

Canon-Conscious Interpretation: Genesis 22, the Masoretic Text, and Targum Onkelos¹

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ABSTRACT

This article is an example of canon-conscious interpretation based on a comparison of Gen 22:1–19 between the Masoretic text (MT) and Targum Onkelos (TO) that demonstrates the canon-conscious changes in TO. Based on the translator's knowledge of another text in 2 Chr 3:1, this results in changes in both passages. Although the Hebrew texts are essentially translated word for word into Aramaic throughout most of the passage, changes result from retaining canon-conscious exegetical interpretations in TO, leading in turn to a nuanced interpretation of the passage. From a methodological standpoint, the MT is examined first paying particular attention to grammatical, syntactical, and literary issues. Further the text is compared with TO, noting similarities and differences and then examining when and whether these differences change the overall interpretation of the text.

A TEXTUAL CRITICISM AND CANON-CONSCIOUS TRANSLATION

Comparing biblical texts closely in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek is usually reserved for the text critic. The goal of the text critic has been variously understood but more or less the goal has been to construct the "original text(s)."² In this endeavor the careful comparison of manuscripts, Hebrew as well as early translations, is of utmost importance. In placing these texts side by side, various types of differences are observed – differences that point to accidental changes,

¹ I would like to thank James Alfred Loader, Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, and Ingrid Lilly for their helpful engagement with earlier forms of this article.

² Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2nd rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 164–180, outlines the difficulty of using this term. Even if multiple "original texts" are presupposed, the goal is then to reconstruct these original parallel texts. However, Tov concludes in his own definition of what he means by original text, "At the same time, there is no solid evidence on textual readings pointing exclusively to the existence of textually parallel versions." See Tov, *Textual Criticism 2nd*, 177. Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (3rd rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 167, if anything, strengthens his statement from the previous edition: "The assumption of parallel pristine texts provides a possible alternative model, but at present it is not supported by textual evidence."

intentional changes, and on some occasions these variants point to different Hebrew *Vorlagen*.³

In the category of intentional changes, exegesis can be clearly identified as one of the reasons for this type of difference.⁴ With one particular type of exegetical change, the contrast is rather striking, as a careful comparison will yield lines of word by word, particle by particle similarities in translation, and then a divergent text.⁵ These differences at first glance appear to be very odd, until a concordance is consulted, and the differences turn out to mark the exegetical connection of key passages, resulting in a canon-conscious translation.⁶

What is meant by "canon-conscious translation" is that the translator noticed a connection between authoritative texts in Hebrew and then made this connection explicit within the translation. What is only possibly implied or even intertextual in the Hebrew texts, then becomes explicit in the translation. A particular passage of scripture is not only being translated, but further a particular body of literature is used to translate and interpret this passage of scripture. This canon-conscious translation not only leads to a significant change in the text being considered but is also marked in the other key text. In this way both texts refer to one another reciprocally in the translation(s) and are only at best hinted at in the Hebrew text.

³ Tov, *Textual Criticism 2nd*, 8–12, and Ernst Würthwein, *Der Text des Alten Testaments* (5th ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1988), 118–124, outline these concepts in broad terms.

⁴ Tov, *Textual Criticism 2nd*, 9, notes in relation to intentional changes, "In contradistinction to mistakes, which are not controllable, the insertion of corrections and changes derives from a conscious effort to change the text in minor and major details, including the insertion of novel ideas." Tov, *Textual Criticism 3rd*, 117–127, discusses exegetical changes in the translations in particular.

⁵ Paul V. M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, *The Targums: A Critical Introduction* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011), 40, in their seven "Rules of Targum" (39–54) would likely identify these observations as a combination of their first, fourth, and fifth rules: "Rule 1: When a targum translates or presents the original text, it does so literally. . . . Rule 4: An addition may be drawn from, imitate, or relate to material elsewhere in the work. Rule 5: A large edition may be placed near the beginning or end of a narrative to emphasize its message." Alberdina Houtman and Harry Sysling, *Alternative Targum Traditions: The Use of Variant Readings for the Study in Origin and History of Targum Jonathan* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 21–25, would most likely identify these characteristics as "Literal word-by-word translation" and "Extended interpretive translation."

⁶ Flesher and Chilton, *The Targums*, 46, state, "The people who composed the Targums were broadly familiar with the whole range of Israel's Scripture. They often demonstrate this knowledge by bringing biblical passages from elsewhere into their expansions. Sometimes they quote other passages directly within these additions. Other times they may just refer to a passage, or they may refer to it and then provide an interpretation of it."

The concept of intertextuality plays an important role in this phenomenon on two levels. On the first level, the authoritative Hebrew texts are understood to be exactly that – texts. These Hebrew texts have different *Entstehungsgeschichten* and were written for different purposes. By their overall placement together in an authoritative corpus, they give “a big picture that would not have been possible if the textual units had been left by themselves,” and yet this overall placement together “highlights the dialogue between these smaller texts with their diachronic and synchronic similarities and differences.”⁷ On the second level, this dialogue which may only be implicit in the Hebrew texts “through their order and overall placement together,” now becomes explicit within the translation, creating a dialogue between the Hebrew texts and the translation(s).⁸ In this sense the quoting of the Hebrew text in the translation with its canon-conscious interpretation retains most of the original text, but nuances the overall literary strategy of the passage through the explicit inclusion of its interpretation; there is a dialogue between the Hebrew and translation texts.

The following is an example based on a comparison of Gen 22:1–19 between the Masoretic Text (MT) and Targum Onkelos (TO) that demonstrates the canon-conscious changes in TO, indicating the translator’s (*Meturgeman*) knowledge of another text in 2 Chr 3:1, which results in changes in both passages. Although the text is essentially a word for word translation throughout most of the passage, changes result from retaining canon-conscious exegetical interpretations in TO which in turn leads to a nuanced interpretation of the passage. From a methodological standpoint, the MT text will be examined first paying particular attention to grammatical, syntactical, and literary issues, and then be compared with TO, noting similarities and differences and then examining when and whether these differences change the overall interpretation of the text. By following the contour of the entire passage and not just the significant changes, the nuanced overall interpretation will be more evident. By following this procedure not only is canon-conscious translation observed in TO but also a proposal for a different type of text critical analysis is made, one that pays more attention to how these differences impact the overall literary strategy of a particular text.⁹

⁷ Jordan M. Scheetz, *The Concept of Canonical Intertextuality and the Book of Daniel* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2012), 34. For a more extensive treatment of what I call canonical intertextuality see 1–35.

⁸ Scheetz, *Concept of Canonical Intertextuality*, 34.

