, renders literally the metaphor “root of Jesse,” however much of the context is carefully shaped. It interprets “to be a sign/ensign” (לְגַם) as “to rule” (ἀρχειν); this could be an interpretation of the metaphor “ensign” or may be the interpretation of what it means for the root to be one “standing to test (נִסָּה) the peoples,” or perhaps as a verbal form corresponding to the Aramaic word for the post נִסָּי was thought.¹⁷¹ In Isa 11:12; 13:2; 18:3; and 33:23, נִס is rendered with σημεῖον.¹⁷² The metaphor is further interpreted in that the nations no longer seek the ensign (perhaps like mobilizing troops trying to find their commander’s rallying point), but put their hope in the one ruling them.¹⁷³ The Greek speaks more concretely than the Hebrew, but does not find it necessary to elaborate on what the root of Jesse means. The singular שֶׁרֶשׁ of this verse is probably why the Greek made it singular in 11:1.¹⁷⁴ It seems clear from the passage as a whole in Greek, that the root of Jesse refers to the royal Davidic line. That in 11:1 the Greek removes the idea of the “stump” may express more continuity in this royal line than the Hebrew, which seems to suggest that the line was cut off but will be restored from the old root.

In the Targum of Isa 11:1 and 11:10, שֶׁרֶשׁ has been rendered as grandson (בנוהי מבני) and (בר בריה דישי).¹⁷⁵

The use of “root” as a metaphor for an individual, found in LXX-Isa 11:1, 10, can also be found in 1 Macc 1:10, where from the kings of Greece an evil root comes: καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐξ αὐτῶν ῥίζα ἁμαρτωλῶς Ἀντίοχος Ἐπιφανῆς. A root can also be an individual in Classical

¹⁷⁰ “And a king shall come forth from the sons of Jesse, and the Messiah shall be exalted from the sons of his sons.”

¹⁷¹ For the last possibility, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 82. He also suggests the homonym נִסִּיך which is rendered with ἄρχων in Josh 13:21. See also LXX.D.E.K., 2535.

¹⁷² See van der Kooij, “Metaphorical Language,” 182-83.

¹⁷³ See Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 82. He says it is another example of an image being interpreted personally.

¹⁷⁴ For the relationship between מְשֶׁרֶשׁ in 11:1 and שֶׁרֶשׁ in 11:10, see: H. L. Ginsberg, “‘Roots below and Fruit Above’ and Related matters,” in *Hebrew and Semitic Studies: Presented to Godfrey Rolles Driver in celebration of his seventieth birthday, 20 August 1962* (eds. D. Winton Thomas and W.D. McHardy; Oxford: Clarendon, 1963): 72-76; Joachim Becker, “Wurzel und Wurzelsproß: Ein Beitrag zur hebräischen Lexikographie,” *Biblische Zeitschrift* 20 (1976): 22-44; and Jacob Stromberg, “The ‘Root of Jesse’ in Isaiah 11:10: Postexilic Judah, or Postexilic Davidic King?” *JBL* 127 (2008): 655-59. Cf. TWNT, VI 986-87, s.v. ῥίζα.

¹⁷⁵ “And it will come to pass in that time that to the son of the son of Jesse who is about to stand as an ensign to the peoples, to him shall kingdoms be obedient, and his resting place will be glorious.”

Greek literature, Aeschylus makes a metaphor that if a certain individual is still alive his house can again be rebuilt:

Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 965-966:

ρίζης γὰρ οὖσης φυλλὰς ἴκετ' εἰς δόμους,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα Σειρίου κυνός.

For while the root remains, foliage comes to a house, spreading shade over it against the dog-star Sirius;¹⁷⁶

The vehicle “root” is also used to refer to family origins, as well, as we will see below.

In **Isa 14:29-30** שֶׁרֶשׁ is twice rendered with σπέρμα, but it appears with different ideas about what “seed” represents.

Do not rejoice, all you Philistines, that the rod that struck you is broken,	אֶל-תִּשְׂמְחֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּלְדָּךְ כִּי נִשְׁבַּר שֶׁבֶט מִכַּדָּךְ	Μὴ εὐφρανθείητε, πάντες οἱ ἀλλόφυλοι, συνετριβή γὰρ ὁ ζυγὸς τοῦ παίοντος ὑμᾶς·	May you not rejoice, all you allophytes, for the yoke of him who struck you is broken,
for from the root of the snake will come forth an adder, and its fruit will be a flying fiery serpent.	כִּי-מִשְׁרֵשׁ נִחַשׁ יֵצֵא צִפְעֵ וּפְרִיֹו שֶׁרֶשׁ מִעֹפֹף: ¹⁷⁷	ἐκ γὰρ σπέρματος ὄφεων ἐξελεύσεται ἔκγονα ἀσπίδων, καὶ τὰ ἔκγονα αὐτῶν ἐξελεύσονται ὄφεις πετόμενοι.	For from the seed of snakes will come forth the offspring of snakes, and their offspring will come forth as flying snakes.
The firstborn of the poor will graze, and the needy lie down in safety;	וְרָעוּ בְּכוֹרֵי דָלִים וְאֶבְיוֹנִים לָבֶטַח יִרְבְּצוּ	καὶ βοσκηθήσονται πτωχοὶ δι' αὐτοῦ, πτωχοὶ δὲ ἄνδρες ἐπ' εἰρήνης ἀναπαύσονται·	And the poor will graze through him, and poor men will rest in peace,
but I will make your root die of famine, and your remnant I will kill.	וְהִמַּתִּי בְרָעַב שֶׁרֶשְׁךָ וְשְׂאֵרִיתְךָ יַהֲרֹג:	ἀνελεῖ δὲ λιμῶ τὸ σπέρμα σου καὶ τὸ κατάλειμμά σου ἀνελεῖ.	but he will wipe out your <i>seed</i> with famine, and your remnant he will wipe out.

The Greek of this passage has adjusted several of the metaphors by changing their vehicles. First of all, שֶׁבֶט has become ὁ ζυγός, an unusual equivalent seen only here and twice in Isa 14:5.¹⁷⁷ In both passages the change from “rod” to “yoke” is not due to the issue of striking but to the connotations of the word. Yoke is a rather common image of hardship and oppression, BDB lists thirty-two occurrences of this figurative usage. It is also used several other times in Isaiah with this meaning: 9:3; 10:27; 14:25; and 47:6. The word שֶׁבֶט can be

¹⁷⁶ Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* [Sommerstein, LCL 146].

¹⁷⁷ Here too, שֶׁבֶט (along with מִטָּה) has been rendered with ζυγός. Notice that in the Greek it is not the rod/yoke that was striking, but God has broken it (the yoke in the Greek) by striking it in anger etc. Later in 14:29, likewise, the yoke does not strike, but the one who owned/put the yoke on Philistia.

used with a similar figurative meaning, according to BDB, but is more a figure of national chastisement (as in Isa 10:5, 24; 14:29; 30:31; Lam 3:1)¹⁷⁸ or a symbol of conquest.¹⁷⁹ The LXX translator seems to have favored in Isa 14 a more common image of oppression and so chose “yoke,” which also harmonized to the image in 14:25.

Important in 14:29-30, for our purposes, is that “root” has twice been rendered “seed.” As a metaphor for offspring, “seed” is a much more clear and common vehicle than “root,” both in Greek and Hebrew.¹⁸⁰ But it seems clarity would have been achieved in 14:29 simply with the phrase ἔκγονα ἀσπίδων.¹⁸¹ We have already seen the LXX-Isa’s aversion to “fruit” as a metaphor for offspring, preferring to use the more general ἔκγονος. The additional ἔκγονος in this verse may be for clarity’s sake, to show three generations: the seed, the asps, and the flying snakes. The change from “root” to “seed” may in addition be made because a dead metaphor is less bold and avoids turning the thick imagery of this passage into a riddle. The Targum also understands three generations, since it interprets כִּי־מִשְׁרָשׁ נָחַשׁ יֵצֵא צִפֶּעַע with אַרְי מְבַנֵּי בְנוֹהֵי דִישֵׁי יְפוּק מְשִׁיחַ.¹⁸²

In verse 30, “seed” again is used rather than “root.” In the Hebrew the root being destroyed probably shows the totality of the destruction, that the “plant” will have no chance to grow back. The Greek probably thinks “seed” better represents the totality of the destruction in that all the seed will be destroyed; as we have seen, σπέρμα is sometimes used as a rendering of words meaning “remnant.” That in the Greek they are in synonymous parallelism strengthens that the translator understood “seed” to represent in some way the idea of a remnant. A similar metaphor can be found in Sophocles *Antigone*, 600, though there he uses “root” to talk about the last family member of Oedipus’ house.

The Targum of 14:29 was mentioned in the section on fruit, above. In 14:29 “root” is interpreted as “your son” (בְּנֶךְ), and “remnant” is rendered with the Aramaic cognate שְׂאֵר.

2.3.2 Root as Permanence or Firmness

In several places Isaiah uses roots to talk about people being established or firm; this occurs along with other plant imagery. Alec Basson describes this use of root metaphors as denoting “the foundation of a person in a specific location.”¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ BDB also lists some examples where it refers to individual chastisement, though none occur in Isaiah.

¹⁷⁹ Num 24:17; Psa 2:9; 125:3; Prov 22:8. The word מָטָה can similarly be used figuratively of oppression, but always in close association with שָׁבַט and only in Isaiah 10:5, 24; 14:5; 30:32; See BDB s.v.

¹⁸⁰ Also at work could be that “seed” is associated with remnant, as we have seen. In 1 Esd 8:78, 87, 88, and 89, “remnant” is rendered “root.”

¹⁸¹ This Greek phrase also occurs in 11:8 and 59:5; See Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 182.

¹⁸² “Rejoice not, all you *Philistines*, because *the ruler* who was *subjugating* you is broken, for *from the sons of the sons of Jesse the Messiah* will come forth, and his *deeds* will be *among you* as a *wounding serpent*. And the *needy of the people* will be *nurtured*, and the *poor in his days* will *dwell* in safety; but *he* will kill your *sons* with hunger and *the remnant of your people* he will slay.”

¹⁸³ Basson, “People are Plants,” 578.

Isa 27:6

In the days to come Jacob will take root, Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots,	הַבָּאִים יִשְׂרָשׁ יַעֲקֹב יִצְיֵץ וּפְרַח יִשְׂרָאֵל	οἱ ἐρχόμενοι, τέκνα Ἰακωβ, βλαστήσει καὶ ἐξανθήσει Ἰσραηλ,	Those who are coming are the children of Iacob; Israel shall bud and blossom,
and fill the whole world with fruit.	וּמְלֵאוּ פְּנֵי-תֵבֶל תְּנוּבָה:	καὶ ἐμπλησθήσεται ἡ οἰκουμένη τοῦ καρποῦ αὐτοῦ.	And the world will be filled with his fruit.

We have discussed this passage already in the section on fruit (2.2.2.). The phrase הנה באים is more common than what we have here,¹⁸⁴ though as van der Kooij has pointed out, all the ancient versions understand the phrase in 27:6 to be about people.¹⁸⁵ In 41:22 the substantive participle הַבָּאִים is translated literally with τὰ ἐπερχόμενα. In Isa 27:6 it is also translated literally but is not taken in a temporal but a substantive sense. Trying to read this participle with the rest of the clause, the translator created a predicative clause (or at least an explanation via a clause in apposition) by rendering יִשְׂרָשׁ with a noun.¹⁸⁶ In the Hebrew, the verse is a metaphor describing a whole process, starting with establishment, continuing in development, and climaxing in multiplication. A plant metaphor is perfect for this idea. The LXX preserves this image, except for the first step. The phrase יִשְׂרָשׁ יַעֲקֹב is identified with “those coming,” and interpreted by the translator to be children (τέκνα). It is somewhat counterintuitive that the translator would suppose “root” should mean offspring. The translator was not making a simple substitution of root for children, based on a substitution view of metaphor, but rather rendered the intent of the clause based on his understanding of the entire verse. That Israel will fill the inhabited world with fruit refers to children, so “those coming” are clearly defined by the translator as “the children of Jacob,” to make the entire image perfectly clear. Likewise the LXX-Isa translator thought “root of Jesse” in 11:1, 10 could refer to a descendent from Jesse, though there it is an individual. The Targum speaks more broadly, describing the return from exile. The specific phrase becomes יתילדון דבית יעקב.¹⁸⁷

It seems odd to imagine root denoting offspring instead of denoting source, but Jacob Stromberg shows that this sort of image is possible in surrounding cultures.¹⁸⁸ He shows

¹⁸⁴ 1 Sam 2:31; 2 Kgs 20:17; Isa 38:6 (rendered ἰδοὺ ἡμέραι ἔρχονται); Jer 7:32; 9:24; 16:14; 19:6; 23:5,7; 30:3; 31:27,31; 48:12; 49:2; 51:47; 51:52; Amos 8:11; 9:13.

¹⁸⁵ van der Kooij, “Text-Critical Notes,” 15.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 234. For Isa 27:6, LXX.D.E.K., 2573 suggests the translator read the plural יִשְׂרָשׁ. The Hiphil form of the verb occurs in Psa 80(79):10(9), where it is rendered κατεφύτευσας τὰς ρίζας. Also a Hiphil participle occurs in Job 5:3, rendered ρίζαν βάλλοντας. The only other verbal form of יִשְׂרָשׁ occurring in Isaiah is in 40:24, to be discussed below.

¹⁸⁷ “They shall be gathered from among their exiles and they shall return to their land, there those of the house of Jacob will receive (children), those of the house of Israel will grow and increase, and sons’ sons will fill the face of the world.”

¹⁸⁸ Stromberg, “Root of Jesse,” 662-65.

examples from Ugaritic literature that use *šrš* in synonymous parallelism with *bn*.¹⁸⁹ He also gives some examples from Aramaic literature (though the word for root used is עקר) as well as from Phoenician literature.¹⁹⁰

Following Joachim Becker, Stromberg discusses some possible uses of “root” to mean “offspring” or “root shoot” in the Hebrew Bible.¹⁹¹ The passages under discussion are Prov 12:3, 7 and Job 5:3. In the case of Prov 12:3, even taken with 12:7, it is too much to say that “root” refers specifically to offspring. The Job passage likewise is not obviously talking about offspring, but is more likely about stability and success in general.

Stromberg also shows examples of “root” representing offspring in Ben Sirach 47:22, and in the Targum of Isa 11:10 (rendered as “grandson,” as we have seen) and of Mal 3:19 (rendered בר).¹⁹²

BDAG offers an example of a Greek author using ῥίζα metaphorically to refer to “that which grows from a root, shoot, scion”.¹⁹³ The example from Pseudo-Apollodorus 2.1.4 is quite strong:

Ἀγήνωρ μὲν οὖν εἰς Φοινίκην ἀπαλλαγείς ἐβασίλευσε, κακεῖ τῆς μεγάλης ῥίζης ἐγένετο γενεάρχης.
 Agenor departed to Phoenicia and reigned there, and there he became the ancestor of the great stock;¹⁹⁴

In this passage Agenor is implied to be a sort of seed from which his descendents grew, they are roots holding his family firmly in Phoenicia. The metaphor “root” functions not only to refer to offspring, but also to show their establishment.

Another tropic use of “root” is by metonymy in a merism. It can be found often in the Hebrew Bible paired with branch, leaves, or fruit. It occurs in a merism in Job 18:16; 29:19; Mal 3:19; and Ezek 17:7, 9.¹⁹⁵ It occurs twice in a merism in Isaiah.

Isa 37:31

The surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward,	וְיִסְפָּה פְּלִיטַת בַּיִת יְהוּדָה הַנְּשָׁאֲרָה שָׂרֵשׁ לְמַטֵּה	καὶ ἔσονται οἱ καταλειμμένοι ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φυήσουσι ῥίζαν κάτω	And those that are left in Judea shall take root downward
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¹⁸⁹ Stromberg, “Root of Jesse,” 663. He lists KTU 1.17 I 20; KTU 1.17 I 25; KTU 1.17 II 14-15.

¹⁹⁰ Stromberg, “Root of Jesse,” 663-64.

¹⁹¹ Stromberg, “Root of Jesse,” 663.

¹⁹² Stromberg, “Root of Jesse,” 662.

¹⁹³ BDAG, s.v. It also offers Diodorus Siculus 26.15 as an example, but it is not as satisfying.

¹⁹⁴ Apollodorus, *The Library* [Frazer, LCL 121-122]. The translation of ῥίζα with “stock” is interesting, since “stock” is the same metaphor as עץ used in Isa 11:1, where LXX rendered ῥίζα.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. 2 Kgs 19:30; Isa 14:29; 37:31; Ezek 17:9; Hos 9:16; Amos 2:9. Ginsberg argued that in passages where “fruit” was used, it should be understood to mean “branch;” this, however glosses over the different nuances of the image root-branch versus root-fruit. Ginsberg, “Roots Below and Fruit Above,” 72-76. For a different critique of Ginsberg, see Becker, “Wurzel und Wurzelsproß,” 22-44.

and bear fruit upward.	וְעִשָּׂה פְּרִי לְמַעַלָּה:	καὶ ποιήσουσι σπέρμα ἄνω.	and bear seed upward,
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Of note in this verse is that while **שָׂרַשׁ** is rendered literally, the parallel term (which completes a merism in Hebrew) is rendered with *σπέρμα*. The addition *φυήσουσιν* clarifies the clause, and is reminiscent of the LXX’s translation of hiphil verbal forms of **שָׂרַשׁ**.¹⁹⁶ The meaning seems to be in both languages that the remnant will be established in the land (take root) and multiply (bear fruit/seed). The LXX rendering of “seed” may better express the multiplying potential of the remnant. The “house of Judah” is instead the region “Judea.” 1QIsa^a has two slight differences, though they shed no light on the LXX: instead of **וַיִּסְפַּח** it has **וַאֲסַפַּח**, and instead of **הַנְּשֵׂאֵרָה** it has **וְהַנְּמִצָּא**.¹⁹⁷ The Targum makes a simile with the image of the remnants being like a tree sending down roots.¹⁹⁸

Isa 5:24

Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours the stubble, and as dry grass sinks down in the flame,	לָכֵן כְּאֵכָל קֵשׁ לְשׁוֹן אֵשׁ וַחֲשֵׁשׁ לְהֶבֶה יִרְפָּה	διὰ τοῦτο ὃν τρόπον καυθήσεται καλάμη ὑπὸ ἄνθρακος πυρὸς καὶ συγκαυθήσεται ὑπὸ φλογὸς ἀνειμένης,	Therefore, as stubble will be burned by a coal of fire and burned up by an <i>unrestrained</i> flame,
so their root will become rotten, and their blossom go up like dust;	שָׂרְשָׁם כַּמַּקֵּי יְהוָה וּפְרִיָּהֶם כַּאֲבָק יַעֲלֶה	ἡ ῥίζα αὐτῶν ὡς χνοῦς ἔσται, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτῶν ὡς κονιορτὸς ἀναβήσεται·	so their root will be like fine dust and their blossom go up like dust;
for they have rejected the instruction of the LORD of hosts, and have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.	כִּי מָאָסוּ אֶת תּוֹרַת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְאֵת אִמְרַת קְדוֹשׁ־יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶאֱצוּ:	οὐ γὰρ ἠθέλησαν τὸν νόμον κυρίου σαβαωθ, ἀλλὰ τὸ λόγιον τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰσραηλ παρώξυναν.	for they did not want the law of the Lord Sabaoth but have provoked the oracle of the Holy One of Israel.

We will discuss the first part of this verse below (3.3.2.1.1.). The second ‘panel’ of the comparison is not only metaphorical but again is a simile. Ordinarily the comparison would be: “like a tongue of flame consumes etc., so their root will become rotten.” But here there is another simile: “so their root will become *like* decay.” “Root” itself is not meant literally, so why do we need this additional simile? The meaning is clear enough, and the rhetorical power of the construction is self apparent.

The use of root here is metonymic, in that along with flower it forms a merism standing for the whole people of Israel (or at least all the people who rejected the instruction of the LORD). Root and flower are a logical word pair (verbal forms are in parallel in Hos 14:6), but more usually we see either the merism root and fruit (2 Kings 19:30; Amos 2:9) or

¹⁹⁶ See Psa 80:10(9) and Job 5:3 above. Usually verbal forms are rendered with *ρίζω*.

¹⁹⁷ Also instead of **לְמַעַלָּה** it has just **מַעַלָּה**.

¹⁹⁸ “And the *delivered* of the house of Judah will continue *and will* be left as a tree which sends its roots downward, and *raises its top* upward;”

root and branch (Job 18:6; 29:19; Mal 3:19). The meaning here is the opposite of establishment, but that the entire plant will come to an end. The word ἄνθος is only used for פִּרְחָה here and in Isa 18:5, the more common equivalent being βλαστός, though it does not occur in LXX-Isa.

The comparison כִּמְקִי is rendered with χνοῦς, possibly due to the parallel κοινορτός (cf. 17:13, 29:5 where the same Greek terms are parallel, though the former renders קִמְ). The word χνοῦς is usually used for קִמְ.¹⁹⁹ It would seem the exact meaning of the word was not known; in Isa 3:24 it is rendered with κοινορτός. The related verb מִקְמִ occurs in Isa 34:4, but the LXX lacks the entire phrase. Otherwise, this panel of the comparison is rendered quite literally. It is unclear if we should understand χνοῦς to refer to “chaff” and continue the grain idea of stubble in the previous image, or if it should mean something more like dust, and agree with the following image. Root is left as the merism root-flower. The comparison, though, has changed from frailty to uncontrollable devastation. The repeated synonyms again make for more unity in the passage. In the Targum, “root” is rendered as the increase of their strength (מַסְגִּי תוֹקֵפָהוֹן כְּשִׁבּוֹ יְהִי), and their blossom means the mammon of their oppression.²⁰⁰

The changes in the metaphors of this verse seem primarily due to the understanding of the vocabulary, and are not an attempt to interpret or update the imagery. The LXX does not find it necessary to explain or alter the use of “root” as a part of a merism. It is unclear if the root and fruit are again depicting Judah as the vine or vineyard of 5:1-6, or if this is an independent use of the metaphor of Israel as God’s special plant.

In Classical literature it is also possible to talk about destroying a family or people by attacking their root.

Diodorus of Sicily, 26.15:²⁰¹

“Ὅτι μετὰ τὴν Ἱερωνύμου τελευτὴν οἱ Συρακούσιοι ἐλθόντες εἰς ἐκκλησίαν ἐψηφίσαντο τοὺς συγγενεῖς τοῦ τυράννου κολάσαι καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας ὁμοίως τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἀνελεῖν, καὶ μηδὲ ρίζαν ἀπολιπεῖν τυραννικῆς συγγενείας.

After the death of Hieronymus, the Syracusans, having met in assembly, voted to punish the whole family of the tyrant and to put them all to death, men and women alike, in order to uproot completely the tyrant stock.

The reference to Hieronymus’ family does not necessarily imply his descendants, it could be his extended family as well. If that is the case, root does not refer specifically to his

¹⁹⁹ That this is what the translator read, see Hugh Williamson, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 1-27 Vol 1: Isaiah 1-5* (The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; London: T&T Clark International, 2006), 389. We will discuss chaff in the section on grain (3.3).

²⁰⁰ “Therefore *they shall be* devoured as *the chaff in the fire*, and as *stubble* in the flame; *the increase of their strength* will be as rottenness, and *the mammon of their oppression* as *the dust which flies*; for they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts, and have despised the *Memra* of the Holy One of Israel.”

²⁰¹ This passage is sometimes numbered 26.16a. Diodorus of Sicily [Walton, LCL].

offspring, but to his whole family which produced him. Presumably the entire family is a tyrannical plant that needs to be completely removed, even its roots, so no tyrant again grows from it.

In one place, “root” is used in a simile.

Isa 53:2

For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,	וַיַּעַל כַּיּוֹנֵק לְפָנָיו וְכַשְׂרֵשׁ מֵאַרְצַ צִיָּה לְאֵתְאָר לּוֹ וְלֹא הָדָר	ἀνέτειλε μὲν ²⁰² ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ὡς παιδίον, ὡς ῥίζα ἐν γῆ διψώσῃ, οὐκ ἔστιν εἶδος αὐτῷ οὐδὲ δόξα·	He grew up before him like a child, like a root in a thirsty land; he had no form or glory,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him	וְנִרְאָהוּ וְלֹא-מְרָאָה וְנִחְמַדְדֵּהוּ:	καὶ εἶδομεν αὐτόν, καὶ οὐκ εἶχεν εἶδος οὐδὲ κάλλος·	and we saw him, and he had no form or beauty.

The Hebrew uses plant imagery to show growth and development. The root out of the dry land expresses “feeble, sickly growth,”²⁰³ reinforcing his lack of form and majesty. The change from the root being “from” the dry land to “in” it could be from seeing כ instead of מ, but is more likely conceptual, since roots grow in the ground, generally, not from it. The Greek alters the image by reading כַּיּוֹנֵק as the participle from יָנַק (to suck), which means babe, or child.²⁰⁴ The root simile is rendered literally (unlike in 27:6 where “root” was rendered with τέκνον), though it is now explained by the parallel term παιδίον.²⁰⁵ This parallel is even closer if we take the reading of the manuscripts (ἀνηγγείλαμεν instead of the conjectured ἀνέτειλε μὲν), so that it would say: “We announced before him: “[he is] like a child, like a root etc.”²⁰⁶ Again we here have a root referring to an individual.

The Targum adds that they are like a tree sending its roots by streams of water, an image found in Psa 1, and rather than “him” having no special appearance, in the Targum it is the opposite.²⁰⁷

The one remaining use of “root” in Isaiah occurs in a sort of extended metaphor.

Isa 40:24

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has	אֶף בְּלִ-נִטְעוּ אֶף בְּלִ-זְרָעוּ אֶף בְּלִ-שָׂרַשׁ	οὐ γὰρ μὴ σπειρώσιν οὐδὲ μὴ φυτεύσωσιν, οὐδὲ μὴ ῥιζωθῆ εἰς τῆν	For they will not sow, nor will they plant. neither will their root
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²⁰² This reading (followed in the Göttingen edition) is a conjecture. The manuscripts and Ralphs have: ἀνηγγείλαμεν.

²⁰³ Joseph Alexander, *Commentary on Isaiah* (2nd Ed.; Grand Rapids: Kregel Classics, 1992), vol 2, 291.

²⁰⁴ See HALOT, s.v. We will discuss this further in the section on sprouts (2.6.1.).

²⁰⁵ For the free rendering καὶ οὐκ εἶχεν εἶδος οὐδὲ κάλλος, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 128.

²⁰⁶ See notes in LXX.D. and LXX.D.E.K., 2666.

²⁰⁷ “And the righteous shall be exalted before him, behold, like tufts which sprout, and like a tree which sends its roots by streams of waters, so holy generations will increase on the land which was needing him; his appearance is not a common appearance and his fearfulness is not an ordinary fearfulness, and his brilliance will be holy brilliance, that everyone who looks at him will consider him.”

their <i>stock</i> taken root in the earth,	בְּאַרְץ גְּזַעַם	γῆν ἢ ῥίζα αὐτῶν·	take root in the earth;
when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like <i>chaff</i> .	וְגַם-נִשְׁף בְּהֵם וַיִּבְשׁוּ וּסְעָרָה בְּקֶשׁ תִּשָּׂאֵם:	ἔπνευσεν ἐπ’ αὐτούς καὶ ἐξηράνθησαν, καὶ καταιγὶς ὡς φρύγανα ἀναλήμψεται αὐτούς.	he blew upon them, and they withered, and a tempest will carry them off like brushwood.

In the Hebrew the metaphor reinforces the frailty and futility of the princes of the earth in 40:23. They barely begin and they are already at their end. The Greek, however, turns the metaphor into a prophecy that the actions of the princes will be ineffective and that their land will be as nothing. This is a continuation of the Greek understanding of 40:23. This change in the translation is achieved in 40:24 by making the princes and the land the subject instead of the object of the verbs. Like in Isa 11:1, גְּזַעַם has been rendered with ῥίζα, perhaps to reduce the number of terms for stylism. The reversal of the main verbs σπείρωσι and φυτεύωσι may be to make a more logical progression, from seed sown (falling through the air), to a plant planted, to it making roots under the earth.²⁰⁸ The verbal form שָׁרַשׁ is rendered with a verbal form, but the parallel clause becomes the subject and indirect object of the phrase. In the Targum it is interpreted: יִתְרַבּוּן בְּאַרְעָא בְּנִיהוֹן.²⁰⁹

2.3.3. Summary

Part of the difficulty in understanding a metaphor is that the same vehicle can be used to represent different tenors. In this section we can see how the translator took advantage of this fact (though perhaps not deliberately) to change the “root of Jesse” into an individual (11:1, 10). Also, the translator appears to want to avoid confusion, and so renders “root” as “seed” (14:30) since to him it is a metaphor more closely related to the concept of a remnant. In 14:29, where “root” refers to the family or stock someone comes from the translator renders also with “seed” since this is a common metaphor, as we saw above. The translator interprets “root” in 27:6 as children, which is the same way the Targum understands the phrase. Similarly, in 53:2 “root” is rendered literally, but the parallel term for a young shoot is understood to mean “child,” coloring the meaning of “root.” In 37:31 the “root” is rendered literally, but its word pair is changed from “fruit” to “seed;” as we have seen, the translator seems to have an aversion to fruit. In 5:24 “root” is rendered literally for the same purpose as the Hebrew text. In 40:24 the stylistics of the passage are adjusted in translation, but the metaphor is not changed.

The Targum, most of the time (11:1, 10; 14:29, 30; 27:6; 40:24) understands “root” to refer to sons or grandsons. In 37:31 the merism becomes similes to describe a tree metaphor

²⁰⁸ Troxel mentions this verse where he says he finds it impossible to attribute every transposition of letters or words to the work of the translator. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 75.

²⁰⁹ “Although they grow, although they increase, although their sons are exalted in the earth, he sends his anger among them, and they are ashamed and his Memra, as the whirlwind the chaff, will scatter them.”

the Targum has provided. In 5:24 root is interpreted as representing the increase of strength and its parallel blossom is oppression. In 53:2 the root is the same but the dry ground has become streams of water.

2.4. Flowers

2.4.1. Hebrew Words for “Flower”

In Isaiah, the word פִּיץ is used to evoke the idea of flowers as something delicate and frail, which quickly withers or is easily crushed. In classical Greek, ἄνθος can have a metaphorical meaning of something choice, or the height of something (bad or good).²¹⁰

Isa 28:1,4

<p>Woe to the proud garland of the drunkards of Ephraim, and the fading flower of its glorious beauty, which is on the head of those bloated with rich food, of those overcome with wine!</p>	<p>הוּי עֲטֹרַת גְּאוּת שִׁפְרֵי אֶפְרַיִם וּפִיץ נִבֵּל צְבִי תִפְאַרְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁ גִּיא שְׂמָנִים הַלּוּמִי יִזָּן:</p>	<p>Οὐαὶ τῷ στεφάνῳ τῆς ὕβρεως, οἱ μισθωτοὶ Εφραιμ· τὸ ἄνθος τὸ ἐκπεσὸν ἐκ τῆς δόξης ἐπὶ τῆς κορυφῆς τοῦ ὄρους τοῦ παχέος, οἱ μεθύοντες ἄνευ οἴνου.</p>	<p>Woe to the crown of pride, the hired workers of Ephraim, the flower that has fallen from its glory on the top of the stout mountain—those who are drunk without wine!</p>
<p>And the fading flower of its glorious beauty, which is on the head of those bloated with rich food, will be like a first-ripe fig before the summer; whoever sees it, eats it up as soon as it comes to hand.</p>	<p>וְהִיְתָה צִיצֵת נִבֵּל צְבִי תִפְאַרְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁ גִּיא שְׂמָנִים כְּבִכּוּרָה בְּטָרֶם קִיץ אֲשֶׁר יִרְאֶה הָרֹאֶה אוֹתָהּ בְּעוֹדָהּ בְּכַפּוֹ יִבְלַעְנָהּ:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔσται τὸ ἄνθος τὸ ἐκπεσὸν τῆς ἐλπίδος τῆς δόξης ἐπ’ ἄκρου τοῦ ὄρους τοῦ ὑψηλοῦ ὡς πρόδρομος σύκου, ὃ ἰδὼν αὐτὸ πρὶν ἢ εἰς τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ λαβεῖν θελήσει αὐτὸ καταπιεῖν.</p>	<p>And the flower that has fallen from its glorious hope on the topmost of the lofty mountain will be like an early fig; the one who sees it will want to eat it up before he takes it into his hand.</p>

In this passage the imagery is poured on thickly. Perhaps Demetrius would have been pleased with this for creating terrifying riddles and forcefulness of style.²¹¹ The Greek is close to the Hebrew, but clarifies all the relationships of the various elements. In Hebrew, the conjunction may suggest that the “crown” and the “fading flower” are two different things, but in Greek they are put into direct apposition equating them, along with the hired workers of

²¹⁰ LSJ, s.v. def. II.

²¹¹ Demetrius, *On Style*, 267-71, 272, 272-74.

Ephraim. This closer connection makes the “crown” being trampled in verse three resonate more clearly with the idea of a frail flower being crushed. It is worth mentioning that Aristotle said asyndeton is useful for creating amplification.²¹²

The LXX has made some very interesting interpretations of this passage, as with the entire chapter. Our main interest, though, is that rather than the “fading/fallen flower” being one image in apposition to others like in the Hebrew, in the Greek it is given a longer description. Many English translations interpret תְּפִאֲרָתוֹ צְבִי נִבְלָה וְצִיָּן as a single construct chain,²¹³ but this is difficult grammatically with the adjective where it is. Another reading is as a predicate clause: “a flower doomed to fade is its splendid beauty.”²¹⁴ That the flower falls at the head of a fertile mountain makes a more dramatic image. If the flower were in the desert, a frail plant in a harsh environment, the flower becomes something resilient and tough. But if it fails even in a fertile place there is a greater contrast. The Greek of the last clause inserts a negation to make another strong contrast; they are drunk without wine, but perhaps with their own pride.

In verse four, where nearly the same phrase again occurs, the LXX gives a different rendering. In verse one, צְבִי is either not rendered, or as Troxel suggests, was collapsed with תְּפִאֲרָתוֹ and became ἐκ τῆς δόξης.²¹⁵ The second occurrence, however, like in Isa 24:16 and 28:5 is rendered with ἐλπίζ.²¹⁶ Also changed from verse one, ἄκρος is used instead of κορυφή, and ὑψηλός instead of παχύς.²¹⁷ This could be for the sake of variety, or the translator may have taken the repetition of the phrase as an opportunity to explain it by using different vocabulary.

Both in 28:1 and 4, the flower image is used to show glory that fades and falls away. This along with the “crown” may be a play on words, referring to something like the קִיָּץ in Exod 28:36 which the High Priest is to wear on his turban.²¹⁸ The image of a fading flower is easy to understand and is rendered literally in Greek, though the passage is clarified and improved stylistically in Greek. It is also improved in the Greek by the happy coincidence that ἄνθος in classical literature can work as a sort of superlative thing (much like flower in English usage).²¹⁹ Also, according to LSJ, it can refer to the “pride” or “honor” of someone, as in Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* 7-8:

τὸ σὸν γὰρ ἄνθος, παντέχνου πυρὸς σέλας,
θνητοῖσι κλέψας ὤπασεν.

²¹² Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 3.12.2-4.

²¹³ Eg. ESV and NRSV.

²¹⁴ Blenkinsop, *Isaiah 1-39*, 385-86.

²¹⁵ He points out a similar case in Isa 13:19. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 270.

²¹⁶ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 237.

²¹⁷ Ottley thinks the use of ὑψηλός “looks like positive carelessness.” Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 237. For LXX-Isa’s use and non-use of synonyms, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 17-21.

²¹⁸ Cf. the Targum for Isa 28:1-4, where קִיָּץ is rendered with מצנפה (turban). See van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 168.

²¹⁹ LSJ, s.v., II.2.

for it was your glory, the gleam of fire that makes all skills attainable, that he stole and gave to mortals.²²⁰

The translator of Exodus knew this superlative meaning of *άνθος*, since in Exod 30:23 he rendered the phrase *וְאֶתְהָ קַח-לְךָ בְּשָׁמִים רֹאשׁ מֶרְדְּרֹר חֶמֶשׁ מְאוֹת* with *Καὶ σὺ λαβὲ ἡδύσματα, τὸ άνθος συμύρνης ἐκλεκτῆς πεντακοσίου σίκλους*.

So, as we have seen, the translation of the imagery in 28:1, 4 has been tightened and focused to more clearly express the issue of pride and glory of some group of people falling away.

The Targum interprets the verse as referring to the leadership.²²¹ The crown of the drunkards is interpreted as the crown of the proud and foolish prince of Israel (*כתרא לגיותנא* (*טפשא רבא דישראל*), and the fading flower is interpreted as the diadem of the wicked of the house of the sanctuary of His praise (*תשבחתיה מצנפתא לרשיעא דבית מקדשא*). The valley of fatness is rendered literally, but presumably represents Jerusalem or the Temple, since it has become the place where these bad leaders are drunk.

In **Isa 40:6-8** we again see in Greek the constellation of terms: *δόξα*, (*ἐκ*)*πίπτω*, and *άνθος*.

A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.	קול אמר קרא ואמר מה אקרא כל- הבשר חציר וכל- חסדו כציון השדה:	φωνὴ λέγοντος Βόησον· καὶ εἶπα Τί βοήσω; Πᾶσα σὰρξ χόρτος, καὶ πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπου ὡς άνθος χόρτου·	A voice of one saying, "Cry out!" and I said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh is grass; all the glory of man is like the flower of grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades,	יבש חציר נבל ציון	ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος, καὶ τὸ άνθος ἐξέπεσε,	The grass has withered, and the flower has fallen,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass.	כי רוח יהוה נשבה בו אבן חציר העם:		
The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.	יבש חציר נבל ציון ודבר-אלהינו יקום לעולם:	τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.	but the word of our God remains forever."

In verse six the LXX makes a few modifications. It turns *ואמר* into the first person, as does 1QIsa^a and some modern translations,²²² since it better fits the context of the prophet

²²⁰ Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* [Sommerstein, LCL 145].

²²¹ "Woe to him who gives the crown to the proud, the foolish master of Israel, and gives the turban to the wicked one of the sanctuary of his praise, which is on the head of the rich valley of those wounded with wine! ... and he who gives the turban to the wicked one of the sanctuary of his praise, which is on the head of the rich valley, will be like a first-ripe fig before the summer: when a man sees it, he eats it up as soon as it is in his hand."

²²² Eg. ESV and NRSV.

due to homoioteleuton or parablepsis.²³³ This seems to be the case for 1QIsa^a, where the phrase is inserted interlinearly and in the margin. Ulrich thinks it is a later gloss and was not present in the LXX or the Qumran *Vorlage*.²³⁴

The verbs of verse seven are translated in the usual way: aorist for qatal. In this case it makes for good Greek, since they work as gnomic aorists which describe a general truth.²³⁵ The passage in the Greek makes a nice urbane saying, as Aristotle would describe it, in that it communicates an idea in a compact and easily understood way,²³⁶ it uses a metaphor that is neither too strange nor too difficult to understand, it features an antithesis (contrasting man's frailty with God's eternity), and has actualization by use of the gnomic aorists depicting the grass withering and the flower falling. These are the three features Aristotle describes: "We ought therefore to aim at three things: metaphor, antithesis, actuality."²³⁷ Perhaps the possibility is worth considering, that the translator has dropped verse seven because it is too crowded and frigid,²³⁸ upsetting the succinctness of the urbane statement. Even if it is not accepted that verse seven was omitted for the sake of rhetoric, the passage as a whole has had its imagery focused and tightened to better express the idea of the frailty of mankind. In Hesiod, *Works and Days*, In 7 we find the image of a withering plant used for humanity losing strength: *ῥεῖα δέ τ' ἰθύνει σκολιὸν καὶ ἀγήνορα κάρφει*, "and easily he [Zeus] straightens the crooked and withers the manly."²³⁹

The Targum interprets flower (צִיץ) as chaff (מוצא) and the comparison is to strength (תקפהון) instead of חסד.²⁴⁰ In verses 7-8 it is not the people (העם), but the wicked among the people (רשיעא בעמא) who are the tenor of the metaphor. As mentioned above, the wicked and his thoughts are said to perish. This effectively changes the metaphor to that of chaff being blown away, seen in Isa 17:13; 29:5; 41:2; 47:14; etc.²⁴¹

Another word for flower (or perhaps "bud" or "what sprouts" are better definitions) in Isaiah is פָּרַח, rendered with ἄνθος.²⁴² Here too, it can imply frailty. We have already

²³³ See for example Karl Elliger, *Deuterjesaja: 1. Teilband Jesaja 40,1-45,7* (Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament 11; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 21-22. While not convinced this can explain all the texts related to this verse, he does think there is no sufficient ground to suppose the verse was deliberately omitted.

²³⁴ Eugene Ulrich, "The developmental Composition of the Book of Isaiah: Light from 1QIsaa on Additions in the MT," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 8 (2001), 299-301.

²³⁵ Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar for Colleges* (New York: American Book Company, 1920), §1931.

²³⁶ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.10, particularly paragraph 2.

²³⁷ Aristotle, *Rhetoric* [Freese, LCL 193], III.10.6.

²³⁸ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.3. Aristotle blames frigid style on the misuse of compound words, strange words, epithets that are too long or crowded, and inappropriate metaphors.

²³⁹ Hesiod, *Works and Days* [Most, Loeb 57].

²⁴⁰ "A voice of one who says, "Prophesy!" And he answered and said, "What shall I prophesy?" All the wicked are as the grass, and all their strength like the chaff of the field. The grass withers, its flower fades, for the spirit from the LORD blows upon it; surely the wicked among the people are reckoned as the grass. The wicked dies, his conceptions perish; but the word of our God stands for ever."

²⁴¹ We will discuss chaff metaphors below (3.3.2.1. and 3.).

²⁴² We deal with 5:24 in section 3.3.2.1.1., and in 18:5 it is not a metaphor.

discussed 11:1 where נצר is rendered with ἄνθος, and is parallel to ῥάβδος. In Isa 5:24 it occurs in a merism with שרש, and is said to become like dust.²⁴³ In 18:5 two terms for flower are each rendered with ἄνθος, namely פרח and נצה.²⁴⁴ In 35:1 the LXX uses a specific flower name for a specific flower given in Hebrew, so תבצלת is rendered with κρίνον.²⁴⁵ In this passage the wilderness is personified and is said to rejoice and blossom like a lily.²⁴⁶ Verbal forms of פרח are usually rendered with a form of ἀνθέω, as in 17:11,²⁴⁷ 27:6; and 35:1.²⁴⁸

2.4.2. Flower as Greek Translation

In two other passages, 11:1 and 61:11, the LXX uses the word ἄνθος for words that more properly mean “sprout” or “shoot.” In 11:1 ἄνθος appears to be used to render נצר,²⁴⁹ as we discussed above.²⁵⁰ The meaning of נצר as a sprout, may be similar to a meaning of ἄνθος: according to LSJ it can mean “anything thrown out upon the surface, eruption.”²⁵¹ W. Bedell Stanford argues that ἄνθος does not primarily mean “flower” but something that rises to the surface.²⁵² This meaning of ἄνθος is suggested in Isa 11:1 by the verb ἀναβήσεται. If this is the case, ἄνθος is not a surprising rendering for the context. According to Ziegler’s apparatus, Aquila rendered נצר with ἀκρέμων and Symmachus with βλαστός.

In Isa 61:11, the LXX uses ἄνθος for another word that means “what sprouts,” or “growth:” צמח.

<p>For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.</p>	<p>כִּי כְאֶרֶץ תּוֹצִיא צִמְחָהּ וּכְגַנָּה זְרוּעֶיהָ תְּצַמְחֶיהָ כְּכֹן אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה יִצְמִיחַ צְדָקָה וּתְהַלֵּל נִגְדַּד כָּל־ הַגּוֹיִם:</p>	<p>καὶ ὡς γῆν αὐξουσάν τὸ ἄνθος αὐτῆς καὶ ὡς κῆπον τὰ σπέρματα αὐτοῦ, οὕτως ἀνατελεῖ κύριος δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἀγαλλίαμα ἐναντίον πάντων τῶν ἔθνων.</p>	<p>And as the earth making its flowers grow, and as a garden its seeds, so the Lord will cause righteousness and gladness to spring up before all the nations.</p>
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As we saw above, the use of ἄνθος may carry well the idea of growth and sprouting, and so is an appropriate, though unique, rendering of צמח. In the context of this passage, it

²⁴³ See the analysis of this verse in the section on “Roots,” above (2.3.2.).

²⁴⁴ We will analysis this passage below in the section on “Sprouts” (2.6.1.).

²⁴⁵ Cf. Song 2:1 where תבצלת is rendered with ἄνθος.

²⁴⁶ In the LXX, it is an imperative: “rejoice and blossom like a lily!”

²⁴⁷ In this passage another term for branch is used: זמורה. It occurs only here in Isaiah, and is rendered with σπέρμα. See the section on “Seeds” (2.1.4.) for an analysis of this passage.

²⁴⁸ The only other place it occurs, in Isaiah 66:14, it is rendered with ἀνατέλλω.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Dan 11:7 θ’ which uses ἄνθος to render מנצר; LXX uses φυτόν.

²⁵⁰ For a more detailed analysis of this passage see the section on “Roots” (2.3.1.).

²⁵¹ LSJ, s.v. We have already seen that ἄνθος can be used for a twig or shoot.

²⁵² Stanford, *Greek Metaphor*, 111-14. This meaning cannot be found in Preisigke, *Wörterbuch*.

makes the image more vivid and the idea of a flower is more closely related to seeds than sprouts are. Unfortunately we do not know how σ' , α' , and θ' dealt with this passage.

The critical editions of Ralfs and Ziegler have a difference in this verse: Ralfs has the nominative $\alpha\eta\pi\omicron\varsigma$ while Ziegler has the accusative $\alpha\eta\pi\omicron\nu$. Ralfs is closer to the Hebrew, but Ziegler has a better manuscript tradition and in his edition the two similes take the same structure. The LXX omits the verb of the second simile;²⁵³ the distributive rendering of a verb in synonymous parallelism is a kind of condensation often found in LXX-Isa.²⁵⁴ The MT's $\text{יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה}$ is reduced to $\alpha\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ in the LXX; 1QIsa^a on the other hand has יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵימ .

The Targum elaborates on the garden, making it irrigated and sown so that it grows (וכגנת שקיא דזירועהא מרביא) and also the righteousness and praise of Jerusalem is revealed (יגלי זכותה ותשבחתה דירושלם).²⁵⁵

2.4.3. Summary

It seems that “flower,” in the Hebrew of Isaiah, is used metaphorically to show something delicate and fleeting (Isa 28:1, 4; 40:6-8). In LXX-Isa this meaning is preserved. Where the term $\alpha\upsilon\theta\omicron\varsigma$ is used for words not primarily meaning “flower” (11:1; 61:11), it seems to be to intensify the vividness of images denoting generation. Perhaps the idea of a blossoming flower is simply more pleasant and vivid in these contexts than that of sprouts or buds. Another possibility, however, is that $\alpha\upsilon\theta\omicron\varsigma$ was used with the generic meaning LSJ and Stanford advocate. LXX-Isa is unique within the LXX for rendering terms that mean “bud” or “sprout” (נצר, פרח, and צמח) with $\alpha\upsilon\theta\omicron\varsigma$. Some other LXX books use $\alpha\upsilon\theta\omicron\varsigma$ as a rendering for words that do not mean “flower” in Hebrew, but not for words meaning “sprout.” The use of $\alpha\upsilon\theta\omicron\varsigma$ in Exod 28:14 is probably a guess from the context, since flowers were a decorative motif in other parts of the temple. Exod 30:23 uses an apt Greek idiom, as we have seen. Zeph 2:2 is not an exception since the translator probably read נַץ or צַץ for נַץ . The only real exception, as we have seen, is Dan 11:7 in Theodotion, which was probably due to the translator’s exegesis, as was 11:1.

The Targum tends to interpret flower imagery. In 28:1, 4 it becomes a diadem of the wicked. In 40:6-8 the metaphor is changed into that of the wicked being blown away like chaff, harmonizing to other passages in Isaiah. In 11:1 the flower is interpreted as “king.” The Targum of 61:11 leaves the flower, but compares the garden to Jerusalem.

²⁵³ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 371.

²⁵⁴ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 81.

²⁵⁵ “For as the earth which brings forth its growth, and as a *channeled* garden which increases what is sown in it, so the LORD God will disclose the virtue and the praise of Jerusalem before all the Gentiles.”

2.5. Leaves

This section will first review passages where leaves are used metaphorically, then make a summary of the findings.

2.5.1. Leaves

Homer uses leaves in a simile to describe men in their helplessness in *Illiad* XXI 463-6:

....εἰ δὴ σοί γε βροτῶν ἔνεκα πτολεμίξω
 δειλῶν, οἳ φύλλοισιν ἑοικότες ἄλλοτε μὲν τε
 ζαφλεγέες τελέθουσιν, ἀρούρης καρπὸν ἔδοντες,
 ἄλλοτε δὲ φθινύθουσιν ἀκήριοι.

...if I war with you for the sake of mortals, pitiful creatures, who like leaves are now full of flaming life, eating the fruit of the field, and now again waste away and perish.²⁵⁶

Similarly, the image of leaves is used in the Hebrew Bible to contrast the righteous who will flourish to the wicked who will wither and fall. This can be seen in Psa 1:3; Prov 11:28; and Jer 17:8. The negative side of the image is used more commonly to describe what will wither and pass away. In Isaiah leaves are mentioned only three times, all of which describe those that wither and fall.

Isa 1:30

For you will be like a terebinth [which is] withered [in regard to] its leaves,	כִּי תִהְיֶה כְּאַ֨לֶּה נֹבֵ֜לָת עֲלֶ֙הָ֙	ἔσονται γὰρ ὡς τερέβινθος ἀποβεβληκυῖα τὰ φύλλα	For they shall be like a terebinth that has shed its leaves
and like a garden without water.	וְכִגְנָה אֲשֶׁר־מִים אֵין לָהּ׃	καὶ ὡς παράδεισος ὑδωρ μὴ ἔχων·	and like an orchard that has no water.

The noun עֲלֶהָ is commonly rendered with φύλλον. The withered leaves are used in a simile to describe what the rebels and sinners that will be broken in 1:28 will be like. The Greek has changed from the second person to the third person in this section. The Greek word ἀποβάλλω is only used as an equivalent for נֹבֵלָת,²⁵⁷ but as we will see, LXX-Isa uses other terms in similar similes. BDB defines נֹבֵלָת as “sink or drop down, languish, wither and fall, fade.” Rendering this with ἀποβάλλω seems to limit the meaning to “drop down,” since the

²⁵⁶ Homer, *Iliad* [Murray and Wyatt, LCL 171].

²⁵⁷ According to Hatch and Redpath it has no Hebrew equivalent for its other occurrences, which are only in the other versions and the additions to Daniel. Muraoka, *Two-way Index*, 14 adds the equivalent אבד pi. for Deut 26:5.

Greek term means “to shed.”²⁵⁸ The choice of this term seems to direct the attention to the tree, rather than to the withered leaf. This also is the focus of the Hebrew since נִבְּלָת is feminine and so must match the terebinth and not the masculine עֵלֶה.²⁵⁹ There is good reason for the tree to be described as a terebinth, since in theory almost any tree could have been mentioned in a simile about losing leaves: Theophrastus lists the Terebinth as an evergreen tree (ἀείφυλλα).²⁶⁰ Indeed, Lytton John Musselman says that the terebinth, due to its extensive root systems, also remains green even in years of drought.²⁶¹ The Terebinth is mentioned, then, to make a rather extreme simile, that they will be like a very resilient tree that has nonetheless succumbed to a drought. So, in this simile, in both languages, leaves are mentioned simply to describe the extreme dry and unhealthy state of the terebinth tree. This same image is probably evoked in 6:13, both in the Hebrew and the Greek, as we will discuss in the section on trees (3.6.2.2.).

The translation of גַּן with παράδεισος is common, particularly when an orchard is meant. In this context it is probably because a tree is mentioned, as opposed to vegetables.²⁶²

The Targum also focuses on the terebinth casting off its leaves (כבוטמא דבמתר) (טרפוהי).²⁶³

Isa 34:4

<p>All the host of heaven shall rot away, and the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall wither like a leaf withering on a vine, or fruit withering on a fig tree.</p>	<p>וְנִמְקוּ כָּל-צִבְּאָה הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנִגְלוּ כַסְפָּר הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל-צִבְּאָה יִבּוֹל כַּנֶּבֶל עֵלֶה מִגִּזְן וְכַנְבֵּלֶת מִתְאֲנָה:</p>	<p>καὶ ἐλιγθήσεται ὁ οὐρανὸς ὡς βιβλίον, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἄστρα πεσεῖται ὡς φύλλα ἕξ ἀμπέλου καὶ ὡς πίπτει φύλλα ἀπὸ συκῆς.</p>	<p>Heaven shall roll up like a scroll, and all the stars shall fall like leaves from a vine and as leaves fall from a fig tree.</p>
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In this passage, the withering leaves are again used in a simile, this time to describe how the hosts of the heavens will fall, after rotting. As Mirjam van der Vorm-Croughs notes, the omission of the heavens rotting in the Greek is probably deliberate, since LXX-Isa will often remove one synonymous element in the translation.²⁶⁴ 1QIsa^a has an additional clause at the beginning of this verse: והעמקים יתבקעו, it lacks ונמקו, but instead has the verb יפולו

²⁵⁸ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, 71. Theophrastus uses this term to talk about shedding fig leaves in *Enquiry into Plants*, 1.9.7.

²⁵⁹ In GKC 116.i two ways of understanding נִבְּלָת are given: as an absolute (with leaf then being accusative) or as a construct (and leaf being genitive). Waltke and O'Connor believe it is a construct, Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O'Connor, *An introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 37.3c. But in light of Isa 34:4, where this term appears again, I believe it should be understood as absolute.

²⁶⁰ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 1.9.3. He calls it τέρμινθος, which is a variant spelling, according to LSJ s.v.

²⁶¹ Lytton John Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh: Plants of the Bible and the Quran* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 2007), 267.

²⁶² See van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 113, 232.

²⁶³ “For you will be like a terebinth when its leaves fall, and like a channeled garden without water.”

²⁶⁴ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 61-62, 65.

after “heavens.” The withering leaf is again of a specific plant: a grape vine. In the parallel clause, the exact substantive is omitted. It could imply leaves falling from the fig tree, but then it is odd that נִבְלָת is feminine, while עֵלֶה is masculine. The Hebrew could be alternating gender for the sake of style (which is why it must drop the masculine noun), like in 3:1 where we have a word repeated in each gender: מִשְׁעֵן וּמִשְׁעָנָה. Alternatively, it could be following the example of the construction in 1:30. It could also mean to imply withered figs falling from the fig tree, which is more likely grammatically for the feminine תְּאֵנָה.²⁶⁵ HALOT lists this passage as the only occurrence of a word נִבְלָת, which means “a withered fig.”²⁶⁶ According to Theophrastus, the fig tree is apt to shed its figs before they ripen;²⁶⁷ this could be what the Hebrew implies. The fertilization of figs is a somewhat complicated process, involving a certain species of insect that is born in a wild fig and then brings pollen to the cultivated fig when it attempts to lay eggs in it.²⁶⁸ If a fig is not pollinated, it turns brown and falls away.²⁶⁹

The specific plants are mentioned to give a vividness to the image, since the audience should be familiar with these domestic plants and have seen how they lose their leaves and fruit. As Musselman points out, the fig and the grape are often associated with each other in describing peace and blessings of the land (Deut 8:8; 1 Kgs 4:25; Mic 4:4; Zech 3:10).²⁷⁰

The LXX leaves out the first clause, though as we would expect, the three recensions all include it. The rendering of סִפָּר with βιβλίον does not necessarily change the image, since the verb ἐλίσσω still means to roll up, and βιβλίον can mean something like a scroll.²⁷¹ The LXX understands the “hosts” of heaven to be the stars.²⁷²

The translation of the various forms of נָבַל is worth noting. The imperfect form is translated as a future, as we would expect, but the infinitive in the first simile is not rendered. This is a common feature of LXX-Isa, to remove paronomasia.²⁷³ The participle in the second simile, however, is rendered as a present indicative verb. The translation equivalent πίπτω for נָבַל is appropriate, but this is the only verse where it is used in the whole LXX.²⁷⁴ But this definition is consistent with how LXX-Isa usually understands the word, we have seen in 1:30 the rendering ἀποβάλλω, similar to ἐκρέω in 64:5; and in 28:1, 4 it was rendered with ἐκπίπτω.²⁷⁵ Given the context, falling is clearly what the similes aim to describe.

²⁶⁵ While it appears masculine in the plural, it is a feminine noun. According to BDB s.v. it only occurs in the plural when meaning the fruit as opposed to the tree.

²⁶⁶ HALOT, s.v. cf. Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 1326, who has this reading, but thinks it is unproven.

²⁶⁷ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 2.8.1-4; 3.3.8.

²⁶⁸ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 128. This is necessary because cultivated figs do not have male flowers to produce their own pollen. Theophrastus also describes figs needing to be visited by insects in order to ripen: Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 2.8.1-4.

²⁶⁹ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 128. Musselman lists Isa 34:4 as an example of this phenomenon.

²⁷⁰ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 129.

²⁷¹ At least according to Middle Liddell, s.v.

²⁷² LXX.D.E.K., 2596.

²⁷³ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 74.

²⁷⁴ Cf. Isa 28:1, 4 where it is rendered with ἐκπίπτω.

²⁷⁵ Cf. 24:4 where it is interpreted in an emotional sense in the context of the earth being personified.

The addition of φύλλον in the second simile shows what the translator thought the meaning of the simile was. The translator probably thought it was simply a case of synonymous parallelism with omission. It could, though, be the result of the translator wanting to improve the rhetoric of the passage.²⁷⁶ While the Greek simile might be different from what the Hebrew implies, it is still appropriate. According to Theophrastus, the fig tree sheds its leaves before its fruit ripens,²⁷⁷ which is a somewhat unique trait for a fruit tree. The translator may have misunderstood the Hebrew (if it is indeed talking about unripe figs), but still has an apt simile.

The LXX, then, has cleaned up this passage rhetorically. It can omit the clause about the hosts of heaven rotting since it is redundant, in that they fall like leaves. The two similes about falling leaves (and withered figs) are cleaned up, so that the first is said more straightforwardly as a prophecy and the second is clarified by adding “leaves.”

The Targum interprets the second half of the verse as referring to armies.²⁷⁸ The withering leaf metaphor is maintained, and the fig simile is rendered with cognates: **וכנבלא מיתינא**; according to Jastrow, **נבלא** refers to an inferior variety of fig.²⁷⁹

Isa 64:5(6)

<p>We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a <i>menstrual</i> cloth.</p>	<p>וְנָהֵי כְּטָמֵא כְּלָנוּ וְכַבְּיָד עֲדִים כָּל- צְדִקְתֵּינוּ</p>	<p>καὶ ἐγενήθημεν ὡς ἀκάθαρτοι πάντες ἡμεῖς, ὡς ῥάκος ἀποκαθιμένης πᾶσα ἡ δικαιοσύνη ἡμῶν.</p>	<p>And we have all become like unclean people; all our righteousness is like the rag of a woman who sits apart.</p>
<p>We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.</p>	<p>וְנָבַל כְּעֵלֶה כְּלָנוּ וְעֹנֵינוּ כְּרוּחַ יְשָׁאֵנוּ:</p>	<p>καὶ ἐξερρήμημεν ὡς φύλλα διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν, οὕτως ἄνεμος οἴσει ἡμᾶς.</p>	<p>And we have fallen off like leaves because of our acts of lawlessness; thus the wind will take us away.</p>

In this passage God’s people are described in several similes. The first is that they have become like the unclean, and that their righteousness or righteous deeds are like a menstrual cloth (that is, stained and unclean, something that can make other things unclean too). The second part of the verse likens them to a withered leaf and their sins to a wind that carries them away. The withered leaf is again used as an image of frailty and perhaps death as it withers and is blown away.

The Greek has made some changes to this verse. The term ἀποκαθιμένης is not surprising (or here a deliberate euphemism), since it is often used to describe menstruating

²⁷⁶ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 163. Perhaps it should be listed as a case of explication.

²⁷⁷ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 1.9.7.

²⁷⁸ “All the forces of heaven shall melt completely and be wiped from under the skies just as was said concerning them in the scroll. All their armies shall come to an end as leaves fall from a vine, like what is withered from a fig.”

²⁷⁹ Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (2 Volumes; London: W.C. Luzac & Co., 1903), s.v.

women in the LXX.²⁸⁰ Seeligmann lists this translation as an example of “standardized expressions relating to traditional homiletics and religious practice.”²⁸¹ Both 1QIsa^a and 4QIsa^b agree with LXX in omitting the conjunction before כבגד. A much bigger change is how the LXX reads the clauses. In the Hebrew, their sins carry them away,²⁸² while in the Greek their sins are the cause of their falling away. This is achieved by changing the conjunction ו into διά. MT’s וְנָבַל is problematic; DCH suggests it is 1st person plural Qal wayyiqtol from נבל, though HALOT suggests it be amended to וְנָבַל.²⁸³ The LXX appears to read the latter. The word choice is interesting, since it fits well with the context of the wind blowing the leaf away when it falls. Only here is ἐκρέω used as an equivalent for נבל; the only other place this word occurs (Deut 28:40) it is a rendering of נשל.²⁸⁴ The word πίπτω, like was used in 34:4, could have sufficed here too, but ἐκρέω is much more apt for the image.

In both languages there is a metaphor of them withering/falling, which is then described in terms of the leaf. The Greek appears to drop the second occurrence of כָּלְנוּ from its rendering and makes their sins the cause of their falling. The choice of ἀνομία for עוֹן is not surprising, given LXX-Isa’s well known fondness of the term, and since they are common word equivalents. But it is interesting that this word choice creates some assonance with the word ἄνεμος. The word οὕτως, perhaps based on כ, continues the image of the withered leaf. In the Hebrew their iniquities are like a wind, but in the Greek, they have fallen like a leaf because of their lawlessness, and as a consequence the wind will carry them away. So what then is the wind that carries them away? Perhaps it could still be understood to be their lawlessness, since they have synonyms for their verbs and there is assonance linking them.

The Targum does not expand this verse.²⁸⁵

2.5.2. Summary

As we have seen, in LXX-Isa the leaf imagery is for the most part preserved rather literally and עָלָה is rendered with φύλλον regularly. What makes these metaphors interesting is the care and nuance the translator has when rendering the accompanying word נבל. In all three cases, the translator is careful to pick a translation that best fits the context and reinforces the image that the withering leaf is meant to represent. The Targum is literal in these passages.

²⁸⁰ For the various terms it renders, see Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 14.

²⁸¹ Seeligmann, *The Septuagint of Isaiah*, 187 [44/45].

²⁸² Usually עוֹן forms in the plural as עוֹנוֹת, but it appears in a few other places it has been pointed as though it formed the masculine plural regularly, as in Jer 14:7 which has אִם-עוֹנֵינוּ עֲנֵנוּ בָּנוּ. Our verse, then, must be a defective spelling of an alternate plural form.

²⁸³ See also LXX.D.E.K., 2687.

²⁸⁴ See Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 132, who thinks the Deut passage influenced the LXX-Isa passage.

²⁸⁵ “We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our virtues are like a despised garment. We all fade like a leaf fades, and before our sins, like the wind, we are taken away.”

2.6. Sprouts and Branches

Sprout and branch metaphors are used less commonly in the Hebrew Bible and may be considered original metaphors (as opposed to conventional metaphors or dead metaphors). In Isaiah a variety of terms are used in different contexts.

2.6.1. Sprouts

A rare word for “sprout” or “shoot” is נֹצֵר; it occurs only in Isa 11:1; 60:21; Dan 11:7 (which, as we have seen, the OG renders with φυτόν and Theodotion with ἄνθος); and Sir 40:15 (where it is rendered ἔκγονος).²⁸⁶ As discussed in the section on roots and the section on flowers, in Isa 11:1 נֹצֵר is appropriately rendered with ἄνθος, since this Greek term can mean “something that rises to the surface.”²⁸⁷ In 14:19 we find the word נֹצֵר, but it most likely means “putrefying matter.”²⁸⁸

Isa 60:21

Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever. They are the shoot that I planted, the work of my hands, so that I might be glorified.	<p>עַמְּךָ כִּלְמֵי צְדִיקִים לְעוֹלָם יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ נֹצֵר מִטְעוֹ²⁸⁹ מֵעֵשָׂה יְדֵי לְהַתְפָּאֵר:</p>	<p>καὶ ὁ λαός σου πᾶς δίκαιος, καὶ δι' αἰῶνος κληρονομήσουσι τὴν γῆν, φυλάσσω τὸ φύτευμα, ἔργα χειρῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς δόξαν.</p>	Your people shall all be righteous, and they shall inherit the land forever, guarding <i>the</i> plant, the works of <i>his</i> hands, for glory.
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The noun נֹצֵר in apposition to other terms describing it has been rendered as if it were a participle form of נֹצֵר, that is, as the singular participle φυλάσσω. Grammatically, the participle must modify λαός, even though this noun here has a plural verb.²⁹⁰ 1QIsa^b omits נֹצֵר, though it is present in 1QIsa^a and appears to have been present in 4QIsa^m.²⁹¹ The rendering of מִטְעוֹ with just τὸ φύτευμα is interesting, since in the Greek there is no sign of the pronoun either in first or third person (from the qere or the ketiv). In the Greek it is described, though, by apposition to the phrase ἔργα χειρῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς δόξαν. While it could be that αὐτοῦ also refers to λαός, like NETS understands it,²⁹² it probably actually refers to God (as 1QIsa^a also understands it). The LXX probably makes the first person pronominal ending third person

²⁸⁶ The Hebrew נֹצֵר, meaning offspring, occurring in Isa 14:22 and 57:19 is said to derive from “little shoots” by HALOT, s.v. But there is no evidence given to support this. The current study agrees with DCH that it means simply descendent.

²⁸⁷ LSJ, s.v.

²⁸⁸ DCH, s.v. E. Nestle, “Miscellen,” *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 24 (1904): 127-30.

²⁸⁹ ק. מטעי

²⁹⁰ Cf. Isa 26:2-3 where people are again described as guarding, using singular participles.

²⁹¹ 1QIsa^a has a plus instead of the pronoun: נֹצֵר מִטְעֵי יְהוָה מֵעֵשֵׂי יָדָיו.

²⁹² NETS reads: “guarding their plant, the works of their hands, for glory.”

because previously, in 60:20, God is spoken of in the third person. The only other occurrence of **מָטֵעַ** in LXX-Isa is in 61:3, where a very similar phrase occurs: **וְקָרָא לָהֶם אֵילֵי הַצֶּדֶק** וְקָרָא לָהֶם אֵילֵי הַצֶּדֶק **מָטֵעַ יְהוָה לְהַתְּפַאֵר** rendered *καὶ κληθήσονται γενεαὶ δικαιοσύνης, φύτευμα κυρίου εἰς δόξαν*. The similarity of the rendering also points to the translator understanding both passages in the same way.

The plant metaphor of this verse, both in its Hebrew and Greek versions, is that God planted Israel in their land, as in Exod 15:17.²⁹³ The difference is that the LXX introduces some group of righteous people who inherit the land and who guard this plant.²⁹⁴

The Targum interprets the phrase **נֹצֵר מָטֵעַ** with **נֹצֵב אֲדָוָתֵי**, connecting the plant to that of Isa 5:7 where the same phrase occurs.²⁹⁵

As we have seen, the word **נֹצֵר** is never given a literal translation. The closest we have seen (not counting the recensions of LXX-Isa) is *ἄνθος* in LXX-Isa 11:1 and Dan 11:7 *θ'*, or *φυτρός* in LXX-Dan 11:7. Also Ben Sirach's grandson, in 40:15, opted to interpret the metaphor **נֹצֵר** as offspring: **נֹצֵר מַחֲמַס לֹא יִנְקָה כִּי שׁוֹרֵשׁ חֲנֹף עַל שֵׁן סֵלַע** was rendered: *ἔκγονα ἀσεβῶν οὐ πληθυνεῖ κλάδους καὶ ῥίζαι ἀκάθαρτοι ἐπ' ἀκροτόμου πέτρας*.²⁹⁶

Another term for a young shoot or twig (as we saw in its verbal form in Sir 40:15) is **יֹנְקָה** or **יֹנֵק**. The latter form occurs only once in the Hebrew Bible in Isa 53:2 (the former form does not occur in Isaiah).

Isa 53:2

<p>For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.</p>	<p>וַיַּעַל כִּי־יֹנֵק לְפָנָיו וְכַשְׂרֵשׁ מֵאַרְץ צִיָּה לֹא-תֵאָר לּוֹ וְלֹא הָדָר וְנִרְאָהוּ וְלֹא-מְרֹאֶה וְנִחְמְדָהוּ:</p>	<p><i>ἀνέτειλε μὲν²⁹⁷ ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ὡς παιδίον, ὡς ῥίζα ἐν γῆ διψώσῃ, οὐκ ἔστιν εἶδος αὐτῶ οὐδὲ δόξα· καὶ εἶδομεν αὐτόν, καὶ οὐκ εἶχεν εἶδος οὐδὲ κάλλος·</i></p>	<p>He grew up before him like a child, like a root in a thirsty land; he has no form or glory, and we saw him, and he had no form or beauty.</p>
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We have discussed this passage already in the section on roots (2.3.2.). The LXX understands **יֹנֵק** as a substantive participle from **יָנַק**, as occurs in 11:8.²⁹⁸ Perhaps the translator recognized the play on words with **יֹנְקָה** (shoot) but thought he should explain it to be clear. As we saw, in Sir 40:15 there is a play on words between the possible meaning “offspring” and “sprout.” His grandson also opted to make clear one term referred to offspring, then maintained the rest of the plant imagery. It is possible, though, that the LXX-Isa

²⁹³ Cf. Psalms 44:3; 80:9. The Targum also reads Isa 61:11 this way, though it renders **יָדִי** with **גְבוּרָתִי**.

²⁹⁴ LXX.D.E.K., 2683.

²⁹⁵ Targum 60:21: “Your people shall all be *virtuous*; they shall possess *the* land for ever, my *pleasant plant*, the work of my *might*, that I might be glorified.”

²⁹⁶ Hebrew text from MS B in Beentjes, *The Book of Sirach in Hebrew*, 70.

²⁹⁷ All manuscripts read *ἀνηγγείλαμεν*.

²⁹⁸ LXX.D.E.K., 2666.

translator rendered יִנֵּק with παιδίον at a lexical level, and did not bother to consider the interpretation of a metaphor. As a result, the parallel simile “like a root in a thirsty land” is more closely tied to “child.”

The Targum does not have any difficulty with this word, it renders with לבלב, “bloom” or “sprout.” The rest of the passage, though, has quite a bit of interpretation as discussed above.²⁹⁹

Three more terms for sprouts, or more accurately, tendrils or shoots, are נְטִישׁוֹת, זְלוּזִים, and שְׁלַחוֹת (this last term is not used in a metaphor in Isaiah). The first two terms occur in Isaiah only in 18:5; in Jer 5:10 נְטִישׁוֹת is interpreted as the buttresses of a city, but in Jer 48:32(31:32) it is translated with κλημα. The word זְלוּזִים only occurs in Isa 18:5.

