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# AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PESHITTA AND OLD GREEK AND THE TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF EZEKIEL IN THE HEBREW BIBLE<sup>1,2</sup>

## ABSTRACT

Of the fifteen examples discussed in this contribution, a different *Vorlage* is likely to underlie the Old Greek and the Peshitta in Ezekiel 10:1, 10:2 (second example), 11:7, 12:4-7 and 12, 16:23, 17:22, 21:17 and 23:43. For this last example, a new proposal is made for a reconstruction of the common *Vorlage* for the two versions. A different *Vorlage* is possible, but less certain, for Ezekiel 7:2, 11:2 and 12:25. The differences between the Masoretic Text, on the one hand, and the two versions, on the other, can be ascribed to a similar translation technique, or other factors in the case of Ezekiel 10:2 (first example), 11:15, 13:5 and 17:7, although a different *Vorlage* may be considered. In light of these examples, agreement between the Peshitta and the Old Greek against the Masoretic Text must be evaluated for every instance, bearing in mind the possibility of a different *Vorlage*.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

When utilising the Peshitta for the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, there are instances where

- 1 This work is based on the research supported by the National Research Foundation. Any opinion, finding and conclusion or recommendation expressed in this material is that of the author and the NRF does not accept any liability in this regard.
- 2 This contribution is dedicated to my friend and colleague of many years, Fanie Snyman, with appreciation for his friendship and scholarship.

the Peshitta agrees with the Old Greek against the Masoretic Text. In his important book on the textual criticism of the Old Testament, Tov (2012:152) expresses a view on the value of the Peshitta in these instances, namely the possibility that the Peshitta cannot be regarded as an independent witness. In this view, it is commonly held that the Peshitta was influenced by the Septuagint, and more in some books than in others. In a previous contribution (Van Rooy 2008), the importance of the Peshitta for the textual criticism of Ezekiel was discussed and illustrated with some examples from Ezekiel 1-5. It was concluded that, in some instances, influence by the Septuagint could have been possible; in other instances, the agreement between the Septuagint and the Peshitta could point to a variant in the Masoretic tradition that is better than the reading of the Masoretic Text (Van Rooy 2008:227). However, that study only scrutinised examples in Ezekiel 1-5. In this contribution, I will briefly discuss the history of research in this regard, and consider publications since 2008. I will then discuss examples from Ezekiel 6-24.

## 2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MASORETIC TEXT, THE SEPTUAGINT AND THE PESHITTA OF EZEKIEL

In the previous contribution, a brief survey was given of the state of research up to that time. The survey starts with the work of Cornill (1886) on the Septuagint and the Peshitta and then presents the views of especially Lust and Tov on the Septuagint of Ezekiel, and those of Mulder on the Peshitta (Van Rooy 2008:213-219). Both Lust (2003:92) and Tov (2012:299-301) distinguish two editorial layers in Ezekiel, with the Septuagint reflecting an older and briefer edition of Ezekiel. Up to the publication of the Leiden edition of the Peshitta of Ezekiel, the views on the value of the Peshitta of Ezekiel for the text-critical study of the Hebrew Ezekiel agreed with the view of Cornill. This is confirmed, for example, in the commentary of Zimmerli (1979:77), who accepts, as Cornill, that the Septuagint influenced the Peshitta of Ezekiel to such an extent that it can only be used with caution as a witness to the Hebrew text. Tov's view referred to earlier exhibits a similar caution. In contrast to this approach, Mulder (1988:110) regards the Peshitta of Ezekiel as a literal and independent translation, with the *Vorlage* evident, even where the translation was not verbal. He mentions that the value of the Peshitta of Ezekiel for the textual criticism of the book is second only to the Septuagint. While Cornill is not impressed by manuscript 7a1, Mulder observes that the older manuscripts used for

the Leiden edition have more value than the older editions such as the edition of Lee used by Cornill and Zimmerli.

With regard to the version of the Septuagint of Ezekiel, an important monograph was published in 2012, the revised doctoral thesis of Ingrid Lilly. This study presents an excellent review of the history of research on the Septuagint of Ezekiel, especially since the publication of Papyrus 967 (Lilly 2012:11-62). In her conclusions, Lilly accepts that Papyrus 967 and the Masoretic Text represent two different literary editions. Papyrus 967 reflects a shorter Hebrew text that is closer to its parent text, and the Masoretic Text represents a development beyond the parent text of the Old Greek (Lilly 2012:301-303).

