Oxford Hebrew Bible

Sample of Ezekiel 2:1-10

Herrie van Rooy

North-West University, South Africa
2:1 Καὶ ἐπηρέασεν Ἐλ, καὶ ἐκτάσθη ὑπὸ τὸν ἡμέραν τοῦ ξυλοῦ τῆς Δαυίδ ἡμέραν ἑκατὸν ἡμέρας.  

2:2 Καὶ ἀνέβαλεν Σαμ, καὶ ἐξετάσθην ὑπὸ τὸν ἡμέραν τοῦ ξυλοῦ τῆς Δαυίδ ἡμέρας ἑκατὸν ἡμέρας.  

Edition A (→ G)  

Edition B (→ M)
הנה כל מקום שמימש את שלום
בם אלוהים אלוהים כבישים הכחים:
spath פחה נפלאות אלהים נפשו אלוהים: נאלה ח.URI שָלַוחַ אָלַי
כבר לשון אלהים אלוהים קבר: קובז קינים אלהים
וּכְתַב הָיִוָה כְתַב הָיִוָה כְתַב הָיִוָה כְתַב הָיִוָה
והוי והוי והוי והוי והוי

Text-critical Commentary

In 1936 Cooke observed that the Hebrew text of Ezekiel has suffered more injury than any book, except 1 and 2 Samuel. This has been the consensus amongst scholars including modern commentators such as Zimmerli and Allen. This is, however, no longer the accepted view. Scholars like Tov and Lust have demonstrated that many of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek Ezekiel can be related to the time of the literary growth of the book. The two texts represent two different editions of the book, with the text underlying the shorter version of the Septuagint being older than the tradition underlying the Masoretic Text.

The texts from Qumran do not preserve much of the text of Ezekiel, even though the book of Ezekiel was very important for the Qumran community. Only a few fragments of text have been preserved, and they reflect early forms of the Masoretic Text. None of the fragments has any part of the text used as example.

It is also a consensus that the Septuagint is the most important aid to reconstructing the text of Ezekiel in many instances. In this respect papyrus 967 has and still does play an important part in the discussion. However, this papyrus does not cover the text used in the sample, so it will not be discussed in detail here. Tov’s view is that the Masoretic Text of Ezekiel and the Septuagint reflect two different redactional stages in the book of Ezekiel, although the differences between the two editions are not as great as in the case of Jeremiah. Tov states that the text underlying the Septuagint is about 4-5% shorter than the Masoretic Text. The shorter form does not occur evenly over the whole book. In the edition a second column will only be used for edition A (= LXX) where the evidence warrants it, for example in Ezekiel 7. As far as the sample is concerned, Lust states that the LXX of Ezekiel 1-2 is about 10% shorter than the Masoretic Text. This warrants a second column. The Septuagint is regarded as a relatively literal translation of its Vorlage. The same is true of the Peshitta. Agreement between the LXX and Peshitta must therefore get special attention, as that may witness to a different Vorlage than the one underlying the Masoretic text.

2:2  נמשאתי ותקני נושאתני + רוח  G (καὶ ὀνέλαβέν με καὶ ἔξηρέν με) (transf; cf. 3:14)

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3 The texts from Masada mentioned by Lust, ‘יהוה אדני’ in Ezekiel, ETL 72, 1996, p. 139, comes from Ezekiel 35-37.
6 J. Lust, ‘Notes to the Septuagint Ezekiel 1-2’, *ETL* 75, 1999, p. 28.
The addition in the Septuagint is probably transferred from 3:14. Lust ascribes it to an attempt by the translator to create an inclusion. This is a possibility. These two words repeat the content of ותעמדני. This is seen as an addition by BHS, but is supported by the versions except LXX. It can be regarded as an elaboration of Edition A, to link this verse to verse 1.

2:3 (ed A) G (τὸν οἶκον) ἐν (ed B) M (syn)

The two words are synonymous readings that occur frequently in the Hebrew Bible, as argued by Talmon. Both combinations occur in Ezekiel, with בֵית more common. Cf. also 35:5, 37:21, 43:7, 44:9, 15. This kind of substitution of a synonym is very common. The reading of the Masoretic Text may be linked to the use of הבני in verse 4, in a phrase missing from the LXX.

5:2 (ed B) M.

These words are an addition to ed. A in the ed. B, disturbing the easy flow of the text. It may have been added as an explication of the previous participial phrase. The two verbs occur together in 20:38 and are parallel in meaning. The addition may perhaps be attributed to syntactic restructuring as well, taking הבני as the subject of מרד and אבותם as the subject of פשעו, but this restructuring separates הבני and אבותם that belong together.

The LXX regularly uses παραπικραίνω as a translation for מרד, creating the idea that παραπικραίνω could be a translation of the verb מרד. Zimmerli points out that the latter verb occurs only in the Hiphil in Ezekiel, making such a Vorlage improbable.

