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The Righteous King in LXX Isa 32:1-4: Hope and Ideology in Translation

RODRIGO FRANKLIN DE SOUSA

Introduction

The portrayal of the righteous king in LXX Isa 32:1-4 displays some noteworthy differences from the Masoretic version of the same passage. In this paper, I attempt to highlight and explain these differences, by means of a comparative analysis of the Greek and Hebrew versions of the oracle, with the assumption that the Hebrew represents a proto-Masoretic text form. The analysis will deal with lexical and syntactical choices, and reading strategies of the translator.¹

Below we offer a parallel translation of the MT and LXX of the passage, followed by a study of the translated version. The following elements will be observed more closely: (1) the representation of the royal figure in verse 1; (2) the articular use of ὁ ἄνθρωπος in verse 2; (3) the imagery of flooding also in verse 2; (4) the deviating rendering καὶ οὐκέτι ἔσονται πεποιθότες ἐπ' ἀνθρώποις in verse 3; (5) the use of the phrase λαλεῖν εἰρήνην at the end of verse 4; (6) the use of ἰδοὺ γὰρ and the question of context in the interpretation of LXX Isaiah.

Text and Translation

Isa 32:1

MT	LXX
	ἰδοὺ γὰρ
לְצַדִּיק יִמְלֹךְ מִלְּהֵי	βασιλεὺς δίκαιος βασιλεύσει καὶ
וְלִשְׂרָיִם לְמִשְׁפַּט יְשׁוּ׃	ἄρχοντες μετὰ κρίσεως ἄρξουσιν
Behold	<i>For</i> behold

¹ A draft version of this paper was presented at the IOSCS unit of the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature 2015, in Atlanta.

A king shall reign <i>according to</i> righteousness And rulers ² shall rule <i>according to</i> judgment	A righteous king shall reign And rulers shall rule <i>according to</i> judg- ment
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Isa 32:2

MT	LXX
וְהָיָה אִישׁ כְּמַחְבְּאֵי־רוּחַ וְסִתְרֵי־רָם כַּפְלֵי־מַיִם כַּצִּיּוֹן כַּצֵּל סְלַע־כַּבֵּד בְּאֶרֶץ צַיְפָה	καὶ ἔσται ὁ ἄνθρωπος κρύπτων τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ καὶ κρυβήσεται ὡς ἀφ' ὕδατος φερομένου καὶ φανήσεται ἐν Σιών ὡς ποταμὸς φερόμενος ἐνδοξος ἐν γῆ διψώσῃ
And each shall be like a shelter from wind and a protection from tempest Like streams of water in a dry place Like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land	And <i>a</i> man shall be hiding his words and will be hidden as (if) carried by water and shall be manifest in Zion As a glorious river flowing in a thirsty land

Isa 32:3

MT	LXX
וְלֹא תִשָּׁעֲיֵנָה עֵינֵי רְאִים וְאָזְנֵי שְׁמָעִים תִּקְשַׁבְנָה	καὶ οὐκέτι ἔσονται πεποιθότες ἐπ' ἀνθρώποις ἀλλὰ τὰ ὄψα δώσουσιν ἀκούειν
And the eyes of those who see will not be shut And the ears of those who hear will be attentive	And no longer shall they be trusting in men but they shall lend the ears to hear

Isa 32:4

MT	LXX
וְלִבְבֵי נְמָרִים יִבִּין לְדָעַת וְלִשְׁוֹן עֲלֻגִים תִּמְהַר לְדַבֵּר צְהוֹת	καὶ ἡ καρδία τῶν ἀσθενούντων προσέξει τοῦ ἀκούειν καὶ αἱ γλῶσσαι αἱ ψελλίζουσαι ταχὺ μαθήσονται λαλεῖν εἰρήνην

² None of the Greek and Latin versions have an equivalent for ל before רַשִׁים. This lends weight to the suggestion of H. Wildberger, *Isaiah 28-39*, (trans. T. H. Trapp; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 341, that the ל is the result of copyist's error in the MT.

And the heart of those who hasten	And the heart of those who are weakened
Will be wise to understand	
And the tongue of those who stammer	Shall devote itself to hear
	And the tongue of the ones who falter in speech
Shall be ready to speak clearly	shall quickly learn to speak peace

Focus on the Royal Figure

As far as the lexical choices are concerned, LXX Isa 32:1 is very simple. The rendering of the pairs רשׁ/מלך and משפט/צדק follows standard equivalences found throughout the LXX. Departing somewhat from his translation technique, whereby he often avoids the repetition of roots due to considerations of style, the translator also preserves the form of roots, possibly due to the difficulty in finding other suitable equivalents.

Syntactically, one notes that the preposition ל , both before צדק and משפט refers to a standard to which the pattern of rule must conform.³ The LXX translates the preposition somewhat literally in the case of למשפט , with the rendering μετὰ κρίσεως . However, in the case of לצדק , the option for the attributive use of the adjective δίκαιος to qualify the noun βασιλεύς focuses on the figure of a righteous king. This creates syntactic and semantic contrast with the Hebrew, where the use of ל , together with the emphatic combination of forms of the root רשׁ , stresses the desire for a righteous rule by the king. The LXX rendering focuses on the person of the king himself, and stresses his righteous character.