As far as the Peshitta of Ezekiel is concerned, Mushayabasa (2015:3-8) presents a survey of research on Ezekiel based on the work of Cornill and newer research since the publication of the critical text of Ezekiel by Mulder in 1985. In light of his research, Mushayabasa (2015:8) is of the opinion that the influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta of Ezekiel has been overstated in the past. Weitzman (2005:68) points to the view in the past that the Septuagint had considerable influence on the Peshitta of Ezekiel.

In 2016 and 2017, two important volumes of a new series on the textual history of the Bible were published (Lange & Tov 2016; 2017). Important contributions on the ancient versions are included in the first of the two volumes, giving a survey of the history of research and the current state of affairs. In an introductory section, Tov (2016a) provides a survey of the translation of the Hebrew Bible in general. Tov (2016a:180) observes that the Peshitta may be regarded as moderately free in small changes, including minuses and pluses, and that some books are freer than others. He also mentions that many scholars are of the opinion that the Peshitta frequently borrowed from the Septuagint (Tov 2016a:184). He further points to a difference of opinion as to whether some adaptation to the Masoretic Text occurs in Syriac manuscripts (Tov 2016a:186). In a second article in the first volume, Tov (2016b) presents a survey of the state of research on the Septuagint. He points to the importance of Papyrus 967 (Tov 2016b:192) and to the two editions of Ezekiel (Tov 2016b:202).

In the same volume, Carbajosa's (2016:271) introductory article on the Peshitta discusses the important manuscripts and editions. He stresses the importance of the Leiden edition of the Peshitta, which is based on manuscript 7a1 and contains variant readings from the most important manuscripts. The language of the Peshitta can be described as idiomatic early Syriac. The translators wanted to be faithful to the original text, with a translation that could be easily understood by its readers (Carbajosa

2016:272). He indicates that scholars previously overstated the influence of the Septuagint on the Peshitta. The agreement with the Septuagint can frequently be ascribed to a similar translation technique or to a different Hebrew *Vorlage* (Carbajosa 2016:274). However, influence of the Septuagint on the copyists of the Peshitta must be considered (Carbajosa 2016:275). Although the Peshitta must be used with caution for the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, he regards it as “a good witness to a proto-Masoretic Text from the middle of the second century C.E.” (Carbajosa 2016:276). There is the possibility that the Peshitta could reflect a different *Vorlage* in some instances (Carbajosa 2016:276).

In the second volume in this series (Lange & Tov 2017), two contributions on Ezekiel are relevant to this study. Tooman (2017) discusses the textual history of Ezekiel, with a survey of the history of research, especially related to Papyrus 967. In his summary, he mentions that Papyrus 967, *codex vaticanus* of the Septuagint and the Masoretic Text descend from a common or nearly common ancestor. The two Septuagint witnesses reflect different pre-hexaplaric recensions of a Hebrew text that was still developing at that stage (Tooman 2017:566). Two different literary editions of Ezekiel can be distinguished (Tooman 2017:567). Tooman refers to the Peshitta of Ezekiel only in passing, with a reference to different publications in this regard in a footnote (Tooman 2017:565, especially footnote 66). In a contribution on the Septuagint, Lust (2017:582) observes that the translation of Ezekiel is “fairly wooden and literal”. It retains the Hebrew word order.

In light of this discussion, I will discuss examples from Ezekiel 6-24, where the Septuagint and the Peshitta agree against the Masoretic Text.

### 3. EXAMPLES<sup>3</sup>

#### 3.1 Ezekiel 7:2

The differences between the versions of Ezekiel 7 in the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint have been discussed in great detail. Bogaert (1986) and Lust (1986) (see also Tooman 2017:576) have made important contributions. For purposes of this article, one instance in 7:2 is important in the section before the major differences occur between the Masoretic Text and the Old Greek (where the Peshitta follows the Masoretic Text). In 7:2, the Masoretic Text reads, “You, O mortal, thus says the Lord God

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3 The following texts were used in this discussion: Hebrew Bible – Elliger & Rudolph (1987) (BHS); Septuagint – Ziegler (2006); Peshitta – Mulder (1985); Targum – Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon (2005).