Isa 18:5

<p>For before the harvest, when the blossom is over and the flower becomes a ripening grape, he will cut off the shoots with pruning hooks, and the spreading branches he will hew away.</p>	<p>כִּי־לִפְנֵי קִצִּיר כְּתָם־ פָּרַח וּבִקְסֵר גָּמַל יִהְיֶה נֹצֵה וְכָרַת הַזְּלוּזִים בְּמִזְמוֹרוֹת וְאֶת־ הַנְּטִישׁוֹת הַסָּרִיר הַתְּזוּ:</p>	<p>πρὸ τοῦ θερισμοῦ, ὅταν συντελεσθῇ ἄνθος καὶ ὄμφαξ ἀνθήσῃ ἄνθος ὄμφακίζουσα, καὶ ἀφελεῖ τὰ βοτρύδια τὰ μικρὰ τοῖς δρεπάνοις καὶ τὰς κληματίδας ἀφελεῖ καὶ κατακόψει</p>	<p>Before the harvest, when the blossom has been completed and the unripe grape blossoms, <i>producing unripe grapes</i>³⁰⁰— then he will take away the little clusters with pruning hooks and take away the small branches and cut them off...</p>
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In the Hebrew, the vinedresser is doing something quite remarkable. Pruning should be done after the harvest and before the new summer growth.³⁰¹ Pruning just before the harvest, when grapes are forming, would serve no purpose other than to ruin the vintage. The point of the metaphor seems to be that before these nations reach their full potential (and accomplish their aims) they are cut off and destroyed. A similar metaphor can be found in Job 15:32-3, but there the vine itself (as well as the olive tree) casts off its unripe fruit “before their time.”

The LXX appears to know all the specific vine related terminology and so uses the appropriate terms in Greek. The rendering of פָּרַח with ἄνθος is not surprising; the Greek repeats the same word later probably for the sake of alliteration. The Hebrew בִּקְסֵר could refer more generally to unripe fruit, but the Greek is specific about unripe grapes. The Hebrew גָּמַל

²⁹⁹ “And the righteous shall be exalted before him, behold, like tufts which sprout, and like a tree which sends its roots by streams of waters, so holy generations will increase on the land which was needing him; his appearance is not a common appearance and his fearfulness is not an ordinary fearfulness, and his brilliance will be holy brilliance, that everyone who looks at him will consider him.”

³⁰⁰ Both NETS and LXX.D. take ὄμφακίζουσα substantively.

³⁰¹ Cato, *De Agricultura*, 32-33 describes pruning in the fall. Columella, *De re Rustica* IV.x, says in cold climates prune in the spring before the shoots bud, but in warm sunny climates, prune in the fall, the natural season when fruit and leaves drop.

יהיה appears to be rendered with ἀνθήσῃ ἄνθος,³⁰² changing the word order; and נצה is rendered ὀμφακίζουσα.³⁰³ This rendering is aimed at describing vines that are finished flowering and beginning to form grape clusters, but also creates some nice alliteration: συντελεσθῆν ἄνθος καὶ ὀμφαξ ἀνθήσῃ ἄνθος ὀμφακίζουσα. The word זלזלים may mean something more like a tendril, but the Greek makes it clearly the little clusters of unripe grapes: τὰ βοτρυδία τὰ μικρά. As a whole, the Greek makes the image specific and vivid.

The Targum appears to interpret כְּתָם as referring to a tree (אילנא). The phrase ובִּסְרֵךְ נְצִיחַ is more clear: ובסרא מיניה סמדר (and the unripe fruit [spreads] from its blossom).³⁰⁴ The second part of the verse, though, abandons the metaphor, making the imagery just a description of the season and clearly states that rulers will die by the sword and the mighty will be removed.

2.6.2. Branches

While מִטֵּה can have the definition “branch of a vine,” it only occurs in Ezek 19:11 (LXX uses ῥάβδος). The LXX-Isa translator never reads this root with this meaning.³⁰⁵ Although it is still often translated ῥάβδος, in LXX-Isa it clearly refers to scepters and not branches. Another Hebrew term for branch is אֶמְרִי. BDB defined it as “top” or “summit,” occurring in Isa 17:6, 9; and Gen 49:21. More recent lexicons, however, define it as “branch” or “twig.”³⁰⁶ In Gen 49:21, the context shows that it is discussing a deer, referring to the branching of its antlers.³⁰⁷

Isa 17:6

<p>Gleanings will be left in it, as when an olive tree is beaten--two or three berries in the top of the highest bough, four or five on the branches of a fruit tree, says the LORD God of Israel.</p>	<p>וְנִשְׂאֲרֵבוּ עוֹלֹלֹת בְּנִקְוֹת זֵית שְׁנַיִם שְׁלֹשָׁה גְרָגְרִים בְּרֵאשׁ אֶמְרֵי אַרְבָּעָה חֲמִשָּׁה בְּסַעֲפֵיהָ פְּרִיָּהּ נְאֻם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>	<p>καὶ καταλειφθῆν ἐν αὐτῇ καλάμη ἢ ὡς ῥῶγες ἐλαίας δύο ἢ τρεῖς ἐπ’ ἄκρου μετεώρου ἢ τέσσαρες ἢ πέντε ἐπὶ τῶν κλάδων αὐτοῦ καταλειφθῆν.</p>	<p>and as if a stalk should be left in it, or like berries of an olive tree—two or three on the topmost height, or four or five left on its branches.</p>
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In the Hebrew, verse five introduces the general concept of a harvest, and verse six specifies that conditions will be like the gleanings that are left over. The rather vivid and

³⁰² LXX.D.E.K., 2551.

³⁰³ LXX.D.E.K., 2551 believes this word connects the halves of the verse.

³⁰⁴ “For before the time of harvest comes, the tree to blossom and its unripe grape [to] flower, he will kill the rulers of the Gentiles with the sword, and their strong ones he will take away and remove.”

³⁰⁵ Isa 9:3; 10:5, 15, 24, 26; 14:5; 28:27; 30:32.

³⁰⁶ HALOT only gives the Isaiah passages, while DCH gives all three.

³⁰⁷ The ESV and NRSV follow the LXX version: “that bears beautiful/comely fawns.”

pictorial image is then used of a few olives left clinging out of reach on a tree that has been beaten in order to knock the ripe olives down. According to Pliny, the best way to harvest olives is to gather them from the tree, but this can be expensive due to labor.³⁰⁸ He says some wait until the olives fall from the tree, but overly ripe olives produce inferior oil. The middle position, he says, is to carefully beat the branches with sticks or reeds to knock down the olives, though he warns this can hinder the next year's fruit production of the tree.³⁰⁹ The Hebrew image is that after the tree has been beaten, there will still be a few left over, that were out of reach or too unripe to easily fall.

The Greek, however reads the first clause of this verse as a continuation of the previous verse, and reads the rest of the verse as an alternative analogy to that of gleaning, as signaled by the addition ἤ. The image of berries remaining in the olive tree is also modified. First, the Greek removes the idea of the tree being beaten. In the Hebrew, the idea of beating the tree makes the image the end of the harvest of that tree's olives, while in the Greek the image is of the tree after the completion of harvest activities. This change is slight, but it makes for a more streamlined image; the image is about what remains, so discussing the harvesting is distracting. The plural ῥῶγες is not based on נִקְיָה but rather on גִּרְגָּרִים.³¹⁰ The word order is changed to make it clear that the olives are what is important, not the tree. The rendering of שְׂבִיבָא with ἐπ' ἄκρου is usual enough. The rendering of אֶמְיָר with μετέωρου is appropriate in the context. Whether the translator was making an educated guess about its meaning, or thought his phrase was better for some reason, is hard to tell. As mentioned above, older lexicons define אֶמְיָר as "top," probably based on the LXX. It could be that this is simply what the word was thought to mean at the time of the translation. If the LXX translator knew the meaning, but wanted some variation, he could have used another synonym of κλάδος like κλήμα, βλάστημα, or κλών. The verb is finally given in the Greek at the end of the verse: καταλειφθῆ. It is probably based on reading פְּרִיָּה as meaning something like "its fruit" as a part of a predicate clause, and so could be clarified by saying "will remain." So the rendering of פֶּרֶה with καταλείπω is an explication; that the branch was fruitful is not as relevant in the context as saying that only four or five olives still remain on it. As a whole, the Greek is quite similar to the Hebrew, though it is expressed in a more focused and succinct manner.

³⁰⁸ Pliny, *The Natural History*, 15.3.

³⁰⁹ Pliny, *The Natural History*, 15.3. Musselman says olives are still harvested in this way in Middle Eastern villages. He also says beating the tree appears to damage it but actually stimulates future bud growth. Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 214.

³¹⁰ 1QIsa^a reads גִּרְגָּרִים.

The Targum appears to have known the meaning of אָמִיר and so rendered it with צִנֵּף.³¹¹ It interprets the simile as the righteous (a few olives on a rebellious branch) being left in the midst of the kingdoms of the world.

Isa 17:9

<p>On that day their strong cities will be like a <i>deserted woodland and the branch</i> which they deserted <i>before</i> the children of Israel, and there will be desolation.</p>	<p>בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיוּ עָרֵי מְעוֹז בְּעִזּוֹבַת הַחֹרֶשׁ וְהָאָמִיר אֲשֶׁר עָזְבוּ מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיְתָה שְׂמָמָה:</p>	<p>τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἔσονται αἱ πόλεις σου ἐγκαταλειμμέναι, ὄν τρόπον ἐγκατέλιπον οἱ Ἀμορραῖοι καὶ οἱ Ευαῖοι ἀπὸ προσώπου τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραηλ, καὶ ἔσονται ἔρημοι,</p>	<p>On that day your cities will be abandoned, just as the Amorrites and the Heuities abandoned them before the sons of Israel, and they will be desolate.</p>
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The Hebrew of this verse is difficult, and often partially amended to agree with the LXX version, so that instead of אָמִיר הַחֹרֶשׁ בְּעִזּוֹבַת הַחֹרֶשׁ וְהָיְתָה שְׂמָמָה it would have יהיו עָרֵי מְעוֹז בְּעִזּוֹבַת הַחֹרֶשׁ וְהָיְתָה שְׂמָמָה.³¹² If it is true that the Hebrew was corrupted, it would have to have taken place before 1QIsa^a, since it agrees with MT. The three recessions also do not agree with LXX, according to Ziegler’s apparatus, though none of them translate אָמִיר: Jerome’s commentary says that α’ had *testa et emir*, σ’ had *silva et amir*, and θ’ had *ars et emir*. The Targum appears to struggle with this passage as well, simply emphasizing that the city will be destroyed without mention of any imagery or Amorites. None of these versions agree with the word order of the LXX,³¹³ οἱ Ἀμορραῖοι καὶ οἱ Ευαῖοι, but the lists of Canaanite people commonly appear in various orders and with various nations.³¹⁴

If we try to understand the Hebrew as it appears in the MT, it would seem the woodland imagery is used to describe a place where no one lives. The branch which they abandoned is most sensible if understood as an awkward allusion to the branch (אָמִיר) in 17:6. If this is the case, it alludes to the branch that was left, along with its three olives, finally becoming bare. Ottley believes אָמִיר is here used to mean mountain top, while in verse 6 it meant tree top.³¹⁵

The LXX, either through an effort to understand a difficult text, or from reading a variant text,³¹⁶ no longer has any plant imagery, but instead an allusion to the Israelite

³¹¹ “And gleanings will be left in it as the *stripping of the olive tree*—two or three berries on the top of the highest bough, four or five on *the rebellious branch, thus shall the righteous be left alone in the midst of the world among the kingdoms*, says the LORD God of Israel.”

³¹² For example see Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 634, 637-38. He does not explore the possibility that אָמִיר could mean branch.

³¹³ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 192.

³¹⁴ Cf. Num 13:29, where LXX adds the Hivites; Deut 20:17 where the LXX adds the Gergesites; and Josh 3:10 where two pairs of nations have their orders changed in the LXX.

³¹⁵ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 192.

³¹⁶ LXX.D.E.K., 2548 offers the possibility of a different *Vorlage* or the translator’s exegesis.

conquest of Canaan. Also, the cities are no longer “strong” in the Greek.³¹⁷ Another minus in this verse is an equivalent for אֲשֶׁר עָזְבוּ.³¹⁸

The Targum understands הַחֲרָשׁ וְהָאֲמִיר (חרוב) as meaning “desolation and waste” (ואתחמר).³¹⁹

Another word for branch used in Isaiah, פֶּאֶרֶה, can be found in **Isa 10:33**.

<p>Look, the Sovereign, the LORD of hosts, will lop the boughs with terrifying power;</p>	<p>הִנֵּה הָאֲדוֹן יְהוָה צָבָאוֹת מְסַעֵף פֶּאֶרֶה בְּמַעֲרָצָה</p>	<p>ἰδοὺ γὰρ ὁ δεσπότης κύριος σαβαωθ συνταράσσει τοὺς ἐνδόξους μετὰ ἰσχύος,</p>	<p>For behold, the Sovereign, the Lord Sabaoth, will mightily confound the glorious ones,</p>
<p>the tallest trees will be cut down, and the lofty will be brought low.</p>	<p>וְרַמֵּי הַקּוֹמָה גְּדוּעִים וְהַגְּבֵהִים יִשְׁפְּלוּ:</p>	<p>καὶ οἱ ὑψηλοὶ τῆ ὕβρει συντριβήσονται, καὶ οἱ ὑψηλοὶ ταπεινωθήσονται,</p>	<p>and the lofty will be crushed in their insolence, and the lofty will be brought low.</p>

The LXX in 10:32 has changed the subject from those coming against Jerusalem into a word to Jerusalem to stay faithful. In this context, 10:33 is about those in Jerusalem. The Hebrew appears to use פֶּאֶרֶה as a pun, since it is clearly a metaphor, but being parallel to the vague phrase “the lofty heights,” suggests it could be understood as “glorious ones” as well, which is its primary meaning.³²⁰ The Greek may not have understood either term in the phrase מְסַעֵף פֶּאֶרֶה. The word פֶּאֶרֶה is never again used with the meaning “branch” in Isaiah. Elsewhere it occurs only in Ezek 17:6 and 31:5-15 (with a different vocalization). The root סַעַף, though, occurs in Isa 17:6, rendered with κλάδος, for its rendering in Isa 27:10, see below. The translator also knew its meaning as “cleft” as in a rock or cave as can be seen in Isa 2:21, though in 57:5 we do not see this in the Greek. The meaning συνταράσσει could have been suggested by other occurrences of this word in contexts of God’s intervention, such as Exod 14:24; 2 Sam 22:8; and Psa 18:14(17:15). Also, it could have been a logical move: for a group of people to “branch” could imply a parting of ways, a division (סַעֲפָה), or confusion as they all go different directions.

In the second half of the verse the “high” (רום) and “lofty” (גבה) are translated literally, which, along with the disappearance of a branch in the first part of the verse, removes the possibility of them carrying the double meaning of high branches and the arrogant. These two terms are also found in the Damascus Document in a simile describing

³¹⁷ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 192 attributes this to the similar letters in the following word, as does LXX.D.E.K., 2548.

³¹⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 54 suggests the Hebrew is a gloss.

³¹⁹ “In that time their strong cities will be as a fortress that is desolate and ruined, and is forsaken before the children of Israel, and it will become a waste.”

³²⁰ Cf. van der Kooij, “Metaphorical Language,” 182.

the wicked sons of the watchers who fell: **ובניהם אשר כרום ארזים גבהם וכהרים**
גויותיהם.³²¹ Also, the LXX interprets **הַקֹּמָה** by saying *τῆ ὕβρει*. In 37:24, **קֹמַת** is rendered with *ὕψος*, though this would be too repetitive of a translation in 10:33. The idea of “cutting” was another opportunity to use tree trimming imagery, which the translator missed. The LXX translators seem to believe that **גָּדוּעִים** can mean “to break,” since it is rendered with *συγκλάω* five times,³²² and in Isaiah, twice with *συντρίβω*.³²³

The translator has interpreted the plant imagery, as Ottley has pointed out, by making high branches stand for the high in arrogance.³²⁴ This is indeed what the Hebrew image is about as well and seems to have been used also in the Damascus Document. The translator may have abandoned the imagery in part because he missed the possible double meaning of **פְּאֲרָה** and was not sure what **מְסֻעָה** meant as a participle, but it seems likely he was deliberately interpreting the metaphor personally.³²⁵

The Targum has a very different understanding of this verse. It inserts wine treading imagery, similar to Isa 63:2-4.³²⁶ The second part of the verse is much more literal, however.

In Isa 4:2, another term for branch, **צֶמַח**, is rendered with a word that can mean “to shine:” *ἐπιλάμπω*.³²⁷ As we discussed earlier, it appears as though the translator knew the meaning of this Hebrew root (at least when it is a verb), but nevertheless rendered it as though it were the Aramaic word. The Targum, though, here renders it with **משיחא**.³²⁸

In **Isa 27:10-11** two terms for “branch” in the Hebrew appear (**קֶצִיר** and **סֶעָף**), though there is no terminology for “branch” in the Greek.

<p>For the fortified city is solitary, a habitation deserted and forsaken, like the wilderness; the calves graze there, there they lie down, and strip its branches.</p>	<p>כִּי עִיר בְּצוּרָה בְּדָד נֹה מְשֻׁלַּח וְנִעְזָב כַּמְדָּבָר שֵׁם יְרֻעָה עֹגְלֵי וְשֵׁם יִרְבֵּץ וְכֹלָה סֶעָפֶיהָ:</p>	<p>τὸ κατοικοῦμενον ποίμνιον ἀνειμένον ἔσται ὡς ποίμνιον καταλειμμένον· καὶ ἔσται πολὺν χρόνον εἰς βόσκημα, κάκει ἀναπαύσονται.</p>	<p>The <i>sheep</i> inhabiting³²⁹ (it) will be left deserted, like a forsaken <i>flock</i>; and it will be turned into a feeding place for a long time, and there they will rest.</p>
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³²¹ Damascus Document, II.19.

³²² Isa 45:2; Psa 75:11; 107:16; Jer 50:23; Lam 2:3.

³²³ The other occurrence is Isa 14:12.

³²⁴ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 166.

³²⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 82. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint of Isaiah*, 270-71 mentions this phrase as an example of where the translator’s social-ethical feelings are evident in his translation. LXX.D.E.K., 2534 and van der Kooij, “Metaphorical Language,” 182 also believe the translator was interpreting the metaphor.

³²⁶ “Behold, the master of the world, the LORD of hosts casts slaughter among his armies as grapes trodden in the press; and the great in stature will be hewn down and the strong will be humbled.”

³²⁷ For a discussion of Isa 4:2 see the fruit section above.

³²⁸ Cf. 61:11, where the Targum renders **צֶמַח** with **צמח**.

³²⁹ NETS has “The inhabited fold” and “fold” which sounds like the place is meant, while in fact it is the herd of sheep that is meant. See LXX.D. for a translation less ambiguous than NETS.

<p>When its boughs are dry, they are broken; women come and make a fire of them. For this is a people without understanding; therefore he that made them will not have compassion on them, he that formed them will show them no favor.</p>	<p>בִּיבֹשׁ קִצְיָרָה תִּשְׁבְּרֶנָּה נְשִׁים בְּאֵוֹת מְאִירוֹת אוֹתָהּ כִּי לֹא עִם- בִּינֹת הוּא עַל-כֵּן לֹא-יִרְחַמְנוּ עִשְׂהוּ וְיִצְרוּ לֹא יִחַנְנוּ:</p>	<p>καὶ μετὰ χρόνον οὐκ ἔσται ἐν αὐτῇ πᾶν χλωρὸν διὰ τὸ ξηρανθῆναι. γυναῖκες ἐρχόμεναι ἀπὸ θέας, δεῦτε· οὐ γὰρ λαὸς ἐστὶν ἔχων σύνεσιν, διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μὴ οἰκτιρήσῃ ὁ ποιήσας αὐτούς, οὐδὲ ὁ πλάσας αὐτούς οὐ μὴ ἐλέησῃ.</p>	<p>Then after a time there will be nothing green in it, because it will have dried up. You women who come from a spectacle, come here! For it is not a people having understanding; therefore he that made them will not have compassion, nor will he that formed them have mercy.</p>
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This passage occurs in a large section marked by its freedom of translation. Here the translator interprets and expands the imagery. In the Hebrew an impenetrable city is likened to a wilderness, where what few branches there are get destroyed by grazing cattle, and once dead and dry get burned. The Greek, however, probably based on the cattle grazing (שֶׁם יִרְעָה) (עֵגֶל) focuses on the idea of a flock of sheep being abandoned so they feed and rest for a long time, until there is nothing left there to eat, since it dried up.

The Hebrew at the beginning of the verse is translated as the end of the previous verse. Regarding the plant terminology, it would appear the phrase וְכָלֵה סְעֵפֵיהָ בִּיבֹשׁ קִצְיָרָה תִּשְׁבְּרֶנָּה has been understood to express all the greenery drying up, and so has been paraphrased with *καὶ μετὰ χρόνον οὐκ ἔσται ἐν αὐτῇ πᾶν χλωρὸν διὰ τὸ ξηρανθῆναι*.³³⁰ LXX.D.E.K. suggests *כלה* was read in the sense of “*vergehen*,” and so comes to this rendering.³³¹ The term *χλωρός* or “greenery” could be based on understanding the idea of branches (סְעֵפֵיהָ),³³² and/or could be because the idea of a pasture drying out entails the greenery turning brown. In Prov 27:25 *χλωρός* appears to be a rendering for קִצְיָר, though that passage is also complicated regarding its rendering. Perhaps the LXX-Isa translator based *χλωρός* on the occurrence of קִצְיָר. The term קִצְיָר meaning branch is translated with *κλήμα* in Psa 80:11(79:12), but with *θερισμός* in Job 14:9; 18:16; and 29:19, the only other places it occurs.

The exact relationship between the Greek and Hebrew is difficult to establish in this case, but it is clear that the translator has introduced a metaphor about sheep being abandoned and eating all the plants until they are gone because it dried up.

³³⁰ LXX.D.E.K., 2573.

³³¹ LXX.D.E.K., 2573.

³³² Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 236.

The Targum interprets the branches as armies being cut off, confounded, and broken.³³³

2.6.3. Branch as Greek Translation

In a one place, LXX-Isa has a word for “branch” where the Hebrew does not.

Isa 55:12

<p>For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.</p>	<p>כִּי־בְשִׂמְחָה תֵּצְאוּ וּבְשָׁלוֹם תּוּבְלוּ הַהָרִים וְהַגְּבוּעוֹת יִפְצְחוּ לְפָנֶיכֶם רְנָה וְכָל־עֵצֵי הַשָּׂדֶה יִמְחָאוּ־כָף:</p>	<p>ἐν γὰρ εὐφροσύνη ἐξελεύσεσθε καὶ ἐν χαρᾷ διαχθήσεσθε· τὰ γὰρ ὄρη καὶ οἱ βουνοὶ ἐξαλοῦνται προσδεχόμενοι ὑμᾶς ἐν χαρᾷ, καὶ πάντα τὰ ξύλα τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἐπικροτήσει τοῖς κλάδοις,</p>	<p>for you shall go out with joy and <i>pass through</i>³³⁴ with happiness; for the mountains and the hills shall leap forth as they welcome you with happiness, and all the trees of the field shall clap with their branches.</p>
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The anthropomorphic descriptions of nature have been adjusted to be more realistic. In Psa 98:8 the same anthropomorphisms are applied to streams and mountains, but is rendered more literally: יַחַד הָרִים יִרְנְנוּ; there the LXX has ποταμοὶ κροτήσουσιν χεῖρι ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, τὰ ὄρη ἀγαλλιάσονται.³³⁵ In Isa 55:12, rather than the hills making a joyful noise (since they can not properly make any noise), they are said to rise up and greet them.³³⁶ This is strictly speaking not literally possible either, but is more plausible than that they should make a sound. Of more interest to us is the description of the trees. The LXX still has the trees clapping, but since trees do not have hands, the translator has put branches. In the Hebrew, saying “hand” may be a kind of catachresis, though the action and purpose of clapping is probably meant more than a description of branches crashing together. The Greek, in an almost rationalistic manner, has put an analogous piece of plant anatomy to what humans would have for hands: κλάδος.³³⁷ This may not, though, be an issue of interpreting a metaphor, but could be under the influence of Lev 23:40, where date-palm branches are called

³³³ “For the city which was fortified will dwell alone, it will be cast out and forsaken, like the wilderness; with it the righteous will battle and plunder its possessions, and its armies will cease to go forth. Their force will be shortened, they will be ashamed of their deeds, they will be broken; women come to their temple and teach them. For they are not discerning people; therefore he who made them will not have compassion on them, and he who formed them will not pity them.”

³³⁴ NETS disagrees with the Göttingen LXX, and instead follows Rahlfs’ text: διδαχθήσεσθε. That διδαχθήσεσθε is the better reading, see LXX.D.E.K., 2672. 1QIsa^a reads תלכו.

³³⁵ See Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 353.

³³⁶ Cf. the traditional Irish blessing which begins: “May the road rise to meet you, May the wind be always at your back...”

³³⁷ LXX.D.E.K., 2672.

כַּפֹּת הַמְנַעוּל. There, though, the LXX renders it with κάλλυσυθρα φοινίκων (frond of date-palms). Also, the word כַּפָּה is used for palm branches in Isa 9:13 and 19:15, though neither place is rendered literally, and the translator may not have known it could mean branch.³³⁸ Still, LXX-Isa may not be interpreting the metaphor so much as giving the appropriate obscure meaning of a word. But it would be odd to consider the palm tree a tree of the field. A literal, or at least less sophisticated, translation is found in σ' and θ' which have χεῖρί, while α' has ταρσῶ.³³⁹ The Targum follows the LXX, making the trees rustle their branches.³⁴⁰ Despite the LXX's difference in poetic sensibility, the imagery is still quite similar.

2.6.4. Summary

As we have seen, the sprout and branch imagery, regardless of the word used, has largely been removed in LXX-Isaiah, though in each case for unique reasons. In 11:1 the translator appears to understand the meaning of נֹצֵר, since he translates it very cleverly. In 60:21, though, he renders it as a verb, but due to other plant terms he maintains the plant metaphor changing the focus to some human group. In 14:19 he knows the homonym נֹצֵר and translates it appropriately. In 18:5 the translator makes it clear that a vine is meant, though the terms are not entirely equivalent. The term אֲמִיר is rendered appropriately in 17:6, though as the top of the tree, it is not clear if the translator knew this word could mean a high branch. In 17:9, where it occurs again, the translator renders it as a people; again, it is unclear if the LXX had a differing *Vorlage* here or was interpreting a difficult text. In 27:10-11 it is not entirely clear whether the image as a whole has been interpreted or if the terms for branches were not understood.

In three cases, it is difficult to determine whether the translator was interpreting the metaphor or simply using an alternative definition (and even then, whether this was understood as a kind of pun or if the metaphorical possibility was not considered). First, the sprout (יֹונֵק) in 53:2 could be considered to have been interpreted as a metaphor for “child” or simply have been understood to mean child in a primary sense. Similarly, in 10:33 פְּאֲרָה could have been understood as a pun for glorious ones through the tree metaphor running through the passage, or have been understood in a primary sense of glorious. In 55:12 the translator may have thought he was rendering a pun that could mean hand or branches, or he may have been interpreting, thinking it too strange for trees to clap their hands.

The Targum has quite a different profile. In 60:21 it explicitly connects the plant image to the special vine in Isa 5:7. In 53:2 it renders literally the “sprout,” as also the branch

³³⁸ We will discuss these passages in the section on reeds (3.1.3.).

³³⁹ LSJ has the definition “mass of matted roots” based on its occurrence in Theophrastus, *De Causis Plantarum*, 3.7.2. This meaning is probably not what α' had in mind.

³⁴⁰ “For you shall go out in joy from among the Gentiles, and be led in peace to your land; the mountains and the hills before you shall shout in singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap with their branches.”

in 17:6, though there it adds that it is a rebellious branch. In 17:9, though, it interprets the branch as desolation and waste (though this could be an interpretation of the places if the *Vorlage* matched LXX). In 18:5 the metaphor is kept in the first part of the verse and interpreted in the second half. In 10:33 the branch image is replaced with a wine treading metaphor. In 27:10-11 the branches drying out and being broken are interpreted as armies. One place where the Targum and LXX agree, though, is that the trees in 55:12 clap their branches.

2.7. Conclusions

The cognitive metaphor “people are plants” is used both in the Hebrew and the Greek of Isaiah, though not in a rigid way. The same metaphor can refer to people in different relationships depending on the context. Seeds, for example, are not always the offspring of some person or group but can also be the origin of some person or group. It is interesting to note, since seeds, fruit, roots, a flower, sprouts, and branches are used for individuals or groups in both MT and the LXX of Isaiah, but at times the translator prefers one vehicle for the metaphor over what the Hebrew has. For example, while in 11:1, 10 it is clear that “root” refers to a specific offspring in the Greek, in 14:29 the translator prefers to render “root” with “seed.” Similarly, the translator usually gives the specific meaning of what “fruit” represents in his renderings, but in 37:30 prefers to use “seed,” as opposed to “children” or “offspring.” But these shifts are not because “seed” is thought to have a more specific meaning, since as we have seen, it can be used in several ways.

Another quite remarkable feature is apparent when comparing the treatment of the lexicalized metaphor “seed” to that of “fruit.” Both metaphors occur regularly in the Hebrew Bible and are routinely rendered literally with equivalent terms in the other books of the LXX. Comparable usages of both “fruit” and “seed” metaphors can be found in Classical Greek literature. Despite this, the LXX-Isa translator approaches these two metaphors quite differently. Not only are metaphors with “seed” maintained, but some are introduced or other metaphors are turned into “seed” metaphors. “Fruit” on the other hand is routinely interpreted, giving the specific tenor that “fruit” is thought to refer to, or else giving the term more commonly used in his time, *γένημα*, when used as a metonymy. There is no clear global reason for this difference in approach, unless, perhaps, the “fruit” metaphors had too great a diversity of meaning and were thought to potentially create confusion if rendered literally.

LXX-Isa on occasion will add or change vehicles, substituting another to carry the same tenor. For example, in 1:9 and 15:9 “seed” is used to render “remnant,” and in 37:31 “fruit” is rendered “seed” in the context of a remnant rejuvenating itself. Using “seed” in metaphors for remnants probably has an agricultural background, that a portion of a crop of

seeds is eaten, but a small remnant is preserved to be sown and to again multiply. Other times a vehicle has its tenor changed as in 11:1 and 11:10, which subtly suggest that the “root of Jesse” is not the familial source of some individual, but is the individual himself, who will rise to rule.

At times too, the translator will take a metaphor from the Hebrew and carefully focus and adjust it to more potently communicate in the passage it occurs. This was seen in the passages with the withering/fallen flowers (28:1, 4), the tree shedding its leaves (1:30), and the fallen leaves carried by the wind 64:5(6). In these metaphors, the process of fading is intensified to the action of falling or already being loose, dry, and easily carried off by the wind.

This chapter has hopefully made clear the independence of the LXX-Isa translator. He does not seem obliged to follow the example of other LXX translators, and certainly does not restrict metaphors to one meaning, but rather carefully renders each verse in its context. He occasionally seems to give thought to the meaning and best way to express a given metaphor, but it is always in the context of the passage at hand and is in the service of the passage’s perceived meaning.

CHAPTER 3

KINDS OF PLANTS

Metaphors can be culturally specific, as many theorists have shown, so metaphors that deal with specific kinds of plants may or may not be intelligible to different cultures living in different environments. This chapter will examine metaphors mentioning specific kinds of plants to see how the translator rendered them. While much plant life is common both to Egypt and Judea, there are some significant differences in flora, environment, and landscape. Ziegler has already pointed out many features of LXX-Isa that reflect an Egyptian provenance.¹ While expanding on this observation, we will also see that in other places the underlying Judean situation will shine through in the translation, and in a few places the translator seems to add features that better describe Judea than Egypt.

In this chapter we will examine various categories of plants in turn. First we will look at reeds and canes; second grass will be examined; third types of grain and related terminology; fourth thorns and thistles will be examined; fifth vineyards and vines; sixth trees; and seventh we will look at one simile where the Greek has a kind of chard; finally some conclusions will be offered.

3.1. Reeds

Reeds are mentioned a few times in Isaiah though in several different ways. The Hebrew terms used are קִנְיָה, גִּמְא, אֶגְמוֹן, סוּף, and עֵרְוֹת. In this section we will discuss the first three terms in order (the last two occur once each and will be mentioned below), then summarize how reed metaphors are rendered.

3.1.1. קִנְיָה

In 19:6 we find the phrase וְסוּף קִנְיָה and it is translated with *καλάμου και παπύρου*, though this passage is a literal description of Egypt's punishment.² In the Greek, these two plants could be considered as specific valuable plants that will fail as a crop (or foraged good),

¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, "Kapital 8. Der alexandrinisch-ägyptische Hintergrund der Je-LXX," 175-212.

² Perhaps the meaning extends beyond a physical drought to political, social, and cultural drought. In the LXX, *παπύρος* only occurs three times. In Job 8:11 it renders גִּמְא, but in Job 40:16(21) it occurs with two synonyms which together stand for קִנְיָה וּבִצְהָה.

or they could simply be two terms for plants that grow in the marshes and are vulnerable to drought. Of note is that the LXX feels the need to add that they are in the marshes, ἔλος, whereas the context could have suggested that they are growing on the river, streams, canals, and pools.³ The next verse, 19:7, has another word that could mean reed, עֲרוֹת, which the LXX renders with ἄχτι (reed-grass).⁴ In the passage as a whole, one can not help but think of Job 8:11-13 where fools who forget God are compared to reeds which cannot survive without water, since the devastation of Egypt is related to the foolishness of its councilors in Isa 19:10. But it is not clear that LXX-Isa has this in mind since, as we will discuss below, the translator misses his chance to connect reeds and fools together in 19:15. The Targum translates 19:6 literally.⁵

Isa 35:7

<p>the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.</p>	<p>וְהָיָה הַשָּׂדֶה לְאֵי וְצִמְאֵון לְמַבְוֵי מַיִם בְּנוֹה תַנִּים רְבֻצָה חֲצִיר לְקִנְיָה וְגַמָּא:</p>	<p>καὶ ἡ ἄνυδρος ἔσται εἰς ἔλη, καὶ εἰς τὴν διψῶσαν γῆν πηγὴ ὕδατος ἔσται· ἐκεῖ εὐφροσύνη ὀρνέων, ἔπαυλις καλάμου καὶ ἔλη.</p>	<p>the dry place shall turn into marshlands, and in the thirsty land there shall be springs of water; the joy of birds shall be there—a residence of reed and marshlands.</p>
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This verse comes in the context of a restoration which is depicted with the image of the wilderness sprouting with life. As van der Kooij has shown, the LXX links 35:1-2 with Isaiah 32:2 and 25:5 and so uses the idea of the thirsty land and thirsty people to be references to Zion.⁶ While 35:7 is not necessarily a metaphor, it vividly illustrates the translator’s conceptions of marshes and reeds.

The first half of the verse is translated literally, except for the springs becoming singular in the Greek, and the addition of ἔσται for the sake of clarity. The second part of the verse is more difficult. Scholars have disputed how to understand this part of the verse, but the LXX reading is completely different. There is no clear textual warrant for rendering בְּנוֹה תַנִּים רְבֻצָה with ἐκεῖ εὐφροσύνη ὀρνέων.⁷ Ottley suggests בנוה may have been read as a form of רִנָּן.⁸ Ziegler believes the idea of “joy” may come from the influence of 32:14.⁹ LXX.D.E.K.

³ The plus in this passage is based on the word מצור, but it is unclear how.

⁴ HALOT, s.v. But DCH, s.v. seems to have reservations about this meaning of עֲרוֹת.

⁵ “and the canals will be devastated, and their deep rivers will dry up and be desolate, reed and rush will not come up. 7 The greater part of the river will dry up, and will become as its stones, and every place where they sow by the river will dry up, be desolate and not sprout.”

⁶ Arie van der Kooij, “Rejoice, O Thirsty Desert! (Isaiah 35): On Zion in the Septuagint of Isaiah,” in ‘Enlarge the Site of Your Tent:’ The City as Unifying Theme in Isaiah (eds. Archibald L. H. M. van Wieringen and Annemarieke van der Woude; Leiden: Brill, 2011): 11-20.

⁷ In 13:22 תַנִּים is rendered with ἔχινος; while in 34:13 and 43:20 it is rendered with σειρήν. The last term is what is found in α’ and σ’ of 35:7. 1QIsa^a 35:7 agrees with MT, except lacks the ה on רבצה.

⁸ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 280.

⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 149.

suggests “joy” came from seeing תנה and “birds” from הצפר, or he associated “residence” with birds, as in Deut 22:6.¹⁰ Perhaps the translator was surprised by the lack of a contrast in this part of the verse and so decided to insert a more positive image describing what the desert would become. The insertion of “joy” εὐφροσύνη, probably comes from the greater context, since it is repeated three times in 35:10.¹¹ In 34:11, birds are part of the picture of abandoned places, but here they are singing for joy in a peaceful marsh scene. This image seems more at home in Egypt than in Judea where the scene would be more likely a river bank than a marsh.¹² One thinks of Egyptian art works, such as the fowling scene depicted in the tomb of Rekh-Mi-Rē, where the birds are flying up from a papyrus marsh.¹³ Similarly, in a simile used in a text about the dedication of Edfu, the bread is said to be as numerous as the sand on the beach, the oxen like a cloud of locusts, and as many birds as in a swamp.¹⁴ In 35:6, however, in both Hebrew and Greek, the image is much more like a flashflood in the desert. The springs and marsh in 35:7 show that it was a flash flood that permanently transformed the desert.

In the last phrase, הַצִּיר appears to have been read with the meaning “an abode” or “residence.” This makes good sense, since this is its meaning in 34:13 where we also find the phrase תְּנִיחַ תְּנִיחַ. The most common equivalent for קִנְיָה is κάλαμος; this is a good equivalent in that they are both rather general words for reeds or canes. According to Musselman, קִנְיָה refers to *arundo donax* as well as generally to other kinds of reeds most of the time in the Old Testament (when one of its extended meanings is not meant), but in five places refers to *acorus calamus*, or calamus (Exod 30:23; Song 4:14; Isa 43:24; Jer 6:20; Ezek 27:19).¹⁵ In Exod 30:23, the LXX has καλάμου εὐώδους, the same term for *acorus calamus* as Theophrastus (*Enquiry* 4.8.3; 9.7.1 and 3) uses: κάλαμος ὁ εὐώδης.¹⁶ In Isa 35:7, then, we should assume a generic meaning for καλάμου, since the LXX often is more specific (usually due to the Hebrew being more specific) when it means calamus (even if the LXX does not interpret it as meaning calamus).

¹⁰ LXX.D.E.K., 2599.

¹¹ However, in 35:6 instead of the mute shouting for joy (וְתִרְצֵן לְשׁוֹן אֵלִים) they speak clearly (καὶ τρανῆ ἔσται γλῶσσα μογιλάων).

¹² A wet area full of reeds is possible in the Jordan valley, near Dan, and in a few other river valleys (such as Zin Canyon or En Gedi) but is not typical. Remember, though, the Hebrew does say אֲנַח.

¹³ Norman de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of Rekh-Mi-Rē at Thebes* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition vol. 11; New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1943), plate 42.

¹⁴ “zu essen gab es mehr als das Sand auf einem Strand ist,... es wurden mehr Ochsen aller Rassen geschlachtet als eine Wolke von Heuschrecken, so viele Vögel wie in einem Sumpf.” S. Saumeron and H. Stierlin, *Die letzten Tempel Agyptens: Edfu und Philae* (Zürich: Atlantis, 1978), 40.

¹⁵ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 73.

¹⁶ The word εὐώδης is only used in this verse, twice rendering בַּשֵּׁם (Cf. Targum Isa 43:24, where קִנְיָה is rendered בַּשֵּׁם. The two most common renderings of בַּשֵּׁם in the LXX are ἄρωμα (15x) and ἡδυσμα (7x)). The other occurrence in this verse modifies cinnamon. For the other verses where Musselman believes calamus is meant, Song 4:14 the usual translation equivalent is used without any description or elaboration. We will discuss the Isaiah passage below, but there we find θυμίαμα. LXX Jer 6:20 interprets the phrase תְּנִיחַ הַצִּיר as referring to cinnamon: καὶ κιννάμωμον. There is no equivalent in Ezek 27:19.

The rendering of אֶמְגַל with ἔλος is peculiar. The word only occurs four times in the Hebrew Bible, and is treated differently each time. In Exod 2:3 it is not rendered. In Job 8:11 it is rendered with πάπυρος, which is the ideal translation. We will deal with Isa 18:2 below, but it is enough here to note that it is rendered βύβλινος. In 35:7, we could have a textual issue, in that the text (or just the translator) read אגם instead of אגמ,¹⁷ which is elsewhere rendered five times with ἔλος,¹⁸ including the first part of the current verse. Having a word for marsh appears to be an idea important for our translator in passages where deserts become wet and green and vice versa (19:6; 33:9; 35:7; 41:18; 42:15); the association of reeds and marshes seems to be appropriate and well known to Egyptians.¹⁹

The Targum is literal, for the most part, but clarifies the meaning of the second part of the verse by the addition of תמן: תמן יסגי קני וגומא: תמן, “the place where jackals dwell, there reeds and rushes will increase.”²⁰ In 35:6, however, the disabled people being healed are interpreted as captives returning, and in 35:9 the lion is interpreted as a wicked king.

In the narrative in Isa 36:6 Sennacherib’s messenger uses a metaphor of a bruised reed.

<p>“See, you are relying on Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him.”</p>	<p>הִנֵּה בְטֻחָתָּ עַל- מִשְׁעַנְתֵּי הַקֶּנֶה הַרְצוּן הַזֶּה עַל- מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר יִסְמְךָ אִישׁ עָלָיו וּבֵא בְכַפּוֹ וְנִקְבָה בְּנִי פְרַעְהַ מִלְדֵי-מִצְרַיִם לְכֹל- הַבְּטָחִים עָלָיו:</p>	<p>ἰδοὺ πεποιθῶς εἶ ἐπὶ τὴν ῥάβδον τὴν καλαμίνην τὴν τεθλασμένην ταύτην, ἐπ’ Αἴγυπτον· ὃς ἂν ἐπ’ αὐτὴν ἐπιστηρισθῆι, εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ· οὕτως ἐστὶ Φαραω βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου καὶ πάντες οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπ’ αὐτῷ.</p>	<p>“See, you are trusting in Egypt, this rod of crushed reed; whoever leans on it, it will go into his hand. Such is Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and all who trust in him.”</p>
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In the Hebrew, the image is of using a crushed or damaged reed as a staff, which breaks as soon as you try to put any weight on it, so that it hurts you rather than helps you. The interpretation of this metaphor is given twice in the verse, first in apposition to the reed equating it, then again at the end of the verse in an explanation. The structure, giving the metaphor then the explanation introduced with בְּנִי, almost makes it a comparison. In the Greek, the tenses are played with a bit and the passage is made into nice Greek (as seen by the use of a periphrastic construction, the use of definite articles in the description of the staff, and the rendering of אִישׁ with ὃς ἂν). The rendering of the phrase עַל-מִשְׁעַנְתֵּי הַקֶּנֶה הַרְצוּן הַזֶּה is

¹⁷ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 280; and LXX.D.E.K., 2599.

¹⁸ Exod 7:19; 8:1; Isa 35:7; 41:18; 42:15. It also renders סוּף in Exod 2:3 and 5.

¹⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 189-90.

²⁰ “and the parched ground [sic] shall become pools of water, and the thirsty area springs of water; the place where jackals dwell, there reeds and rushes will increase.”

literal, showing that the staff is made of reed: ἐπὶ τὴν ῥάβδον τὴν καλαμίνην τὴν τεθλασμένην ταύτην. Either the LXX’s *Vorlage* lacked הַקֶּבֶץ or the translator thought the idea was already expressed by εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ, and so omitted what he thought was a redundant synonym.²¹ It is present in the parallel text in Kings, both in the Hebrew and Greek, and also is included in Theodotion of our passage.²²

In all, the rendering of this verse is quite literal. The metaphor is already explained in the Hebrew, so there is no extra work for the translator in rendering it. The reed is probably chosen for the metaphor both because it is typical of Egypt, and also because a reed can be weakened by being crushed and breaks in such a way that it would hurt someone, like in this image. Of note is how much is not rendered, in contrast, in the next verse, 36:7, though that is beyond the scope of this research.

The Targum clarifies the first mention of Egypt by rendering it פֶּרַעַה מְלֹכָא דְּמִצְרַיִם.²³ This makes the two interpretations of what the reed-staff represents identical. Otherwise the rendering is quite literal.

In **Isa 42:3** there is another reference to a bruised reed.

<p>a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice.</p>	<p>קִנְיָה רְצוּץ לֹא יִשְׁבֹּר וּפְשֵׁתָה כְּהָה לֹא יִכְבֶּנֶה לְאֵמֶת יוֹצֵיא מִשְׁפָּט:</p>	<p>κάλαμον τεθλασμένον οὐ συντρίψει καὶ λίνον καπνιζόμενον οὐ σβέσει, ἀλλὰ εἰς ἀλήθειαν ἐξοίσει κρίσιν.</p>	<p>a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoking wick he will not quench, but he will bring forth judgment for truth.</p>
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The bruised reed here has nothing to do with the use in 36:6. The LXX renders literally, the biggest difference being the addition of the contrastive ἀλλά. The translator does not give what he thinks the metaphors mean, but in the Hebrew there are similar images in 36:6 of a bruised reed, and in 43:17 where warriors and armies are said to die like an extinguished wick כְּבִיבֵי פְשֵׁתָה כְּבִיבֵי, ὡς λίνον ἐσβεσμένον. However, these passages do not seem related in the Hebrew or the Greek; it is merely the reuse of the same vehicle for different tenors. The meaning here has to do with the servant’s mercy and gentleness toward the weak.

The Targum interprets the two metaphors by making them similes: the meek are like a bruised reed and the poor are like a smoldering wick (perhaps to disambiguate from the metaphors in 36:6 and 43:17).²⁴ The Targum renders the second part of the verse literally without any addition.

²¹ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 62-63.

²² See Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 284.

²³ “Behold, you are relying on *Pharaoh king of Egypt*, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of *the man who leans on it*. Such is *Pharaoh king of Egypt* to all who rely on him.”

²⁴ “*The poor who are like a bruised reed* he will not break, and *the needy who are like a dimly burning wick* he will not quench; he will bring forth *judgment* for *his truth*.”

In the two places where an extended meaning of קנה is used, LXX translates appropriately. In Isa 43:24 the plant is mentioned in the context of sacrifices, so means specifically the plant *acorus calamus* or calamus, which has a root used in incense.²⁵ The LXX renders with θυμίαμα (incense), and the Targum clarifies by saying קני בסם. In 46:6 קנה is used to refer to the beam of a set of scales. The LXX renders it with ζυγός, which is the appropriate Greek term,²⁶ and the Targum takes a similar strategy rendering with מוזניא.

3.1.2. גמא

Another term for a reed is גמא which, as we have seen, means papyrus. We have discussed its only other occurrence in 35:7.

Isa 18:2

<p>sending ambassadors by <i>sea</i> in vessels of papyrus on the waters! Go, you swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth, to a people feared near and far, a nation mighty and conquering, whose land the rivers divide.</p>	<p>הַשְּׁלַח בַּיָּם צִירִים וּבְכֵלֵי-גִמָּא עַל-פְּנֵי- מַיִם לָבוֹא מְלֹאכִים קְלִים אֶל-גּוֹי מְמַשְׁדָּה וּמוֹרָט אֶל-עַם נוֹרָא מִן-הוּא וְהִלְאָה גּוֹי קוֹקוֹ וּמְבוֹטָה אֲשֶׁר- בְּזָאוּ נְהָרִים אֲרָצוֹ:</p>	<p>ὁ ἀποστέλλων ἐν θαλάσῃ ὄμηρα καὶ ἐπιστολὰς βυβλίνας ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος· πορεύσονται γὰρ ἄγγελοι κοῦφοι πρὸς ἔθνος μετέωρον καὶ ξένον λαὸν καὶ χαλεπὸν, τίς αὐτοῦ ἐπέκεινα; ἔθνος ἀνέλπιστον καὶ καταπεπατημένον. νῦν οἱ ποταμοὶ τῆς γῆς</p>	<p>he who sends hostages by sea and papyrus letters on the water! For swift messengers will go to a high nation, and a foreign and fierce people: who is beyond it? It is a nation without hope and trampled down. Now the rivers of the land</p>
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Our interest in this passage is only in the first parallel clauses. In the Hebrew, the second cola expands on how the messengers will travel on the sea, namely, on papyrus boats on the water. The LXX takes the phrase כְּלֵי-גִמָּא not as a description of a kind of boat, but as a circumlocution for an epistle.²⁷ The LXX seems to have a more specific idea for this passage in mind than the Hebrew expresses. This is seen by the rendering of צִירִים. This term for some sort of messenger is translated with ἄγγελος (three times) in the LXX, and in LXX-Isa is twice translated with πρέσβυς. Only here is it rendered with ὄμηρος.²⁸ This rendering shows a much more specific relationship: if they sent only a messenger or envoy it shows they wanted to talk, but sending hostages shows they already have a certain agreement or obligation and are subordinate. This rendering may be in part under the influence of the translator's understanding of the next clause.

²⁵ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 73.

²⁶ LSJ, s.v.

²⁷ Ziegler simply calls it a free rendering in his description of the rendering of כְּלֵי. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 84.

²⁸ Van der Kooij points out that this word equivalence is also found in Aquila Prov 13:17 and Symmachus Isa 57:9. van der Kooij, "The City of Alexandria and the Ancient Versions," 147 nt.10. See also LXX.D.E.K., 2550.

In Hebrew the word **כֶּלִי** is remarkably versatile, and often is given specificity by the noun it is in construct with. Only in this passage is it used to refer to ships.²⁹ While papyrus boats could undoubtedly be seen on the rivers and canals of Egypt, as indeed they can still be seen today,³⁰ the only other Biblical reference to a papyrus water craft is the **אֲנִיֹּת אֲבָהָה** in Job 9:26 and the ark in Exod 2:3, but in neither place does the Greek render as a papyrus boat. The translator of LXX-Isa 18 could have taken **כֶּלִי** in its most general sense, “an article, object,”³¹ and given the material “papyrus” and the context of sending hostages and messengers, rather naturally assumed the phrase referred to letters. The translator, then, translates by way of metonymy of the genus, exchanging the general “object” to the specific “letter.”³² Only here in the LXX do we find the adjective *βυβλίνας*, though elsewhere we find *πάπυρος* (Isa 19:6; Job 8:11; 40:21) which refers to the plant, not the material. The idea of ships, however, is still present in the LXX of the passage in 18:1.

Elsewhere LXX-Isa often renders **כֶּלִי** with the standard *σκεῦος* (Isa 10:28 where it refers to baggage; 39:2 where it refers to Hezekiah’s valuables; 52:11 where it refers to temple vessels; 54:16 where it refers to something made by a smith; in 54:17 the term is used, but the LXX may change the meaning from a weapon to a generic item; 65:4 where it refers to cooking and eating vessels).³³ At times, though, LXX-Isa specifies to what it thinks **כֶּלִי** refers. In 13:5 where weapons are meant, it is rendered with *ὄπλομάχος*.³⁴ In 61:10 where the ornaments and jewelry of a bride are meant, it is rendered with *κόσμος*. In two places, the translator goes beyond specifying a general word with a specific rendering and actually interprets. In 66:20, the phrase **בְּכֵלֵי טְהוֹר** becomes *μετὰ ψαλμῶν*, a rendering due to contextual reasons.³⁵ We have already discussed Isa 22:24 (1.3.3.4.), but in brief, the entire metaphor of the verse is interpreted, and the various vessels have been interpreted by merism for all the people: *ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου*.

It should be noted that in 18:1 the Greek adds a reference to a boat, *πλοῖον*, which could be under the influence of 18:2, or may be an equivalent for **כֶּלִי**, as in Job 40:31.³⁶ There are undoubtedly other contextual reasons for the LXX translator’s decision to translate these phrases the way that he does (see also, for instance, the translation of 18:2b and the same clause in 18:7), but we will leave that to other studies.

²⁹ The closest it gets is “cargo” in Jonah 1:5.

³⁰ F. Nigel Hepper, *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Plants: Flowers and Trees, Fruits and Vegetables, Ecology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 69-70.

³¹ See BDB s.v., def. 1.

³² Aristotle might look down on using the metaphor “vessel of papyrus” to mean a letter; while it is a sort of genus for species, the metaphor is not proportional, in that it can not be reversed; a vessel can not be called a letter very easily. See Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.4.4.

³³ Ziegler describes the translation of **כֶּלִי** in LXX-Isa as an example of the translator’s freedom to interpret figurative expressions. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 83-84.

³⁴ The only other place this term is used is in the previous verse, 13:4.

³⁵ Bringing a sacrifice in clean vessels is no longer possible in the Greek, since the sacrifice has become a simile for bringing prisoners.

³⁶ LXX.D.E.K., 2550.

The Targum understands the clauses in question in 18:2 to refer to messengers and fishing boats, respectively.³⁷ Also the people are “robbed and plundered” by the gentiles. But in 18:1 the land is India, not Cush.

3.1.3. אגמון

Another term for reed is אגמון, related to the term for marsh, אגא.

Isa 58:5

<p>Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?</p>	<p>הַכִּזָּה יְהִיָּה צוֹם אֲבַחְרֶהוּ יוֹם עֲנוּת אָדָם נִפְשׁוֹ הַלְכָף כְּאֲגָמוֹן רֹאשׁוֹ וְשֵׁק וְאִפְרָל יִצְיַע הַלְזָה תִּקְרָא-צוֹם וַיּוֹם רִצּוֹן לַיהוָה:</p>	<p>οὐ ταύτην τὴν νηστείαν ἐξελεξάμην καὶ ἡμέραν ταπεινοῦν ἄνθρωπον τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ· οὐδ’ ἂν κάμψῃς ὡς κρίκον τὸν τράχηλόν σου καὶ σάκκον καὶ σποδὸν ὑποστρώσῃ, οὐδ’ οὕτως καλέσετε νηστείαν δεκτὴν.</p>	<p>This is not the fast I have chosen, even a day for a person to humble himself; not even if you bend your neck like a ring and spread under you sackcloth and ashes—not even so shall you call it an acceptable fast.</p>
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Our interest in this verse is in the simile. In the Hebrew we have the bowing of the head compared to a reed bending; it is easy to imagine a papyrus reed with its globe of flowers at the top bowing down in the wind. The Greek, however, has changed head to neck and reed to ring.³⁸ Ziegler points out that κάπτω is elsewhere associated with necks, but never with heads.³⁹

The word אגמון occurs only five times in the Hebrew Bible, three times in Isaiah it is not literally rendered (we will discuss the other two occurrences below) nor in the two occurrences in Job (in Job 40:26 it appears to be rendered with κρίκον, though Muraoka finds the equivalence implausible,⁴⁰ and in Job 41:12 it is rendered with ἄνθραξ, probably due to the context). It could be argued that the translators of all these passages simply do not know what the word means, which is odd, since the LXX knows the meaning of אגא. In both Job passages it appears that the translator has used the context to make a guess (different in each place). BDB and Ottley suggest it could refer to a rope made from reed fiber, which would explain the rendering in Job 40:26 and Isa 58:5.⁴¹ Another explanation can be found in looking at the words more commonly rendered with κρίκος: וַי (3x) and קַרְס (4x), both terms meaning “hook.” The translator may have thought a bent hook or ring was a better image for a

³⁷ “which sends messengers by the sea and in fishing boats upon the waters! Go, swift messengers, to the people robbed and plundered, to the people which was strong before and continually, the people robbed and plundered whose land the Gentiles plundered.”

³⁸ 1QIsa^b agrees with LXX’s second person pronoun: ראשך.

³⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 99-100. He points out the close parallel in Ecc 30:12.

⁴⁰ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, s.v. Rashi, however, says אגמון refers to a bent needle or fishhook.

⁴¹ BDB. s.v. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 359.

bowed neck than a bending reed. In either case, while the LXX changes the vehicle of the simile, it is still apt, as Ziegler has said.⁴²

The Targum is literal, even using the word **אגמון**, though it feels the need to explain the simile, adding that the rush is bowed down.⁴³

Isa 9:13

<p>So the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail, palm branch and reed in one day--</p>	<p>וַיִּכְרֹת יְהוָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל רֹאשׁ וְזָנָב כַּפֵּה וְאַגְמוֹן יוֹם אֶחָד:</p>	<p>καὶ ἀφείλε κύριος ἀπὸ Ἰσραηλ κεφαλὴν καὶ οὐράν, μέγαν καὶ μικρόν ἐν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ,</p>	<p>So the Lord took away from Israel head and tail, great and small in one day--</p>
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In the Hebrew of the next verse (9:14) the head (LXX: ἀρχή) is said to be the elders and those following them and the tail are the prophets. In the passage as a whole, however, there is no interpretation for what the branch and reed represent. If the two word pairs are understood as synonymously parallel, or two images of the same thing, we can suppose that the palm-branch represents the rulers (just as the Hasmonean kings used the palm branch as their symbol). The reed also, in theory, could represent prophets perhaps by the association of reed flutes (as mentioned with prophets and other instruments in 1 Sam 10:5), though this is a strained speculation. Apart from 9:14, there is no mention of prophets in the passage. The LXX seems to have understood **אגמון** **כפה** not as synonymous to the first image but as further describing it, and so renders it as great and small,⁴⁴ so that all the leaders and prophets will be removed. The branches and reeds, then, were seen as a merism for all the leaders. The only place outside Isaiah where the term **כפה** is used is Job 15:32, where it is rendered *ῥάδαμνος*; as mentioned in the section on branches above (2.6.3.), the LXX-Isa translator may have thought he saw the word **כפה** in Isa 55:12.

Ziegler believes the translator paraphrases.⁴⁵ He does not describe why, but says that *μέγαν καὶ μικρόν* is a proper rendering.⁴⁶ Ziegler also points out that the phrase “great and small” occurs many times in the Hebrew Bible, but not in Isaiah.⁴⁷ He says LXX-Isa likes to use the phrase when the text is obscure, such as in 22:5, 24; 33:4, 19, though in all these other places the word order is the reverse.⁴⁸ Indeed, the Hebrew phrase that ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου renders in 22:5 is obscure; LXX.D.E.K. suggests the translator may have read two words, **קרקע** (ground) and **קדקד** (top of the head), and rendered the perceived meaning of the

⁴² Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 100. Here he also discusses how the other versions deal with this passage.

⁴³ “Is this it, the fast that I take pleasure in, a day for a man to afflict himself? Is it to bow down his head like a rush that is bowed down, and to lodge upon sackcloth and ashes? Do you call this a fast, and a day that is a pleasure before the LORD?”

⁴⁴ 1QIsa^a agrees with MT.

⁴⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 84. Ottley calls the translation a “simplified version;” Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 157.

⁴⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 84.

⁴⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 84.

⁴⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 84.

metaphor.⁴⁹ Here again it functions in Greek as a merism for all the people suffering what is described. In 22:24 the Hebrew is not obscure, the translator says ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου as an interpretation of the metaphor “from cups to flagons,” prompted by the Hebrew כּל כּלי הַקֶּטַן. In 33:4 the Greek phrase could be understood as an interpretation of the Hebrew אֶסֶף הַחֲסִיל if the phrase were understood to show that even the spoil of a small bug will be plundered. In this case saying simply “from small to great” shows the same thing, that the spoil of all people will be plundered. The last place it occurs in Isaiah, 33:19, it is a plus based on reading the verse a little differently. Moving where the sentence ends, and taking הַמְגַדְלִים as a pual participle and עַם in the next sentence in connection with it, the translator adds μικρὸν καὶ μέγαν to modify the λαόν who are growing up. As we have seen, on several occasions the LXX-Isa translator likes to add “small and great” but it is because of how he reads the Hebrew and appears to be what he thinks the Hebrew intends, and not, as Thackeray believes, because the translator was in doubt of the meaning of the Hebrew.⁵⁰

The Targum interprets these words in 9:13 as kings and governors and such: רִישׁ וְהַגְמוֹן שְׁלִטוֹן וְאַטְרוֹן.⁵¹

Isa 19:15

Neither head nor tail, palm branch or reed, will be able to do anything for Egypt.	וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה לְמִצְרַיִם מַעֲשֵׂה אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה רֹאשׁ וְזָנָב כַּפֶּה וְאַגְמוֹן:	καὶ οὐκ ἔσται τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις ἔργον, ὃ ποιήσει κεφαλὴν καὶ οὐράν, ἀρχὴν καὶ τέλος.	And there will not be a work for the Egyptians that will make head <i>and</i> tail, beginning <i>and</i> end.
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Here again we have the two word pairs: head and tail, and palm branch and reed. In the context, 19:12-14, the wise men and princes of Egypt are depicted as powerless and confused, like staggering drunks. In light of this, it makes sense to suppose in 19:15 it is the leaders that are meant by the metaphors, like in 9:13. If this is the case, then the two word pairs should be the subject of יַעֲשֶׂה (as in RSV), the verse meaning the various leaders are powerless to do anything to help Egypt.

The Greek, however, makes these word pairs the object of the verb. They no longer represent the leaders being able to do nothing, but describe the state of Egypt itself. In the context of incompetent and confused leaders, these word pairs seem to represent disorder. “Head and tail” may here be much like the English idiom “I can’t make head or tail of it,” meaning one can not understand or make sense of it (put it into order); the pair ἀρχὴν καὶ τέλος more clearly has this meaning.⁵² To elaborate on Ziegler’s suggestion, the rendering is

⁴⁹ LXX.D.E.K., 2559.

⁵⁰ H. St. J. Thackeray, “The Greek Translators of the Prophetical Books,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* IV (1903): 583 nt. 3.

⁵¹ “So the LORD *destroyed* from Israel head and *commandant, ruler and tyrant* in one day—15 the elder and honoured man is the head, and the *scribe* who teaches deceit is *faint*;”

⁵² 1QIsa^a agrees with MT.

dependent on the previous pair; it probably is meant to reiterate or explain “head and tail,” in that ἀρχή is a synonym of κεφαλή (both render שׂרָר in 9:13 and 9:14, though there the leadership is meant), and τέλος is chosen as a counterpart to ἀρχή.⁵³

The Targum interprets these terms exactly as in 9:13.⁵⁴

3.1.4. Summary

In Isaiah, reeds and canes are mentioned only a few times but are used in a variety of ways. In two places they are mentioned as plants that live where there is water: in 19:6-7 they die as Egypt dries up but in 35:7 they are used to describe the desert becoming a marsh. That reeds are closely associated with marshes, so that a transfer between a place and what grows in it is possible, is not unique to this passage; in Exod 2:3, 5 the LXX has marsh (ἔλος) where the Hebrew has reed (רִיבּוֹ). In two places reeds are mentioned in the Hebrew for their frailty once bruised; the LXX renders these places literally (36:6 and 42:3). In 18:2 a word for “reed” is rendered literally but the phrase is changed from a boat to a letter of papyrus, due to the context. In 58:5 a reed is used in the simile of bowing for its ability to bend, but the Greek uses a simile of a bent ring or hook. In 9:13 and 19:15 the same image is rendered in two different ways. In each of these two places it is rendered to explain the meaning of the previous image; the image itself does not really have a life or meaning of its own to the translator (though in 9:13 the idea of a reed being frail may be at work in the Greek). All in all, reeds are used in Isaiah in a variety of ways, and the Old Greek translator tries to catch and accentuate their meaning in the context in which they occur, though this is not always how modern people would understand the Hebrew.

The Targum generally either interprets or renders literally, though occasionally will add words to specify the meaning. It expands 19:6-7 emphasizing that the rivers and canals are drying up; the reference to reeds and canes is preserved literally. Isa 35:7 is rendered literally, with only a few clarifying words. The bruised reed in 36:6 is rendered literally, though Pharaoh is called king; but in 42:3 the Targum turns the bruised reed metaphor into a comparison describing the poor. In 18:2 the vessel of papyrus is rendered as a kind of fishing boat, explaining the odd epithet. The comparison of a bowed head to a reed in 58:5 is rendered literally, though the Targum clarifies the point of comparison: that the reed is bent. The Targum, like LXX-Isa, interprets the word pair “branch and reed” in 9:14 and 19:15 though is much more specific, rendering as rulers and tyrants.

⁵³ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 84.

⁵⁴ “And the Egyptians will not have a *king who will reign*, head or *commandant*, ruler or *tyrant*.”

3.2. Grass

In Isaiah we find a variety of terminology for grass and greenery: **חֲצִיר**, **עֵשֶׂב**, **דָּשָׁא**, **יֵרֶק**, and **חֲשֵׁחַ**. The various words for grass are used either to express the idea of something that quickly flourishes (44:4 and 66:14) or as something that quickly withers (15:6; 37:27; 42:15; 51:12);⁵⁵ often both ideas are implicitly at work (such as 40:6-8; 51:12; or 35:7 where dry grass is used in contrast to a pool of reeds). As a corollary to the idea of withering, grass is mentioned as something flammable and quickly consumed by fire (5:24; 33:11).

In the LXX, the rich array of vocabulary is reduced to just three terms: *βοτάνη*, *χόρτος*, and *ἀγρωστis*. Of the ten passages where grass terminology occurs in Isaiah, five are either not rendered or are not metaphors: The term **חֲשֵׁחַ** means dry grass or foliage;⁵⁶ as Ziegler has pointed out, both occurrences of this word in Isaiah (5:24 and 33:11) are parallel to the word **חֲשָׁה** but are rendered as verbs.⁵⁷ Since this term is not rendered literally we will discuss these passages in the section on chaff (3.3.2.1.1.).⁵⁸ The term **חֲצִיר** appears in 35:7; as we discussed in the section on reeds (3.1.1.), it is rendered, based on its other definition, with *ἔπαυλις* (residence).⁵⁹ Similarly, the Targum renders with **שָׂרִי** (to dwell). This could be because also in 34:13 **חֲצִיר** appears even more clearly with this meaning. LXX renders it the same way in 34:13 but the Targum has **מְדוּרָא** (dwelling place). The term **עֵשֶׂב** occurs in 42:15, but that clause is not rendered in the LXX, probably because the translator attempted to reduce “(nearly) identical elements that are not joined in coordination.”⁶⁰ In 15:6, several words for grass are found and they are again reduced to two nouns (one becomes an adjective), though this verse is not a metaphor but describes how the greenery of Moab will fail. The LXX adds grass terms in three passages; we will discuss 9:17, 10:17, and 32:13 below in the section on thorns (3.4.1.).

This section will discuss the remaining five passages looking first at those concerned with grass that withers and is dry, then will look at grass that flourishes.

⁵⁵ Basson has two categories of plant metaphors more generally that represent a person flourishing (Isa 11:1; 27:6; etc.) or passing away (Isa 1:30; 3:14; 5:5-6; 14:30; etc.). Basson, ““People are Plants,”” 578-79. Sticher, “Die Gottlosen gedeihen wie Gras,” 251-52 discusses metaphors where grass is transient, usually a vehicle representing the wicked.

⁵⁶ HALOT, s.v.

⁵⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 9-10. However, his attempt to link the Greek rendering to the Aramaic meaning of **חֲשָׁה** “to feel, to suffer,” is not convincing.

⁵⁸ Note that 5:24 was already partially discussed in the section on roots (2.3.2.).

⁵⁹ This equivalent is also used in Isa 34:13, 42:11, and 62:9.

⁶⁰ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 69-70. 1QIsa^a has the missing clause. It is noteworthy that LXX-Isa has removed the clause with geography atypical of Egypt.

3.2.1. Withering Grass

Four terms for grass, חֲצִיר, דָּשָׁא, יֵרֶק, and עֵשֶׂב, are found together in Isa 37:27.

<p>while their inhabitants, <i>short of hand</i>, are dismayed and confounded; they have become like plants of the field and like tender grass, like grass on the housetops, blighted before it is grown.</p>	<p>וַיִּשְׁבִּיֵהוּן קְצָרֵי יָדַי חֲתוּ וּבָשׁוּ הָיוּ עֵשֶׂב שְׂדֵה יֵרֶק דָּשָׁא חֲצִיר גִּזְזוֹת וּשְׂדֵמָה לִפְנֵי קָמָה:</p>	<p>ἀνῆκα τὰς χεῖρας, καὶ ἐξηράνθησαν καὶ ἐγένοντο ὡς χόρτος ξηρὸς ἐπὶ δωμάτων καὶ ὡς ἄγρωστις.</p>	<p>I weakened their hands, and they have <i>dried up</i>, and they have become like dry grass upon housetops and like wild grass.</p>
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This verse can be understood in various ways, and there have been several suggestions for how to understand וּשְׂדֵמָה.⁶¹ The parallel to this verse in 2 Kgs 19:26 reads וּשְׂדֵפָה which makes better sense and appears to be the basis of the Targum of Isa 37:27.⁶² The LXX of 2 Kgs 19:26 translates all the grass terms. LXX.D.E.K suggests that the *Vorlage* of LXX-Isa read שְׂדֵפָה which may have contributed to the rendering χόρτος ξηρός.⁶³ The possibility of this reading being in the *Vorlage* is strengthened by 1QIsa^a which has הַנְשַׁדֵּף לִפְנֵי קָדִים. While it is possible this word was read and contributed to the LXX's understanding, ξηρός could also have been freely added for clarity or under the influence of Psa 129:6 where יִהְיוּ שְׂדֵפָה לִפְנֵי יְבֵשׁ is rendered with γενηθήτωσαν ὡς χόρτος δωμάτων, ὅς πρὸ τοῦ ἐκσπασθῆναι ἐξηράνθη. In 9:17(18) as we will see, the translator also adds ξηρός (though here it modifies ἄγρωστις which is a rendering for “thorns”) to make it clear that flammability is what is at issue. Likewise in 51:12 the translator clarifies with the verb ξηραίνω modifying grass. In 37:27, the translator understands the grasses mentioned to be illustrative of how the inhabitants will lose strength and vitality. As though the verb ξηραίνω were not enough, the translator also adds the adjective ξηρός to tighten up and focus the comparison, and perhaps to partially ballast the synonyms he has condensed. The Hebrew basis for ἄγρωστις could be דָּשָׁא (as in Gen 1:11 and Deut 32:2) though it is an equivalent elsewhere for עֵשֶׂב (as in Micah 5:6); this Greek term is not used in 2 Kgs 19:26. As Ziegler points out, ἄγρωστις is a kind of weed that grows in fields and is mentioned in the Papyri.⁶⁴

The Greek has partially interpreted the phrase קְצָרֵי יָדַי to be more clear. The Greek has not rendered חֲתוּ.⁶⁵ Instead of being ashamed, the LXX understands וּבָשׁוּ as coming from יֵבֵשׁ,⁶⁶ probably due to the grasses in the verse, and so was rendered with ξηραίνω. 1QIsa^a

⁶¹ See Wilderberger, *Jesaja*, 1415, 1418-419.

⁶² The Targum reads: דִּישְׁלוּק עַד לֹא מִטָּא לְמַהוּי שׁוּבְלִין.

⁶³ LXX.D.E.K., 2603.