The Identity of “the Man”

Another issue that draws attention is the rendering of the anarthrous ישׂא with the articular form ὁ ἄνθρωπος . The Hebrew presents a quite common idiom, normally translated into English as “each one”, or “each man”. The use of the articular form seems at first sight to bypass this normal idiomatic use of ישׂא and indicate that a specific man is in view. The focus on the person of the king in 32:1 would seem to reinforce this. This interpretation becomes especially tempting in the light of existing proposals to take ἄνθρωπος as a messianic title, in connection with LXX Num 24:7, 17 and LXX Isa 19:20.

³ Following P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Third Reprint of the Second Edition (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2011), §133d, 458-460.

In Num 24:7, the enigmatic MT reads יזל־מים מדליו וזרעו במים רבים (“Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters”), while the LXX has the rendering ἐξελεύσεται ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτοῦ καὶ κυριεύσει ἐθνῶν πολλῶν (“A man shall come out of his seed and shall rule many nations”). The unexpected presence of ἄνθρωπος in the verse has led to some speculation regarding the possibility of a messianic interpretation.⁴ This is reinforced by the fact that in verse 17 שבט (“sceptre”) is rendered by ἄνθρωπος instead of the more direct and standard equivalent ῥάβδος.⁵ Horbury argues that the choice of ἄνθρωπος in verse 17 is intended to “identify the star-victor of verse 17 with the emperor of verse 7”, which would seem to indicate a messianic significance to the term ἄνθρωπος.⁶

Horbury attempts to support the affirmation that the use of ἄνθρωπος in LXX Numbers 24 is messianic by referring to LXX Isa 19:20. In this latter verse, we find a prophecy about the forthcoming liberation of Egyptian Jews, in which the Lord promises to send them a saviour. While the MT version of the text reads מושיע ורב והצילם (“a saviour, and he shall contend and deliver them”), the LXX has ἄνθρωπον ὃς σώσει αὐτούς κρίνων σώσει αὐτούς (“a man who will save them; judging he will save them”). Horbury argues that the use of ἄνθρωπος in this verse indicates that, for the translator, “the ‘saviour’ of Egyptian Jews is evidently identified with the star-man of Balaam’s prophecy”.⁷

However, in the light of the explicative tendencies of the Isaiah translator, the use of ἄνθρωπος in 19:20 could very well simply be an explanatory rendering of מושיע without any special messianic significance attached to ἄνθρωπον. It is likely that ἄνθρωπος in LXX Num 24:17 is also an explanatory rendering, because in the same verse the metaphor פאתי מואב (“the brows of

⁴ G. Dorival, *La Bible d’Alexandrie: Les Nombres* (Paris: Cerf, 1994), 139-140, argues that this rendering is “more messianic” than the MT or the Targum, suggesting that the messianic conception of LXX Numbers is close to that of early Christianity. However, it could have originated in a reading of יזל־מים מדליו, with the first word understood as a form of the verb לזל and מים read by דם, as acknowledged by W. Horbury, “Monarchy and Messianism in the Greek Pentateuch,” in *The Septuagint and Messianism*, ed. M. A. Knibb, BETL 195 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 121. Cf. A. Salvesen, *Symmachus in the Pentateuch*, JSS.M 15 (Manchester: University of Manchester), 1991), 134-135.

⁵ cf. LXX Isa 9:3[4]; Jer 48[31]:17; Ezek 19:11-12, 14; Ps 45[44]:7.

⁶ W. Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ* (London: SCM Press, 1998), 50.

⁷ Horbury, “Monarchy and Messianism”, 122. Cf. M. Rösel, “Jakob, Bileam und der Messias: messianische Erwartungen in Gen 49 und Num 22-24”, in *The Septuagint and Messianism*, ed. M. A. Knibb, BETL 195 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 169.

Moab”) is translated in an explanatory manner by τοὺς ἀρχηγοὺς Μωάβ (“the rulers of Moab”).⁸

The messianic interpretation of Num 24:7 and 17 is well attested in Early Judaism.⁹ Nevertheless, there is not enough linguistic evidence to explain the use of ἄνθρωπος in LXX Numbers 24:7 and 17 as messianic,¹⁰ and even less to support the claim that ἄνθρωπος was a messianic *terminus technicus* in the LXX.¹¹

It is very unlikely that we are dealing with a messianic term in LXX Isa 32:2 as well. Besides the paucity of evidence gathered from other texts, this can also be argued on linguistic grounds. ὁ ἄνθρωπος is normally the equivalent to the articular form הַאִישׁ, although sometimes it translates הָאָדָם (cf. Lev 6:3; Deut 8:3; Eccl 2:12; 3:11), and הַגִּבּוֹר (cf. Num 24:3, 15; Jer 17:7). אִישׁ is never translated with the articular form ὁ ἄνθρωπος, save, of course, in the case of construct chains such as אִישׁ הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִי in Lev 24:10, אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים in 1 Sam 9:10, 1 Kgs 13:3,6, 8, 11, 12, or אִישׁ שְׁלָמִי in Ps 41:10 (40:10).

Besides the straightforward meaning “the man”, the articular form ὁ ἄνθρωπος on its own seems to also mean “that man” in certain contexts, as indicated by the rendering of הַאִישׁ הַהוּא in 1 Sam 1:3. In this connection, the articular form appears in Gen 44:10 and Deut 24:12 as a good idiomatic equivalent to הוּא. In Lev 5:4 ὁ ἄνθρωπος is used in a general or universal manner as an equivalent to כָּל־אִישׁ, here, the meaning is basically “any man”.