to the land of Israel” (NRSV). The Septuagint (εἶπον) and the Peshitta (ܝܒܪܝܢ) insert the imperative “say” after “mortal”. The Septuagint has the same insertion in 13:8, 15:6 and 39:17. In these instances, the Peshitta does not agree with the Septuagint. In 7:2, the Vulgate and the Targum do not have the addition. Cornill (1886:210-211) accepts that this insertion is original and that it was omitted by the Masoretic Text. Referring to the Septuagint and the Peshitta, Zimmerli (1979:194) states that this addition is “materially desirable”, although the messenger formula is not always introduced by an imperative. It is possible that the versions could have added it in this case. However, he does not refer to the Targum and the Vulgate, or to the fact that the Peshitta does not support the insertion by the Septuagint in other places. Allen (1994:99) supports the Masoretic Text as the more difficult reading. Block (1997:247) refers to the insertion of the Septuagint, but not to the Peshitta. Greenberg (2008:145) mentions that the messenger formula is often, but not always, preceded by a command. Goshen-Gottstein and Talmon (2004:אב) refer to the reading of the Septuagint and the Peshitta and other places where the addition occurs, without evaluating the difference.

The question is thus whether the Peshitta had a *Vorlage* agreeing with the Septuagint. The fact that it does not follow the Septuagint in the other instances mentioned supports the idea of a *Vorlage* different from the Masoretic Text.

### 3.2 Ezekiel 10:1

In Ezekiel 10:1, a verb occurs in the Masoretic Text (נראה) that is omitted by the Septuagint and the Peshitta. The NRSV translates the Masoretic Text as follows:

Then I looked, and above the dome that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire, in form resembling a throne.

According to NETS,<sup>4</sup> the Septuagint reads:

And I saw, and behold, above the firmament over the head of the cheroubin was something like a lapis lazuli stone; a likeness of a throne was upon them.

The Peshitta can be translated as follows:

And I saw a roof which was above the top of the cherubim, like the appearance of the stone of sapphire, and like the appearance of the form of a throne above them.

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4 NETS: Abbreviation for Pietersma & Wright (2007).

The additional verb of the Masoretic Text is not translated by the two versions. It is, however, translated by the Targum and the Vulgate. Cornill (1886:228-230) follows the Septuagint and the Peshitta in omitting the verb. Dijkstra (1986:65) regards it as a late expansion in the Masoretic Text. Goshen-Gottstein and Talmon (2004:לג) only note the variant reading, with no comment. Zimmerli (1979:226) regards the verb as an addition in the Masoretic Text. Allen (1994:123-124) regards the verb as a comment inserted by a reader. Block (1997:317) only notes that the verb is not in the Septuagint. He does not mention the Peshitta. Tov (1999:404) regards the word in the Masoretic Text as a late addition. He does not mention that the Peshitta agrees with the Old Greek.

In these instances, one can regard the additional verb in the Masoretic Text as a late addition, with the Peshitta and the Septuagint reflecting a different *Vorlage* without the verb.

### 3.3 Ezekiel 10:2

Ezekiel 10:2 has two variants where the Septuagint and the Peshitta agree against the Masoretic Text. In the Masoretic Text, a man clothed in linen is commanded to go “within the wheelwork underneath the cherub”. The Peshitta and the Old Greek agree with the nouns “wheels” and “cherubs” in the plural. In the first instance, the Vulgate and the Targum manuscripts also have the plural, while in the second instance, the Vulgate has the singular, and the Targum manuscripts have the plural. BHS proposes to read the plural in the second instance, with a possible haplography (the next word begins with a waw and a mem). Cornill (1886:230) does not discuss the variants; he accepts the singular for the first noun and the plural for the second. Zimmerli (1979:226) refers to the plural of the Septuagint in the first instance. For the second noun, he wants to retain the singular as the more difficult reading. Dijkstra (1986:66-67) wants to retain the singular for the cherub and the wheelwork. Allen (1994:124) also supports the singular as a collective for the first noun. He accepts the plural for the second noun, also referring to haplography. Block (1997:321) also retains the singular of the first noun as a collective. He accepts the idea of haplography for the second noun and reads the plural (Block 1997:317, note 21; see also Greenberg 2008:181).

In the case of the first noun, the agreement between the Old Greek and the Peshitta could perhaps be attributed to a similar translation technique. In the case of the second noun, haplography is a good argument in favour of a different *Vorlage* for these two versions.