⁹ Fleisher and Chilton, *The Targums*, 439, note a similar approach to Gen 22, “On the one hand, we need to undertake a close reading of the story of the sacrifice of Isaac as found in the HB. By working to understand its plot and the dynamics, its impact and its lingering questions, we can see how the tale was read. This reading is not taken in isolation from the Targums’ readings but with full knowledge of what they say. On the other hand, we will look at the Targum’s recasting of Genesis 22.”

B COMPARISON OF GEN 22:1–19 BETWEEN THE MASORETIC TEXT (MT) AND TARGUM ONKELOS (TO)**1 22:1–2**

ויהי אחר הדברים האלה והאלהים נסה את אברהם ויאמר אליו אברהם ויאמר הנני

MT 22:1 And it came to pass after these things and God tested Abraham and he said to him, "Abraham," and he said, "Behold me."

והוה בתר פתגמא האילין ויוי נסי ית אברהם ואמר ליה אברהם ואמר האנא

TO 22:1 And it came to pass after these things and YWY tested Abraham and he said to him, "Abraham," and he said, "Behold me."

The opening two verses of the narrative introduce the key conflict between God's testing of Abraham and Abraham's response to this test with regard to his only son, Isaac. Genesis 22:1 gives the first aspect of this conflict as the text clearly lets the reader know that everything that is about to happen is God's test of Abraham, as the MT makes clear.¹⁰ The use of "ויהי / and it came to pass" is clearly introducing a new narrative and yet "אחר הדברים האלה / after these things" makes a clear connection to the previous material where after years of barrenness and ultimately the unfulfilled promise to Abraham from 12:1–3 (ואעשך לגוי גדול / and I will make you a great nation) and 15:4 (לא יירשך / this one will not inherit you but who will go out from your loins, he will inherit you), God miraculously provided a physical descendant from Abraham and Sarah.¹¹ Through the use of a W+X+QATAL clause,¹² "והאלהים נסה את אברהם / and God tested Abraham," it is clear that

¹⁰ John Skinner, *Genesis* (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1930), 327–328, notes with regard to this test, "The only incident in Abraham's life expressly characterized as a 'trial' of his faith is the one here narrated, where the patriarch proves his readiness to offer up his only son as a sacrifice at the command of God."

¹¹ Georg Steins, *Die "Bindung Isaaks" im Kanon (Gen 22)* (Freiburg: Herder, 1999), 147, makes a clear case for foundational material from Gen 21: "Im Nahkontext von Gen 22 spielt 21,1–21 eine besondere Rolle, denn in dieser Perikope wird Gen 22 mit der Erzählung von der Geburt Isaaks und der Vertreibung der Hagar und ihres Sohnes Ismael vorbereitet. Isaak, der erst mit Gen 21 ins Spiel kommt, ist am Ende der einzige, d.h. der einzig verbliebene Sohn Abrahams."

¹² My description of Hebrew syntax follows John H. Sailhamer, "A Database Approach to the Analysis of Hebrew Narrative," *Maarav* 5–6 (1990): 319–335. On a basic level verbal clauses are marked by either the presence (W) or absence (0) of ו, whether something precedes the predicate (X), and the type of predicate (QATAL, YIQTOL, etc.), or simply as WAYYIQTOL. Nominal clauses are marked by the presence (W) or absence (0) of ו and NC.

God's testing of Abraham is necessary background for the ensuing dialogue.¹³ The initial short interaction between God and Abraham, "ויאמר אליו אברהם / and he said to him, 'Abraham,' and he said, 'Behold me,'" is characteristic in the direct dialogue when there are two characters speaking to one another in the narrative (cf. 22:7 "ויאמר יצחק אל אברהם אביו ויאמר אבי / and Isaac said to Abraham his father and he said, 'My father,' and he said, 'Behold me, my son,'" and 22:11 "ויקרא אליו מלאך יהוה מן השמים / and the messenger of YHWH called to him from heaven and he said, 'Abraham, Abraham'"). Targum Onkelos follows the MT word for word except for changing the generic designation of God from "אלהים / God" to God's covenant name "יְיָ / YWY," something that will be characteristic of the whole narrative (cf. 22:3, 8, 9, 12).

ויאמר קח נא את בנך את יחידך אשר אהבת
את יצחק ולך לך אל ארץ המריה והעלהו שם
לעלה על אחד ההרים אשר אמר אליך

MT 22:2 And he said, "Take now your son, your only one, who you love, Isaac, and go yourself to the land of Moriah and offer him up there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will say to you."

ויחל שלמה לבנות את בית יהוה בירושלם בהר
המוריה אשר נראה לדויד אביהו אשר הכין
במקום דויד בגרן ארנן היבוסי

MT 2 Chr 3:1 And Solomon began to build the house of YHWH in Jerusalem on the mountain of Moriah where he appeared to David his father where David established in the place on the threshing-floor of

¹³ Wolfgang Schneider, *Grammatik des Biblischen Hebräisch* (2nd ed.; Garching: Claudius, 2004), 178–180, notes that anything other than a WAYYIQTOL breaks the narrative chain and introduces background information: "Die Sätze, die die Narrativkette unterbrechen, enthalten Hintergrundinformationen. In ihnen schreitet die Erzählung nicht fort" (Schneider, *Grammatik*, 180). Shimon Bar-Efrat, *De Bijbel Vertelt: Literaire Kunst in Oudtestamentische Verhalen* (Kampen: Kok, 2008), 36, notes the paradigmatic distanced perspective of the narrator throughout this narrative even with the shocking nature of Abraham's test: "Vaak is van Bijbelse vertellers gezegd dat zij de gebeurtenissen objectief en neutral weergeven. ... zij berichten de gebeurtenissen op een feitelijke en zakelijke toon, zonder emotionaliteit, zonder pathos, zonder uitdrukkingen van medeleven, vreugde, lof of blaam en zij vertellen zelfs de schokkendste voorvallen met terughouding en zonder in gruwelijke details te vervallen (het verhaal van Abrahams offer is daarvoor typerend)." Skinner, *Genesis*, 328, similarly comments on the literary style of the narrative, "The story, which is the literary masterpiece of the Elohist collection, is told with exquisite simplicity; every sentence vibrates with restrained emotion, which shows how fully the author realizes the tragic horror of the situation." For a more up-to-date discussion with regard to the perspectives on source materials in Gen 22:1–19, see Steins, *Die "Bindung Isaaks"*, 104–114.

Ornan the Jebusite.