In LXX Isaiah, ὁ ἄνθρωπος appears, besides 32:2, in 13:2, 14:16, and 22:25. In 14:16 it is a straight translation of הַאִישׁ. In 22:25 it is an explanatory translation of the metaphor הֵיחָר (“the peg”) – which incidentally weakens even further the case for a messianic interpretation of ἄνθρωπος in 19:20. 13:2 is a very

⁸ J. A. Fitzmyer, *The One Who is to Come* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 71.

⁹ For the messianic interpretation of Num 24:17 in early Judaism, cf. K. J. Cathcart, “Numbers 24:17 in Ancient Translations and Interpretations”, in *Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. J. Krašovec, JSOTSup 289 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 511-519.

¹⁰ The only other passage that reflects 24:11 and also uses ἄνθρωπος is *T. Judah* 24:1-6, but it was probably influenced by the LXX, as argued by J. J. Collins, “Messianism and Exegetical Tradition: The Evidence of LXX Pentateuch,” in *The Septuagint and Messianism*, ed. M. A. Knibb, BETL 195 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 145-146.

¹¹ Cf. Collins, “Messianism and Exegetical Tradition”, 145-146. A very interesting analysis, but which also does not offer a definitive answer is that of J. Lust, “The Greek Version of Balaam's Third and Fourth Oracles. The ἄνθρωπος in Num 24:7 and 17. Messianism and Lexicography”, in *VIII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies. Paris 1992*, eds. L. J. Greenspoon and O. Munnich, SCS 41 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1995); repr. in J. Lust, *Messianism and the Septuagint: Collected Essays*, ed. K. Hauspie, BETL 178 (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 69-86.

significant occurrence, because in it ὁ ἄνθρωπος is an equivalent of the anarthrous form אָנוּשׁ, and it is clearly used to signify “any man”.

All of this suggests that in LXX Isa 32:2, ὁ ἄνθρωπος can be taken either as a free translation of the idiomatic אָנוּשׁ, meaning “any man”, or “each man”, or as a specification of the previous verse, in which case ὁ ἄνθρωπος is a reference to the royal figure, the king that is to come. In neither of these options, however, the expression itself functions as a specifically messianic term.

At any rate, the scale is heavily tilted in the direction of the first option, especially when we consider the free rendering of כְּמַחְבֵּא־רוּחַ by κρύπτων τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ. The *hapax legomenon* מַחְבֵּא is most likely understood as a participial form of חָבֵא.¹² The rendering of the Hebrew, which can be taken literally, in this perspective, as “like one hiding a breath, or spirit” with the use of the accusative plural τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ in “the man shall be hiding his words” can be seen as a loose translation of רוּחַ. This is the only time the two terms are connected in the LXX. The word λόγος appears 44 times in LXX Isaiah, normally rendering דְּבַר, with only a few exceptions. It is added without a Hebrew equivalent in 10:22, 23, 30:12, and 36:14. It renders תּוֹרָה in 1:10 (according to S), and אִמְרָה in 28:23, 32:9, and 41:26. Significantly, it translates שְׁבַט in 11:4.¹³ In this case, the translator interprets the sceptre of the messianic figure metaphorically, and understands that it represents the judgment dispensed by the messiah upon his enemies.

Ziegler points to the targumic tradition to render רוּחַ with a form of מִימְרָא or מִלָּא (4:4; 25:4; 28:6; 30:28; 59:19; 63:14 and others), highlighting that sometimes the Targum uses the expression “the words of the prophets” (11:15; 61:1; 63:10).¹⁴ Given the openness of the translation to employ λόγος express a metaphorical sense, and the Targumic tradition to translate רוּחַ with different equivalents for “word”, we can conceive of λόγος as a plausible linguistic equivalent to רוּחַ in LXX Isa 32:2. One is still left with the task of making sense of the construction as it stands in the LXX. In this connection, it is interesting to note that in LXX Ps 119(118):11 we find the sentence ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου ἔκρυψα τὰ λόγια σου, ὅπως ἂν μὴ ἀμάρτω σοι.¹⁵ In Sir 1:24 it is said that the patient wise man ἕως καιροῦ κρύψει τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ, καὶ χεῖλη πολλῶν ἐκδιηγῆσεται σύνεσιν αὐτοῦ (“will hide his words until the [proper] time; than

¹² There would not be much difference if the *Vorlage* read כְּמַחְבֵּא like 1QIsa^a. In this case, the translator would have understood מַחְבֵּא as a participial form of חָבֵא.

¹³ In that context, it translates the metaphorical פִּי בְשֵׁבֶט פִּי with τῶ λόγῳ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ.

¹⁴ J. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaias*, *Alttestamentliche Abhandlungen* 12-13 (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1934), 84.

¹⁵ This is a translation of בְּלִבִּי צִפְנֵתִי אִמְרֹתַי לְמַעַן לֹא אֶחְטֵא־לֶךָ.

the lips of many will tell of his understanding”). These are examples of Hellenistic Jewish texts in which “hiding one’s words” was a sign of wisdom and piety. It is conceivable that the translator was familiarized with this notion.

It is significant that in Isa 29:14 אבדה חכמת חכמיו ובינת נבניו תסתתר is translated as καὶ ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν κρύψω. Both in Hebrew and in Greek the “wisdom of the wise will be concealed”. However, whereas in Hebrew the expression has a decidedly negative connotation, in Greek it can be interpreted in either positive or negative ways. That is, we can conceive the idea of “hiding the wisdom of the wise” as a judgement or as an announcement of protection and favour to the wise. This positive connotation appears, for instance, in Isa 49:2, where the Servant of the Lord affirms that the Lord “has hidden me under the shadow of his hand” (ὕπὸ τὴν σκέπην τῆς χειρὸς αὐτοῦ ἔκρυψέν με).