2:4 (ed B) M (ed/exeg)

8 Lust, ‘Notes to the Septuagint Ezekiel 1-2’, p. 23.
10 Zimmerli, Ezekiel 1, pp. 89-90.
This plus in the Masoretic text has been omitted by most commentators as secondary. Zimmerli regards it as a secondary expansion, as does Tov.\(^\text{11}\) Tov says that it disturbs the direct connection between the previous verse and אֲלֵהֵי בְּנֵי יָהֳעִירָמָר in verse 4. This passage is discussed in detail by Lust and Greenberg as well.\(^\text{12}\) Greenberg says that the omission is usually motivated by the absence in the LXX, their repetitiveness (from 3:7) and an uncommon use of בֵּית בָּני for the position of the people before the Lord. He argues for the originality of the passage, by pointing amongst others to the link between בֵּית בָּני in this verse and the previous verse. In discussing the view of Greenberg, Lust has a positive evaluation of his arguments, but states that the version of the LXX is logical as well. This passage is a good example of the editorial work done in edition B. The plus can be regarded as an exegetical addition, linking up with 3:7 and the נַבַּיִן הָיוּ of the previous verse.

**[8]{0} +pre אֲדֹנִי (ed B) M (ed/add)**

The issue of the double divine name will be dealt with fully in the introduction. Lust has discussed the major issues in this regard.\(^\text{13}\) Zimmerli originally omitted אֲדֹנִי in his commentary, but had second thoughts in the Excursus at the end of the second volume of his Ezekiel commentary. It is probable that the use of the double divine name in stereotyped expression such as this verse must be regarded as original at least in edition B. A question still to be answered is whether it was omitted in edition A during the process of translation, or during the transmission of the Hebrew text underlying that tradition. At this stage the two editions are regarded as demonstrating different usages.

**[2:5 init ] +והמה (ed B) M (ed/exeg)**

In this instance the Peshitta agrees with the LXX. The plus in edition B is related to the exegetical additions made in the process of edition. It makes clear that the following sentence refer to the children of Israel by referring back to the והמה of verse 3.


The expression in the MT occurs in 33:33 as well, where it is followed by the LXX, with a variant similar to the reading of the LXX in this instance. The fact that the Peshitta agrees with the LXX makes a variant reading in a Hebrew Vorlage of the Peshitta a good possibility. The two editions probably had the two different readings, with the reading of edition A perhaps the result of making it clear that the prophet is being addressed here. The fact that there are no variants to this reading in the LXX, makes it probable that this reading was part of the Hebrew tradition. As far as the Peshitta is concerned, the codex ambrosianus, the base text for the Leiden edition, read אֲדֹנִי, agreeing with the MT. However, the editor regards it as an error, as all the other manuscripts have אֲדֹנִי. It is, however, also possible to regard the reading of the LXX as reflecting


\(^\text{13}\) Lust, אֲדֹנִי הָיוּ in Ezekiel’.
a variant caused in the process of transmission, with edition A having originally the same reading as the MT. It is difficult to make a final decision. The choice to treat it as part of edition A is motivated by the agreement of the original LXX with the Peshitta.

The Septuagint translated with πτοηθῶσιν and the Peshitta with ħưdāl, both implying an original יָדחלו, as in Aramaic. As this word does not appear with the meaning “to fear” in Biblical Hebrew, it is improbable that the original edition A could have had this reading. The reading of the LXX and Peshitta must have been caused by metathesis either in the transmission of the Hebrew or in the process of translation.

In this instance a scribe in the proto-M tradition probably changed the direct object to a prepositional phrase in the light of the three prepositional phrases in the rest of the verse. The direct object is used in 3:9 and that was probably the original reading here as well.

The reading of the LXX is generally preferred by scholars as the original reading. It does not have the repetition of תיראה in the first part of the verse and brings a nice parallelism with the two phrases at the end of the verse. The reading of the MT was probably influenced by the last two phrases and resulted in a chiasm.

This instance represents a well-known problem in the text of Ezekiel. The reading of the MT can be understood as “briers and thorns will be with you”, with an unusual use of the nota accusativi. It is, however, a very problematic reading. The Septuagint, Vulgate and Peshitta each had different solutions, or different Vorlagen. The emendation attempts to explain the readings of the LXX and MT in relation to the proposed reading, which was argued in detail elsewhere. Different suggestions have been made to solve the problem. The main problems with the reading of the MT concern the meaning and origin of the two words סרבים and סלונים, as well as the use of the particle ואתך. If the first two words are to be regarded as nouns, the fact is that the word סלונים occurs only here and in Ezekiel 28:24, while סרבים occurs only in this verse. If the two nouns are retained, the next problem is the particle ואתך, since this particle normally follows a verb to indicate the object of that verb. If it is taken as a variant form of the

15 van Rooy, ‘A New Proposal for an Old Crux’.
preposition אַת, it would still constitute a somewhat strange syntax, with a probable meaning of: “thistles and briers will be with you”. This reading is indeed still adopted by some scholars, such as Cooke and Greenberg.\footnote{Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 34; Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, p. 60.}