⁶⁴ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 181. Michael Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten* (Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte Heft 7; München: Beck, 1925), 114-15.

⁶⁵ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 63. She classifies it as an instance of the reduction of synonymous words in coordination.

⁶⁶ LXX.D.E.K., 2603. Cf. 40:7 which has יְבֵשׁ חֲצִיר rendered ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος.

reads: וישב ו; the *yod* may help explain LXX-Isa’s reading. The Greek has also condensed all the synonymous terms for grasses in the enumeration down to one term and put it in a simile, so הִיוּ עֵשֶׂב שָׂדֵה וִירֶק דְּשָׂא חֲצִיר גְּגוֹת becomes ὡς χόρτος ξηρὸς ἐπὶ δωμάτων;⁶⁷ there are no exact equivalents for χόρτος or ἄγρωστις. Most of the Hebrew terms for grass or vegetation suggest fresh green growth, but the LXX makes it dry grass, probably to emphasize the point of the comparison (implied in the Hebrew, but the Greek has a comparative particle): they have become weak. In 2 Kgs 19:26 the Greek renders the same phrase, aiming more for accuracy, as χόρτος ἀγροῦ ἢ χλωρὰ βοτάνη χλόη δωμάτων.

As mentioned above, the Targum agrees with the emendation to שדפה.⁶⁸ Apart from clarifying the first part of the verse that their strength (חיל) is cut off, the Targum renders literally.

Isa 51:12

<p>I, I am he who comforts you; <i>who are you that you fear</i> a mere mortal who must die, a <i>son of man who is given up</i> like grass?</p>	<p>אֲנֹכִי אֲנֹכִי הוּא מִנְחַמְכֶם מִי־אֵת וְתִירְאֵי מֵאֲנוּשׁ יָמוֹת וּמִבְּן־אָדָם חֲצִיר יִנָּתֵן:</p>	<p>ἐγὼ εἶμι ἐγὼ εἶμι ὁ παρακαλῶν σε· γνώθι τίνα εὐλαβηθεῖσα ἐφοβήθης ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπου θνητοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ υἱοῦ ἀνθρώπου, οἷ ὡσεὶ χόρτος ἐξηράνθησαν.</p>	<p>I am, I am he who comforts you. Acknowledge of whom you were cautious; you were afraid because of a mortal man and a son of man, who have dried up like grass.</p>
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The Greek has made some modifications to this verse.⁶⁹ Of note for our purposes is that the last clause has been clarified. This use of the Hebrew verb נתן is unique to this passage.⁷⁰ The Greek interprets it to better reinforce the perceived meaning of the passage; it makes it explicitly a comparison by inserting the comparative marker, and interprets the verb to explain the point of the comparison: οἷ ὡσεὶ χόρτος ἐξηράνθησαν. The translator appears to have prioritized translating with a finite verb over refraining from adding elements which turn the clause into a simile. This understanding makes sense in this passage, in that it illustrates how humanity is weak and feeble. It is probably under the influence of 40:6-8, where the verb ξηραίνω also occurs in relation to χόρτος, describing the frailty of humans.⁷¹ Part of the idea in 40:6-8, which may underlie the Greek of 51:12 as well, is that grass turns green, springs up, and flowers quickly, and so seems to have great vigor, but is in fact frail and transitory. Ziegler also points to Isa 40:7 as an influence on 51:12, as well as 42:15.⁷²

⁶⁷ See van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 63-64.

⁶⁸ “while their inhabitants, *their force* shorn, are *shattered* and confounded, and have become *like* plants of the fields and *like* tender grass, and *like* grass on the housetops which is *singed* before it comes to be ears.”

⁶⁹ The plus εὐλαβηθεῖσα is probably under the influence of 57:11, as Ottley has suggested, Ottley, *Isaiah*, II, 340. cf. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 223-24 [71]; Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 76.

⁷⁰ 1QIsa^a has the same verb, though in the qatal.

⁷¹ LXX.D.E.K., 2664.

⁷² Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 162.

The Targum also interprets the verb, but in a different way, and adds a comparative marker: ומבר אנשא דכעסבא חשיב.⁷³ The Targum rendering is more literal than the LXX.

Isa 40:6-8

<p>A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.</p>	<p>קֹל אִמַּר קְרֵא וְאָמַר מָה אֶקְרָא כָּל- הַבָּשָׂר חֲצִיר וְכָל- חֶסְדּוֹ כְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה:</p>	<p>φωνὴ λέγοντος Βόησον· καὶ εἶπα Τί βοήσω; Πᾶσα σὰρξ χόρτος, καὶ πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπου ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου·</p>	<p>A voice of one saying, "Cry out!" and I said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh is grass; all the glory of man is like the flower of grass.</p>
<p>The grass withers, the flower fades,</p>	<p>יִבֶשׂ חֲצִיר נִבְלָצִין</p>	<p>ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσε,</p>	<p>The grass has <i>dried out</i>, and the flower has fallen,</p>
<p>when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass.</p>	<p>כִּי רוּחַ יְהוָה נִשְׁבָּה בּוֹ אֶכֶן חֲצִיר הָעָם:</p>		
<p>The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.</p>	<p>יִבֶשׂ חֲצִיר נִבְלָצִין וְדַבְר־אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִקּוּם לְעוֹלָם:</p>	<p>τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.</p>	<p>but the word of our God remains forever."</p>

We have discussed this passage at greater length in the section on flowers (2.4.1.). Here we will focus on its rendering of "grass." In Isa 40:6-8 חֲצִיר appears four times, and is twice rendered with *χόρτος*; the third occurrence of *χόρτος* is a rendering for *הַשָּׂדֶה*. The other two occurrences of *חֲצִיר* are in clauses that are minuses, as was discussed in the section on flowers. The rendering of *שָׂדֶה* with *χόρτος* is unique to this passage; elsewhere in LXX-Isa it is rendered with *ἀγρός*.⁷⁴ Ziegler suggests this rendering is under the influence of the repetition of *χόρτος* in this passage,⁷⁵ but it could have been a deliberate choice. This rendering tightens the relationship between the image and the reality, so that man and his glory are more closely related to grass and its flower; also it tightens the relationship between 40:6 and 40:7, since the field is not mentioned again in the Hebrew. This changes the parallelism into a more climatic construction, rather than two parallel ideas. In Psalm 103(102):15 where man's mortality is again compared to grass and to the flower of the field, the LXX renders literally, using *ἄνθος ἀγροῦ*.

⁷³ "I, I am he that comforts you; of whom are you afraid, of man who dies, of the son of man who is reckoned as the grass?"

⁷⁴ 5:5 2x; 7:3; 32:12; 36:2; 43:20; 55:12.

⁷⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 150.

The Targum of 40:6-8 interprets that all the wicked are like grass, and their strength like the chaff of the field.⁷⁶ Also, in 40:8 grass is replaced with the wicked dying, and the flower with their thoughts perishing.

3.2.2. Flourishing Grass

In two passages, grass is used positively to illustrate things that flourish.

Isa 44:4

<p>And they will spring up in between grass like willows by flowing waters.</p>	<p>וְצִמְחוּ בְּבֵין הָצִיר כְּעֵרְבִים עַל-יְבִלֵי- מַיִם:</p>	<p>καὶ ἀνατελοῦσιν ὡσεὶ χόρτος ἀνὰ μέσον ὑδατος καὶ ὡς ἰτέα ἐπὶ παραρρέον ὕδωρ.</p>	<p>And they shall spring up like grass in the midst of water and like a willow by flowing water.</p>
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The Hebrew text of this passage is often emended in various ways;⁷⁷ the main issue is the unusual preposition בְּבֵין. LXX and 1QIsa^a both have instead כְּבֵין (בֵין becomes ἀνὰ μέσον in LXX).⁷⁸ A second textual question is whether הָצִיר refers to “grass” or “reed.”⁷⁹ HALOT lists 44:4 along with Isa 35:7 and Job 8:12 as occurrences where הָצִיר means “reed.” But in each of these places, it makes more sense to define it as meaning “grass.”⁸⁰ In any case, here the LXX renders it as meaning grass, making it a simile like the parallel clause.

A third issue is the LXX’s plus: ὑδατος. The LXX *Vorlage* could have been the same as the MT or 1QIsa^a; Ziegler suggests that ὑδατος was added for the sake of having a pleasing comparison.⁸¹ Also, ὑδατος provides a nice parallel to ὕδωρ. While this addition could have been already in the *Vorlage*, it makes sense for it to be a deliberate addition, as Ziegler says, since nearly everywhere else in LXX-Isa χόρτος occurs in contexts of dryness (10:17; 15:6; 37:27; 40:6-7; 51:12).⁸² The addition here would be to specify that fresh green grass is meant, contrasting dry land where water is poured in 44:3. In the MT, as it stands, the first clause is metaphorical, likening them to something that springs up in the grass. This metaphor is then made more specific in the parallel clause, where it is described in a simile. The Greek, by the

⁷⁶ “A voice of one who says, “Prophesy!” And he answered and said, “What shall I prophesy?” All the wicked are as the grass, and all their strength like the chaff of the field. The grass withers, its flower fades, for the spirit from the LORD blows upon it; surely the wicked among the people are reckoned as the grass. The wicked dies, his conceptions perish; but the word of our God stands for ever.”

⁷⁷ For discussion, see Elliger, *Deuterojesaia*, 363-64.

⁷⁸ The Syriac attests מְבֵין.

⁷⁹ See Elliger, *Deuterojesaia*, 364.

⁸⁰ Indeed, in Job 8:12 it would be a rather trivial observation that papyrus without water withers before any other reed. Also in 35:7 it would make no sense to say that the reed becomes a cane and rush. In both places grass makes better sense.

⁸¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 73. Cf. van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 188. For the plus of the comparative particle see van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 132.

⁸² The other exception is 32:13.

modifications we have discussed and the addition of the conjunction *καί*, has made two synonymously parallel similes. The image in both texts is that of God pouring out water and his people sprouting up spontaneously, like grass after a rain shower, and that they will be like willows that grow where water is abundant (just as willows, in fact, commonly do grow).⁸³ In the Greek, more prominence is given to the idea of water.

The Targum makes clear the subject of this verse by saying the righteous (צדיקיא) will grow.⁸⁴ It also clarifies in what way they are like grass by writing רכיכין ומפנקין כלבלבי (tender and soft like a sprout of grass).

Isa 66:14

<p>You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; your <i>bones</i> shall flourish like the grass; and it shall be known that the hand of the LORD is with his servants, and his indignation is against his enemies.</p>	<p>וְרֵאִיתֶם וְשִׂשׁ לְבַבְכֶם וְעֲצְמוֹתֵיכֶם כַּדְּשָׁא תִּפְרָחְנָה וְנִודְעָה יְדֵי־יְהוָה אֶת־עַבְדָּיו וְזַעַם אֶת־אֹיְבָיו:</p>	<p>καὶ ὄψεσθε, καὶ χαρήσεται ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία, καὶ τὰ ὀστέα ὑμῶν ὡς βοτάνη ἀνατελεῖ· καὶ γνωσθήσεται ἡ χεὶρ κυρίου τοῖς σεβομένοις αὐτόν, καὶ ἀπειλήσει τοῖς ἀπειθοῦσιν.</p>	<p>And you shall see, and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall grow like grass, and the hand of the LORD shall be known to those who worship him, and he shall threaten those who disobey him.</p>
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In this passage, in both languages, there is the peculiar simile that their bones will sprout up like grass. The idea is of dry dormant grass turning green and sprouting into luxuriant green pasture grass, seemingly overnight, when it is watered. Bones are mentioned to represent the whole body’s renewal whereas the heart refers more to mental or spiritual health.⁸⁵ This is a positive image, whereas so far we have mostly seen humans compared to grass to emphasize their transience, particularly in 40:6-8 where we saw another metonymy for physical bodies (σάρξ) compared to grass. The meaning of this simile is probably best understood in light of Isa 58:11, where the bones are made strong (fat in Greek, cf. Prov 15:30) in the context of God providing needs in dry places.⁸⁶

While the Hebrew term אֲשֵׁרִי seems to denote mostly fresh grass,⁸⁷ the Greek rendering βοτάνη implies herbage good for pasturing.⁸⁸ Both words, though, can be vague terms for vegetation or herbage;⁸⁹ they are equivalents meaning this in Gen 1:11, where also

⁸³ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 308. Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 72, also says willows love water and take root quickly.

⁸⁴ “The righteous shall be exalted, tender and indulged as tufts of grass, like a tree that sends its roots by streams of waters.”

⁸⁵ R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (London: Oliphants, 1975), 286. Also BDB, s.v. עָצָם.

⁸⁶ Some manuscripts (א^{ca}, A, Q, 26, 86, etc.; see Ziegler’s apparatus) have an additional explanatory simile in 58:11, and so read: καὶ τὰ ὀστέα σου ὡς βοτάνη ἀνατελεῖ καὶ πιανθήσεται. For the rendering of עָבַד with σέβω, see LXX.D.E.K., 2690.

⁸⁷ HALOT, s.v.

⁸⁸ LSJ, s.v.

⁸⁹ Muraoka describes the Greek term as “growth on land, ‘plant, herbage.’” Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

we can find *χόρτος*.⁹⁰ The word *βοτάνη* is probably used here in Isa 66:14 because it has more positive connotations than *χόρτος*.

The Targum has *גוף* (body) for *עצם* (bone), probably by way of metonymy, but renders the rest of the simile literally.⁹¹

3.2.3. Summary

As we have seen, Isaiah uses grass primarily to show something that quickly flourishes and just as quickly withers;⁹² grass is quickly consumed by fire, and is used to show desolation (eg. 15:6). Where the LXX does not render grass terms (5:24; 33:11; 15:6; 35:7; 42:15) it is not due to the metaphor but to other considerations. Where the terms are rendered, LXX-Isa uses fewer terms for grass but will often make explicit whether well watered grass or dry grass is meant. In two passages where LXX-Isa introduces terms for grass (9:17(18); 10:17, both discussed in the section on thorns, 3.4.1.) it is mentioned for its flammability; in the third passage, 32:13 (also discussed in the section on thorns, 3.4.2.), grass is mentioned in contrast to cultivated plants to describe a field becoming fallow.

Likewise where grass is mentioned as something that quickly withers, LXX-Isa maintains the metaphor, often making explicit that dryness is at issue. In 37:27, possibly due to textual issues, LXX-Isa adds a verb and an adjective to show that dry grass is meant; also what may be an implied simile in Hebrew is made explicitly a simile in the Greek. In 51:12 a unique usage of a Hebrew word is rendered as meaning dried out; again an implied simile is made explicit. In 40:6-8 grass is rendered several times in an image of human frailty; the LXX adds a reference to grass with the effect of tying together more closely two metaphors in the passage and improving the style of the passage.

Where grass is mentioned as something quickly sprouting and returning to life the LXX makes this clear. In 44:4 the translator adds that the grass is near water to emphasize its greenness and for the sake of the parallel clause. The Hebrew has a metaphor that is expanded by a simile in the parallel clause, but the LXX makes it two synonymously parallel similes (the first simile may have been due to the *Vorlage*). In 66:14 the unique comparison of bones sprouting like greenery is maintained as a simile in the Greek. The choice of *βοτάνη* may be due to it having more positive connotations of lush healthy vegetation.

⁹⁰ Perhaps there *βοτάνη* is used for consonance with *βλαστησάτω* to compensate for the cognate accusative lost from the Hebrew; the two following cognate accusatives are found also in Greek.

⁹¹ “You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; your *bodies* shall flourish like grasses; and the *might* of the LORD shall be *revealed to do good to his servants, the righteous*, and he will *bring a curse to his enemies*.”

⁹² Eidvall, studying metaphors in the Psalms, found that plants, particularly grass (Psa 90:5; 103:15; 37:2), are used for the brevity of human life (though in Psa 72:16 grass has a positive sense); G. Eidvall, “Metaphorical Landscapes in the Psalms,” in *Metaphors in the Psalms* (ed. P. van Hecke and A. Labban; BETL 231; Leuven: Peeters, 2010): 13-22.

LXX-Isa’s conception of grass is largely based on the Hebrew usage. It is noteworthy that the situation in Egypt was quite different from that of Judea in terms of grass lands. While in Judea grass of various qualities was abundant in places, in Egypt pasture land was scarce and typically the result of cultivation.⁹³ Grass was not a sign of wilderness but a crop important for fodder which was taxed.⁹⁴ Indeed, in the papyri *χόρτος* is used as a general term for fodder.⁹⁵ While the qualities of grass flourishing, withering, and flammability would have been known, LXX-Isa’s negative view of grass is not typical of the Egyptian landscape.

The Targum renders most of these places literally (15:6; 42:15; 37:27; 5:24). Like LXX-Isa, in 35:7 the Targum understands *רְצִיחַ* as meaning “residence.” In a few places the imagery is maintained, but is applied to a different subject: in 40:6-8 only the wicked and their strength are like grass; and in 44:4 the righteous are like grass, and the Targum specifies in what way, namely, their softness and tenderness. In 66:14, instead of “bones” sprouting the Targum has “body,” but is otherwise the same. In 51:12 the vague verb “to give” is interpreted as meaning “considered.” Of the passages that mention grass, 33:11 is rendered the most freely by the Targum; it interprets the phrase mentioning grass, but still maintains a reference to chaff (see III.C.2.a.).

3.3. Grains

Grains like wheat and barley are a kind of grass, botanically speaking. Due to their importance to civilized life, considerable terminology is related to them. In this section we will examine how metaphors are used in Isaiah that come from both the different types of grain and the various parts of grain.⁹⁶

3.3.1. Types of Grain

3.3.1.1. Texts

We can find several terms for various grain crops in **Isa 28:25**.⁹⁷

When they have leveled its surface, do they not scatter <i>black cumin</i> , sow cumin,	הֲלוֹא אִם-שָׂוּהָ פְּנֵיהָ וְהִפִּיץ קֶצֶחַ וְכַמְזֹן	οὐχ ὅταν ὁμαλίση αὐτῆς τὸ πρόσωπον, τότε σπείρει μικρὸν μελάνθιον καὶ κύμινον	When he has leveled its surface, does he not then sow <i>black cumin</i> and cumin and
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⁹³ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 211-12.

⁹⁴ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 212-18.

⁹⁵ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 212-13.

⁹⁶ We have not discussed the parts of grain (chaff, ear, straw, stubble) in the previous chapter since the way these metaphors are used are more closely related to grass and thorns which are discussed in this chapter.

⁹⁷ *בָּר* (grain, corn) does not occur in Isaiah.

and plant wheat in rows and barley in its proper place, and <i>emmer-wheat</i> as the border?	<p>יִזְרַק וְשָׂם חֲטָה שׁוֹרָה וְשַׁעֲרָה גְסָמֹן וּבְסֻמָּת גְּבֻלָּתוֹ:</p>	<p>καὶ πάλιν σπείρει πυρρόν καὶ κριθήν καὶ ζέαυ ἐν τοῖς ὁρίοις σου;</p>	again sow wheat and barley and <i>einkorn</i> in your borders?
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In the Hebrew, two herbs are mentioned, קֶצֶח (black cumin)⁹⁸ and כַּמֶּן (cumin); they occur again in 28:27 and are rendered the same way as here. The LXX translates these spices accurately; Ziegler points out that they are two spices often mentioned in the papyri.⁹⁹ Additionally he says that the LXX addition *μικρόν* is accurate in that only a small amount of black cumin was sown.¹⁰⁰ Theophrastus does not mention the name *μελάνθιον* but does talk about a black variety of cumin.¹⁰¹ Also, he does not tell us where to plant cumin (*κύμινον*) in a field, but does mention that some say that for an abundant crop one should curse and abuse it while sowing.¹⁰²

The meaning of two Hebrew terms are uncertain. Three possibilities for שׁוֹרָה are 1) a kind of grain; 2) a row in which the wheat is planted; 3) a dittography of וְשַׁעֲרָה.¹⁰³ The word גְּסָמֹן likewise has multiple explanations: 1) a niphil participle of סָמַן, meaning to place;¹⁰⁴ 2) it is simply unexplained;¹⁰⁵ 3) a dittography of וּבְסֻמָּת; 4) a scribal sign; 5) Marchalianus and Syh have *κέγχρον* (millet).¹⁰⁶ Whatever they may mean, the LXX has not rendered them, according to Ziegler, “weil sie nichts mit ihnen anfangen konnte.”¹⁰⁷

While the Hebrew seems to emphasize in the previous verse preparing the fields and in v.25 how to arrange the crops in the field, this verse does not seem to take timing into account. At least according to Theophrastus, barley is sown before wheat (*ζειά*, which is not the same species as *ζέα* but is the same genus, is sown earlier than wheat and barley).¹⁰⁸ Likewise in Exod 9:31-32 the barley and flax are ruined by the hail, but the חֲטָה and בְּסֻמָּת are not because they ripen later. Ziegler thinks the translation of בְּסֻמָּת with *ζέαυ* was a last resort, but that the translator has chosen a grain variety common to Egypt; he says it is often found in the papyri and that Pliny the Elder mentions it as an Egyptian crop.¹⁰⁹ While *ζειά* is probably *einkorn* (*triticum monococcum*),¹¹⁰ בְּסֻמָּת is *emmer-wheat* (*triticum sativum*)

⁹⁸ KJV renders with “fitches,” a kind of vetch used for fodder; NRSV renders “dill,” perhaps following Luther’s translation. I follow HALOT and LXX, rendering it with “black cumin.”

⁹⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 183.

¹⁰⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 183-84.

¹⁰¹ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 7.3.2.

¹⁰² Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 7.3.3.

¹⁰³ These views can be seen in HALOT, s.v.; Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 1084.

¹⁰⁴ DCH, s.v.

¹⁰⁵ HALOT, s.v.

¹⁰⁶ The last three explanations can be found in Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 1084. The word is left un-rendered in his translation.

¹⁰⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 184.

¹⁰⁸ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 8.1.3, 8.1.2.

¹⁰⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 184.

¹¹⁰ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

according to HALOT,¹¹¹ but Musselman thinks it cannot be definitely identified.¹¹² In any case, one variety of grain has been rendered with a variety, probably from the same genus, used at the time of the translation.¹¹³

The reason for describing the various tasks and arrangement of agricultural activities is not to give precise instructions as for an almanac, but to show that all these different things are done in a proper way and for a purpose,¹¹⁴ just like the various things being suffered, and so if they face destruction (28:22) for a time it is part of a greater plan.

The Greek, however, understands the section differently. While much of the passage (28:25-29) is rendered literally, though updated slightly to reflect contemporary Egyptian agricultural practices,¹¹⁵ in 28:28 the Greek has an explanation of the imagery. As Ziegler points out, the translator has interpreted exegetically.¹¹⁶

Isa 28:28

Grain is crushed for bread, but one does not thresh it forever; one drives the cart wheel and horses over it, but does not pulverize it.	<p>לְחֵם יִדְקֶה כִּי לֹא לְנֶצַח אֲדֹשׁ יְדוּשָׁנֹו וְהֵמָּה גְלָגְלוּ עַגְלֹתָיו וּפָרְשָׁיו לֹא יִדְקָנוּ:</p>	<p>μετὰ ἄρτου βρωθήσεται. οὐ γὰρ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἐγὼ ὑμῖν ὀργισθήσομαι, οὐδὲ φωνὴ τῆς πικρίας μου καταπατήσει ὑμᾶς.</p>	will be eaten with bread. For I will not be angry with you forever, nor will the voice of my bitterness trample you.
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The translator has transformed the meaning of the entire section with this rendering.¹¹⁷ Now the entire section is an allegory for Israel. They are plowed and sown, threshed, but not so long as to completely destroy them. The rendering seems mostly based on **כִּי לֹא לְנֶצַח**, together with his interpretation of 28:22, where the prophet hears of works cut short. Ziegler points out a similar rendering in 21:10, where LXX-Isa renders “threshed” and “winnowed” with whom he thinks the terms represent.¹¹⁸ Ziegler suggests the rendering of 28:28 is under the influence of 57:16, where God again says he will not punish his people forever (**לֹא לְנֶצַח**).¹¹⁹ Perhaps another hint is found in 28:25 where the Greek changes the third to the

¹¹¹ HALOT, s.v.

¹¹² Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 293-94. He is confident that it is not spelt or einkorn. Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 86, says that it is a hard wheat related to emmer, but is not more specific. He does, though, say it was known to the Egyptians as *swt*.

¹¹³ It is pointless to worry too much about the exact species since they probably changed with cultivation and since the ancients did not have a very good understanding about how they changed. According to Theophrastus, ζεῖα will turn into πυρός in as little as three years if proper measures are not taken, and likewise wild wheat and barley change with cultivation in the same time period. Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 2.4.1.

¹¹⁴ Black cumin indeed needs to be threshed, yet is easily damaged, so is beaten lightly with a rod, as Isaiah says in verse 27. See Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 133.

¹¹⁵ See Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 182-85.

¹¹⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 185.

¹¹⁷ For a detailed analysis of this LXX-Isa 28:23-29, see Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 276-86.

¹¹⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 185.

¹¹⁹ He also points to Jer 3:12; Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 119-20; cf. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 223 [70/71].

second person (ἐν τοῖς ὀρίοις σου) which could be an allusion to Psa 147:14(3).¹²⁰ We will discuss 28:27-28 further below in relation to the threshing of grain (3.3.2.3.1.).

The Targum has interpreted the passage allegorically. Most of the allegorical treatment occurs in 28:24-25 (where it is about the prophets teaching and the blessing that Israel would enjoy if they would turn to the law), and the rest of the agricultural imagery is preserved or made into similes (as in 28:25).¹²¹ In 28:28 the threshing idea is made clear and winnowing is added by mentioning the chaff being blown away.¹²²

Isa 17:5 is the other passage where grain is mentioned, though here generically.

<p>And it shall be as when reapers gather standing grain and their arms harvest the ears, and as when one gleanes the ears of grain in the Valley of Rephaim.</p>	<p>וְהָיָה כְּאֶסְף־קְצִיר קָמָה וְזָרְעוּ שְׂבִלִים יִקְצֹר וְהָיָה כְּמִלְקֵט שְׂבִלִים בְּעֵמֶק רְפָאִים:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔσται ὃν τρόπον ἐάν τις συναγάγη ἀμητὸν ἐστηκότα καὶ σπέρμα σταχύων ἀμήση, καὶ ἔσται ὃν τρόπον ἐάν τις συναγάγη στάχυν ἐν φάραγγι στερεᾷ</p>	<p>And it shall be as if someone were to gather the standing crop and reap the seed of the ears of grain, and it shall be as if someone were to gather an ear of grain in a firm ravine</p>
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This verse continues to describe what it means in the previous verse that Jacob’s glory will be brought low and his fat made lean. The harvesting similes are familiar enough, but in what way things will be like a harvest is not made clear in this verse (unless the reference to the valley of Rephaim had a specific meaning to the audience). It is only in 17:6 that it is made clear that the image describes almost everyone being gathered up and removed from the land, so only gleanings are left, one or two here and there. This is made entirely clear in 17:9.

There are three main explanations for how to understand קְצִיר. It can either refer to the time “gathering at harvest;” or to a person (“a harvester”) either as a form of קָצַר or as a noun forming like פְּלִיל and נְבִיא, or as an explanatory gloss for בְּאֶסְף.¹²³ The LXX understands it as what is gathered, the crops of the harvest: ἀμητος. Rather than reading קָמָה as the object, it is read as an adjective from קוֹם, modifying ἀμητος. Also of note is that the translator has added subjects for both clauses (τις), and has rendered מְלִקֵט with συναγάγη. These two changes make the clauses more closely related (though it may serve just for variation, in that the verbs συνάγω and ἀμάω now alternate). Between the two clauses the translator has rendered וְזָרְעוּ with its homonym, giving us σπέρμα;¹²⁴ this clause, σπέρμα σταχύων ἀμήση, explains to what exactly ἀμητὸν ἐστηκότα refers.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 224.

¹²¹ “If the house of Israel set their face to perform the law, would he not repent and gather them from among the Gentiles among whom they are scattered, behold as dill and cumin which is strewn? And he will bring them near by families to their tribes, behold, as seeds of wheat in rows and barley in proper places and spelt on the borders.”

¹²² “They indeed thresh grain, but they do not thresh it forever; and he stirs with the wheels of his cart and separates the grain and lets the dust fly.”

¹²³ For the scholars who hold to each view see Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 636.

¹²⁴ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 191.

¹²⁵ Cf. 1QIsa^a which reads: וזרעו שבלים וקציר.

A second peculiarity is the mentioning of the valley of Rephaim, which according to Josh 15:8 and 18:16 is located outside Jerusalem. Some hold that the text is corrupt, either missing some part, or אפרים has become רפאים.¹²⁶ Wildberger suggests the valley was mentioned to give a vividness to the image, naming a nearby place where his audience would have seen harvesting activities.¹²⁷ The LXX-Isa rendering of this phrase is unique. Elsewhere LXX-Isa only uses στερεός as a plus to modify stone (2:21; 5:28; 50:7; 51:1). Also, the other places the Hebrew עֵמֶק רְפָאִים occurs, it is rendered literally in LXX (though not always in the same way). Ottley suggests the translator may have understood the Hebrew to mean the valley of healers, so rendered “strong, sound,” or that he read רקיע. Ziegler suggests the translator here had Deut 21:4 in mind, where נחל איתן (ever flowing stream) is rendered with φάραγγα τραχεῖαν (rough valley), which is explained in the verse as a place that is not plowed or sown.¹²⁸ The Greek may have actually understood רְפָאִים to mean “mighty men” (cf. Targum) as he did in 14:9,¹²⁹ but did not find “valley of mighty men” appropriate here, so instead said φάραγγι στερεῶ “strong valley.” In any case, the meaning of the Greek phrase in Isa 17:5 is that it has hard soil that is unsuitable for cultivation.¹³⁰

The LXX has preserved the two similes, and also has the second more specific than the first, though perhaps with a different meaning than in the Hebrew. In the Hebrew the first two describe harvesting while the third describes gleaning. In the Greek, though, the three similes are nearly synonymous.

As mentioned above, the translator does not seem to have understood the term קָמָה properly. The only other place it occurs in Isaiah, 37:27b, is a minus in LXX-Isa. The term for an ear of grain שֶׁבֶלֶם, however, has been appropriately translated with στάχυς. Where this term appears to occur in 27:12 it is correctly rendered based on its homonym.

The Targum renders literally: ויהי כמכנש חצר קמא “and it will be like gathering a harvest of standing crop,” and at the end: במישר גיבריא “in the plain of mighty men.”¹³¹

3.3.1.2. Summary

Only two passages in Isaiah talk specifically about grains. The use of grains in 28:25 is not properly metaphoric, but better categorized by the vague term *mashal*; they are mentioned to make an analogy to which the LXX adds an explicit interpretation in 28:28. In 17:5, however, the LXX preserves three similes, though changes their meaning, seemingly due to the difficulty of some of the vocabulary. It is interesting that the translator does not offer what exactly it means to harvest in the hard valley.

¹²⁶ For a few proposals see Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 637.

¹²⁷ Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 648.

¹²⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 114. LXX.D.E.K., 2548 concurs.

¹²⁹ The LXX translator also knows the meaning “physician” for this word, as can be seen in Isa 26:14, 19.

¹³⁰ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, 635.

¹³¹ “And it will be as a harvester gathers standing grain, and with his arm harvests ears, and as on gleaning ears in the *plain of mighty men*.” Cf. Targum Gen 6:4 where גיברא renders גִּבְרִיִּים.

The Targum interprets 28:28, as well as the rest of the passage, as an allegory, giving specific things for the various agricultural terms to represent. In 17:5 the Targum renders literally; its understanding of **בְּעֵמֶק רְפָאִים** is literal (taking the meaning of the place name) and explains nothing.

3.3.2 Parts of Grain

Apart from types of grain, grain plants have various parts such as the ear (**שֶׁבֶלֶת**), the stalk (**שֵׁק**),¹³² and the chaff that must be separated from the actual grain in the ear (**מֵץ**).¹³³ Another term for one of the byproducts of threshing is **תֵּבֵן** (crushed stalks, straw, chaff).¹³⁴ In English, the word “chaff” can refer both to the part that is separated in threshing and to the cut straw that can be used for cattle feed, and so it is often found as a definition of the last three Hebrew terms.¹³⁵ The Greek word *ἄχυρον* means “chaff, bran, husks,”¹³⁶ as well as “straw.”¹³⁷ This was not a waste product but a valuable commodity in arid regions such as Ancient Egypt; it was used as a fuel source (often mixed with manure), as a building material (when mixed with clay or mud), as well as fodder (sometimes mixed with other grains, particularly barley).¹³⁸ Chaff was taxed in the Roman period,¹³⁹ but can be seen in papyri receipts already in the Ptolemaic period.¹⁴⁰ The word used by the LXX as a rendering of **מֵץ**, namely, *χνοῦς* in classical Greek means dust, fine down, or incrustation,¹⁴¹ though in the LXX it means chaff.¹⁴² The only use of this word in the Papyri¹⁴³ is on some sort of receipt, but there is not enough context to firmly see to what it refers.¹⁴⁴ The LXX seems to want to distinguish chaff

¹³² According to DCH, s.v., **שֵׁק** refers both to the stubble left in the field and the straw left after threshing.

¹³³ See HALOT, s.v.

¹³⁴ HALOT, s.v.

¹³⁵ As in BDB, and HALOT. DCH, however, distinguishes **שֵׁק**, **תֵּבֵן**, and **מֵץ** more clearly.

¹³⁶ LSJ, s.v.

¹³⁷ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v., has the definition “straw” and for Dan 2:35 “chaff and grain.”

¹³⁸ Archeological, ethnographical, and literary evidence is brought together in Marijke van der Veen, “The Economic Value of Chaff and Straw in Arid and Temperate Zones,” *Vegetation History and Archaeobotany* 8.3 (1999): 112-13. Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 91.

¹³⁹ See van der Veen, “The Economic Value of Chaff,” 216 for primary and secondary references.

¹⁴⁰ P.Tebt. 3.2842 from ~140BC; and P.Princ.2.18 from the late 3rd century BC. Accessed 4/27/2012, <http://www.papyri.info/>.

¹⁴¹ LSJ, s.v.

¹⁴² Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v. It would seem outside of the LXX, according to LSJ, this term is not typically used for chaff, but for dust, powder, and things that are fine and small. In Aristophanes Fragments, *Babylonians* 78, as pointed out by *LSJ Supplement*, we can find the phrase *ἔχεις ἄχυρα καὶ χνοῦν*, describing stuffing for a bed, Aristophanes, *Fragments* [Henderson, LCL 502], though even here “chaff” may not be meant. J. Lust, E. Eynikel, K. Hauspie, *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Revised ed.; Stuttgart: deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003), s.v. only gives Hos 13:3 with the definition “chaff” and defines all others as “dust.” LSJ’s examples from 2 Kgs 22:43 and 2 Chr 1:9 are problematic, since in both places it is a textual variant, and Ralfs’ edition prefers the reading *χνοῦς*.

¹⁴³ Based on a word search of *χνοῦς* as well as *χνόος* on <http://www.papyri.info/> 4/27/2012.

¹⁴⁴ HGV BGU 3.921.

as the husks from chaff as the straw, and so uses *χνοῦς*;¹⁴⁵ though perhaps the minute dust-like parts that are released in threshing, winnowing, and sieving which can not be collected for later use but blow away are what is meant by this term. Of the occurrences of *גָּזַל*, threshing or winnowing is only mentioned in Hos 13:3; Isa 41:15; and possibly in Isa 17:3 (though explicitly in the LXX).¹⁴⁶

In two places LXX takes special effort to describe what is meant by “chaff.” In Dan 2:35 the statue breaks and becomes like dust on a summer threshing floor (*בְּעוֹרָה* *מִן־אֲדָרִי־קִיט*)¹⁴⁷ that is blown away by the wind. The Greek text ο’ feels the need to be more specific than just “chaff” and so has: *ὡσεὶ λεπτότερον ἀχύρου ἐν ἄλωνι*. The Theodotion text is less specific, writing: *ὡσεὶ κονιορτός ἀπὸ ἄλωνος θερινῆς*. The other place is in Isa 17:13, where *גָּזַל* is rendered *χνοῦν ἀχύρου*. In these two places it seems the translators felt *ἀχύρον* on its own did not adequately represent what was meant, but had to be qualified as some smaller part. Perhaps a similar concern is why *χνοῦς* is typically used for *גָּזַל* instead of *ἀχύρον*; this however, does not explain why a double rendering is not used in the other places *גָּזַל* occurs.

While some of these terms have some degree of overlap, we will first discuss how LXX-Isa understands *שֶׁקַע*, second we will look at *תְּבַנֵּן*, and finally *גָּזַל* (including threshing metaphors, since they imply chaff). Each section has its own summary.

3.3.2.1. שֶׁקַע

In LXX-Isa, *שֶׁקַע* is rendered once with *κάλαμη* (stubble, straw) in 5:24,¹⁴⁸ which is the common equivalent used elsewhere in the LXX, occurring eight other times. It is rendered in Isaiah most often, three times, with *φρύγανον* (dry stick),¹⁴⁹ and in 33:11 its metaphorical meaning is made explicit. In this section we will first look at the passages where *שֶׁקַע* occurs with *שֶׁשֶׁקַע*, then where it is rendered with *φρύγανον*, third where the more regular equivalent *κάλαμη* occurs without a Hebrew equivalent, and finally a section summary.

3.3.2.1.1. שֶׁשֶׁקַע Occuring with שֶׁשֶׁקַע

Isa 5:24a

Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours the stubble,	<i>לִבֵּי כְּאֵבֶל קֵשׁ לְשׁוֹן אֵשׁ וְחֶשֶׁק</i>	<i>διὰ τοῦτο ὁν τρόπον καυθήσεται καλάμη ὑπὸ ἀνθρακος πυρός</i>	Therefore, as stubble will be burned by a coal of fire and
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¹⁴⁵ The choice of this term is appropriate for referring to something small and fluffy, such as grain husks, though the etymology, as “something scratched off or planed” also makes sense for grain husks. This etymology, though the meaning “chaff” is not mentioned, is from Robert Beeks, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek Vol 2* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1639-640. Of course this etymology was probably not thought of in ancient times.

¹⁴⁶ The other passages *גָּזַל* occurs are: Psa 1:4; 34:5; Wis 5:14; and Isa 29:5. Also *χνοῦς* renders *מָקַח* in Isa 5:24, where also there is no sense of winnowing. In Job 21:18 it is rendered with *κονιορτός*, parallel to *ἄχυρον*. In Zeph 2:2 it is rendered with *ἄνθος*, another image of something transient (see Isa 40:6-7).

¹⁴⁷ In M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1992), s.v. both *עוֹר* and *מוֹץ* are defined simply as “chaff.”

¹⁴⁸ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

¹⁴⁹ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v. Only one place outside of Isaiah uses this as an equivalent: Jer 13:24.

and as dry grass sinks down in the flame,	לְהִבָּה יִרְפָּה	καὶ συγκαυθήσεται ὑπὸ φλογὸς ἀνειμένης,	burned up by an <i>unrestrained</i> flame,
so their root will become rotten, and their blossom go up like dust;	שָׂרְשָׁם בְּמֶקַח יִהְיֶה וּפְרִיָּהֶם כְּאַבְבֶּק יַעֲלֶה	ἡ ῥίζα αὐτῶν ὡς χνούς ἔσται, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτῶν ὡς κονιορτὸς ἀναβήσεται·	so their root will be like fine dust and their blossom go up like dust;

We have discussed the second part of this verse in the section on roots (2.3.2.). The imagery in the first half of this verse is a rather complex combination of metaphor and simile. Both the basis for the comparison and what is being compared are described in metaphorical terms. Despite this complexity, the passage is remarkably straight forward and easy to understand.

To say that a flame eats stubble could be described as a dead metaphor, or idiomatic, as could saying “tongue of flame.” But when both elements are combined it is clearly a vivid living metaphor. The parallel clause is rather pictorial: one can just see how burning grass curls and bends as it turns to bright embers and falls.

The Greek translation modifies this construction, but not because of its complexity. The LXX instead of having “tongue of flame” as the subject, makes “stubble” the subject of a passive verb.¹⁵⁰ The expression “tongue of flame” is not common in Biblical Hebrew but can be found in some later literature.¹⁵¹ In Targum II Esther 6:13 the phrase **לשנא דנורא** occurs, referring to the flame that came out of the furnace into which the three youths were thrown. Also, in Enoch 14:9-10 the phrase *γλώσσης πυρός* appears twice. It is also found in the Dead Sea Scrolls as **[ולשנ] י נור**.¹⁵² In a Dead Sea Scroll fragment of the Targum of Job 41:11 (11Q10) we read **בלשני אשה** where the MT has **כִּידוּדֵי אֵשׁ**.

The Greek rendered **לשון אש** with *ἄθρακος πυρός*, which is a word combination that renders **גְּחֻלֵּת** in Prov 6:28; 25:22; and Isa 47:14.¹⁵³ This was perhaps under the influence of the phrase **גְּחֻלֵּי־אֵשׁ** (Lev 16:12; 2 Sam 22:13; Psa 18:13; Ezek 1:13; 10:2). The only other place where fire is described in relation to “tongue” is Isa 30:27, where the Hebrew has **תְּלַחֲשֵׁנוּ בְּאֵשׁ אֲכָלֶת** and it is rendered *καὶ ἡ ὄργη τοῦ θυμοῦ ὡς πῦρ ἔδεται*. The three recensions render 5:24 literally with *γλῶσσα πυρός*. In Isa 5:24 the transformation of the metaphor is probably due to harmonization to the more familiar phrase **גְּחֻלֵּי־אֵשׁ**, though in our passage it becomes singular. Also damaging to the “consuming fire” metaphor is that it is rendered as a “burning fire.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ For LXX-Isa’s occasional practice of making active constructions passive, see Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 202-3 [55-56].

¹⁵¹ The idiom is known in English, no doubt, due to KJV of Acts 2:3.

¹⁵² See J. T. Milik, ed., *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974), 194. Cf. 4Q206 1xxi3 (4QEn^a ar) for the phrase **בלשני נור**. Also, the Book of Giants 4Q530 2n+6-12,9 has **לשני נור**.

¹⁵³ The rendering in Isa 47:14 is more complicated, as we will discuss below.

¹⁵⁴ This rendering is not uncommon, see LXX.D.E.K., 2518.

Rather than the second image of the simile, the Greek understands a continuation of the image. The Greek simile is stubble burning from a hot coal spreading wildly, let loose, burning things. This interpretation is arrived at by rendering **יִרְפָּה** with the adjectival participle *ἀνειμένης*.¹⁵⁵ The verb *ἀνίημι* is one of the most common equivalents of the root **רפה** in the LXX as a whole.¹⁵⁶ Perhaps **חשש** was rendered with *συγκαίω*, because it was thought to be synonymous with **אכל**, which is rendered with *συγκαίω* in Gen 31:40. The only other occurrence of **חשש** is in Isa 33:11. In that passage also, fire is said to devour (**אכל**), but there is no clear translation of **חשש**. The repetition of verbs for burning create more unity in 5:24. Williamson points out that 1QIsa^a reads: **ואש לוהבת**, but this is most likely secondary and does not help with understanding the Greek.¹⁵⁷ 4QIsa^b agrees with MT, having **חשש**.

Note also, as mentioned in the section on roots (2.3.2.), *χνοῦς* is offered as a rendering of **מק**, which the translator either did not understand or read as **מץ**.¹⁵⁸ If the meaning “chaff” is meant, the translator introduces an image.

The changes in the metaphors of this verse seem primarily due to the understanding of the vocabulary, and are not an attempt to interpret or update the imagery.

The Targum renders literally, making the terms chaff (**קשא**) and hay (**עמיר**).¹⁵⁹

The other place **חשש** occurs it is again rendered as some kind of verb in the LXX and again occurs with **קש**.¹⁶⁰

Isa 33:11

<p>You conceive <i>dry grass</i> and bring forth <i>straw</i>, your breath is a fire that will consume you.</p>	<p>תִּהְיוּ חֹשֵׁשׁ תִּלְדוּ קֶשׁ רֹחַבְכֶם אֵשׁ תֹּאכַלְכֶם:</p>	<p><i>νῦν ὄψεσθε, νῦν αἰσθηθήσεσθε· ματαία ἔσται ἡ ἰσχὺς τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν, πῦρ ὑμᾶς κατέδεταί.</i></p>	<p>Now you will see; now you will perceive; the strength of your spirit will be vain; fire will consume you.</p>
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The metaphor of conceiving and giving birth is used several other times in Isaiah. In 26:18 the people conceive and give birth to wind; the LXX renders this literally, though the wind is made positive in the Greek instead of representing vanity or emptiness. In 59:4 they conceive trouble and give birth to guilt and in 59:13 they only conceive and ponder lies,¹⁶¹ there is no giving birth. The LXX maintains both of these metaphors in its translation. Perhaps the more concrete metaphor of straw, as opposed to something abstract, was considered to be too far-fetched or difficult to understand to be used in this context.

¹⁵⁵ *α'* has *παρίησι*, “to yield,” “fall.”

¹⁵⁶ It occurs 10x as an equivalent, as does *ἐκλύω*.

¹⁵⁷ Williamson, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 1-27*, 384. Cf. LXX.D.E.K., 2518.

¹⁵⁸ Also possible is that it should in fact read *χνοῦς*.

¹⁵⁹ “Therefore *they shall be* devoured as *the chaff in the fire*, and as *stubble in the flame*; *the increase of their strength* will be as *rotteness*, and *the mammon of their oppression* as *the dust which flies*.”

¹⁶⁰ See Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 9-10.

¹⁶¹ The equivalent *κύω*, *ατέω* for **יָרָה** is marked as doubtful in Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, s.v. For 59:4’s relationship to 33:11, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 147.

Alternatively, the translator may have decided to interpret the metaphor to further emphasize the destruction coming upon the godless in Zion.¹⁶²

It is unlikely that the Greek is based on a misreading of the Hebrew. IQIsa^b has a feminine form חששה, but this does not help us understand what the Greek does. The closest thing to a possible lexical warrant for ὄψεσθε would be seeing חזה instead of תהרו; Ottley suggests perhaps they read תראו or תחו.¹⁶³ Also, it is unlikely that αἰσθηθήσεσθε was from reading תלדו as a form of ידע.¹⁶⁴ There is even less of a lexical warrant for the use of νῦν twice. Rather than simply omit the clause, due to a strange metaphor, the translator has taken inspiration from the previous verse using νῦν in short clauses with just a verb. The translator saw that the verbs were second person, so he made the clause in the second person as a response to God in the previous verse. The translator seems to have interpreted the metaphor, rendering קש רוחכם תלדו as ματαία ἔσται ἡ ἰσχὺς τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν. Perhaps קש suggested to the translator the idea of emptiness and is the basis for ματαία; according to Muraoka, this passage is one of the three free renderings in LXX-Isaiah that use μάταιος.¹⁶⁵ Ziegler suggests the passage has been influenced by Isa 30:15, where תהיה is twice rendered with ματαία, and that both passages are under the influence of Lev 26:20.¹⁶⁶

The difficulty of the metaphor in this verse is clear in that the three recensions seem to have problems with it as well. Aquila has συλλήψεσθε αἰθάλην “you will be pregnant with ash,” Symmachus has κήσεσθε φλόγα “you will conceive flame,” and Theodotion has: γαστρι λήψεσθε σποδῆ τέξεσθε καλάμην “you will grasp ash in your belly, beget stubble.”¹⁶⁷ Theodotion is the closest to the Hebrew, but still has the idea of ash instead of dry grass, perhaps because of the mention of flames in the verse.

The Targum rendering of this verse is very free, but we can still find in it a reference to chaff in a simile, though it is blown by the wind: מימרי בעלעולא לקשא ישיצי יתכון “My word, like a storm wind to chaff, will destroy you.”¹⁶⁸

3.3.2.1.2. קש Rendered with φρύγανον

In the other three places קש occurs, it is rendered with φρύγανον.

Isa 40:24

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their <i>stock</i> taken root	אֲנִי בְלִ-נִטְעוּ אֶף בְּלִ-זָּרְעוּ אֶף בְּלִ-שָׂרַשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ גְּזֻעִים	οὐ γὰρ μὴ σπείρωσιν οὐδὲ μὴ φυτεύσωσιν, οὐδὲ μὴ ῥιζωθῆ εἰς τῆν γῆν ἢ ῥίζα αὐτῶν·	For they will not sow, nor will they plant, neither will their root take root in
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¹⁶² LXX.D.E.K., 2593.

¹⁶³ Ottley, *Isaiah* II, 271. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 118.

¹⁶⁴ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 118, nt. 172. He points out this equivalence in 49:26.

¹⁶⁵ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, s.v.

¹⁶⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 147.

¹⁶⁷ See the apparatus of Gottingen LXX Isaiah.

¹⁶⁸ “You conceive for yourselves wicked conceptions, you Gentiles, you make yourselves evil deeds; because of your evil deeds my Memra, as the whirlwind the chaff, will destroy you.”

in the earth,			the earth;
when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like <i>straw</i> .	וְגַם-נִשְׁף בָּהֶם וַיִּבְשׁוּ וְסַעֲרָה בְּקֶשׁ תִּשָּׂאֵם:	ἔπνευσεν ἐπ’ αὐτούς καὶ ἐξηράνθησαν, καὶ καταιγὶς ὡς φρύγανα ἀναλήμψεται αὐτούς.	he blew upon them, and they withered, and a tempest will carry them off like <i>twigs</i> .

We have discussed this passage in the section on roots (2.3.2.). Here our focus is on the simile “the tempest carries them away like straw” or in the Greek “like twigs.” If the idea is being slight and easily carried by the wind, straw (*κάλαμη*) seems like it would make more sense than “twigs,” though *κάλαμη* could potentially be confused for the stubble still left in the earth. The choice of *φρύγανα* as a translation, together with the reversal of the voice of the verbs in 40:24a, has changed the image. In the Hebrew the princes are scarcely planted (that they are next said to be scarcely sown is a chronological step backwards, probably as a hyperbole) and barely take root before they are withered. This language is an image of grain (or perhaps any other seed that is sown, or the flower and grass in 40:6-8) being sown, germinating, and being dried out by the wind before it matures. The Greek improves the logic of the word order¹⁶⁹ and makes the princes the subject of the verbs, though not sowing or planting, then describes them as not taking root but drying out and being carried away like twigs. Their stock taking root in the earth could be an image of planting tree cuttings. In Theophrastus’ *De Causis Plantarum* we can find the same verbal form describing that transplanted trees should not have their hole filled in right away so that they can strike roots properly: *Καὶ τοὺς γύρους οὐκ εὐθὺς συμπληροῦσιν ὅπως ρίζωθῆι τὰ κάτω πρότερον.*¹⁷⁰ In this case, the tiny branches (the princes of 40:23 who become rulers of nothing) do not take root (their rule is not established) before they are dried out and blown away in the tempest as twigs. This is in contrast to the common image of kings as trees (as in Isa 2:12-13 or Dan 4:20-22).

The Targum understands the sowing and taking root as children multiplying in the earth, but the last part has God’s word scattering them like chaff **יבדר לקשא יתהוון**.¹⁷¹

Isa 41:2

Who has roused a victor from the east, summoned him to his service? He delivers up nations to him, and tramples kings under foot; he makes them like dust with	מִי הָעֵרַל מִמְּזֹרַח צֶדֶק יְקַרְאֵהוּ לְרַגְלֹו יִתֵּן לְפָנָיו גּוֹיִם וּמַלְכִים יִרְדֵּי יִתֵּן כְּעָפָר חֲרָבֹו בְּקֶשׁ נִדְף קִשְׁתֹו:	τίς ἐξήγειρεν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν δικαιοσύνην, ἐκάλεσεν αὐτήν κατὰ πόδας αὐτοῦ, καὶ πορεύσεται; δώσει ἐναντίον ἐθνῶν καὶ	Who has roused righteousness from the east, called it to its feet and it will go? He will place it before nations and astonish kings, and he will <i>give to the earth</i>
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¹⁶⁹ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 75 thinks the transposition of words is not the result of the translator’s exegesis.

¹⁷⁰ Theophrastus’ *De Causis Plantarum* [Einarson and Link, LCL 471], III.4.2. This is after describing how the tree should be planted in certain seasons, and the hole treated in such a way to make it easy for the tree to take root.

¹⁷¹ “Although they grow, although they increase, although their sons are exalted in the earth, he sends his anger among them, and they are ashamed and his *Memra*, as the *whirlwind* the chaff, will scatter them.”

his sword, like driven stubble with his bow.		βασιλεῖς ἐκστήσει καὶ δώσει εἰς γῆν τὰς μαχαίρας αὐτῶν καὶ ὡς φρύγανα ἐξωσμένα τὰ τόξα αὐτῶν.	their swords and their bows like twigs that are driven out.
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For our purposes, it is only the last clauses that are of note.¹⁷² In the Hebrew the two final similes are describing how the one roused from the east subdues kings and nations, his sword makes them like dust and his bow drives them off like stubble, presumably, is driven by the wind. The Greek has removed the first simile and the second simile is different in the Greek, though it is rendered literally in its own way.¹⁷³

The first simile is removed, possibly, because while כ was taken as ב (perhaps since his text did indeed read this),¹⁷⁴ he has rendered עֶפֶר with γῆν by way of metonymy. This is not an unusual rendering of עֶפֶר, it occurs forty-six times, including five other times in LXX-Isa (2:9; 34:9; 40:12; 47:1; 65:25).¹⁷⁵ The difference between giving them to the earth instead of to the dust could be very slight. The important change is that it is no longer “his” sword, but the swords of his enemies. The second simile is rendered literally, except the verb is made passive and the singular indirect object “his bow” becomes the plural subject “their bows.” The simile in the Greek is not of driven stubble, but of bows being like feeble twigs. The simile has changed, but there is a better point of comparison: bows and twigs. In the Hebrew the sword and bow are the means of subduing kings and nations, while in the Greek they stand metonymically for the kings and nations, who are killed and expelled. The Greek ἐξωθέω is a unique rendering for נָדָה. The translator probably knows what it means (cf. 19:7 where there is a closer equivalent) and has here partially interpreted the simile.

The Targum understands the difficult Hebrew use of צָדַק to refer to Abraham.¹⁷⁶ Also it makes clear that he cast his slain like the dust with his sword (רמא כעפרא קטילין קדם) (חרביה) and pursued them like stubble with his bow כקשא רדפנון קדם קשתיה.

Isa 47:14

See, they are like stubble, the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the	הִנֵּה הֵיוּ כְקֶשׁ אֵשׁ שֶׁרָפְתָם לְאֵי־יָצִילוּ אֶת־נַפְשָׁם מִיַּד לְהַבָּה	ἰδοὺ πάντες ὡς φρύγανα ἐπὶ πυρὶ κατακαήσονται καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐξέλωνται τήν	See, they all will be burned like twigs on a fire, and they will not deliver their soul from the flame; since
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¹⁷² For the pluses in this and the following verses, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 71-72. See also Arie van der Kooij, “‘Coming’ Things and ‘Last’ Things: Isaianic Terminology as Understood in the Wisdom of Ben Sira and in the Septuagint of Isaiah,” in *Festschrift for Henk Leene: The New Things: Eschatology in Old Testament Prophecy* (eds. F. Postma, K. Spronk, and E. Talstra; Amsterdamse Cahiers Voor Exegese van de Bijbel en zijn Tradities, Supplement Series 3; Maastricht: Uitgeverij Shaker Publishing, 2002): 135-40.

¹⁷³ IQIsa^a agrees with MT in this verse.

¹⁷⁴ Ottley mentions that כ and ב are easy to confuse in Hebrew, as also εἰς and ὡς are easy to confuse in Greek transmission of texts. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 302.

¹⁷⁵ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 24.

¹⁷⁶ “Who brought Abraham openly from the east, a select one of righteousness in truth? He brought him to his place, handed over peoples before him and shattered kings; he cast the slain like dust before his sword, he pursued them like chaff before his bow.”

<p>hand of the flame. No coal for warming oneself is this, no fire to sit before!</p>	<p>אֵין־גַּחֲלֵת לְחֹמֶם אֹר לְשֵׁבֶת נִגְדָּו:</p>	<p>ψυχὴν αὐτῶν ἐκ φλογός· ὅτι ἔχεις ἀνθρακας πυρός, κάθισαι ἐπ’ αὐτούς.</p>	<p>you have coals of fire, sit on them--</p>
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In this passage, the prophet prophesies against the daughter of Babylon in the second person. In 47:12-13 she is told sarcastically to consult with her sorcerers and astrologers, who are described as doomed in 47:14. They are said to be like stubble, burned by fire, and they cannot save themselves from the hand of the flame. This image is built on by the next, that the daughter of Babylon will have no coal to comfort her, since the astrologers are destroyed quickly like stubble in a fire, instead of providing a slow hot fire the way burning charcoal would.

The Greek has made several modifications. These modifications appear to center around the first two clauses becoming one clause with one verb: κατακαίω. The word יָיִן has been dropped and πάντες added. The preposition ἐπί is added to clarify and as a part of making the sentence better Greek. Here the rendering of שֵׁקֶל with φρύγανον is appropriate, since tinder is what is clearly meant. Also of note is that the translator has changed מִיַּד לְהִבָּה to the more straightforward, and stylistically superior ἐκ φλογός. The LXX-Isa translator has discretely removed it, since there is no need to personify the fire.¹⁷⁷ Similarly, in 64:7, מִיַּד עֲוֹנוֹנֵינוּ is rendered simply as διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν. Usually the LXX-Isa translator has no problems with using hand metaphors and metonymies, at least the more conventional ones.¹⁷⁸ As mentioned earlier, here the phrase אֵין־גַּחֲלֵת לְחֹמֶם אֹר is collapsed to ὅτι ἔχεις ἀνθρακας πυρός. The end of the verse is understood differently in the Greek and continues into 47:15a.

The Greek, by combining the first two clauses, has changed the simile. In the Hebrew they are like straw and a fire will burn them, but in the Greek they burn like twigs. In the Hebrew the similes have more interchange between tenor and vehicle, in that they are like tinder, and the fire that burns them is like a person in that it has hands. The Greek has moved further into the metaphorical language by making things more direct.

The Targum takes a different tactic, explaining each of the first two clauses so that they are weak like straw, and the nations are strong like fire that will consume them.¹⁷⁹ The third clause maintains “hand” but flame is rendered as their slayers: מִיַּד קְטוּלִין.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. 5:24, where the “tongue” of a flame is removed.

¹⁷⁸ In general, the anthropomorphic or idiomatic use of יָד is usually not removed in LXX-Isa, but the more rare idioms involving hands are removed. Similarly, Orlinsky argues that all three times the right hand of God occurs and thirty-six out of thirty eight occurrences of the hand of God are rendered literally in LXX-Isa. Orlinsky, “The Treatment of Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Septuagint of Isaiah,” 195. The two exceptions, he says, are “rendered freely in accordance with the context.” Likewise, Raija Sollamo detects no anti-anthropomorphic tendency in the LXX as a whole’s rendering of מִיַּד. See Raija Sollamo, *Renderings of Hebrew Semiprepositions in the Septuagint* (Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae Dissertationes Humanarum Litterarum 19; Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1979), 191-204.

¹⁷⁹ “Behold, they are faint as the chaff, the peoples who are strong as the fire destroy them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of killers. They have no remnant or survivor, not even a place to be rescued in!”

Why LXX-Isa thinks φρύγανον is an appropriate rendering for ψק could be understood if we think in terms of use instead of resemblance. Even in arid environments where heating is less important, fuel is still needed for cooking, and in Hellenistic settlements, for the bath house. Beside what wood was available, for fuel people would use manure, straw (chaff), and various small woody desert plants (such as *zilla spinosa*, *cornulaca monacantha*, and *leptadenia pyrotechnica*, all of which have been found burnt in Roman era Egyptian fireplaces).¹⁸⁰ By φρύγανον, then, the translator may have had in mind not dead wood gathered from beneath trees, but the smaller twig-like plants that can be found throughout the Middle East and Egypt. One plant in particular, *zilla spinosa*, exemplifies the qualities which appear in the LXX-Isa passages. It grows nearly everywhere, as can be seen in its frequent listing in ecological surveys,¹⁸¹ and particularly flourishes in grassland communities.¹⁸² An issue for these small desert plants is their taking root: if their roots do not grow deep enough (to reach moist ground) before the wet season ends, they die,¹⁸³ like in LXX-Isa 40:24. That φρύγανον is carried by the wind also makes more sense if we consider it to refer to such small desert plants, some of which act like a kind of tumble weed (such as *gundella tournefortii* and *salsola kali*),¹⁸⁴ and most certainly could easily be blown about if they become detached from the roots.¹⁸⁵

The LXX-Isa translator has only followed convention in 5:24, rendering with καλάμη, perhaps because elsewhere in the verse he understood other terms related to kinds of grains: dry grass is mentioned (ψψη) and the translator has also chaff (χνοῦς).¹⁸⁶ As mentioned above, there are some hints that may show there was good reason for the strange equivalent favored by LXX-Isa. In 40:24 the translator has perhaps used φρύγανον to contrast the princes mentioned to the common image of kings as trees. In 41:12 the Greek has changed the metaphor: instead of being driven by the bow (implied to be as driven by a wind), the Greek has their bows expelled like flimsy twigs; once the translator takes bows as the object, it makes much more sense (due to their resemblance) to compare them to twigs than to straw. In 47:14 saying φρύγανον burned in the fire may be preferable to straw because its root already implies it is destined for fire. Also, a twig is a small staff or rod and so could be understood as a sort of mocking diminution of these important advisors. While φρύγανον is not an obvious

¹⁸⁰ van der Veen, "The Economic Value of Chaff," 218-19.

¹⁸¹ M. A. Zahran and A. J. Willis, *The Vegetation of Egypt* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1992), 112-13; 156-57, 220. It is mentioned repeatedly throughout the book.

¹⁸² Zahran and Willis, *The Vegetation of Egypt*, 156-57, 200-1.

¹⁸³ See I. Springuel, M. Sheded, and W. Abed, "Plant Growth in Relation to a Rain Incident in Wadi Agag, South Egypt," *Vegetatio* 90 (1990), 159. They note that *zilla spinosa* is one of the best plants at striking deep roots, and so has a comparatively low rate of juvenile mortality.

¹⁸⁴ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 281-83. Though as he describes, *salsola kali* is used for food, not fuel. Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 57.

¹⁸⁵ *Zilla spinosa*, when mature, "is pulled out of its bed and goes bouncing through the desert," according to http://www.flowersinisrael.com/Zillaspinosa_page.htm (accessed 3/5/2012).

¹⁸⁶ Though the translator may mean "dust" and not "chaff" here.

rendering for שֶׁקֶט, the translator has been able to consistently use it in a way appropriate to the context he creates in his translations.

This equivalent only occurs outside Isaiah in Jer 13:24: *καὶ διέσπειρα αὐτοὺς ὡς φρύγανα φερόμενα ὑπὸ ἀνέμου εἰς ἔρημον*. Here it is an odd comparison, to say they will be scattered in the wind like sticks; while sticks certainly blow in the wind, leaves, straw, chaff, and grass all come more readily to mind and are more dramatically carried by lighter breezes. The word φρύγανον only occurs in two other places in the LXX: in Job 30:7 it is used for לִדְוִקָה, a kind of weed or artichoke;¹⁸⁷ in Hos 10:7 it is used for חֲצֵקָה, a splinter.¹⁸⁸

3.3.2.1.3. καλάμη where the Hebrew Lacks a Word for Straw

While καλάμη seems like a better rendering of שֶׁקֶט, and is used more often elsewhere in the LXX, in LXX-Isa it is only used for שֶׁקֶט once (5:24), as we have seen. The other three places it occurs in LXX-Isa it modifies the meaning of an image. In Isa 1:31 it is used to further describe נְעֵרֶת (tow), in 17:6 for עֲלֵלֶת (gleanings), and in 27:4 as a rendering for שִׁית (thistle). We discuss 17:6 in the section on trees (3.6.3.3.), and 27:4 in the section on thorns (3.4.1.). We will discuss 1:31 here because the LXX has the plus καλάμη and there are not other flax related passages in Isaiah with which to discuss it.

Flax was an important crop in both Palestine and Egypt. Types of linen are mentioned in Isa 3:23 and 19:9, and how the Greek renders them is interesting,¹⁸⁹ but the plant flax or its parts only occur in a metaphor in 1:31.

Isa 1:31

The strong shall become like <i>tow</i> and their work like a spark;	וְהָיָה הַחֹסֶן לְנְעֵרֶת וּפְעֵלוֹ לְנִיצוֹץ	καὶ ἔσται ἡ ἰσχυρὸς αὐτῶν ὡς καλάμη στιππύου καὶ αἱ ἐργασίαι αὐτῶν ὡς σπινθηῆρες πυρός,	And their strength shall be like a <i>straw</i> of <i>tow</i> , and their works like sparks of fire,
<i>the two of them</i> shall burn together, with no one to quench them.	וּבְעָרוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו וְאֵין מְכַבֵּה:	καὶ κατακαυθήσονται οἱ ἄνομοι καὶ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἅμα, καὶ οὐκ ἔσται ὁ σβέσων.	and the lawless and the sinners shall be burned together, and there shall be no one to quench them.

Isaiah 1:31 tells how the wicked described in the previous verses, who will be refined out of Jerusalem (1:25), will self destruct. The word נְעֵרֶת refers to tow,¹⁹⁰ it only occurs here and in Judges 16:9. Tow is a by-product of flax production; when the woody parts of the plant are combed (hackled) out of the flax fibers, some fibers break and are also removed; these

¹⁸⁷ Here again, perhaps *salsola kali* was thought.

¹⁸⁸ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 335 finds this equivalent implausible.

¹⁸⁹ For the rendering of the articles of clothing in chapter 3 see: Michaël van der Meer, “Trendy Translations in the Septuagint of Isaiah: A Study of the Vocabulary of the Greek Isaiah 3:18-23 in the Light of Contemporary Sources,” in *Die Septuaginta-Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten* (eds. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008): 581-96.

¹⁹⁰ HALOT, s.v.; DCH, s.v.; BDB, s.v.

short fibers are the tow and can still be used to make coarser cordage, rough fabric, and often wicks.¹⁹¹ The Hebrew image, then, builds in each clause. First, the strong are said to become tow, that is, something feeble; second, their works become a spark (something short lived, a flash in the pan). In the second part of the verse the image develops further by combining the two previous ideas: their works will set them on fire and the two of them will burn up; to make matters worse, in the final clause we learn that there is no one to extinguish them.

The Greek of 1:31a has made a few adjustments. The metaphors were made into similes, by interpreting ל as though it were כ, as often happens.¹⁹² “The strong” and “their works” have become in Greek “their strength” and “their works;” “they” must be οἱ ἄνομοι and οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ mentioned in 1:28.¹⁹³ The change from “the strong” to “their strength” could be based on a *Vorlage* reading with pronominal suffixes like that of 1QIsa^a which reads: החסנכם (and also ופעלכם), though the person is still different. The idea that tow is weak can be seen in classical literature, in that *στυππέϊνος* is used metaphorically for feebleness in *Comica Adespota* 855.¹⁹⁴ The LXX also renders the vehicles of the two similes each with two words, so נְעֵרָת becomes καλάμη στιππύου, and נִצוֹן becomes σπινθήρες πυρός.¹⁹⁵ The need to specify that it is a single straw of tow may be to distinguish it from a stronger cord of tow, or from tow as a collective material.¹⁹⁶ Ziegler suggests καλάμη was added because it is thrown into fires in metaphors describing the punishment of the wicked (Isa 5:24; Mal 4:1(3:19)).¹⁹⁷ Theodotion and Symmachus use only one word for tow in Isa 1:31: ἀποτίναγμα, while Aquila seems to understand נְעֵרָת to be from נָעַר (to shake), and so renders with τίναγμα. In Judges 16:9, where again the simile of tow is used, this time snapping in a fire, a cord of tow is expressed by the construct פִּתְלֵה-הַנְּעֵרָת (thread of tow) which is rendered as στρέμμα στιππύου in Vaticanus (B) and κλώσμα τοῦ ἀποτινάγματος in Alexandrinus (A). As Ziegler points out,¹⁹⁸ in Sirach 21:9 a similar idea to LXX-Isa 1:31 is expressed: στιππύον συνηγμένον συναγωγῇ ἀνόμων, καὶ ἡ συντέλεια αὐτῶν φλόξ πυρός (The assembly of the lawless is bundled tow, and their end is a flame of fire).

In Isa 1:31b the LXX adds an interpretation for the metaphor by making clear to whom שְׁנֵיהֶם refers: οἱ ἄνομοι καὶ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ from 1:28, who again appear being destroyed together, this time by fire instead of crushing. In the Greek, the pronoun could not have

¹⁹¹ R. J. Forbes, *Studies in Ancient Technology* vol. IV (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 30.

¹⁹² Ziegler notes that ל + היה is often turned into a simile in LXX-Isa, *Untersuchungen*, 92. van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 233, believes the metaphor is made into a simile to underline the metaphoric value of “strength.”

¹⁹³ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 111.

¹⁹⁴ LSJ, s.v.

¹⁹⁵ LXX.D.E.K., 2509 suggests these words point to LXX-Isa 5:24.

¹⁹⁶ For στιππύον (which also can have the spelling *στυππύον*, according to LSJ, s.v.) as a collective singular, see p.cair.zen.3.59489. Cf. van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 233, who says that καλάμη is added to show that the weakness of tow is meant, as opposed to rope.

¹⁹⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92-93. But it only elsewhere (beside 1:31 and 5:24) appears in Isaiah in 17:6 and 27:4, where it refers to the stubble left in a field after harvest.

¹⁹⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

referred to “their strength and works” since the LXX understands these as attributes of someone else (the lawless and the sinners). LXX.D.E.K points out that δ $\sigma\beta\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\omega\nu$ corresponds to LXX-Amos 5:6 and LXX-Jer 4:4.¹⁹⁹

The Targum is similar to LXX in several ways: the strong again becomes strength: תוקפהון דרשיעיא, tow is rendered with two words in a simile: כנעורת כתנא; spark is also rendered with two words in a simile: כניצון נורא; and while “the two of them” is not the lawless and sinners but refers to tow and spark, twice we have a reference to רשיעיא.²⁰⁰

As we mentioned, Ziegler suggests $\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\mu\eta$ is used in 1:31 because it often occurs in descriptions of the wicked being punished in metaphors using fire,²⁰¹ but we suggested it is added to distinguish that an individual fiber of tow is meant and not tow as a collective singular. While indeed in 1:31 and 5:24 we find $\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\mu\eta$ destined for fire, in the other two places it occurs in LXX-Isa (17:6 and 27:4) the idea is related to what is left in fields after harvest.

3.3.2.1.4. Summary

It is clear that the LXX-Isa translator knew the meaning of $\psi\kappa$ since he translated it with $\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\mu\eta$ in 5:24. In this passage he may have translated with $\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\mu\eta$ because of the idea of the “unrestrained flame;” a flame in a field of stubble or where straw is stored would be difficult to restrain compared to how he usually translates $\psi\kappa$: $\phi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron\nu$ (dry sticks) which needs to be gathered and typically belong in a controlled cooking or heating fire. In 33:11 the translator renders what he thought the straw metaphor meant: vanity or weakness; this is close to how Targum Isaiah understands straw metaphors in 5:24 and 47:14. In the remaining three occurrences of $\psi\kappa$, it is rendered as $\phi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron\nu$. In 40:24 the image is of something being carried away; by rendering with $\phi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron\nu$, the translator continues the idea of the princes being planted and creates a subtle contrast to the common image of kings as trees. In 41:2 the image is again of something blowing away in the wind; in rendering with $\phi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron\nu$ the Greek makes a more apt image of the enemies’ bows uselessly being scattered. In 47:14 the image is again about fire; $\phi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron\nu$ implies that they are destined to be burned which further advances the translator’s rendering of the verse. The translator, then, chooses which vehicle, straw or twigs, will better express what he understands to be the meaning of the passage at hand.