### 3.4 Ezekiel 11:2

In the Masoretic Text, the first verb does not have an explicit subject (“He said to me”), while the Old Greek and the Peshitta have “The Lord” as subject (κύριος, ה'י). It must be noted, however, that the Old Greek and the Peshitta do not have the same word order, with the prepositional phrase “to me” after the subject in the Old Greek and before it in the Peshitta. This is the normal word order for these two versions for this phrase in Ezekiel (cf. 23:36; 44:2, 5).

Cornill (1886:234-235) notes the plus in the Old Greek and the Peshitta, but he does not include it in his reconstructed text. Goshen-Gottstein and Talmon (2004:1) also simply note the addition in the Old Greek and the Peshitta. Block (1997:327, note 2) refers only to the Septuagint. Zimmerli (1979:228) regards the plus as a clarification (see also Greenberg 2008:186). The Old Greek probably had this addition in its *Vorlage*. The plus does not occur in the Targum and the Vulgate. It could have been added for clarification in the Peshitta, but such a clarification could also have been in the *Vorlage*. This is the only place in Ezekiel where “the Lord” was added as subject to the verb “and he said”, enhancing the possibility of the addition already in the *Vorlage*.

### 3.5 Ezekiel 11:7

The Masoretic Text has the verb הוציא, a third person masculine singular perfect that does not fit into the context. All the versions and some Masoretic manuscripts have the expected first person singular imperfect, “I will drive out”. This is, for example, the reading accepted by the NIV:

Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: The bodies you have thrown there are the meat and this city is the pot, but I will drive you out of it.

Cornill (1886:236) states that the reading of the Masoretic Text is an error. Goshen-Gottstein and Talmon (2004:1) refer to the first person singular of the Old Greek, the Peshitta, the Targum and the Vulgate, and to verses 8-9. Block (1997:328), Allen (1994:126) and Zimmerli (1979:229) accept the proposed reading. Greenberg (2008:186) mentions the possibility of reading the verb as a hiphil infinitive, with a passive meaning. In this instance, the reading of the Masoretic Text can be regarded as an error, with all the versions supporting the proposed reading, which was probably in all the *Vorlagen*.

### 3.6 Ezekiel 11:15

The Masoretic Text describes Ezekiel's compatriots as אֲנָשֵׁי גַלְתָּי (NIV: "your blood relatives"). This reading is followed by the Targum and the Vulgate. The Peshitta and the Old Greek have "the men of your captivity" (οἱ ἄνδρες τῆς αἰχμαλωσίας). This presupposes a Hebrew consonantal text גַּלְתָּי for the second noun, a word that occurs in Ezekiel 1:2, 33:21 and 40:1. The related noun גּוֹלָה occurs frequently in Ezekiel. Cornill (1886:236) accepts the reading גַּלְתָּי. Goshen-Gottstein and Talmon (2004:17) regard the reading of the Peshitta and the Old Greek as an interpretation based on etymology. Zimmerli (1979:229) ascribes the reading of the Peshitta and the Old Greek to not understanding the Masoretic Text. Allen (1994:128) also supports the reading of the Masoretic Text, as does Block (1997:341, note 2). Be that as it may, the question is whether the variant must be ascribed to the translators of the Old Greek and the Peshitta or whether it could have been in the *Vorlage*. In this instance, both could be possible.

### 3.7 Ezekiel 12:4, 5, 6, 7 and 12

In Ezekiel 12, the verb יָצָא occurs in the hiphil ("to bring out") in verses 4, 5, 6, 7 (twice) and 12 and in the Qal ("to go out") in verses 4 and 12. As far as the hiphil is concerned, an explicit object occurs in verses 4 and 7 (1<sup>o</sup>) and not in the other instances. The Hiphil in verse 4 (וְהוֹצֵאתָ, "and bring out") is translated by transitive verbs by the Peshitta, the Vulgate, the Old Greek and the Targum, with a direct object. The Peshitta uses an imperative, the Vulgate and the Old Greek the indicative future, and the Targum an imperfect. Transitive verbs are also used for the hiphil in verse 7. The intransitive verbs in verses 4 and 12 are also translated by intransitive verbs. However, the versions do not agree with the Masoretic Text in the instances in verses 5, 6 and 12, where there is no explicit object. In verse 5, the four versions have an intransitive verb. In verse 6, only the Vulgate has a transitive verb (*effere*) and in verse 12, the Targum and the Vulgate have transitive verbs. In all these verses, the Peshitta and the Old Greek agree.