The Septuagint took the two words as participles with the following rendering: διότι παροιστρήσουσι καὶ ἐπισυστήσονται ἐπὶ σὲ κύκλῳ (for they will go mad and gang up against you all around; cf. Muraoka 2002:440). It has rendered the two problematic words of the Hebrew as verbs, παροιστρέω and ἐπισυνίσταμ. The Peshitta reads as follows: (because they boast and despise you). It has also interpreted the words as participles. For the Hebrew root סֵרָב it has used the cognate verb in Syriac ܫܐܒܬ, with the meaning “to talk foolishly”, or “to boast”. For סֵלֹנִים it has used the verb ܐܪܝܬ, “to despise” or “to reject”. In both instances it has used a participle. The Vulgate renders the phrase under discussion with *quoniam increduli et subversores sunt tecum* (because incredulous people and destroyers are with you).

The Targum reads (because rebels and objectors are opposite you). It is clear that both the Targum and Peshitta read the Hebrew words as verbal forms.

Some scholars have proposed emendations to the text. Cornill proposed the following reading: כִּי סְבֵבִים סַלְוִים אַתָּךְ. He translates it as: “wenn sie dir widerstreben und dich verachten…” In this reading he accepts the rendering of the Peshitta as a good rendering of the original. The Aramaic root סִרְבּ should not be strange in Ezekiel and the root סֵלֹנִים also occurs in Psalm 119:118.\footnote{C.H. Cornill, *Das Buch des Propheten Ezechiel* (Leipzig, 1886), p. 188.}

According to the footnotes 6a (in agreement with the Septuagint) and 6b, BHK wanted to change the reading as follows: כִּי סְבֵבִים סַלְוִים אַתָּךְ (when thorns were surrounding you). This makes sense, but the problem of the subject following the participle remains. The consequent suggestion of Zimmerli, accepted by BHS footnote 6b-b, is to change the word order to אַתָּךְ סְבֵבִים סַלְוִים, giving the same meaning as the proposal of BHK. Zimmerli regards the Hebrew (“for rebellious people and thorns are with you”) as unsatisfactory. He says that the κύκλῳ of the Septuagint points to some form of the root סֵבֵב in the Hebrew original. He then regards סֵבִים as a scribal error for סֵבְבִים סֶלָוִים. He considers the reading סֶלָוִים אַתָּךְ סְבֵבִים as a satisfactory equivalent of the Greek phrase ἐπισυστήσονται ἐπὶ σὲ κύκλῳ. The Greek παροιστρήσουσι means “to unsettle by stings”, and in this way the Greek rephrases the Hebrew word for “thorns”, resulting in a good parallel to the scorpions mentioned later in the verse.\footnote{Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, pp. 90-91.}

The proposal of Zimmerli can then ascribe the reading of the MT can be ascribed to two different processes. In the first instance the two words סֵלָוִים and סֵבְבִים were switched, and secondly a graphic confusion led to the change from ב to ר in סֵבְבִים. This was then followed by insertion of ו to link the two nouns of the final text. This proposed correction of the Masoretic Text does not, however, solve all the problems related to the Septuagint. In the Septuagint of Ezekiel the word κύκλῳ is usually a translation of some form of the Hebrew word סֵבַב. In this instance this word with the suffix of the second person masculine singular could account for the phrase ἐπὶ σὲ κύκλῳ in the Septuagint.
In the proposed reading it is accepted that the original reading included both סבבים and סרבים. What happened then in the reading of the Septuagint is that סבבים and אחריך were combined by the omission of the last letters of the first word and the first letter of the second, giving סביבותיך. The two words were then read as participles. This is a linguistic modernization of two unknown Hebrew words. For the reading of the Masoretic Text, סבבים was omitted because of the similarity with סרבים (a near haplography) and the two nouns were switched. This gives a reading that could explain both the readings of the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint.

2:7 (ed A) G S T > (ed B) M (om; prps harm 2:8)

The fact that the Peshitta supports the LXX in this instance is a strong argument for the priority of edition A. The reading of the MT is perhaps a harmonization with verse 8, where the word is used with respect to the author.

2:8 The Septuagint reads τοῦ λαλοῦντος for ראת › א מדבראני, clearly a harmonization with the same expression in verse 2.

2:9 (ed A) G (καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ) V (in qui erat) S (in qui erat) M (explic/graph ἦν) [Ψ]

The addition of the MT disturbs the sentence structure and the repetition of the particle הנה is unusual. It may have been an explication, to stress what the prophet saw. The suffix should normally be feminine, and a confusion of ו and הנה is possible.

2:10 הני* G (θῆνος) T (mod)

The Hebrew plural is uncommon, pleading for its originality, while the Septuagint probably used the singular as a linguistic modernization, in line with the frequent use of the word in the singular in Ezekiel.

In this instance the Hebrew word in ed. B should probably taken as defective form, without the vowel letter, misunderstood in the Masoretic pointing.
Bibliography