The Targum renders the similes literally in 5:24, maintaining the reference to stubble. The rendering of 33:11 is free, so that stubble is interpreted as evil deeds, yet the idea of straw ($\psi\kappa$) is added turning the reference to breath into the common image of wind blowing chaff away. In 40:24 the first half of the verse is interpreted, but the simile of wind scattering straw

¹⁹⁹ LXX.D.E.K., 2509.

²⁰⁰ “And the strength of the wicked shall become as a tow of flax, and the deed of their hands as a spark of fire; as when they are brought near to each other and both of them burn together, so will the wicked come to an end, they and their wicked deeds, and there will be no pity for them.”

²⁰¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92-93.

is maintained. The Targum interprets the righteous one in 41:2 to be Abraham, and has him pursue his enemies with his bow like stubble, probably before a wind. For 47:14 the Targum understands that one group are weak like straw as opposed to a strong group that destroys them like fire.

3.3.2.2. תָּבַן

Another term that refers to “straw” or “stubble,” in this case meaning the cut straw used as cattle feed, is תָּבַן. This term is typically rendered with ἄχυρον, which in classical Greek referred to the husk or bran of the grain,²⁰² but in the LXX refers more to the straw from which the grain is removed at threshing.²⁰³ In this section we will first look at the texts where תָּבַן occurs, then make a short summary.

3.3.2.2.1. Texts

The word תָּבַן only occurs in Isaiah in 11:7 and 65:25.

Isa 11:7

The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.	<p>וּפְרָה וְדֹב תִרְעִינָה יַחְדָּו יִרְבְּצוּ יְלֵדֵיהֶן וְאַרְיֵה כִבְקַר יֹאכַל- תָּבָן:</p>	<p>καὶ βοῦς καὶ ἄρκος ἅμα βοσκηθήσονται, καὶ ἅμα τὰ παιδία αὐτῶν ἔσονται, καὶ λέων καὶ βοῦς ἅμα φάγονται ἄχυρα.</p>	And the ox and the bear shall graze together, and their young shall be together, and together shall the lion and the ox eat <i>straw</i> .
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In the Hebrew, this image depicts future tranquility such that even animals will be tame and live together in peace. The predators will be content eating grass and hay together with their former prey. The Greek maintains this image, though it removes the comparison of the lion eating *like* an ox, but instead eats *with* the ox (note also the LXX does not bother with a synonym for βοῦς), harmonizing to the first clause. 1QIsa^a, 4QIsa^b, and 4QIsa^c all have כִּבְקַר (though 4QIsa^b lacks the ר).

The Greek has made a few minor stylistic adjustments. In the first clause, it moves “together” (ἅμα) to before the verb, and adds it to the subsequent two clauses. The rendering of תָּבַן with ἄχυρον is a good choice, since both refer to cut stalks of grain used for cattle fodder, and can also mean chaff.²⁰⁴

The Targum renders this verse literally.²⁰⁵

In Isa 65:25 very nearly the same image is used again.

The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, the lion	<p>וְאֵב וְטֹלָה יִרְעוּ כְּאַחַד וְאַרְיֵה כִבְקַר</p>	<p>τότε λύκοι καὶ ἄρνες βοσκηθήσονται ἅμα, καὶ λέων ὡς βοῦς</p>	Then wolves and lambs shall graze together, and a lion
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²⁰² LSJ, s.v.

²⁰³ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v. As a second definition he has the chaff and grain separated from the straw and grain.

²⁰⁴ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v. LSJ s.v..

²⁰⁵ “The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.”

<p>shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent-- its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.</p>	<p>יֹאכְלֵ-תִבְּנִין וְנֶחֱשׁ עֲפָר לֶחֶמֹו לֹא-יִרְעֹו וְלֹא- יִשְׁחִיתֹו בְּכָל-הָרֶ- קַדְשֵׁי אֶמְרַת יְהוָה:</p>	<p>φάγεται ἄχυρα, ὄφεις δὲ γῆν ὡς ἄρτον· οὐκ ἀδικήσουσιν οὐδὲ μὴ λυμανοῦνται ἐπὶ τῷ ὄρει τῷ ἁγίῳ μου, λέγει κύριος.</p>	<p>shall eat <i>straw</i> like an ox, but a snake [shall eat] earth <i>like</i> bread! They shall not do wrong or destroy on my holy mountain, says the Lord.</p>
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This image is shorter than that of 11:6-9, and focuses more on the dangerous animals no longer doing harm. The Greek renders more literally than in 11:7, note especially the very same phrase יֹאכְלֵ-תִבְּנִין וְנֶחֱשׁ עֲפָר is now rendered literally, preserving the simile και λέων ὡς βοῦς φάγεται ἄχυρα.²⁰⁶ But in the next sentence, the snake instead of eating dust for its bread it has a new simile in the Greek: it eats earth like bread.²⁰⁷ This simile is jarring after the previous one, the lion is compared to something else that eats, while the snake has its future food compared to its regular food (bread in the sense of subsistence).²⁰⁸ Again, תִּבְּנִין is rendered with ἄχυρον.

The Targum also renders this verse literally.²⁰⁹

While the term ἄχυρον is used as an equivalent for תִּבְּנִין in 11:7 and 65:25, it also appears in 30:24 and 17:13 (which we will discuss below in our discussion of chaff: מִץ). In 30:24 we find a description of how the land will be blessed in the future, and how the cattle will have large pastures and will eat high quality fodder: וְהָאֲלָפִים וְהָעִירִים עֲבָדֵי הָאֲדָמָה וְהַבְּמֹזָרָה בְּלִיל חֲמִין יֹאכְלוּ אֶשְׁרֵי-זֶרֶה בְּרַחַת וּבַמְזֹרָה “And the cattle and donkeys, the workers of the earth, will eat seasoned mixed-fodder, which was winnowed with a winnowing-shovel and winnowing-fork.” The meaning of בְּלִיל חֲמִין is some sort of special fodder, seasoned somehow and mixed with different kinds of grain and straw;²¹⁰ that it is special fodder is made clear in that it has been winnowed, which is not usually necessary for cattle feed. LXX does not render this literally but gives the general sense, that the fodder is ἄχυρα ἀναπεποιημένα ἐν κριθῇ λελιχυμένα. The idea of winnowing (or at least it is threshed and crushed) is present, as is that it is a mixture, hay prepared with barley, so it is still a special kind of fodder, or at least more than the most basic fodder of plain hay.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 182 [41].

²⁰⁷ Perhaps it is better thought of as a deictic use of ὡς. See T. Muraoka, “The Use of ὡς in the Greek Bible,” *Novum Testamentum* 7.1 (1964), 55.

²⁰⁸ This would be less jarring if the previous simile were: the lion will eat hay like it eats the ox. 1QIsa^a agrees with MT.

²⁰⁹ “the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like an ox; and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, says the LORD.”

²¹⁰ Probably something like the slightly fermented mixture “silage” is meant, as NRSV renders it. For the identification of חֲמִין with chick peas, see Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 130.

3.3.2.2. Summary

To summarize, LXX-Isa understands **תְּבַנֵּי** to refer to a grain farming byproduct that can be collected and fed to animals, and so renders with *ἄχυρον*, which is a term used to render other words related to cattle feed. The Targum renders with the Aramaic cognate.

3.3.2.3. מֶן

The last part of grain plants that needs to be considered is the chaff or husk that is separated from the ear of grain by crushing or threshing and then is winnowed away. In this section we will first look at the texts where it occurs, then make a short summary.

3.3.2.3.1. Texts

The Hebrew term for chaff is **מֶן**, and occurs in Isa 17:13, 29:5 and 41:15, and in each case is rendered with *χνοῦς* (chaff).²¹¹ As discussed above, *χνοῦς* was probably used as an equivalent of **מֶן** in the LXX to describe the smaller, lighter parts of chaff (*ἄχυρον*).

Isa 17:13

<p>The nations roar like the roaring of many waters, but he will rebuke them, and they will flee far away, chased like chaff on the mountains before the wind and <i>tumbleweed</i> before the storm.</p>	<p>לְאַמִּים כַּשֶּׁאֵזֶן מַיִם רְבִים יִשְׁאֹז וְגַעַר בּוֹ וְנָס מִמְּרָחֵק וְרָדָף כְּמֶזְזַח הָרִים לְפָנֵי-רוּחַ וּכְגַלְגַּל לְפָנֵי סוּפָה:</p>	<p>ὡς ὕδωρ πολὺ ἔθνη πολλά, ὡς ὕδατος πολλοῦ βία καταφερομένου· καὶ ἀποσκορακιεῖ αὐτὸν καὶ πόρρω αὐτὸν διώξεται ὡς χνοῦν ἄχυρου λικμώντων ἀπέναντι ἀνέμου καὶ ὡς κονιορτὸν τροχοῦ καταιγίς φέρουσα.</p>	<p>Many nations are like much water, as when much water violently rushes down. And he will damn him and pursue him far away, like the dust of chaff when they winnow before the wind and like a sudden gust [drives] dust of a wheel.</p>
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For the LXX’s reading of the water similes, see LXX.D.E.K. For our purposes, it is important to note **כְּמֶזְזַח הָרִים** has been rendered with *ὡς χνοῦν ἄχυρου λικμώντων*. LXX.D.E.K. notes that the idea of winnowing comes from Isa 30:22, 24 and 41:16, and that **מֶן** is here rendered twice: *χνοῦν ἄχυρου*.²¹² This double rendering is probably to specify *χνοῦς* as chaff, since it could otherwise be misunderstood, being parallel to *κονιορτός*.²¹³ Ziegler believes *ἄχυρου* is added because of *λικμώντων*.²¹⁴ It is interesting to note that this parallel also has two words where the Hebrew has only one: *κονιορτὸν τροχοῦ*.²¹⁵ Another explanation is that the

²¹¹ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v. The word *χνοῦς* also occurs in Isa 5:24, for **מֶן**. The only other place **מֶן** occurs is Isa 3:24, where it is rendered with *κονιορτός*. Each rendering is appropriate for the context in which they occur, though they may not be very close equivalents for **מֶן**.

²¹² LXX.D.E.K. 2549. See also van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 34.

²¹³ Ziegler believes the translator inserted *κονιορτὸν* due to the parallel *χνοῦν ἄχυρου*. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 93. However, cf. 29:5, where *τροχοῦ* is added to explain *κονιορτὸν* “dust.”

²¹⁴ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 93. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 193, believes *ἄχυρου* is explanatory, pointing to its addition also in 30:24 (as does Ziegler), though that context is different, as we have seen.

²¹⁵ See van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 34.

idea of winnowing could have come from the translator supposing זָרִים should be זָרִים;²¹⁶ though Ziegler suggests the translator may have thought mountains are mentioned as a place where they winnowed in Palestine.²¹⁷ According to Musselman, גִּלְגֵּל refers to a sort of tumble-weed that dries out and blows in the wind around the same time of year as wheat is harvested,²¹⁸ and so would have been seen blowing about when the chaff was also being blown away;²¹⁹ the LXX never renders in this way. Indeed here, the LXX understands the image to be of a passing wheel kicking up a cloud of dust, as in 5:28 where chariot wheels are compared to a blast of wind.²²⁰

The Targum makes clear that the waters are kings, translates זָרִים literally, and perhaps understands גִּלְגֵּל, or at least transliterates with גִּלְגֵּל.²²¹

Isa 29:5

<p>But the multitude of your foes shall be like small dust, and the multitude of tyrants like flying chaff. And in an instant, suddenly,</p>	<p>וְהָיָה כְּאַבְקַת דָּק הַמֶּזֶן זָרִיד וּכְמֶזְעַר עֵבֶר הַמֶּזֶן עֲרִיצִים וְהָיָה לְפֶתַע פְּתָאִים:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔσται ὡς κονιορτός ἀπὸ τροχοῦ ὁ πλοῦτος τῶν ἀσεβῶν καὶ ὡς χυνοῦς φερόμενος, καὶ ἔσται ὡς στιγμὴ παραχρῆμα 6 παρὰ κυρίου σαβαωθ·</p>	<p>But the wealth of the impious shall be like dust from a wheel and like flying chaff. And it shall be like an instant, suddenly, 6 from the Lord Sabaoth,</p>
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Depending on how we understand הַמֶּזֶן, the enemies' army or royal entourage, or the general confusion they create, it is just like a cloud of dust and chaff passing in the wind, just a temporary little cloud of chaos disappearing quickly and permanently.²²²

The Greek has made several modifications to the verse. Of note first, is that the Greek has added the idea of a wheel (ἀπὸ τροχοῦ),²²³ which is elsewhere seen in relation to chaff (more specifically, to dust (κονιορτός) as in 17:13,²²⁴ but also generally as we will see, in the Greek of 41:15). The LXX here understands הַמֶּזֶן to refer to the strangers' abundance of riches, as in 29:7, 8; and 32:14;²²⁵ this fits into the translator's understanding of the passage, since it is also a plus found in 29:2. Also of note is that rather than the idea of strangers or tyrants, the LXX has ἀσεβής, the impious. This equivalence (for זָרִים) can also be found in Isa 25:2, 5, and is explainable if we understand it as it is used to describe things strange to the law,

²¹⁶ Ziegler does not think this explanation is necessary. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 93. Otley, *Isaiah*, II 193, thinks the genitive suggests the translator is making a guess, or that he read חרש or זרה.

²¹⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 93.

²¹⁸ This is how LXX.D.E.K. 2550 understands the Hebrew.

²¹⁹ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 281-83.

²²⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 93.

²²¹ "Kingdoms roar like the roaring of many waters, but he will rebuke him, and he will flee far away and be chased like chaff on the mountains before the wind and the whirling dust before the storm." Chilton seems to think גִּלְגֵּל can mean "whirling dust," but I can only find the definition "wheel" in lexicons.

²²² In how many cartoons is a crowd or chaos illustrated as a cloud of dust and commotion?

²²³ IQIsa^a agrees with MT in that there is no wheel.

²²⁴ LXX.D.E.K., 2579.

²²⁵ This equivalence can also be found in Isa 16:14; Psa 36:16, and as Muraoka points out, 36:3. Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 97.

like the strange incense of Exod 30:9 or the strange fire of Lev 10:1, Num 3:4; and 26:61.²²⁶ Another explanation is that of Muraoka, who suggests the translator understood דַּי (insolent, presumptuous),²²⁷ which agrees with 1QIsa^a which has דַּי. The Greek omits the synonymous phrase הַמֶּזֶן עָרִיצִים, using the first rendering distributively.²²⁸ Nearly the same phrase, πλοῦτος ἀσεβῶν, is found also in the Greek of 24:8.²²⁹

The equivalent φερόμενος for עֲבָר is elsewhere only found in Jer 13:24;²³⁰ this passage, remember, is also the only place outside of Isaiah that uses φρύγανα for קֶשׁ.

The last change is that the Greek adds a simile, as Ziegler pointed out he often does this when he sees the phrase הִיָּה לְ. ²³¹ These changes are largely stylistic, they do not change the imagery drastically in content, though their rhetorical effect is different.

The only thing to note about the Targum is that “your multitude of enemies” (הַמֶּזֶן עָרִיצִים) are interpreted as the tumult of those scattering you הַמֶּזֶן מְבַדְּרֶיךָ, understanding perhaps זרע.²³²

Isa 41:15

<p>Now, I will make of you a threshing sledge, sharp, new, and having teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and crush them, and you shall make the hills like chaff.</p>	<p>הִנֵּה שֶׁמְתִיץ לְמוֹרֵג חָרוֹץ חָדָשׁ בְּעַל פִּיפִיּוֹת תְּדוֹשׁ הָרִים וְתִדְק וּגְבַעוֹת כְּמֶזֶן תִּשָּׂים:</p>	<p>ἰδοὺ ἐποίησά σε ὡς τροχούς ἀμάξης ἀλωῶντας καινοὺς πριστηροειδεῖς, καὶ ἀλόησεις ὄρη καὶ λεπτυνεῖς βουνοὺς καὶ ὡς χνοῦν θήσεις.</p>	<p>Look, I made you as the threshing wheels of a cart, new and saw-shaped, and you shall thresh mountains and grind hills to powder and make them like <i>chaff</i>.</p>
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In this passage God comforts Israel saying he will make them a threshing sledge that will reduce mountains and hills to chaff. The metaphor here explains 41:11-12 where Israel’s enemies will become like nothing, here the enemies are mountains and hills but are reduced to chaff which blows away and is gone in 41:16.²³³

The term מֹרֵג refers to a threshing sledge.²³⁴ Here its high quality is described as being sharp (חָרוֹץ)²³⁵ and new (חָדָשׁ), that is, all the stones or metal teeth on the bottom are still sharp and none have fallen out. The meaning of בְּעַל פִּיפִיּוֹת is obscure; HALOT defines פִּיפִיּוֹת as “sharp edges” and DCH as just “edge,” since it is used to describe double edged swords. In 1QIsa^a it is two words: פִּי פִּיּוֹת; perhaps thinking a sort of superlative expression

²²⁶ See definition 2d in BDB.

²²⁷ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 189.

²²⁸ van der Vorm-Crouchs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 77-78.

²²⁹ LXX.D.E.K., 2565, 2579.

²³⁰ LXX.D.E.K., 2579. For the translator’s preference for this verb, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 142-43.

²³¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

²³² “But the multitude of your *dispersed* shall be like small dust, and a *tumult* of *strong ones* like chaff which passes, and there will be a *tumult* suddenly.”

²³³ The Greek renders literally the reference to winnowing in 41:16, while the Targum adds a simile explicitly mentioning chaff.

²³⁴ HALOT, s.v. DCH, s.v.

²³⁵ As a noun, this would also mean a threshing sledge. HALOT, s.v.

like שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים.²³⁶ The strong expression of plurality, פִּיפִּיּוֹת, undoubtedly denotes an extra amount of stones or metal teeth, since they are already described as sharp and new. Whatever it means exactly, it clearly contributes to the picture of the sledge being a deluxe industrial model with all the accessories; it is a much more elaborate description than Amos 1:3 uses: הַרְצוֹת הַבְּרִזָּל.

The Greek translates the metaphor as a simile, rendering לְ with ὡς, and changes the terminology to better fit the Egyptian agricultural context. As Ziegler pointed out: though there is no regular LXX rendering for מוֹרֵג, here the translator has not rendered it, but has changed the threshing sledge into threshing rollers, τροχούς ἀμάξης, under the influence of 28:27.²³⁷ In that passage, we find the Greek τροχὸς ἀμάξης literally translating אֹפֶן עֲגֵלָה. Ziegler shows that this, along with the term πιστηροειδεῖς (for בְּעֵל פִּיפִּיּוֹת) reflects the Egyptian milieu,²³⁸ and gives the example of Cyril of Alexandria who comments on this verse by mentioning that some Egyptians just use animals to thresh grain with their hooves, while others use wagons with saw-like wheels.²³⁹ Troxel suggests שֶׁדֶשׁ was read as הַדֶּשׁ and so rendered ἀλωῶντας, then was read as שֶׁדֶשׁ and rendered καινούς;²⁴⁰ but it seems the technical terms do not have exact equivalents but are updated to fit the tools of the translator's day.²⁴¹ Another change the Greek makes is to move the conjunction on “hills” to before the simile, which improves the parallelism.

The Greek does not change the vehicle of the metaphor, but makes it a simile, then adjusts the terminology of the vehicle to better fit the experience of his audience. As in 29:5, the Greek has added the idea of a wheel in a passage mentioning chaff.²⁴²

The Targum renders literally, except it interprets mountains and hills as nations.²⁴³

The image of chaff is used in the Hebrew to illustrate something that is minute and light and is passing away and disappearing in the wind. The Greek uses it in the same way, though often adjusts the surrounding terminology, often to include a wheel; in 17:13 and 29:5 the wheel is mentioned as kicking up dust for the wind, while in 41:15 it is a threshing tool.

Chaff is implicitly present also wherever threshing (שֶׁדֶשׁ; 21:10; 25:10; 28:27-8; 41:15) and winnowing (זָרָה; 30:24; 41:16, which we have already discussed) is mentioned.²⁴⁴

²³⁶ Otherwise 1QIsa^a agrees with MT regarding the threshing implement, as does 1QIsa^b up to חרוץ.

²³⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 186-87.

²³⁸ Seeligmann lists the word πιστηροειδεῖς as an example of the translator's big vocabulary. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version*, 184 [42/43].

²³⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 186-87.

²⁴⁰ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 120. He calls this a translation doublet, as opposed to a double translation.

²⁴¹ Without ἀλωῶντας it could be unclear why this wagon wheel is mentioned.

²⁴² It is noteworthy that the translator uses χροῦς and not χροῦς or κονιορτός, suggesting he has chaff and not simply dust in mind.

²⁴³ “Behold, I make you a *strong* threshing sledge, new, *full of points*; you shall *kill the Gentiles* and *destroy* [them], and you shall make *the kingdoms* like *the chaff*. 16 You shall winnow them, and a wind shall carry them away, and *his Memra*, as *the whirlwind the chaff*, shall scatter them. And you shall rejoice in *the Memra* of the LORD; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.”

Isa 21:10

<p>O my threshed and my son of a threshing-floor, what I have heard from the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, I announce to you.</p>	<p>מְדֻשָּׁתִי וּבֶן-גֶּרְנִי אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּי מֵאֵת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַגִּדְתִּי לָכֶם:</p>	<p>ἀκούσατε, οἱ καταλειμμένοι καὶ οἱ ὀδυνώμενοι, ἀκούσατε ἃ ἤκουσα παρὰ κυρίου σαβαωθ· ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἀνήγγειλεν ἡμῖν.</p>	<p>Hear, you who have been left and you who are in pain; hear the things I have heard from the Lord Sabaoth; the God of Israel has announced them to us.</p>
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Here, at the end of an oracle about Babylon’s fall to Media and Persia, the audience, Israel/Judah, are addressed metaphorically. The term מְדֻשָּׁתִי refers to what was threshed and בֶּן-גֶּרְנִי to what is characteristic of a threshing floor: threshed grain. The metaphor suggests the people addressed have suffered violence like threshed grain. As LXX.D.E.K. points out, in Micah 4:13 and Hab 3:12 nations are described as being threshed as a metaphor for them being defeated.²⁴⁵

The Greek interprets these terms as also in 28:28 where a similar interpretation is made.²⁴⁶ The threshed grain metaphor comes out of nowhere in the passage, so it makes sense that the translator would feel the need to interpret it for the sake of clarity.²⁴⁷ He renders the threshed grain מְדֻשָּׁתִי as representing the remnants: οἱ καταλειμμένοι.²⁴⁸ This is interesting, since in 17:5-6 the remnant is what was left in the field, so the grain is presumably what was carried off. But of course it is possible to use the same vehicle in different ways for different metaphors. Those remaining in 21:10 are thought of as having suffered some violence or distress,²⁴⁹ which the translator makes clear by rendering the parallel בֶּן-גֶּרְנִי with οἱ ὀδυνώμενοι. 1QIsa^a has גְּדָרִי (my fenced one), though the MT reading makes better sense as the basis for the Greek. While threshed grain implies chaff, neither the Hebrew nor the Greek even make an implication regarding whether the chaff is present or has already been winnowed away.²⁵⁰

In addition to interpreting the metaphor and giving what it is thought to represent, the translator has further clarified the passage by adding two imperatives (ἀκούσατε) for which the vocatives act as subject. Ziegler suggests this plus follows the relative clause and is similar to Isa 1:10; 7:13 and such passages.²⁵¹ The main verb in the Hebrew has changed from first person to third person; the prophet no longer announces to the threshed, but it is God who declares to the prophet and the remnant.

²⁴⁴ Isa 27:12 may contain threshing and gleaning imagery, though synonyms are used: חָבַט and לָקַט. In any case, LXX understands it to refer to “fencing” (συμφράσσω) instead of “beating.”

²⁴⁵ LXX.D.E.K., 2557.

²⁴⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 185.

²⁴⁷ Seeligmann goes too far in saying the translation “is practically independent of the Hebrew text.” Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 277.

²⁴⁸ This term appears in 13:12,14; 27:10; 37:4, 31, as LXX.D.E.K., 2557 points out.

²⁴⁹ LXX.D.E.K. describes it as cruelty suffered by the defeated. LXX.D.E.K., 2557.

²⁵⁰ NRSV renders בֶּן-גֶּרְנִי as “winnowed one.”

²⁵¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 65.

The Targum also interprets the metaphor, though by giving what it thinks מְדַשְׁתִּי represents, then by expanding the parallel name into a simile.²⁵² So, the first part represents kings skilled in war who will plunder, and the second part says they plunder like someone skilled to thresh: מלכין דאומנין לאגחא קרבא ייתון עלה למיבזה הא כאיכרא דאומן למדש ית אידרא.

Isa 25:10

For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain. The Moabites shall be trodden down in their place as straw is trodden down in a dung-pit.	כִּי־תִנְנֶנָּה יְד־יְהוָה בְּהַר הַזֶּה וְנָדוּשׁ מוֹאָב תַּחֲתֵיו כְּהַדָּוֶשׁ מִתְבֵּן בְּמִי ²⁵³ מִדְּמָנָה׃	ὅτι ἀνάπαυσιν δώσει ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος τοῦτο, καὶ καταπατηθήσεται ἡ Μωαβίτις, ὃν τρόπον πατοῦσιν ἄλωνα ἐν ἀμάξαις.	Because God will give us rest on this mountain, and Moabitis shall be trodden down as they tread a threshing floor with wagons.
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The Hebrew uses a more general meaning for the term דָּוַשׁ, simply to tread. In this case it is straw being trod into dung, either for fuel or fertilizer.²⁵⁴ The metaphor is different from the threshing metaphor, in that it is less about suffering cruel violence and more about humiliation, though the reality may have been much the same.

The Greek removes the anthropomorphism יְד־יְהוָה saying instead simply ὁ θεός. This may not be due to the issue of it being an anthropomorphism, but a matter of syntax, since the translator appears to have read תִּנְנֶנָּה as a hiphil (exchanging a י for the ו),²⁵⁵ and so rendered it with ἀνάπαυσιν δώσει.²⁵⁶ The Greek changes the image into the more common one of grain being threshed, though he should have been familiar with mixing straw and manure for fuel as was common.²⁵⁷ The Qere-Ketiv of MT is read in both ways by various ancient versions: LXX follows the Qere (בְּמוֹ, rendering with the preposition ἐν), as does the Peshita and Vulgate; while 1QIsa^a, Symmachus, and the Targum follow the Ketiv.²⁵⁸ As Ziegler points out, πατέω is a unique rendering for דָּוַשׁ, though it can be found in relation to a threshing floor (ἄλων) in 1 Sam 23:1.²⁵⁹ As we have seen, תְּבֵן is elsewhere in Isaiah always rendered with ἄχυρον, but here מִתְבֵּן is understood to stand for the grain of the threshing floor; the

²⁵² “Kings who are skilled in waging war will come against her to plunder her even as the farmer who is skilled in threshing the grain. The prophet said, What I have heard before the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, I announce to you.”

²⁵³ ק במו.

²⁵⁴ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 185-86. For an analysis of the Hebrew in light of Mari texts, see: Bob Becking, “‘As Straw is Trodden Down in the Water of a Dung-Pit;’ Remarks on a Simile in Isaiah 25:10,” in *Isaiah in Context: Studies in Honour of Arie van der Kooij on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (eds. Michaël N. van der Meer et al.; Leiden: Brill, 2010): 3-14. He argues in favor of the ketiv reading, understanding that straw was used to cover the dung to soak up water and cover the smell. Cf. 1QIsa^a which has כְּחָדוּשׁ.

²⁵⁵ See Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 227.

²⁵⁶ LXX.D.E.K. 2568. Here it suggests 32:17 as a similar case.

²⁵⁷ see van der Veen, “The Economic Value of Chaff,” 218-19. Cf. Ezekiel 4:11-15.

²⁵⁸ See Arie van der Kooij, “Isaiah 24-27: Text-Critical Notes,” in *Studies in Isaiah 24-27: The Isaiah Workshop-De Jesaja Werkplaats* (eds. Hendrik Jan Bosman, Harm van Grol, et alii; Oudtestamentische Studiën 43; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 14.

²⁵⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 185-86.

LXX uses a metonymy putting the threshing floor (ἄλων) for what is trod upon it.²⁶⁰ The rendering of מְדַמְנָה with ἄμαξα is not really a rendering,²⁶¹ but like in other passages related to threshing, the translator includes the idea of wheels or carts (21:10; 41:15).²⁶²

The Targum changes “hand” to “power.”²⁶³ Of more interest to us is that the Targum also changes the vehicle of the metaphor; instead of treading straw in dung, the straw is trodden into clay דְּמִידֵּשׁ תְּבִנָּא בְּטִינָא, probably under the influence of Exod 5:7 and Nahum 3:14.

In Isa 28:23-29 there is a passage illustrating various agricultural activities that are done in a certain way, and others that are not done in a certain way. We have discussed 28:25, 28 above (3.3.1.1.), but now we will look again at 28:27-28 where threshing is discussed and the passage is interpreted in the Greek.

Isa 28:27-28

<p><i>Black cumin</i> is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin; but <i>black cumin</i> is beaten out with a stick, and cumin with a rod.</p>	<p>כִּי לֹא בַּחֲרוּץ יִדָּשׁ קִצָּח וְאוֹפֵן עֲגָלָה עַל-כַּמֶּן יוֹסֵב כִּי בַמַּטֵּה יִחַבֵּט קִצָּח וְכַמֶּן בְּשִׁבֵּט:</p>	<p>οὐ γὰρ μετὰ σκληρότητος καθαίρεται τὸ μελάνθιον, οὐδὲ τροχὸς ἀμάξης περιάξει ἐπὶ τὸ κύμινον, ἀλλὰ ῥάβδῳ ἐκτινάσσεται τὸ μελάνθιον, τὸ δὲ κύμινον</p>	<p>For <i>black cumin</i> is not <i>cleaned</i> with harshness, nor will a cart wheel roll over the cumin, but <i>black cumin</i> is shaken with a rod, and cumin</p>
<p>[It] is crushed for bread, but one does not thresh it forever; one drives the cart wheel and horses over it, but does not pulverize it.</p>	<p>יִחָם יוֹדֵק כִּי לֹא לְנִצָּח אֲדוֹשׁ יְדוֹשֵׁנוּ וְהֵמָּה גִלְגַּל עֲגָלָתוֹ וּפְרָשָׁיו לֹא יִדְקְנוּ:</p>	<p>μετὰ ἄρτου βρωθήσεται. οὐ γὰρ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἐγὼ ὑμῖν ὀργισθήσομαι, οὐδὲ φωνὴ τῆς πικρίας μου καταπατήσει ὑμᾶς.</p>	<p>will be eaten with bread. For I will not be angry with you forever, nor will the voice of my bitterness trample you.</p>

In 28:23-25 the proper order of planting a field is described, and in 28:27-28 the proper way of preparing various produce is described, first by saying how herbs are not treated, then by saying how they are treated. In 28:27 two different threshing implements are mentioned, a sledge (חֲרוּץ) and rollers (אוֹפֵן עֲגָלָה), perhaps simply cart wheels); since they are not used on black cumin and cumin, they presumably are used for something else: the wheat, emmer, and barley of 28:25. The herbs are simply struck with a rod to shake the seeds

²⁶⁰ Cf. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 186, where he points out the papyri using the same metonymy.

²⁶¹ See Wilson De A. Cunha, *LXX Isaiah 24:1-26:6 as Interpretation & Translation: A Methodological Discussion* (PhD Diss., Leiden University, 2012), 118-19, where the suggestion that the translator read במרכבה for במי מדמנה is rejected.

²⁶² Ziegler says it is conditional on the image of the threshing floor. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 97.

²⁶³ “For the *might* of the LORD will be *revealed* on this mountain, and the Moabites will be trodden down in *their* place, as the straw is trodden down in the *mire*.”

loose. In 28:28 the Hebrew concedes that the cumins are crushed, even by cart wheels, but it is not ground finely. The meaning of the passage has to do with Judah suffering, but only for a time and according to the planned ordering of God's will (28:29). In 1QIsa^a a few differences should be noted. First of all, in 28:29, לחם is missing (4QIsa^k has לחם^l) and the first word is דק^l. Also, גלגל has been added by a corrector. These changes do not seem to form the basis for the differences in the Greek.

The Greek in these verses creates a more clear explanation of the whole passage. It is difficult to tell if σκληρότης is an interpretation of בְּחִרְוִין as the adjective (with sharpness) or as a noun (with a threshing sledge).²⁶⁴ As we saw in 21:10, the translator associates threshing with harsh treatment causing agony, so he could have interpreted “with a threshing sledge” to refer to harsh treatment. The rendering of וְדִישׁ with καθαίρω is interesting. The translator knows the meaning of דִישׁ, as we saw in 41:15; Ziegler discusses this rendering and concludes that the translator was influenced by his culture and rendered with καθαίρω, which refers more to winnowing or cleaning the seeds rather than threshing, because he knew it was appropriate to how cumin was treated.²⁶⁵ This translation, then, fits the common practice, which in fact reinforces the point the passage is trying to make, that black cumin is not treated harshly like grains are, it is simply cleaned by winnowing or sieving.²⁶⁶ In comparison, the next clause is rendered very literally, except for the word order being adjusted by moving the location of the verb περιάγω, and reading it as a Qal instead of Hophal.²⁶⁷ Likewise the next clause כִּי בַמְטָה יִחַבֵּט קֶצֶחַ is rendered literally, but the last is understood differently. Presumably וְכִמֶּזְזַן בְּשֶׁבֶט לָחֶם יוֹדֵק is rendered with τὸ δὲ κύμινον μετὰ ἄρτου βρωθήσεται.²⁶⁸ Ottley and Ziegler suggest the translator understood לָחֶם בְּשֶׁבֶט as being analogous to the idiom מְטָה-לָחֶם (eg. Lev 26:26) and shortened the phrase just to μετὰ ἄρτου.²⁶⁹ LXX.D.E.K. suggests the word שֶׁבֶט was simply passed over.²⁷⁰ This rendering is probably for clarity, since cumin is not crushed with a rod for making bread, but is crushed so it can be eaten with bread, as the Greek makes clear, dropping the references to the preparation of the cumin.

The passage as a whole is interpreted by the Greek in the last lines. It does not render the horses or wagons. The Greek interprets threshing (אָדוּשׁ יְדוּשָׁנוּ) as God's anger (ἐγὼ ὑμῖν ὀργισθήσομαι).²⁷¹ The translator again sees threshing as an image of harsh violent treatment, in this case as a manifestation of God's anger. The last phrase וְהָמָם גְּלִגְל עֲגָלָתוֹ וּפְרָשָׁיו לֹא־

²⁶⁴ It appears with little textual warrant in 4:6 and 8:12, as LXX.D.E.K., 2578 points out.

²⁶⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 184-85.

²⁶⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 184-85.

²⁶⁷ This parsing agrees with 1QIsa^a. LXX.D.E.K., 2578.

²⁶⁸ LXX.D.E.K., 2578 suggests יִדֵּק was read as נִדֵּק like in Jos 9:5, 12 where βιβρώσχω is used as an equivalent. However, it is probably an equivalent there to express the idea of the bread being worm-eaten.

²⁶⁹ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 245. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 8.

²⁷⁰ LXX.D.E.K., 2578.

²⁷¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 185. That it is brief anger accords with 7:4; 10:25; 54:7, as pointed out in LXX.D.E.K., 2578. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 120 also points to Isa 57:16 and Jer 3:12. 1QIsa^a has הִדֵּשׁ instead of אָדוּשׁ.

לִדְקֹנָנוּ appears to be rendered freely. Perhaps וְהַמֶּן was read as וְהַמֶּן, and is thus the source of the word φωνή; a similar idea to the Greek is expressed in Isa 30:30.²⁷² The idea of animosity (πικρία) comes from 28:21.²⁷³ The one phrase rendered nearly literally is לֹא־יִדְקֹנָנוּ which becomes οὐδὲ... καταπατήσει ὑμᾶς.

The Greek, then, interprets the passage as having to do with how Judah is treated. They suffer hardship for a time, but are not to be destroyed, just as black cumin and cumin are beaten but not crushed.²⁷⁴ This interpretation is partly the result of reading 28:26 as describing a chastisement followed by rejoicing.

The Targum interprets the passage as a whole already in 28:24-25, so that the rest can be rendered nearly literally. In 28:28 לֶחֶם is interpreted as grain עֲבוּרָא. The horses, which were omitted in the Greek, are rendered as a verb, and in the context of threshing, the Targum talks about separating the grain from the chaff: וּמְפָרִישׁ יֵת עֲבוּרָא וּמְפָרֵחַ יֵת דּוּקָא.²⁷⁵

3.3.2.3.2. Summary

LXX-Isa always understands the term chaff (זֶרֶק), rendering it literally with χνοῦς. While in 5:24 and in 29:5 the translator may have intended χνοῦς to carry a meaning more like “dust,” in the other places it clearly refers to chaff. In 17:13 the translator is more clear, rendering: χνοῦν ἀχύρου, and in 41:15 the context is of threshing. Chaff is mentioned in Isaiah to illustrate something that is chased away by the wind and disperses and disappears. In Aristophanes, *Acharinians*, 508 we see chaff in a metaphor in reference to the mixed nature of the members of a city: τοὺς γὰρ μετοίκους ἄχυρα τῶν ἀστῶν λέγω.²⁷⁶ We do not see chaff as a party in Isaiah, unlike Matt 3:12 and Luke 3:17 where it is a group that needs to be separated.

The LXX does not interpret or replace these chaff metaphors, but in each case adjusts and directs the metaphor. In 17:13, perhaps for lexical reasons, the translator has added winnowing, which makes more vivid the idea of the chaff being tossed in the air and blown away by wind. In 29:5 the similes are adjusted in the Greek. Instead of fine dust passing away, the Greek has introduced the idea of a wheel (which is found with chaff in 17:13 and the Greek of 41:15). Also, the similes are interpreted as standing for something different in the Greek; in the Hebrew it is the army of your strangers (זֶרֶק־יְרֵמֶן) but in the Greek it is the riches of the impious (ὁ πλοῦτος τῶν ἀσεβῶν), probably due to the translator’s understanding of the passage as a whole. In 41:15, the LXX updates the image to better fit his Egyptian

²⁷² LXX.D.E.K., 2578.

²⁷³ LXX.D.E.K., 2578.

²⁷⁴ Perhaps we could push this to claim that the other nations are like the wheat and barley which will be completely crushed and ground to flour, like Moab in 25:10.

²⁷⁵ “For *they* do not thresh dill with threshing sledges of iron, nor do *they* turn wheels of a cart upon cumin; for *they* beat dill with the stick, and cumin with the rod. 28 *They indeed thresh grain, but they* do not thresh it forever; and he *stirs* with the wheels of his cart and *separates the grain and lets the dust fly.*”

²⁷⁶ Aristophanes, *Acharnians* [Henderson, LCL 178].

context by describing the kind of threshing sledge commonly used. Also, here the metaphor is turned into a simile.

Threshing metaphors meet more varied treatment in the LXX. In 21:10, the metaphor is interpreted as a remnant that is suffering, perhaps to make more clear who is addressed. In 25:10, the Greek turns a more unique metaphor into a more conventional metaphor: treading straw into a dung-heap becomes treading out grain. Also, the translator again adds contemporary technology, adding the idea of a threshing cart. In 28:28-29, the threshing metaphor is again updated to the translator's contemporary practice (for how cumin is prepared) and the passage is clarified (that cumin is crushed to be eaten with bread). The Greek interprets the passage as a whole here (that they will suffer only for a time), and like in 21:10 interprets threshing, though this time as a manifestation of God's anger. While threshing implies chaff, the threshing metaphors in Isaiah and the Greek rendering do not.

In the Targum, it is noteworthy that it also interprets 29:5 as referring to a different group than the Hebrew, though it understands it in a different way than the Greek. In 41:15, the mountains and hills are interpreted as nations, but the rest of the metaphor is retained. In the next verse, rather than a tempest scattering the chaff, it is made clear that God's word (מימר) scatters them. In 21:10, the Targum interprets the first metaphor, then uses the parallel phrase as a simile to relate the tenor to the vehicle. Like in the Greek of 25:10, the Targum also has used a different metaphor from the Hebrew (and the Greek); instead of treading straw into dung, it is straw trodden into clay. The Targum of 28:28-29 is rendered literally, though mostly due to the passage already being interpreted in 28:24-25. We should mention again here that in the Targum of 40:6 a chaff metaphor is introduced, so that the strength of the wicked is like chaff of the field instead of the flower of the field. This is probably because it is blown away in the next verse, and so harmonizes with the common chaff in the wind imagery.

3.4. Thorns

Various sorts of thorns and thistles are mentioned several times in Isaiah. Sometimes they are metaphorical, but other times they stand in images that work by way of metonymy. Generally speaking, thorns and thistles are mentioned either in connection with inhabited places becoming devoid of people with the result that thorns grow up, or they are mentioned as something flammable.

In this section we will first look at a word pair unique to Isaiah, then we will look at the more common thorn terminology, and finally there will be a summary.

3.4.1. A Unique Isaianic word pair: שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית

Several times we see the word pair שְׁמִיר and שִׁית.²⁷⁷ These terms only occur in Isaiah, and always occur together, except for in 32:13 where we find קוץ שְׁמִיר. Wildberger believes שְׁמִיר refers to the christ-thorn plant, and שִׁית is a generic word for thorny scrub brush.²⁷⁸ He says they are chosen for the sake of alliteration.²⁷⁹ The LXX's translation of this phrase is complex.²⁸⁰ About half of the time, LXX-Isa renders it in a sense having to do with thorns in uncultivated land, and about half the time it renders it as having to do with grass.

Isa 5:6

I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briers and thorns;	וְאַשְׁיִתְהוּ בְתֵהּ לֹא יִזְמַר וְלֹא יַעֲדֵר וְעֵלָה שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית	καὶ ἀνήσω τὸν ἀμπελῶνά μου καὶ οὐ μὴ τμηθῆ ἢ οὐδὲ μὴ σκαφῆ, καὶ ἀναβήσεται εἰς αὐτὸν ὡς εἰς χέρσον ἄκανθα.	And I will <i>leave my vineyard unused</i> and it shall not be pruned or dug and a thorn shall come up into it as into a <i>fallow field</i> ,
I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.	וְעַל הָעַבִּים אֶצְוֶה מִהַמְטִיר עָלָיו מָטָר:	καὶ ταῖς νεφέλαις ἐντελοῦμαι τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι εἰς αὐτὸν ὕετόν.	and I will command the clouds, that they send no rain to it.

In 5:7 we get the explanation for this allegory, that the vineyard is the house of Israel and the vine is the man of Judah.²⁸¹ This probably does not mean we have to find an exact interpretation for the thorns and weeds; they probably simply illustrate symptoms of an abandoned place, like the abandoned cities in 5:9. A vineyard being neglected in Prov 24:30-31 (in this case by a sluggard) is also described in synonymous terms (in the Greek the land becomes fallow and grassy). The image in 5:6 is of neglect, that the vines are not pruned and so grow out of control and become unfruitful, and that thorns and weeds are allowed to grow up without being weeded. God even commands the clouds to neglect to rain on the vineyard.

The Greek has a slightly different picture. The phrase וְאַשְׁיִתְהוּ בְתֵהּ is rendered καὶ ἀνήσω τὸν ἀμπελῶνά μου which Ziegler says is common terminology in the Papyri for leaving fields so that they become fallow,²⁸² which naturally would be disastrous for a vineyard, which requires considerable labor to maintain. The LXX for some reason wants to make explicit that the vineyard is being abandoned, and so gives what is meant by the pronoun: τὸν ἀμπελῶνά μου. The term χέρσος likewise refers to developed land that is deteriorating.²⁸³ Schnebel shows that the primary meaning of χέρσος is dry land, but that in Hellenistic Egypt it came to describe arable land that has become less productive due to lack of irrigation (natural or artificial), or because it was overgrown with canes or with thorns and scrub or tamarisks, or

²⁷⁷ Isa 5:6; 7:23, 24, 25; 9:17; 10:17; and 27:4.

²⁷⁸ Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 171.

²⁷⁹ Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 171.

²⁸⁰ See Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 33, 181.

²⁸¹ We will discuss this passage again in the section on Vines and Vineyards (III.E.1.).

²⁸² Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 179-80.

²⁸³ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 181.

covered in sand or salt.²⁸⁴ John S. Kloppenborg Verbin points out that in Ptolemaic Egypt, the failure of vineyards was common enough for the word *χερσάμπελος* to be coined.²⁸⁵ This is a more precise description of the matter, leaving a vineyard to become a fallow plot of land. Fallow can sound positive in English, but here we should understand it as describing a plot of land that requires considerable extra work to be put back to use;²⁸⁶ in the Egyptian context perhaps the land is even returning to desert. The Greek is literal but more technical in describing the consequences of God's action, that the vines will not be pruned or weeded.

The rendering of the phrase *וְעָלָה שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית* with *καὶ ἀναβήσεται εἰς αὐτὸν ὡς εἰς χέρσον ἄκανθα* is difficult to unravel. The Greek has added the words *εἰς αὐτὸν ὡς εἰς* and omitted a conjunction. The Hebrew has two subjects, but the Greek has only one and a comparison describing the location for the action. Judging from the rendering of the phrase in 7:23, 24, and 25, it is likely that *שְׁמִיר* is rendered with *χέρσος* and *שִׁית* with *ἄκανθα*.²⁸⁷ The typical meaning of *χέρσος* is “dry land,” but Ziegler points out that in the Papyri it is often used to refer to fallow or undeveloped land.²⁸⁸ In the Egyptian context, an abundance of thorns growing in a field would render it a *χέρσος*;²⁸⁹ though in Judea various thorn plants would also need to be weeded in fields. The addition of the simile may be because in the Greek (5:2, 4), the vine was already producing thorns when it was being properly tended. So here it is necessary to clarify that the vineyard will be left to become fallow and thorns will sprout up. This makes clear that the choice vine that produces thorns will not be left to flourish on its own, bringing an abundant crop of thorns; this difference is also clarified by the use of the plural *ἄκανθας* in 5:2, 4, whereas everywhere else in LXX-Isa it is used in the singular.²⁹⁰ In 7:23, vineyards are again destroyed, but there they become undeveloped land and thorns, without a simile in Hebrew or in the Greek. The rendering of *שִׁית* with *ἄκανθα* occurs three other times: in Isa 7:23, 24, and 25.²⁹¹

The Targum interprets all the elements in this verse.²⁹² The phrase *וְעָלָה שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית* becomes *מטלטלין ושבביקין ויהון*, “And they will be deported and abandoned.” It is debatable whether this interpretation is of the text as a metaphor or as a prophecy.

²⁸⁴ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 14-20. Also it can be used with descriptions of land reclaimed from the wilderness, 13-14.

²⁸⁵ John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices and the Citation of Isa 5:1-7 in Mark 12:1-9,” *NT 44.2* (2002), 152.

²⁸⁶ Such as cutting and burning the wild scrub or repairing irrigation systems; loans were sometimes needed to finance this work; see Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 21-23.

²⁸⁷ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, s.v.

²⁸⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 181.

²⁸⁹ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 20-21.

²⁹⁰ As Ken Penner pointed out in personal correspondence, S* (and B) have *ἄκανθαί* which is corrected in stages to *ἄκανθα*.

²⁹¹ See Hatch and Redpath, 43b. Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 364.

²⁹² “And I will make them [to be] *banished*; they will not be *helped* and they will not be *supported*, and they will be *cast out* and *forsaken*; and I will command the *prophets* that they *prophecy* no *prophecy* concerning them.”

The second place the phrase occurs is Isa 7:23-25, where vines (and by metonymy, vineyards) are mentioned three times as becoming a place for **שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית**. Strictly speaking this passage is not metaphorical, but it does stand as a sort of hyperbole or metonymy for how even the best farm land will become a fallow waste since no one will be around to take care of it. All three times the words are rendered with *χέρσος* and *ἄκανθα* respectively. While the first two verses are rendered almost completely literally, in 7:25 the Greek renders the clauses differently, making the mountains an exception to the lands that will become dry and overrun with thorns. This is also how the Targum understands the verse. This change seems to lie more on the level of their understanding of the prophecy than their understanding of the metaphor.²⁹³

In all three verses, the Targum renders **שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית** with **הובאי ובור**, thorn and fallow land.²⁹⁴ This is the same as the LXX, but with the opposite words associated with thorn and fallow land or simply with the word order changed.

In other places, LXX-Isa understands **שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית** to refer (in part) to dry grass, usually in the context of fire.

Isa 9:17(18)

<p>For wickedness burned like a fire, consuming briars and thorns; it kindled the thickets of the forest, and they swirled upward in a column of smoke.</p>	<p>כִּי־בַעֲרָה כָּאֵשׁ רְשָׁעָה שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית תֹּאכֵל וְתִצַּת בְּסִבְבֵּי הַיַּעַר וְיִתְאַבְּכוּ גֵּאוֹת עֲשָׂן:</p>	<p>καὶ καυθήσεται ὡς πῦρ ἡ ἀνομία καὶ ὡς ἄγρωστις ξηρὰ βρωθήσεται ὑπὸ πυρός· καὶ καυθήσεται ἐν τοῖς δάσεσι τοῦ δρυμοῦ, καὶ συγκαταφάγεται τὰ κύκλω τῶν βουνῶν πάντα.</p>	<p>And the transgression will burn like a fire, and like dry grass will it be consumed by fire, and it will burn in the thickets of the forest and devour everything around the hills.</p>
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We will discuss this passage further in the section on trees (3.6.4.). For the current purposes, it is worth noting that the Greek adds a comparative particle: *ὡς*. While it could be argued that the simile is implied in the Hebrew and the comparative particle is omitted because it is poetry, it seems more likely to read the clause as the fuel wickedness will burn. Wickedness is burning first the thorns and thistles, then spreading over the hills and forests burning up everything. This is made clear in the next verse which says that the land and people of the land are allowed to burn because of God’s wrath. That the thorns and trees are compared to people is also made clear in 9:18 by the phrase **וַיְהִי הָעָם כְּמִאֲכֵלֵת אֵשׁ**.

The Greek understands all of this differently. The translator reads **שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית** as a comparison of in what way lawlessness burns. In the next verse, where the connection between the fire’s fuel and people is made, the translator has rendered with a passive

²⁹³ To be precise, their reading is based on taking **יְרֵאת** as the subject of the clause.

²⁹⁴ Chilton renders **בור** with “briers,” but Sokoloff does not have this definition in either lexicon. Jastrow seems to arrive at his definition “weed, briars” based on the Targum’s use as an equivalent here in Isa 7:23 and from “something waste, wild-growing.”

participle (κατακαυμένος), and so instead of being like fuel (וַיְהִי הָעָם כְּמֵאֵלֶּת אֵשׁ), the people are like they have been burned (καὶ ἔσται ὁ λαὸς ὡς ὑπὸ πυρὸς κατακαυμένος).

It is within the context of this transformation of the passage that the rendering of שְׂמִיר וְיִשְׁתִּית can be understood. The translator may have thought a literal rendering would express thorns in a fallow waste (based on how these words were translated in the other passages where it occurs) and then chose a rendering that more clearly expresses the essential quality described, flammability, and so renders with ἄγρωστις ξηρά. LXX.D.E.K. similarly believes that these terms were used because they better fit the verb אָכַל or βιβρώσκω.²⁹⁵ As we will see below, thorns are said to be burned in 32:13 in both Hebrew and Greek, though there the emphasis is not on the flammability of thorns; they are burned as a method of disposal. In two other places (10:17 and 32:13) שְׂמִיר is rendered as grass (χόρτος), and so may be the basis here for ἄγρωστις; Muraoka is probably right in that he does not venture independent word equivalents for the two words in the phrase.²⁹⁶

The Greek metaphor of a fire spreading from dry grass to thickets and burning everything around the hills sounds just like how fires would spread. Hepper discusses how forests develop and the effects of burning; he says it is unlikely that oak forests would be easy to set on fire, while coniferous trees burn much more easily; he says that grass and grain fires would spread very quickly and could easily light dry thickets that accompany hill-woodlands, which could then generate the heat to spread to the hardwood trees.²⁹⁷

The Targum interprets the passage.²⁹⁸ Thorns and thistles are interpreted as representing the sinners and the guilty, חַטָּאִיא וְחַיִּיבֵיא.

Isa 10:17

<p>And the light of Israel will become a fire, and his Holy One a flame; and it will burn and devour his thorns and briars in one day.</p>	<p>וְהָיָה אִזְרַיִשׁרָאֵל לְאֵשׁ וְקָדוֹשׁוֹ לְלֶהֱבֵה וּבְעֵרָה וְאָכְלָה שִׁתּוֹ וְשְׂמִירוֹ בְּיוֹם אֶחָד:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔσται τὸ φῶς τοῦ Ἰσραηλ εἰς πῦρ καὶ ἀγιάσει αὐτὸν ἐν πυρὶ καιομένῳ καὶ φάγεται ὡσεὶ χόρτον τὴν ὕλην. τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκεῖνη</p>	<p>And the light of Israel will become a fire and it will sanctify him with a burning fire and devour the wood like grass. In that day</p>
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Throughout the context of this passage the translator has made several modifications. This verse is a continuation or expansion of 10:16, in that it continues to describe how God will intervene to humble the king of Assyria and to destroy his stout warriors with a wasting sickness. In 10:17, the language has become much more poetic in that there is no direct

²⁹⁵ LXX.D.E.K., 2530.

²⁹⁶ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, s.v.

²⁹⁷ Hepper, *Bible Plant*, 39-40.

²⁹⁸ “For the retribution of their sins burns like the fire, it destroys transgressors and sinners; and it will rule over the remnant of the people and destroy the multitude of the armies.”

reference; God is called the “light of Israel” and “the Holy One,” and the king is only a pronoun and his army or perhaps his pretensions are called thorns and thistles.²⁹⁹

The Greek renders the first part of the verse literally, except it reads וקדושו as a verb and so renders ἀγιάσει αὐτόν,³⁰⁰ and also removes the conjunction on וּבְעֵרָה and makes it a participle describing the previous verb. Also, the last two words of the verse are understood as the beginning of the next sentence.

The phrase we are interested in, וְאֵכְלָהּ שִׁיתוֹ וְשָׁמִירוֹ, has again been rendered with an additional simile, like in 5:6, 9:17(18), and 33:12, though with a completely different meaning. The pronouns have disappeared entirely. It seems likely that שָׁמִיר was rendered with χόρτος (which is clearly the case in 32:13), and שִׁית was rendered with ὕλη. It could be argued that in 27:4 שִׁית is rendered with καλάμη, but as we will discuss below, this is not likely.³⁰¹ We have seen that elsewhere שִׁית is rendered with ἄκανθα (Isa 5:6; 7:23, 24, and 25), and that in 7:19 a word the translator knew meant thorn is rendered as a thorn tree, so it seems possible that the translator thought he could render שִׁית with ὕλη. The term ὕλη can refer both to fire wood (as NETS appears to understand it, though they just have “the wood” which could have either meaning) or to a collection of trees, a sort of copse (or *Gehölz*, as LXX.D understands it).³⁰² In the other two places ὕλη occurs,³⁰³ Job 19:29 has it as a rendering of שִׁית (as Muraoka suggests), and in Job 38:40 it is a rendering of סִבָּה.³⁰⁴ In any case, it is not used to mean wood or firewood elsewhere in the LXX, but is used as an equivalent to copse in Job 38:40. In addition to dropping the prepositions, the LXX has reversed the order of שִׁיתוֹ וְשָׁמִירוֹ, returning them in the translation to their more regular order. The context of woods burning in Isa 10:18-19 probably contributed to this verse’s rendering.

So, the rendering φάγεται ὡσεὶ χόρτον τὴν ὕλην should probably be understood as an image of a forest or copse of trees, which should be difficult to ignite,³⁰⁵ being burned quickly as if they were a clump of inflammable dry grass. This image is similar to that of 9:17(18) where the same Hebrew phrase has been rendered as dry grass and is said to burn up the thickets of the forest, though in that verse synonyms are used for grass and for thicket. This connection is made stronger in the Greek of 9:17(18) where it adds the idea of hills, which are mentioned in 10:18. The point of this connection would highlight the idea that the destruction the Assyrians bring to Israel and Judea will also come upon them, since in both cases it comes as the result of God’s wrath.

²⁹⁹ Cf. Ob. 18, where Jacob becomes a fire and the house of Joseph a flame to consume the house of Esau, which will become stubble.

³⁰⁰ LXX.D.E.K., 2532.

³⁰¹ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, s.v. deletes this equivalent.

³⁰² See Preisigke, *Wörterbuch*, s.v.

³⁰³ Hatch and Redpath list גִּלְיָ as an equivalent in Psa 68(69):2, but both Ralfs and the Göttingen LXX prefer the reading ἰλύν.

³⁰⁴ It also occurs in Wis 11:17; 15:13; Sir 28:10; II Mac 2:24; and IV Mac 1:29.

³⁰⁵ Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 39-40.

The Targum interprets the elements of this passage, so that God is the light of Israel, His word is the flame, and the thorns and thistles are the rulers and tyrants: שלטונוהי וטורנוהי.³⁰⁶

Isa 27:4

<p>I have no wrath. Who endows me with thorns and briars? I will march to battle against it. I will burn it up.</p>	<p>חַמָּה אֵינְ לִי מִי־ יִתְנֶנִּי שְׁמִיר שִׁית בְּמִלְחָמָה אֶפְשָׁעָה בָּה אֶצִּיתָנָה יְחָד:</p>	<p>οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἐπελάβετο αὐτῆς· τίς με θήσει φυλάσσειν καλάμην ἐν ἀγρῶ; διὰ τὴν πολεμίαν ταύτην ἠθέτηκα αὐτήν. τοίνυν διὰ τοῦτο ἐποίησε κύριος ὁ θεὸς πάντα, ὅσα συνέταξε. κατακέκαυμαι,</p>	<p>There is not <i>one</i> that has not taken hold of it; who will set me to watch stubble in a field? Because of this enmity I have set it aside. Therefore because of this the Lord God has done all things, whatever he has ordained. I have been burned up.</p>
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In the Hebrew the peace of Israel and God’s zeal to defend it is expressed through another vineyard metaphor. God wishes (as expressed by the cohortative verbs) there were thorns and thistles so He could zealously make war on them and destroy them from His vineyard. The Greek has rather drastically changed the entire chapter.³⁰⁷ We discuss other features of this verse below in the section on vineyards (3.5.1.).

The phrase מִי־יִתְנֶנִּי שְׁמִיר שִׁית is translated so as to still contain a metaphor, but the image is entirely different. In the Greek a rhetorical question asks about guarding a field of stubble. Indeed, fields are guarded to protect the harvest from beasts and robbers (like the image in 1:8), but once the field has been stripped, it was not customary to guard the stubble. The city presumably is the field that has been plundered and emptied and so needs no more protection since there is nothing left to protect. Often in Isaiah we see the idea of harvesting and gleaning as an image of plundering (such as 24:13); this is made stronger in the LXX in some places (such as 3:12). Unlike much of the verse, this phrase is easy to understand in light of the Hebrew. As Ziegler points out, the translator gives a double reading of שְׁמִיר, first as an infinitive of שָׁמַר and so rendered it with the common equivalent φυλάσσω.³⁰⁸ The second reading καλάμη is based on reading עָמַר;³⁰⁹ though this could also have been a reading based on the understanding of שְׁמִיר as referring to grass (as in 10:17; 32:13; and 9:17). A second possibility is that it comes from שִׁית which the translator knew was a kind of thorn plant, but in this context thought καλάμη worked better for the image. The addition of ἐν ἀγρῶ is interesting,³¹⁰ since as we have seen, usually the idea of a fallow field (χέρσος) is

³⁰⁶ “And it will come to pass that *the master of the light of Israel and his Holy One, his Memra will be strong as the fire, and his words as the flame; and he will kill and destroy his rulers and his tyrants in one day.*”

³⁰⁷ For an analysis of 27:2-5 see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 87-91.

³⁰⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 89.

³⁰⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 89.

³¹⁰ Ottley suggests it is an addition or a duplicate misreading of בְּמִלְחָמָה. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 234.

found in connection to שָׁמִיר. Ziegler believes ἐν ἀγρῶ is based on reading שִׁית as שְׁדִי like in 33:12 where the same rendering is given for שִׁיד.³¹¹ LXX.D.E.K. agrees that שָׁמִיר was read as an infinitive and suggests שִׁית is rendered freely as an image of captured Jerusalem.³¹² A third possibility is that the translation is based on the idea that שָׁמִיר can mean a fallow field (χέρσος), but for the sake of the rhetoric of the image it is stronger to talk about guarding a harvested field (since the enemies have plundered it) rather than a fallow field of thorns (which would be absurd, since it is devoid of crops by definition). This passage could have a triple rendering of שָׁמִיר, but there are of course less exotic explanations for the Greek, as we have seen.

The Targum expands this verse also, but makes it about how God would destroy Israel's enemies if they would follow his law, like fire destroys thorns and fallow land: ואשיציון כמא דמשיציא אשתא הובאי ובור כחדא.³¹³

3.4.2. Other Terms for Thorn: קוץ, נַעְצוץ, חוֹךְ, קמוֹשׁ, סִירָה

In Isa 34:13 three types of thorny plant are mentioned

Thorns shall grow over its strongholds, nettles and thistles in its fortresses. It shall be the haunt of jackals, an abode for ostriches.	וְעִלְתָּה אֲרָמְנֹתֶיהָ סִירִים קְמוֹשׁ וְחוֹךְ בְּמִבְצָרֶיהָ וְהִיתָה נְוָה תְּנִים חֲצִיר לְבָנוֹת יַעֲנָה:	καὶ ἀναφύσει εἰς τὰς πόλεις αὐτῶν ἀκάνθινα ξύλα καὶ εἰς τὰ ὄχυράματα αὐτῆς, καὶ ἔσται ἔπαυλις σειρήνων καὶ αὐλή στρουθῶν.	Thorn trees shall grow up in their cities and in her fortresses. It shall be a habitation of sirens and a courtyard of ostriches.
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In this passage, God's judgment on Edom is described, which entails how all the people will be gone and it will no longer be a kingdom. While it is not metaphoric speech, it is noteworthy for the translation equivalents and the translator's conception of thorns. In this verse and the following, the abandoned fortresses (rendered as "cities") and strongholds will be overgrown with weeds and become homes to wild animals and the demons that live in remote wilderness places. The Hebrew uses three terms for thorns or thistles in parallelism חוֹךְ, קְמוֹשׁ, סִירִים. The Greek, however, only has one kind of thorn described with two words ἀκάνθινα ξύλα.³¹⁴ This is probably a case of condensation of synonymous terms.³¹⁵ In α', σ' and θ', on the other hand, we find renderings for each of the words: ἄκανθαι καὶ κνίδες καὶ

³¹¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 89.

³¹² LXX.D.E.K., 2572.

³¹³ "Behold, there are many prodigies before me! If the house of Israel set their face to do the law, would I not send my anger and my wrath among the Gentiles who are stirred up against them and destroy them as the fire destroys briars and thorn together?"

³¹⁴ Preisigke, *Wörterbuch* I, 41 cites a similar phrase, found among the wood mentioned in a tax document from the second century AD, where we find: ξύλ[α] κανθ[οῦ]. P.LOND vol. 3, papyri 1177 ln. 191.

³¹⁵ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 77-78.

ἄκανες.³¹⁶ In Ecc 7:6, קִרְה is rendered with ἀκάνθα (but with σκόλοψ in Hos 2:8). The word קִרְה is rendered with ἀκάνθα three times (Prov 26:9; Sol 2:2; Hos 9:6), and twice with ἄκαν in 2 Kgs 14:9. The word קְמוֹשׁ, however, is a more complicated issue. According to Hatch and Redpath, it might be the basis for the word ὄλεθρος (ruin, destruction) in Hos 9:6;³¹⁷ Muraoka's Index is more confident that it is.³¹⁸ The only other place it occurs is Prov 24:31, though neither index offers an equivalent there. The issue of translation equivalents for the first half of this verse is tricky, but it is interesting to note there are two words for weeds or thistles in the Hebrew: קְמוֹשׁ and קְרָלִים, and while they may not be directly the basis of these Greek words, we do find χερσωθήσεται καὶ χορτομανήσει.

Returning to the question at hand, the phrase ἀκάνθινα ξύλα is general and vague for a thorny tree,³¹⁹ but as we will see in the section on trees, it is a good description for the acacia tree or perhaps the *ziziphus spina-christi*. Theophrastus speaks of several specific thorny trees that could have just as easily been mentioned by LXX-Isa.³²⁰ That the translator decided to make the thorn a tree and not some smaller plant gives the impression of permanence or at least the long passage of time, that trees will be growing there, and not simply some small seasonal weed.

The Targum renders the first and last plant with its Aramaic cognate, and קְמוֹשׁ with קְרְסוּלִין. No explanation is given.³²¹

In **Isa 7:19** another kind of thorn is also turned into a tree, though for completely different reasons.

<p>And they will all come and settle in the steep ravines, and in the clefts of the rocks, and on all the thornbushes, and on all the pastures.</p>	<p>וּבָאוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּנוּ בְּכָל־ בְּנִיחֵי הַבְּתוֹת וּבְנִקְיֵי הַסְּלָעִים וּבְכָל־הַנְּעֻצּוֹצִים וּבְכָל־הַנְּהַלְלִים:</p>	<p>καὶ ἐλεύσονται πάντες καὶ ἀναπαύσονται ἐν ταῖς φάραγξι τῆς χώρας καὶ ἐν ταῖς τρώγλαις τῶν πετρῶν καὶ εἰς τὰ σπήλαια καὶ εἰς πᾶσαν ῥαγάδα καὶ ἐν παντὶ ξύλῳ.</p>	<p>And they will all come and rest in the ravines of the country and in the clefts of the rocks and into the caves and into every crevice and on every tree.</p>
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The last two clauses have been switched in the translation, perhaps to make a more logical sequence coming after other geological features. The word ῥαγάς is only used here in the LXX. In classical Greek it refers to a fissure, as found in dry soil, or can be used of a crack in the skin.³²² It is an odd equivalent for נְהַלְלִים, perhaps we can make sense of it with the suggestion that the translator thought that the affixed ל could make what he read as נחל

³¹⁶ See the apparatus of Ziegler's LXX text.

³¹⁷ Hatch and Redpath, 986a. They mark it with a question mark.

³¹⁸ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, s.v.

³¹⁹ Cf. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 8-9.

³²⁰ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4.2.1: ἄκανθα Αἰγύπτια; 4.2.8: ἄκανθα ἢ λεύκη; 4.7.1: ἄκανθα ἢ διψάς.

³²¹ "Thorns shall grow over its palaces, and nettles and thistles in the stronghold of its fortresses. It shall be a haunt of jackals, a place for ostriches."

³²² LSJ, s.v.

diminutive.³²³ The plus *καὶ εἰς τὰ σπήλαια* is probably meant to explain why the places are listed;³²⁴ the flies and bees will go everywhere, even the places where people would hide from them. The translator seems to know that *נַעְצוּץ* refers to a kind of thorn bush, since he translates it with *στοιβή* in 55:13.³²⁵ But here, rather than give an exact equivalent he interprets the plant as a metonymy for every tree. Also the letters *עץ* may have suggested rendering with *ξύλον*. That the translator once renders *נַעְצוּץ* as “thorn” and once as “tree” suggests he identified the plant as something like *ziziphus spina-christi*,³²⁶ a large thorn-bush that can approach the size of a small tree, and so he rendered it in such a way as to express the features of the plant most salient to the passage in which it occurs. In this passage, the translator thought the places mentioned were hiding places, and so trees are chosen since they make better hiding places than small thorn plants.

In 7:19, the Greek makes some adjustments to the metaphor, though probably for style more than for what the specific images represent. In both languages the metaphor of this verse shows the ubiquity of the presence of the flies and bees, not specific places or institutions where they will be (though the places mentioned are where people fleeing them would hide).

The Targum interprets this passage. In 7:18 the flies are used as a simile to describe the numbers of an army *לעם קטרי משרית גיבריא דסגיאין כדיבביא*, and the bee is used in a simile to show the armies strength *ולעזיזי משריתא דאינון תקיפין כדבראיתא*. In 7:19 the Targum interprets some of the places as relating to cities so *וְנָחוּ בְּלִמְ בְּנִחְלֵי הַבְּתוֹת* is interpreted as *וישרון כלהון ברחובי קריא*,³²⁷ and *וּבְכָל הַנְּהַלְלִים* is interpreted as *ובכל בתי תושבחתא*,³²⁸ in every house of glory.³²⁸ As mentioned above, the Targum interprets some of the places mentioned, but in the case of *נַעְצוּץ* uses the cognate (or loan word) *נעעוץ*.³²⁹

An otherwise common (Gen 3:18; Exod 22:5; Jdg 8:7, 16; 2 Sam 23:6; Psa 118:12 etc.) word for thorn, *קוץ*, only occurs twice in Isaiah.

³²³ The idea of ל endings being diminutive can be seen in older grammars, such as T. J. Conant, trans., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (17th ed.; New York: D. Appleton, 1855), §30.3, though this misconception may not have arisen yet in antiquity.

³²⁴ Ziegler thinks the meaning of *הנעעוץ* was unclear to the translator and was the basis of *εἰς τὰ σπήλαια* as a parallel to *ἐν ταῖς τρώγλαις τῶν πετρῶν*. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 10.

³²⁵ LXX.D.E.K. 2522, says the translator understood the words *עץ* and *גחל*, and so rendered them with *ξύλον* and *ράγας*, respectively.

³²⁶ It must be noted that Theophrastus calls this plant *παλίουρος* (*Enquiry*, 4.3.1-3); *στοιβή* is *Poterium/Sarcopoterium spinosum* (*Enquiry*, 1.10.4; 6.1.3; 6.5.1-2). LSJ and Muraoka identify *στοιβή* as thorny burnet; this is a low growing plant that could hardly be called a tree.

³²⁷ Perhaps thinking *בְּנִחְלֵי הַבְּתוֹת* referred to the valleys of houses, or the spaces between them.

³²⁸ Perhaps thinking *הַנְּהַלְלִים* had to do with praise *לל*.

³²⁹ “And they will come and all of them *dwell* in the *squares* of the *city*, and in the clefts of the rocks, and in all the *deserts of thornbushes*, and in all the *famed buildings*.”