In all three instances, Cornill (1886:242-243) accepts the intransitive verbs as the preferred readings. Zimmerli (1979:264-266), however, regards the hiphil as original, although as part of a late interpretation. Allen (1994:171-173) accepts that the instances in verses 5 and 6 should be intransitive, but that verse 12 reflects a different stage in the narrative, with the prince as the implicit object of the verb. Block (1997:362, note 11) accepts an object ellipsis in all instances in verses 5, 6 and 12.

The question is whether the changes from transitive to intransitive verbs in the Peshitta and the Old Greek must be ascribed to the translators



or to the *Vorlagen*. The Vulgate and the Targum probably had the same *Vorlage* as the Masoretic Text, with different translations in different verses. However, the consistent renderings by the Old Greek and the Peshitta argue in favour of a common *Vorlage* for these verses.

### 3.8 Ezekiel 12:25

The Masoretic Text has a passive verb (תִּמְשָׁךְ, “it will not be delayed”). However, the Old Greek and the Peshitta have active verbs, with a first person singular subject (μην ἀναύω / אֲרַחֵם אֶתְּמוֹתַי “I will not delay”). The Vulgate has a passive verb (*prolongabitur*). The Targum has an active verb in the Peal (בִּטְלֵ, “to be invalid”, “to cease”). Cornill (1886:244, 246) accepts the first person singular as original, with the reading of the Masoretic Text assimilated to verse 28. Goshen-Gottstein and Talmon (2004:מג) refer to the reading of the Old Greek, stating that it is a reformulation and nearly equal to the Peshitta. Allen (1994:188) holds the Masoretic Text as original and rejects Cornill’s view. Zimmerli and Block do not refer to the variant reading of the Old Greek and the Peshitta. It is interesting to note that the Septuagint and the Peshitta translated verse 28 differently (P967 omits verses 26-28), with the Septuagint having an active verb in the plural and the Peshitta using a noun for “delay”. This enhances the possibility of a common *Vorlage* for verse 25, with a first person singular verb in the *Vorlage*.

### 3.9 Ezekiel 13:5

In Ezekiel 13:5, the Masoretic Text reads לֹא עֲלִיתֶם בַּפְּרוּצֹת (‘‘You did not go up into the breaches’’). The Old Greek, the Peshitta, the Vulgate and the Targum manuscripts have the noun in the singular. Cornill (1886:246) regards the singular as original. He ascribes the form of the Masoretic Text as the result of dittography (with the first two consonants of the next word in the Masoretic Text repeated). Goshen-Gottstein and Talmon (2004:מד) also mention the possibility of dittography. Although the plural of this noun occurs only a few times, this would be the only place where a feminine plural form occurs. Zimmerli (1979:286) accepts this, but Allen (1994:189) is of the opinion that the versions may have assimilated the text to the more common form. Block (1997:396) retains the plural in his translation; he refers to the general view of emending the text and to plural forms in Isaiah 58:12 and Amos 4:3 and 9:11 (in footnote 396).

In this instance, a different *Vorlage* could be a possibility, but one must at least consider the possibility of dittography in the Masoretic tradition. If such a possibility exists, a different *Vorlage* cannot be taken for granted.

### 3.10 Ezekiel 16:23

In Ezekiel 16:23, the following phrase occurs: כּל־רעַתְךָ (“all your wickedness”). The singular noun also occurs in the Targum and the Vulgate, but the Peshitta and the Old Greek have the plural (“all your evil deeds”). Cornill (1886:262) reads the singular and does not refer to the variant in the Old Greek or the Peshitta. Zimmerli (1979:327) prefers the plural, as the singular is only used, according to him, for evil sent by God. Block (1997:491, note 162) regards the variant as harmonisation with other references to human evil. Although harmonisation is a possibility, the fact that the Peshitta and the Old Greek both have the plural makes a different *Vorlage* a distinct possibility.