ואמר דבר כען ית ברך ית יחידך דרחימתא ית
 יצחק ואיזיל לך לארע פלחנא ואסיקהי קבדמי
 תמן לעלתא על חד מן טוריא באימר לך

TO 22:2 And he said, "Take now your son, your only one, who you love, Isaac, and go yourself to the land of the service and offer him up there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will say to you."

Genesis 22:2 gives the actual content of God's test of Abraham in the MT. The test comes in the form of a series of commands for Abraham to take (קח) his only son, presumably his only son with Sarah, go (לך) to "ארץ המריה / the land of Moriah," and offer Isaac up (העלה / offer him up) as a burnt offering upon a mountain there that God will say (אמר / I will say) to him. The command to go is an obvious parallel to the initial calling narrative of Abraham in 12:1 with the use of "לך לך / go yourself." The place that Abraham is to take Isaac to, "ארץ המריה / the land of Moriah," has only one parallel in the MT in 2 Chr 3:1. In this parallel "המוריה / Moriah" is identified as the place where Solomon built the temple which was also the place that was revealed to David, in particular "בגן ארנן היבוסי" / on the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite." The obvious intertextual connection in reading these texts is that the land to which Abraham was to take and offer up Isaac is also the place where the later temple of Solomon was to be built. Although the MT does not make an explicit connection between these passages beyond the use of the same proper noun "המריה / Moriah," TO introduces a curious connection by its translation of "המריה / Moriah" with "פלחנא / service" in an otherwise word for word parallel with the MT. The use of "פלחנא / service" is significant in that this is the normal word used especially for "priestly service, Temple service, worship" in targumic literature.¹⁴ What is only implicit from an intertextual standpoint in the MT is made explicit in TO.

Although Skinner in his classic commentary on Genesis states in relation to המריה / Moriah, "All attempts to explain the name and identify the place have been futile," Jewish interpretation, both early and medieval, seems to be fairly unified on this point.¹⁵ The LXX translates the phrase "ארץ המריה / the land of Moriah" with "τὴν ὑψηλὴν τὴν γῆν ἄψυγαν / the high land." Van Ruiten notes in relation to *Jubilees'* parallel text,

the author of *Jubilees* comes close to the reading of the Septuagint (τὴν ὑψηλὴν), which possibly goes back to a Hebrew *Vorlage*, of Gen 22:2c, which did not have המריה but something like המרה.

¹⁴ Marcus Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (New York: The Judaica Press, 1982), 1141.

¹⁵ Skinner, *Genesis*, 328.

However, it is also possible that the author of *Jubilees* deliberately changed his *Vorlage*, because in *Jub.* 18:13 it becomes clear that the place where Abraham is going to offer his son is identified with Mount Zion. The identification of Moriah and Zion (Jerusalem) occurs also in 2 Chr 3:1 . . . and in rabbinic sources.¹⁶

It could also be the case that both the translator(s) of the LXX and the author of *Jubilees* changed their text based on 2 Chr 3:1. Josephus calls the place “τὸ Μώρισον ὄρος / the Morian mountain” (*Ant.* I,224), which is clearly taken from 2 Chr 3:1.¹⁷ Rashi without hesitation identifies the place as Jerusalem based on 2 Chr 3:1: “ארץ המוריה. ירושלים וכן בדברי הימים (ד"ה ב' ג') לבנות / את בית ה' בירושלם בהר המוריה / the land of Moriah. Jerusalem and so in *The Words of the Days* (2 Chr 3) ‘to build the house of HaShem in Jerusalem on the mountain of Moriah.’”¹⁸

2 22:3–5

וישכם אברהן בבקר ויחבש את חמרו ויקח את
שני נעריו אתו ואת יצחק בנו ויבקע עצי עלה
ויקם וילך אל המקום אשר אמר לו האלהים

MT 22:3 And Abraham rose early in the morning and he saddled his donkey and he took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son and he split the wood of the burnt offering and he rose and he went to the place which God said to him.

ואקדים אברהם בצפרא וזרין ית חמרין ודבר
ית תרין עולימוהי עמיה וית יצחק בריה וצלח
אעי לעלתא וקם ואזל לאתרא דאמר ליה יו

TO 22:3 And Abraham rose early in the morning and he saddled his donkey and he took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son and he split the wood of the burnt offering and he rose and he went to the place which YWY said to him.

The following section in 22:3–5 demonstrates Abraham’s immediate response to God’s commands, including gathering the necessary supplies and approaching the place God had described with “שני נעריו / two of his young men” and “יצחק / Isaac.” Through a series of WAYYIQTOL clauses, 22:3 outlines Abraham’s unquestioning response. Abraham’s rising early, saddling his donkey, taking two young men and Isaac, splitting the wood, and going to the place which God said (“אמר” cf. 22:2) all come in quick succession, giving little of the psychological aspect of what is happening in Abraham’s inner

¹⁶ Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26–25:10 in the Book of Jubilees 11:14–23:8* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 220.

¹⁷ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities: Books I–III* (trans. H. St. J. Thackeray; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1930), 110.

¹⁸ Rashi, *חמשה חומשי תורה* (Tel Aviv: Schocken Publishing, 1958), סו.

thoughts and emotions, only his outward response to God's commands.¹⁹ Targum Onkelos translates the MT of 22:3 word for word with the already noted standard change between "אלהים / God" and "י"י / YWY."

<p>ביום השלישי וישא אברהם את עיניו וירא את המקום מרחק</p>	<p>MT 22:4 On the third day and Abraham lifted his eyes and he saw the place from a distance.</p>
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<p>ביומא תליתאה וזקף אברהם ית עינוהי וחזא ית אתרא מרחיק</p>	<p>TO 22:4 On the third day and Abraham lifted his eyes and he saw the place from a distance.</p>
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The MT of 22:4 makes it clear that wherever "ארץ המריה / the land of Moriah" was, it was able to be seen with only a three day journey from Abraham's initial location. Strikingly, the text gives no further indication of what Abraham was inwardly thinking during this three day journey. Targum Onkelos translates the text word for word.