Isa 32:13

<p>for the soil of my people growing up in thorns and briars; yes, for all the joyous houses in the jubilant city.</p>	<p>עַל אֲדָמַת עַמִּי קוֹץ שְׁמִיר תִּעֲלֶה בִּי עַל- כָּל-בֵּיתֵי מְשׁוֹשׁ קָרְיָה עֲלִיזָה:</p>	<p>ἡ γῆ τοῦ λαοῦ μου ἀκανθα καὶ χόρτος ἀναβήσεται, καὶ ἐκ πάσης οἰκίας εὐφροσύνη ἀρθήσεται· πόλις πλουσία,</p>	<p>As for the land of my people, thorns and grass will come up, and joy will be removed from every house. A wealthy city,</p>
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This verse and the passage it is from is not metaphorical but an elaboration expressing how the city and land will be abandoned. We discuss it because the translation gives insights into the Greek and Targum translators' conceptual understanding of thorn terms. In the Hebrew this verse continues to elaborate on why the women in 32:11-12 should be full of sorrow. The farm land is said to be overcome with thorns. Either the joyous houses and exultant town is also overcome with thorns, or it is a new idea, and the women should be full of sorrow because of them, but the exact reason why is not stated until the next verse. The Greek has made many adjustments to this passage, such as the women in 32:9 are said to be rich (perhaps to connect them with the ornamented daughters of Zion in 3:16-26). In 32:13 the Greek has removed the first preposition, making some sort of nominative exclamation,³³⁰ or to introduce the subject of the thought.³³¹ The word קוֹץ is rendered with its most common equivalent in the LXX: ἀκανθα,³³² but שְׁמִיר is rendered with χόρτος; we have discussed this equivalent above. The Greek changes the style of the verse, but does not seem to interpret it as anything other than a literal description, though expressed in a rhetorical way, of the destruction that will come upon certain people.

The Targum is also very literal, even being unhelpful with the phrase בִּי עַל-כָּל-בֵּיתֵי מְשׁוֹשׁ, rendering it אַרְי עַל כָּל בֵּיתֵי דִי. The Targum understands קוֹץ שְׁמִיר the same way it often (7:23, 24, 25; 27:4) renders שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית with הוֹבֵאֵי וּבוֹר.³³³

Isa 33:12

<p>And the peoples will be as if burned to lime, like thorns cut down, that are burned in the fire.</p>	<p>וְהָיוּ עַמִּים מְשֻׂרְפוֹת שִׂיד קוֹצִים כְּסוּחִים בְּאֵשׁ יִצְתּוּ:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔσονται ἔθνη κατακαυμένα ὡς ἀκανθα ἐν ἀγρῷ ἐρριμμένη καὶ κατακαυμένη.</p>	<p>And the nations will be burned like a thorn cast out and burned in a field.</p>
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In the Hebrew we have two phrases that are overly terse. In the first phrase a construct is used where a preposition would be much more clear. It appears to be a sort of genitive of

³³⁰ William W. Goodwin, *Greek Grammar* (Revised and Enlarged; Boston: Ginn & Co, 1900), §1045.

³³¹ Smyth, *Greek Grammar for Colleges*, §941.

³³² It is an equivalent 12x. See Hatch and Redpath, s.v.

³³³ “for the land of my people which will bring up briars and thorn; yea, for all the joyous houses in the strong city.”

effect,³³⁴ so that the people will be burned until even their bones have become lime.³³⁵ The second clause is probably a simile, though there is no comparative marker due to the terse style of poetry. The phrase could, though, be understood as a metaphor, that the thorns קוצים are equated to the people עמים, who are burned in fire.

The Greek has taken the two separate ideas and combined them into one idea. The translator recognized that there was a simile, and so made it explicit by adding a comparative marker. The idea that this takes place in a field is probably, as Ziegler suggests, from the word שׂד which was read as שׂדי or שׂדה.³³⁶ The Hebrew קוצים is the basis of ἄκανθα (like in 32:13), so the Greek has changed the word order. The only other place כּסח occurs in the Qal is Psa 80:17, where it is rendered with ἀνασκάπτω (to dig up). The Greek rendering in Isa 32:12 adds to the picture of thorns that they are discarded from a field and burned. This simile is of particular note because, as we have seen, LXX-Isa does not usually associate thorns with kindling for a fire in places where we would expect, but renders with “grass.”

The Targum is literal, even omitting any comparative marker. The one change of note is that instead of lime (שׂד) the Targum has fire: נור.³³⁷

3.4.3. Summary

This analysis has shown certain patterns. In the Hebrew, thorns are mentioned to illustrate land that has been neglected because there is no one to tend it properly (5:6; 7:19, 23-25; 32:13; 34:13). In addition, it is used to describe a threat to a vineyard which represents the house of Israel (5:6; in the Greek of 27:4 it represents Jerusalem, as we will argue below (3.5.1.)). Thorns are also mentioned for their flammability (9:17; 10:17; 33:12).

The Greek transforms many of these images, sometimes because of the immediate context but also because of some underlying assumptions the translator has. One such underlying assumption is that שׂמיר can refer both to a place or habitat (χέρσος, 4x) and to what grows in it (χόρτος, 2x).³³⁸ This could be a sort of metonymic exchange;³³⁹ A similar conceptualization can be seen in Prov 24:31 where two kinds of weeds are rendered with the infinitives χερσωθήσεται καὶ χορτομανήσει. Similarly, in Isa 33:12 the LXX adds a reference to a field (though perhaps for lexical reasons), ἐν ἀγρῶ, as a place where thorns will be. The translator chooses between these concepts for his translation of שׂמיר, usually, based on the

³³⁴ Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 9.5.2.c, though they do not list this passage anywhere in their discussion of the construct state.

³³⁵ Lime is made primarily from calcium (it is either calcium oxide or calcium hydroxide), and so the bones are the only part of the body that could produce lime. Cf. Amos 2:1 for bones being burned to lime.

³³⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 98. Cf. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 272. The usual equivalent of שׂד is κοιλία (Deut 27:2, 4 and Amos 2:1).

³³⁷ “And *the* peoples will be burned *with* fire; thorns cut down are burned in the fire.”

³³⁸ Also, 27:4 has both the concept of grass and a field in the Greek.

³³⁹ Perhaps it is an attempt at a Midrashic word play but in Greek, since the differences between the words are just the vowels and τ has become σ.

context. When the word is mentioned to describe abandoned places the meaning “fallow field” is used twice (5:6; 7:23-25), once the thorn is made into a thorn tree to emphasize more permanence (34:13), and once is made into grass to denote a weed (32:13). When the context has to do with burning or flammability the meaning “grass” is used (9:17; 10:17; however in 33:12, thorns are removed from a field and burned). In 27:4 we find both a field and stubble, though here the phrase is interpreted much more than usual. It should be noted that while the translator’s use of *χέρσος* in connection to thorns reflects well the Egyptian situation, according to the papyri, it would seem *χόρτος* is not a weed but a cultivated crop.³⁴⁰ The association of a fallow waste and grass fits more the situation in Judea, though it is also possible for a *χέρσος* to be used as a pasture in Egypt.³⁴¹

The Greek also associates thorns with trees. There are several species of thorn trees in Judea and Egypt, most notably the acacia, though this is not the tree explicitly named in LXX-Isa where the Hebrew has only a thorn. In 7:19 a word the translator knew meant “thorn” is rendered with *ξύλον*. In 34:13 three words for thorns are condensed into the phrase “thorn tree.” In 10:17 the idea of a copse is added, somehow under the influence of the phrase *וְשִׁתּוֹ וְשִׁמְרֵוֹ*.

The immediate context can be seen as affecting the transformation of thorn metaphors in several places. As was just mentioned, in 34:13 the translator turns a thorn into a thorn tree to exaggerate the image. In 5:6, the translator gives more details by using technical vocabulary to describe the vineyard being left to become a fallow plot of land. In 9:17(18), the translator uses different terms than he usually does to emphasize the flammability of dry grass in the context of a spreading conflagration.

Also of note is that for three out of the eight occurrences of *וְשִׁמְרֵוֹ* the translator has added a comparative marker (5:6; 10:17; and 9:17, though in the last case it may be implied in the Hebrew).³⁴² It is interesting that the Targum adds a comparative marker for 27:4, comparing fire destroying thorns and thistles to how God would destroy enemy nations.

This nuanced contextual and conceptual rendering of thorns in the LXX is markedly different from how the Targum approaches the issue. It is striking how both LXX and the Targum understand 7:23-25 as referring to thorns and fallow land (as also in 27:4 and 32:13),³⁴³ but elsewhere the Targum is either literal or has interpreted the metaphor. In Isa 5:6 *וְשִׁתּוֹ וְשִׁמְרֵוֹ* is interpreted as deported and abandoned. In 9:17 it is interpreted as referring to sinners and the guilty, and in 10:17 it is thought to refer to rulers and governors. In the other places, though, there is still a reference to thorns and briars (7:19; 33:12; 34:13).

³⁴⁰ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 212-13.

³⁴¹ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 16-17.

³⁴² Also a comparative marker is added 33:12, though here it also may be implied in the Hebrew.

³⁴³ As mentioned in a footnote above, Chilton translates בור as “brier,” but this definition is not found in either of Sokoloff’s lexicons. Jastrow’s dictionary says: “something waste, wild-growing, whence weed, brier,” but cites only Isa 7:23 and the places where it is an equivalent for the phrase *וְשִׁתּוֹ וְשִׁמְרֵוֹ*. It seems safer to suppose that like LXX, the Targum understands this phrase to imply fallow or waste land.

The Targum interprets the phrase **שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית** in various ways. In 5:6 the thorns and thistles coming up are interpreted as the people being cast out and forsaken. In 9:17, the phrase is interpreted as representing transgressors and sinners that are destroyed by the retribution of their sins which burns like fire. In 10:17 the same word pair is interpreted as rulers and tyrants being killed and destroyed. In 27:4 **שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית** are rendered literally, but in an added simile of how God’s wrath would burn among the gentiles if Israel would obey the law. For the Targum, the context of **שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית** is always destruction, but the words themselves can represent different groups of people. This is probably related to 33:12 where thorns being burned is used for a simile of peoples being burned (the Targum is literal, except it renders “lime” with “fire”).

The Targum renders other words meaning “thorn” literally (34:13; 7:19; 32:13; 33:12). In 7:19 the thorn becomes “deserts of thornbushes.” As mentioned above, in 7:23-25 the Targum and LXX both render one of the words for thorns with a word for fallow land.

That LXX-Isa adds similes (5:6; 9:17; 10:17) in the exact verses that the Targum feels the need to interpret the meaning of the image is surely significant. These three passages are more poetic and have more imagery than the other places thorns appear. The LXX approach to the imagery in these passages is to reinforce and make more vivid the vehicle of the image, while the Targum interprets the image giving what it feels is the tenor. Perhaps an explanation for this approach is that the LXX translator knows he needs to make a literary text and is concerned about keeping as close as possible to the Hebrew, while the Targum translator assumes his text will be read with the Hebrew, and so should offer insights not obvious in the Hebrew text.

3.5. Vineyards and Vines

The language of viticulture is a rich source for imagery in the Bible, particularly in Isaiah. We will focus only on vineyards and vines, leaving images of wine and wine making to other studies.

3.5.1. Vineyard (כַּרְם)

The word **כַּרְם** occurs fifteen times in Isaiah, and is always translated with *ἀμπελών*, except for in 5:10, which we will discuss below. In many of the passages it occurs (36:16-7; 37:30; 61:5; 65:21), however, vineyards are spoken of literally, often as a sign of the condition of the nation that is being punished or restored.

Isa 1:8

And daughter Zion is left like a booth in a	וְנוֹתְרָה בַּת־צִיּוֹן	<i>ἐγκαταλειφθήσεται ἡ θυγάτηρ Σιων ὡς</i>	Daughter Zion will be forsaken like a
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vineyard, like a shelter in a cucumber field, like a besieged city.	בְּסֹכָה בְּכַרְם כַּמְלוּנָה בְּמִקְשָׁה כְּעִיר נְצוּרָה:	σκηπή ἐν ἀμπελῶνι καὶ ὡς ὀπωροφυλάκιον ἐν σικυηράτῳ, ὡς πόλις πολιορκουμένη·	booth in a vineyard and like a garden-watcher's hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city.
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This verse, along with its similes, is translated literally. The Greek addition of *καὶ* agrees with 1QIsa^a against MT and MurIsa. The only thing to note, which will be seen again later, is that here a vineyard is used in a simile that describes daughter Zion. To be precise, daughter Zion will be like a tent in a vineyard, which is qualified by saying like a besieged city. As LXX.D.E.K points out,³⁴⁴ the image is probably that the huts are temporary, as in Isa 24:20 where they are as unstable as a drunk and TestJos 19:12 where it will be gone by the end of summer. The verb *ἐγκαταλείπω* seems to suggest (as the Targum makes clear) that the tent and hut are left alone (disregarded)³⁴⁵ in a field that has been harvested. The Greek word *ὀπωροφυλάκιον* is elsewhere used in the LXX in passages relating to Jerusalem (Psa 78:1; Mic 3:12) and Samaria (Mic 1:6) being destroyed, but in these places renders *עִי* (heap of stones, rubble).³⁴⁶ The besieged city appears again with the image of a vineyard in LXX-Isa 27:3, as we will discuss below.

The Targum is more interesting, specifying that the simile is of a vineyard and a cucumber field after the harvest: ואשתארת כנשתא דציון כמטלתא בכרמא בתר דקטפוהי בכרסל מבתותא במקטיא בתר דאבעיוהי *יִתֵר*.³⁴⁷ This is probably implied in the Hebrew by the verb *יִתֵר*. That it is after the harvest shows not only remoteness, but also abandonment, and perhaps even desolation in that the plants have been harvested and picked over.

Isa 3:14

The LORD enters into judgment with the elders and princes of his people: It is you who have grazed ³⁴⁸ the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses.	יְהוָה בְּמִשְׁפַּט יָבוֹא עִם־זְקֵנֵי עַמּוֹ וְשָׂרָיו וְאַתֶּם בְּעֵרְתֶם הַכֶּרֶם גִּזְלַת הָעֲנִי בְּבֵתֵיכֶם:	αὐτὸς κύριος εἰς κρίσιν ἔξει μετὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ μετὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων αὐτοῦ Ἰμεῖς δὲ τί ἐνεπυρίσατε τὸν ἀμπελῶνά μου καὶ ἡ ἀρπαγὴ τοῦ πτωχοῦ ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις ὑμῶν;	The Lord himself will enter into judgment with the elders of the people and with their rulers. But you, why have you burned my vineyard, and why is the spoil of the poor in your houses?
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³⁴⁴ LXX.D.E.K., 2507, it also mentions EpJer 69, where a scarecrow guards nothing.

³⁴⁵ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

³⁴⁶ For the relationship of these passages, see Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies*, 227. Cf. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 105. Cf. Michaël van der Meer, “The Question of Literary Dependence of the Greek Isaiah upon the Greek Psalter Revisited,” in *Die Septuaginta – Texte, Theologien, Einflüsse: 2. Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D)*, Wuppertal 23.-27.7.2008 (eds. Wolfgang Kraus and Martin Karrer; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010): 162-200.

³⁴⁷ “And the congregation of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard after they have picked it clean, like a tent for staying overnight in a cucumber field after they have stripped it, like a city which is besieged.”

³⁴⁸ NRSV translates: “devoured.” For the scholarly discussion on the root and meanings of *בער*, see Williamson, *Isaiah 1-5*, 226.

In this passage “the vineyard” is probably not a collective singular, since it has a definite article. It could be a metaphor for God’s people, like in Isa 5:1-7, but here there is nothing to make clear that it is meant as a metaphor.³⁴⁹ It could be understood as a general statement, to graze the vineyard meaning they help themselves to what they want from someone else’s property, or that they leave no gleanings in their own vineyard. The verb בער could mean more than “graze,” it could mean to destroy the vineyard by allowing cattle to trample it, as in Exod 22:4 and Isa 5:5.³⁵⁰

In the Septuagint, the translator has brought emphasis to the fact that the LORD himself will enter judgment, by adding αὐτός; also it removes the possessive pronoun after “people.” Troxel believes that the Lord is not simply entering into litigation, but is coming in a theophanic way to judge the rulers.³⁵¹ The interrogative τί anticipates the question in the Hebrew of the next verse,³⁵² and makes the accusation more vivid. The Greek appears to understand the vineyard as a metaphor. This is clear in that it is now God’s vineyard τὸν ἀμπελῶνά μου instead of הַכֶּרֶם, anticipating the song of the vineyard in chapter 5.³⁵³ Further, the leaders do not graze the vineyard (if this limited definition is intended) but burn it;³⁵⁴ this is not simply stealing for one’s own gain but a cruel and malicious act to deprive someone of what is theirs. The idea of burning comes from understanding בערתם as its homonym. LXX-Isa does know בער can mean something to do with pillage, since in 5:5 it is rendered with διαρπαγή (plunder, the act of plunder) and in 6:13 it is rendered with προνομή (plunder), though as nouns in both places. Ziegler points out that ἐμπυρίζω is found often in the Papyri as a method of clearing land and killing weeds,³⁵⁵ though no sensible person would clear a vineyard of weeds in this way. The Greek metaphor, then, is that the leaders rather than tending God’s vineyard are actively destroying it. As Troxel says, the Greek of this verse first gives a metaphor, that the leaders burn God’s vineyard, then gives a concrete description of the situation: they plunder the people.³⁵⁶ Burning the vineyard, then, could mean that they are clearing the plot to put it to their own purposes (and profit), or that they are plundering the people thoroughly leaving nothing, as if a fire had burned it up. LXX-Isa is probably

³⁴⁹ Ottley seems to imply this is a metaphor in the Hebrew, since he calls it another hint at the coming parable in 5:1-7. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 119. Williamson takes the vineyard as a metaphor, in light of chapter 5. Williamson, *Isaiah 1-5*, 271.

³⁵⁰ Williamson, *Isaiah 1-5*, 226.

³⁵¹ Troxel, “Economic Plunder,” 378-79.

³⁵² LXX.D.E.K., 2513.

³⁵³ LXX.D.E.K., 2513.

³⁵⁴ Baer suggests these leaders are foreign leaders oppressing God’s people. David A. Baer, “‘It’s All about Us!’: Nationalistic Exegesis in the Greek Isaiah (Chapters 1-12),” in *“As Those Who Are Taught”: The Interpretation of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL* (eds. Claire Mathews McGinnis and Patricia K. Tull; SBL Symposium Series 27; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 33-36.

³⁵⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 180-81. He mentions vineyards, but his sources, Dahlman and Schnebel, do not.

³⁵⁶ Troxel, “Economic Plunder,” 381. It is difficult, though, to take ἀρπαγή as the act of plundering, Troxel, “Economic Plunder,” 379, one would expect to plunder the poor in their houses, not in the leaders’ houses.

interpreting in light of Psa 80(79):17 where again God’s vineyard is facing threats, including being burned (שָׂרַף, rendered with ἐμπυρίζω) and cut down.³⁵⁷

The Targum interprets the vineyard metaphor, writing: וְאַתּוֹן אֲנִסְתּוֹן יִת עַמִּי.³⁵⁸ The word אֲנִסְתּוֹן could be understood to mean they attack the people, or that they force them to sell their possessions due to poverty or even that they seize the people by force.³⁵⁹ In any case, they are actively harming the people they should be ruling.

Isa 5:1-7 is an allegory in the form of a song with an explanation of its meaning in the final verse. Each verse will be examined and the allegory as a whole will be commented on in 5:7.

Isa 5:1

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard:	אֲשִׁירָה נָא לְיַדֵּי שִׁירַת דּוֹדִי לְכַרְמִי	Ἄρισω δὴ τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ ἄσμα τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ τῷ ἀμπελῶνί μου.	I will now sing for the beloved a song of the loved one concerning my vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard on a mountain spur, a son of fertility.	כֶּרֶם הָיָה לְיַדֵּי בְּקֶרֶן בְּוֶשְׁמֹן:	ἀμπελῶν ἐγενήθη τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ ἐν κέρατι ἐν τόπῳ πίονι.	The beloved <i>acquired</i> a vineyard in a <i>horn</i> , on a fertile place.

The translator distinguishes דֹדִי from דוֹד by using two different parts of speech: ἡγαπημένος and ἀγαπητός. Elsewhere, ἡγαπημένος is used for דֹדִי only in Jer 11:15,³⁶⁰ while ἀγαπητός is used for it five times in the Psalms. Nowhere else is ἀγαπητός used for דוֹד.³⁶¹ The definite article suggests the translator has a person in mind, instead of simply an adjective describing what kind of song it is.³⁶² The ἡγαπημένος could be understood as a collective singular, representing the group to whom the song is addressed, but in light of 5:7, it probably is intended to address the leadership in particular.³⁶³

The translator, as he does with much of the song, tries to put this verse into first person. This is complicated in this verse because לְיַדֵּי is translated literally without the pronominal suffix as τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ. In the Greek, the person sings the song to the beloved τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ, and it is the singer’s vineyard in 1a (ἀμπελῶνί μου), and in the following verses. But in 1b it is the beloved who acquires a vineyard ἀμπελῶν ἐγενήθη τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ. This

³⁵⁷ See Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 180.

³⁵⁸ “The LORD will bring into judgment the elders and commanders of his people: “You have robbed my people, the spoil of the poor is in your houses.””

³⁵⁹ Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002), 145-46.

³⁶⁰ In Isa 44:2 ἡγαπημένος appears in relation to Israel, parallel to Jacob.

³⁶¹ LXX-Isa mentions an ἀγαπητός again in 26:17 (as a plus) in what appears to be a messianic interpretation. Seeligmann believes it is a Christian gloss, *The Septuagint of Isaiah*, 26.

³⁶² LXX.D.E.K., 2515 points out that it is an objective genitive, and that it means an individual, perhaps a particular leader.

³⁶³ LXX.D.E.K., 2515.

could be a careless mistake in trying to turn the voice into the first person (α' and θ' avoid this problem in that they have $\acute{\alpha}\mu\pi\epsilon\lambda\acute{\omega}\nu\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$ in 1a, and σ' has $\acute{\alpha}\mu\pi\epsilon\lambda\acute{\omega}\nu\alpha\ \acute{\alpha}\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$, allowing the song to begin in 5:2). This question in the LXX can be resolved in several ways. The singer could be referring to himself as $\eta\gamma\alpha\pi\eta\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\varsigma$, though this is least likely. It could be that 1b has a different voice than 1a, though the translator has otherwise tried to remove the Hebrew's alternation between first and third person. One could suppose that the song begins in 5:2, and the prophet speaking in verse 1a calls it "my vineyard" not because he owns it but because he's associated with it; it is his vineyard in that it represents his people; then he refers to God as beloved in 1b, switching to God's voice in the song in 5:2. The best solution is that the beloved in 1a and 1b are the same as the beloved new planting of 5:7; the beloved acquired a vineyard in that it became associated with it: in the metaphor the vine was planted in the vineyard in a good plot of soil. In any case, there remains the question of the identity of the $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\eta\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$. It could be God, though again it would be odd to refer to Himself this way. It similarly probably does not refer to the prophet (unless God sings the prophet's song) nor to the vineyard as a whole (since the song is about the vineyard). The ineluctable conclusion is that it is very unclear who it is meant to be.³⁶⁴

The translation using $\gamma\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ is interesting. The translator could have rendered לְהִיָּהוּ with $\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ as in 1:31; 8:14; 29:5, 17; and 40:23.³⁶⁵ But if this technique was followed, the comparison would have been backwards: "a vineyard is like my beloved;" also, this would spoil the climax of the allegory when its meaning is finally revealed in 5:7.

The translation of the dead metaphor רֶקֶן with $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha\varsigma$ is apt, since in Greek it can also be a geographical term, though usually having to do with rivers or bays, but can be part of a mountain;³⁶⁶ also, it can be simply a horn shaped object.³⁶⁷ The use of רֶקֶן in construct with another noun, denotes a nature, character, or quality.³⁶⁸ E. W. Bullinger calls the phrase רֶקֶן־בֶּן־שֶׁן antimereia, since it is the exchange of one noun for another.³⁶⁹ The LXX, then, explains the figure by saying "fat place," partially preserving the imagery, while explaining the most difficult part (namely, why this hill is being called a son). By adding $\tau\acute{o}\pi\omega$ "place" not only does the LXX clarify what is meant by "horn" but also allows it to be characterized by the metaphor $\pi\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$.³⁷⁰ A similar description is found in the Greek of 30:23 describing a

³⁶⁴ If it should be interpreted in light of 26:17 it may refer to some messianic figure.

³⁶⁵ Ziegler discusses this frequent translation equivalent, Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

³⁶⁶ LSJ, s.v. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 123, calls it "a very usual metaphor for a hill or peak."

³⁶⁷ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, 395. If ram's horns are thought of, then it makes sense that this refers to a terraced hill side.

³⁶⁸ P. Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (2nd ed.; trans. and rev. T. Muraoka; Subsidia Biblica 27; Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2009), §129j; Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 9.5.3b.

³⁶⁹ E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible Explained and Illustrated* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968), 503-4.

³⁷⁰ For the translator's use of $\tau\acute{o}\pi\omicron\varsigma$ with unusual Hebrew equivalents, see Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 115-16.

pasture as τόπον πίονα, but there is no clear Hebrew basis there. As LXX.D.E.K. points out, the land of Judaea is meant.³⁷¹

The Targum tries to make clear both what this allegory represents and who is speaking it.³⁷² The song is sung by the prophet: אמר נביא אשבחיה. Also, rather than waiting for the punch line in 5:7, the Targum states from the beginning that Israel is comparable to a vineyard: לישראל דמתיל בכרמא. It also makes clear who “my beloved” is: Abraham, perhaps under the influence of Isa 41:8 where the phrase זרעיה דאברהם רחמי again occurs. The description of the vineyard is also clarified; בטור רם means a high hill קרן, and בן-שמן refers to a fertile land בארע שמינא.

Isa 5:2

<p>He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it;</p>	<p>וַיַּעֲזָקְהוּ וַיִּסְקְלֵהוּ וַיִּטְעֵהוּ שָׂרֵק וַיִּבֶן מִגְדָּל בְּתוֹכוֹ וַיִּגְמֵי קֶבֶב חֲצֵב בּוֹ</p>	<p>καὶ φραγμὸν περιέθηκα καὶ ἐχαράκωσα καὶ ἐφύτευσα ἄμπελον σωρηχ καὶ ὠκοδόμησα πύργον ἐν μέσῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ προλήνιον ὠρυξά ἐν αὐτῷ·</p>	<p>And I put a hedge around it and fenced it in and planted a Sorech vine, and I built a tower in the midst of it and dug out a wine vat in it,</p>
<p>he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.</p>	<p>וַיִּקְוֶה לְעִשׂוֹת עֲנָבִים וַיַּעַשׂ בְּאֲשִׁים:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔμεινα τοῦ ποιῆσαι σταφυλήν, ἐποίησε δὲ ἀκάνθας.</p>	<p>And I waited for it to produce a cluster of grapes, but it produced thorns.</p>

As with the previous verse, the LXX has rendered the verbs into 1st person, probably under the influence of the 1st person in 5:3.

The Hapax Legomena עזק, "dug around" is used to refer to tilling the soil in preparation for planting.³⁷³ BDB relates the word to the same Arabic root, which means to cleave or furrow the earth with an implement.³⁷⁴ It is rendered in Greek by καὶ φραγμὸν περιέθηκα “and placed a hedge around (it).” The word φραγμός is elsewhere used in relation to Jerusalem's wall (1 Kgs 10:22; 11:27; Ezra 9:9; Psa 80:12), so it may have been chosen with an interpretation of the allegory in mind. It is also associated with vineyards (Num 22:24; Psa 79(80):13); Ziegler notes that it is a less common word for a vineyard wall, but that it is found in the papyri.³⁷⁵ It is possible, though, that the translator simply thought this is what was meant. Rashi thinks this Hebrew comes from the Aramaic עִיִּיקָא, and so refers to surrounding

³⁷¹ LXX.D.E.K. 2516.

³⁷² “The prophet said, I will sing now for Israel-which is like a vineyard, the seed of Abraham, my friend-my friend’s song for his vineyard: My people, my beloved Israel, I gave them a heritage on a high hill in fertile land.”

³⁷³ Carey Ellen Walsh, *The Fruit of the Vine: Viticulture in Ancient Israel* (Harvard Semitic Monographs 60; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 97.

³⁷⁴ BDB, 740.

³⁷⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 179. Cf. Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 423-24.

with a fence like a sort of ring.³⁷⁶ This sort of reasoning would mean the translator translated עֶזֶק with περιτίθημι and added φραγμός to clarify what was meant (and to create more coherence with 5:5).³⁷⁷ It cannot be ruled out, though, that Rashi was influenced by the LXX at least indirectly. Ibn Ezra also claims the Hebrew refers to a fence or hedge, but based on the Arabic.³⁷⁸ Both HALOT and DCH have the possibility of עֶזֶק here meaning to build or surround with a wall, both under the influence of LXX, but HALOT notes the Arabic ‘zq.³⁷⁹ In any case, the LXX mentioning φραγμός here and fencing creates more coherence in the passage, since a hedge (מְשׁוּפָּה, φραγμός) and a wall (גֵּדֵר, τοῖχος) are removed from the vineyard in 5:5.

The phrase וַיִּסְקְלֶהוּ “and cleared it [of stones],” becomes ἐχαράκωσα “I fenced” (the only other usage of this word is for צוּר in Jer 32(39):2). The piel of סָקַל also occurs in Isa 62:10, where סָקְלוּ מְאֵבֶן is rendered καὶ τοὺς λίθους τοὺς ἐκ τῆς ὁδοῦ διαρρίψατε. This suggests the translator knew what the term was referring to, but for some reason did not want to use that image here. Again, it could be to harmonize with 5:5 where a hedge and a wall are described as being removed from the vineyard. Ziegler notes the possibility that the translator read the root סָלַל, since χάραξ renders סָלְלָה in Isa 37:33; Ezek 4:2; and 26:8.³⁸⁰ He says the Greek often means “surround with stakes” or “fence around” in the papyri.³⁸¹ Kloppenborg Verbin believes, based on papyrological evidence, that this refers to setting stakes for the vines to grow upon,³⁸² but Ziegler has already dismissed this understanding since they are placed before the vine is planted (which would not make sense) and since it is parallel to the building of a wall.³⁸³

The word שֵׂרֶק is rendered twice, first it is translated vine and then transliterated: ἄμπελον σωρηχ.³⁸⁴ Troxel lists this translation as a feature of the translator, that he transliterates technical terms and proper nouns.³⁸⁵ Σωρηχ is an unusual transliteration in that ק usually is transliterated with κ, but χ and γ are also possible, though rare.³⁸⁶ A few other passages use the same transliteration of שֵׂרֶק: in Jdg B 16:4 בְּנַחַל שֵׂרֶק becomes ἐν Αλσωρηχ,

³⁷⁶ Avraham I. Rozenberg, ed., *Isaiah: A New English Translation* (vol. 1. מקראות גדולות; New York: The Judaica Press, 1982), 41. cf. Sokoloff, *Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, 400, where עֶזֶק is defined as “to ring.”

³⁷⁷ For Pseudo-Aristeas’ use of wall metaphors for God giving Israel the law, see par. 139 and 142. In LXX-Prov 28:4 those who love the law fortify themselves with a wall. See Cook and van der Kooij, *Law, Prophets, and Wisdom*, 126-27.

³⁷⁸ See in Rozenberg, *Isaiah*, vol 1, 41.

³⁷⁹ HALOT, s.v. DCH, s.v.

³⁸⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 179.

³⁸¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 179.

³⁸² Kloppenborg Verbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices,” 147-48.

³⁸³ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 179. LXX.D. likewise translates: “umzäunte.”

³⁸⁴ That it is a double translation, see van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 35. For translations followed by transliterations of name-phrases, see van der Kooij, “The Septuagint of Isaiah,” in *Law, Prophets, and Wisdom*, 73-74.

³⁸⁵ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 170.

³⁸⁶ Joseph Ziegler, “Transcriptionen in der Ier.-LXX,” in *Mitteilungen Des Septuaginta-Unternehmens der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen VI* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958), 60. See for example קְטוּרָה rendered Χεττουρα in Gen 25:1.

and Jdg A 16:4 has *χειμάρρου Σωρηχ* “valley of Sorach.” The other passages containing this word offer a rendering: in Jer 2:21 *שֶׁרֶק* becomes *ἄμπελον καρποφόρον* (again a double rendering; *α'* has just *Σωρηχ*); in Gn 49:11 *וְלִשְׂרָקָה* becomes *καὶ τῆ ἔλικι* (tendrils); and in Isa 16:8 *שְׂרוּקֵיהָ* is translated *ἀμπέλους αὐτῆς*. The LXX translators know this term has something to do with grapes and vineyards, but are inconsistent in being more specific than that. Tov lists Isa 5:2 under “Transliterations of Unknown Words, Transmitted as Collective Readings.”³⁸⁷ It is possible that the definition “vine” was derived from the context in the occurrences in Isa 5:2; Isa 16:8; and Jer 2:21 (especially since it appears parallel to *גִּפְנֵי* in the last two instances). It is unclear why the transliteration was left in 5:2 and not in any of the other places (apart from where it is a place name). According to Tov, revisers generally reverted guesses of unknown words back to transliterations, suggesting *σωρηχ* was added later.³⁸⁸ In some manuscripts of 5:2 *σωρηχ* is spelled with a *κ*.³⁸⁹ It is curious that this transliteration would be improved later in transmission. Seeligmann suggests the transliteration was older, and the explanation *ἄμπελον* was added later,³⁹⁰ but Ziegler in his critical edition believes both were original. Aquila and Theodotion have the same reading, but Symmachus has *ἐκλέκτην*.³⁹¹ This definition can be found for *σωρηχ* in Hesychius’ lexicon,³⁹² possibly added by some monk. The Targum agrees with Symmachus, translating the phrase as *גִּפְנֵי בַחִירָא*, or “choice vine.”³⁹³ LXX.D.E.K. suggests the Greek of 5:2 does not transliterate *שֶׁרֶק* but *סרח* as an allusion to Ezek 17:6, where *גִּפְנֵי סרח* (*ἄμπελον ἀσθενοῦσαν*) is an image for a king.³⁹⁴ The connection to Ezek 17:6 is interesting in that *α'* has *σωρηχ*,³⁹⁵ and for Jer 2:21 *α'* has *σωρηχ*.³⁹⁶

To the translators’ credit, the precise meaning of the word *שֶׁרֶק* is still disputed. BDB still lists “choice” as one of its definitions.³⁹⁷ One definition is that it became a name for a variety of vine due to its red color like the sunrise, which is what the Arabic root means.³⁹⁸ The best explanation is that it is a specific variety of grape vine which, either because of its fruitfulness,³⁹⁹ color, or even its seedless grapes,⁴⁰⁰ was recognized as being the best. HALOT defines it as “a valued, perhaps bright-red species of grape” and DCH says it is a choice vine,

³⁸⁷ Emanuel Tov, “Transliterations of Hebrew Words in the Greek Versions of the Old Testament,” *Textus* 8 (1973), 92. Aquila and Theodotion have this reading as well.

³⁸⁸ Tov, “Transliterations of Hebrew Words,” 83-84.

³⁸⁹ *σωρηκ* Q-106-710 O-88-736 309-cl’ Or.X 597. 598 Eus.Cyr. ο↓.

³⁹⁰ Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 171 [33], 180 [39/40], 207 [59].

³⁹¹ Ziegler’s apparatus is unclear if it is part of a double rendering or not.

³⁹² Hesychius, word entry 3092. NETS in the footnote of 5:2 says the Hebrew means “choice.”

³⁹³ Rashi explains they are the best of all branches for planting. See in Rozenberg, *Isaiah*, vol 1, 41.

³⁹⁴ LXX.D.E.K. 2516. Also it asks whether the vine producing thorns may be an allusion to Jdg 9:14, where the parable of the trees choosing the thorn for their king occurs.

³⁹⁵ *θ'* has *ἀχρ<ε>ῖα* and *σ'* has *ἠπλωμένη*.

³⁹⁶ LXX.D.E.K. 2516.

³⁹⁷ BDB, 977.

³⁹⁸ BDB, 977.

³⁹⁹ As in LXX of Jer 2:21.

⁴⁰⁰ So says Redak; see in Rozenberg, *Isaiah*, vol 1, 41.

perhaps red.⁴⁰¹ That it is a special variety of vine is evident from the contexts where it occurs. As Walsh says: “The infrequency of קִרְשׁ in the Bible, the fact that Yahweh is the vintner in two out of three contexts, and that Judah as the favored son benefits in the third—probably determined its translation as ‘choice’.”⁴⁰² The Greek phrase ἄμπελον σωρηχ could denote a particular vine variety; the Ptolemies imported many varieties of vines which are denoted in the Papyri by similar constructions, such as: ἀμπέλου καπνείου, ἀμπέλος φοινίσση; ἀμπέλος κάπνιος; and ἀμπέλος βούμαστος.⁴⁰³

The term קִרְשׁ is typically understood to refer to a wine vat where the must (grape juice) runs after being trod in the תַּג; though BDB also says that it can refer to the wine-press where the grapes are trodden.⁴⁰⁴ Ziegler notes that the LXX seems to understand the same double meaning, in that it sometimes translates קִרְשׁ with ληνός (winepress in general) and sometimes with ὑπολήγιον (wine vat).⁴⁰⁵ Walsh believes קִרְשׁ is a general term for the entire wine-press complex, while תַּג refers more specifically to the press itself.⁴⁰⁶ In Isa 5:2, however, we have the only LXX instance of the word προλήγιον (vat in front of the wine press),⁴⁰⁷ which otherwise does not occur in Greek until this passage is interpreted in Christian commentaries on this passage.⁴⁰⁸ In Isa 16:10 קִרְשׁ is translated with ὑπολήγιον, a vat placed under a wine press;⁴⁰⁹ this is probably an alternate wine-press and vat configuration from a προλήγιον. Ziegler suggests that Isa 5:2 refers to a *Vorkelter* or a pre-press which would produce the finest quality wine.⁴¹⁰

The sour grapes, שִׂשְׁבִּים, are rendered as thorns, ἀκάνθας. A similar word הַשִּׂבִּים which only occurs in Job 31:40, is rendered by the LXX as βᾶτος, bramble/thorns. Aramaic שִׂבִּים means bad, in the hiphal to decay, smell badly; also the early stage of ripening.⁴¹¹ The verbal root שִׂבִּים used in Isa 50:2 as שִׂבִּים־תִּבִּי is translated with ξηραίνω (perhaps thinking of the root שִׂבִּים), which is logical in the context. While the root שִׂבִּים is rare in the Hebrew Bible, the translator could have known its meaning from Aramaic and decided ἄκανθα was more appropriate in the context.

The decision to translate שִׂשְׁבִּים in Isa 5:2 (and also 5:4) with ἀκάνθας (thorns) is probably, in part, conceptual. In Isa 7:23-25 and 32:11-13 vineyards are contrasted with thorns and brambles in the Hebrew and the Greek.⁴¹² The translator may have been influenced by the contrasts in these passages, and so felt the opposite of vines and grapes are brambles

⁴⁰¹ HALOT, s.v. DCH, s.v.

⁴⁰² Walsh, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 106.

⁴⁰³ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 252-53.

⁴⁰⁴ BDB, 428.

⁴⁰⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 179.

⁴⁰⁶ Walsh, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 162-65.

⁴⁰⁷ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

⁴⁰⁸ Kloppenborg Verbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices,” 149.

⁴⁰⁹ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

⁴¹⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 179. For comments on first press wine, see Walsh, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 194-95.

⁴¹¹ Jastrow, *Dictionary*, v.s. p. 136.

⁴¹² Cf. Jer 12:10-13, where someone sows wheat but reaps thorns.

and their thorns. Interestingly, Ibn Ezra also comments that it was thorns that the vine produced.⁴¹³ In Isa 33:12 and 34:13 the land is overcome by thorns as part of God’s judgment for wicked acts, whereas in LXX-Isa 5, thorns metaphorically represent the acts of the wicked. Kloppenborg Verbin believes that since the vineyard is producing thorns there is implied some negligent human party that should have been tending the vineyard.⁴¹⁴ But as we will see in our discussion of 5:6, this is unlikely, since it is the vine that produces thorns, not the land the vineyard is on.⁴¹⁵

The overall picture of the vineyard, then, is slightly different in the LXX. This is in part due to exegetical concerns, as we have seen, as well as updating to contemporary Egyptian practices. Kloppenborg Verbin argues that the Hebrew describes a new vineyard being cultivated on a hill, while the LXX describes a plot of land being converted into a vineyard, as was often done.⁴¹⁶ He draws support, in part, from the use of νεόφυτος in 5:7, which was a technical term for newly planted vines.⁴¹⁷ However, he does not explain what it means that the beloved “acquired a vineyard,” which might suggest it already was a vineyard. There was a term for fields being converted to vineyards: χέρσος ἀμπελίτις.⁴¹⁸

The Targum interprets all the elements in this verse.⁴¹⁹ So, the first three verbs are rendered as וקדשתננון ויקרתננון וקיימתננון (I sanctified them, and I glorified them, and I established them). Since these verbs are interpreted, the reference to שִׁרְק is turned into a simile: כמיצב גפן בחירא (like a planting of a choice vine). Likewise, the vineyard’s features are interpreted, so that the watchtower is God’s sanctuary (בנייהון ובנית מקדשי), and the wine-vat is the altar for them to atone for their sins (לכפרא על חטאיהון ואף מדבחי יהבית). The grapes are good works (עובדין טבין), and ויעש באשמים is cleverly rendered with ואינון אבאישו עובדיהון (but they caused their works to be bad).

Isa 5:3

And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah,	ועתה יושב ירושלם ואיש יהודה	καὶ νῦν, ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Ἰουδα καὶ οἱ ἐνοικοῦντες ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ,	And now, man of Ioudas and those who dwell in Ierousalem,
judge between me and my vineyard.	שפטו־נא ביני וביין ברמי:	κρίνατε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ ἀμπελώνος μου.	judge between me and my vineyard.

⁴¹³ See in Rozenberg, *Isaiah*, vol 1, 41. He did not get this from the Targum, which says “made evil their deeds” using the root באש.

⁴¹⁴ Kloppenborg Verbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices,” 151.

⁴¹⁵ IQIsa^a has ויעשה, but even if the ה were a pronominal suffix, it would have no antecedent, since both שִׁרְק and כרם are masculine; though in Isa 27:2 כרם is feminine according to BDB.

⁴¹⁶ Kloppenborg Verbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices,” 146-47.

⁴¹⁷ Kloppenborg Verbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices,” 152.

⁴¹⁸ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 246-47.

⁴¹⁹ “And I sanctified them and I glorified them and I established them as the plant of a choice vine; and I built my sanctuary in their midst, and I even gave my altar to atone for their sins; I thought that they would do good deeds, but they made their deeds evil.”

The order of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and man of Judah are switched in the LXX.⁴²⁰ For agreement with the LXX order see 2 Kings 23:2; 2 Chr 20:15, 18, 20; 2 Chr 21:13; 32:22; 33:9; 34:30; 35:18; Ezra 4:6; Jer 4:4; 11:2; 11:9, 12; 17:20, 25; 18:11; 25:2; 32(39):32; 35(42):13, 17; Dan 9:7; and Zeph 1:4. Isa 22:21 also has the order seen in the Hebrew of 5:3 and the LXX preserves the order in translation (house of Judah becomes inhabitants, like for Jerusalem). Jer 36(43):31 has this order as well, but men of Judah becomes land of Judah. When the two terms “House of Israel and Men of Judah” appear in 5:7 the LXX does not change the order. The plural ἐνοικοῦντες agrees with 1QIsa^a which has יושבי ירושלם.

Only here, in 5:7, and Jer 35(42):13 is the phrase אִישׁ יְהוּדָה rendered with ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Ιουδα. Typically ἄνηρ is used, either in the singular or plural. In Jer 35(42):13 it is also rendered literally as a singular and is parallel to “inhabitants” in the plural translated with a plural: וְאֶמְרָתָּ לְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה וְלְיוֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם as καὶ εἶπὸν ἀνθρώπῳ Ιουδα καὶ τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν Ιερουσαλημ. LXX-Isa’s translation is more eloquent, with the definite article (ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Ιουδα), and using the same preposition in the prefix (ἐνοικοῦντες ἐν Ιερουσαλημ). Based on these passages, and Ob 1:9,⁴²¹ it seems ἄνθρωπος can be a collective singular, though it is odd that in Isa and Jer it stands parallel to a plural, especially in Isa, where the parallel collective singular is translated in the plural (assuming the *Vorlage* was like MT, and not 1QIsa^a). Since יושב is understood as a collective singular (unless of course the *Vorlage* agreed with 1QIsa^a), while אִישׁ is not, it seems possible that ἄνθρωπος is intended to be a singular (and not collective). LXX.D.E.K. takes it as a singular with the leadership in mind, and compares it to 8:8, 32:2, and 19:20, where a singular ἄνθρωπος is added in the Greek.⁴²² When the translator intends a plural, he at times adds ἄνθρωποι, as in 25:3-5.⁴²³

The Targum changes voice in this verse, with נביא אימר להון (Prophet, say to them...)⁴²⁴ Also it interprets the situation by adding הא בית ישראל מרדו מן אוריתא ולא צבן למתב (Behold, the house of Israel have rebelled against the law, and they are not willing to repent). Also of note is ואיש יהודה is rendered ואנש יהודה.

Isa 5:4

What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?	מֵה־לְעֲשׂוֹת עוֹד לְכַרְמִי וְלֹא עָשִׂיתִי בּוֹ מִדּוֹעַ קְנִייתִי לְעֲשׂוֹת עֲנָבִים וַיַּעַשׂ בְּאֲשָׁשִׁים:	τί ποιήσω ἔτι τῷ ἀμπελῶνί μου καὶ οὐκ ἐποίησα αὐτῷ; διότι ἔμεινα τοῦ ποιῆσαι σταφυλὴν, ἐποίησε δὲ ἀκάνθας.	What more might I do for my vineyard, and I have not done for it? Because I waited for it to produce a cluster of grapes, but it
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⁴²⁰ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 124 points out that B has the same order as the Hebrew.

⁴²¹ See Muraoka, *Lexicon*, 52. Ottley, *Isaiah* vol II, 124.

⁴²² LXX.D.E.K. 2516. 19:20 is of particular note. However, in 40:6 ἄνθρωπος is added and is undoubtedly meant to be collective singular, or at least general for all men.

⁴²³ For an analysis of this passage see Cunha, *LXX Isaiah 24:1-26:6*, 182-92.

⁴²⁴ “Prophet, say to them, Behold the house of Israel have rebelled against the law, and they are not willing to repent. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge now my case against my people.”

			produced thorns.
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The LXX translates well, using a subjunctive to capture the modal ל + infinitive construct.⁴²⁵ The translation of מְדוּעַ with διότι is unusual, (usually מְדוּעַ is translated by ὅτι τί or δια τί) but this rendering is not unheard of (see Jdg 5:28 and Jer 30:6). In the Hebrew, according to Jouon-Muraoka 161.k, the interrogative is the first “of two coordinate members, when, logically, the first member is subordinate and the interrogative relates only to the second member.”⁴²⁶ The translator may have had difficulty with this construction, and so converted the rhetorical question into a causal statement with a contrast. 1QIsa^a has בְּכַרְמִי instead of לְכַרְמִי, and וַיֵּשֶׁה instead of וַיֵּשֶׂה, but LXX seems to agree with MT in both places.

Theophrastus discusses all the things that can go wrong if a vine is not tended properly or is exposed to bad weather: the leaves can fall off, the plant can die, the shoots may grow too much, or the branches become too woody, the fruit might not grow at all, or it may fall off before ripe.⁴²⁷ Also, in his discussion of spontaneous changes that can happen in plants, he mentions that a vine that produces white grapes may suddenly produce black ones, or vice versa.⁴²⁸ The translator has departed from reality and exaggerates what happens in the vineyard; the vines are not failing, they are actively producing a bad crop.

The Targum turns the question about what more could have been done for the vineyard into a question of what promised good was not given to Israel: מַא טְבָא אִמְרִית לְהוֹן לְמַעְבַּד עוֹד לְעַמִּי וְלֹא עַבְדִּית לְהוֹן.⁴²⁹

Isa 5:5

And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.	<p>וְעַתָּה אֲדַעֲיֶה-נָא אֶתְכֶם אֶת אֲשֶׁר-אֲנִי עֲשֵׂה לְכַרְמִי הַסֵּר מִשׁוֹכְתוֹ וְהָיָה לְבָעֵר פְּרִץ גְּדָרוֹ וְהָיָה לְמַרְמָס:</p>	<p>νῦν δὲ ἀναγγελῶ ὑμῖν τί ποιήσω τῷ ἀμπελῶνί μου· ἀφελῶ τὸν φραγμὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔσται εἰς διαρπαγὴν, καὶ καθελῶ τὸν τοῖχον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔσται εἰς καταπάτημα,</p>	But now I will declare to you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be plundered, and I will tear down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.
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The hedge and wall mentioned here in the Hebrew were not included in the Hebrew description of the labor God performed in planting the vineyard in 5:2. The Greek, however, already had there the φραγμός and the act of fortifying (χαρακώω). The first person ἀφελῶ is probably not due to a reading like 1QIsa^a, which has אִסִּיר, but is simply due to the translator turning the whole passage into the first person.

⁴²⁵ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 36.2.3f.

⁴²⁶ Jouon/Muraoka, §161.k.

⁴²⁷ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4.14.6-7.

⁴²⁸ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 2.3.1.

⁴²⁹ “What more good did I promise to do for my people that I have not done for them? When I thought they would do good deeds, why did they make their deeds evil?”

The rendering of לְבַעַר with εἰς διαρπαγὴν only occurs here.⁴³⁰ Troxel suggests this equivalent is based on 3:14, with the idea of economic plunder underlying the decision.⁴³¹ The notion of plundering may have been chosen as a possible result of having the fence and wall removed, and has tightened the connection between the vineyard imagery and the reality it represents.⁴³² The choice of τοῖχος seems appropriate for a wall around a vineyard, though in the Papyri, vineyard walls are usually called τεῖχος, πλαστή, or πλάτη.⁴³³

Like the LXX, the Targum relates the hedge and the wall to 5:2, in that here God says He will remove his Shekhinah and they will become plunder (לְמִיבֹז) and He will break down the house of their sanctuaries (אֶת־רַע בֵּית מִקְדָּשֵׁיהוֹן); in 5:2, though, it was the temple and altar.⁴³⁴

Isa 5:6

I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;	וְאַשְׁיִתְהוּ בְתָהּ לֹא יִזְמַר וְלֹא יַעְדֹר וְעֵלָהּ שָׁמִיר וְשִׁית	καὶ ἀνήσω τὸν ἀμπελώνά μου καὶ οὐ μὴ τμηθῆῖ οὐδὲ μὴ σκαφῆῖ, καὶ ἀναβήσεται εἰς αὐτὸν ὡς εἰς χέρσον ἄκανθα·	And I will abandon my vineyard, and it shall not be pruned or dug, and a thorn shall come up into it as into a wasteland;
I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.	וְעַל הָעַבִּים אֶצְוֶה מִהַמְטִיר עָלָיו מָטָר:	καὶ ταῖς νεφέλαις ἐντελοῦμαι τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι εἰς αὐτὸν ὑετόν.	And I will also command the clouds, that they send no rain to it.

In the section on thorns (3.4.1) we discussed how the LXX translator has shaped this verse with language typical of the papyri to vividly describe a vineyard being left to turn into a fallow waste.⁴³⁵ Note again the singular ἄκανθα, in contrast to the plural form in 5:2 and 5:4.

As mentioned in the section on thorns, the Targum interprets all the elements in this verse.⁴³⁶

Isa 5:7

For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting;	כִּי כָרַם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה נֹטַע שְׁעִשְׁוּעָיו	ὁ γὰρ ἀμπελῶν κυρίου σαβαωθ οἶκος τοῦ Ἰσραηλ ἐστὶ καὶ ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Ἰουδα νεόφυτον ἡγαπημένον·	For the vineyard of the Lord Sabaoth is the house of Israel, and the man of Ioudas is a beloved young plant;
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⁴³⁰ 1QIsa^a has simply בער.

⁴³¹ Troxel, “Economic Plunder,” 389.

⁴³² LXX.D.E.K., 2516.

⁴³³ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 243-44. See 25:12 for an odd use of τοῖχος. cf. Cunha, *LXX Isaiah 24:1-26:6*, 121.

⁴³⁴ “And now I will tell you what I am about to do to my people. I will take up my Shekhinah from them, and they shall be for plundering; I will break down the place of their sanctuaries, and they will be for trampling.”

⁴³⁵ See also Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 181-82.

⁴³⁶ “And I will make them [to be] banished; they will not be helped and they will not be supported, and they will be cast out and forsaken; and I will command the prophets that they prophesy no prophecy concerning them.”

he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!	וַיִּקְוֶה לְמִשְׁפָּט וְהִנֵּה מִשְׁפַּח לְצִדְקָה וְהִנֵּה צַעֲקָה:	ἔμεινα τοῦ ποιῆσαι κρίσιν, ἐποίησε δὲ ἀνομίαν καὶ οὐ δικαιοσύνην ἀλλὰ κραυγὴν.	I waited for him to produce justice, but he produced lawlessness—nor did he produce righteousness but a cry!
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Again in this verse, the LXX has tried to put the verbs into first person. This means, either the voice changes in 5:7a, or that the Lord refers to Himself in the third person. Like in 5:3, we again have the issue of ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Ιουδα; if we understand it as a collective singular, then the beloved new plant (νεόφυτον ἡγαπημένον) also must be a collective singular. The Hebrew עֲשֵׂה צִדְקָה וְשָׁמַע צֶעֶק refers to the צֶדֶק of verse 5:2. The LXX translates with νεόφυτον ἡγαπημένον, an adequate but unique translation; usually (5x in the Psalms) עֲשֵׂה צִדְקָה is rendered with μελέτη.⁴³⁷ In α' we find φυτὸν ἀπολαύσεως αὐτοῦ and in σ' φυτὸν τέρψεως, both are closer translations. Here the LXX translator is undoubtedly creating coherence with 5:1 (though there the adjective is substantive); if the translator wanted to distinguish the vine from the beloved (ἡγαπημένος) of 5:1, he could have used a different word here. That the translator uses νεόφυτος (used elsewhere for עֲשֵׂה only in Job 14:9)⁴³⁸ instead of simply φυτός, makes sense, since the vine in question was planted in the vineyard in 5:2. The word νεόφυτος was the technical term for newly planted vineyards,⁴³⁹ though LXX-Isa wants it to refer to the ἄμπελος σωρηχ. In 5:7b the LXX adds verbs, the same as were used in 5:2: ποιῆσαι...ἐποίησεν, creating yet more coherence with that verse. In the following phrase he does not add verbs, but does add a negation, and renders the conjunction with a contrastive ἀλλά to make the contrast more obvious.⁴⁴⁰ Here there is still ambiguity whether it is the house of Israel or the man of Judah who is doing lawlessness, though the man of Judah is the immediate antecedent of the verb; this is noteworthy in light of the two having their order switched in 5:3. In 5:3, the man of Judah follows immediately after the thorns produced in 5:2.

The Targum of verse seven replaces vineyard with “people,” and elaborates on what God expected and what he found.⁴⁴¹

Isa 5:1-7 is widely recognized as an allegory, as opposed to a parable. A parable is an extended simile, that is, a comparison by resemblance, while an allegory is an extended metaphor, that is, as comparison by representation.⁴⁴² The interpretation of this allegory is

⁴³⁷ Other exceptions are Prov 8:30-31 where εὐφραίνω and ἐνευφραίνομαι are used, and Jer 31:20 uses ἐντρυφάω. In Psa 118(119):166 הַשֵּׁן is rendered with ἀγαπᾶν, and in 93(94):19 it renders the form עֲשֵׂה צִדְקָה.

⁴³⁸ Cf. Psa 143:12 where it is used for עֲשֵׂה צִדְקָה.

⁴³⁹ Schnebel, *Die Landwirtschaft im hellenistischen Ägypten*, 245.

⁴⁴⁰ For the translators use of negative particles, see Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 94-99.

⁴⁴¹ “For the *people* of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; *I thought that they would perform judgment*, but behold, *oppressors*; that they would act innocently, but behold, they multiply sins.”

⁴⁴² See Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 748-49.

provided already in the Hebrew in 5:7, making it unnecessary for the LXX translator to explain what the imagery refers to. He can translate literally allowing 5:7 to interpret the imagery. In both the Hebrew and the Greek, God planted the vineyard, the vineyard is Israel, the beloved planting are/is the men/man of Judah, grapes are justice and righteousness, and bad grapes/thorns are lawlessness and cries of distress. Some elements are not explained, such as the wall, the hedge (or clearing stones), rain, etc., but these details function within the allegory and do not need real counterparts, or their counterparts are implied by their function in relation to the parts that are explained. In any case, they show God doing all the proper work necessary to cultivate a perfect vineyard.⁴⁴³ Perhaps these details were understood to represent specific things, which would be elaborated when the passage was commented on by the Greek translator or his community. The Targum goes into detail, explaining how each element of the allegory relates to Israel's history, with particular interest in the temple.

The LXX for this passage as a whole does not interpret to the extent that the Targum does. It does, as Ziegler points out and we have seen, update the vineyard terminology to contemporary practices. Also, to some extent it recasts the image as a Hellenistic-Egyptian vineyard as distinct from an Israelite vineyard.⁴⁴⁴ The biggest differences between vineyards in these regions would be that in Israel vineyards would be placed on terraces on hillsides, like we see in 5:1 in both languages.⁴⁴⁵ Kloppenborg Verbin argues that the Greek has the conversion of a plot of land, while the Hebrew has the creation of a new plot,⁴⁴⁶ but this seems difficult, since in 5:1 a vineyard is acquired, and not simply a plot of land for a vineyard.

As mentioned above, the change in voice in the Septuagint to the first person has left a difficulty in 5:1: if it is “my vineyard” why does it say “the beloved acquired a vineyard?” Who is speaking when, and about whom? In 5:7 we learn that the vineyard belongs to the Lord of Hosts, so the first person references to “my vineyard” throughout the passage are presumably made by God. But does the prophet refer to God in 7a, or does God refer to Himself in the third person? Likewise, in 1b, is the beloved who acquires a vineyard God, who refers to Himself in the third person, or is it someone else? The tempting solution to the last problem is to call the pronoun μου of 5:1 a mistake resulting from the attempt to put the whole passage into the first person; then, we could claim the song only begins in 5:2, where the voice turns to the first person, as in α', σ', and θ'. But assuming the translator was deliberate and careful in his translation, we must suppose either the prophet calls the vineyard his own in 5:1a in that he is somehow associated with it,⁴⁴⁷ and in 5:1b the prophet talks about God, his beloved, acquiring the vineyard, or we must suppose God is referring to Himself as

⁴⁴³ See Walsh, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 137.

⁴⁴⁴ Kloppenborg Verbin expands on Ziegler in the description of this updating. Kloppenborg Verbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices,” 134-59.

⁴⁴⁵ See Walsh, *The Fruit of the Vine*, 93-99.

⁴⁴⁶ Kloppenborg Verbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices,” 146.

⁴⁴⁷ A citizen can refer to “my land” in a different way than a king might refer to “my land.”

beloved in 1b, or some other beloved is said to acquire the vineyard. If we do assume the translator was deliberate and consistent, then the beloved of 5:1a-b is probably meant to be the same beloved new planting in 5:7, that is, the man of Judah. If this is the case, the beloved acquired a vineyard in 5:1 by being the sorach vine planted in it (5:2). In the same way we might say a dog from an animal shelter got a good home, not by purchasing the deed to the house, but by being brought to it and settled there. This seems like an odd thing to say at this point in the passage, but the literal translation technique required this phrase to be rendered; indeed it is rendered quite literally, except for the pronoun and for the last words. The question of the identity of the ἀγαπητός in 5:1, however, remains.

A second difficulty in the translation is the ambiguity created in 5:4 by rendering **כִּשְׂבָאִים** with ἀκάνθας; in the Greek, it is possible that the vineyard as a whole is growing thorny plants, or that the vines of the vineyard are growing thorns instead of grapes. As mentioned above, Kloppenborg Verbin believes there is an implicit criticism of some other party who was negligent in tending the vineyard and did not remove the thorn plants that were growing.⁴⁴⁸ But this explanation does not seem likely, as we have said. The owner of the vineyard asks in 5:4 what more could he have done for the vineyard? If he could have weeded out the thorns, the question, and the whole allegory, loses its meaning. Additionally, that the vineyard is no longer pruned or dug in 5:6 shows that it was pruned and the weeds dug out of it before the harvest. Also, in 5:6 when the vineyard is abandoned, thorn (a collective singular, unlike the plural of 5:2 and 5:4) springs up like in a fallow field, as opposed to as in a tended vineyard. But whether the vine or the vineyard produces thorns is beside the point; the point is God did everything He could for His vineyard, but still it produced the opposite of what it was supposed to produce. When we look at what grapes and thorns represent in 5:7, it becomes clear that a criticism of the leadership is indeed implied, in that there is no justice but lawlessness. This shows that the ruling authorities are not acting righteously but are causing their people to cry in distress (like in 3:14, where the leadership sets fire to the vineyard, in the Greek).

The allegory is focused in the LXX by the addition of walls and fences in 5:2. In the Hebrew the allegory speaks more broadly of God's deeds on behalf of the vineyard, preparing the land, planting, and cultivating the vineyard. The Greek puts the focus more on the defense of the vineyard (though the other elements are not completely absent), by mentioning twice the wall and fence, and by changing "grazing" into "plundering," which exaggerates the destruction of the vineyard once the walls are gone. By focusing on defense, the allegory hints at the idea of a city, though still speaks generally about a people or nation. Ziegler suggests Isa 5:1-7 plays a role in Isa 27:2-5 rendering the vineyard as a city, as we will discuss below.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁸ Kloppenborg Verbin, "Egyptian Viticultural Practices," 150-51.

⁴⁴⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 90.

The LXX of the song of the vineyard, then, follows closely the Hebrew original, bringing the image to the experience of his readers by the use of appropriate terminology. At the same time, by slight adjustments, here and there, the translator has focused the allegory to a particular interpretation. That the vineyard produces thorns instead of grapes, and not just bad grapes, makes the vineyard, and those it represents, even more culpable; they are not only disappointing (producing poor quality grapes) but are wicked (producing thorns). The Greek appears to lay extra focus on the leadership, by the way it deals with the “man of Judah.”

There is a peshet fragment (4Q162/4QpIsa^b) of this passage, but not much can be said from it beyond that verse 5 is interpreted as God abandoning his people.

The Targum, on the other hand, interprets each element of the allegory, and makes what little imagery survives into similes. In 5:7, where in the Hebrew and Greek the interpretation of the allegory is given, the Targum in part interprets even this: ארי עמיה דיוי צבאות בית ישראל (for the people of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel).

In 5:10 vineyards are mentioned as producing very little wine to illustrate the desolation promised in 5:9. The phrase צמדיי כרם is rendered ζεύγη βοῶν. Ottley says the Greek phrase corresponds in meaning to the unit of measure צמד;⁴⁵⁰ the only other place it occurs, 1 Sam 14:14, it is rendered very differently. There is no need to suppose כרם was thought to be some plural for a word for cattle (such as פרים);⁴⁵¹ since the context of plowing a vineyard makes little sense;⁴⁵² the translator may have supposed a yoke of oxen was a better rendering and better cohered with the parallel clause.⁴⁵³

The Targum renders the Hebrew well, only adding an explanation for why the ten measures of vineyard land yields only one measure of wine: the sin of not giving tithes.

In 27:2-5 a vineyard again is used in a metaphor. In the Hebrew it is implied to represent God’s people, but in the Greek it is explicitly interpreted as a besieged city.

Isa 27:2

On that day: “A pleasant vineyard, sing about it!	בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כָּרֵם :חֲמַד עֲנוּלָהּ ⁴⁵⁴	τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκεῖνη ἀμπελῶν καλός· ἐπιθύμημα ἐξάρχειν κατ’ αὐτῆς.	On that day: a beautiful vineyard—a desire to begin singing <i>against</i> it.
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The LXX testifies to a textual variant in MT, namely, the reading חמד as opposed to חמר.⁴⁵⁵ The LXX read חמד and gave it a double rendering καλός and ἐπιθύμημα.⁴⁵⁶ Ziegler

⁴⁵⁰ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 125.

⁴⁵¹ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 125. LXX.D.E.K. 2517.

⁴⁵² A field where a vineyard was to be planted would need the soil loosened, perhaps by plowing, but describing a land being turned into an under performing vineyard would require considerable more description than a literal rendering style would allow.

⁴⁵³ Ziegler thinks the translator considered it arable land generally, and did not need to be restricted to vineyards. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 108. For the units of measure, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 193.

⁴⁵⁴ Following BHS; the reading of the Aleppo Codex and Leningradensis is חמר, 1QIsa^a has חומר; this reading is reflected also in the Vulgate and the Peshitta. See van der Kooij, “Isaiah 24-27: Text-Critical Notes,” 15.

thinks it is questionable that ἀμπελών καλός is original, since the passage as a whole is frequently understood to be about a city, and so the original reading was πόλις πολιορκουμένη (as occurs in 27:3), which the feminine pronoun αὐτῆς would then match.⁴⁵⁷ But it is entirely possible that the translator simply maintained the vineyard metaphor in verse 2 (as well as rendering literally the gender of the pronoun) and once the song began in verse 3 makes clear his interpretation of the metaphor. The feminine pronoun in the Hebrew here and the feminine forms in the next verse undoubtedly contributed to the idea that a city was meant and not a vineyard, which is elsewhere always masculine in Hebrew.

The Targum makes clear that the passage is talking about the congregation of Israel, and turns the metaphor into a simile.⁴⁵⁸ Like the LXX, it gives two renderings of חֲקִי but to a different end: ככרם נסב בארע טבא.

Isa 27:3

<p>I, the LORD, am its keeper; every moment I water it. I guard it night and day so that no one can harm it;</p>	<p>אֲנִי יְהוָה נֹצְרָה לְרַגְעִים אֲשַׁקְנָהּ פֶּן יִפְקֹד עָלֶיהָ לַיְלָה וַיּוֹם אֲצַרְנָה:</p>	<p>ἐγὼ πόλις ἰσχυρά, πόλις πολιορκουμένη, μάτην ποτιῶ αὐτήν· ἀλώσεται γὰρ νυκτός, ἡμέρας δὲ πεσεῖται τὸ τεῖχος.</p>	<p>I am a strong city, a besieged city; in vain will I water it, for it will be taken by night, and by day the wall will fall.</p>
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In this verse, the Hebrew is more concerned about showing God’s care for the vineyard, than about describing the vineyard itself. That God waters the vineyard is the opposite of 5:6 where He commanded the clouds not to rain. Giving it drink could mean irrigation practices, like in Deut 11:10 where Egyptian fields are watered by foot וְהִשְׁקִיָּהּ בְּרַגְלֶיהָ. Guarding the vineyard was important for the LXX’s understanding of 5:1-7 (where a vineyard representing the house of Israel is destroyed).

The Greek, for some reason, has omitted יְהוָה,⁴⁵⁹ Seeligmann suggested it was abbreviated in the *Vorlage* as י and eliminated by haplography.⁴⁶⁰ The phrase πόλις πολιορκουμένη only elsewhere occurs in 1:8 where it translates כְּעִיר נְצוּרָה. Ottley suggests that πόλις πολιορκουμένη comes from נצרה and πόλις ἰσχυρά is a duplicate.⁴⁶¹ Ziegler holds the opposite view, that the song in 26:1 contributed to the idea that the song in 27:2 was about a strong city,⁴⁶² though in 26:1 it is πόλις ὀχυρά.⁴⁶³ Ziegler believes πόλις ὀχυρά was original

⁴⁵⁵ See D. Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l’Ancien Testament: 2 Isaïe, Jemie, Lamentations* (OBO, 50.2; Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1986), 188-92.

⁴⁵⁶ LXX.D.E.K., 2572.

⁴⁵⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 88.

⁴⁵⁸ “In that time, “The congregation of Israel which is like a choice vineyard in a good land, sing of it!””

⁴⁵⁹ Unless עיר יהוה was thought (Isa 60:14; Psa 48:8; 101:8), and not wanting to use the term in a negative context opted for πόλις ἰσχυρά, as Prof. van der Kooij tentatively proposed in discussion.

⁴⁶⁰ Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 169 [31/32].

⁴⁶¹ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 234.

⁴⁶² Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 87.

⁴⁶³ It would appear Ziegler preferred this reading for 27:3 while he wrote *Untersuchungen*, but changed his mind when he prepared the Göttingen LXX text. The reading ἰσχυρά is attested in S, A, and Q*.

and πόλις πολιορκουμένη was secondary.⁴⁶⁴ Van der Vorm-Croughs, following Seeligmann,⁴⁶⁵ believes this is a case of two coordinate renderings that reflect distinct readings or interpretations of the Hebrew, as her section title says.⁴⁶⁶ She explains that both adjectives come from נצרה; first, πολιορκουμένη comes from reading a Niphal participle of צור (to enclose); and second, ισχυρά comes from reading בצרה, as in 25:2; 36:1; and 37:26 (though in these places the Greek has ὀχυρά).⁴⁶⁷ Seeligmann believes πόλις is an epexegetic addition, which the translator “came to regard as the binding factor” between his two readings of נצרה.⁴⁶⁸

It seems likely that we have here a double translation; why the translator here uses πόλις ισχυρά instead of πόλις ὀχυρά could be to distinguish this city from that of 25:2 and 26:1. The term ὀχυρά is better for a fortified city, though ισχυρά is used again in 33:11 to describe the strong position the righteous will inhabit. The idea that a city was meant at all, and not a vineyard, is probably in part due to 1:8, where a vineyard is mentioned and נצורה describes a city.⁴⁶⁹ Also, all the feminine forms in the Hebrew of 27:2-3, as mentioned above, would match עיר, but nowhere else is כָּרִים feminine. The surrounding context of strong cities undoubtedly also contributed to the translator understanding 27:2-3 to be about a strong city.

Like in Isa 5:1-7, it is confusing concerning who is speaking. In 5:2 the beloved is said to acquire a vineyard, but then the passage speaks about “my vineyard.” So too in 27:3, the speaker is the besieged city, but the passage continues to describe what “I” do for “her” (the city). According to LXX.D., 3-4a is all part of one direct speech. It then still remains odd that the city refers to itself as “her,” αὐτήν.

The phrase μάτην ποτιῶ αὐτήν for לְרִיק לְרִיקִים אֲשַׁקֵּנָה could be the result of reading לְרִיק לְרִיקִים.⁴⁷⁰ Muraoka calls μάτην here a free rendering.⁴⁷¹ LXX.D.E.K thinks the idea is that a continuous effort is a futile effort,⁴⁷² if it was efficacious it would stop. To give drink to a city makes sense in the context of a siege, and if the translator believed the city was doomed to fall then indeed providing water to it would be in vain.⁴⁷³ It seems unlikely that γάρ is meant to render פֶּן, but the two words are otherwise unaccounted for.⁴⁷⁴ Troxel calls ἀλίσκω a

⁴⁶⁴ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 89.

⁴⁶⁵ Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 169. Though he believes it is read as בצרה and נצרה.

⁴⁶⁶ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 32.

⁴⁶⁷ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 32.

⁴⁶⁸ Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 169. He believes the *Vorlage* had the Tetragrammaton abbreviated with ׀, which had fallen out due to haplography.

⁴⁶⁹ As also in Isa 27:10, but the LXX does not translate in the same way there, and does not even mention a city.

⁴⁷⁰ For the former, see Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 234. Ziegler agrees with the possibility and suggests also the latter, Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 89.

⁴⁷¹ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 77.

⁴⁷² LXX.D.E.K., 2572.