The Flood Imagery

LXX Isa 32:2 is cast in futuristic terms, with καὶ κρυβήσεται, which indicates that the translator understood וסתר as a w^cqatal form of the verb סתר, with the passive voice employed in the translation due to semantic considerations, taking into account the notion of being protected from a storm or a strong movement of water. וסתר is either bypassed or idiomatically subsumed together with מים later in the verse in the clause ὡς ἀφ’ ὕδατος.¹⁶ The whole sequence ὡς ἀφ’ ὕδατος φερομένου loosely renders כפלגי־מים. The rare occurrences of פלג and its various translations in the LXX suggest that it was not treated as a technical or stereotyped term. Only the semantic thrust of the sequence is taken into account.

It is quite obvious that ἐν Σιῶν is a reading of the consonantal form of בציון. The occurrences of ציון in the near context (28:16, 29:8, 30:19; 31:4, 9; 33:5, 14, 20, 34:8, 35:10, 37:22, 32) and the heavy ideological load of the term

¹⁶ Wildberger, *Isaiah 28-39*, 237, entertains the possibility that the LXX ὡς ἀφ’ ὕδατος – as well as the Vulgate’s *a tempestate* – seems to presuppose a form of מן before וסתר (“tempest”). The reading וסתרם (with a third person plural possessive “their shelter”) in 1QIsa^a is adduced in support of this view. It could be the case that the original Hebrew did contain a form of מן that was subsequently lost in MT and absorbed by the preceding word in 1QIsa^a. Yet, it is more likely that the form in 1QIsa^a is a mistake caused by haplography, as both Greek and Latin would require a preposition to express the meaning of the Hebrew properly, even without מן in the original. Another interesting translation of וסתר is found in 25:5, as ἀνθρώπων πονηρῶν.

played a significant part in the form that the translation of the passage eventually took. καὶ φανήσεται does not have a discernible Hebrew counterpart, so it is likely to be an explanatory addition.¹⁷

It is also difficult to establish a close equivalence between ὡς ποταμὸς φερόμενος ἔνδοξος and כצל סלע־כבר. ὡς suggests the reading כצל like the MT – in contrast with 1QIsa^a, which has בצל – and ἔνδοξος reflects כבר, but the other words do not seem to be translated on the basis of a one-to-one correspondence. It is important to note that the translation does not give indications elsewhere of a difficulty with the meaning of either צל or סלע, so that the deviating rendering of 32:2 must be seen as a deliberate departure from the plain sense of the specific terms, focusing on the sense of the verse as a whole.¹⁸ The rendering of עיפה by διψῶση also steers the translation in the direction of the reference to water.

But the question is whether the Greek as it stands makes sense in the mind of the translation, and if so, how. There are two basic options. First, κρυβήσεται has “the man” as its passive subject. It is the pious that shall be hidden “as if carried by water”. In this case, φανήσεται has the Lord as an occult subject. It is he that will be manifest as a glorious river flowing in a parched land. This would make sense in the light of the overall context of 28-37 which speaks of divine judgement being poured down, as indicated above, and also of texts such as Isa 4:2-6, where the Lord “shines forth” (ἐπιλάμπει) offering judgment and burning heat for the impenitent, protection and shade for the faithful.

Other parts of Isaiah also offer interesting insights. Isa 59:19 speaks of the wrath of the Lord coming like a mighty river (ὡς ποταμὸς βίαιος / כנהר צר). Isa 60:2 brings a promise to Jerusalem, that while darkness covers the world, “the Lord will appear upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you” with the LXX

¹⁷ Small explanatory additions such as this are an important feature of the translator’s technique. For the fullest survey of the additions and omissions in LXX Isaiah available, see M. van der Worm-Crougths, *The Old Greek of Isaiah: an Analysis of its Pluses and Minuses*, SBL.SCS 61 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014).

¹⁸ צל is rendered by σκιά in Isa 4:6, 38:8, 51:16, and by σκέπη in the loose rendering of 16:3, 25:4, and 49:2 (49:2 and 51:16 have very similar contexts). The word is bypassed in 25:5. It is rendered idiomatically in the parallel occurrences at 30:2 and 30:3. In the first case, and in 30:3, we have καὶ τοῖς πεποιθόσιν ἐπ’ αἴγυπτον for וְלַחֲסוֹת בְּצֶל מִצְרַיִם, and in 30:2, we have וְלַחֲסוֹת בְּצֶל מִצְרַיִם. In the free and loose rendering of 34:15, צל seems to be reflected in ἀσφαλείας. All these occurrences indicate that the translator was at home with the referential sense of the term, as well as with its possible metaphorical connotations. סלע is elsewhere in LXX Isaiah invariably rendered by πέτρα (cf. 2:21, 7:19, 22:16, 31:9, 33:16, 42:11, 57:5, and especially 16:1, where the place name is also translated with the simple Greek term).

rendering זרח by φανήσεται. And in Isa 66:12, were the Lord promises to Jerusalem that he will שׁוֹרֵחַ כְּנָהָר שְׁלוֹמָהּ (“stretch over her peace like a river”), the LXX reads ἐγὼ ἐκκλίνω εἰς αὐτοὺς ὡς ποταμὸς εἰρήνης (“I will turn toward them like a river of peace”).