<p>ויאמר אברהם אל נעריו שבו לכם פה עם החמור ואני והנער נלכה עד כה ונשתחוה ונשובה אליכם</p>	<p>MT 22:5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Dwell yourselves here with the donkey and I and the young man, let us go until there and let us worship and let us return to you."</p>
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<p>ואמר אברהם לעולימוהי אוריכו לכוון הכא עים חמרא ואנא ועולימא נתמטי עד כא ונסגוד ונתוב לותכוון</p>	<p>TO 22:5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Dwell yourselves here with the donkey and I and the young man, let us go until there and let us worship and let us return to you."</p>
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In the MT Gen 22:5 breaks the three day silence as Abraham instructs his young men to wait at a distance while he and Isaac go and worship. Abraham's direct speech reveals a series of volitional desires. On the one hand he commands his two young men to remain (שבו / dwell) where they are with the donkey with a plural imperative. On the other he expresses his desire to go (נלכה / let us go) with Isaac to the place God said, worship (נשתחוה / let us worship) there with Isaac, and to return with Isaac to them (נשובה / let us return), all with plural cohortatives. All of this seems to foreshadow the remainder of the story, but also gives a view into what Abraham has been seemingly hoping

¹⁹ Skinner, *Genesis*, 329, similarly states, "While the outward preparations are graphically described, no word is spared for the conflict in Abraham's breast, – a striking illustration of the reticence of the legends with regard to mental states."

for over the last three days, namely that somehow Isaac will return with him. Targum Onkelos translates 22:5 with a word for word parallel.

3 22:6–10

ויקח אברהם את עצי העלה וישם על יצחק בנו
ויקח בידו את האש ואת המאכלת וילכו שניהם
יחדו

MT 22:6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and he put upon Isaac his son and he took in his hand the fire and the knife and the two of them went together.

ונסיב אברהם ית אעי דעלתא ושוי על יצחק
בריה ונסיב בידיה ית אישתא וית סכינא ואזלו
תרויהון כחדא

TO 22:6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and he put upon Isaac his son and he took in his hand the fire and the knife and the two of them went together.

In contrast to the previous three verses that spanned a three day period with relative terseness, the story begins to slow down as Abraham and Isaac approach their destination and ultimately Abraham begins to finish God's command in 22:6–10. Even with Abraham's hope expressed in 22:5, namely that both Abraham and Isaac would return to the young men, 22:6 shows that Abraham is still planning to follow God's command. The irony of the whole situation is of course that Isaac is carrying the wood that is intended to be used to offer him up as a burnt offering and further that the father is carrying both the fire and the knife that is expected to bring his promised descendant's life, his son, to an end. With this thick tension looming in the story, the two of them go together to a place seen in the distance. Targum Onkelos translates the text of 22:6 word for word.

ויאמר יצחק אל אברהם אביו ויאמר אבי
ויאמר הנני בני ויאמר הנה האש והעצים ואיה
השה לעלה

MT 22:7 And Isaac said to Abraham his father and he said, "My father," and he said, "Behold me my son," and he said, "Behold the fire and the wood and where is the one of the flock for a burnt offering?"

ואמר יצחק לאברהם אבוהי ואמר אבא ואמר
האנא ברי ואמר הא אישתא ואעיא ואן אימרא
לעלתא

TO 22:7 And Isaac said to Abraham his father and he said, "My father," and he said, "Behold me my son," and he said, "Behold the fire and the wood and where is the one of the flock for a burnt offering?"

Genesis 22:7 represents the first time in the story that Isaac becomes more than a flat character, as he raises the simple but observant point about what is to be offered as the MT makes clear. Regardless of what age Isaac is, he is old enough to understand the process of offering a burnt sacrifice to the point that they are missing a key component, namely “השה לעלה / the one of the flock for a burnt offering.”²⁰ The short interactions, though interspersed with the formulaic “וַיֹּאמֶר / and he said,” belay the directness and intimacy of their conversation. Targum Onkelos translates the text word for word.

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֶה לּוֹ הַשֶּׁה לְעֹלָה בְּנֵי וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו MT 22:8 And Abraham said, “God will see to it, the one of the flock for the burnt offering my son,” and the two of them went together.

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם קִדְּם יְיָ גְלִי אֵימְרָא לְעֹלְתָא בְּרִי וַאֲזֵלוּ תְרוּיְהוֹן כְּחֻדָּא TO 22:8 And Abraham said, “Before YWY it will be revealed, the one of the flock for the burnt offering my son,” and the two of them went together.

As was the case in 22:5, 22:8 reveals what Abraham’s hope actually is, even if it does not directly give God’s actual command. Although we as readers know about God’s particular test of Abraham in relation to offering up Isaac as a burnt offering, Abraham betrays none of this to either his young men or even Isaac. Instead, Abraham appears to express what he believes, namely that God will see/provide (יִרְאֶה / he will see) “השה לעלה / the one of the flock for the burnt offering.”²¹ Targum Onkelos translates the text with a few changes. Again, “אֱלֹהִים / God” is translated with “יְיָ / YWY” but “אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֶה לּוֹ / God will see to it” is translated with “קִדְּם יְיָ גְלִי / before YWY it will be revealed.” This translation removes the anthropomorphism in the MT of God “יִרְאֶה / he will see” which is a standard hermeneutical practice in both TO and Targum Jonathan (TJ).²²

²⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 112, claims that Isaac is 25 years old in this narrative: “τοῦ δ’ Ἰσαάκου πέμπτον τε καὶ εἰκοστὸν ἔτος ἔχοντος τὸν βωμὸν κατασκευάζοντος καὶ πυθομένου, τί καὶ μέλλοιεν θύειν ἱερείου μὴ παρόντος” (*Ant.* I.227).

²¹ John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical–Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 178, goes as far as to say about Abraham’s response to Isaac, “Thus midway through the narrative the writer allows the final words of the story to appear and to foreshadow the end. The reader is thereby assured both of the outcome of the narrative and of the quality of Abraham’s faith.”

²² Houtman and Sysling, *Alternative Targum Traditions*, 27, note with regard to general characteristics of Targums, “Expressions that might seem disrespectful with regard to God or His people are avoided. Anthropomorphic and anthropopathic references to God are often, though not always, reworded in more neutral wording.”

ויבאו אל המקום אשר אמר לו האלהים ויבן
שם אברהם את המזבח ויערך את העצים
ויעקד את יצחק בנו וישם אתו על המזבח
ממעל לעצים

MT 22:9 And they went in to the place
which God said to him and Abraham built
there the altar and he arranged the wood
and he bound Isaac his son and he put
him upon the altar from upon the wood.

ואתו לאתרא דאמר ליה יוי ובנא תמן אברהם
ית מדבחה וסדר ית אעיא ועקד ית יצחק בריה
ושוי יתיה על מדבחה עיל מן אעיא

TO 22:9 And they went in to the place
which YWY said to him and Abraham
built there the altar and he arranged the
wood and he bound Isaac his son and he
put him upon the altar from upon the
wood.