⁴⁷³ Cf. Sir 24:31 where giving drink (ποτιῶ) to the garden has good results. Water here representing instruction. LXX.D.E.K. suggests this is the meaning of the metaphor “to give drink” in LXX Isa 27:3, also. LXX.D.E.K., 2572.

⁴⁷⁴ Even more unlikely is that it was thought to be the proclitic particle ׀.

slot word used by the translator in contexts having to do with battle.⁴⁷⁵ But there seems to be some lexical warrant: ἀλώσεται could be a free interpretation of יִפְקֹד, since פָּקַד can have negative connotations suggesting a coming punishment, as in Isa 10:12 and Jer 6:15.⁴⁷⁶ As Ottley says, πεσεῖται is probably a result of seeing in אֶצְרָנָה the letters צר and τεῖχος comes from reading חֲמָה as חוֹמָה in the next verse.⁴⁷⁷ Van der Vorm-Croughs agrees that חֲמָה is rendered twice, once as τεῖχος and once as ἐπελάβετο (associating the root חמס).⁴⁷⁸ Ziegler points out that the phrase πεσεῖται τὸ τεῖχος occurs also in 24:23.⁴⁷⁹

The Targum expands and interprets the verse.⁴⁸⁰ There is no mention of a vineyard, but God keeps his covenant. Giving drink refers to the cup of their punishment (כס פורענותהוּן). Day and night refers to the constant protection of God’s Memra.

Isa 27:4

<p>I have no wrath. <i>Who will give me thorns and briars? I will march to battle against it. I will burn it up.</i></p>	<p>חֲמָה אֵין לִי מִיִּתְנִי שְׁמִיר שִׁית בְּמַלְחָמָה אֶפְשָׁעָה בָּהּ אֶצִּיתָנָה יְהִד:</p>	<p>οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἐπελάβετο αὐτῆς· τίς με θήσει φυλάσσειν καλάμην ἐν ἀγρῶ; διὰ τὴν πολεμίαν ταύτην ἠθέτηκα αὐτήν. τοίνυν διὰ τοῦτο ἐποίησε κύριος ὁ θεὸς πάντα, ὅσα συνέταξε. κατακέαυμαι,</p>	<p>There is not <i>one</i> that has not taken hold of it; who will set me to watch stubble in a field? Because of this enmity I have set it aside. Therefore because of this the Lord God has done all things, whatever he has ordained. I have been burned up.</p>
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The Hebrew expresses the peace of Israel and God’s zeal to defend it. God wishes (as expressed by the cohortative verbs) there were thorns and thistles so He could zealously make war on them and destroy them from His vineyard.

The Greek has rather drastically changed this verse along with much of the chapter.⁴⁸¹ Relating Greek clauses to the underlying Hebrew is difficult; there appears to be some double translations in this verse. The identity of the relative pronoun ἢ is translated as referring to “city” by NETS and to “Macht” in LXX.D.; more literally it refers to the enmity (or the inimical one) mentioned later: πολεμία. This idea, while difficult to extrapolate from the Hebrew, continues from the Greek’s understanding of 27:3 where the strong city is taken and the wall falls; every enemy will take hold of the city. Likewise ἐπελάβετο αὐτῆς may come

⁴⁷⁵ Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 79.

⁴⁷⁶ Ziegler suggests the root לָכַד may have been thought, Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 89. LXX.D.E.K. is probably right that it is a paraphrase with the sense of an announcement of judgment. LXX.D.E.K., 2572.

⁴⁷⁷ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 234. Cf. LXX.D.E.K., 2572.

⁴⁷⁸ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 47-48.

⁴⁷⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 89. Cf. LXX.D.E.K., 2572. For LXX-Isa’s use of τεῖχος and τοῖχος see van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre*, 67-68; Cunha, *LXX Isaiah*, 173-74.

⁴⁸⁰ “I, the LORD, keep for them the covenant of their fathers, and I will not destroy them, except that in the moment that they incite to anger before me, I make them drink the cup of their retribution. But though their sins already demand that retribution be taken from them, night and day my Memra protects them.”

⁴⁸¹ For an analysis of 27:2-5, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 87-91.

from the general perceived context of an inimical party attempting to seize a city; LXX.D.E.K links it to Joel 2:9 where again the word occurs in the context of an attacked city.⁴⁸² Van der Vorm-Croughs suggests ἐπελάβετο is based on linking חמה to חמס by way of root association.⁴⁸³

We have already discussed the rendering of the phrase מִי־יִתְּנֵנִי שְׁמִיר שִׁית in the section on thorns (3.4.1.).

The phrase διὰ τὴν πολεμίαν ταύτην ἠθέτηκα αὐτήν presumably comes from the Hebrew. The word πολεμίαν comes from בְּמִלְחָמָה. The word פֶּשַׁע elsewhere only occurs in 1 Sam 20:3,⁴⁸⁴ where it is rendered ἐμπέπλησται. In Isa 27:4, as Ottley and LXX.D.E.K. show, the translator understood פֶּשַׁע as in Isa 1:2.⁴⁸⁵ The last word, בָּה, is rendered with αὐτήν.

The next phrase, τοίνυν διὰ τοῦτο ἐποίησε κύριος ὁ θεὸς πάντα, ὅσα συνέταξε, has been compared to the similar phrase in Lam 2:17.⁴⁸⁶ Ziegler held that it was a marginal gloss already before the LXX; he shows how the theme of God decreeing things before they happen is addressed elsewhere, as in 37:26.⁴⁸⁷ Seeligmann, on the other hand, thought it was a Christian gloss.⁴⁸⁸ LXX.D.E.K. acknowledges the influence of Lam 2:17, and suggests the following equivalents: פֶּשַׁע = ποιέω, מָה = πάντα ὅσα, צוה = συντάσσω.⁴⁸⁹ This plus acts as a kind of theological summary, explaining why God's holy city faces such disasters. The phrase דַּחֲצִיתָנָה יְיָ runs into the next verse in the Greek, as a complaint of the people wanting to make peace with God.

The Targum expands this verse also, but makes it about how God would destroy Israel's enemies if they would follow his law, like fire destroys thorns and fallow land: ואשיצניון כמה דמשיציא אשתא הובאי ובור כחדא.⁴⁹⁰

The vineyard metaphor of Isa 27:2-4 has been substantially reworked by the LXX; indeed, after 27:2 there is no hint of a vineyard at all in the Greek but only of a besieged city. The reference to giving drink in 27:3 which in the Hebrew refers to a vineyard in the Greek refers to the besieged city. It could literally refer to giving water in the famine of the siege, or

⁴⁸² LXX.D.E.K. 2572.

⁴⁸³ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 47-48. This is an example of words rendered at the end of one clause and the beginning of the next clause.

⁴⁸⁴ One manuscript has it in Prov 29:6, but LXX has ἀμαρτάνοντι.

⁴⁸⁵ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 234. LXX.D.E.K., 2572.

⁴⁸⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 91; Seeligmann, *The Septuagint of Isaiah*, [26/27] 162.

⁴⁸⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 90-91. Ziegler convincingly shows the several connections between LXX-Isa 37 and 27. Van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 239 also offers these passages as an example of elements being adopted from elsewhere in Isaiah.

⁴⁸⁸ Seeligmann, *The Septuagint of Isaiah*, [26/27] 162.

⁴⁸⁹ LXX.D.E.K., 2572. For the last equivalent, see van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 50, where she suggests a double rendering of אַצִּיתָנָה, as συντάσσω from צוה and κατακαίω from יצת.

⁴⁹⁰ "Behold, there are many prodigies before me! If the house of Israel set their face to do the law, would I not send my anger and my wrath among the gentiles who are stirred up against them and destroy them as the fire destroys briars and thorn together?"

could be a metaphor for instruction.⁴⁹¹ How the vineyard became a besieged city is in part due to lexical issues, in part due to the immediate context, and in part due to the interpretation of the vineyard in Isa 5.

The lexical warrant, such as it is, involves the interpretation of two words in 27:3-4. While opinions differ as to exactly what happened, many agree that נצורה gave way to the idea of a strong or besieged city, as we have seen; נצורה is used to describe a city in Isa 1:8. The second lexical warrant is חמה in 27:4, which was interpreted as a city wall: τεῖχος. In addition to these, the repeated feminine forms in the passage probably suggested to the translator that a city (עיר/πόλις) was meant.

The context likewise probably contributed to the understanding that a city was meant; cities are mentioned numerous times in Isa 24-26. In particular, as we stated above, the song in 26:1 about a strong city (though there a different word for “strong” is used) may have contributed to the song in 27:2 being understood as referring to a city.⁴⁹² Also, in the following passage, 27:10, a fortified city (עיר בצורה) is described as deserted (though LXX renders this phrase differently there). Hendrik Leene has argued that in the Hebrew, 27:8 invites a comparison between the vineyard of 27:2-6 with the city of 27:10-11.⁴⁹³ Also, as Ziegler pointed out, the phrase πεσείται τὸ τεῖχος occurs both in 27:3 and 24:23. More specifically, exegesis of LXX-Isa 26 shows that it is most likely referring to Jerusalem,⁴⁹⁴ so it makes sense that this context would contribute to seeing 27:2-5 as referring to Jerusalem also, despite the fact that it is described as πόλις ἰσχυρά in 27:3 and not as πόλις ὀχυρά as in 26:1.

The connection between Isa 5 and Isa 27 does not at first appear to go far beyond them both being songs about a vineyard. While the Greek of Isa 5 still maintains the interpretation that the vineyard represents the house of Israel and the vine the man of Judah, the language of the passage has been changed, making it easier to relate to a city. In LXX-Isa 5:2 the additional description of the vineyard as fenced or fortified brings it closer to the besieged city of 27:3. As we saw in the Targum, later tradition understood parts of the vineyard of Isa 5 to represent the temple in Jerusalem. Baumgarten argues that 4Q500 uses botanical imagery from Isa 5 to describe the temple as early as the first century BCE.⁴⁹⁵ While identified already as a benediction by Baillet,⁴⁹⁶ Baumgarten shows that it is probably a benediction addressed to God, since it talks of “the gate of the holy height” (לשער מרום הקודש) and the “streams

⁴⁹¹ LXX.D.E.K., 2572.

⁴⁹² See Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 87.

⁴⁹³ Hendrik Leene, “Isaiah 27:7-9 as a bridge between vineyard and city,” in *Studies in Isaiah 24-27* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000): 199-225. He shows some connections in the Hebrew between 27 and 24 on page 216-17, though the LXX does not appear to make these connections.

⁴⁹⁴ van der Kooij, “The Cities of Isa 24-27,” 195-97. Cunha, *LXX Isaiah 24:1-26:6*, 206-7.

⁴⁹⁵ Joseph M. Baumgarten, “4Q500 and the Ancient Conception of the Lord’s Vineyard,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 40 (1989), 1-2.

⁴⁹⁶ Maurice Baillet, *Qumrân Grotte 4* (DJD VII; Oxford, 1982), 78-79.

of your glory” (ופלגי כבודכה).⁴⁹⁷ In even such a short fragment the connection to Isa 5 is clear: both speak of a wine vat יקב (Kloppenborg Verbin points out that there is no point to the fragment saying it is made of stones unless it has in mind the altar, like the Targum),⁴⁹⁸ and both use the somewhat rare adjective שעשוע.⁴⁹⁹ Additionally, Baumgarten believes the holy height corresponds to the tower in 5:2 and that word מכה^o[can be reconstructed as מכה[וכר].⁵⁰⁰ Perhaps this interpretation, that the song of the vineyard in Isa 5 refers to the Temple, was already known to the LXX-Isa translator; it seems to fit with his understanding of the vineyard as Jerusalem in Isa 27:2. In any case, 4Q500 and the Targum demonstrate that the tradition thought it possible to identify a vineyard with Jerusalem (or more specifically, its temple), as LXX-Isa does in 27:2-5. Already in the Hebrew it is hinted at that Jerusalem itself is at times represented by a vineyard. In 1:8 the daughter of Zion is compared to a hut in a vineyard (and to a besieged city), and in 3:14 it could be understood that the leaders grazing the vineyard are helping themselves to the goods in Jerusalem, though nothing explicit makes this connection in the Hebrew or the Greek. While 1:8 is only that the people are like a vineyard or like a besieged city, and in 3:14 and 5:1-6 the people not the city are represented by a vineyard,⁵⁰¹ LXX-Isa 27 takes a step further thinking a vineyard represents the city Jerusalem.

3.5.2. Vines

Grapes or grapevines (גפן) are often nearly synonymous with vineyards. We have already discussed 7:23-5 in the section on thorns (3.4.1.). For the occurrence in 34:4, see the section on leaves (2.5.1.). The occurrences in 32:10-12 and 36:16-17 speak literally about actual grapes and vines. Isaiah 16:8 also talks about a vine in hyperbolic terms, which the LXX makes less extreme, but the Targum interprets allegorically.⁵⁰² In 16:9 there is weeping for vines, though this is probably because they are actually destroyed (and are not a metaphor).

Isa 24:7

The wine <i>mourns</i> , the vine languishes, all the merry-hearted sigh.	אָבַל תִּירוֹשׁ אֲמַלְלָהּ גִּפְנוֹ נִאֲנָחוּ כָּל־שִׂמְחֵי־ לֵב:	πενθήσει οἶνος, πενθήσει ἄμπελος, στενάξουσιν πάντες οἱ εὐφραινόμενοι τὴν	The wine will mourn; the vine will mourn; all who rejoice in their soul will groan.
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⁴⁹⁷ Baumgarten, “4Q500 and the Ancient Conception of the Lord’s Vineyard,” 1.

⁴⁹⁸ John S. Kloppenborg [Verbin], *The Tenants in the Vineyard* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 195; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 90. Both Kloppenborg Verbin and Baumgarten also compare the fragments’ interpretation to that of both the Targum and Tosephta Sukkah 3.15.

⁴⁹⁹ Baumgarten, “4Q500 and the Ancient Conception of the Lord’s Vineyard,” 1-2.

⁵⁰⁰ Baumgarten, “4Q500 and the Ancient Conception of the Lord’s Vineyard,” 2.

⁵⁰¹ Cf. Ezek 15:6 where again the people of Jerusalem are represented by a grape vine in the context of coming destruction.

⁵⁰² “For the *armies* of Heshbon are plundered, the *companies* of Sibmah are killed; the *kings* of the *Gentiles* kill their rulers, they reached to Jazer, strayed to the desert, their outcasts cut [their way] through, cross over the sea.”

		ψυχῆν.	
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While in Isa 16:8-9 there was weeping for vines, in 24:7 they are personified as themselves weeping. In the Hebrew, the synonymous parallelism suggests it could be understood to mean simply that wine and vine dry out. According to HALOT, אָבַל can mean “to dry out,” and has a homonym that means “to mourn,” but אָמַל only means to dry out.⁵⁰³ The Greek translates both terms with *πενθέω*,⁵⁰⁴ and so anthropomorphizes the wine and vine, giving them emotions. In 16:8 the translator has also rendered אָמַל with *πενθέω*. Earlier in the passage, the earth also is said to mourn (אָבַל) in 24:4, which may have contributed to the Greek reading of 24:7.⁵⁰⁵ In 4QIsa^c there is a plus, and so reads גַּפְנֵי יֵצֵה, which is a closer parallel to תִּירוֹשׁ.

Also of note is that שְׂמַחֵי־לֵב has been rendered with *εὐφραϊνόμενοι τὴν ψυχῆν*. This translation occurs 13x (and 12x for לֵב) in the LXX and *διάονια* 19x, so often this lexicalized metaphor is translated so as to remove the idiom.

The Targum inserts a subject and makes things causal, so that those who drink wine mourn because the vines are dying;⁵⁰⁶ this is based on the context, particularly 24:9 and 11.

A word associated with grape vines is אָשַׁכַּל, which occurs in Isaiah only in 65:8.

Thus says the LORD: As the wine is found in the cluster, and they say, "Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it,"	כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה בְּאֶשֶׁר יִמְצָא הַתִּירוֹשׁ בְּאֶשְׁכּוֹל וְאָמַר אֵל- תִּשְׁחִיתֶהוּ כִּי בִרְכָה בּוֹ	Οὕτως λέγει κύριος ἽΟν τρόπον εὐρεθήσεται ὁ ῥῶξ ἐν τῷ βότρυι καὶ ἐροῦσι Μὴ λυμήνη αὐτὸν ὅτι εὐλογία ἐστὶν ἐν αὐτῷ,	Thus says the Lord: As the grape will be found in the cluster, and they will say, “Do not destroy it, because a blessing ⁵⁰⁷ is in it,”
so I will do for my servants' sake, and not destroy them all.	כִּן אֶעֱשֶׂה לְמַעַן עֲבָדַי לְבַלְתִּי הַשְׁחִית הַכֹּל:	οὕτως ποιήσω ἕνεκεν τοῦ δουλεύοντός μοι, τούτου ἕνεκεν οὐ μὴ ἀπολέσω πάντας.	so I will do for the sake of the one who <i>serves</i> me. For the sake of this one I will not destroy them all.

The Hebrew comparison expresses that the destruction declared in 65:1-7 will not be complete but some remnant will survive. Some commentators understand the Hebrew as the Greek does, that some good grapes are found on a bad bunch, but others that it is a good bunch of grapes among bad bunches.⁵⁰⁸ It remains strange, though, that “wine” or “must” is mentioned and that there is nothing to clarify what kind of activity is being done that the bunch would otherwise be destroyed.

⁵⁰³ HALOT s.v.; DCH only has the definition “to mourn” for אָבַל.

⁵⁰⁴ See LXX.D.E.K., 2565.

⁵⁰⁵ See Cunha, *LXX Isaiah*, 66, 72, 147-48.

⁵⁰⁶ “All who drink wine mourn, for the vines wither, all the merry-hearted sigh.”

⁵⁰⁷ NETS follows Rahlfs with “the blessing of the Lord,” though it does not mention that it departs from Ziegler at this point.

⁵⁰⁸ See Blenkinsop, *Isaiah 56-66*, 275-76.

The word שִׁירָתָהּ is usually translated with οἶνος in LXX (and in LXX-Isa). The rendering here with ῥῶξ is considered to be free by Muraoka,⁵⁰⁹ and indeed, it constitutes an interpretation of the difficult simile. Ziegler suggests the translator had the leftover grapes in mind, which one was supposed to leave for the poor (Lev 19:10: οὐδὲ τοὺς ῥῶγας τοῦ ἀμπελῶνός σου συλλέξεις), similar to the use of ῥῶξ in Isa 17:6 (though there it refers to olives); the mention of a blessing, then, is to that promised for keeping such commandments (Deut 24:19).⁵¹⁰

The Targum abandons the language of the comparison, making it about Noah (chosen, perhaps in part, because he was a vintner) being saved in his wicked generation, rather than having to do with grapes.⁵¹¹

3.5.3. Summary

In summary, vineyard metaphors in LXX-Isa could be on their way toward conventionalization, in that they seem to be regularly thought to represent Jerusalem. This is hinted at in the Hebrew already in 1:8 and 3:14, but is hinted at more strongly in the Greek of 5:1-7 and made explicit in 27:2-6. The comparison in 65:8 also makes good sense (both in the Hebrew and Greek) if understood in relation to Isa 5:1-7, so that not all the grapes are bad (though they are thorns in the Greek), but a few will be saved.

In 5:10, the removal of the vineyard is probably due to trying to make a more sensible text. The reduction of the hyperbolic size of the vine of Sibmah has to do with the translator trying to describe how Moab will be ravaged in 16:8-9. In 24:7 the vines are personified as weeping, though this is probably not connected to ideas of Israel as God's vineyard.

The Targum in 1:8 focuses the metaphor, making it clear that the hut and booth are abandoned after the harvest is over. The grazing of the vineyard in 3:14 is interpreted simply as robbing God's people, as the context makes clear. In 5:1-7 the Targum expands interpreting the language to give an overview of Israelite history and the temple; it explains the exile and the temple's destruction as the result of the people's failure to obey the law. In 27:2-4 the individual elements of the vineyard are again interpreted; the passage becomes about Israel and the covenant and what God would do for His people if they would only follow the law.

Concerning the vine of Sibmah in 16:8-9, the Targum interprets the vine's parts, so that the vine is the armies, the tendrils rulers, and the shoots fugitives. In 24:7, rather than the

⁵⁰⁹ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 105.

⁵¹⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 132.

⁵¹¹ "Thus says the LORD: "As Noah who was found innocent in the generation of the flood, and I promised not to destroy him in order to establish the world from him, so I will do for my servants', the righteous', sake, in order not to destroy all."

vine mourning, those who drink wine mourn. In 65:8 the strange “must in the grape cluster” image is replaced by a vintner: Noah, who becomes the basis for the comparison.

3.6. Trees

In Hebrew, עץ is a word for a tree or the material wood. The LXX renders it with ξύλον the majority of the time. When the context is appropriate, it uses more specific terms, such as in Gen 18:4 where it has δένδρον.⁵¹² Since our interest is in plant imagery, we will skip most of the passages that use עץ as the material wood or speak of trees literally.⁵¹³

This section will first discuss general references to trees; second, it will look at references to oaks or terebinths; third, several other specific kinds of trees will be treated together; and fourth, references to thickets and woods will be examined; and finally a summary of tree related metaphors will be offered.

3.6.1. References to trees in general: עץ

Often Isaiah uses tree metaphors that do not need to be any particular kind of tree. As we will see, the LXX-Isa translator sometimes feels the need to adjust these passages in various ways. We will first look at the texts in question, then make a summary.

3.6.1.1. Texts

The first place עץ occurs is in a short narrative section giving historical context to a prophecy.

Isa 7:2

<p>When the house of David heard that Aram had allied itself with Ephraim, the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.</p>	<p>וַיִּגְדַּל לְבַיִת דָּוִד לְאֹמֶר נָחָה אֲרָם עִלָּי- אֶפְרַיִם וַיִּנְעוּ לִבָּבוּ וּלְבַב עַמּוֹ כְּנוֹעַ עֵצִי- יַעַר מִפְּנֵי רִוְחַ:</p>	<p>καὶ ἀνηγγέλη εἰς τὸν οἶκον Δαυιδ λέγοντες Συνεφώνησεν Ἀραμ πρὸς τὸν Εφραιμ· καὶ ἐξέστη ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ, ὃν τρόπον ὅταν ἐν δρυμῶ ξύλον ὑπὸ πνεύματος σαλευθῇ.</p>	<p>And it was reported to the house of David saying, “Aram has made an agreement with Ephraim.” And his soul and the soul of his people were agitated as when a tree in the forest is</p>
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⁵¹² Cf. Ezek 37:16-20.

⁵¹³ Isa 10:15; 30:33; 37:19; 40:20; 44:13; 44:19; 45:20; 60:17. Often trees are mentioned literally in relation to cultic sites in Isaiah. Sticher, “Die Gottlosen gedeihen wie Gras,” 253-54 argues that God is not described in tree metaphors out of concern for Canaanite tree-cults; she also shows that trees as something permanent usually are used to represent the righteous in the OT; though they can be cut down, they may sprout from the stump and so can be an image of judgment and salvation. She shows trees also can be used negatively as representing the proud and arrogant, and in Psa 37 the wicked are like a tall tree that nevertheless vanishes without a trace.

			shaken by the wind.
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This simile is interesting, first of all, since it is used in a narrative section to describe events, and not in a more poetic prophetic section.⁵¹⁴ In the Hebrew the comparison turns on using the same verb נָנַע to describe the tenor (their hearts) and the vehicle (trees of the forest). That hearts shake is itself a metaphor for fear, though it also describes the physical sensation of shock and fear. 1QIsa^a has only the hearts of the people shake, probably due to haplography: וינע לבב עמו.

The LXX clarifies exactly what is meant by hearts shaking. The word ἐξίστημι is only used here as an equivalent for נָנַע. The translator wanted to explain what it meant for their heart to shake by saying they were amazed or stunned, as Muraoka defines the phrase.⁵¹⁵ The regular translation, even in LXX-Isa, for לִבָּב is καρδία, which further shows that the translator was attempting to explain the meaning of the phrase and was not concerned with preserving its imagery. Once the reality represented is clear, the translator is able to translate the simile describing it.

But the simile too has been modified in translation. The comparative particle is rendered with a long but precise phrase ὃν τρόπον ὅταν so that the simile can be an entire phrase.⁵¹⁶ The verb σαλεύω (elsewhere used seven times for נָנַע) is moved to the end of the sentence. Also, the construct relationship עֲצֵי יַעֲרֵר has been carefully rendered ἐν δρυμῶ ξύλον, as opposed to just using a genitive; the word order is changed, the plural becomes singular and a preposition is used to show the relationship.

These changes clarify what the simile means, but appear to be done for the sake of creating an inclusio. The reality and the simile describing it are linked by the term נָנַע in the Hebrew, but the Greek has sought for clarity in describing the reality and so uses different verbs.⁵¹⁷ By rearranging the simile, the link between the verbs ἐξίστημι and σαλεύω is reestablished by placing them at the beginning and end of the sentence.

The Targum modifies this simile slightly, and like the LXX uses two different verbs for the hearts (עֲזִיז to shake or move) and the tree (יִדְּשׁ hit.: to be thrown about).⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁴ For the use of συμφωνέω, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 109. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 195 [50/51]. LXX.D.E.K., 2520.

⁵¹⁵ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v. ψυχή.

⁵¹⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

⁵¹⁷ For this technique in LXX-Isa, see Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 182 [41].

⁵¹⁸ “And it was made known to the house of David: “The king of Syria has allied himself with the king of Israel,” to come up against him. And his heart with the heart of his people quaked as the shaking of trees of the forest before the wind.”

Isa 10:17-19

<p>The light of Israel will become a fire, and his Holy One a flame; and it will burn and devour his thorns and briars in one day.</p>	<p>וְהָיָה אֹרֶן־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֵשׁ וְקִדּוּשׁוֹ לְלֶהֱבֵה וּבַעֲרָה וְאָכְלָה שִׁיתוֹ וּשְׁמִירוֹ בַּיּוֹם אֶחָד:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔσται τὸ φῶς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ εἰς πῦρ καὶ ἀγιάσει αὐτὸν ἐν πυρὶ καιομένῳ καὶ φάγεται ὡσεὶ χόρτον τὴν ὕλην. τῆ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ</p>	<p>The light of Israel will become a fire, and it will sanctify him with a burning fire and devour the wood like grass. On that day</p>
<p>The glory of his forest and his fruitful land the LORD will destroy, both soul and body, and it will be as when an invalid wastes away.⁵¹⁹</p>	<p>וְכָבוֹד יְעָרָו וְכַרְמֵלֹו מִנֶּפֶשׁ וְעַד־בָּשָׂר יִכְלֶה וְהָיָה כַּמָּסָס נֶסֶס:</p>	<p>ἀποσβεσθήσεται τὰ ὄρη καὶ οἱ βουνοὶ καὶ οἱ ὄρυμοί, καὶ καταφάγεται ἀπὸ ψυχῆς ἕως σαρκῶν· καὶ ἔσται ὁ φεύγων ὡς ὁ φεύγων ἀπὸ φλογὸς καιομένης·</p>	<p>the mountains and the hills and the woods will vanish, and it will consume them from the soul to the flesh, and the one who flees will be like the one who flees from a burning flame.</p>
<p>And the remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few that a child can write them down.</p>	<p>וּשְׂאֵר עֵץ יְעָרָו מִסְפֵּר יִהְיוּ וְנָעַר יִכְתְּבֵם:</p>	<p>καὶ οἱ καταλειφθέντες ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ἔσονται ἀριθμὸς, καὶ παιδίον γράψει αὐτούς.</p>	<p>And those who are left from them will be a cipher, and a child will write them down.</p>

We have already discussed 10:17 in the section on thorns (3.4.1.). There we showed that the LXX adjusts the image to be that of a copse of trees going up in flames as quickly as a clump of dry grass.

As Muraoka suggests concerning 10:18, ἀποσβεσθήσεται probably comes from reading וְכָבוֹד as though it had the root כבה,⁵²⁰ possibly due to the perceived need for a verb in the clause.⁵²¹ This change turns the imagery of the verse. In the Hebrew we have the king’s realm and person becoming a waste, while the Greek has what appears to be metaphorical language (since hills and mountains are destroyed) about the land and about his person. The Greek renders יְעָרָו literally, though without the possessive pronoun, but moves it after its rendering for וְכַרְמֵלֹו. Ottley suggests that ὄρος is a rendering of יְעָרָו understood to be הַהָרִים, but this is not likely.⁵²² The word כרמל is usually transliterated, though again in Isa 29:17 it is twice rendered with τὸ ὄρος τὸ Χερμελ.⁵²³ In 37:34, however, it is not rendered.⁵²⁴ In 16:10 it is

⁵¹⁹ Or “as when a banner-holder despairs.”

⁵²⁰ Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 15. This translation is made in Prov 31:18. Cf. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 162. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 110-11.

⁵²¹ 1QIsa^a matches MT in this passage.

⁵²² Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 162.

⁵²³ The same transliteration (but without mention of a mountain) is used twice in 32:15, while in 32:16, 33:9 and 35:2 the transliteration used is κάρμηλος. Only in 33:9 and 35:2 does the Hebrew mean the place and not the noun.

rendered with ἀμπελών, though probably due to the parallel כַּרְם. The rendering of 10:18 is probably because it made no sense to the translator to call Carmel the Assyrian's, and so he rendered just the mountains and added the hills to make a nice word pair; we see the two terms in synonymous parallelism in 10:32.⁵²⁵ In 44:23, however, יַעַר is rendered with βουνός (note the parallel ὄρος), so we could here have a double rendering of יַעַר; Ziegler thinks βουνός is original and δρυμός was added later. As Ziegler has shown, the similar passage in Ecc 43:21(23) probably also plays a role in the rendering of this verse.⁵²⁶

The Hebrew יִבְלָה may have been understood to come from the root אכל, since κατασθίω is its most common equivalent. It could also be that the translator took language from the preceding context to interpret specifically how they will be destroyed. The idea of wasting away having been removed, the Greek goes on to transform the comparison from an invalid atrophying to someone fleeing from fire (another element perhaps taken from the context).⁵²⁷ The basis for this change appears to arise from understanding כְּמַסַּס נִסַּס to come from the root נִסַּס.⁵²⁸ Note that the simile maintains some alliteration, though from different sounds than the Hebrew. The translator could have reused the phrase πυρός καιομένου from 10:16 (though in a different case), but chose a synonym that repeats the φ sound instead.

In 10:19, the LXX replaces the phrase עֵץ יַעַר with a pronoun referring back to those fleeing, interpreting the remaining trees as the remaining people.⁵²⁹ The rest of the verse is translated very literally, rendering the yiqtol as simple future, whereas a potential sense is preferred. The trope could be an implicit comparison in Greek and Hebrew, or a metaphor, though it may be considered a sort of prophecy.

The passage as a whole in the Hebrew uses thorn, wood, and tree metaphors to talk about the king, his men, and his glory. The thorns and thistles in 10:17 probably represent his army or works; the forest and land being consumed could refer to his land, but in light of them being consumed “body and soul” suggests it represents his people. Likewise the few trees surviving the fire seem to suggest people are meant and not his actual forests. The Greek focuses this imagery by amplifying the burning flame throughout the passage; that people are meant by the tree and forest imagery is made clear by the LXX in 10:19 by making the remnant refer to those who flee the fire.

⁵²⁴ See Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 111.

⁵²⁵ For this word pair, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 111.

⁵²⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 111.

⁵²⁷ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 162. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 93.

⁵²⁸ This phrase is still difficult to understand. DCH suggests six possible meanings for נִסַּס. It is probably best to understand it either as meaning to be sick (as from Syriac nassîs) or to shake (as from Akkadian nasâsu), Wildberger, *Jesaja*. 406.

⁵²⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 82. LXX.D.E.K., 2523.

The Targum also understands the trees in this passage to refer to people.⁵³⁰ In 10:17 the grass and thorns are rendered as rulers and tyrants. In 10:18 the forest is rendered as people, and in 10:19 the remnant of trees are rendered as the survivors of his army camp.

Isa 44:23

<p>Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done it; shout, O depths of the earth; break forth into singing, O mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and will be glorified in Israel.</p>	<p>רְנֹו שְׁמַיִם כִּי־עָשָׂה יְהוָה הַרְיֵעֹו תַּחְתִּיּוֹת אֲרֶץ פִּצְחֹו הָרִים רְנֵה יַעַר וְכָל־ עֵץ בּוֹ כִּי־גָאֹל יְהוָה יַעֲקֹב וּבִישְׂרָאֵל יִתְפָּאֵר:</p>	<p>εὐφράνθητε, οὐρανοί, ὅτι ἠλέησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν Ἰσραηλ· σαλπίσατε, θεμέλια τῆς γῆς, βοήσατε, ὄρη, εὐφροσύνην, οἱ βουνοὶ καὶ πάντα τὰ ξύλα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς, ὅτι ἔλυτρώσατο ὁ θεὸς τὸν Ἰακωβ, καὶ Ἰσραηλ δοξασθήσεται.</p>	<p>Rejoice, O heavens, because God has had mercy on Israel; trumpet, O foundations of the earth; shout for joy, O mountains, the hills and all the trees that are in them, because God has redeemed Iakob, and Israel will be glorified!</p>
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In this verse the heavens, earth, mountains, forests, and trees are personified and told to rejoice in various manners; we have already treated the similar passage 55:12 where mountains, hills, and trees rejoice (2.6.3.). The plus giving the reason to rejoice (ὅτι ἠλέησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν Ἰσραηλ) is probably to explain what exactly God did (יְהוָה כִּי־עָשָׂה), and is provided from the end of the verse.⁵³¹ The phrase תַּחְתִּיּוֹת אֲרֶץ is unique to this passage. Usually תַּחְתִּי is used in an attributive position and not in a construct phrase, as we see in Ezek 26:20: בְּאֲרֶץ תַּחְתִּיּוֹת.⁵³² LXX-Isa uses the familiar phrase, θεμέλια τῆς γῆς, which more properly translates מוֹסְדֵי אֲרֶץ as in Isa 24:18 and 40:21.⁵³³ It also occurs in Isa 14:15 for the phrase יִרְכַּתִּי־בוֹר. The rendering of רוע with σαλπίζω only occurs here. It is probably due to understanding it as meaning a signal or war cry, and so the idea of sounding a trumpet.⁵³⁴

A significant change in the translation is found at the end of the verse. In the Hebrew, God shows himself glorified in Israel, but in the Greek Israel is glorified.⁵³⁵ This change in meaning is achieved by leaving off the preposition ב.

What is important for our study is that the forest (יַעַר) is made into a hill (βουνός).⁵³⁶ There could be at work here the same issue that led to the addition of βουνοί in Isa 10:18, or it

⁵³⁰ “And it will come to pass that the master of the light of Israel and his Holy One, his Memra will be strong as the fire, and his words as the flame; and he will kill and destroy his rulers and his tyrants in one day. 18 And the glory of his many armies and his warriors, their soul with their body, he will destroy, and he will be broken and fugitive. 19 And the remnant of the people of his armies will come to an end, to become a people of small number and they will be esteemed a faint kingdom.”

⁵³¹ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 317. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 156.

⁵³² Cf. Jos 15:19; Psa 88:7; Lam 3:44; Ezek 32:18, 24.

⁵³³ Also in Psa 81:5; Prov 8:29; Mic 6:2; and for יסודי תבל in Sir 16:19.

⁵³⁴ Cf. LXX.D.E.K., 2654.

⁵³⁵ Cf. LXX.D.E.K., 2654.

⁵³⁶ 4QIsa^b and 1QIsa^b both correspond to MT, lacking “hills.”

could be a more logical counterpart to mountains than a forest would be (see Isa 40:4; 55:12, etc.).

The Targum is literal, though specifies that what the LORD has done is accomplish redemption for His people.⁵³⁷

Another passage that mentions trees in anthropomorphic language is Isa 55:12. We have dealt with this passage in the section about branches (2.6.3.). Remember that the tree was rendered literally, but it clapped its branches in Greek, rather than its hands.

Isa 56:3

<p>Do not let the foreigner joined to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from his people"; and do not let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am just a dry tree."</p>	<p>וְאֵל־יִאמַר בֶּן־הַנֶּכֶד הַנְּלוֹה אֶל־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר הַבְּדֵל יְבַדִּילֵנִי יְהוָה מֵעַל עַמּוֹ וְאֵל־יִאמַר הַסְּרִיס הֵן אֲנִי עֵץ יָבֵשׁ:</p>	<p>μη λεγέτω ὁ ἀλλογενὴς ὁ προσκείμενος πρὸς κύριον Ἐφοριεῖ με ἄρα κύριος ἀπὸ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ· καὶ μὴ λεγέτω ὁ εὐνοῦχος ὅτι Ἐγὼ εἰμι ξύλον ξηρόν.</p>	<p>Let not the alien who clings to the Lord say, "So then the Lord will separate me from his people," and let not the eunuch say, "I am a dry tree."</p>
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This verse has had some changes made in translation, though the content and rhetorical force has been maintained. Ziegler points out that *προσκείμενος* is an expression known from LXX-Pentateuch in passages having to do with foreigners.⁵³⁸ The LXX omits the introduction of direct speech *לֵאמֹר*, though the second quote has the additional introduction *ὅτι*. The pleonastic construction of an infinitive absolute and a finite verb is often translated in LXX-Isa either with just a verb or with a finite verb and a cognate noun in the dative.⁵³⁹ In this verse, the translator has opted to translate just the verb but has given the statement a similar sense of certainty as the Hebrew construction would, by adding the particle *ἄρα*.⁵⁴⁰ In the second quote, *הֵן* is not rendered with its stereotype *ἰδοὺ*. Perhaps it is meant to be represented by the word *εἰμί*. In any case, the quote in Greek has much the same force with the first person pronoun and the verb, of asserting the reality or certainty of his statement. The quote features terseness and assonance with the *ε* and *ξ* sounds.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁷ "Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has accomplished *redemption for his people; break forth, O foundations of the earth; shout into singing, O mountains, O forest and all trees that are in it!* For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and will be glorified in Israel."

⁵³⁸ Such as Exod 12:49 and Lev 16:29. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 129.

⁵³⁹ See Emanuel Tov, "Renderings of Combinations of the Infinitive Absolute and Finite Verbs in the LXX—Their Nature and Distribution," *Studien zur Septuaginta-Robert Hanhart zu Ehren: Aus Anlaß seines 65. Geburtstages* (eds. Detlef Fraenkel, Udo Quast, and John W. Wevers; *Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens XX*; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 70.

⁵⁴⁰ See Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, §2787, §2790.

⁵⁴¹ For the importance of metaphors sounding beautiful, see Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.13.

In both the Hebrew and the Greek, it is ambiguous whether the eunuch considers himself dry wood or a dry tree;⁵⁴² both images are apt. If he's dry wood, then he is presumably attached to the rest of Israel (just like the foreigner in the beginning of the verse), but is dead and has no future or potential for children (contrary to the promise in 56:5) and should be pruned off (perhaps implied by תִּכְרֹת like 56:5). If the image is understood as a tree it has the connotation of other tree images (such as Judges 9:9-15; Psa 1:2-3; Dan 4:10-12, 20-22), where kings and important people are likened to them. The eunuch, though, is dry and so again, has no future or hope for offspring.

The Targum softens the image, making it a simile: הֵא אֲנִי כְּעֵץ יָבֵשׁ (reading אֲנִי: “behold I am like a dry tree”).⁵⁴³ Perhaps the Targum read a text like 1QIsa^a, which reads אֲנִי כְּעֵץ, but divided the words differently.

Isa 65:22

<p>They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.</p>	<p>לֹא יִבְנֶוּ וְאַחֵר יֵשֵׁב לֹא יִטְעוּ וְאַחֵר יֹאכַל כִּי־כִימֵי הָעֵץ יִמֵּי עַמִּי וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם יִבְלוּ בַּחַיִּי:</p>	<p>καὶ οὐ μὴ οἰκοδομήσουσι καὶ ἄλλοι ἐνοικήσουσι, καὶ οὐ μὴ φυτεύσουσι καὶ ἄλλοι φάγονται· κατὰ γὰρ τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς ἔσονται αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ λαοῦ μου, τὰ ἔργα τῶν πόνων αὐτῶν παλαιώσουσιν.</p>	<p>and they shall not build, and others inhabit; they shall not plant, and others eat, for according to the days of the tree of life shall the days of my people be; they shall make old the works of their labors.</p>
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Of special note in this passage is that the simile is interpreted quite dramatically. In the Hebrew, the lifespan of the people is compared to that of a tree, most of which live quite a long time. The Greek, though, departs from typical literal translation and specifies that the tree of life is meant.

The rendering of the Hebrew comparative marker with κατά and an accusative is not mentioned by Ziegler in his discussion of comparisons and is found nowhere else in LXX-Isa. This is, however, a common rendering in Ben Sira.⁵⁴⁴ This rendering has changed the comparison into a more literal description of their days. In addition, the translator has understood the definite עֵץ to refer not to just any tree, but to the tree of life, τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς.⁵⁴⁵ In Gen 2-3 the tree of life, עֵץ הַחַיִּים, is likewise rendered τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς. Ottley suggests it may have originally read: κατὰ γὰρ τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ ξύλου ἔσονται αἱ ἡμέραι τῆς

⁵⁴² The choice of ξύλον over δένδρον could be simply because it is used more commonly (245 versus 14 times) or for the sake of assonance. That it is for assonance is strengthened by 57:5 where נַעֲרֵי עַם is rendered δένδρα δασέα. This is the only place in Isa where δένδρον is used for עַם.

⁵⁴³ “Let not a son of *Gentiles* who has *been added to the people of the LORD* say, “The LORD will surely separate me from his people”; and let not the eunuch say, “Behold, I am *like* a dry tree.””

⁵⁴⁴ Hatch and Redpath, Appendix 2, 181a.

⁵⁴⁵ Seeligmann believes the phrase could come from a latter reviser, who also altered 65:3, Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 167-68 [30-31].

ζωῆς τοῦ λαοῦ μου,⁵⁴⁶ but no manuscript preserves this reading. This interpretation of Isa 65:22 is seen also in the Targum, which reads ארי כיומי אילן חייא יומי עמי. This interpretation is probably based on קִנְיָן having the definite article (in 1QIsa^a it lacks the article), just as in Jewish tradition הַמִּזְבֵּחַ in Gen 22:9 is thought to refer to the altar Adam, Cain and Abel, and Noah sacrificed on, because it has the definite article.⁵⁴⁷

The Targum in addition to agreeing with the LXX about the tree of life, it also agrees that the last clause is about people living so long that they outlive their various works which should outlive them.⁵⁴⁸

Before moving on to specific types of trees, two passages that list several specific types of trees are worth mentioning. In 44:14 the LXX gives a general rendering for various types of trees, and in 41:19 the LXX reduces the number of different types of trees.

Isa 44:14

<p>He cuts down cedars or chooses a holm tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a <i>laurel</i> and the rain nourishes it.</p>	<p>לְכַרְת־לֹּא אֲרָזִים וַיִּקַּח תְּרִזָּה וְאֵלֹן וַיִּאֲמַקְ-לֹו בְעֵצֵי-יַעַר נָטַע אֲרָן וַגַּשָּׁם יַגְדֵּל:</p>	<p>ὁ ἔκοψε ξύλον ἐκ τοῦ δρυμοῦ, ὃ ἐφύτευσε κύριος καὶ ὑετὸς ἐμήκυνεν,</p>	<p>He cut wood from the forest, which the LORD planted and the rain made grow,</p>
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This passage occurs within a description of how foolish it is that people take wood and use some of it for fuel and exert effort to turn some of it into an object of worship. This verse is not metaphorical, but it is insightful for how the translator understands tree language and how he deals with poetry.

Here the translator removes parallelism and enumeration of synonymous terms.⁵⁴⁹ The terms אֲרָזִים, אֵלֹן, and אֲרָן (cedar, oak, and laurel)⁵⁵⁰ are not difficult or obscure, but are all removed in favor of a direct and clear description of what the person described is after: ξύλον.⁵⁵¹ Van der Vorm-Croughs lists this verse as an example where LXX-Isa condenses two clauses into one.⁵⁵² Ottley, however, calls the text mutilated, suggesting the translator skipped

⁵⁴⁶ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 383.

⁵⁴⁷ See, for example, Ramban (Nachmanides), *Commentary on the Torah 1: Genesis* (trans. Charles B. Chavel; New York: Shilo, 1971), 276-77.

⁵⁴⁸ “They shall not build and others inhabit; they shall not plant and others eat; for like the days of the tree of life shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall wear out the works of their hands.”

⁵⁴⁹ 1QIsa^a agrees with MT.

⁵⁵⁰ BDB defines אֲרָן as fir or cedar, while HALOT defines it as laurel. Musselman says that the Old Testament does not mention the laurel, Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 170, but he nowhere makes clear what this Hebrew term refers to. Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 74, believes that a laurel (bay) tree is meant.

⁵⁵¹ Ziegler agrees that the omissions are the result of a deliberate free rendering. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 126. Also LXX.D.E.K., 2654.

⁵⁵² van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 73.

from ארזים to ארן;⁵⁵³ but this does not explain why לו was not rendered or why יער and נטע were rendered. Also, the similar reduction of parallel words and clauses in the surrounding passage, such as in 44:12, 13, 15, 17, and 25,⁵⁵⁴ must be taken into account and suggests that the condensation was the deliberate work of the translator. The term תרזה only occurs here; Musselman thinks it could be a species of pistacia, related to the terebinth.⁵⁵⁵ Besides this collapsing of terms for tree for the sake of clarity and style, the translator adds an agent for the verbs in the second part of the verse: κύριος. LXX.D.E.K. suggests the translator read ארן as אדן.⁵⁵⁶ It could be a matter of the translator taking the opportunity to add that the wood which man works into an idol has its source from the true God.

The Targum is rather literal.⁵⁵⁷ It only adds two double translations. The difficult tree תרזה is rendered with תרן תורז (mast of toraz), which acts to specify that it is some sort of tree good for timber, but does not try to identify or interpret it further. The other double rendering is of ויאמן-לו with ומתקיף ומתקין ליה, which clarifies the idea of a tree being selected but allowed to mature before being cut down.

Isa 41:19

<p>I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and <i>tree of oil</i>; I will set in the desert the cypress, <i>the plane</i> and the pine together.</p>	<p>אָתָּן בַּמִּדְבָּר אֲרֹז שֵׁטָה וְהַדָּס וְעֵץ שֶׁמֶן אֲשֵׁים בְּעֵרְבָה בְּרוֹשׁ תְּדָהָר וּתְאֲשׁוּר יַחְדָּו:</p>	<p>θήσω εἰς τὴν ἄνυδρον γῆν κέδρον καὶ πύξον καὶ μυρσίνην καὶ κυπάρισσον καὶ λεύκην,</p>	<p>I will put in the dry land a cedar and a box-tree and a myrtle and a cypress and a white poplar</p>
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In this passage the Greek has removed the synonymous parallelism and reduced the number of trees listed from seven to five. Van der Vorm-Crouchs lists this passage among those where the enumeration of closely associated words are reduced.⁵⁵⁸

The Greek does not have equivalents for עץ שמן, the tree of oil, or either תדהר or תאשור. Assessing the translation of the trees mentioned is difficult, in that it is uncertain to which species some of these terms intend to refer. We will discuss the issue of word equivalents and the species of trees here, since it will be useful for the following sections on specific types of trees.

It is well known that ארז means cedar, so the rendering with κέδρος is appropriate. The rendering of שטה with πύξος is unique to this passage, in fact, πύξος only occurs here.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵³ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 315.

⁵⁵⁴ See van der Vorm-Crouchs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 63-65, 79, 81.

⁵⁵⁵ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 267. HALOT prefers some species of oak, perhaps the holm oak.

⁵⁵⁶ LXX.D.E.K., 2654.

⁵⁵⁷ “He cuts down cedars, or chooses a holm or an oak and *establishes* it among the trees of the forest; he plants *the* laurel and rain nourishes it.”

⁵⁵⁸ van der Vorm-Crouchs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 63-64. Also she lists it among passages where there is condensation by a distributive rendering of parallel clauses, 77-81.

Elsewhere *טֹפֵּט* usually occurs in the construct phrase *עֵצֵי שֹׁטִים* as in Exod 25:5, and is rendered *ξύλα ἄσηπτα* (rot resistant wood).⁵⁶⁰ This tree is thought to be the acacia tree, or more specifically *acacia nilotica* or *albida*.⁵⁶¹ Theophrastus describes both species of acacia, calling them *ἄκανθα ἢ Αἰγυπτια* and *ἄκανθα ἢ λεύκη* respectively.⁵⁶² LXX-Isa's rendering *πύξος*, however, is a different tree, the *buxus sempervirens*.⁵⁶³ This is probably not a wild guess, since both the *buxus sempervirens* and the *acacia nilotica* are resistant to rot and provide good material for making things.⁵⁶⁴ It is worth noting that in the previous chapter, Isa 40:20, we find the phrase: *הַמִּסְכָּן תְּרוֹמָה עֵץ לֹא יִרְקַב יִבְחָר* which could have given another kind of tree as one that does not rot, but the LXX does not make this connection.⁵⁶⁵ LXX-Isa provides a better translation for the acacia tree in 34:13 (though the Hebrew may not intend to imply this) where we find the phrase *ἀκάνθινα ξύλα* for the Hebrew *סִירִים קְמוֹשׁ וְחוֹךְ*.

The next tree mentioned, *הַדֵּס*, is properly translated as *μυρσίνη*.⁵⁶⁶ The term *עֵץ שָׁמֶן*, is not rendered here.⁵⁶⁷ The exact tree *בְּרוֹשׁ* refers to is disputed. HALOT prefers juniper, of all the various options, while Musselman believes it is a cypress.⁵⁶⁸ The LXX outside of Isaiah renders it as referring to juniper, *πέυκινος*, twice (Hos 14:9; II Chron 2:8(7)) and once as cypress, *κυπάρισσος* (2 Kgs 19:33).⁵⁶⁹ In LXX-Isa, though, it is always rendered as cypress (Isa 37:24; 41:19; 55:13; 60:13). LXX-Isa, then, is on the cutting edge of scholarship on this issue.

The last two trees mentioned, *תְּדָהָר* and *תְּאֲשׁוּר*, only occur here and again together in Isa 60:13. 1QIsa^a has *תרהר* here and *תהרהר* in 60:13, which does not help. HALOT believes the former is best described vaguely as a tree from Lebanon, and the later as a cypress. The LXX renders one of these trees with *λεύκη* (poplar).⁵⁷⁰ In Isa 60:13, assuming

⁵⁵⁹ LXX.D.E.K., 2649.

⁵⁶⁰ It is interesting to note that the LXX seems to understand the wood that is meant since it translates its most important quality as a construction material: that it does not rot. A more literal rendering of the phrase would have used the word *ἄκανθα*, which would have accurately identified the tree, botanically speaking, but would have sounded as though the ark and other vessels were to be made out of thorn trees. The word choice probably had some theological undertones to it.

⁵⁶¹ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 38.

⁵⁶² Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4.2.1; 4.2.8.

⁵⁶³ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 1.5.4-5.

⁵⁶⁴ For the *πύξον* see Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 5.3.7; 5.4.1-2. For the acacia, see Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 38-41.

⁵⁶⁵ This could be because *בְּרוֹשׁ* does not mean a kind of tree. We will discuss this passage below.

⁵⁶⁶ Compare Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 198-200; and Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 1.3.3; 1.9.3.

⁵⁶⁷ In 1 Kgs 6:23 it is also not rendered. In Neh 8:15 it occurs after the *תִּי* and is rendered with *ξύλων κυπάρισσινων*; in 1 Kgs 6:31, 33 it is rendered with *ξύλων ἀρκευθίνων*, while in 1 Kgs 6:32 it is rendered with *ξύλων πευκίνων*. The tree *עֵץ שָׁמֶן* is often identified either as a wild olive or a kind of pine tree. See HALOT, s.v. That it is not an olive tree, see Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 109 nt. 1.

⁵⁶⁸ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 110.

⁵⁶⁹ Also, it renders it six times as referring to a pine tree, and twice as a cedar.

⁵⁷⁰ Theophrastus discusses the poplar. Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 1.10.1; 3.1.1; 3.3.1; etc.

the three trees mentioned are rendered in the same order, תְּדֵהָר is rendered as *πεύκη* (pine) and תְּאֲשׁוּר as *κέδρος* (cedar).⁵⁷¹

In the Hebrew, it is undoubtedly significant that seven trees are mentioned. The acacia could live in the desert, but the cedar, myrtle, olive, and cypress would most likely die there.⁵⁷² That they do not live together, and especially in the desert, is probably why they are chosen, which 41:20 makes clear in that they are planted so men will know that the LORD has done it. Since we cannot identify with certainty the תְּדֵהָר and תְּאֲשׁוּר, we cannot say whether they could live in the desert. The trees mentioned are all beautiful and useful for various products, and so we would expect them in a king's garden, which is another reason they were probably chosen for this image.

As mentioned earlier, the Greek removes the parallelism and two trees, probably for the sake of style and not for symbolism. In the Greek, these trees are still out of place together in the desert. Whether the trees could be planted by cuttings is probably irrelevant to the metaphor in both languages, as it is supposed to be a miraculous planting in any case.

The Targum appears to be rather literal, using Aramaic cognates for most of the trees. For the last two trees it has מורנין ואשכרעין, “planes and pines.”⁵⁷³

Two passages should be mentioned where the LXX adds a reference to a tree. In 16:9 we read τὰ δένδρα σου, which is probably a result of a differing *Vorlage* which matched 1QIsa^a, which reads אַרְזִיךְ.⁵⁷⁴ In 7:19, discussed in the section on thorns (3.4.2.), a type of thorny plant (נַעְצוּיִן) is rendered with ξύλον.

3.6.1.2. Summary

As we have seen, in the Hebrew, trees are often used in comparisons and metaphors for people. In 7:2, the shaking of the king and his people's hearts is compared to trees shaking in a forest; the Greek improves the style of this verse. In 10:17-19 wood is added and carefully crafted to make it represent people. And in 56:3, a eunuch compares himself to a dry tree; the Greek improves the style by adding assonance. In 65:22 people's lifespans are said to be like that of a tree, but the LXX makes it specifically like the tree of life.

The opposite also is true, in that trees are sometimes personified in Isaiah as well as LXX-Isa. In 44:23, trees and forest sing for joy, and in 55:12 the trees clap.

In 44:14 and 41:19, as we have seen, the LXX does not attempt to render all of the tree types accurately, probably for the sake of style. We will investigate specific types of trees further in the following sections.

⁵⁷¹ We will discuss 60:13 below.

⁵⁷² See the relevant trees in Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*.

⁵⁷³ “I will put in the wilderness cedars, acacias, myrtles, olive trees; I will *make great* in the desert cypresses, planes, and pines, together;”

⁵⁷⁴ MT has אַרְזִיךְ דְּמַעְתֵּי. The LXX does not seem to understand the trees or vines in this passage as metaphorical.

The Targum renders similarly to the LXX in some cases. In 7:2, for example, it also uses two different verbs in the comparison, one for the hearts and another for the trees, though not to the same effect as the LXX. Also, the Targum understands the tree of life to be implied in 65:22. The Targum goes further than the LXX in interpreting trees as people in 10:17-19, rendering them as rulers, tyrants, armies, and survivors. In 56:3, though, the metaphor of the eunuch being a dry tree is softened into a simile. But unlike the LXX the Targum lists all the specific trees in 44:14 (specifying a rare word for a kind of tree) and 41:19;⁵⁷⁵ and renders literally the trees and forests and mountains rejoicing in 44:23.

3.6.2. Oak/Terebinth

The Hebrew term אֵיל occurs three times in Isaiah. BDB defines it as the terebinth (which is also its definition for אֵלֶּה and אֵלֹן), while HALOT says only that it is a mighty but unspecified tree. The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew lists אֵילִים as the plural absolute form of אֵלֶּה, which it defines as terebinth. The Targum believes that they are different words, in that in Isa 1:29 אֵילִים is rendered with אֵילֹן (tree) while in the next verse, 1:30, אֵלֶּה is rendered with בטמה (terebinth). DCH defines אֵלֹן as an oak or other large tree. In this section we will look at how these trees are rendered. First, we will look at occurrences of אֵיל; second, אֵלֶּה; third, אֵלֹן; and finally, make a summary.

3.6.2.1. אֵיל

Isa 1:29

For you shall be ashamed of the <i>terebinths</i> in which you delighted;	כִּי יִבְשׂוּ מֵאֵילִים אֲשֶׁר חִמְדְּתֶם	διότι καταισχυνθήσονται ἐπὶ τοῖς εἰδώλοις αὐτῶν, ἃ αὐτοὶ ἠβούλοντο,	For they shall be ashamed because of their idols, which they themselves wanted,
and you shall blush for the gardens that you have chosen.	וְתַחְפְּרוּ מֵהַגְּנוֹזֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּחַרְתֶּם:	καὶ ἐπησχύνθησαν ἐπὶ τοῖς κήποις αὐτῶν, ἃ ἐπεθύμησαν.	and embarrassed because of their gardens, which they desired.

The rendering of אֵיל with εἶδωλον can be explained in various ways. On the level of word analysis, the translator could have read a form of אֱלֹהִים (like in Num 25:2; 1 Kgs 11:2, 8, 33; Isa 37:19) or אֵלֶּה (like in Dan 3:12, 18; 5:4, 23) or אֵילִי (like in Lev 19:4; 1 Chr 16:26; Psa 97:7; Hab 2:18), since these words also can be rendered with εἶδωλον.⁵⁷⁶ If the *Vorlage* was like 1QIsa^a it would have read מֵאֵלִים (cf. Exod 15:11; Isa 57:5) and so been rendered this way as an interpretation of “gods.”⁵⁷⁷ Another explanation, which is probably not mutually exclusive to the first, is that the LXX interprets מֵאֵילִים as referring to the idols

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. Zech 11:2 where the Targum interprets cypresses as kings and cedars as princes.

⁵⁷⁶ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 110, suggests the translator read אֵילִים or אֱלֹהִים.

⁵⁷⁷ See van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 215-16. LXX.D.E.K., 2509. 4QIsa^f has only]מא.

worshiped at sacred trees by way of metonymy. The translator probably wanted to make clear that idolatry is meant here. The same translation technique is used in 57:5, though here we have a defective spelling: אֱלִים. It seems likely, though, that the translator knew the association between sacred trees and pagan worship, since in 27:9 and 17:8 he rendered אֲשֶׁרָה with δένδρον, both with contexts of pagan worship places. In the next verse, 1:30, כְּאֵלֶּה is rendered with ὡς τερέβινθος (see the section on leaves, 2.5.1.).

The Targum explains the verse by making explicit that the trees and gardens are places of idol worship, calling the terebinth מאילני טעותא, and the garden מגניאך טעותא.⁵⁷⁸

Isa 61:3

<p>to provide for those who mourn in Zion-- to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.</p>	<p>לְשׂוֹם לְאַבְלֵי צִיּוֹן לְתַתּוֹ לָהֶם פְּאֵר תַּחַת אֶפֶר שָׁמֶן שִׁשׁוֹן תַּחַת אֲבֵל מְעִטָּה תְהִלָּה תַּחַת רִיחַ כְּהָה וְקָרָא לָהֶם אֵילֵי הַצְּדָק מִטֵּעַ יְהוָה לְהַתְּפָאֵר:</p>	<p>δοθῆναι τοῖς πενθοῦσι Σιων δόξαν ἀντι σποδοῦ, ἄλειμμα εὐφροσύνης ἀντι πένθους, καταστολήν δόξης ἀντι πνεύματος ἀκηδίας· και κληθήσονται γενεαὶ δικαιοσύνης, φύτευμα κυρίου εἰς δόξαν.</p>	<p>so that to those who mourn for Sion be given glory instead of ashes, oil of joy instead of mourning, a garment of glory instead of a spirit of weariness. They will be called generations of righteousness, a plant of the Lord for glory.</p>
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For our interests, this passage is notable in that אֵילֵי הַצְּדָק has been rendered γενεαὶ δικαιοσύνης. Perhaps the translator thought אֵילֵי was from אֵיל referring to men as in Exod 15:15 (though there the LXX renders it with ἄρχοντες, leaders).⁵⁷⁹ Ottley believes γενεαί is an explanation of “oaks” as a symbol for the life of the righteous,⁵⁸⁰ but here generations are meant, not a long life or a fruitful or flourishing life. Ziegler rejects Fischer’s suggestion that אֲבֵי was read, and suggests that γενεαί was chosen as a parallel to “planting,”⁵⁸¹ but from the examples he gives, 60:21 and 17:10, it is unclear why it should be fitting. LXX.D.E.K. suggests that the translator borrowed from 61:4 in an attempt to avoid calling them oaks, since he knows they are associated with idolatry (as we have seen).⁵⁸²

In any case, this rendering fits into the conceptual metaphor of people as plants. If roots are their ancestry and seeds or fruit are their offspring, then the tree itself can be the generations linking the two. The parallel clause has a literal translation of a plant. Alec

⁵⁷⁸ “For you shall be ashamed of the oaks of the idols in which you delighted; and you shall be humiliated for your gardens of the idols in which you assemble.”
⁵⁷⁹ 1QIsa^a has the first yod added above the line; also 4QIsa^m matches MT.
⁵⁸⁰ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 369.
⁵⁸¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 171.
⁵⁸² LXX.D.E.K., 2683-684.

Basson believes planting tree metaphors in the Hebrew Bible represent a person restored.⁵⁸³ But this metaphor seems to resonate much more with ideas of Israel’s special covenant relationship with God. They are separated from other nations (like a vine or tree cutting) and are brought to a piece of land that has been specially prepared for them, where they are carefully tended.⁵⁸⁴ Basson is partially correct, that some of these metaphors are that of transplanting a tree, removing it and bringing it to a different land, or brought back to the original land.⁵⁸⁵

The Targum understands the oaks to mean the leaders (רברבי קשטא) and the plant to mean the people (עמיה דיוי).⁵⁸⁶ In Exod 15:15, where the LXX understood the tree in this way, the Targum sees it as the strong, תקיפי מואב.

3.6.2.2. אֵלֶּה

The word אֵלֶּה only occurs twice in LXX-Isa, though in 41:28 the demonstrative pronoun אֵלֶּה is rendered with εἰδῶλον. We have discussed 1:30 in the section on leaves (2.5.1.). There the specific tree terebinth is mentioned (and literally translated as a terebinth in the Greek) because it is an evergreen, and so the simile is rather strong, saying that its leaves wither and fall away.

Isa 6:13

<p>“Even if a tenth part remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak whose stump remains standing when it is felled.” the holy seed is its stump.</p>	<p>וְעוֹד בֵּה עֵשְׂרִיָּה וְשִׁבָּה וְהִיתָה לְבַעַר כְּאֵלֶּה וְכֶאֱלוֹן אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁלְכָתָּ מִצְבַּת בָּם זֶרַע קֹדֶשׁ מִצְבַּתָּהּ:</p>	<p>καὶ ἔτι ἐπ’ αὐτῆς ἔστι τὸ ἐπιδέκατον, καὶ πάλιν ἔσται εἰς προνομήν ὡς τερέβινθος καὶ ὡς βάλανος ὅταν ἐκπέσῃ ἀπὸ τῆς θήκης αὐτῆς.</p>	<p>And again the tithe is on it, and it will be plundered again, like a terebinth and like an acorn when it falls from its husk.</p>
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This verse presents interesting interpretive and textual problems. To begin, the second part of this verse is slightly different in 1QIsa^a: כאלה וכאלון אשר משלכת מצבת במה זרע. Brownlee suggests משלכת be read as a Hophal participle, so the terebinth “is overthrown.”⁵⁸⁷ The other difference is the reading במה where MT has בָּם. Brownlee suggests the phrase refers to cultic high places, and translates it “the sacred column of a high place.”⁵⁸⁸ This reading, unfortunately, does not shed light on the LXX. The temporal

⁵⁸³ Basson, “‘People are Plants,’” 577-78.

⁵⁸⁴ Exod 15:17; 2 Sam 7:10; Isa 60:21; Jer 11:17; Jer 24:6; Psa 44:3; Psa 80:9; etc.

⁵⁸⁵ Ezek 36:36; Amos 9:15.

⁵⁸⁶ “to confuse those who mourn in Zion—to give them a diadem instead of ashes, oil of joy instead of mourning, a praising spirit instead of their spirit which was dejected; that they may call them true princes, the people of the LORD, that he may be glorified.”

⁵⁸⁷ William H. Brownlee, “The Text of Isaiah VI 13 in the Light of DSIa,” VT 1.4 (Oct 1951): 296-97.

⁵⁸⁸ Brownlee, “The Text of Isaiah VI 13,” 296-97. It seems this spelling could just be a long form of a 3mpl pronoun, as in Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Harvard Semitic Studies 29; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 58, 62-64.

conjunction *ὅταν* along with the active *ἐκπέση* suggests the LXX *Vorlage* agreed with MT against 1QIsa^a, at least in this difference.

The LXX's lack of the last phrase has led some to suggest it was a later addition,⁵⁸⁹ sometime between the LXX and Qumran. What likely happened is that the LXX translator skipped the phrase *וְרַע קִדְשׁ בְּמִצְבֵּת* by homoiarkton, but did translate *הַמִּצְבֵּת* as *ἀπὸ τῆς θήκης αὐτῆς*.⁵⁹⁰ If the LXX *Vorlage* ended with *בְּמִצְבֵּת* we would expect to see a preposition in the translation; so, *αὐτῆς* is from the pronominal ending on *הַמִּצְבֵּת*.⁵⁹¹

The Greek is ambiguous. It can mean either “like an oak when it falls from its grave/station”⁵⁹² or “as an acorn when it falls from its husk.”⁵⁹³ As Troxel has suggested, the “acorn” reading is more likely, since the other place *βάλανος* occurs, Isaiah 2:13, it is in the phrase *δένδρον βαλάνου*.⁵⁹⁴ Troxel finds the meaning of the terebinth simile obscure, but thinks the acorn simile is apt for people being plundered; but he reverses the action, saying: “like an acorn deprived of its husk.”⁵⁹⁵ A better explanation of both similes is that of van der Kooij, who explains the terebinth by saying it refers to the terebinth of 1:30, which there has shed all its leaves.⁵⁹⁶ The parallel simile of the acorn falling from its husk means that it falls from its rightful place; van der Kooij points out that this is the regular meaning of *ἐκπίπτω*.⁵⁹⁷ He interprets the similes, then, to refer to the loss of position and power of the priesthood (referenced by the “tithes”).⁵⁹⁸

According to Theophrastus, there is a tree peculiar to Egypt called *ἡ βάλανος*.⁵⁹⁹ He says the tree gets its name from its fruit, which though useless in itself, has a husk that perfumers use.⁶⁰⁰ This does not help much with our simile, since the balanos tree's fruit does not fall from its husk. The Greek seems to be thinking of an acorn that falls out of its husk from a tall oak tree. The context is of the remnant in the land multiplying (6:12) only to be plundered again. The image of the terebinth could be that it has been cut and mangled for the

⁵⁸⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 213. However, Seeligman, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 213 [63/64] suggests that the phrase is authentic.

⁵⁹⁰ J. A. Emerton, “The Translation and Interpretation of Isaiah vi.13,” in *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honor of E.I.J. Rosenthal* (eds. J.A. Emerton and Stefan C. Reif; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 89. See also Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 234. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 48.

⁵⁹¹ Emerton, “The Translation and Interpretation of Isaiah vi.13,” 89.

⁵⁹² See NETS, 6:13. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 193 [48/49], he says the translation “is rooted in the coagulated equation of *מצבה* with *θήκη* = gravestone, monument – which the translator, was, of course, perfectly familiar.”

⁵⁹³ LXX.D. 6:13. Troxel, “Economic Plunder,” 386-87.

⁵⁹⁴ Troxel, “Economic Plunder,” 386-87. Theophrastus, however, refers to the tree just as *ἡ Βάλανος*. Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4.2.1, 6.

⁵⁹⁵ Troxel, “Economic Plunder,” 386-87.

⁵⁹⁶ Arie van der Kooij, “The Septuagint of Isaiah and Priesthood,” in *Let us Go up to Zion: Essays in Honour of H.G.M. Williamson on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (eds. Iain Provan and Mark J. Boda; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 74.

⁵⁹⁷ van der Kooij, “The Septuagint of Isaiah and Priesthood,” 74-75.

⁵⁹⁸ van der Kooij, “The Septuagint of Isaiah and Priesthood,” 75.

⁵⁹⁹ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4.2.1. cf. Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 150.

⁶⁰⁰ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4.2.6.

resin it produces,⁶⁰¹ but the tree recovered and is plundered of its resin again. The image of the balanos is that the acorns fall and are easily collected. The idea of the “seed” in the Hebrew may be in part reflected in the LXX translation in it mentioning balanos fruit.

The Targum interprets the tenth as the righteous, and the tree simile as being dry terebinths and oaks that have lost their leaves (כבוטמא וכבולטא דבמיתר טרפוהי), but still have enough moisture to produce seed.⁶⁰²

3.6.2.3. אֵלֶּז

We have already seen the two other places אֵלֶּז occurs in LXX-Isa, 44:14 (where it is not rendered) and Isa 6:13 (where it is rendered with βαλάνος). Outside of LXX-Isa βαλάνος is used to render אֵלֶּז three times,⁶⁰³ while δρύς (not occurring in LXX-Isa) is used eleven times.

Isa 2:12-13

<p>For the LORD of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up <i>that he be humbled.</i></p>	<p>כִּי יוֹם לַיהוָה צְבָאוֹת עַל כָּל־גִּזְאָה וְרִם וְעַל כָּל־נִשְׂאָ וְשִׁפְּלוּ:</p>	<p>ἡμέρα γὰρ κυρίου σαβαωθ ἐπὶ πάντα ὑβριστὴν καὶ ὑπερήφανον καὶ ἐπὶ πάντα ὑψηλὸν καὶ μετέωρον, καὶ ταπεινωθήσονται,</p>	<p>For the day of the Lord Sabaoth will be against everyone who is insolent and haughty and against everyone who is lofty and high, and they shall be humbled,</p>
<p>against all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up; and against all the oaks of Bashan;</p>	<p>וְעַל כָּל־אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן הַרְמִים וְהַנְּשִׂאִים וְעַל כָּל־אֵלֶּזַי הַבְּשָׁן:</p>	<p>καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν κέδρον τοῦ Λιβάνου τῶν ὑψηλῶν καὶ μετεώρων καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶν δένδρον βαλάνου Βασαν</p>	<p>both against every cedar of Lebanon, of them that are lofty and high, and against every <i>balanos</i> tree of Basan,</p>

In 2:12, the Greek adds high/proud, μετέωρος (taken from the next verse),⁶⁰⁴ parallel to high, ὑψηλός, in order to define it. This could have been done also because height, or being high (רום) was interpreted as being proud (ὑπερήφανος) in this verse. The association of height and pride underlies much of the tree imagery in Isaiah (as we saw in 10:33). The LXX may have omitted the second על כל in 2:12 for stylistic reasons, or because his *Vorlage* matched 1QIsa^a.

In 2:13, the high and proud of the previous verses has now been imaged as tall trees. The LXX renders the metaphors literally. That the two adjectives used of these trees, ὑψηλός and μετέωρον, are in the previous verse for people (and μετέωρον is an addition in 2:12)

⁶⁰¹ See Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4:16.1-2; 9.1.2.