There is another possibility. The syntax also allows for “the man” to be the subject of φανήσεται. In this case, it is “the man” who will be manifest as a glorious river flowing in a parched land. Could such an interpretation be acceptable to the translator? The question is pertinent, because one would expect such a glorious manifestation to refer to the Lord.

Yet, it is possible to see the plausibility of this interpretation in the light of other examples in Isaiah and other texts. In Isa 48:18, the Lord affirms that if the people had been obedient their peace should be like a river (ἂν ὡσεὶ ποταμὸς ἡ εἰρήνη σου).¹⁹ More significant is the eschatological affirmation, in Dan 12:3, that the “wise will shine like the shining of the firmament” (הַמְשַׁכְּלִים יִשְׁכְּלוּ כְּהַרְקִיעַ / οἱ συνιέντες φανοῦσιν ὡς φωστῆρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). We are also reminded that, according to Prov 18:4 “Deep waters are the words in the mouth of a man, and the fountain of wisdom, a flowing stream”.²⁰ In Sir 24:30, the wise man can affirm: κάγω ὡς διώρυξ ἀπὸ ποταμοῦ καὶ ὡς ὑδραγωγὸς ἐξῆλθον εἰς παράδεισον (“and I was like a canal from a river, like a water channel into a garden”). Also, Sir 47:14 says of the young king Solomon: ἐνεπλήσθης ὡς ποταμὸς συνέσεως (“You overflowed like a river of understanding”).

We see, therefore, that men endowed with wisdom and notorious for their obedience to God could be described both in terms of a glorious, shining manifestation (φαινῶ) and with the imagery of a mighty river. So that while it is hard to have a precise explanation of the latter part of LXX Isa 32:2, the overall context of Isaiah 28-32, and indeed of all of Isaiah, makes it perfectly plausible that the translator understood it as an amalgam of traditions and ideas relating to God’s visitation of Zion and the practice of Law and wisdom by his people.

Thus the rendering of this verse in LXX Isaiah is shaped by the close context of the passage and the broader context of Isaiah as a whole, read in the light of interpretative traditions and ideological influences proper to the translator’s milieu.

¹⁹ Rendering שׁוֹרֵחַ כְּנָהָר שְׁלוֹמָהּ. Also, Isa LXX 43:2 speaks of the Lord offering protection to the faithful so from rivers and fire (καὶ ἐὰν διαβαίνης δι’ ὕδατος, μετὰ σοῦ εἰμι, καὶ ποταμοὶ οὐ συγκλύσουσίν σε· καὶ ἐὰν διέλθῃς διὰ πυρός, οὐ μὴ κατακαυθῆς, φλόξ οὐ κατακαύσει σε).

²⁰ The MT reads מִים עֲמֻקִּים דְּבַרֵי פִי־אִישׁ נִהְלָה נִבְעַ מְקוֹם חֲכָמָה, and the LXX has ὕδωρ βαθὺ λόγος ἐν καρδίᾳ ἀνδρός, ποταμὸς δὲ ἀναπηδύει καὶ πηγὴ ζῶης.

No Longer Trusting in Men

The second half of 32:3 can also be taken as a free idiomatic rendering that follows the Hebrew somewhat closely and does not need comment. The question is how the first half, ולא תשעני עיני ראים, came to be rendered as καὶ οὐκέτι ἔσονται πεποιθότες ἐπ' ἀνθρώποις. Ottley looks for an essentially “morphological” explanation connecting this reading with 31:1, where he argues that πεποιθότες is a misreading of שנה, with שען, “stay”, “lean upon”, which appears earlier in the verse.²¹ He believes that this confusion is carried over to 32:3, in the rendering of תשענינה, from שעע, which would also have been understood as a form of שען.²² He also tries to explain the change as a reading of אל אדם or על אנשים for עיני ראים.²³ It is possible that Ottley is correct in pointing to formal elements in the text that prompted the deviation, but ultimately the change is to be attributed to the carrying over of the idea of trusting in foreign powers found throughout Isaiah 28-31, a point to which we will return later.

Learning to Speak Peace

The first three lines of 32:4 are translated quite freely. The most significant deviation is the rendering of לדבר צחות by λαλεῖν εἰρήνην. The meaning and etymology of Hebrew צחות is obscure, and it is conceivable that the word is an addition in the MT.²⁴ At any rate, Seeligmann is correct in affirming that the explanation for the LXX reading is to be sought “in a reminiscence of the Septuagint of the Psalms”. He is thinking particularly of the occurrences of variant forms of λαλεῖν εἰρήνην in 27(28):3; 84(85):9 and 121(122):8.²⁵ The use of the phrase in these contexts points in the direction of a common idiom relating to a peaceful and righteous discourse and behaviour.

The same final line of 32:4 is inserted almost verbatim at the end of LXX Isaiah 29:24:

²¹ R. R. Ottley, *The Book of Isaiah according to the Septuagint (Codex Alexandrinus)* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 2: 260. See also the notes on תשענינה in Wildberger, *Isaiah 28-39*, 231.

²² Ottley, *Isaiah*, 2: 264.

²³ Ottley, *Isaiah*, 2: 264. He also notes that τῶν ἀσθενοῦντων has the same root as “be quick” later in the verse, is rendered in 35:4 by ὀλιγόψυχοι.