Genesis 22:9 continues to characterize Abraham as completely obedient to God's command as he reaches the place which God said to him. Upon Abraham's and Isaac's much anticipated arrival (ויבאו / and they went in), Abraham builds (ויבן / and he built) an altar, he arranges (ויערך / and he arranged) the wood upon the altar, he binds (ויעקד / and he bound) Isaac, and he puts (וישם / and he put) Isaac bound upon the wood on the altar, using a quick succession of WAYYIQTOL verbs, with each one heightening the tension in the story. The only real background information is with the relative clause, "אשר אמר לו / which God said to him," indicating that this was indeed the place which God said back in 22:2 (אשר אמר אליך / which I will say to you). Targum Onkelos translates the text word for word yet again using "יוי / YWY" for "אלהים / God."

וישלח אברהם את ידו ויקח את המאכלת
לשחט את בנו

MT 22:10 And Abraham sent his hand and
he took the knife to slaughter his son.

ואושיט אברהם ית ידיה ונסיב ית סכינא למכס
ית בריה

TO 22:10 And Abraham sent his hand and he
took the knife to slaughter his son.

The climax of the story is found in 22:10 as Abraham stretches out his hand to slaughter Isaac. The incredible tension is only heightened as the contrast between Abraham's complete obedience to God's command and his words to both the young men and Isaac are at hopeless odds with one another; Abraham will return alone to the young men because he has sacrificed his son. Targum Onkelos translates 22:10 word for word.

Flesher and Chilton, *The Targums*, 45, state, "A special class of translation techniques deals with the name of God; specialists commonly speak of this as 'anti-anthropomorphism.' ... Anti-anthropomorphisms provide circumlocutions in which the translation removes the impression that God has human characteristics."

4 22:11–14

ויקרא אליו מלאך יהוה מן השמים ויאמר
אברהם אברהם ויאמר הנני

MT 22:11 And the messenger of YHWH called to him from heaven and he said, "Abraham, Abraham."

וקרא ליה מלאכא דיוי מן שמיא ואמר אברהם
אברהם ואמר האנא

TO 22:11 And the messenger of YWY called to him from heaven and he said, "Abraham, Abraham."

The resolution of the story begins in 22:11–14, as at the absolute height of the tension in the story, with Abraham's outstretched hand, the messenger of YHWH calls out and puts an end to the test. For the first time in the Hebrew text God's covenant name is used in 22:11, as the messenger of YHWH gets Abraham's attention. The messenger of YHWH calls to Abraham "מן השמים / from heaven," a designation that is missing in the initial calling in 22:1. The repetition of Abraham's name communicates the urgency of the situation. At the risk of stating the obvious, this short interaction stops the impending slaughter of Isaac at the hands of his father.²³ Targum Onkelos translates the text in a word for word parallel.

ויאמר אל תשלח ירך אל הנער ואל תעש לו
מאומה כי עתה ידעתי כי ירא אלהים אתה ולא
חשכת את בנך את יחידך ממני

MT 22:12 And he said, "Do not send your hand to the boy and do not do to him anything because now I know that you are one fearing of God and you have not withheld your son, your only one, from me."

ואמר לא תושיט ירך בעולימא ולא תעביד ליה
מדעם ארי כען ידעית ארי דחלא דיוי את ולא
מנעתא ית ברך ית יחידך מני

TO 22:12 And he said, "Do not send your hand to the boy and do not do to him anything because now I know that you are one fearing of YWY and you have not withheld your son, your only one, from me."

The messenger of YHWH not only calls off what was commanded in the beginning of the story, but even explains what the core of the test actually was in 22:12. The messenger of YHWH makes it clear that the hand Abraham sent to take the knife in 22:10 (וישלח אברהם את ידו / and Abraham sent his hand) is not to be sent to take the boy's life here in 22:12 (אל תשלח ירך אל הנער / do not send your hand to the young man). As a matter of fact, Abraham is to do noth-

²³ Skinner, *Genesis*, 330, states, "At the extreme moment Abraham's hand is stayed by a voice from heaven."

ing to Isaac. The reason for this change in commands is that the messenger of YHWH now knows that Abraham fears God (כי ירא אלהים / because one fearing of God), which in this case is characterized by obedience to God's clear command up to this very point, where Abraham would not even withhold his only son "ממני / from me," blurring the distinction between "אלהים / God" and "מלאך יהוה / the messenger of YHWH."²⁴ Abraham's test was whether or not Abraham would fear God, in the matter of his only son (from Sarah) Isaac's life, a test of Abraham's ultimate affection. Targum Onkelos translates the text in a word for word parallel, changing again "אלהים / God" to "יוי / YWY."

וישא אברהם את עיניו וירא והנה איל אחר
נאחז בסבך בקרניו וילך אברהם ויקח את האיל
ויעלהו לעלה תחת בנו

MT 22:13 And Abraham lifted his eyes and he saw and behold a ram, behind, being caught in the thicket by his horns and Abraham went and he took the ram and he offered it for a burnt offering in place of his son.

וזקף אברהם ית עינוהי בתר אלין וחזא והא
דכרא אחיד באילנא בקרנוהי ואזל אברהם
ונסיב ית דכרא ואסקיה לעלתא חלף בריה

TO 22:13 And Abraham lifted his eyes behind these and he saw and behold one ram was in the tree by his horns and Abraham went and he took the ram and he offered it for a burnt offering in place of his son.

Genesis 22:13 gives a prophetic ring to Abraham's earlier words to Isaac in 22:8 (אלהים יראה לו השה לעלה בני / God will see to it, the one of the flock for a burnt offering my son) and even before that what he said to his two young men in 22:5 (ואני והנער נלכה עד כה ונשתחוה / and I and the young man, let us go and let us worship) as a ram is provided in Isaac's place for the burnt offering. The command from 22:2 was, "והעלהו שם לעלה על אחד ההרים," and is now completed in 22:13 with the verbal parallel: "ויעלהו לעלה תחת בנו." In some sense, the command was kept as the

²⁴ Gerhard von Rad, *Das 1. Buch Moses: Genesis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1987), 192, notes in relation to what is meant by fear of the Lord in this section and in the OT as a whole, "Es ist nicht als eine besondere gefühlsmäßige Reaktion auf die als mysterium tremendum erfahrene Wirklichkeit Gottes zu denken. Daß das Alte Testament derlei kennt, ist nicht zu bestreiten; aber da, wo das Wort ‚Gottesfurcht‘ und ‚gottesfürchtig‘ im Alten Testament anklingt, bezieht es sich nicht auf eine besondere Form seelischer Erschütterungen, sondern gleich auf die Folge davon, d. h. auf den Gehorsam (1. Mos. 20,11; 42,18; 2. Kö. 4,1; Jes. 11,2; Spr. 1,7; Hi. 1,1,8)."

ram was offered in Isaac's place.²⁵ Targum Onkelos adds "בתר אלין / behind these" in the first clause for further clarity, giving an overall smoother reading that clarifies why Abraham would not have seen the ram sooner, translates "אחר / behind" as "אחיד / one" where ר is understood to be ד, "נאחז / being caught" is not represented, and "בסבך / in the thicket" is translated as "באילנא / in the tree."