⁶⁰² “And one in ten they will be left in it and they will again be for scorching like the terebinth or the oak, which when their leaves drop off appear dried up, and even then they are green enough to retain from them the seed. So the exiles of Israel will be gathered and they will return to their land.” For the holy seed is their stump.”

⁶⁰³ Gen 35:8 (2x); Judg 9:6 (also Judg A 9:6).

⁶⁰⁴ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 61.

suggests the translator probably considered these trees to represent people.

The translation of the trees themselves is worthy of note. The cedar of Lebanon has been rendered literally (we will discuss this tree more below). Usually (10x), אֵלֶּן is rendered as oak, δρῦς, in the LXX. The Greek phrase δένδρον βαλάνου or “tree of the acorn,” could be understood as a poetic way of talking about an oak, but this would be an unusual kind of rhetorical flare for the translator.⁶⁰⁵ What seems a more likely explanation is that the translator means just what he says: ἡ βάλανος, the balanos tree which, according to Theophrastus, is native to Egypt.⁶⁰⁶ Theophrastus’ description of the tree also makes good sense in the context of this verse, in that he says they are stout and fair in their stature and useful for building ships.⁶⁰⁷ So they are sizable trees and probably more familiar to the experience of readers than the Cedars of Lebanon. Perhaps βαλάνος is chosen here because it can also refer to part of a gate or its bars,⁶⁰⁸ as in Jer 30:9, and so could foreshadow the mention of high towers and walls in 2:15. Though it makes more sense to connect the trees with people and the hills and mountains in the following verses to the cities. The Damascus Document uses some similar imagery for the high being laid low; in CD II.19 we have the phrase: וּבְנֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר כְּרוּם אֲרָזִים גְּבֵהִים.

The Targum understands the lofty and high in 2:12 as proud people (גִּיּוֹתֵינָא וִרְמִי לִיבָא) and the cedar and oak of Isa 2:13 to refer to the kings of the peoples (מַלְכֵי עַמְמַיָּא) and tyrants of the provinces (טוֹרְנֵי מַדִּינַתָּא).⁶⁰⁹

3.6.2.4. Summary

The LXX-Isa translator does not render אֵלֶּן as one specific kind of tree, but does know that it is a kind of tree. In 1:29 he renders it as idols, probably knowing that a tree associated with idolatry is meant. As we mentioned above, in Isa 27:9 and 17:8 he renders אֲשֶׁרָה with δένδρον, so he knows about sacred trees. Also, his rendering of אֵלֶּן with γενεά in 61:3 makes good sense as an interpreted metaphor if he thought the Hebrew meant a kind of tree. LXX-Isa understands אֵלֶּה to refer to the terebinth tree, translating it this way in 1:30 and 6:13. The word, אֵלֶּן however, seems to be understood as a tree native to Egypt, the balanos tree, as it is interpreted in 2:12-13, though in 6:13 he renders using acorn imagery.

⁶⁰⁵ For the rendering of בְּרוּשִׁים with ξύλα τοῦ Λιβάνου in 14:8, see below.

⁶⁰⁶ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4.2.1. They in fact also live elsewhere in Africa as well as the Levant, Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 55, 150.

⁶⁰⁷ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 4.2.6. Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 150, says they are stout and grow to a height of 3m. Alfred G. Bircher and Warda H. Bircher, *Encyclopedia of Fruit Trees and Edible Flowering Plants in Egypt and the Subtropics* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2000), 53, says the timber is compact, easy to work, and resists insects.

⁶⁰⁸ Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

⁶⁰⁹ “For the day is about to come from the LORD of hosts against all the proud and lofty of heart and against all the strong—and they will be humbled 13 and against all the kings of the Gentiles, strong and hard, and against all the tyrants of the provinces;”

The Targum interprets some references to oaks or terebinths, so that in 2:12-13 and 61:3 they are interpreted as tyrants and kings. Also, for the lofty and high of 2:12 the Targum makes clear that this refers to proud people. In 1:29, like the LXX, the Targum specifies that the trees are associated with idolatry, but rather than replacing the word for tree with “idol,” it describes the tree as a “tree of idolatry.” In 6:13 the strange terebinth simile is interpreted in light of 1:30 as a terebinth that loses its leaves, then another tree metaphor is added, which, though dry, can still produce seed.

3.6.3. Other Kinds of Trees

There remains several other varieties of trees used in Isaiah. In 60:13, three trees are mentioned: **וְתֵאֵשׁוּר וְתִדְהָר וְבְרוֹשׁ** rendered: *κυπαρίσσω και πεύκη και κέδρω*.⁶¹⁰ This passage is not metaphorical, but talks about the precious woods that will adorn the temple. The Greek renders **לְפָאֵר** (to beautify) as *δοξάσαι*, but this can mean nearly the same thing and does not mean the trees represent people.

Another tree that is mentioned in Isaiah is the fig tree: **תְּאֵנָה**. We have already discussed the image of the leaves falling from the fig tree (34:4) in the section on leaves (2.5.1.) and the early fig that is eaten right away in the section on flowers (2.4.1.). The other two places it is mentioned are literal: in 36:16 they are mentioned by Rabshekeh in the context that if Jerusalem surrenders, everyone will enjoy the fruit of their own fig tree and vine; in 38:21 figs are mentioned as an ingredient in the salve Hezekiah is to apply to his boils. The LXX and Targum render both of these passages literally.

In 40:20, the word **מְסֻכֵּן** occurs, which could be a specific kind of tree⁶¹¹ or a reference to a poor person. In any case, the LXX does not render the word, probably for stylistic reasons. The Targum renders it with **אֹרֶן** (laurel), perhaps thinking it was related to the word **מְסוּכָה** (hedge), which occurs in Mic 7:4. This passage is not metaphorical.

The word **עֵרְבָה**, meaning willow, occurs twice in Isaiah. In 15:7 it is used in a place name for a valley, but the LXX renders it as a people: Arabians. We have already discussed 44:4 in the section on grass (3.2.2.); willows are mentioned in both languages in a simile to show how the people will flourish; the willow is mentioned because they are commonly found near streams.

In this section we will discuss the following trees used in metaphors and similes in turn: **אֶרֶז**, **בְּרוֹשׁ** and **הָדָס**, and **זֵית**, then we will make a summary.

⁶¹⁰ The only other place **וְתֵאֵשׁוּר** and **וְתִדְהָר** occur in Isaiah is in 41:19, which we discussed above.

⁶¹¹ See HALOT, s.v. and the DCH, s.v.

3.6.3.1. אָרְזִי

The cedar tree, אָרְזִי, is usually translated literally with κέδρος or with κέδρινος in the LXX,⁶¹² and also in LXX-Isa, as we just saw with 2:13. In 9:9(10) it is also rendered literally, though the passage is altered and an allusion to the tower of Babel is inserted.⁶¹³ The one exception to this is 16:9 where, assuming the Greek *Vorlage* was the same as 1QIsa^a, אָרְזִי is rendered τὰ δένδρα σου.

Isa 14:8

<p>The cypresses exult over you, the cedars of Lebanon, saying, "Since you were laid low, no one comes to cut us down."</p>	<p>גַּם־בְּרוֹשִׁים שְׂמְחוּ לְךָ אָרְזֵי לְבָנוֹן מֵאֵז שְׁכַבְתָּ לְאִי־עֵלָה הַכֶּרֶת עָלֵינוּ:</p>	<p>καὶ τὰ ξύλα τοῦ Λιβάνου ἠύφραnthησαν ἐπὶ σοὶ καὶ ἡ κέδρος τοῦ Λιβάνου 'Αφ' οὗ σὺ κεκοίμησαι, οὐκ ἀνέβη ὁ κόπτων ἡμᾶς.</p>	<p>and the trees of Lebanon rejoiced over you, even the cedar of Lebanon, saying, "Since you fell asleep, <i>one who cuts</i> us down has not come up."</p>
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Of note for the current study in this passage is that בְּרוֹשִׁים has been rendered generically as the trees of Lebanon, ξύλα τοῦ Λιβάνου. The usual rendering of בְּרוֹשׁ in LXX-Isa, as mentioned above, is κυπαρίσσος, as in 41:19, which is probably a correct identification of the tree.⁶¹⁴ The two terms for tree in parallel in the Hebrew are both tall conifers, useful for timber, that can be found in Lebanon.⁶¹⁵ Their asyndetic relationship may have seemed odd to the translator, so he rendered the first term generically as the trees of Lebanon, then gave the specific term as the singular (perhaps collective singular) cedar of Lebanon. He may have simply desired to reduce the number of trees mentioned, as in 44:14 and 41:19, and so did not give both specific names here. This passage is probably not a metaphor in the Hebrew, just an anthropomorphism or personification.⁶¹⁶ The actual trees would be glad (as if they were like people with emotions) that the king of Assyria will no longer cut them down (as he presumably boasts of doing in Isa 37:24, only there בְּרוֹשׁ is rendered with κυπαρίσσος). In the Greek, likewise, it is an example of personification or anthropomorphism.

The Targum sees the trees as representing leaders, and this time, those with property (cf. 9:9(10)): אַף שְׁלִטוֹנֵי חַדְיָאוּ עַלְךָ עֲתִירֵי נַכְסֵיָא אִמְרִין.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹² A few times it is rendered as a cypress, κυπαρίσσος: Job 40:17; Ezek 27:5; 31:3, 8.

⁶¹³ See Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 156. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 191 [47/8]. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah*, 147-48. LXX.D.E.K., 2529.

⁶¹⁴ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 110.

⁶¹⁵ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 112.

⁶¹⁶ That the trees are not figurative, see Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 176.

⁶¹⁷ "Indeed, rulers rejoice over you, the rich in possessions, saying, 'From the time that you were laid low, no destroyer comes up against us.'"

3.6.3.2. בְּרוֹשׁ and הֶדְס

We have already mentioned all of the passages that have a cypress, בְּרוֹשׁ (14:8; 37:24; 41:19; 60:13), and those that mention the myrtle, הֶדְס (41:19), except 55:13, where both trees occur.

Isa 55:13

<p>Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the <i>nettle</i> shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.</p>	<p>תַּחַת הַנְּעֻצוֹן יַעֲלֶה בְּרוֹשׁ תַּחַת הַסְּרָפֵד יַעֲלֶה הֶדְס וְהָיָה לְיְהוָה לְשֵׁם לְאוֹת עוֹלָם לֹא יִכָּרֵת׃</p>	<p>καὶ ἀντὶ τῆς στοιβῆς ἀναβήσεται κυπάρισσος, ἀντὶ δὲ τῆς κονύζης ἀναβήσεται μυρσίνη· καὶ ἔσται κυρίῳ εἰς ὄνομα καὶ εἰς σημεῖον αἰώνιον καὶ οὐκ ἐκλείψει.</p>	<p>And instead of the brier shall come up a cypress, and instead of the <i>flea-bane plant</i> shall come up a myrtle, and the Lord shall be⁶¹⁸ for a name and an everlasting sign and shall not fail.</p>
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This verse speaks metaphorically of the conditions that will obtain if the people seek God again; it is a reversal of the curse from Gen 3. Instead of weeds, pleasant trees will sprout up seemingly spontaneously. The word נְעֻצוֹן only occurs twice in the Hebrew Bible, here and Isaiah 7:19. As discussed above, in 7:19 it is rendered simply as “tree.” This could be because the translator understood the Hebrew term to refer to the *ziziphus spina-christi*,⁶¹⁹ which is a large thorny bush that sometimes grows as large as a tree.⁶²⁰ Here, though the translator uses στοιβή.⁶²¹ This plant, according to Theophrastus, has thorns on the stem and fleshy leaves.⁶²² The Hebrew and Greek terms probably do not refer to the same species, but both refer to a specific sort of thorny plant. The translation of בְּרוֹשׁ with κυπάρισσος is accurate. The passage implies that the cypress is more desirable than the thorn-bush. Perhaps the point of comparison is in the fact that thorns seem to sprout up everywhere that is untended; Theophrastus says cypress trees spontaneously generate after rain.⁶²³ Otherwise, the comparison could be of a small undesirable tree being replaced with a large and desirable tree.

The second weed that will be replaced by something better, סְרָפֵד, or a spiny nettle, is not the same thing as κονύζα, a kind of stinky weed: the flea-bane plant,⁶²⁴ neither word occurs elsewhere.⁶²⁵ The translation of הֶדְס with μυρσίνη is accurate, as we saw in 41:19. The point of comparison between the weed and myrtle in the Greek probably has to do with aroma. Theophrastus notes specially how the κονύζα has a strong smell and keeps animals away,⁶²⁶

⁶¹⁸ Here NETS follows Ralphps, which reads: καὶ ἔσται κύριος, the preferred reading also of LXX.D.E.K., 2672.

⁶¹⁹ It must be noted, however, that this plant is referred to as παλίουρος in Theophrastus, *Enquiry* 4.3.1-3.

⁶²⁰ Musselman, *Figs, Dates, Laurel, and Myrrh*, 276.

⁶²¹ For other meanings and uses of this word, see Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 10.

⁶²² Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 1.10.4; 6.1.3. While in Isa 55:12 the mountains and hills break into song and the trees clap hands when the people turn to God and He pardons them, Theophrastus says the στοιβή rejoices when put in sandy soil, 6.5.2.

⁶²³ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 3.1.6.

⁶²⁴ See LXX.D.E.K., 2672. Muraoka, *Lexicon*, s.v.

⁶²⁵ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 353.

⁶²⁶ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 6.2.6.

while the myrtle has a very nice smell.⁶²⁷ This passage shows the translator was concerned about what plant or tree is being mentioned and why; for both comparisons he picks plants that have a logical, though antithetical, relationship.

The Targum understands these trees as representing people: חלף רשיעיא יתקיימון צדיקיא וחלף חייביא יתקיימון דחלי חטאה.⁶²⁸

3.6.3.3. זית

The olive tree, זית, is mentioned twice in Isaiah (17:6 and 24:13) to illustrate the idea of a remnant in the image of the tree being beaten to harvest its olives. We have already discussed 17:6 in the section on branches (2.6.2.).

Isa 24:13

<p>For thus it shall be on the earth and among the nations, as when an olive tree is beaten, as at the gleaning when the grape harvest is ended.</p>	<p>כִּי כֹה יִהְיֶה בְּקִרְבֵּי הָאָרֶץ בְּתוֹךְ הָעַמִּים בְּנִקְוֵי זֵית כְּעוֹלֵלֹת אִם־כֹּלֵה בְּצִיר:</p>	<p>ταῦτα πάντα ἔσται ἐν τῇ γῆ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἐθνῶν, ὃν τρόπον ἐάν τις καλαμῆσῃται ἔλαιαν, οὕτως καλαμῆσονται αὐτούς, καὶ ἐὰν παύσῃται ὁ τρύγητος.</p>	<p>All these things shall be on the earth, in the midst of the nations; just as when someone gleans an olive tree, so shall people glean them, even when the <i>grape</i> harvest has ceased.</p>
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The Hebrew image of this passage refers to the same situation as in 17:6, or even to that passage itself.⁶²⁹ The idea of the beaten olive tree and the gleaning after the harvest is that just a few will be left. The Greek removes the notion of the tree being beaten and focuses on the idea of gleaning. The Greek, as in 17:6, does not render that the tree is beaten. It could be possible that the translator here understood נקף to mean something like “to go around” and so thought it referred to wandering through the orchard looking for the remaining olives.⁶³⁰ But this does not explain the rendering in 17:6. It seems more likely that the translator has shaped the metaphor to express more clearly what he thought it meant, and so twice talks about gleaning the few remaining olives after the harvest. It is irrelevant how the tree was harvested (e.g. beating the branches). Whereas the Hebrew image is of a few olives abandoned and alone in the orchard ready to be taken by passing people, the Greek image is of the olives being gleaned by the nations even after most have already been carried off by the harvest. Also, the Hebrew has two similes, while the Greek has a simile and an explanation.⁶³¹

⁶²⁷ Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, 6.8.5.

⁶²⁸ “Instead of the wicked shall the righteous be established; and instead of sinners shall those who fear sin be established; and it shall be before the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign which shall not cease.”

⁶²⁹ For a detailed analysis of 24:13, see Cunha, *LXX Isaiah*, 79-81, 155-58.

⁶³⁰ 1QIsa^a agrees with MT.

⁶³¹ LXX.D.E.K., 2565.

The Targum again, like in 17:6, explains the olive gleaning image as referring to the righteous being left behind among the nations, using the same phrase: **יחידאין צדיקיא בגו עלמא ביני מלכוותא**.⁶³² Like the LXX, though, the tree is not beaten, just gleaned.

3.6.3.4. Summary

The LXX seems to consider why various specific trees are mentioned. While we have seen already that he tends to cut back and generalize lists of trees (44:14; 41:19; 14:8; though not in 60:13) he is still careful in identifying the specific tree that the Hebrew mentions and rendering it accurately. This accuracy is probably because the metaphorical language is often based on features characteristic of the specific tree mentioned, such as figs losing leaves (34:4); willows growing near streams (44:4); cedars being prized for timber (14:8; 37:24);⁶³³ or olive trees holding a few olives despite attempts to harvest them (17:6; 24:13). This is seen even further in 55:13, where the translator specifies generic words for weeds as specific plants that are logically antithetical to the trees mentioned, highlighting the contrast.

These other kinds of trees are all interpreted as people by the Targum: in 14:8 the cypresses are the leaders and the cedars those rich in property; in 55:13 the bad plants are interpreted as wicked people and the good plants replacing them are good, righteous people; and in 24:13 the olives left in the tree are the righteous.

3.6.4. Thickets and Woods

Related to trees, thickets or woods are also used metaphorically. The word **קִבְּץ** means underbrush or thicket; it always occurs with **יַעַר** in Isaiah, which also means thicket but can mean wood or forest as well. In this section we will first look at the relevant texts, then offer a summary.

3.6.4.1. Texts

We have already discussed the occurrences in Isa 7:2; 10:18-19; 44:14; and 44:23, and it is not used metaphorically in 21:13.⁶³⁴

⁶³² “For thus shall *the righteous be left alone* in the midst of the *world* among the *kingdoms*, as the *stripping of the olive tree*, as gleanings *after vintage*.”

⁶³³ Also in 9:9(10).

⁶³⁴ In 56:9, a forest is mentioned as a place wild animals come from to prey on Israel (either imaged as a flock or perhaps some sort of a field) because her watchmen are incompetent.

Isa 9:17(18)

<p>For wickedness burned like a fire, consuming briars and thorns; it kindled the thickets of the forest, and they swirled upward in a column of smoke.</p>	<p>כִּי־בַעֲרָה כָּאֵשׁ רְשָׁעָה שְׂמִיר וְשִׁית תֹּאכֵל וְתִצֵּת בְּסִבְכָּי הַיַּעַר וְיִתְאַבְּכוּ גְּאוֹת עֲשָׂן:</p>	<p>καὶ καυθήσεται ὡς πῦρ ἡ ἀνομία καὶ ὡς ἄγρωστις ξηρὰ βρωθήσεται ὑπὸ πυρός· καὶ καυθήσεται ἐν τοῖς δάσεσι τοῦ δρυμοῦ, καὶ συγκαταφάγεται τὰ κύκλω τῶν βουνῶν πάντα.</p>	<p>And the transgression will burn like a fire, and like dry grass will it be consumed by fire, and it will burn in the thickets of the forest and devour everything around the hills.</p>
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We have already discussed this passage in part in the section on thorns (3.4.1.). In the Hebrew, wickedness burns various flammable things (which we learn are the people in the next verse), but the Greek, due to standard translation equivalents, makes wickedness into lawlessness, and renders בערה as passive: καυθήσεται. While the simile “like fire” is preserved, the action is reversed. The translation of שְׂמִיר וְשִׁית with ἄγρωστις ξηρὰ is probably to make more clear the idea of something very inflammable burning.⁶³⁵

The picturesque image of columns of smoke is rendered quite differently in the Greek. Ziegler believes the last phrase was difficult for the translator, so he rendered parallel to the previous phrase.⁶³⁶ Also he points out the related passages in Jer 21:14; 27(50):32 and Psa 82(83):15.⁶³⁷ The reference to hills probably comes from supposing גְּאוֹת could refer to hills,⁶³⁸ or perhaps seeing גֵּיא and thinking the space around hills.⁶³⁹ As we have seen already, LXX-Isa knows that typically forests and hills are related in Judea, so perhaps the mention of a forest (יַעַר) was warrant enough to add the hills (as in 10:18 and 44:23).⁶⁴⁰

The simile of the people being like fuel for a fire, has been transformed to compare them to fuel that has been burned by a fire. This is probably due to reading כמאכלת as a passive form of a participle instead of as a noun. It could be a part of all the passive verbs the Greek has in this passage.

A result of the transformations in this passage is that the people are not as strongly tied to the thorns/grass and forests that burn. In the Greek the land is more clearly destroyed and the people are burned, while in the Hebrew the people were burned as fuel like thorns and forests.

The Targum understands “wickedness” to mean the retribution for their sins פורענות חוביהון הטאיה.⁶⁴¹ The rest of the verse is more difficult to equate to the Hebrew, but seems

⁶³⁵ We discussed the translation of שְׂמִיר וְשִׁית in the section on thorns (3.4.1.).

⁶³⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 109. He offers possible readings for the individual words.

⁶³⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 110.

⁶³⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 109.

⁶³⁹ IQIsa^a agrees with MT.

⁶⁴⁰ As Ziegler notes, *Untersuchungen*, 109. For wooded hills, see Hepper, *Bible Plants*, 39-40.

⁶⁴¹ “For the retribution of their sins burns like the fire, it destroys transgressors and sinners; and it will rule over the remnant of the people and destroy the multitude of the armies.”

to interpret the weeds and forests as people: וחיביא תשיצי ותשלוט בשאר עמא ותשיצי סגי משריתא.

Isa 10:34

<p>He will hack down the thickets of the forest with <i>iron</i>, and Lebanon with its majestic trees will fall.</p>	<p>וְנִקְוּ סִבְכֵי הַיַּעַר בְּבַרְזֵל וְהַלְבָּנוֹן בְּאֲדִיר יָפוּל:</p>	<p>καὶ πεσοῦνται οἱ ὑψηλοὶ μαχαίρα, ὁ δὲ Λίβανος σὺν τοῖς ὑψηλοῖς πεσεῖται.</p>	<p>And the lofty will fall by dagger, and Lebanon will fall with the lofty ones.</p>
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We have dealt with 10:33 in the section about branches (2.6.2.). There the LXX has interpreted the high branches and high trees as the proud rather than as the Assyrians as the Hebrew context would suggest (10:24). In 10:34 the LXX continues in this interpretation calling the thickets and forests simply the high,⁶⁴² and likewise associates the trees of Lebanon with people. It is interesting to note that the metonymy “iron” has been interpreted explicitly to mean a sword since people are being cut down, much like the NRSV interprets it to mean axe since it cuts trees. Also, the Greek is careful to translate the first preposition ב as a dative of means, but the second one gets a preposition in Greek to specify that the relationship is different than in the first clause.⁶⁴³

The Targum interprets the trees to refer to warriors: ויקטיל גיברי משריתיה דמתגברין בברזלא ועבדי קרביה על ארעא דישראל יתרמון.⁶⁴⁴

Isa 22:8

<p>He has taken away the covering of Judah. On that day you looked to the weapons of the House of the Forest,</p>	<p>וַיִּגְלֵ אֶת מַסְךְ יְהוּדָה וַתִּבְטֹ בַיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶל-נֶשֶׁק בַּיִת הַיַּעַר:</p>	<p>καὶ ἀνακαλύψουσι τὰς πύλας Ἰουδα καὶ ἐμβλέψονται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ εἰς τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς οἴκους τῆς πόλεως</p>	<p>And they will uncover the gates of Ioudas and look on that day into the choicest houses of the city,</p>
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In the Hebrew, the phrase בַּיִת הַיַּעַר appears to be the name of the building used as an armory, either because of the forest of spears or it is the house of the forest of Lebanon mentioned in 1 Kgs 7:2. The Greek, however, reads it as עיר.⁶⁴⁵ This could be an interpretation of the passage, since πύλη seems to explain “covering.”⁶⁴⁶ Ottley suggested נֶשֶׁק was thought to be something like נשכה, as in Neh 13:7, where it is used of a room in the

⁶⁴² If we allow the wisdom of Euthyphro to overtake us, like it overtook Socrates in *Cratylus*, we may suppose ὑψηλός is a fitting word since it contains forest: ὕλη.

⁶⁴³ See Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 166.

⁶⁴⁴ “And he will slay the mighty men of his armies who make themselves mighty with iron, and his warriors will be cast on the land of Israel.”

⁶⁴⁵ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 211.

⁶⁴⁶ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 211.

temple,⁶⁴⁷ though this explanation seems unlikely. LXX.D.E.K. suggests the verb was read, and that kissing was somehow associated with the idea “choice.”⁶⁴⁸

The Targum understands the phrase as referring to the treasury of the temple: על זין בית גנזי מקדשא⁶⁴⁹

Isa 29:17

<p>Shall not Lebanon in a very little while become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be regarded as a forest?</p>	<p>הֲלוֹא-עוֹד מְעַט מִזְעָר וְשֵׁב לְבָנוֹן לְכַרְמֵל וְהַכְרָמֶל לְיַעַר יִחְשָׁב:</p>	<p>οὐκέτι μικρὸν καὶ μετατεθήσεται ὁ Λίβανος ὡς τὸ ὄρος τὸ Χερμελ καὶ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Χερμελ εἰς δρυμὸν λογισθήσεται;</p>	<p>Is it not yet a little while, and Lebanon shall be changed like Mount Chermel, and Mount Chermel shall be regarded as a forest?</p>
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As we saw in 10:18, the word כְּרָמֶל is associated with mountains, though this time specifically with mount Carmel.⁶⁵⁰ In the Hebrew, the comparison seems to be about the wild forest becoming a cultivated field and vice versa. In the Greek, however, there seems to be a downgrade: Lebanon becomes Carmel, and Carmel becomes just a forest, or perhaps thicket. Similarly, 32:15 says Carmel will be considered a forest, both in Hebrew and Greek, though there this is after it has become wilderness.⁶⁵¹ In the Hebrew this cryptic verse probably should be understood in light of the reversals in the following verses, where the deaf hear and blind see and so forth. For the Greek it makes best sense when understood with 29:20, where the lawless and proud are destroyed.

The Targum agrees with LXX that it is talking about Carmel.⁶⁵² But instead of it becoming a forest it is inhabited as many cities: וּכְרַמְלָא לְקְרוּיִן סְגִיאיִן יִתִּיב.⁶⁵³

In one place, the LXX adds a word for forest where the Hebrew has something else.

Isa 27:10(9)

<p>Therefore by this the guilt of Jacob will be expiated, and this will be the full fruit of the removal of his sin: when he makes all the stones of the altars like chalkstones crushed to pieces, no sacred</p>	<p>לָכֵן בּוֹזֵאת יִכַּפֵּר עֲוֹן- יַעֲקֹב וְזָה כָּל-פְּרִי הַסֵּר חֲטָאתוֹ בְּשׁוּמוֹ כָּל-אַבְנֵי מִזְבְּחַ כְּאַבְנֵי-גֶר מִנְפָצוֹת לֹא-יִקְמוּ אֲשֵׁרִים וְחֲמָנִים:</p>	<p>διὰ τοῦτο ἀφαιρεθήσεται ἡ ἀνομία Ιακωβ, καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν ἡ εὐλογία αὐτοῦ, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι αὐτοῦ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ὅταν θῶσι πάντας τοὺς λίθους τῶν βωμῶν κατακεκομμένους ὡς</p>	<p>Because of this the lawlessness of Iakob will be removed. And this is his blessing, when I remove his sin, when they make all the stones of the altars broken pieces like fine dust, and their trees will not</p>
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⁶⁴⁷ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 211.

⁶⁴⁸ LXX.D.E.K., 2559.

⁶⁴⁹ “He has uncovered the hiding place of the house of Judah, and he has looked in that time upon a weapon of the treasure house of the sanctuary.”

⁶⁵⁰ In Isa 37:24 it has no equivalent in the Greek.

⁶⁵¹ In 65:10 the place Sharon is rendered simply as a forest.

⁶⁵² Chilton translates כְּרַמְלָא as a fruitful field.

⁶⁵³ “It is not yet a very little while until Lebanon shall return to be as a fruitful field, and the fruitful field will cause many cities to be inhabited?”

poles or incense altars will remain standing. 10 For the fortified city...	10 כִּי עֵיר בְּצוּרָה ...בְּדָד	κονίαν λεπτήν· και οὐ μή μείνη τὰ δένδρα αὐτῶν, και τὰ εἰδωλα αὐτῶν ἐκκεκομμένα ὥσπερ δρυμὸς μακράν.	remain, and their idols will be cast down like a forest far away.
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The word *δρυμός* appears to be based on the beginning of the next verse. Opposite from what we saw in 22:8, עֵיר is read as עֵר (as also in 32:19). Ottley suggests that ἐκκόπτω was a rendering of בְּצוּרָה supposing בצר “to cut off,”⁶⁵⁴ or it was confused with נפצות; also he thinks μακράν is from בְּדָד.⁶⁵⁵ Ziegler agrees with the last point, but thinks ἐκκόπτω may have come from seeing a form of כרת.⁶⁵⁶ Ziegler rejects that the phrase could have been a plus in the *Vorlage*, showing other passages that associate the destruction of idols with ideas of cutting them down.⁶⁵⁷ The meaning of the simile “like a distant forest” may have to do with the idea of going to great lengths to acquire wood, such as for Solomon’s temple; so that the great effort to travel and cut them down would be considered valuable.

The use of δένδρα to render אֲשֵׁרִים is unique to LXX-Isa (also seen in 17:8),⁶⁵⁸ the most common equivalent is ἄλσος (a grove). The choice of using δένδρα is interesting, since in the next clause we read of the idols being cut down like a forest. The simile כְּאֲבְנֵי־גֵר is rendered freely: ὡς κονίαν λεπτήν, a phrase known from classical literature.⁶⁵⁹ Ziegler shows that elsewhere גֵר is rendered with κονία.⁶⁶⁰

The Targum renders אֲשֵׁרִים with a cognate, and emphasizes that they will not be raised up again. It preserves the city in the next verse, though not as a simile.⁶⁶¹

3.6.4.2. Summary of Woods and Thickets

The LXX seems to associate hills with forests, adding them in 9:17(18); 10:18; and 44:23. Similarly, בְּרִמָּה is associated in LXX-Isa with mount Carmel and forests in 10:18; 29:17; and 32:15. Occasionally, LXX-Isa turns cities into forests (27:10(9); 32:19) or forests into cities (22:8), perhaps for lexical reasons. The metaphoric value of a forest can be people, as in 10:34; and perhaps also in 9:17(18) and 29:17.

The Targum is more likely to associate trees with kinds of people, as in 9:17 and 10:34. It does on at least one occasion turn a forest into a city, or rather, a village (29:17).

⁶⁵⁴ Also LXX.D.E.K., 2573.

⁶⁵⁵ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 235.

⁶⁵⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 101.

⁶⁵⁷ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 102. 2 Chron 15:16; 28:24; 34:7; Micah 1:7; Exod 34:13; Deut 7:5; and 12:3.

⁶⁵⁸ But in Alexandrinus of 17:8 ἄλσος is used.

⁶⁵⁹ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 235. He points out Homer, *Illiad*, XXIII.505 and Sophocles, *Antigone*, 256.

⁶⁶⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 101.

⁶⁶¹ “Therefore by this the *sins of the house of Jacob* will be *forgiven*, and this will be the full *effectuation* of the removal of his *sins*: when he makes all the stones of *the alter* like chalkstones crushed to pieces, no Asherim or sun pillars will be *established*.”

Asherim are rendered with a cognate in the Targum of 27:10, and most of the passage is rendered literally. The forest of weapons in 22:8 is interpreted as the temple treasury.

3.6.5. Summary of Trees

As we can see, the LXX-Isa translator treats tree metaphors in a variety of ways. Usually he does not change a metaphor simply due to the difficulty of the metaphor itself in the target language, but for other exegetical concerns. The distance the translator takes the image away from being a literal rendering varies.

In some places the translator is willing to preserve the metaphor in his translation, or to use it with only slight modifications. For example, in the two places where trees are personified, 44:23 and 55:12, the translator makes some modifications but lets the image stand.

In a few places, the translator appears to make modifications for the sake of style. For example, in 41:19 the translator cares more about a terse style than in listing the seven kinds of trees mentioned (also 44:14). In 56:3 and 57:5, equivalents for trees are made that are unusual in themselves but create alliteration in the translation. In 7:19 the word order is changed to create a better topical logical flow.

Sometimes the translator is a little more active and careful in his translation, shaping it to more effectively express what he thinks it aims to express. For example, in 7:2 the translator clarifies that the people are amazed, and adjusts the metaphor to show how the tree shaking represents this. Likewise, in 1:30, the translator is very careful to show that the people will be like the tree losing its leaves, not like the leaves themselves. In 55:13, the translator is attentive to the different kinds of plants and their relationships and so renders with plants that have a logical antithetical relationship (such as the foul and sweet smelling plants). Similarly, in some cases the translator appears to render freely for the sake of clarity. In 1:29 and 57:5 trees are rendered as idols to make clear what the passage means (though as we discussed, these could be simply lexical issues). In 2:12-13, the translator appears to use a tree that would have been more familiar to his Egyptian audience than the usual tree would have been. Also, in 24:13 the translator seems to want to avoid equating the cypress with the cedar, or to suggest they are the only trees of Lebanon.

The translator sometimes goes further, modifying the passage to better express his understanding of the meaning of the metaphor. In 2:12-13, the translator is less subtle than the MT in equating the high and arrogant with the trees; the LXX adds an adjective which ties these closer together. In 10:19 he makes a similar exegetical move this time by omitting a reference to trees, letting a pronoun refer to people in the sentence instead. In 10:34 the reference to thickets is rendered by a reference to the high and the iron is made a sword, showing the translator understands these trees to refer to people. The translator goes even

farther in 61:3, where he interprets the terebinth tree as representing generations, and so gives what he perceives to be the meaning of the metaphor. In 65:22 the translator changes the simile dramatically from comparing a long lifespan to a tree, to saying people will live like the tree of life.

In 6:13, the translator offers a different simile; rather than describing how the people will be like a tree that is cut down leaving a stump, the translator talks about an acorn falling from its husk. In 9:17(18) the LXX may remove the metaphor referring to actual land being ravaged. In 27:9 a simile is added, though it is the result of reading the text differently.

While few of the tree metaphors are rendered rigidly literally, usually the translator is subtle in his renderings, clarifying and nuancing them to better express what he thinks they mean. In a few cases, for whatever reason, the translator is more bold in modifying the metaphor or removing it to express his own ideas.

The Targum renders similarly to LXX in several cases, as we have seen. In 7:2, different verbs are used for the trembling hearts and trees comparison; in 65:22 both believe the tree of life is meant; in 10:17-19, the high and types of trees are interpreted as people, though the Targum is more explicit than the LXX; in 1:29 the LXX replaces trees with “idols” while the Targum calls them “trees of idolatry” (the Asherim are rendered literally by the Targum in 27:10); and in 29:17 both turn forests into cities.

The Targum has a marked tendency to explicitly interpret tree metaphors as referring to various types of people (often rulers), as can be seen in 2:12-13; 9:9(10); 9:17; 10:17-19; 10:34; 14:8; 55:13; 61:3. Similarly, it makes clear that the olives left after gleaning in 24:13 are the righteous (also 17:6).

But the Targum does not have the same stylistic concerns as the LXX, so in 41:19; 44:14; and 44:23 the various types of trees are all listed, rendered literally; in 6:13, where the LXX renders literally adding assonance, the Targum renders the metaphor as a simile. Two strange metaphors are also dealt with differently in the two translations: the terebinth cut from its station is interpreted in light of 1:30 as losing its leaves (LXX has the acorn fall from its husk), then a simile is added of a dry tree having moisture enough to produce seed. The house of the forest in 22:8 is interpreted as the temple treasury by the Targum, while the LXX rendered generally as the choice houses of the city.

3.7. Chard

In one place, the LXX changes a simile to contain a reference to beets or chard.

Isa 51:20

Your sons fainted, they lie at the head of every street like an	בְּנֵי־עַלְפָּו שָׁכְבוּ בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חוֹצוֹת	οἱ υἱοὶ σου οἱ ἀπορούμενοι, οἱ καθεύδοντες ἐπ’ ἄκρου	Your sons are the ones perplexed, who lie down at the head
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antelope in a net; They are full of the wrath of the LORD, the rebuke of your God.	<p style="text-align: center;">כְּתוֹא מְכַמֵּר הַמְּלֵאִים חֲמַת־יְהוָה גְּעַרַת אֱלֹהֵיךָ:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">πάσης ἐξόδου ὡς σευτλίον ἡμίεφθον, οἱ πλήρεις θυμοῦ κυρίου, ἐκλελυμένοι διὰ κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ.</p>	of every street like a half-cooked <i>chard</i> , who are full of the wrath of the LORD, made feeble by the LORD God.
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In the Hebrew, the idea seems to be that the sons fainted from exhaustion, and so lie out at the head of every street like an antelope (if this is the meaning of **תוא**) that has been chased into a net and is exhausted from the chase and the struggle in the net.

The Hebrew **עלה** is translated differently in each of its occurrences, so not much can be made of it being rendered with ἀπορέω. Ottley suggests **ערפו** was read since the same word is used as an equivalent 5:30.⁶⁶² Perhaps the term was understood and contributed in part to the use of ἐκλύω below, which is a unique rendering of **גערה**. The choice of ἐκλύω captures both the idea of losing courage that the context of 30:17 suggests, and can mean to be weary, perhaps under the influence of **עלה**. The extending of the divine name in the last clause is often done in LXX-Isa.⁶⁶³

Of note is that the simile **כתוא מכמר** was rendered with ὡς σευτλίον ἡμίεφθον. Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion all render it literally, though differ in the word used for net. 1QIsa^a has a different spelling, but the same text: **כתו מ'כמר**. The only other occurrence of **תוא** is Deut 14:5, where it is spelled **תא** and rendered with ὄρυξ. Ottley seems to like the suggestion that the translator read **כתאמך מר** understanding bitter herbs.⁶⁶⁴ Ziegler surveys several of the suggestions of how this translation came about, the best answer seems to be that of Wust, namely, that **תיא** (a kind of leafy plant) was read.⁶⁶⁵ The word ἡμίεφθος probably comes from understanding **מכמר** as coming from **כמר**, which in rabbinic Hebrew means to heat fruit.⁶⁶⁶ In Isa 19:8, the LXX renders nearly the same word consonantly, **מְכַמְרַת**, with σαγήνη, though perhaps it was a guess from the context of fishermen and hooks. The remarkable rendering of this simile in 51:20 is probably due to reading the text differently and not a desire to substitute a new metaphor more accessible to the audience. What is most remarkable is that the translator ends up with a sensible and even vivid image: the exhausted youth lying like blanched chards.

The Targum harmonizes to Nah 3:10, interpreting that the sons will be dashed to pieces (rendering **עלפו** with **מתרפין**), thrown (**רמו** for **שכבו**) in the head of every street.⁶⁶⁷ The simile is rendered: **כמזרקו מצדן** (like those cast in nets), keeping the construct, but only

⁶⁶² Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 341. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 128.

⁶⁶³ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 91-92.

⁶⁶⁴ Ottley, *Isaiah*, II 342.

⁶⁶⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 99. The Syriac agrees with LXX.

⁶⁶⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 99. Joosten, "The Knowledge and Use of Hebrew in the Hellenistic Period Qumran and the Septuagint," 119-20. He argues that this could be an example of spoken words being confused for classical words.

⁶⁶⁷ "Your sons will be dashed to pieces, thrown at the head of all the streets like those cast in nets; they are full of wrath from the LORD, rebuke from your God."

seems to understand מִכְּמָר. It is interesting that the first part of the verse is interpreted, but not the tricky simile.

3.8. Conclusions

Many individual points have already been made in the section summaries. Here we will reiterate the LXX-Isa translator's independence and thoughtfulness in how he rendered metaphors. Also, we will point out some tendencies and issues that have arisen in this chapter.

Again this chapter has shown the cognitive metaphor "people are plants" is often at work in Hebrew plant metaphors as well as in LXX-Isa. Of particular note here is how LXX-Isa at times extends these and uses them to interpret. The clearest example is in 61:3 where the term "trees" is rendered as "generations," but can also be seen where the translation adjusts the metaphor to more clearly express that people (often arrogant people) are meant, as in 2:12-13; 10:19, and 34. This interpretation is already to an extent in the Hebrew of Isaiah, and can be seen elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, particularly Jdg 9:8-15 and Dan 4:20-22. A more culture specific cognitive metaphor, that Israel (or some subset) is God's vineyard, seems to underlie LXX-Isa's understanding of many of the passages mentioning vineyards and vines; more specifically, LXX-Isa often seems to have Jerusalem in mind (1:8; 3:14; 5:1-7 which in the Hebrew explicitly says the vineyard is the house of Israel; and 27:2-6).

The LXX-Isa translator is very much aware of the relationship between plants and the environment in which they typically flourish. In the Hebrew of Isaiah already we often see deserts flourishing with greenery (35:7; 41:18-19) and lush marshlands and cities becoming barren wilderness (19:6; 33:9; 34:9-15; 42:15). Ziegler has already pointed out the Egyptian nature of the translator's understanding of marshlands.⁶⁶⁸ We can see this particularly in 19:6 where the translator adds a reference to a marsh where reeds are mentioned.⁶⁶⁹ Similarly, the translator's association of fallow wastes and thorns reflects an Egyptian milieu;⁶⁷⁰ this is particularly apparent in how he rendered שְׂמִיר, as we have seen. The association of grass and fields is not as clearly Egyptian, since usually grass had to be cultivated in Egypt, though it is abundant in Judea. When discussing forests the translator will often add references to hills, both of which are features more typical of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee (9:17(18); 10:18; and 44:23).

The LXX-Isa translator is often careful to pay attention to the specific plants mentioned, since the metaphor itself often functions because of qualities specific to that kind of plant. In 36:6, the LXX specifies that crushed reed is meant, to emphasize its frailness using the same terminology as in 42:3. We have seen that unlike the rest of the LXX, LXX-

⁶⁶⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 189-90.

⁶⁶⁹ Oddly, LXX-Isa 33:9 mentions "marshes" but does not have the MT's "desert" (they are not equivalents).

⁶⁷⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 179-81.

Isa uses *χνοῦς* for *קֹמ*, perhaps to better distinguish husks of grain from straw. Lists of specific trees are reduced for the sake of style (44:14; 41:19), but metaphors with specific species of trees are rendered carefully with an eye for the quality of the tree in question, so that the tree losing leaves in 1:30 is an evergreen to illustrate extreme dryness; but in 34:4 it is the fig that drops its leaves (or perhaps fruit) as they tend to actually do, to illustrate stars falling; and willows are mentioned by streams (44:4) where they are commonly found. A more dramatic example of the translator taking qualities of specific plants into account is in 55:13, where a word for weed is rendered as a specific kind of malodorous plant to contrast the fragrant myrtle.

In several cases, however, the LXX-Isa translator changes which plant is mentioned in a metaphor. In the case of *שֶׁמֶר*, as we have seen, the translator does not seem to know it should mean thorn, but in three places where fire is involved, renders with words for grass (9:17(18); 10:17; 32:13). In 33:12, however, a different word for thorn is rendered literally and is said to be burned up. In the only other place grass burns, 5:24, the translator seems to have understood *שֶׁחַח* as a verb meaning “to burn.”⁶⁷¹ Another exchange from one plant to another is the case of stubble (*שֶׁקֶה*) which is rendered literally with *καλάμη* in 5:24 (where it is burned), but in 47:14 where it is again burned, it is rendered with *φρύγανον*. In two cases, stubble is also rendered *φρύγανον* in the context of being blown by the wind (40:24 and 41:2). As we have argued in 3.3.2.1.4., the translator seems to have taken context into account and so uses *φρύγανον* to better express the meaning of the passage. So, where the translator does change which plant is mentioned in a metaphor, it is either due to having a different conception of the word’s meaning (as is the case for *שֶׁמֶר* and *שֶׁחַח*) or it is due to his attempt to maintain rich metaphors with connections to the passage in which they occur (as in the case of *שֶׁקֶה*).

This chapter has shown that while there are indeed some probable textual differences in the *Vorlage* and cases where the translator has understood words differently than modern scholars, in many cases the translator adjusts the language of metaphors to communicate clearly in Greek what he believes the image means.

⁶⁷¹ The other occurrence of *שֶׁחַח* in 33:11 has no clear equivalent.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined how the plant metaphors of LXX Isaiah were rendered. We have taken a topical approach, focusing on the vehicles used in similes and metaphors. Already each chapter has conclusions of the various features of the translation; what remains to be discussed are the broader issues and implications of this research. In this final chapter we will first review and discuss the various metaphor translation strategies adopted by LXX-Isa to deal with plant metaphors. Second, we will review the findings of Ziegler in light of the present analysis. Third, we will attempt to place LXX-Isa within its Jewish context by noting some of its similarities and differences compared to Targum Jonathan's way of interpreting metaphors. And fourth, we will return to the issue brought up in the introductory chapter regarding to what extent LXX-Isa reflects Greek ideas about metaphors.

4.1. Metaphor Translation Strategies

In the introduction (1.1.3.), we looked at some metaphor translation strategies proposed by several LXX scholars. We saw that LXX translators used various translation strategies to render metaphors into Greek. In this section we will look at the strategies the LXX-Isa translator used to render plant metaphors. We have expanded the categories discussed above in order to describe more precisely how the translator renders. In addition, we have attempted to describe reasons a given strategy was adopted. As we will see, often there are multiple factors affecting why a given translation strategy was adopted.

4.1.1. Metaphors Translated with the Same Metaphor

We should begin by noting that often the translator has simply translated metaphors using the same vehicle but in the new language. But even in places where a metaphor is translated with the same metaphor there is room for some interpretation. We will first list passages where the metaphors are rendered literally with the same metaphor. Second we will list the passages that, while preserving the same metaphor, are adjusted in some way. Third we will list passages where the same metaphor is used but has been adjusted for stylistic reasons in translation.

4.1.1.1. Literally Translated Metaphors

In several places the dead metaphor “seed” representing offspring is rendered literally; often a parallel term for offspring makes clear that this is meant by seed, and so facilitates this literal rendering, as in 57:3-4 and 61:9. The idea of the “seed of Abraham” is a conventional metaphor that alludes to Gen 12:7, 13:15-16 etc., and so it is rendered literally in 41:8 as are its variations “seed of Jacob” in 45:19 and “seed that will be brought from Jacob” in 65:9. Similar is the idea that Israel’s seed will be gathered from across the world in 43:5. In 1:4 the current people are called an evil seed (cf. 14:20 where the translator makes this an epithet for a particular person and his family), and it is rendered literally. As we have shown, classical Greek literature had analogous metaphors to these, so they are not entirely culturally specific conceptualizations and so could be easily rendered.

Some more unique metaphors are also rendered literally, but original metaphors are in theory easier to translate, according to translation theorists.¹ In 36:6 a rod of crushed reed is literally translated as an image for unreliable Egypt, together with its explanation. A similar image in 42:3 is likewise preserved, though here the bruised reed will not be broken. In two places forests and trees are personified, being told to rejoice in 44:23 and exulting over a fallen “lumberjack” in 14:8.

A strictly literal translation technique should have resulted in this section being by far the longest, since most metaphors should have been rendered with the same metaphor. But the LXX-Isa translator, as Ziegler has pointed out,² did not feel bound to stay close to the *Vorlage*, but would render metaphors freely.

4.1.1.2. Literally Translated Metaphors in Adjusted Passages

Sometimes, while the metaphor we are interested in has been preserved, other metaphorical aspects of the verse have been adjusted. In 44:3 the metaphor of offspring being a “seed” is maintained (perhaps due to explicit terminology mentioning offspring in the parallel phrase), but the metaphor of the spirit being poured out like water is rendered as just being given or placed. In 45:25 a metaphor using “seed” to represent offspring is preserved, but is perhaps rendered twice or interpreted, in that in the Greek it is the “seed of the children of Israel” instead of just “the seed of Israel.” In 11:1 the root of Jesse is rendered literally, but the Greek has a blossom grow from it rather than a branch. Similarly, in 37:31 the remnant is said to take root downward in both texts, but in the Greek instead of bearing fruit above it produces seed. In 24:7 the personification of the vine mourning is preserved but the parallel wine languishing is rendered as mourning, probably for lexical reasons.

In two passages, the LXX preserves a metaphor literally but adjusts the language to point to how it should be interpreted. The high trees in 2:12-13 are brought down, but the Greek makes it clearer that people are meant by adding some adjectives that apply to people

¹ See van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 86.

² Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 80.

and not trees. Also in 2:13, the specific kind of tree is interpreted as a different species. In 5:1-7, as we have seen, the metaphor is literally preserved, but the translator adjusts some elements, most notably adding references to the hedge and fence in 5:2; this creates more coherence with 5:5.

These examples show how imagery can be rendered literally, though the passage in which it occurs may have been shaped by the translator to one end or another. Also, it is a good illustration of the limits of my method; the translation of individual metaphors is truly best understood in the context of the text where it occurs.

4.1.1.3. Stylistic Adjustments

In a few places a metaphor is rendered with the same metaphor but has been improved stylistically. In 40:24 the vocabulary is reduced: גֹּזַע is rendered with ῥίζα.³ A more obvious example is in 59:21 where זָרַע וְזָרַע וּמִפִּי זָרַע וּמִפִּי זָרַע is reduced just to ἐκ τοῦ στόματός σου καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ σπέρματός σου, since seed can already include all subsequent offspring. Similarly, in 65:23 the LXX preserves the seed metaphor but omits the last clause of the verse “and their offspring as well” since it is unnecessary and prolix.

In Isa 40:6-8 the translator shows his skill in rendering a metaphor (and an accompanying simile) with the same metaphor (and simile) while at the same time improving it stylistically, as we have shown in 2.4.1. In 40:6 the metonymy “flesh” standing for humanity, which is unusual in Greek, is interpreted subtly by rendering a third person pronoun referring back to it with “man.” Also the “flower of the field” is rendered as “flower of grass” to create more coherence in the passage. The passage as a whole features a metaphor, antithesis, and actuality which are features Aristotle recommends for good style, so perhaps 40:7 was not dropped by accident by parablepsis or homoioteleuton but was deliberately omitted because it was too crowded and frigid stylistically. In 56:3 the eunuch’s metaphor describing him as a dry tree is preserved literally, but the style is improved by featuring assonance. A similar example where Greek word choice improves the metaphor is 55:13 where specific kinds of weeds are mentioned in the Greek that contrast logically with the pleasant plants, such as the spontaneously sprouting thorn and cypress and the fetid flea-bane plant replaced by the fragrant myrtle.

These passages show that the translator, even while staying close to his text by translating metaphors with the same metaphors, at times seeks to explain and make clear his translation to his audience using a pleasing style.

³ This could be considered a lexical issue, if the translator thought the word meant “root,” or a metonymic shift from a stump to a root.

4.1.1.4. Conclusions

Given the number of examples this study has examined, that only the above eleven metaphors are rendered literally with the same metaphor seems like a rather small sample. Generally, even where the translator uses the same metaphor as the Hebrew, he tends to make adjustments to shape the passage or focus the meaning of the metaphor. So, even when the translator did render a metaphor with the same metaphor he will often leave his mark in the translation.

4.1.2. Metaphors Translated with Different Metaphors

Translating a metaphor with a different metaphor is a well-known translation technique. But this technique can be taken up for different reasons. Of the examples we have examined, there seems to be five reasons which we will review in turn. First, a metaphor may be translated with a different metaphor for lexical reasons, understanding different words in the text. Second, the translator may have interpreted the metaphor by a metonymic shift. Third, the translator may wish to use more conventional metaphors known to his readers (or to create conventional metaphors in his text). Fourth, LXX-Isa at times tries to find more vivid and dramatic metaphors than a purely literal rendering would have made. And finally, in at least one place, the translator rendered a metaphor literally yet has altered what the metaphor represents. These categories to some extent can overlap, as we will point out.

4.1.2.1. Metaphors Changed for Lexical or Textual Reasons

In 33:2 and 48:14 it is almost not fair to say the metaphor is translated with a different metaphor, since it is apparent that the translator read **רִיבֵּץ** (spelled defectively in MT in both places) as **רִיבֵּץ** and so rendered with *σπέρμα*. In 11:1 and 40:24 LXX-Isa seems to understand **גִּזְעַת** as referring not to a stump but perhaps a taproot, and so renders it in both places with *ρίζα*. But the change from stump to root may have been done to make a metaphor that is more specific or clear or even an attempt at conventionalization toward other metaphors in Isaiah dealing with roots (such as 11:10; 14:29-30; 27:6; etc.), or perhaps even should be considered a rendering with a metonymic shift.

A few more places should be mentioned here, since there is a lexical warrant to some degree for the translator to have used a different metaphor, though we prefer to classify these passages differently. In 27:4, as we will discuss below, the translator reads **שָׂמַר** as an infinitive of **שָׂמַר**. In 3:14, the Greek metaphor is more vivid, since they understood **בָּעַר** II. (to graze, in the Piel) as **בָּעַר** I. (to burn) and rendered with *ἐμπυρίζω*. In 7:19, the word *ξύλον* could be from seeing **נִעְצִיץ** and supposing **עֵץ** was meant.

4.1.2.2. Metaphors Changed by a Metonymic Shift

In some cases the translator uses a slightly different metaphor by choosing words metonymically associated. For example, in 11:1 and 40:24, as we have seen, there was a shift from “stump” to “root.” The most obvious examples of this technique was LXX-Isa’s unique interest in using γένημα rather than the more common equivalent καρπός for rendering פְּרִי when agricultural products are meant. We saw this in 32:12 and 65:21 where “produce” is in fact meant in the Hebrew, but also in 3:10 where a more extended meaning of “the result” is meant; this is interesting in that classical Greek literature does have similar metaphors to those in Hebrew, using the word καρπός. Also peculiar is that in 27:9 the word תְּנוּבָה which ought to be translated γένημα (like in the other places it occurs in the LXX) is instead rendered with καρπός. Perhaps 11:1 could be classified here (or indeed as a shift with lexical warrant) in that רֶצֶן is rendered with ἄνθος.

4.1.2.3. Metaphors Changed to Conventionalize

Here we mean to suggest that at times the translator has rendered a metaphor with a different metaphor in order to create or expand references to a conventional metaphor. That is, the translator replaced some metaphors in his translation with metaphors found commonly elsewhere, either in LXX-Isa or biblical literature more generally. This conventionalization, by repeating metaphors with similar or standard meanings, allows for his text to be more readily understood.

This tendency is seen most clearly with the use and introduction of metaphors using “seed” as a vehicle, perhaps because it is nearly a lexicalized metaphor. As we have shown, Isaiah uses “seed” in metaphors to represent offspring, families, or individuals (see 2.1.). LXX-Isa introduces “seed” metaphors for each of these already established meanings. In 37:31 where “bearing fruit” is mentioned to represent producing offspring, LXX-Isa instead says that they will produce “seed.” Similarly, in 14:30 the offspring (parallel to remnant) of the Philistines is referred to as their “root,” but the LXX substitutes the metaphor “seed.” In 14:29, “seed” is used in the Greek as the source of a particular person, while in the Hebrew he comes forth from a “root.” In 14:20, while strictly speaking the LXX uses the same metaphor as the Hebrew, in translation the “seed” no longer represents a kind of people (evil seed) but refers to an individual evil seed and his family.

In two places the translator turns somewhat obscure metaphors into “seed” metaphors. In 31:9 the unique “fire” and “furnace” metaphors are rendered instead as the more conventional “seed” metaphor (meaning remnant or family member) and its interpretation: “kinsmen.” In 57:7 the reference to “your flesh” meaning one’s family would sound strange in Greek, so the translator there too picks the more conventional metaphor “seed.”

In 27:10-11 the Greek abandons the unique metaphor of branches being stripped by calves, drying out, being broken, and being collected by women for a fire. Instead, since the

idea of the metaphor is to show an abandoned fortified city, the Greek uses language more commonly occurring in Isaiah, that of lush green places drying up (such as in 15:5-6; 19:6-7; and 42:15).

4.1.2.4. Metaphors Exchanged for More Vivid or Dramatic Metaphors

At times the LXX-Isa translator likes to substitute a different metaphor that is more vivid or dramatic than the Hebrew affords. The motivation for these substitutions is not always necessarily to make a more vivid metaphor.

In 3:14, possibly in part due to a lexical issue, as mentioned above, rather than leaders grazing God's vineyard, they burn it. In 27:4, likewise, there is some sort of lexical issue at work (as well as many other alterations in the translation), yet rather than having thorns and briars the LXX substituted the metaphor of guarding a field of stubble.

In a few places the translator does seem to be deliberately using a more vivid metaphor. In 7:19, as shown above, there may be some lexical warrant; the translator seems to have interpreted a word for a kind of thorn bush as a tree to better fit the context of hiding places. In 11:1 the translator uses *ἄνθος* to render *נֹצֵר*, which more vividly shows the new life springing up from the root. Similarly, in the simile in 61:11, the earth does not just bring forth shoots, but in the Greek the translator has it grow flowers. In 28:1 and 4 the translator makes the fading flower more vivid by shifting from a description of the process of fading to a description of it having withered and fallen.

4.1.2.5. Metaphors That Have Had Their Tenors Altered

In at least two places the translator has rendered a metaphor with the same vehicle but has managed to change the tenor it represents in his translation. As mentioned above, in 11:10 the "root of Jesse" in the Hebrew could refer either to the royal line or to an individual, but in the Greek it is specifically an individual. A more definite example comes from 14:20; in Hebrew the "evil seed" refers to evil people in general or as a group of evil people, but in the Greek it refers to an individual and his family.

4.1.2.6. Conclusions

While indeed the above subcategories to an extent overlap, we can conclude, based on our sample, that the translator does not typically replace one metaphor with another because it is objectionable in some way, but does seem at times to understand his text differently at the lexical level than we would. At times he is careful not to render a metaphor literally that will sound too strange in Greek (e.g. 57:7), though also he will at times avoid metaphors that have classical Greek precedents and so should have been possible (as we have seen in his avoidance of *καρπός*). It would be interesting to see if further research showed other ways the translator has conventionalized metaphors in Isaiah. The true genius of the LXX-Isa translator

is his ability to interpret the Hebrew text while translating it largely literally, as can be seen in his altering the tenor of two metaphors while translating their vehicles literally.

4.1.3. Metaphors Translated with Non-metaphors

Metaphors can be rendered with non-metaphors in a variety of ways and for different reasons. First, we will look at some examples where idioms and dead-metaphors are rendered so as to give a non-metaphoric meaning, usually by giving the metonymic value of the Hebrew word. Second, we will look at puns and homonyms that are rendered either in line with the Hebrew or the homonym. Third, we will look at places where the LXX has rendered using the perceived meaning of the Hebrew metaphor. These three sections give order to how metaphors are rendered into non-metaphors, but in nearly each specific example different factors are at work in determining how the translator renders.

4.1.3.1. Hebrew Idioms, Dead Metaphors and Metonymies Rendered

In 4:2 **וּפְרִי הָאָרֶץ** is rendered simply with ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Ottley suggests that the LXX reads **פְּנִי**,⁴ but this would be a unique equivalence. The translator transforms this entire verse to express his own ideas. The word **פְּרִי** was probably dropped because of the translator's ideas about the verse or style, and not because of the state of his *Vorlage*.

In 10:12 another idiom using the word **פְּרִי** is removed. The Hebrew **אֶפְקֹד עַל-פְּרִי מְלֹךְ-אֲשׁוּר לְבַב מְלֹךְ-אֲשׁוּר** is reduced to ἐπάξει ἐπὶ τὸν νοῦν τὸν μέγαν, τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν Ἀσσυρίων. If the fruit of the great heart is its results, pride, then the LXX saw no reason to render it in this clause since later in the verse this is made clear. While the phrase **פְּרִי-גִדְל לְבַב** is unique, it operates according to the idiomatic use of **פְּרִי**.

The case of 13:18, however, is a matter of interpreting an idiom. The Hebrew **וּפְרִי יְרַחֲמוּ בְטֶן לֹא יְרַחֲמוּ** is rendered καὶ τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν οὐ μὴ ἐλεήσωσιν, though here it has a synonymously parallel phrase. This is a good translation of **פְּרִי-בְטֶן**, but in Gen 30:2; Mic 6:7; and Psa 132(131):11 we find καρπὸν κοιλίας, and in Psa 127(126):3 καρποῦ τῆς γαστρὸς.

A similar idiom is also interpreted in 14:29b, this time it is the fruit of snakes. The Hebrew **וּפְרִיּוֹ שָׂרָף מְעוֹפֵף** is rendered καὶ τὰ ἔκγονα αὐτῶν ἐξελεύσονται ὄφεις πετόμενοι. The verb **יָצָא** and the noun **פְּרִי** are rendered twice by the Greek to balance the parallelism. Again the rendering of **פְּרִי** with τὰ ἔκγονα is appropriate, and is used elsewhere for renderings of fruit as an offspring of animals (Deut 28:4, 11, 51; 30:9).

In Isa 27:6 a metaphor of Jacob taking root and blossoming is rendered as a variation of the idioms in 13:18 and 14:29. The Hebrew **הַבְּאִים יִשְׂרָשׁ יַעֲקֹב יִצְיָן וּפְרָח יִשְׂרָאֵל** is rendered οἱ ἐρχόμενοι, τέκνα Ιακωβ, βλαστήσει καὶ ἐξανθήσει Ισραηλ. The translator reads **יִשְׂרָשׁ** as the noun **שְׂרָשׁ** and renders it τέκνα.

⁴ Ottley, *Isaiah II*, 121. Ziegler suggests פְּנִי הָאָרֶץ (על); *Untersuchungen*, 108.

In two places, the LXX-Isa translator appears to give a literal rendering of what he perceives to be a metonymy. In 55:12 the translator renders **וְכָל־עֵצֵי הַשָּׂדֶה יִמְחֹאוּ־כַף** with *καὶ πάντα τὰ ξύλα τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἐπικροτήσῃ τοῖς κλάδοις*. While the translator may have understood **כַּף** to be the same as **כֶּפֶף**, meaning “branch” (though he never renders this word literally, see 9:13; 19:15) the translator may have simply thought it odd for trees to clap hands so adjusted it to branches, a shift that could be understood as metonymic from one species to another species. An example quite different is 18:2, where a metonymy of the genus is perceived and the species is given. The Hebrew **הַשְּׁלַח בְּיָם צִירִים וּבְכָל־יַם־גִּמְאֵל־פְּנֵי־מִיָּם** is rendered *ὁ ἀποστέλλων ἐν θαλάσῃ ὄμηρα καὶ ἐπιστολὰς βυβλίνας ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος*. The translator seems to take **כָּלִי** as meaning something like “an article, an object” and so gives it the more specific meaning “letter,” *ἐπιστολή*, due to the context of sending messengers and hostages; nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible is **כָּלִי** used to refer to a boat. As Ziegler has pointed out, LXX-Isa often renders **כָּלִי** freely to fit what is meant in the specific context, rather than rigidly rendering with *σκεῦος*.⁵

While we can point out that LXX-Isa sometimes interprets idioms and dead metaphors or perceived metonymic statements, this observation is of limited value, since in most cases the immediate context seems to be the deciding factor for the rendering, not the idiomatic or metonymic nature of the statements themselves.

4.1.3.2. Puns and Homonyms

Puns represent a dilemma for translators: how can they offer both meanings of the word in the new language? Similarly, when presented with a word that has a homonym in an un-vocalized text, the translator must choose between meanings.

In 10:33, a metaphor of the LORD trimming high branches is given for the arrogant being brought low. The LXX, though, renders **פְּאַרְהַ מְסַעֵף** with *συνταράσσει τοὺς ἐνδόξους*. The translator seems to have understood **מְסַעֵף** in the sense of “divide,” and **פְּאַרְהַ** not as “branch,” but “glorious people.” Once this reference to branches being trimmed is gone, the remaining metaphor with a dual meaning of the high (branches/trees) must refer only to high people. The translator makes this clear, rendering **וְרָמֵי הַקּוֹמָה גְּדוּעִים וְהַגְּבֵהִים יִשְׁפְּלוּ** with *καὶ οἱ ὑψηλοὶ τῆ ὕβρει συντριβήσονται, καὶ οἱ ὑψηλοὶ ταπεινωθήσονται*.

It would be easy to compile a long list of words taken with a different meaning from what modern scholars believe the Hebrew intended, but here are a few examples where the rendering of a word with its homonym has affected a metaphor.

In 60:21 the phrase **נִצָּר מִטְעֵו** is rendered *φυλάσσω τὸ φύτευμα*. Rather than calling the people a shoot God planted (as in Exod 15:17), in the Greek the righteous people are in the land guarding the plant, the work of God’s hands. In the Greek of 61:3, however, the

⁵ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 83-84.

people are called righteous generations, the plant of the Lord for glory, so perhaps in 60:21 the translator sees some group of leaders as those guarding the plant.

The LXX reads the noun **צֶמַח** as the Aramaic verb **צַחַח** in 4:2. The result is that the “branch of the LORD,” a metaphor of a messianic figure, is removed in the Greek. Instead of **בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִי צֶמַח יְהוָה לְצַבִּי וּלְכְבוֹד** we read *Τῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἐπιλάμψει ὁ θεὸς ἐν βουλῇ μετὰ δόξης*. The metaphor was technically removed, but it was not the result of the translator actively considering what to do about the metaphor.

Only 10:33 could be considered a possible pun. In these other examples the translator reads the text differently than the MT does, and removes a metaphor mostly due to how the verse as a whole is understood.

4.1.3.3. Interpreting the Meaning of the Metaphor

In a few cases we can say with confidence that the translator has removed the metaphor and opted instead to state what he believes the metaphor meant.

The translator in 27:9(10) renders the “fruit” idiom as though it were a metaphor and gives what he believes it represents, so **וְזֶה כָּל-פְּרִי הַסֵּר הַחֲטָאתוֹ** is rendered *καὶ τοῦτο ἐστὶν ἡ εὐλογία αὐτοῦ, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι αὐτοῦ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν*.

In 33:11 a metaphor of giving birth to straw is rendered with what the translator thinks it means. The Hebrew **קִשׁ רִוְחָכֶם תִּלְדוּ** is interpreted as *ματαιά ἐσται ἡ ἰσχὺς τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν*. Elsewhere conceiving and giving birth to wind is rendered literally (28:18), and in 59:4 that the people conceive trouble and give birth to guilt is rendered literally. The interpretation of 33:11 is probably under the influence of 30:15 and Lev 26:20 where their strength is vain, as Ziegler pointed out.⁶

In two passages, 9:13 and 19:15, the same word pair is used in a merism but is interpreted in two different ways by the LXX. Isa 9:13 reads **וַיִּכְרַת יְהוָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל רֹאשׁ וְזָנָב** and was rendered *καὶ ἀφείλε κύριος ἀπὸ Ἰσραηλ κεφαλὴν καὶ οὐράν, μέγαν καὶ μικρὸν ἐν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ*. The Greek seems to understand **וְזָנָב** not as synonymously parallel to **רֹאשׁ** but as an explanation of it. In the next verse it is explained that the leaders and prophets are meant by this metaphor, so the Greek has made it clear that all will be removed, great and small. But in 19:15 where the Hebrew reads **וְלֹא-יְהִי לְמִצְרַיִם מַעֲשֶׂה אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה רֹאשׁ וְזָנָב כַּפָּה וְאַגְמוֹן** the Greek interprets *καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις ἔργον, ὃ ποιήσει κεφαλὴν καὶ οὐράν, ἀρχὴν καὶ τέλος*. The Greek has made these word pairs the object of the verb (rather than describe the doer), so they no longer represent the leader’s inability to lead but describe the disorderly state of Egypt. In each verse the translator has rendered the meaning of the metaphor in order to clarify what he thinks it means in its immediate context.

⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 147.

In 21:10 two metaphors are interpreted by the translator. The Hebrew מְדֻשָּׁתִי וּבֶן־גֶּרֶןִי is interpreted as οἱ καταλελειμμένοι καὶ οἱ ὀδυνώμενοι. The idea that being threshed is to suffer some sort of violence is clear enough (cf. Micah 4:13 and Hab 3:12 where it is a metaphor for military defeat). Also the process of winnowing after threshing may have given rise to the idea of a remnant, though in 17:5-6 what is left in the field represents the remnant.

In three places, tree metaphors are interpreted as referring to people. In 10:19, after two verses talking about trees of the forest, the phrase וְשֵׁר עַץ יֵעָרֵן is rendered with καὶ οἱ καταλειφθέντες ἀπ’ αὐτῶν, making clear that these trees represented people. In 10:34 the translator interprets “the thickets of the forest” and “the majestic trees” both as “the lofty” (2x), and to make clear that these lofty ones are people, he specifies that they fall by the sword (μάχαιρα) rather than just by iron (בַּרְזֶל). In 61:3 rather than calling those mourning in Zion “oaks of righteousness” the LXX calls them “generations of righteousness.”

In 27:2-4 the vineyard metaphors have been nearly all removed and replaced with discussion of a besieged city. We have discussed this at length in 3.5.1.

4.1.3.4. Conclusions

While we have used the word “metaphor” rather broadly, these examples show that there are a variety of reasons why a metaphor can be rendered with a non-metaphor. Giving a non-metaphorical rendering of an idiom or dead metaphor is interpretation on a different level than giving the meaning of a metaphor. But also, some metaphors are removed because the translator reads the passage differently or understands a different definition of a word; this is not the same as interpreting the meaning of a metaphor. In each case the translator is carefully trying to render the verse at hand, looking at the immediate and more remote contexts to interpret. Further study is needed to see which idioms or sorts of idioms and dead metaphors are “acceptable” to be retained in the translation by various LXX translators. For example, as we have seen, idioms involving “fruit” are always removed by LXX-Isa, though not by other LXX translators, while some other metaphors are conventionalized to “seed” in LXX-Isa.

4.1.4. Translation of Non-Metaphors with Metaphors

On three occasions the translator has introduced a plant metaphor where there was no metaphor in the Hebrew.

Two of these occasions involve words for a remnant being rendered with “seed.” In 1:9 the word דְּרִישׁ is rendered with σπέρμα, perhaps following the precedent in Deut 3:3. In 15:9 פְּלִיטָה is rendered with σπέρμα; usually in Isaiah it is rendered with a form of καταλείπω (4:2 and 37:31 where the parallel “fruit” is rendered “seed”), unless it is parallel to שֵׁר, in which case it is rendered with a participle from σῶζω (10:20 and 37:32). As we discussed in

2.1.4. concerning these passages, LXX-Isa seems to take seed and remnant as related ideas. In any case, “seed” is very nearly a dead metaphor in the LXX.

The third place a metaphor is introduced is in 24:7, though it is probably because the translator believes אָבַל means “to mourn” since this is also how he translates it in 24:4 (where it is again parallel to אָמַל). The addition of this metaphor, then, is most likely due to the translator’s understanding of the vocabulary and not due to concern for style or expression.

