

**THE PSALMS OF
SOLOMON**

**A PHILOLOGICAL ANALYSIS
OF THE GREEK
AND THE SYRIAC TEXTS**

by

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THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The eighteen poems which make up the Psalms of Solomon are Jewish pseudepigrapha from the first century, B.C.E.¹ The earliest surviving reference to the Psalms of Solomon comes from the fifth century C.E., where they are included in the list of the contents of Codex Alexandrinus. The end of the codex, where the Psalms of Solomon would have been, is missing. That the Psalms of Solomon were included in Codex Alexandrinus indicates, at least in this one instance, some relationship to the canonical tradition. The manuscripts continued to be copied and preserved in some communities, for at various times they are included in lists as *antilegomena*, pseudepigrapha, and apocrypha.² The Greek translations are preserved, in whole or in part, in eleven manuscripts dating from the tenth to the sixteenth century C.E., and the Syriac translations are found in five³ manuscripts dating from the seventh century (for the source known as S) to the sixteenth century C.E.⁴

¹ The dating is primarily on the basis of alleged allusions to events, both national and international, in the time period in the Psalms of Solomon. The descriptions of the foreign conqueror mentioned in Psalm 2 seems best to fit Pompey who invaded Palestine in 63 B.C.E. For a fuller treatment of the date of the Psalms and the possibility that stages of editorial activity may have taken place, see Wright, 1985: 640–641.

² Viteau, 1911: 186–191; Wright, 1985: 639.

³ Depending on whether S, a marginal note on a 7th century manuscript of the *Hymns of Severus*, is indeed a manuscript. See the discussion of this fragment at the beginning of the discussion of Psalm Three.

⁴ For a detailed description of the Greek and Syriac manuscripts see Trafton (1985, 5–9) and for the Greek texts see Wright's forthcoming volume on the Psalms of Solomon.

The primary importance of the Psalms of Solomon, however, is the light they shed on the historical and theological situation in this first century, B.C.E.

. . . [the] Psalms of Solomon preserve one of the most detailed messianic expectations in the immediate pre-Christian centuries. The title, 'Messiah,' . . . is given shape and dimension in these psalms as they describe the person of the Messiah and the character of his government in the age to come. There is more substance to the ideas concerning the Messiah in the Psalms of Solomon than any other extant Jewish writing."⁵

If the psalms are from the first century B.C.E., as most scholars believe, on the occasion of the invasion by the Romans under Pompey in 63 B.C.E., then the theological response in the psalms is important for studying the development of the issues of theodicy, eschatology, the suffering of the righteous, the concepts of life after death, and the person and position of the expected Messiah.

The Original Language of the Psalms of Solomon

A. The Languages of Jewish Pseudepigrapha:

A survey of current discussion in pseudopigraphical literature demonstrates a general consensus that much of the Judaeo-Christian non-canonical literature (extant in various languages in manuscripts dating from the second century B.C.E. to the ninth century C.E.), including the Psalms of Solomon, must have been written originally in a Semitic language (most frequently considered to be Hebrew). The following extended list of quotations from scholars contributing to Charlesworth's *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (1985) demonstrates the extent of this consensus:

⁵ Wright, 1985: 643.

(1) Knibb (1985: 146) noted concerning the “Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah” that

So far as the Martyrdom [of Isaiah] is concerned, there is good evidence for the view that it was composed in Hebrew. . . . The Hebrew Martyrdom of Isaiah was translated into Greek, and, as we have seen, a fragment of the Greek translation has survived.

(2) Wintermute (1985: 43–44) expressed the opinion concerning “Jubilees” that

There is no longer any reason to doubt that Jubilees was originally written in Hebrew. Nevertheless, there was still considerable latitude for debate until the discovery of fragments of the Hebrew text at both Qumran and Masada Consequently, it is generally maintained that the text was written in Hebrew.

(3) Isaac (1985: 7) asserted concerning “1 Enoch” (Ethiopic Apocalypse of Enoch) that

Some scholars believe that the original language of 1 Enoch is Hebrew; others, however, think it is Aramaic; still others contend that the book, like Daniel was composed partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic. . . . Moreover Halévy’s argument that portions of the Ethiopic text derived ultimately from a Hebrew original has not been disproved.