ויקרא אברהם שם המקום ההוא יהוה יראה
אשר יאמר היום בהר יהוה יראה

MT 22:14 And Abraham called the name of that place "YHWH will see" which it is being said today, "On the mountain of YHWH it will appear."

ופלח וצלי אברהם תמן באתרא ההוא אמר
קדם יוי הכא יהוה פלחין דריא בכין יתאמר
כיומא הדין בטורא הדין אברהם קדם יוי פלח

TO 22:14 And Abraham served and prayed there in that place saying, "Here before YWY generations will be ones serving," therefore it is being said as this day, "On this mountain Abraham served before YWY."

ושרי שלמה למבני ית בית מקדשא דיהוה
בירושלם בטור מוריה באתר דפלח וצלי
אברהם תמן בשמא דיהוה הוא אתר ארע
פולחנא דתמן פלחין קדם יהוה כל דריא ותמן
אסיק אברהם ית יצחק בריה לעלתא ושזביה
מימרא דיהוה ואתמני דכרא חלופיה תמן צלי
יעקב במערקיה מן קדם עשו אחוי תמן אתגלי
מלאכא דיהוה לדויד בזמן דאתקין מדבחא
באתרא די זבן מן ארון בבית אדרי דארון
יבוסאה

T 2 Chr 3:1 And Solomon began to build the house of the sanctuary of YHWH in Jerusalem on the mountain of Moriah in the place where Abraham served and prayed there in the name of YHWH, it is the place of the land of the service where there all generations are serving before YHWH and there Abraham caused Isaac his son to go up for a burnt offering and the word of YHWH delivered him and a ram was appointed in place of him, there Jacob prayed when he fled from before Esau his brother, there the messenger of YHWH revealed himself to David in the time when he established the altar in the place which he bought from Ornan, in the house of the threshing place of Ornan the Jebusite.

²⁵ Skinner, *Genesis*, 330, notes in relation to the substitution of the ram for Isaac, "The substitution of the ram for the human victim takes places without express command, Abraham recognizing by its mysterious presence that it was 'provided' by God for this purpose." He goes on to say, "Having regard to the origin of many other Genesis narratives, we must admit the possibility that the one before us is a legend, explaining the substitution of animal for human sacrifices in some type of ancient worship" (332).

The final verse of the resolution brings the narrative as a whole together with a rather cryptic saying in the MT while the same verse draws the text into a canonical perspective in TO, which was hinted at already in its translation of "המריה / Moriah" by "פלחנא / service" in 22:2. The MT of 22:14 has Abraham naming the place "יהוה יראה / YHWH will see" which explains the saying "בהר יהוה יראה / on the mountain of YHWH it will appear." The name of the place actually transforms the earlier statement from 22:8 where the generic name for God "אלהים / God" is used and here uses God's covenant name "יהוה / YHWH," which is what the TO has consistently done throughout. Further the saying itself is transformed from the *qal* active "יִרְאֶה / he will see" with YHWH as the subject to the *nip'al* passive "יִרְאֶה / it will appear" with an impersonal subject. In other words, Abraham names the place after the messenger of YHWH's "seeing" that stopped him from offering Isaac as a burnt offering and a ram was offered instead in Isaac's place. In turn this gave rise to the phrase "בהר יהוה יראה / on the mountain of YHWH it will appear."²⁶

Although TO has essentially been a word for word translation throughout the whole chapter, 22:14 is strikingly different. With this sudden change, it is clear that the somewhat obscure statement in the MT text is replaced with what was hinted at in 22:2 where TO translated "המריה / Moriah" with "פלחנא / service" based on 2 Chr 3:1.²⁷ As the resolution comes to a conclusion, TO interprets the whole of this story as the prophetic reason for Solomon establishing the temple where he did: "ופלח וצלי אברהם תמן באתרא ההוא אמר קדם יוי הכא / יהון פלחין דריא / And Abraham served and prayed there in that place saying, 'Here before YWY generations will be ones serving.'" The further saying derived from this reality underscores the establishment of the temple in its particular place through Abraham's service there: "בטורא הדין אברהם קדם יוי פלח / On this mountain Abraham served before YWY." To add to this canon-conscious interpretation, a Targum of 2 Chr 3:1 (a Targum since there is no official Targum for the Ketuvim) contains all of these observations as well. Although the MT of 2 Chr 3:1 only has the semantic parallel with Gen 22:2 in the use of "המריה / Moriah," the Targum has both 22:2 and 22:14 in common, identifying the place on which Solomon was to build the temple as the place "דפלח וצלי תמן אברהם / where Abraham served and prayed there." This statement is a verbal parallel to Gen 22:14: "ופלח וצלי אברהם תמן / and Abraham served and prayed there." Also, the Targum identifies the place as "ארע פולחנא / the land of the service" just as it was identified in 22:2, "ארע פלחנא / the land of the service," and then makes it clear that this would be the place where further generations would worship: "דתמן פלחין קדם יהוה כל דריא / where there all generations are serving before YHWH." All of which is similar to Gen 22:14: "אמר

²⁶ Skinner, *Genesis*, 330, states about this phrase, "The words בהר יהוה יראה yield no sense appropriate to the context."

²⁷ *Jubilees* makes this connection in a different way concluding after a similar text to MT, "It is Mt. Zion" (Van Ruiten, *The Rewriting*, 217).

ותמן אסיק אברהם ית / here before YWY generations will be ones serving." Further, 2 Chr 3:1 recounts the broader story of Gen 22: " ויצחק בריה לעלתא ושזביה מימרא דיהוה ואתמני דכרא חלופיה / and there Abraham caused Isaac his son to go up for a burnt offering and the word of YHWH delivered him and a ram was appointed in place of him." Yet the Targum also identifies this same location as the place in which Jacob prayed when he was fleeing from Esau in Gen 28:10–22, " תמן צלי יעקב במערקיה מן קדם עשו אחוי, " there Jacob prayed when he fled from before Esau his brother," and also where David built an altar on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite in 2 Sam 24:16–25: " תמן אתגלי מלאכא דיהוה לדויד בזמן דאתקין מדבחה באתרא די זבן מן / there the messenger of YHWH revealed himself to David in the time when he established the altar in the place which he bought from Ornan, in the house of the threshing place of Ornan the Jebusite." What these three texts have in common for the purpose of 2 Chr 3:1 in the Targum is that they all were places where Abraham, Jacob, and David prayed and made offerings, clearly grounding Solomon's temple in the "right" place.