²⁴ See Wildberger, *Isaiah 28-39*, 232.

²⁵ I. L. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah: a Discussion of its Problems* (Leiden: Brill, 1948), 71. He also points to the “slightly different” λαλεῖν εἰρηνικὰ in LXX Jer 9:7.

Isa 29:24

MT	LXX
	καὶ γνώσονται οἱ τῷ πνεύματι πλανώμενοι σύνεσιν
	οἱ δὲ γογγύζοντες μαθήσονται ὑπακούειν <i>καὶ αἱ γλώσσαι αἱ ψελλίζουσαι μαθήσονται λαλεῖν εἰρήνην.</i>
Those who err in spirit will know understanding	Those who are deceived in spirit will understand
And those who murmur will receive instruction	And those who murmur will learn to obey <i>And the tongue of the ones who falter in speech shall learn to speak peace</i>

In Isa 29:20-24 we have a reproach on oppression, in which the Greek version replaces the עריץ (“tyrant”) with the ἄνομος (“lawless”) and the גל (“scoffer”) becomes the ὑπερήφανος (“arrogant”). Both figures are well known enemies in LXX Isaiah, and can be ideologically identified with those who represented the corruption of Jewish values and behaviour due to Hellenistic influences, or who in one way or another represented oppression for Alexandrian Jews. More significantly, while in the Hebrew the charge brought against them is that they pervert the practice of justice and the righteous functioning of the legal system, in the LXX of verse 21, they are accused of ποιοῦντες ἁμαρτεῖν ἀνθρώπους ἐν λόγῳ (“causing men to sin by [their] discourse”).²⁶ In this context, at the end of the passage (vv. 23-24) we read that when the children of Jacob see the works of the Lord (which is itself a deviating rendering), they will sanctify the Lord and his name. In v. 24 the somewhat literal translation of וידעו תעיררוח בינה ורוגנים ילמדו־לקח (“And those who err in spirit will understand knowledge, and those who murmur will take instruction”) by καὶ γνώσονται οἱ τῷ πνεύματι πλανώμενοι σύνεσιν, οἱ δὲ γογγύζοντες μαθήσονται ὑπακούειν (“And they that erred in spirit shall know understanding, and they that murmur shall learn obedience”) receives the unsupported addition of καὶ αἱ γλώσσαι αἱ ψελλίζουσαι

²⁶ 30:9-12 presents an accusation against those who do not submit to the “Law of the Lord”. The accusation is that the people preferred to ignore the Law, visions and prophetic announcements, and this rejection of divine instruction is tantamount to a rejection of the “Holy One of Israel” (v. 11). In the light of 32:2, one’s attention is drawn to the translation, in 30:12, of ען מאסכם בדבר הזה (“Because you rejected this word”) by ὅτι ἠπειθήσατε τοῖς λόγοις τούτοις (“Because you were disobedient to these words”).

μαθήσονται λαλεῖν εἰρήνην. The almost exact same phrase (with the exception of ταχὺ) found in the end of 32:4.

The addition clearly indicates the connectedness of the two passages in the mind of the translator, and reinforces the idea that he sees 32:1-4 in the context of the vindication of the people of the Lord in Zion, against those who are disobedient and ungodly in their midst, and who manifest their disobedience chiefly by lack of conformity to the law and by leading others to error by their perverse influence in speech and conduct.

The Influence of the Literary Context

The influence of the immediate literary context in the translation is evidenced by the use of ἰδοὺ γὰρ at the opening of 32:1-4. In the LXX, the expression is almost entirely limited to Isaiah.²⁷ Of 27 occurrences of יְהוָה in LXX Isaiah, this is the only instance where it is rendered by ἰδοὺ γὰρ.²⁸ The Greek phrase is a literal translation of הִנֵּה־כִּי in 26:21 and 66:15, and is inserted with no equivalent in 44:22.²⁹ ἰδοὺ γὰρ also appears as an equivalent to הִנֵּה in 10:33, 13:9, 62:11.³⁰

So ἰδοὺ γὰρ can be taken as a preferred expression of the translator, which serves both to introduce an oracle and connect it with a previous section. The lofty style of the phrase indicates an intention to use language appropriate to express the divine voice. ἰδοὺ γὰρ is variously used in Jewish texts originally composed in Greek (cf. Job 2:9 [an addition not without equivalent in the Hebrew text]; Jdt 5:23; 9:7; 12:12; 1 Macc 9:45; Odes 9:48; Luke 1:44; 1:48; 2:10; 6:23; 17:21; Acts 9:11; 2 Cor 7:11; 1 Clem 18:5, 6). In all of these cases,

²⁷ Elsewhere in the LXX, ἰδοὺ γὰρ renders הִנֵּה in 2 Sam 17:9; Ps 54:6(53:6) and הִנֵּה־כִּי in Job 33:2. It is only used with יְהוָה in Ps 51:7,8 (50:7,8).

²⁸ The other uses of יְהוָה in LXX Isaiah.