(4) Charlesworth (1985: 473–474) stated concerning the “Treatise of Shem” that

The original language seems to be Semitic since there are abundant Semiticisms that appear to be original and personal names are defined according to the Semitic alphabet it is impossible to discern whether the original language is Hebrew or Aramaic (Syriac).

(5) Charlesworth (1985: 626) similarly stated concerning the “Prayer of Manesseh” that

The scholarly stature of the specialists who favor a Semitic original, the lack of a detailed examination of the question by proponents of either a Greek or a Semitic original, and the cavalier treatment of the Syriac version(s) by almost all scholars should warn against concluding with some authors that the issue is closed and the original language is Greek. While the notes to the following translation demonstrate that the Syriac version sometimes preserves a more reliable tradition, and while I tend to favor slightly a Semitic original, three factors preclude certainty

(6) Priest (1985: 920) wrote concerning the “Testament of Moses” that

Most of the first editors and translators assumed that the original language [of the Testament of Moses] was indeed Greek. Further investigation, however, indicates the Greek was, in all probability, a translation of a Semitic original . . . but there remains a question as to whether the original was Aramaic or Hebrew. Certainty is not possible, but the balance of probability leans toward Hebrew.

(7) Johnson (1985: 251) noted concerning the “Life of Adam and Eve” that

Although no Hebrew text is extant, it is most probable that there did exist an original Hebrew document or documents from which the Apocalypse and *Vita* were translated, the Greek directly from the Hebrew and the Latin directly either from the Hebrew or from the Greek.

(8) Harrington (1985: 298–299) expressed the opinion concerning “Pseudo–Philo” that

In an 1898 article that introduced Pseudo–Philo to the scholarly world [“An Apocryphal Work Ascribed to Philo of Alexandria, *JQR* 10: 277–332], Leon Cohn argued that the Latin text is a translation from the Greek and that underlying the Greek there must have been a Hebrew original . . . For example, the phrase *in victoria* (9:3) or *ad victoria* (12:6) can be traced to the Hebrew idiom *ʿneṣaḥ*, “forever, everlasting,” but the root *nṣḥ* in Aramaic is not used in this sense . . . There we are led to conclude that Hebrew, rather than Aramaic, is the original language of Pseudo–Philo.

(9) Anderson (1985: 94) asserted concerning “2 Enoch” (Slavonic Apocalypse of Enoch) that

The text abounds in Semitisms . . . It is theoretically possible that the book, or at least parts of it, came directly from Hebrew into Slavonic. . . . An original Semitic composition can still be suspected; but after two stages of translation through Greek to Slavonic, it is not now possible to tell how much written material in a Semitic language might lie behind portions of the text which still have Semitisms, let alone to determine which Semitic language it might have been.

(10) Metzger (1985: 520) stated concerning “The Fourth Book of Ezra” that

There remain, however, many other phenomena that suggest a Semitic original lying behind the lost Greek text. Several scholars have argued that it was Aramaic. On the other hand, the presence of instances of notable Hebraisms (such as the infinitive absolute construction) has led most modern scholars to postulate a Hebrew original underlying the Greek.

(11) Hare (1985: 380) wrote concerning “The Lives of the Prophets” that

It is believed by many that The Lives of the Prophets was originally written in one of the Semitic languages. A few scholars have proposed that the original language was Syriac, but this position has won few supporters. More widespread is the view, vigorously defended by C. C. Torrey, that the book was composed in Hebrew.

(12) Robinson (1985: 414) concluded concerning “4 Baruch” that

Several early scholars, particularly R. H. Charles and those influenced by him, maintained that the original language of 4 Baruch was Greek. Since the time of Charles, however, scholars have generally come to favor the hypothesis of a Semitic original for the work.

(13) Charlesworth (1985: 726) noted concerning the “Odes of Solomon” that

Some scholars have thought that the original language [of the Odes of Solomon] is Greek, others that it is Hebrew. It is probable that they were composed in Syriac (or Aram.) . . . Most importantly, the attractive quality of the extant Syriac is indicative that Syriac is probably the original language.

(14) Rubinkiewicz (1985: 682) asserted concerning the “Apocalypse of Abraham” that

A thorough investigation of the original language of the Apocalypse of Abraham has never been undertaken . . . The Slavonic text of the Apocalypse of Abraham contains several Hebrew names . . . The parallelism of the verses reflect Semitic thought. The positive instead of a comparative betrays a Semitic original . . . The syntax of the temporal phrases reflects the Hebrew original of our apocalypse. . . The foregoing suggests that the Apocalypse of Abraham was written in a Semitic language, probably Hebrew.