5 22:15–19

ויקרא מלאך יהוה אל אברהם שנית מן השמים MT 22:15 And the messenger of YHWH called to Abraham a second time from heaven.

וקרא מלאכא דיזי לאברהם תינינות מן שמיא TO 22:15 And the messenger of YHWH called to Abraham a second time from heaven.

The story concludes in 22:15–19, where YHWH reaffirms his promise to Abraham (cf. Gen 12:1–3), where Abraham returns to his young men (just as he hoped), and ultimately moves on to Beer-sheba. Although the story seems to have come to a conclusion in the previous verse, 22:15 introduces a second time that the messenger of YHWH called to Abraham.²⁸ It is clear through the verbal parallel that the first time the messenger of YHWH called to Abraham was in 22:11 (ויקרא אליו מלאך יהוה מן השמים / And the messenger of YHWH called to him from heaven). Targum Onkelos returns to a word for word parallel translation.

ויאמר בי נשבעתי נאם יהוה כי יען אשר עשית MT 22:16 And he said, "By myself I swear,"
את הדבר הזה ולא חשכת את בנך את יחידך declaration of YHWH, "Because on
account that you did this thing and you

²⁸ Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 179, suggests as a reason for this second calling, "Perhaps the purpose is to emphasize that this second discourse came at a separate time and thus after Abraham had finished the burnt offering."

did not withhold your son, your only one."

ואמר במימרי קיימית אמר יוי ארי חלף
דעבדתא ית פתגמא הדין ולא מנעתא ית ברך
ית יחידך

TO 22:16 And he said, "In my word I establish," said YWY, "Because on account that you did this thing and you did not withhold your son, your only one."

Genesis 22:16 repeats how Abraham passed the test but demonstrates that this is the reason why YHWH has sworn what is to follow. Not only did the messenger call off the sacrifice of Isaac as seen in 22:12 (כי עתה ידעתי כי ירא / because now I know that you are one fearing of God and you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me) but in particular "כי יען אשר עשית את הדבר הזה ולא חשכת את בנך את יחידך / because on account that you did this thing and you did not withhold your son, your only one" becomes the basis of the messenger of YHWH's oath. This repetition emphasizes what in particular Abraham did that was so commendable in YHWH's eyes, namely that Abraham would not withhold even his most valuable thing, his only son (from Sarah), from him. Targum Onkelos translates the text avoiding the anthropomorphic "בי נשבעת" / by myself I swear" with the more removed "במימרי קיימית" / in my word I establish" but otherwise is a word for word parallel.

כי ברך אברכך והרבה ארבה את זרעך ככוכבי
השמים וכחול אשר על שפת הים וירש זרעך
את שער איביו

MT 22:17 "Because I will indeed bless you and I will indeed multiply your offspring like the stars of heaven and like the sand which is upon the shore of the sea and your offspring will inherit the gate of its enemies."

ארי ברכא אברכינך ואסגאה אסגי ית בנך
ככוכבי שמיא וכחלא דעל כיף ימא ויירתינך בנך
ית קרוי סנאיהון

TO 22:17 "Because I will indeed bless you and I will indeed multiply your offspring like the stars of heaven and like the sand which is upon the shore of the sea and your offspring will inherit the cities of their enemies."

The initial portion of what the messenger of YHWH is swearing is in 22:17. The first part of the oath is that YHWH will bless Abraham with innumerable descendants and that they will inherit their enemies' cities, understanding both the second (והרבה ארבה את זרעך ככוכבי השמים וכחול אשר אל שפת הים / and I will indeed multiply your seed like the stars of heaven and like the sand which is upon the shore of the sea) and third clauses as figures of speech (וירש זרעך את שער איביו / and your seed will inherit the gate of his enemies).

Targum Onkelos translates the text word for word but uses plural verbs and pronominal suffixes in relation to the collective noun "בן / offspring" in the final clause and eliminates the final figure of speech by substituting "קרוי סנאיהון / the cities of their enemies" for "שער איביו / the gate of its enemies."

<p>והתברכו בזרעך כל גוי הארץ עקב אשר שמעת בקלי</p>	<p>MT 22:18 "And all nations of the earth will bless themselves in your offspring on account that you listened to my voice."</p>
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<p>ויתברכו בדיל בנד כל עממי ארעא חלף דקבילתא למימרי</p>	<p>TO 22:18 "And all the nations of the earth will bless themselves on account of your offspring on account that you received my word."</p>
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Genesis 22:18 demonstrates that Abraham's blessing will be extended to the nations and again reinforces why Abraham will be blessed in these ways. The reflexive use of "והתברכו / and they will bless themselves" represents a change from 12:3 where the passive "ונברכו / and they will be blessed" is used. Still it reveals that Abraham's blessing will extend beyond his own descendants and even into the nations. The final emphasis on the reason why all this will be "עקב אשר שמעת בקלי / on account that you listened to my voice" functions as a summary statement of what was so commendable about Abraham in this test. Much of the material in 22:16–18 is repeated word for word in 26:2–5 as the promises to Abraham are passed on from Abraham to Isaac by YHWH, emphasizing in 26:5 "עקב אשר שמע אברהם בקלי" / on account that Abraham listened to my voice" which is clearly a verbal parallel to 22:18 but further is the reason why Isaac will receive this oath (cf. 26:3 "והקמתי את השבעה אשר נשבעתי לך" / and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father) as well.²⁹ Targum Onkelos translates 22:18 by placing a greater emphasis on why the nations will bless themselves by translating "בזרעך / in your off-

²⁹ Rolf Rendtorff, *Das Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1976), 151, sees in these promises a strong connection that brings the various patriarchal narratives together: "In der Abrahamgeschichte spielen die göttlichen Verheißungsreden eine vergleichsweise größere Rolle als in den beiden anderen Vätergeschichten und sind auch tiefer in den erzählerischen Kontext eingedrungen. Aber auch hier ist die rahmende Funktion deutlich erkennbar, vor allem in der abschließenden Verheißungsrede in Gen 22₁₅₋₁₈. Diese gehört nun auch zu den Textstücken, durch welche die drei Vätergeschichten miteinander verbunden und zu einem Ganzen zusammengefügt werden. In ihnen dominiert die Verheißung des Segens für andere. Sie ergeht an Abraham (Gen 12₃ 22₁₈), an Isaak (26₄) und an Jakob (28₁₄); dabei zeigen die unterschiedlichen Formulierungen, daß zunächst die Abrahamgeschichte und die Jakobgeschichte miteinander verbunden wurden (12₃ und 28₁₄) und erst in einem späteren Stadium der Bearbeitung und Gestaltung auch die Abrahamgeschichte und die Isaakgeschichte (22₁₈ und 26₄)."

spring" with "בדיל בנך / on account of your offspring" and further avoids the anthropomorphism by translating "אשר שמעת בקלי" / that you listened to my voice" with "דקבילתא למימרי" / that you received my word."