### 3.11 Ezekiel 17:7

In Ezekiel 17:7, the Masoretic Text reads נֶשֶׁר־אֶהָדָד (“an eagle”). The Old Greek, the Peshitta and the Vulgate read “another eagle”, reflecting a Hebrew reading נֶשֶׁר אֶחָד. Within the context, this reading makes good sense, referring to an eagle different from the great eagle mentioned in verse 3. Cornill (1886:274) accepts this reading. Zimmerli (1979:355) is of the opinion that the reading of the versions could just as well be a translation of the Hebrew “one”. He is followed by Allen (1994:251) and Block (1997:528). However, the fact that three versions all read “another”, and that the difference could be ascribed to a confusion of two similar-looking Hebrew consonants, enhances a possible error in the transmission of the Hebrew *Vorlage*.

### 3.12 Ezekiel 17:22

There are many differences with respect to this verse in the Masoretic Text, the Old Greek and the Peshitta, as can be seen from the different texts and their translations:

#### MT

כּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וּלְקַחְתִּי אֶנִּי מִצְמַרְתָּ הָאֵרֶז וּנְתִיתִי מִרְאֵשׁ יַנְקוּתָיו רֶךְ אֶקְטֵף  
וּשְׂתַלְתִּי אֶנִּי עַל הַר־גְּבוּה וְתֹלֹל

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar; I will set it out. I will break off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs; I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain.

#### LXX

διότι τὰδε λέγει κύριος Καὶ λήμψομαι ἐγὼ ἐκ τῶν ἐπιλέκτων τῆς κέδρου, ἐκ κορυφῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν ἀποκνιώ καὶ καταφυτεύσω ἐγὼ ἐπ’ ὄρος ὑψηλόν.



discussed in detail (Lilly 2012:207-212). In Ezekiel 17:22, the Old Greek is, as indicated earlier, supported by, *inter alia*, Papyrus 967. Lilly discusses the different texts with “heart” or “spirit” in the Old Greek, P967 and other Greek witnesses.<sup>5</sup> Ezekiel 17:22 is the only instance where the Peshitta agrees with the Old Greek against the Masoretic Text, enabling them to reflect a common *Vorlage* for this instance.

### 3.13 Ezekiel 21: 17 (18)

The words at the beginning of verse 18 in the Peshitta stand at the end of verse 17 in the Masoretic Text. The Masoretic Text reads לִבְנֵי סַפֵּק אֶל-יָרֵךְ (“Therefore, strike the thigh”). The Peshitta and the Old Greek do not have “a thigh”. The Peshitta reads כַּף (“a hand”), without a preposition. The Old Greek has ἐπὶ τῆς χειρὸς σου (“on your hand”). The reading of the Old Greek presupposes a reading יָד (“your hand”), with a dalet for the resh of the Masoretic Text. These two letters can easily be confused in a handwritten text. The reading of the Peshitta presupposes י (“hand”), without the pronominal suffix. Although the two renderings are not identical, they presuppose the Hebrew word for “hand”. Cornill (1886:302-303), Zimmerli (1979:428) and Block (1997:673) are of the opinion that the reading of the Masoretic Text is to be preferred. Allen (1990:18) retains it in his translation, without making any remark. Whether the reading of the Masoretic Text is to be preferred or not, the Old Greek and the Peshitta point to a *Vorlage* with the word for “hand”. Weitzman (2005:76) is of the opinion that, in this instance, the Peshitta consulted the Septuagint, but this is improbable, since the readings are slightly different (without the preposition and the pronominal suffix in the Peshitta).

### 3.14 Ezekiel 23:3

The first part of this verse in the Masoretic Text reads as follows: ותזנינה במצרים בנעוריהן זנו (NIV: “They became prostitutes in Egypt, engaging in prostitution from their youth”). The Old Greek and the Peshitta have only one verb. The Old Greek reads: καὶ ἐξέπόρνευσαν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐν τῇ νεότητι αὐτῶν (“And they committed fornication in Egypt in their youth”). The Peshitta has וזנו בחסי זנין בלילסותם (“And they fornicated in Egypt in their youth”). The Vulgate follows the Masoretic Text. The Targum has an expanded translation, but retains the repetition of the verb טעאח. This variant is not noted by BHS. Cornill (1886:316) follows the two versions in retaining only the first verb. Zimmerli (1979:471) believes that the reading of the Peshitta and the Old Greek can be ascribed to stylistics. Allen (1990:43) agrees

5 Ezekiel 13:2, 3; 16:30; 17:22; 20:24; 21:12; 22:15, 27; 29:16; 31:10; 36:5; 37:1, 9; 39:29.

with Zimmerli and calls it “stylistic abbreviation” (see also Block 1997:732, note 12; Goshen-Gottstein & Talmon 2004:צו). If, however, one accepts the idea that the Old Greek represents an older edition of the book, one should not ascribe the variant to a minus in the Old Greek, but to a plus in the Masoretic Text. If this is accepted, the Peshitta can be regarded as having the shorter reading, in agreement with the Old Greek. A different *Vorlage* is a distinct possibility.

