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

Austin, B.M.

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

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door Benjamin M. Austin

1. LXX-Isaiah avoids "fruit" metaphors, in part, due to a preference for specificity, following the example of LXX-Deuteronomy 28:4, 11, 18, 42, 51, and 53.
2. The difference between MT and LXX-Isa 40:6-8 is best explained not as the result of negligence (on the part of translator or an earlier Hebrew scribe) but is a deliberate attempt of the translator to improve the passage stylistically.
3. LXX Isaiah is at once a specimen testifying to traditional Early Jewish exegesis and a specimen of how Early Jews adopted and adapted current Hellenistic scholarship.
4. The well known freedom of the LXX-Isa Translator is not the result of his limited ability or uncertainty with difficult texts, but rather the result of his knowledge and authority to interpret and explain difficult texts.
5. Apparent contradictions within a text are not alone sufficient grounds to posit different scribal circles with conflicting ideologies. In antiquity, a single scribal circle could, in fact, write conflicting accounts of the same events in differing genres for differing purposes.

For examples of texts with such conflicting accounts, see K. Lawson Younger Jr., "Heads, Tails, Or the Whole Coin: Contextual Method & Intertextual Analysis: Judges 4 and 5," in *Biblical Canon in Comparative Perspectives* (1991): 109-146.

6. Cognitive metaphor theorists who attack Aristotle's views typically fail to take differences in epistemology into account. Cognitive metaphor theorists tend toward a Nominalistic position, while Aristotle can be described as a Realist.

For example of such an attack, see I. A. Richards (*The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 1979, 89-90).

7. Skeptics of theological exegesis in the LXX often fail to fully consider what is known about the training and traditions of Jewish scribes in this time period. Additionally, transformations in the LXX could represent not an exegesis per se, but a sort of launch pad from which the translator intended to expound theology orally when reading his text aloud.
8. Discussions of the meaning of a pericope are complicated by the fact that those who wrote it did not use modern scientific exegetical methods. In some regards, pre-critical methods are closer to how an ancient author thought he would be understood.
9. If Abraham and Keturah's granddaughter married Hercules, as alleged by Cleodemus Malchus, it must have been a bigger family scandal than Esau's marriage to the Hittite women.