<p>וישב אברהם אל נעריו ויקמו וילכו יחדו אל באר שבע וישב אברהם בבאר שבע</p>	<p>MT 22:19 And Abraham returned to his young men and they rose and they went together to the well of the oath and Abra- ham dwelled by the well of the oath.</p>
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<p>ותב אברהם לות עולימהי וקמו ואזלו כחדא לבאר שבע ויתיב אברהם בבאר שבע</p>	<p>TO 22:19 And Abraham returned to his young men and they rose and they went together to the well of the oath and Abra- ham dwelled by the well of the oath.</p>
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The story comes full circle as Abraham and all the young men are united in 22:19. What is peculiar is that this text does not note that Abraham returned with Isaac to the young men (וישב אברהם אל נעריו / and Abraham returned to his young men). Instead it is as though Abraham was by himself when the second call from the messenger of YHWH came. But with Abraham's return they all go together to Beer-sheba (the well of the oath) and dwell there, an all too fitting place as Abraham just received an oath from the messenger of YHWH. This also brings the story full-circle from 22:5 where Abraham expressed his hope that they would return to them (ונשובה אליכם / and let us return to you). Targum Onkelos translates the text in a word for word parallel.

C CONCLUSION

In comparing the MT and TO several key issues are clear. First, a majority of the text is a simple word for word, particle for particle, semantic equivalent translation. Although it would have been easier and faster to skip through the vast majority of this text and only highlight the significant differences, this would actually undermine the overall argument. The vast majority of the comparison yields the meticulous care with which the text was translated. Second, certain standard changes were found throughout. The consistent translation of the generic term for God with God's covenant name is an obvious theological choice as was the consistent distancing of God from anthropomorphic descriptions. This God was not to be confused with any other God or created being; he was the covenant God. Third, the places where TO radically differed from the MT were based on canon-conscious interpretation. The translator made a connection between authoritative texts in Hebrew and then made this connection explicit within the Targum(s). What was only possibly implied or even intertextual in the Hebrew texts, became explicit in the Targum(s). In this last observation, the obvious point is that the *Meturgeman* was not only translating

a particular passage of scripture, but further that he was using a particular body of literature to translate and interpret this passage of scripture.

Although my primary concern is not the dating of these texts, the text of TO is so painstakingly close to MT with the exception of v. 14, it is hard not to view TO as dependent on MT or proto MT (there would seem to be virtually no difference between the two in this case). Further, it does seem that the Targum of 2 Chr 3:1 is quoting from TO, as well as other biblical texts, which would place it sometime after TO. Würthwein dates the official wording of the text for TO in the 5th Century C.E. after a long process of development:

Hier handelt es sich um *offizielle* Targume, deren endgültiger Wortlaut in Babylonien wahrscheinlich im 5. Jahrhundert n. Chr. nach längerer Vorgeschichte festgelegt wurde; sie beruhen auf älterem Material, das letztlich wohl palästinischen Ursprungs ist.³⁰

Tov notes that there are various scholarly opinions dating the text in the 1st, 3rd, or 5th Century C.E..³¹ With this said, this would place the development of TO squarely within the time period when the definitive canonical lists begin to appear, namely between the end of the 1st through the 4th Century C.E..³²

In practical terms my own exegetical comments on the Hebrew text have actually highlighted what impact this sort of translation and interpretation may have on a biblical text. My own comments focused on the reality that God was testing Abraham, how Abraham responded in both actions and words, and the messenger of YHWH's response to Abraham, ultimately leading not only to Abraham's words to his young men and Isaac being prophetic, with a ram taking Isaac's place, but further to the messenger's oath to Abraham, that would ultimately be reaffirmed with Isaac in essentially the same words. For TO all of these elements are certainly retained but through the transformations in Gen 22:2 and 22:14 the *Meturgeman* frames the story as a prophetic description of where the future temple would be, something that is also made explicit in 2 Chr 3:1 along with other details from Jacob's and David's lives. Although the connection between Gen 22 and 2 Chr 3:1 could certainly be made on lexical grounds in the Hebrew text as the only two places where "מריה / Moriah" is used, any further description is intertextual, two texts written for two different purposes, that now have a common context through being collected and ordered together into a larger textual context. They certainly appear to be in reference to the same place, but neither of the Hebrew texts makes this connection any more explicit than using the same word.

³⁰ Würthwein, *Der Text*, 94.

³¹ Tov, *Textual Criticism 2nd*, 150.

³² See Flesher and Chilton, *The Targums*, 151–166, for a detailed discussion in the dating of the Pentateuchal Targums.

The MT of Gen 22:1–19 focuses on God’s test of Abraham and how Abraham’s “listening to God’s voice” is the foundation for the continuing promises made to Abraham and his descendants. Targum Onkelos certainly includes all of these details as is evidenced by the word for word translation technique used for the majority of the passage. However, TO frames the narrative through transformations found in 22:2 and 22:14 based on 2 Chr 3:1, the only other place in the MT that “מִרְיָה / Moriah” is used, so that Gen 22 explicitly becomes the prophetic starting point for the building of the temple in Jerusalem by Solomon.³³ This transformative framing is not only found in Gen 22, but also in 2 Chr 3:1 that adds clear references to Gen 22 as well as Gen 28:10–22, and 2 Sam 24:16–25. Through these observations, I have demonstrated how canon-conscious interpretation impacted TO’s translation of Gen 22.

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³³ Flesher and Chilton, *The Targums*, 456, state similarly, “Onqelos’ agenda in Genesis 22 is the identification of the location of Abraham’s attempted sacrifice of Isaac with the location of the later temple in Jerusalem. TO changes two verses to accomplish this goal, Genesis 22:2 and 14, in a manner that enables them to support this point.” Charles T. R. Hayward, “The Sacrifice of Isaac and Jewish Polemic Against Christianity,” *CBQ* 52 (1990): 294, notes, by contrast, how the *Mekhilta de R. Ishmael* treats this passage: “Hence the commentator, through these verses of Scripture, is able to link the blood of the Passover and mount Moriah, where Abraham offered Isaac; and he can bring us back full circle to the Passover with mention of the lamb spoken of in Gen 22:8.”

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