4.1.5. Merging of Multiple Metaphors

In at least three places the translator has merged metaphors together. In 35:7 the Hebrew has four transformations: sand becomes a pool, thirsty ground becomes springs; the haunt of jackals becomes a swamp, and grass becomes reeds. The Greek, however, only has the first two transformations (altered somewhat in translation) then describes what the marshy springs will be like: the joy of birds and a residence for reeds and marshland. Perhaps the translator wanted to reduce the number of parallel images and so opted instead to describe the pleasant scene resulting from the transformations.

In 37:27, the Hebrew has what may be three implied similes: that the inhabitants become plants of the field, tender grass, and grass on the housetops, blighted before it is grown. The Greek, however, condenses these down into two similes (perhaps under the influence of דָּרְבָּר), so they are like dry grass on housetops and like wild grass.

In 40:6, a passage with several interesting renderings, a metaphor and a simile (all flesh is grass; their constancy like the flower of the field) are merged so that all flesh is grass and the glory of man like the flower of grass. By mentioning grass in the simile instead of the field, the two images are tied more closely together. This is still implied in the Hebrew (especially in 40:7 where the grass and flower fade) but is explicit in the Greek.

4.1.6. Metaphors Omitted

In two cases LXX-Isa omits a plant metaphor, giving no equivalent for it. In 40:7 the metaphor that all flesh is grass is repeated in the Hebrew, but the LXX omits this verse. It could be due to parablepsis or homoioteleuton, but could also have been done for stylistic reasons. In 42:15 LXX-Isa omits a clause describing herbage (עֵשֶׂב) drying out, probably for stylistic reasons, that is, to reduce nearly identical elements.⁷

⁷ See van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 69-70.

4.1.7. Translation of Metaphors with Similes

As we said in our introduction, Demetrius suggests using similes instead of metaphors if they are “too bold.”⁸ As we will show below (4.3.3.), metaphors rendered as similes in LXX-Isa do not seem to have been done so because they were too bold (with the possible exception of 50:3).⁹ But nevertheless, the translator sometimes renders metaphors with similes, as Ziegler has discussed.¹⁰ In some cases the simile is implied in the Hebrew, in other cases the translator has at least some lexical warrant for using a simile, but in some cases the translator has introduced similes due to some exegetical considerations.

4.1.7.1. Similes Implied in the Hebrew

The terse style of Hebrew poetry often omits particles and conjunctions, so at times a simile is probably implied though there is no comparative marker. In 37:27 the Hebrew has no comparative marker, but the LXX adds one, perhaps under the influence of הִיָּה, since often לִּיהִיה constructions are interpreted as similes in LXX-Isa.¹¹ Even modern English translations (NRSV, ESV) render these metaphors in 37:27 as similes. The same issue seems to be at work in 33:12, where we find overly terse poetic statements that seem to imply a comparison and also feature the presence of הִיָּה, and so the Greek has made it into a simile. In 51:12 the phrase וּמִבְּנֵי־אָדָם הָצִיר יְנַתֵּן is translated with a simile in modern translations (NRSV, ESV) as well as in LXX: καὶ ἀπὸ υἱοῦ ἀνθρώπου, οἷ ὡσεὶ χόρτος ἐξηράνθησαν. The translator has made this clause clear by making it a simile and explaining what exactly he thinks יְנַתֵּן means.

In 9:17(18) the Greek adds a simile, probably believing that it is implied by the parallel clause having a simile καὶ καυθήσεται ὡς πῦρ ἢ ἀνομία καὶ ὡς ἄγρωστις ξηρὰ βρωθήσεται ὑπὸ πυρός; only it is not a parallel clause (unless it is climactic parallelism) but a continuation of the simile in Hebrew: כִּי־בַעֲרָה כָּאֵשׁ רְשָׁעָה שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית תֵּאָכֵל.

4.1.7.2. Lexical Warrants for Translating with a Simile

We have already seen that in 37:27 the translator may have thought he saw a lexical warrant for using a simile. In 1:31 it is clearer, in that לִּיהִיה is rendered with a simile. Again, some modern translations (NRSV, ESV) tend to see similes in this verse as well. Similarly, in 41:15 a comparative marker is added where the Hebrew has לִּיהִיה. Perhaps it makes better sense in Greek to say they will be made like threshing sledges than to say they will be made into threshing sledges. The issue of לִּיהִיה constructions being rendered with ὡς could just be a matter of Greek syntax and not a matter of concern for rhetorical style.

Another example is in 44:4, where וְצִמְחוּ בְּבֵינֵינוּ הָצִיר is rendered as though ב were כ: καὶ ἀνατελοῦσιν ὡσεὶ χόρτος ἀνὰ μέσον ὕδατος. This could be the result of the *Vorlage*

⁸ Demetrius, *On Style*, 80, 85.

⁹ And arguably 55:8.

¹⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92f.

¹¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

matching 1QIsa^a, which reads כַּבִּין. But as Ziegler has pointed out, sometimes where MT has ב LXX-Isa has read it as a comparative marker.¹²

4.1.7.3. Similes Introduced Due to Exegetical Considerations

In two places the translator introduces a simile in order to more clearly express what the translator thought the passage meant. In 5:6 the translator introduces a simile that thorns will come up as in a dry land. This is done in part due to the translator's unique ideas about the meaning of שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית, but also to distinguish the thorns overcoming the abandoned vineyard from those being produced by it in 5:2 and 4. In 10:17 another metaphor with the words שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית is rendered with a simile. The Hebrew metaphor emphasizes that God will burn the thorns and briars of the king, but the Greek introduces a simile to show how violently or quickly they will be consumed, like they were dry grass.

4.1.7.4. Conclusions

Generally, LXX-Isa appears to render metaphors as similes only where he believes a simile is actually meant, either by being implied or because he thought he saw (or did see in his differing *Vorlage*) a comparative marker. The case of the construction לִּיהִה לִּי deserves further investigation; perhaps the translator does in fact render this appropriately by using a comparative marker. In the only two places where the translator's exegesis is the deciding factor, it is probably because of the word pair שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית which he has his own unique approach to everywhere it occurs.

4.1.8. Translation of a Simile with the Same Simile

Again, a generally literal translation technique of the translator should have resulted in the majority of similes being translated literally. Also, if similes are “safer” than metaphors, as Demetrius says,¹³ there should be less need to find alternative ways of expressing them in a new language. But as we will see, even where similes are rendered with the same simile, the LXX-Isa translator will often make slight adjustments to the simile or its passage and at times will expand the simile.

4.1.8.1. Literal Renderings of a Simile with the Same Simile

Not much needs to be said about the simile literally rendered. The three similes in 1:8 (like a booth in a vineyard, like a hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city) are all rendered literally. In 48:19, the well known simile alluding to God's promise to Abraham in Gen 22:17 that “your seed will be like sand” and its parallel “like dust” are rendered literally. In 66:14 a

¹² Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92.

¹³ Demetrius, *On Style*, 80, 85.

strange simile of bones flourishing like grass is rendered literally; אֲשָׁרָא is rendered with βοτάνη probably for its positive connotations. One of the similes in 5:24, וּפְרָחַם כְּאֵבֶק יַעֲלֶה, is rendered literally as καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτῶν ὡς κονιορτὸς ἀναβήσεται. In both the Hebrew and the Greek of 65:25 the lion eats straw like the ox (but the similar simile in 11:7 is not rendered as a simile).

4.1.8.2. Slightly Adjusted Similes

Sometimes the translator makes various sorts of small adjustments while using the same simile in Greek.

In three places, rather than “withering” the translator has opted for “fallen.” In 1:30 the translator carefully renders the simile to draw attention to the terebinth that sheds its leaves, as opposed to the withering leaves. In 34:4 the translator adjusts the leaves and fruit simile so that they fall rather than just wither. In 64:5(6), also, the attention is drawn to leaves that have fallen rather than are withering. In each of these passages the translator has carefully rendered נָבַל to more vividly express the simile.

In 53:2 a simile is adjusted, probably to make it more sensible (and not just due to confusion about the text); rather than a root growing *out of* dry ground (מֵאֲרָץ) the LXX has it growing *in* a dry land (ἐν γῆ διψώσῃ).

In 5:24 the first simile is rendered literally (except that “tongue of fire” is rendered “coal of fire”) and the second simile (the comparative marker is implied in the Hebrew but perhaps not in the Greek) is adjusted to be more closely parallel (“sinks down in the flame” is rendered “burned up by an unrestrained flame”).

A second simile in 17:5 is slightly adjusted due to lexical reasons; וְזָרְעוֹ was thought to be זָרַע and so rendered with σπέρμα.

The simile in 17:6 is slightly adjusted as well; the translator has removed that the tree is beaten and only says that the few olives remain in the tree and makes the simile more succinct.

The simile in 7:2, that the heart of the king and the people shake like a tree in the forest, is slightly adjusted in the Greek; the verb יָנַח is rendered in two different ways (with ἐξίστημι for the people and σαλεύω for the trees) for the sake of clarity.

4.1.9. Translation of a Simile with a Different Simile

The translation of similes should be easier, since they often make explicit the point of comparison. But in several cases the LXX-Isa translator has seen fit to translate one simile with another. First, we will list similes that differ probably due to a textual or lexical issue. Second, we will list a place where a simile is altered by a metonymic shift. Third, we will list

similes altered for the sake of clarification. Fourth, we will look at similes with the word *φρύγανα*. Then we will make some conclusions.

4.1.9.1. Textual or Lexical Issues

In 5:24 the translator rendered *מִן* as though it were *מִן*, that is, with *χουῶς*, and so has changed the simile.

In 17:5 the translator has altered the simile slightly by taking the subject *קָצִיר* as an object of what was gathered (*ἀμνητος*); also the means of gathering (*וְזָרְעוּ*) was read as its homonym (rendering it with *σπέρμα*) further describing what was gathered.

In Isa 53:2 there is something of a pun, where *וַיַּעַל כִּי־יִנְק לְפָנָיו* could be understood as referring to a baby growing up until the next clause, *וְכִשְׂרָשׁ מִאֲרָץ צִיָּה*, makes it clear that a plant is meant. The translator, though, renders *ἀνέτειλε μὲν¹⁴ ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ὡς παιδίον, ὡς ῥίζα ἐν γῆ διψώση*.

4.1.9.2. Metonymic Shift

In 61:11 rather than the earth bringing forth sprouts (*צִמָּח*), the LXX makes the simile about flowers (*ἄνθος*), which makes a more vivid image; also flowers are more closely related to the parallel “seed.” This rendering is similar to the shift in 11:1 from *נֶצֶר* to *ἄνθος*.

4.1.9.3. Clarification

In a few places the LXX-Isa translator substitutes another simile that is clearer in some way.

For the simile of the oak being cut down in 6:13, the translator has instead used the simile of an acorn falling from its husk. We have noted the difficulties of this verse above (3.6.2.2.); the acorn falling simile is parallel to the terebinth simile which seems to be implied to be about a terebinth shedding its leaves.

In 9:17(18) thorns are rendered as dry grass that will be burned. We will discuss this below where multiple similes are combined.

In 17:5b, rather than the simile of gleaning grain in the valley of Rephaim (which requires readers to know about this particular valley), the LXX says it is like gathering grain in a firm ravine, where one cannot sow.

The unique simile “like chaff on the mountains” in 17:13 is rendered to be clearer: “like the dust of chaff when they winnow.”

A second simile in 17:13 is also changed, rather than tumble-weed (*גִּלְגָּל*) being blown in a storm, the LXX makes it a gust driving dust kicked up by a wheel. There could be some lexical warrant for this (*גִּלְגָּל*), but in 29:5 the LXX again introduces the idea of dust being

¹⁴ All manuscripts read *ἀνηγγείλαμεν*.

blown by the wind without any equivalent. In both places the translator's new simile illustrates and makes more vivid a parallel simile of chaff blowing away.

The unique simile of treading straw into dung is clarified to conform with more common images; perhaps we can consider it conventionalization, in 25:10. To an extent the translator may have understood **בַּתְּבַן** to mean grain, and then by metonymy associated it with the threshing floor (*ἄλων*), but there is no clear reason **הַתְּבַן** should have been rendered with *ἄμαξα* besides that the translator was transforming the simile into describing threshing.

In 58:5 the image of bowing one's head like a reed is rendered instead with bending the neck like a ring. This appears to be the translator picking a better image, though could be because he did not understand the word **תְּבַן** the way we do.

In 65:22 the translator rather flagrantly interprets by turning the simile "like a tree" into "like the tree of life." This does in a sense clarify, in that the longevity of the tree is meant in Hebrew; the Greek extends the longevity.

4.1.9.4. Similes with *φρύγανον*

In several places LXX-Isa prefers to use similes with *φρύγανον*, rather than with a word for stubble, since it better expresses the simile. In 40:24 the translator changes the simile from that of straw blowing in the wind to twigs, probably thinking the frail desert plants that easily come loose from their roots when dried out. This change better connects the simile to the image of the princes' stock not taking root in the earth. The same simile is used in 41:2, though here because comparing bows to dry twigs is a more vivid simile than comparing them to straw. We find the same rendering for a third time in 47:14, where tinder is clearly meant. Instead of saying the astrologers are like straw and they will be burned, the LXX says simply that they will be burned like twigs. The translator may have thought *φρύγανον* was a valid meaning of **פְּרִי**, but he stands alone among the LXX translators in using this equivalent. In 5:24, though, he uses the more standard equivalent *κάλαμη*.

4.1.9.5. Conclusions

While there are three cases that look like there may be a textual or lexical issue, most of the above examples show that the translator would sometimes use a different simile or adjust it to what he thought would be a more clear or appropriate simile. Most of these cases feature a unique simile, which may be why he felt the need to use a different vehicle. If indeed clarity is what is at issue, it is interesting that the translator opts for a different simile so often, rather than use a non-simile to express what he thought the idea was.

4.1.10. Translation of Similes with Non-Similes

On three occasions the translator has rendered a simile with a non-simile. In 41:2 this could be because **כעפר** was read as **בעפר**, since the Greek has εἰς γῆν. The change is that rather than the victor making the kings like dust with his sword, now the kings' swords are given to the earth. In 11:7 a simile is removed due to harmonization. Here the three pairs of animals are all said to eat “together” in the Greek, though the Hebrew only has “together” once. The Greek harmonizes what is said about the three pairs, removing a simile in the process. So, in the first case the simile may have been removed because the translator did not see a comparative marker, and in the second place it was removed for the sake of style.

In 17:9 the Hebrew may have been corrupted, though the DSS evidence and the three other versions all agree with MT against LXX. The MT reads **יְהִיו עָרֵי מְעֻזָּה כְּעֻזַּת הַחֲרֹשׁ וְהָאָמִיר אֲשֶׁר עֻזְבוּ מִפְּנֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**, while LXX has ἔσονται αἱ πόλεις σου ἐγκαταλελειμμέναι, ὃν τρόπον ἐγκατέλιπον οἱ Ἀμορραῖοι καὶ οἱ Εὐαῖοι ἀπὸ προσώπου τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ. While this passage is technically a simile rendered with a non-simile, it is clearly not a simple issue of the translator removing imagery, he has read the text quite differently, or even read a different text.

4.1.11. Translation of Non-Similes with Similes

In one place, the translator introduces a simile where the Hebrew does not have (or imply) one. We discussed the details of how in 27:10(9) the phrase **כִּי עֵיר בְּצֹרֶה בְּדָד** is rendered ὥσπερ δρυμὸς μακράν (see 3.6.4.1.); here it is necessary only to note that **כִּי** was taken as a comparative marker.

4.1.12. Merging Multiple Similes

In 24:13 two similes are combined, turning the second simile into an explanation with a metaphor; rather than “like when an olive is beaten, like at the gleaning when the grape harvest is ended” the Greek has “just as when someone gleans an olive tree, so shall people glean them, even when the harvest has ceased.”

4.1.13. Metaphor or Simile with an Explanation

In a few cases a metaphor or simile has an explanation along with it. In 36:6, in what way Pharaoh is a broken reed is explained in both languages by saying it breaks when you lean on it and injures the hand holding it. Similarly, the allegory in 5:1-7 is explained in verse 7 in both languages, though the Greek subtly shapes and interprets other elements. In both

languages, the image in 40:6-8 is explained: humanity is like grass in that it quickly withers and fades.

In two places we examined, the translator adds an explanation for the image. Isa 27:2-4 has many differences in the Greek from the Hebrew, most of the vineyard metaphor has been rendered with language about a besieged city. As if this were not enough, the translator adds a sort of theological summary in 27:4, about how God has done all that he has ordained.

Another extended metaphor can be found in 28:23-28. Here various agricultural activities are described in terms of how they typically are and are not done, where various crops are planted and how they are processed after harvest. In the Greek the translator updates some of the terms and equipment to better match the practices of his day in Egypt. More interesting, though, is that the translator interprets giving his perceived meaning of the metaphor in 28:28, so that threshing means God's anger and trampling is His bitterness, neither of which will last forever. By interpreting the metaphor in this verse he provides an explanation for the imagery in the entire passage.

4.1.14. Conclusions

It should come as no surprise that the translator used so many different strategies to render metaphors, given the well known independent character of LXX-Isa's translation approach, and since, as Labahn has shown, even within one chapter, Lam 3:1-21, a LXX translator used six different strategies to render metaphors.¹⁵ It is tempting to draw statistics about how often a metaphor is rendered with the same metaphor versus a non-metaphor or different metaphor, and so forth, but since we have only surveyed plant metaphors, these statistics may not accurately represent those of all the metaphors in the book. Nevertheless, we can make some observations about how the translator used different metaphor translation strategies.

It is important to note that quite often the translator is content to render a metaphor or simile with the same metaphor or simile. Often it is because the metaphor is a dead metaphor (as in the case of "seeds"). But also conventional metaphors, which should be more difficult to translate, are maintained in the translation, perhaps since they can be found commonly in biblical literature (such as metaphors about trees, roots, and grass). Some original metaphors are also rendered, as is the case with the bruised reed in 36:6, which has an explanation in the text. The extended metaphor in Isa 5:1-7 is also rendered with the same metaphor, though with some modifications, and has an explanation. The similes rendered with the same similes are often modified slightly in some way, as we have seen.

¹⁵ Labahn, "Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise," 181. She counts five strategies, but I count two of her subdivisions separately.

Rendering a metaphor with a different metaphor is a good strategy when trying to create vivid and poetic passages that are sensible to the audience and reflect their own experience. Skilled translators can find and use equivalent metaphorical expressions in the target language. Usually, though, when LXX-Isa renders a metaphor with a different metaphor this does not seem to be his main concern. Often he uses a different metaphor due to lexical or textual issues; he has taken a word to have been a different word or to have had a different definition than we would expect. It is difficult to tell in the cases where the translator has altered the metaphor by making a metonymic shift in the meaning of a word or vehicle of the metaphor, whether the translator was endeavoring to interpret, or if it is simply testimony to a different lexical knowledge of the meaning of the words in question. Translations using metonymy are worthy of more research. It is more clear that the translator is deliberately choosing a different metaphor in cases where he chooses to use dead metaphors (such as “seed,” particularly for words the meaning of which he clearly knows) or conventionalizes to more common metaphors (such as using the common image of lush places drying out in 27:10-11 or using a threshing simile in 25:10). Sometimes the translator renders a metaphor in such a way as to show the resultant state rather than the process, such as when he talks of flowers instead of shoots, and will describe leaves, flowers, and fruit as having fallen rather than withering; this approach creates more vividness. Also of interest, and worthy of further study, are the metaphors that have their vehicles hijacked to carry new tenors in the translation, such as 11:10 and 14:20; these show the translator’s skill in interpreting the meaning of a text while rendering many features literally.

The translator renders similes with different similes for many of the same reasons: because of lexical or textual issues, using metonymic shifts, or seeking to clarify the imagery. Often when he feels the need to use a more clear simile it is because the simile in question is unique (such as treading straw into dung in 25:10), and so the translator may conventionalize, picking a simile found elsewhere in biblical literature or even in Isaiah itself. One strange exception is the translator’s use of *φρύγανον* to render similes; while he makes a good simile in each case, it is unclear why he felt the need to clarify the similes with this word.

The translator renders a metaphor with a non-metaphor for several reasons. As we have shown, he will often remove Hebrew idioms and dead metaphors (particularly using the word פִּרְיָ). Sometimes he removes a metaphor by way of metonymic shift (55:12 could be an example of this, if the translator knew כִּפְתָּר meant branch;¹⁶ a better example is 18:2 with the vessel of papyrus). Homonyms and puns in the Hebrew at times require the translator to choose a rendering that in effect removes the metaphor but is more clear. When the translator uses a non-metaphor in an effort to interpret a metaphor it is usually due to the features of the individual passage at hand. It is in these examples that the LXX-Isa translator shows himself to be most unique among the LXX translators.

¹⁶ Though he gives no evidence elsewhere of knowing this meaning.

Of the passages we have examined where similes are rendered with non-similes, twice it is due to textual or lexical issues and in the third passage the simile is removed to harmonize to the surrounding clauses.

In only three places the translator introduces a plant metaphor where the Hebrew has no metaphor. In two cases it is because he prefers to say “seed” rather than remnant; it is noteworthy that while he introduces a metaphor, it is a dead or lexicalized metaphor and is consistent with uses of the same metaphor in other places in the Hebrew Isaiah text. The third place it is probably not an exegetical effort but only because he defined a word differently than we do. Where similes are introduced where they are lacking in the Hebrew it is always due to lexical reasons; the translator only introduced similes where he thought they were present in his *Vorlage*. Similarly, the translator does not seem to render metaphors with similes where they are too bold or objectionable in some way, but usually because the Hebrew implies a simile or he thought his text had a simile present.¹⁷ The exception to this is where the word pair *וְשִׁית וְשָׁמִיר* occurs, words for which the translator has his own special approach.

In some cases the translator takes other approaches to metaphors for the sake of style. In particular, he at times merges metaphors or similes together or will even omit them, as we have seen, though, it is not always clear whether an omission is deliberate or not.

At times the translator feels the need to explain a metaphor or simile. He often explains or renders them in ways similar to other metaphors or similes present already in the Hebrew text.

So, looking generally at these various translation strategies, subdividing them for possible reasons they were adopted, it is clear that some of the same or similar issues are dealt with differently. For instance, lexical or textual issues provide motivation for the translator adopting various different translation strategies, such as rendering with a different metaphor, a non-metaphor, or a simile with a different simile. In a sense, these are false positives of that strategy being used, since the translator has simply read a different text or read it differently or understood a different definition than we would, and was not deliberately trying to modify the expression of the metaphor for his target language.

It is curious also that while dead metaphors should in theory be the hardest to translate between languages,¹⁸ they do not seem to bother our translator. This could be because many of the dead metaphors we looked at have similar usages in classical Greek literature, and can be found elsewhere in biblical literature. The one exception is metaphors involving “fruit,” which should have been no harder than the others, since again, they are found commonly in biblical literature (and were rendered literally in the other books of the LXX) and can also be found in classical Greek literature.

¹⁷ We will address the issue of metaphors rendered as similes below in 4.4.3.

¹⁸ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 86.

Conventional metaphors, likewise, should be difficult to translate, particularly if they are language or culture specific.¹⁹ But again, the translator often has no problem with these metaphors, though he will occasionally modify them in various ways for his translation. Where the translator does make changes to metaphors it is often when they are original, which in theory should be the easiest to translate.²⁰ As we have seen, though, these original metaphors are often conventionalized in that the translator substitutes for them dead metaphors or metaphors found elsewhere in Isaiah.

The translator shows his independence and license in his translation by making some metaphors more vivid, but can be seen most clearly where he adds interpretations of metaphors or renders them with non-metaphors to give what he believes the metaphor means. Likewise he feels he has the authority to omit and otherwise adjust metaphors, not only for the sake of clarity and to express their proper meaning in Greek, but even simply for the sake of good style and to render some of the rhetorical force even at the expense of some of the individual words and phrases.

But at the same time the translator is rather moderate. He usually does not change metaphors into similes or vice versa unless he thinks the text intends them. Even where he shows alarming and unique interpretations, he is consistent in how he executes them, so that while he resists metaphors with “fruit,” he is systematic and consistent in how he renders them. Likewise he appears to have a clear conception of the meaning of the word pair **שְׂמִיר וְיִשְׁתִּי**, and so is consistent in how he deals with them in the different contexts they appear. His use of *φρύγανον* also, while unique, is always used for the same Hebrew word and is always used well to express the metaphor in which it occurs. Further evidence of his moderation is that when he does render a metaphor with a different metaphor he usually conventionalizes, opting for a metaphor that has already been used in the Hebrew of Isaiah.

Labahn has argued for Lam 3:1-21 that it is unclear whether metaphors are altered as a result of the translator receiving the metaphors of the MT or of the translator producing metaphors in Greek,²¹ which in some cases is undoubtedly true in the examples we examined above. But I think we can go further and suggest that the pluses and minuses of similes are wholly the result of how the LXX-Isa translator received the imagery of the MT, while some of the places where he renders with a non-metaphor or adds an explanation are the results of him producing (or rather interpreting) metaphors. A more obvious example of the later are the similes where the translator uses *φρύγανον* as the vehicle of a metaphor and rendering of **קֶשׂ**, since he clearly knows the proper meaning of this Hebrew word.

¹⁹ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 86.

²⁰ van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 86.

²¹ Labahn, “Bitterkeit und Asche als Speise,” 153.

4.2. Evaluation of Ziegler's Work on the Metaphors in LXX-Isa

Our study has made frequent reference to that of Ziegler and has hopefully expanded on his work to paint a more full picture of how the LXX-Isa translator dealt with metaphors. We have already summarized Ziegler's chapter on metaphors and comparisons in the introduction (1.1.2.), it remains for us here to evaluate his findings against our own. While we have looked primarily at metaphors in passages that have plant terminology, Ziegler based his observations on his work with the entire book; but nevertheless, from our own more limited perspective we can confirm that Ziegler's observations are largely sound. Indeed, the translator does feel free to interpret, particularly figurative expressions, while at the same time produces a translation that in some relationship represents the *Vorlage*.²² Ziegler's chapter on the importance of the papyri for understanding LXX-Isa is also of great value for the study of metaphors, since they are informative of the realia of the translator which he sometimes draws from to furnish vehicles for the metaphors in his translation. Rather than rehearsing the numerous points of agreement with Ziegler,²³ this section will describe a few points that warrant further investigation.

One point that needs further investigation is whether the translator felt the need to ameliorate images that were “*zu real und derb*.”²⁴ The only example Ziegler gives of this is Isa 3:15, where מְלָכֶם תִּדְכָּאוּ עַמִּי וּפְנֵי עֲנִיִּים תִּטְחַנּוּ is rendered τί ὑμεῖς ἀδικεῖτε τὸν λαόν μου καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον τῶν πτωχῶν καταισχύνετε;. There is no doubt the translator is interpreting these metaphors, and it is easy to see how, but is it because the image is too harsh? Elsewhere in Isaiah דכא is also interpreted,²⁵ except 57:15, where the second occurrence is rendered with συντριβω. But synonyms used metaphorically are not interpreted, such as שָׁטַף, which is rendered with συντριβω in 13:16 where infants are the object (also 13:18, though LXX reverses the action). While perhaps less harsh, in 1:28 rebels and sinners are crushed (שָׁטַף rendered with συντριβω), and people are also crushed (with these same words) in 8:15 and 28:13. It does not seem to be an issue of the image being too harsh since similar images are maintained. We have also seen other examples of the translator rendering metaphors based on homonyms (see 4.1.3.2.) or Aramaic definitions of words (as we saw in 8:6-8) which may be at work here. Ziegler also points out that טָחַן is interpreted literally in 47:2, so the translator knows it means “to grind.” But in 3:15 the translator seems to have interpreted it in light of דכא, and so renders it as to humble: καταισχύνω. When we look at the larger context in which these metaphors occur, it becomes clear that it is not the individual metaphor that is too harsh, since in 3:7, 12, and 17 metaphors are also interpreted, and the idea of “humbling” is found in

²² Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 80-81, 83-84.

²³ Or the details on which we agree or disagree in the analysis of specific texts.

²⁴ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 81.

²⁵ The meaning “humble” (as in the Aramaic) may be thought in 19:10 where it is rendered with ὀδύνη and 53:5 where it is rendered with μαλαρίζομαι. 1 Macc 1:40 similarly interprets דכא, rendering it with ἀτιμάζω. For καθαρίζω in Isa 53:10, cf. 28:27 where this renders שָׁטַף, and dill is the object.

3:8, 17, and 26. The metaphor seems to be interpreted, then, in light of the translator's ideas about the meaning of the passage, not because of its choice of vehicle. Ziegler may well be right that some metaphors are interpreted because they are too vivid and coarse, but the example he gives is not entirely convincing.

Another point Ziegler makes, and which can be found in the present study, which requires further research is whether some images are interpreted due to the translator's lack of Hebrew knowledge. On the one hand, indeed some rare words are not literally rendered. Examples Ziegler gives include 3:17, where קָדְקֹדַד ... שִׁפָּח is rendered with ταπεινώσει...ἀρχούσας; and 1:22, where לְסִיגִים is rendered ἀδόκιμον.²⁶ But there are similar interpretations of words the meaning of which the translator clearly knew, such as we have seen with דְּכָא and טָהֵן in 3:15.²⁷ There may be two different phenomena at work (some metaphors interpreted because the vocabulary was obscure, others with known vocabulary interpreted for some other reason), or the translator may have been deliberately interpreting the passages and knew perfectly well the meaning of the words. As we have shown in the case of שְׁמִיר וְשִׁית, to which indeed the translator has a unique approach, he is at least consistent in his understanding of the terms and does not reach wildly for a solution in each occurrence. Likewise, the translator knows the meaning of שִׁק, yet on several occasions renders it with the unexpected equivalent φρύγανον. In cases where the translator renders based on grammatical theories of analogy or using Aramaic definitions, is there a way to tell the difference between the translator not knowing a word and the translator expounding a possible, perhaps perceived to be hidden, meaning of the passage?

Ziegler is quite right regarding LXX-Isa's tendency to render metaphors personally,²⁸ as we have seen, for example, with metaphors involving trees (2:12-13; 10:19; 61:3) and branches (10:33-34). David Baer has expanded on this point at length; he shows that this is not only done for metaphorical speech but is a way the translator reads Isaiah for his own time; Baer gives nearly two hundred examples of personalization in LXX-Isa.²⁹

Ziegler also makes many useful observations about comparisons.³⁰ One point that is helpful is his discussion of word equivalents for comparative particles. Here further research is needed, not only of the Greek rendering, but of the syntax of the Hebrew itself to show just to what extent ל and ὡς overlap in meaning, and whether ל היה ever marks similes in the Hebrew. Ziegler says the construction ל היה means "zu etwas werden,"³¹ so based on our distinction between metaphor and simile it is not comparative, yet LXX-Isa often renders it as

²⁶ He also looks at 1:25.

²⁷ We may add also 10:19 and 61:3.

²⁸ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 81-82.

²⁹ Baer, *When We All Get Home*, 59. See ch. 3: "'Personalization' in LXX Isaiah."

³⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92-103. See the summary in our introduction (1.1.2.).

³¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92. Also Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline* (2nd Edition; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), §278.

a simile.³² Ziegler gives as examples: 1:31; 8:14; 29:5, 17; 40:23; and 41:2. In theory, ὡς could be intended to mark identity in these constructions and not a comparison.³³ As Muraoka has shown, ὡς originally in Greek had a comparative sense but over time developed some other usages as well,³⁴ though is most commonly used for comparisons in Biblical literature.³⁵ It is best, then, to consider the Greek of these examples to be similes, and indeed they make the best sense as similes. Muraoka also points out that some uses of ὡς are close in meaning to some uses of εἰς.³⁶ This is interesting since in 41:2 and 1:25 LXX-Isa renders כּ with εἰς, though it is interpreting the simile in both places. Further research is needed to see whether לַהִייה should be considered to be marking a simile in some cases or whether it is closer to a metaphor and LXX-Isa simply prefers to use a simile in these places.

In conclusion, Ziegler has laid a solid foundation for the study of metaphors and similes in LXX-Isa. Ziegler offered some categories for the rendering of metaphors and more for how similes were rendered. The present study has expanded on his work by categorizing in detail the various translation strategies for rendering metaphors adopted by the translator. We turn now to further contextualizing LXX-Isa in its Jewish and Hellenistic contexts.

4.3. LXX-Isa and Jewish Approaches to Rendering Metaphors

In this section, we will attempt to position LXX-Isa within its Jewish context and show that some of its treatment of metaphors fits within the trajectory of Jewish interpretive traditions. To do this, we will focus first on the similarities and then on the unexpected differences between Targum Jonathan's and LXX-Isa's approach to rendering metaphors.³⁷ In the introduction (1.3.2.1.) we have already discussed how Targum Jonathan of the Prophets dealt with metaphors and similes. As we have seen, though have not analyzed in depth, these observations hold for the examples included in this study.

³² By contrast see 1:22 where LXX-Isa interprets the image, and so does not render it with a simile.

³³ For the use of ὡς to mark identity or similarity, see Muraoka, "The Use of ὡς in the Greek Bible," 56-57.

³⁴ Muraoka, "The Use of ὡς in the Greek Bible," 53.

³⁵ Muraoka, "The Use of ὡς in the Greek Bible," 71-72.

³⁶ Muraoka, "The Use of ὡς in the Greek Bible," 58, nt. 3. Ottley, *Isaiah*, II, 302 says these Greek words are easily confused in the manuscripts, as are כּ and כּוּ.

³⁷ For a recent study comparing LXX-Zech and Targum Jonathan more generally, see Cécile Dogniez, "Some Similarities between Septuagint and the Targum of Zechariah," *Translating a Translation: The LXX and its Modern Translations in the Context of Early Judaism* (eds. H. Ausloos and B. Lemmelijn; BETL 213; Leuven: Peeters, 2010): 89-102; she also notes bibliography. One similarity she points out of note to us is that both translations changed the metaphor in Zech 12:6 from "pot of fire" to "firebrand."

4.3.1. Similarities

We have seen several examples in our introduction (1.1.2.) of similarities between how the Targum and LXX-Isa render metaphors. One similarity in the approach of these two translations is the tendency to translate the meaning or interpretation of a metaphor. We have seen also that sometimes they agree in their interpretation. Sometimes, the Targum is even more literal than the LXX. We have found similar examples in the passages we have examined, particularly above where we discussed metaphors or similes rendered with non-metaphors or non-similes. Here we will first list places where both translations attempt to clarify the same passage in some way; second we will list places where both have the same interpretation of a metaphor or simile; third, we will list some passages where the LXX uses the otherwise characteristically Targumic method of rendering part of the imagery while offering an extended interpretation.

4.3.1.1. Clarifying the Same Passage

In some cases, both LXX-Isa and the Targum agree that a metaphor should be clarified in some way, though they do not always take the same solution. For 1:29, “terebinth” is rendered with “idols” by the LXX, but the Targum says “oaks of the idols.” In 10:33-34 both LXX and the Targum interpret the “lofty” and other terms as representing some group of people. In 37:30-31, the second part of the Hebrew’s “take root below...bear fruit above” is changed in the LXX to “bear seed upward” while the Targum opts for “raises its top upward,” perhaps since it also made clear that a tree is meant. In 27:10(9) the LXX thinks “the full fruit” means a “blessing” while the Targum puts “effectuation.” In 10:12 the “fruit of the greatness of heart” is interpreted by the LXX as referring to “pride,” but the Targum interprets it as “deeds.” In 28:25-28 both translations try to clarify the metaphor, the Targum clarifies in the first verse, while the LXX adds an explanation in the last. In 51:20 the antelope simile is turned into a half-cooked chard by the LXX translator, but the Targum renders personally: “those cast in nets.” In 58:7, where the metaphor “flesh” would have sounded strange in Greek, the LXX opted instead for “seed,” while the Targum rendered it literally while adding, as does the LXX, that it is a relative. The epithet “oaks of righteousness” used of the people in 61:3 is interpreted by the LXX as “generations of righteousness,” but the Targum is more specific, saying: “true princes.”

4.3.1.2. Offering a Similar Explanation

In some places LXX-Isa and the Targum offer a similar explanation for a metaphor, as van der Kooij has pointed out.³⁸ For example, in 1:31 both add very nearly the same explanation, that the wicked are meant, though in different ways. In 7:2, where the hearts of the people shaking is compared to trees in the wind, both LXX and the Targum use different

³⁸ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 181-82, 184.

verbs for the hearts and the trees. In 13:18 both remove “fruit” opting instead for a word for offspring, though the Targum still has it in construct with “womb.” In 24:7 both translations believe לָבַח means “mourn,” though the LXX personifies the wine as mourning, and the Targum makes it the drinkers of wine who mourn. In 55:12, despite other additions, the Targum and the LXX both have the trees clap their branches. And the comparison of the lives of the people to a tree in 65:22 is interpreted by both the LXX and the Targum as the “tree of life.”

4.3.1.3. LXX-Isa’s Targumic Translations

At times LXX-Isa’s approach to rendering metaphors employs methods used extensively later in the tradition by the Targum, as van der Kooij has pointed out.³⁹ For example, Churgin describes one of the Targum’s methods of rendering metaphors as giving the object represented, often staying close to the original, maintaining “a circumscription of phraseology.”⁴⁰ This can include a simile using the vehicle of the Hebrew, either before or after an explanation.⁴¹

If we look at the Targum of Isa 27:2-4 we see that the metaphor has become just a simile in the first verse, followed by an explanation of the imagery (that it is a description of the covenant with its blessings and curses) in the rest of the passage.⁴² The LXX is similar, only it does not use a simile in 27:2 but has the metaphor of the Hebrew, followed in the rest of the passage by only what the imagery is thought to represent (a fortified city).

Similarly, in 28:24-28 the LXX stays close to the Hebrew text rendering closely all the various agricultural activities (with some cultural updating of terms). In the final verse, LXX-Isa offers a theological explanation to make clear the point of mentioning the various agricultural activities (that God will not be angry forever, presumably just like the various activities are only done for a time and to a certain degree and in a certain manner). The Targum renders differently, making clear in the first verse what the passage means by explaining with similes.

Further analysis of the translation of metaphors in LXX-Isa is needed to determine why some images are interpreted this way, while others are rendered literally in Greek. Possible reasons are that the translator had a special interest in expressing clearly the idea he thought these texts described. Also, it could be a matter of more rare images being clarified, as we have seen is sometimes the case among plant metaphors. In any case, LXX-Isa is clearly using techniques for rendering metaphors that were to be used more extensively later in Jewish tradition, as van der Kooij has shown.⁴³

³⁹ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 179-85.

⁴⁰ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 86.

⁴¹ Churgin, *Targum Jonathan to the Prophets*, 86-88.

⁴² This approach is also seen in the Targum of Isa 5:1-6. Another nice example is found in 21:10, where an interpretation is given before offering the vehicle recast in a simile.

⁴³ van der Kooij, “The Interpretation of Metaphorical Language,” 179-85.

4.3.1.4. Conclusions

This comparison has shown that the LXX does indeed adopt some methods of metaphor interpretation as well as specific interpretations that are used more extensively later in Jewish tradition by the Targum. This conclusion is not limited to Isaiah (or the study of metaphors), but LXX-Isa interprets to a much greater extent than other books; L. H. Brockington already has shown various ways the LXX and Targum have similar theological interests (such as adding soteriological interpretations in Isaiah;⁴⁴ and have other interpretations with verbal similarity to various degrees and where they exhibit similar expository traditions).⁴⁵ Further study of these features should shed light on how metaphors were thought to function in Early Judaism and fill in the trajectory of this tradition.⁴⁶ It is interesting in the case of the more expanded interpretations that LXX-Isa feels authorized to replace the imagery with its meaning; though the Targum does this often, the Targum assumes the Hebrew text is being read with it, while the LXX probably does not make this assumption.⁴⁷ This is the same explanation given by Dogniez in his study of similarities in general between the LXX and Targum of Zechariah.⁴⁸

4.3.2. Differences

While there are many well known and expected differences, due to the differences in time, place, language, and purpose of the two translations, there are some differences that are worthy of note, as they serve to temper and balance our perspectives on the translators. First, we will show some places where the Targum is actually more literal than the LXX in some way. Second, we will compare how the two translations conventionalize imagery, resort to stock interpretations, or make classical allusions. Finally, we will make some concluding comments about their differences.

⁴⁴ L. H. Brockington, "Septuagint and Targum," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 25 (1954), 80-83.

⁴⁵ Brockington, "Septuagint and Targum," 84-6. Passages of note he lists for Isaiah are: 11:4; 8:7; 17:4; 18:1; 36:2; 38:18; and 52:4.

⁴⁶ Brockington believes the similarities are due to a shared oral tradition and that the interpretations are made to meet the expository needs of the synagogues in the respective milieus, "Septuagint and Targum," 82, 86. The idea of shared oral tradition and expository methods are undoubtedly at work, but there is no need to tie them specifically to the synagogue (since we do not know enough about what was done and read in synagogues in the 2nd century BC), but can be attributed to a shared scribal and exegetical tradition.

⁴⁷ For a discussion of the "Interlinear Model" of the LXX, see our introduction (1.3.2.1.).

⁴⁸ Dogniez, "Some Similarities between Septuagint and the Targum of Zechariah," 90-91.

4.3.2.1. Places the Targum is More Literal than LXX-Isa

Sometimes the Targum is actually more literal than the LXX, rendering a metaphor or simile with the same metaphor or simile. For example, in 1:9 and 15:9 where the LXX renders “remnant” with “seed,” the Targum agrees with MT (despite its other expansions). Similarly in 14:20 the Targum is closer to the MT than LXX, which makes the “evil seed” an individual. In 14:22 a word for offspring becomes “seed” in the LXX, but “grandson” in the Targum. In 11:7 the Targum keeps the simile, while the LXX removes it. The “vessels of papyrus” in 18:2 become “fishing boats” in the Targum, while LXX makes them letters. In 25:10, the straw trodden in dung is rendered nearly literally in the Targum (it is trodden in a mire), while the LXX replaces it with a threshing metaphor. In 31:9, God’s “fire” and “furnace” is interpreted as “seed” and “kinsmen” by the LXX, but the Targum renders the vehicle of the image literally, though explains it as a threat for the wicked. In 35:7 the Targum is closer to MT than the LXX is, though neither are exactly the same nor extensive in their interpretation. In 40:24; 41:2; and 47:14 the Targum renders literally, despite other additions, with “chaff,” while the LXX prefers “twigs.” Whereas the LXX cuts back the number of trees mentioned in 41:19 and 44:14, the Targum lists them all. The bent reed describing how they bow their heads in 58:5 is rendered literally by the Targum, but LXX-Isa changes the metaphor to a ring. The Targum’s ability to render the vehicles of these metaphors and similes literally is probably because the translator felt more free to expand and explain the imagery. LXX-Isa, on the other hand, generally does not like to expand the text much and so usually restrains himself to the choice between rendering the vehicle of the metaphor, or using what he thinks will be a more clear vehicle, or giving what he thinks is its tenor.

4.3.2.2. Conventionalization

Another difference is how the two translations conventionalize imagery. We have seen that LXX-Isa will sometimes conventionalize unique metaphors, instead using more commonly found metaphors. The conventionalization in the Targum is quite different. We have seen that often the Targum introduces explicit references to the metaphor that Israel is God’s special plant, an idea that probably underlies much plant imagery in the Bible. For example, in 57:2-4 the metaphor “seed,” rendered literally in LXX, is replaced in the Targum by a description of Israel as an evil people who come from a holy plant. In 17:10-11 the “alien slips” which were meant as literal plants used for pagan worship are replaced in the Targum by a description of Israel as God’s select plant. In 60:21 the MT indeed has this meaning, and the Targum adds that it is a “pleasant plant.”⁴⁹ In 61:3, though, the Hebrew “planting of the LORD” becomes “people of the Lord.”

⁴⁹ See also 5:2, where the Targum expands that “*I established them as the plant of a choice vine,*” perhaps just to tighten the connection to the explanation in 5:7.

A difference in their exegetical approach that has a bearing on the renderings of metaphors is that LXX-Isa tends to render metaphors according to the context in which they occur, while the Targum is prone to offer stock interpretations for images, as if they were established symbols. So in the Targum, “root” is sometimes rendered with “sons of sons,” as in 11:1, 10; 14:29 (but not 14:30 and 40:24 where it is just “sons” or 5:24 and 53:2 where other interpretations are made). Sometimes words for “trees” are interpreted for rulers as in 2:13 where the trees become “kings” and “tyrants;” the trees (and bricks) of 9:9(10) also become rulers; and again in 14:8; also, in 61:3 where “oaks of righteousness” becomes “true princes.” Similarly, the recurring phrase in 9:13 and 19:15 (palm branch and reed) is interpreted as representing rulers by the Targum in both places. Alternatively trees are sometimes rendered as referring to armies or warriors, as in 10:19 and 10:34. A well known example from the Targumim in general is the tendency to make water metaphors refer to Torah.

The Targum will sometimes insert what could be called “classical allusions,” interpreting a metaphor or redesigning it to refer to some biblical character or event to illustrate what is meant. Sometimes Abraham is mentioned, as in 5:1 and 41:2. In 65:8, the tricky metaphor about not destroying the grape cluster is replaced with the analogy of righteous Noah being spared from the flood.

4.3.2.3. Conclusions

These differences are in part due to LXX-Isa’s attempt to stay close to the *Vorlage*, while the Targum is more free to expand. When LXX-Isa does offer an explanation of a metaphor it is often in place of some text and not an expansion of it (such as in 28:22-28). The Targum has the luxury of being able to give both the vehicle of the metaphor and offer its explanation. The different sort of conventionalization in the two translations is probably due to LXX-Isa being more concerned with rhetoric in expressing the meaning of his passage (and so conventionalizes to well known metaphors), while the Targum is trying to systematize the theology of the text (and so conventionalizes to certain stock meanings of metaphors).

4.4. Evidence of Greek Views of Metaphors in LXX-Isa

To some extent, the use of metaphors in the Hebrew of Isaiah already conforms to Hellenistic requirements of good style. As Lowth long ago pointed out:

If the Hebrew poets be examined by the rules and precepts of this great philosopher and critic [Aristotle], it will readily be allowed, that they have assiduously attended to the sublimity of their compositions by the abundance and splendour of their figures; though it may be doubted whether they might not have been more temperate in the use of them. For in those poems at least, in which something of uncommon grandeur and sublimity is aimed at, there predominates a

perpetual, I had almost said continued use of the Metaphor, sometimes daringly introduced, sometimes rushing in with imminent hazard of propriety.⁵⁰

We have shown in our introduction (1.3.1.5.) that there is evidence that the translator was concerned about proper Greek style, but to assess his use of metaphors against Hellenistic rhetorical manuals is tricky. For one thing, the manuals teach that metaphors should be used differently in different genres. So, does our translator understand Isaiah as a book of divine oracles that speak in poetry full of riddles and enigmas?⁵¹ Or is it the prose oratory of the prophet, which employs lofty, heroic, and subdued styles to persuade his audience to repentance? Or would the translator have recognized different genres in different passages? This issue is beyond the scope of our current study, but could explain differences in translation technique and rendering of metaphors in different passages. A second difficulty was highlighted already in antiquity by Philodemus, as we have seen (1.3.1.1.). He points out that the rhetoricians do not give any practical working instructions, and do not describe why the metaphors they condemn are faulty or how to create good metaphors.⁵² He adds that rhetorical training does not account for good or bad speech, and that what the rhetoricians condemn is not typical of the uneducated but of those lacking common sense.⁵³ If this really is the case, then what instructions, exactly, do we expect to see the translator following? And whether he was educated in rhetoric or not may be less important than his natural ability and feel for good style.

Despite this, to see if any evidence can be culled from our study we will here first look for evidence of the so-called Aristotelian substitution view of metaphor. Second, we will list metaphors that are adjusted in some way to show how they are in line with what the rhetorical handbooks suggest. Third we will discuss whether metaphors are rendered as similes because they are too bold, as Demetrius' handbook says bold metaphors should be treated.

4.4.1. Substitution View of Metaphor

In the introduction we mentioned that many modern theorists of metaphor believe Aristotle advocates what they call the “substitution view” of metaphor.⁵⁴ According to this view, a metaphor simply substitutes one word for another and so can be paraphrased in literal language. More recently, scholars have questioned whether Aristotle held to this view.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Aristotle's definition states that a metaphor is “the application of a word that belongs to another thing: either from genus to species, species to genus, species to species, or

⁵⁰ Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, 121.

⁵¹ Note the literal (and unique) choice of *ἀνιγματιστής* to render *לְשׁוֹן* in Num 21:27, where perhaps some word for a poet (such as *ποιητής*) is better suited.

⁵² Philodemus, *The Rhetoric of Philodemus*, 298. This corresponds to Sudhaus, 1.171.2 col. XII-1.175, col. XVI.

⁵³ Philodemus, *The Rhetoric of Philodemus*, 199-200. This corresponds to Sudhaus, 1.186 col. V-1.192 col. XI.

⁵⁴ Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 33-34.

⁵⁵ See Soskice, *Metaphors and Religious Language*, 8-10.

by analogy.”⁵⁶ As such, the removal or interpretation of a metaphor could, in theory, be done by applying the proper word to a thing by the same relationships described. Caution is due, though, for two reasons. First, even in the Hebrew, many metaphors seem to function merely by the substitution of one word for another, such as the eunuch in 56:3 saying he is a “dry tree,” instead of an “infertile man.”⁵⁷ Second, if the translator simply substitutes one word for another (as opposed to paraphrasing the statement, or otherwise explaining it), it may not necessarily be because he has adopted the substitution theory of metaphors from Aristotle, but could be because he is generally aiming to follow a literal translation technique and wants to maintain a quantitative representation of the words in the Hebrew text.⁵⁸

With these caveats in mind, it is possible to list some examples of places where the translator interprets (or simply clarifies) a metaphor by substituting a word with another word more proper to the thing described. This is most clear in 61:3 where “oaks of righteousness” is rendered instead with “generations of righteousness.” Some other examples include: “palm branch and reed” is rendered “great and small” in 9:14(13) and “beginning or end” in 19:15; in 21:10 “threshed one” is rendered “remnant” and “son of a threshing floor” is rendered “those suffering;” in 27:6 “children” is substituted for “root;” in 27:9(10) the “full fruit” is rendered with “blessing;” and in 31:9 “seed” is substituted for “light” and “kinsmen” for “furnace.”

Another part of Aristotle’s definition, that this substitution can be from genus to species, or species to genus, species to species, or by analogy, also describes how some metaphors are rendered by LXX-Isa, as we have seen. For instance, some renderings are from genus to species, such as: 10:34 “sword” is substituted for “iron.” The phenomena Ziegler pointed out, whereby the translator substitutes פְּלִי with what he believes it represents is an interpretation from genus to species.⁵⁹ Others are from species to genus, such as: 3:10; 27:6; 32:12; and 65:21 where the species פֶּרִי is rendered as the genus γένημα; the simile in 17:5 has the species “valley or Rephaim” replaced by the genus “hard valley.” Most common are substitutions of species for species, often just changing the vehicle of the metaphor: in 11:1 the LXX substitutes a “blossom” for the Hebrew’s “branch;” in 14:29-30 “seed” is twice substituted for “root;” in 37:31 a “seed” is substituted for the Hebrew’s “fruit;” and “root” is substituted for “stump” in 11:1 and 40:24; likewise for the simile in 61:11 where “flower” is substituted for “sprout” (though the terms may be synonymous); and in 40:24, 41:2, and 47:14 where φρύγανον is substituted for שֶׁקֶט. Analogous substitutions are seen where LXX-Isa

⁵⁶ Aristotle, *Poetics*, XXI.7-9, [Halliwell, LCL].

⁵⁷ It is particularly common with dead metaphors, such as uses of “seed,” “fruit,” and “root.” To an ancient Hellenistic Jew it would have seemed plausible that Aristotle learned something about rhetoric from Moses and the prophets, even if indirectly, so they would not have been surprised to see metaphors in Isaiah functioning in line with Aristotle’s descriptions.

⁵⁸ See Tov, *The Text-Critical use of the Septuagint*, 23-24.

⁵⁹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 83-84.

introduces a metaphor in 15:9,⁶⁰ so that “remnant” is replaced by “seed;” and 14:22 where “seed” is substituted for “descendent and offspring.”

4.4.2. Adjustments to Metaphors in Line with Rhetorical Handbooks

We have seen that many metaphors and similes are adjusted in some way or interpreted; in this section we will look at some of these adjustments that appear to be in line with what Aristotle describes. While many of their comments seem vague or subjective in their sensibilities, there are some examples from LXX-Isa that appear to conform to what these teachers of rhetoric advocate and condemn. It is unconvincing to argue that metaphors are rendered literally (with the same metaphor) due to concern for good style, so we will focus primarily on metaphors and similes that are changed by the translator in some way.

One of the things Aristotle suggests is that metaphors should be derived from beautiful things, selecting words that either sound beautiful or are beautiful in sense, and the same is true for ugly things.⁶¹ LXX-Isa seems to take this into account in translating the eunuch’s speech in 56:3, saying with assonance: ἐγὼ εἶμι ξύλον ξηρόν. Perhaps the ugly sense of the metaphor in 25:10 contributed to replacing “like treading straw in dung” with the more conventional threshing language.

One of the causes of frigid style is epithets that are too long or unseasonable, or too crowded.⁶² Aristotle complains about Alcidamas’ crowded style, giving examples of what he should have said:

For instance, he does not say “sweat” but “damp sweat”; not “to the Isthmian games” but “to the solemn assembly of the Isthmian games”; not “running,” but “with a race-like impulse of the soul”; not “museum,” but “having taken up the museum of nature”; and “the scowling anxiety of the soul”; “creator,” not “of favour,” “but all-popular favour”; and “dispenser of the pleasure of the hearers”; “he hid,” not “with branches,” but “with the branches of the forest”; “he covered,” not “his body,” but “the nakedness of his body.”⁶³

In a few places LXX-Isa removes epithets and statements that are too long or crowded. In 4:2 LXX-Isa says just “upon the earth” instead of the Hebrew’s “and the fruit of the land.” A more clear example is in 10:12 where LXX-Isa has “great mind” instead of “the fruit of the greatness of heart,” an epithet both too long and unseasonable. In 13:18 the translator puts just “your children” instead of “the fruit of the womb.” Perhaps the epithets were too crowded in 14:29 with all the snake imagery, so that “root” becomes “seed” and “fruit” is rendered with “offspring.”⁶⁴ The frigid epithet in 27:9(10), “and this is the full fruit of the removal of their

⁶⁰ For Aristotle the analogies are more direct, such as Ares’ shield is analogous to Dionysius’ cup. *Poetics*, XXI.16-32.

⁶¹ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.13.

⁶² Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.3.3.

⁶³ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.3.3, [Freese, LCL].

⁶⁴ Also “rod” becomes “yoke.” The verse is made more clear, which is the chief merit of good style, according to Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.2.1.

sin,” is rendered: “and this is their blessing when I remove their sin.”⁶⁵ In 59:21, LXX-Isa stops after the word not departing “from your mouth nor from the mouth of your seed,” omitting the superfluous “nor from the mouth of the seed of your seed.” Aristotle would approve of omitting the last statement, “for when words are piled upon one who already knows, it destroys perspicuity by a cloud of verbiage.”⁶⁶ In 65:23 the blessed seed are rendered literally, then the LXX omits the superfluous last clause “and their descendants as well,” since seed already includes their descendents.⁶⁷

To achieve loftiness of style, Aristotle suggests using descriptions instead of the name of things; but for conciseness to do the reverse.⁶⁸ This could be at work in why some metaphors are interpreted, besides to make them more clear. For instance, in 33:11 the two strange metaphors “You conceive dry grass and bring forth straw,” are reduced and interpreted just as “the strength of your spirit will be vain.”⁶⁹ This metaphor may also have been interpreted for being too far-fetched. Similarly in 21:10 “O my threshed and my son of a threshing-floor,” is rendered with the names (which the translator thought were described metaphorically) “Hear, you who have been left and you who are in pain.” Again, it is unclear if the metaphor was too far-fetched or just too long and needed to be more concise and clear.

Aristotle likes metaphors that set things before the eyes (τῶ πρὸ ὀμμάτων ποιεῖν).⁷⁰ By this he means metaphors that express actuality as opposed to abstract ideas; so saying a man is “four-square” is a metaphor, but to say “his life is in full bloom” expresses actuality in a metaphor.⁷¹ Perhaps related to this concern for actuality is LXX-Isa’s adjustment of metaphors that make for a more vivid image. In particular, the translator seems to prefer to describe things in their final state, rather than in intermediate processes. We can see this in 11:1 where the sprouting shoot is translated with the fully developed flower that will come up from the root. Similarly, rather than describing withering, the translator prefers to describe that leaves have fallen in several passages (perhaps due to his understanding of the word נָבַל). In 28:1 and 4 the flower is described as “fallen” rather than “fading.” In 1:30 the tree’s leaves are not withering, but in the Greek the tree sheds (ἀποβάλλω) them. Again in 34:4 the stars fade like leaves on the vine and the fig in the Hebrew, but the Greek says they will fall. Falling is more animated than withering, which is observed slowly over time; Aristotle suggests motion is important for achieving actuality.⁷² The same thing is seen in 64:5, where

⁶⁵ The issue may not be that it is too long, but that the metaphor is too far-fetched. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.3.4. One example he disapproves of is: “you have sown shame and reaped misfortune.”

⁶⁶ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.3.3, [Freese, LCL].

⁶⁷ Note also the compound word τεκνοποιεῖω; compound words are to be used in moderation according to Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.3.3.

⁶⁸ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.6.1.

⁶⁹ LXX-Isa also adds some clauses to this verse to ballast his omission and to interpret the passage.

⁷⁰ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.11.1.

⁷¹ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.11.2, [Freese, LCL].

⁷² Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.11.3-4. Aristotle shows a preference for using animate vehicles for metaphors of inanimate things; since our study is of plant metaphors, we have not seen many examples of this.

we do not fade like a leaf, but in the Greek we fall like a leaf, which better sets up the image of the wind carrying the leaves away. In one place, 3:14, the translator, perhaps due to reading a word as its homonym, makes a much more vivid metaphor: rather than “graze my vineyard” the LXX has “burn my vineyard.”

We have already argued (2.4.1.) that Isa 40:6-8 may have been modified in the Greek to make an urbane saying, since in the Greek it has antithesis, metaphor, and actuality, the three features Aristotle says should be aimed for to make an urbane saying.⁷³

It can not be shown that the translator was deliberately following Aristotle; as Philodemus suggests, good style could be just as much about having good sense and not a good rhetorical education. But as we have shown in our introduction, the discussion and analysis of tropes was an important part of learning to read and conduct literary criticism under the tutelage of a grammarian, and this training with tropes would largely be in Aristotelian terms. So, it should not be surprising that LXX-Isa at times modifies his translation to conform to what the rhetorical teachers of his day thought about how metaphors should be used. Likewise we should not be surprised that his Greek education does not come out more in his translation, since he was in no way obliged to follow Greek rhetorical rules. His translation method is largely literal, though he may at times take liberties and use some of the techniques he learned from his Greek education.

4.4.3. Bold Metaphors Ameliorated by using Similes

Demetrius in his manual on style says that metaphors that are too bold can be made safe by turning them into similes.⁷⁴ We can easily see if this advice is followed by searching LXX-Isaiah for pluses that are comparative markers.⁷⁵

Ziegler suggests that sometimes the translator removed imagery that was too strong or harsh;⁷⁶ the only example he gives is 3:15, where the image is interpreted but not made into a simile.

As van der Vorm-Croughs has shown, most of the time when the translator adds ὡς it is to harmonize a clause to the previous or subsequent clause which has a simile.⁷⁷ In Hebrew poetics, similes and metaphors can be hard to distinguish since the comparative particle can be implicit. LXX-Isa makes implicit similes explicit in 55:8 and 66:3.⁷⁸ In 52:7 a rhetorical

⁷³ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.10.6.

⁷⁴ Demetrius, *On Style*, 80, 85.

⁷⁵ ὡσεὶ is used with no equivalent in 10:17, but LXX-Isa often uses similes with the word pair ψυμῖρ וְשִׁית. The word ὡσπερ is only used without an equivalent twice in Isaiah: in 55:8 the Hebrew implies a comparison between God’s thoughts and our thoughts; in 27:9 the LXX reads the text differently and does not add the simile to ameliorate a bold metaphor. The only places δὲν τρόπων is added is 62:5, where a simile is implied in the Hebrew.

⁷⁶ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 81. See IV.B., above for an analysis of this claim.

⁷⁷ van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 132-33. She shows Isa 4:5; 5:29; 10:17; 16:1; 16:11; 17:11; 23:3; 27:10(9); 30:22; 44:4; and 50:9.

⁷⁸ It could be argued that 55:8 is not a simile in the Hebrew, but the LXX wanted to make the statement safe.

statement (introduced with *מה*) is rendered as a simile, probably in an attempt to better capture the force of the statement in Greek and for the sake of clarity.⁷⁹ The translator turns 37:27 into a simile, probably because of the occurrence of *היה*; Ziegler has shown that *היה* is commonly rendered with *ὡς*.⁸⁰ Also, we can not consider the comparative marker a plus where it is an equivalent of *ב* or *ל*, since the translator seems to understand these as able to denote comparisons, as Ziegler has shown.⁸¹ In one place, though, the translator may have added a comparative marker to avoid a statement that is otherwise absurd. **Isa 50:3** says:

I dress the heavens in darkness, and sack cloth I make its clothing.	אֲלֶבֶשׁ שָׁמַיִם קִדְרוֹת וְשָׂק אֲשִׁים כְּסוּתָם:	καὶ ἐνδύσω τὸν οὐρανὸν σκότος καὶ θήσω ὡς σάκκον τὸ περιβόλαιον αὐτοῦ.	And I dress heaven with darkness and I put as sackcloth its cloak.
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Typically, as we have seen, when there is a metaphor followed by a simile, or vice versa, LXX-Isa makes them both similes. But here the translator lets the first metaphor remain but makes the second a simile. If the translator simply thought the simile was implicit, we should have found both parts of the verse rendered as similes.⁸² The second part of the verse is a much bolder metaphor, to say the heavens are covered in sackcloth, but as a simile it is more acceptable.

LXX-Isa, then, does not seem to take Demetrius’ advice for dealing with bold metaphors by making them similes very often. He seems to much prefer making difficult metaphors clear by interpreting them.

4.4.4. Conclusions

In this section we have aimed to show what appears to be evidence that the translator took some of his rhetorical training concerning metaphors to heart and used it to improve the style of his translation. As we have admitted, there could be other explanations for many of the examples given. But we have seen in our introduction that other scholars have already shown further evidence that the translator was concerned at times with making his translation conform to Greek standards of good style. Further research is needed to see if there is more evidence among the other renderings of metaphors not examined in this study. Also, it would be noteworthy if other studies could show examples where the translator has made his text not better stylistically but worse. One possible example may be 45:25 where “seed of Israel” is rendered with the unnecessarily long “seed of the sons of Israel.”⁸³

⁷⁹ The rendering of rhetorical questions in LXX-Isa is worthy of further study. Compare 5:4b; 27:4; 28:25; 29:17; 51:12; 58:5; etc.

⁸⁰ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92. Here too it could be argued that the simile is implicit in the Hebrew.

⁸¹ Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 92. Or they may have been read as *ב*.

⁸² Cf. The Targum, which finds it necessary to add a comparative marker to both clauses: אכסי שמיא כיד בקבלא ובסקא אשוי כסותהון, “I will *cover* the heavens *as* with *darkness*, and make *as* sackcloth their covering.”

⁸³ This rendering is in line with other examples of LXX-Isa making double translations, see van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah*, 34-36, but often elsewhere “seed” metaphors are used without explanation in LXX-Isa.

4.5. Conclusion

This study has hopefully shown how LXX-Isa dealt with metaphors, filling in more details to the picture started by Ziegler and van der Kooij. We have not taken a comprehensive look at all the metaphors in Isaiah, but only a cross-section: the plant metaphors. Still, we have seen a variety of translation and interpretive methods from different sections of the book while being able to see the relationship of related metaphors within the book. But why individual metaphors are treated the way they are and how they are intended to function is probably best understood in light of the passage in which they occur; future research is needed in order to take a more contextual approach to metaphor, seeing how they are translated and interpreted along with the discourse and passage in which they occur.

We have seen that LXX-Isa is independent of other LXX translators, not only with his freedom to interpret metaphors but also in what metaphors he is willing to use or wishes to avoid (such as fruit metaphors). He interprets metaphors both in their small details and large, both making slight adjustments to shape their meaning and blatantly stating instead of the metaphor what he believes it represents. He at times updates the vehicles of metaphors to reflect the practices of his own day and conditions in Egypt, as Ziegler has shown. LXX-Isa's freedom to render metaphors is not an isolated phenomenon but seems to be one dimension of his approach to the book and his method of interpretation in general.

We have shown that LXX-Isa at times appears to be taking Hellenistic sensibilities about the proper use of metaphors into account. At the same time he often interprets using methods and interpretations which clearly belong to Jewish scribal traditions and which are further developed in the following centuries. To some degree, then, he resembles the scholars Aristeas par. 120-122 describes: a scholar familiar with both Jewish and Greek literary traditions. Further research is warranted to better position LXX-Isa among Jewish as well as Greek traditions in terms of his methods of exegesis and sensibilities of style.

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SAMENVATTING

In deze studie worden de plantenmetaforen van de Septuagint van Jesaja geanalyseerd, met als doel verder inzicht te verkrijgen in de vertaaltechniek van dit unieke boek. De vraag naar de vertaling van metaforen in de Septuagint als geheel ontstond als een verzameling vage observaties, en richtte zich aanvankelijk primair op omschrijvingen van God, en diende als voorbeeld van theologische exegese. Recent is de vertaling van metaforen een apart studiegebied geworden, dat losstaat van onderzoek naar omschrijvingen van God. Deze ontwikkeling gaat gepaard met een algemene interesse in metaforen binnen de Bijbelwetenschap. Voor de Septuagint van Jesaja is de situatie vergelijkbaar, behalve dan dat J. Ziegler en A. van der Kooij geïnteresseerd waren in de metaforen als gelegenheden waar de unieke kwaliteiten van de ideeën en methoden van de vertaler zich konden manifesteren. Recent hebben T. van der Louw en A. Labahn enkele vertaalstrategieën gecategoriseerd die in de LXX gebruikt worden om metaforen over te brengen. Er is reeds veel goed onderzoek verricht naar de vertolking van metaforen in de Septuagint. Deze dissertatie poogt het onderzoeksveld uit te breiden en te verdiepen door zich te concentreren op LXX-Jesaja.

Na een korte samenvatting van modern visies op metaforen gaat deze studie in op antieke visies op metaforen. Zij laat zien wat Griekse schrijvers te zeggen hadden over metaforen (en dat het waarschijnlijk is dat de vertalers van de LXX in enige mate blootgesteld zijn geweest aan deze ideeën), en zet vervolgens uiteen wat er gezegd kan worden over Joodse visies op metaforen in de tijd van de vertaler. Deze studie suggereert dat, indien de vertaler expliciet zou nadenken over metaforen, het waarschijnlijk is dat hij hierover zou denken in de Hellenistische termen van zijn tijd, maar dat hij zich niet gedwongen gevoeld zou hebben om op rigide wijze retorische handboeken te volgen tijdens de voorbereiding van zijn vertaling. Hij nam waarschijnlijk de Griekse stijl enigszins in acht, maar interpreteerde voornamelijk als een Joods schriftgeleerde.

In het tweede hoofdstuk worden metaforen met terminologie die refereert aan de verscheidene onderdelen van planten bestudeerd. Ook worden de vertalingen van LXX-Jesaja vergeleken met de vertolkingen van de Targoom. Zaadterminologie wordt gebruikt voor metaforen voor nageslacht, familie of volk, en individuen; soms verandert de vertaler de betekenis van enkele van deze metaforen of voegt nieuwe zaadmetaforen toe. Vruchteterminologie wordt gebruikt in metonymia voor opbrengst, metaforen voor nageslacht, en metaforen voor het resultaat van handelingen. In tegenstelling tot de LXX als geheel, vermijdt LXX-Jesaja de letterlijke vertaling van vruchtenbeeldspraak. Wortelterminologie wordt zowel gebruikt in metaforen voor familie als in metaforen die

bestendigheid of stevigheid uitdrukken. Soms gebruikt de vertaler van LXX-Jesaja dezelfde metafoer, terwijl hij op subtiele wijze hetgene wat de metafoer representeert verandert. Bloementerminologie wordt gereduceerd tot één woord in het Grieks, maar de metaforen worden goed overgebracht; echter, LXX-Jesaja voegt enkele bloemenmetaforen toe waar ze in het Hebreeuws ontbreken. Bladbeeldspraak wordt behouden, alhoewel deze beelden vaak omzichtig overgebracht worden om het begrip van de vertaler van deze passages te nuanceren. Scheut- en takkenbeeldspraak wordt doorgaans verwijderd door de vertaler van LXX-Jesaja, maar de redenen hiervoor verschillen per geval. In het algemeen laat dit hoofdstuk zien hoe de vertaler van LXX-Jesaja zich niet verplicht voelt om het voorbeeld van andere LXX-vertalers te volgen, en metaforen zeker niet beperkt tot één betekenis, maar juist ieder vers in zijn context zorgvuldig weergeeft. Zo nu en dan lijkt hij aandacht te besteden aan de betekenis en de beste manier om een bepaalde metafoer weer te geven, maar dit gebeurt altijd in de context van de betreffende passage en is steeds in dienst van de veronderstelde betekenis van de passage.

In het derde hoofdstuk worden metaforen waarin terminologie voor verschillende soorten planten voorkomt geanalyseerd, en de vertalingen van LXX-Jesaja worden vergeleken met de vertalingen van de Targoem. Metaforen waarin riet voorkomt worden in Jesaja op allerhande manieren gebruikt. De oud-Griekse vertaler probeert hun betekenis te vangen en te accentueren in de context waarin ze voorkomen. Over het algemeen maakt LXX-Jesaja voor grasbeeldspraak duidelijk of diens kwetsbaarheid of diens eigenschap om snel tot bloei te komen wordt bedoeld. In enkele gevallen is grasbeeldspraak verwijderd. De behandeling van doornbeeldspraak is complex: sommige metaforen worden behouden, andere worden aangepast. Dit hangt af van zowel de context als het begrip van de vertaler van de beeldspraak. Beeldspraak over wijnstokken en wijngaarden lijkt door LXX-Jesaja vaak begrepen te worden als representaties van Jerusalem. Boommetaforen worden in de vertaling soms aangepast ter wille van de stijl, maar worden op andere momenten aangepast om exegetische redenen; de metaforen die letterlijk weergegeven worden, zijn vaak alsnog enigszins aangepast om andere redenen. In veel gevallen past de vertaler de taal van de metaforen aan om in het Grieks duidelijk over te brengen wat volgens hem de betekenis van het beeld is.

In het afsluitende hoofdstuk worden alle metaforen die in deze studie zijn geanalyseerd gecategoriseerd op basis van de vertaalstrategie die op de metaforen is toegepast. Daarna wordt Joseph Ziegler's studie naar de metaforen van LXX-Jesaja geëvalueerd, in het licht van de bevindingen van deze studie. Vervolgens wordt de vertolking van metaforen in LXX-Jesaja vergeleken met de Joodse traditie, zoals geïllustreerd door de Targoem van Jesaja. Tot slot wordt bewijs geleverd dat suggereert dat de vertaler een deel van zijn Hellenistische retorische scholing aangaande metaforen ter harte heeft genomen en deze heeft toegepast om de stijl van zijn vertaling te verbeteren.

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