(15) Klijn (1985: 616) conjectured concerning “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch that

The Greek version, most of which is lost, appears to have been translated from Hebrew. An original Hebrew should be accepted because of the many parallels between 2 Baruch and other Jewish literature composed in Hebrew or Aramaic. In some cases the Syriac text is intelligible only after translating it into Hebrew. Finally, a translation of the Syriac text into Hebrew restores a play on words apparently contained in the original.

(16) Charlesworth (1985: 444) concluded concerning the “History of the Rechabites” that

The Syriac version [of the History of the Rechabites] . . . may well have been translated from a Greek text, but some of it may go back to an earlier, Semitic source. . . . Some sections appear to have been composed in Greek, others indicate possible translation from a Semitic text, which could be the original language of the earliest portions.

(17) Alexander (1985: 225) stated concerning the “3 Enoch” (Hebrew Apocalypse of Enoch) that

3 Enoch is written in Hebrew. . . . There is no reason to suppose that the work has been translated into Hebrew from another language, such as Aramaic, in which some Merkabah traditions were written down.

(18) Zervos (1985: 756) concluded that the “Apocalypse of Daniel” was written in Greek, but recognized that

The case for Semitic sources for parts of the apocalyptic section (chs. 8–14) would have to be built on such slight evidence as the occurrence of the odd Semitic place name Gouzēth (9:7) . . . and the Semiticism “sons of men” (14:5) . . . the most that can be said is only that these three examples — Gouzēth in 9:7 [= Goza, a river or channel in Babylon], ‘sons of men’ in 14:5, and the three letters on the forehead of the Antichrist in manuscript B (9:25) — could conceivably be faint traces of an earlier, possibly Semitic, source or sources that underlie the whole or parts of the apocalyptic section of the Apocalypse of Daniel.

(19) And most significantly for the purpose of the current study, Wright (1985: 640) expressed the following opinions concerning the “Psalms of Solomon”

The Psalms of Solomon, according to the majority of scholars, were composed in Hebrew, very soon afterward translated into Greek, and at some later time into Syriac. . . . It is clear that the Greek is a translation. Ryle and James, and G. B. Gray (in *APOT*) noted features in common with other translations: translational errors from Hebrew, “Semiticisms” in the Greek, etc., our texts are indeed “translation Greek,” a phenomenon identifiably distinct from writing originally composed in Greek, even those written in conscious imitation of the Septuagint The Syriac has usually been seen as a translation from the Greek text, although there is some evidence that it was translated from a Hebrew text.

It is most interesting that scholars have often argued—without any extant Hebrew manuscripts—for Semitic *Vorlagen* behind the extant non-Semitic texts of a number of pseudepigraphical works which appeared in a variety of languages and in manuscripts as late as the 9th century C.E. But this conclusion is most often based on the detection of supposed “Semiticisms” in these texts, with little or no appeal to any detailed examination of the texts.

B. The Language of the Psalms of Solomon:

The current interest in the study of the Pseudepigrapha has generated renewed interest in the Psalms of Solomon,⁶ as evidenced by the work of Trafton (1985) on the Syriac psalms and the works of Wright (1985, 1996) on the Greek psalms. One of the questions re-examined in this period of renewed interest is that of the original language behind the Syriac and Greek texts. The Psalms of Solomon are thought by most scholars to have been originally composed in Hebrew and then translated into Greek, and then later into Syriac.⁷

⁶ For a discussion of this renewal of interest see Charlesworth, 1981.

⁷ Viteau (1911: 192–239) provided an extended survey of scholarly opinions about psalms and the debate over their original language, commencing with David Hæschell (1614) and concluding with Rendell Harris (1909).

Ryle and James (1891), Viteau (1911), Gray (1913), and Hann (1982), have demonstrated with considerable evidence that the Greek manuscripts of the Psalms of Solomon are “translation Greek” from a Hebrew original and have accepted the idea that the Syriac manuscripts are a translation of the Greek text of the psalms.