²⁹ Elsewhere in LXX Isaiah, הִנֵּה־כִּי is rendered by ἰδοὺ δὲ in 3:1, and simply by ἰδοὺ in 60:2. In the Hebrew Bible, the construction הִנֵּה־כִּי appears mostly in poetic or oracular contexts and it invariably denotes logical or semantic connection between parts. This is clearly indicated by its renderings in the LXX. In the Psalms and Song of Solomon it is always rendered by ὅτι ἰδοὺ (Ps 11:2[10:2], 48:5[47:5], 59:4[58:4], 73:27[72:27], 83:3[82:3]; 92:10[91:10]; Song 2:11).²⁹ The same Greek phrase is used in Jer 30:3(37:3), 50:9 (27:9), and Ezek 30:9. The simple ὅτι appears in Jer. 25:29(32:29), Jer 34:7(41:7). In the Book of the Twelve, apart from the use of διὰ τοῦτο ἰδοὺ in Hos 9:6, and διότι in Zech 3:9, הִנֵּה־כִּי is rendered with διότι ἰδοὺ (Joel 4:1, Amos 4:2, 13, 6:11, 9:9, Mic 1:13, Zech 11:6, Mal 3:19). It is altogether omitted only in Jer 49:15(30:9), but this is a free rendering in which a reminiscence is given a futuristic connotation. The only occurrence of הִנֵּה־כִּי in a narrative is in 1 Sam 27:8, where it serves a simple connective function and it is rendered quite literally by καὶ ἰδοὺ.

³⁰ In this case, the LXX could lend weight to the reading found in 1QIsa^a.

together with the basic function of semantic linkage, the intention seems to be imitating some kind of heightened religious, scriptural, or divine diction.

ἰδοὺ γὰρ connects the oracle in 32:1-4 immediately with 31:9, which closes chapter 31. Isa 31:7-9 is a short oracle against Assyria which announces that its destruction is the result of divine action alone, and serves to complement the previous woe oracle (v. 1-6) against those who sought succour in Egypt. The Hebrew of this verse is a taunt against the Assyrian king, and reads וסלעו ממגור יעבור וחתו מנס שריו נאם־יהוה אשר־אור לו בציון ותגור לו בירושלם (“And his rock shall pass away, from fear, and his princes be frightened from the standard, says the Lord, who has his torch in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem”), translated in the LXX as πέτρα γὰρ περιλημφθήσονται ὡς χάρακι καὶ ἠττηθήσονται, ὁ δὲ φεύγων ἀλώσεται. Τάδε λέγει κύριος Μακάριος ὃς ἔχει ἐν Σίων σπέρμα καὶ οἰκεῖους ἐν Ἰερουσαλημ (“For they shall be encompassed by a rock, as with a palisade, and shall be vanquished, and he that flees shall be taken. Thus says the Lord, happy is he who has a seed in Zion, and kinsmen in Jerusalem”). This rendering displays a remarkably nationalistic connotation. Of special importance is the second half of the verse, produced by understanding נאם־יהוה as the introduction of a new divine speech, after which follows a misreading of אשרי as אשרי (“blessed”, “happy”), resulting in the Greek μακάριος.³¹

This verse is significant because it offers some context to the translation of 32:1-4, which the translator sees the continuation of the previous running announcement of divine vengeance against those who trusted in Egypt and divine protection for Jerusalem that structures chapter 31.

It appears that the translator took into account the entire section that goes from chapters 28-32 in the Hebrew Book of Isaiah, when working on chapter 32. Regardless of how one conceives their compositional history, these chapters form a coherent whole dealing with the issue of political relations between Judah, Egypt and Assyria.³² The translator seems to have been mindful of the overall content of the section, naturally, under the light and influence of his own historical context and interpretative milieu. In this case, the address of a specific socio-political situation in the days of the prophet, namely, the threat

³¹ There is no way of determining how σπέρμα derives from אור or οἰκεῖους from תגור.

³² For an overview of the section in the Hebrew version of the book, see W. A. M. Beuken, “Women and the Spirit, the Ox and the Ass: The First Binders of the Booklet Isaiah 28-32,” ETL 74 (1998), 5-26; R. G. Kratz, “Rewriting Isaiah: the Case of Isaiah 28-31,” in *Prophecy and Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. J. Day (New York / London: T & T Clark, 2010). G. Stansell, “Isaiah 28-33: blest be the tie that binds (Isaiah together),” in *New visions of Isaiah* (Sheffield, Eng: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

of war with Assyria and the condemnation of the leaders who sought the support of Egypt is reread as a description of a future manifestation of God in which he will purify Zion, punishing those who are guilty of teaching error and distorting the knowledge of the Law (possibly by the propagation of Hellenistic influences), and vindicating those who remain faithful to their Jewish identity. This is a clear feature of other passages in LXX Isaiah (for instance, 8:12-16). It seems clear that this ideological reading prompted the specific deviations seen in 32:1-4.

A general overview of the content of Isaiah 28-31 helps us to see the ideological significance of the passage for the translator. The structural flow these chapters can be described as follows: 28:1-4 contains the judgment oracle against the “crown of te drunkards” of Ephraim; 28:7-13 is a second judgment oracle, condemning the “Covenant with Death” celebrated by Judean leaders; 28:14-22 is the celebrated announcement about the “cornerstone” in Zion; 28:23-29 is a short wisdom text, with an allegorical lesson taken from the world of farming; 29:1-8 presents the mysterious oracle against “Ariel”; 29:15-24 centres around the image of a Sealed Book and the theme of blindness and the need for divine illumination; 29:15-24 is a salvation oracle, with an announcement of renewal for the “offspring of Jacob”; 30:1-5 contains an oracle of judgment reproaching those who sought an alliance with Egypt. 30:6-7 comprise the vision of the animals of the Negev. 30:8-14 has the explanation of the oracle and a rebuke on those who are disobedient to oracles and words from the Lord. 30:15-26 consists in an oracle of salvation and future restoration pending repentance, which involves the casting out of idols, and subsequent affluence and blessing in the land, culminating in an outpouring of divine light. 30:27 initiates another oracle announcing the coming of the Lord in fiery judgement. 30:31-33 contains a threat against the Assyrian king.