### 3.15 Ezekiel 23:43

The Masoretic Text of Ezekiel 23:43 is generally regarded as corrupt. Zimmerli (1979:478) does not even attempt a reconstruction and refers to the reading of the Old Greek and a proposal by Driver. The Masoretic Text reads as follows: וואמר לבלה נאופים עת יזנה תזנותה והיא Allen (1990:43, 45) mentions that the text is uncertain, but he attempts to make sense thereof. He translates it as follows (Allen 1990:43):

Then I asked myself about this woman who was worn out by adultery,  
whether they would there and then fornicate with her.

He refers to Genesis 18:12 for “worn out”, stating that the Septuagint and the Peshitta partly presuppose a reading ולא באלה נאפים (“and do they not commit with these adultery”; Allen 1990:45). He also follows the Qere for “they committed adultery” against the singular of the Khetib. The pronoun at the end is then used to emphasise the pronominal suffix to the preceding noun.

BHS proposes a reading הלא כאלה נאפו ומעשי זנה תעשינה following on the verb at the beginning of the verse (“Did they not commit adultery like these and did deeds of prostitution”). For this proposal, it refers to the Septuagint and the Peshitta. Although the renderings of the Peshitta and the Old Greek are not identical, they are clearly related.

The Old Greek has και εἶπα Οὐκ ἐν τούτοις μοιχεύουσι; και ἔργα πόρνῆς και αὐτὴ ἐξεπόρνευσε (NETS: “Do they not commit adultery with these? And with actions of a whore, she too played the whore”). The Peshitta reads כאלה נאפים וזנותה (NETS: “With these they have committed adultery and by the deeds of prostitutes they have fornicated”).

Allen (1990:45) mentions that the Greek ἔργα πόρνῆς is a free rendering of the Hebrew תזנותה. The proposal by Cornill, BHS and others (ומעשי זנה) is graphically improbable, according to Allen. The Peshitta supports the rendering of the Old Greek.

When one compares the readings of the Old Greek, the difference at the beginning of the two renderings is the negative particle at the beginning,

correctly translated as a question by NETS (as a Greek rendering of the Hebrew הלא). The Peshitta generally changes these kinds of questions into positive statements, so that the Old Greek and the Peshitta could represent different renderings of the Hebrew question. Both the Peshitta and the Old Greek have a rendering of a preposition that would normally translate the Hebrew preposition ב, not כ, as proposed by BHS and others. The Peshitta and the Old Greek have the two verbs in the plural, and they are feminine in the Peshitta. In his reconstruction, Allen did not propose the interrogative at the beginning. His idea of a participle can be supported, but it should then be a feminine plural participle, as in verse 45, where the same verb as in the reconstruction is a feminine participle in two instances. In light of this discussion, the following reading can be proposed that could have served as the *Vorlage* of the Peshitta and the Old Greek: הלא באלה נואפות ומעשי זנה תעשינה (“Did they not commit adultery with these and committed deeds of adultery?”).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Of the fifteen examples discussed above, a different *Vorlage* underlying the Old Greek and the Peshitta is probable in Ezekiel 10:1, 10:2 (second example), 11:7, 12:4-7 and 12, 16:23, 17:22, 21:17 and 23:43. For this last example, a new proposal is made for a reconstruction of the common *Vorlage* for the two versions. A different *Vorlage* is possible, but less certain, for Ezekiel 7:2, 11:2 and 12:25. The differences between the Masoretic Text, on the one hand, and the two versions, on the other, can be ascribed to a similar translation technique, or other factors in the case of Ezekiel 10:2 (first example), 11:15, 13:5 and 17:7, although a different *Vorlage* may be considered. In light of these examples, agreement between the Peshitta and the Old Greek against the Masoretic Text must be evaluated for every instance, bearing in mind the possibility of a different *Vorlage*.

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