31:1-3 starts another rebuke against those who trust in Egypt instead of listening to the divine words. 31:4-5 has an announcement (using animal imagery) of the return of the Lord to fight upon mount Zion. This is immediately followed by a summons, in 31:6-7 to obedience and renouncement of idolatry. 31:8-9 closes with a taunt against Assyria.

Elements in the passage seem to have a bearing on the peculiar shape of 32:1-4. I highlight especially those that describe the manifestation of divine wrath against the rebellious and impenitent by means of an upheaval of the natural world, expressed in terms of fire and flooding. The most important thing to note at this point is that, just as it is the case with 32:1-4, also in this larger section, one will look in vain for a precise correspondence between the

Hebrew terms describing these phenomena and their Greek translational counterparts. What we have, in fact, is a free rendering of the entire section with the cosmic or natural elements translated loosely or idiomatically.

It is instructive to consider some examples. In 30:27b, the metaphorical תכלה לשון אש אכלה ("his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is like devouring fire") is given an explanatory translation as τὸ λόγιον ὀργῆς πλήρες, καὶ ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θυμοῦ ὡς πῦρ ἔδεται ("with glory the oracle of his lips, his oracle is full of wrath, and the wrath of his anger shall devour like fire"). The awesome judgement word of the Lord, presented in the Hebrew of v. 28 with ורוחו כנחל שוטף עד צואר יצה ("And his breath is an overflowing stream, dividing even to the neck") is understood as καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ὡς ὕδωρ ἐν φάραγγι σῦρον ἥξει ἕως τοῦ τραχήλου ("And his breath, like water sweeping in a torrent-bed, shall come even to the neck"). 30:30 reads והשמיע יהוה את הורו קולו ונחת זרועו יראה בזעף אף ולהב אש אוכלה נפץ זורם ואבן בררד ("And the Lord shall cause the majesty of his voice to be heard, and the lighting down of his arm to be seen, with fury of anger, and the flame of devouring fire; scattering, rain-storm, and hailstone"). This is rendered by καὶ ἀκουστήν ποιήσει ὁ θεὸς τὴν δόξαν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν θυμὸν τοῦ βραχίονος αὐτοῦ δεῖξει μετὰ θυμοῦ καὶ ὀργῆς καὶ φλογὸς κατεσθιούσης· κεραυνώσει βιαίως καὶ ὡς ὕδωρ καὶ χάλαζα συγκαταφερομένη βία ("And God shall make the glory of his voice heard, even to show the wrath of his arm with wrath and anger and devouring flame, he shall thunder violently (upon them), and like water and hail descending with violence").

Summary and Conclusions

We can summarize our study of LXX Isa 32:1-4 as follows: In comparison with the Hebrew version of the oracle, the Greek presents a change of focus from the hope of righteous rule by a king to the person of a righteous king himself. The subsequent changes in the section, such as the use of the articular form ὁ ἄνθρωπος, the translation of the flood imagery and the particular treatment of references to conduct and speech, indicate that the translator rendered the text in the light of certain interpretative traditions and ideological trends characteristic of his own Hellenistic Jewish milieu. The text also gives evidence that the immediate and larger literary contexts of the Book of Isaiah were taken into consideration.

This study serves as a contribution to an ongoing debate in the field of LXX Isaiah, namely, the proper understanding of what "actualizing" interpretation means. It is well known that two diametrically opposing views have become

standard. On the one hand, the approach of authors such as Arie van der Kooij, who sees a high degree of theological and ideological transformation and an effective attempt to recreate independent oracles in Greek.³³ On the other, the view championed by authors such as Ronald Troxel and J. Ross Wagner, who eschew the idea of actualizing interpretation altogether.³⁴

The translation of LXX Isa 32:1-4 is a good example of how different linguistic, literary, historical, and ideological factors influenced the activity of the translator and the way he read the Isaiah oracles. By recasting the hopes expressed in the text within his own Hellenistic milieu, the translator changes the meaning of the original oracle. Yet, the evidence is not sufficient to indicate a conscious program of theological transformation or actualization of prophecy. The ideological transformation of the Isaianic hope is, paradoxically, the result of an attempt to communicate the “original” meaning of the text, as the translator sees it.

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³³ A. van der Kooij, “Isaiah in the Septuagint,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, eds. C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans, VTS 70/2 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 513-529; A. van der Kooij, *The Oracle of Tyre: the Septuagint of Isaiah XXIII as Version and Vision*, VTS 71 (Leiden: Brill, 1998). More recently, this approach has been reflected in monographs such as W. d. A. Cunha, *LXX Isaiah 24:1-26:6 as Interpretation and Translation: A Methodological Discussion*, SBL.SCS 62 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014).

³⁴ R. L. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation. The Strategies of the Translator of the Septuagint of Isaiah*, VTS 124 (Leiden: Brill, 2008); J. R. Wagner, *Reading the Sealed Book: Old Greek Isaiah and the Problem of Septuagint Hermeneutics* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013). For a full discussion of the latter book, see L. J. Greenspoon, et al., “Interpreting the Sealed Book,” *JSCS* 47 (2014), 1-31.