In the most recent focused study of the Syriac texts of the Psalms of Solomon, Trafton (1985) suggested that the psalms in the Syriac manuscripts of the Psalms of Solomon could be a translation made from a Hebrew original. Trafton’s suggestion has prompted this further investigation into the question of a Hebrew *Vorlage* for both the Greek and Syriac Psalms of Solomon. While Trafton made an extensive examination of the Syriac variants, his basic focus was “. . . not an attempt to determine the original language of the Psalms of Solomon, but rather to determine the value, if any, of the Syriac version” (1985:22). However, Trafton addressed the possibility of a Hebrew *Vorlage*, and concluded cautiously that (1) “Nothing has been found to call into question the scholarly consensus that the PssSol were composed in Hb, and thus, that the Gk version was translated from Hb” (187), and (2) “The quality, variety, and amount of evidence which points to a Hb *Vorlage*, against that which points to a Gk *Vorlage*, tips the balance of probability in favor of Hb.” (207).

However, one of the limitations of Trafton’s work is that he does not offer thorough philological support for his cautious conclusions that there are thirty-one places where the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts can be best explained by assuming a Hebrew *Vorlage*. Consequently, Trafton (1985: 195) found it necessary to concede that:

Of these thirty-one passages, eight could be explained plausibly on the basis of lost Gk readings of which the extant Gk readings are corruptions . . . , three could be explained on the basis of an inner-Sy corruption . . . , and three could be explained in terms of (mis) translation of the extant Gk readings.

For the other seventeen passages he stated, “Sy could be explained as paraphrase, free translation, guesswork, or ‘correction’ on the part of the a Sy translator using a Gk *Vorlage*.”

Wright (1988, 131–134) reviewed Trafton’s study and, taking seriously his reservations, concluded that while “Trafton has made a substantial contribution to research on the Psalms of Solomon . . . the Syriac cannot at the present time be proven to be a translation directly from the Hebrew” Thus, the exact nature of the relationship between the Syriac and the Greek psalms and the probability that the Syriac *and* the Greek were translated from a Hebrew *Vorlage* requires more definitive study. Consequently, the purpose of this analysis is to investigate the probability that the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts of the Psalms of Solomon can be best explained by assuming there was a Hebrew *Vorlage* which was read *and* misread differently by the Greek and the Syriac translators.

C. Possible Options for the Relationship of the Greek to the Syriac Texts:

Theoretically, at least eight different scenarios could be argued for with reference to the relationship of the Greek and Syriac textual traditions. It is possible that

(1) the psalms were composed in Hebrew and were translated into Greek, and they were subsequently translated from the Greek into Syriac. If so, the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts could most likely be explained by textual variants in the Greek text tradition.

(2) the psalms were composed in Hebrew and were subsequently translated into Syriac, and from the Syriac they were then translated into Greek. If so, the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts could most likely be explained by textual variants in the Syriac text tradition.

(3) the psalms were composed in Hebrew and were subsequently translated into Greek, and were then translated independently of the Greek from Hebrew into Syriac. If so, the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts could not be explained by textual variants in either the Greek text tradition or the Syriac text tradition, but at times appeal would have to be made to a conjectured Hebrew *Vorlage* and to Hebrew and cognate lexicography.

(4) the psalms were composed in Greek, and from the original Greek they were translated into Syriac. If so, the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts could most likely be explained by textual variants in the Greek text tradition.

(5) the psalms were composed in Syriac, and from the original Syriac they were translated into Greek. If so, the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts could most likely be explained by textual variants in the Syriac text tradition.

(6) the psalms were composed in Aramaic and were subsequently translated into Greek, and from the Greek they were then translated into Syriac. If so, the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts could probably be explained by textual variants in the Greek tradition, without making an appeal to Aramaic lexicography.

(7) the psalms were composed in Aramaic and were subsequently translated into Syriac, and from the Syriac they were then translated into Greek. If so, the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts could most likely be explained by textual variants in the Syriac text tradition, without making any appeal to Aramaic lexicography.

(8) the psalms were composed in Hebrew and were subsequently translated into Greek, and the Syriac translator

worked from both the Hebrew original and the Greek translation, depending upon the Syriac translator's ability to understand the Hebrew and/or the Greek at any particular place. If so, the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts could not be explained simply by textual variants in the Greek text tradition, but at times appeal would have to be made to a conjectured Hebrew *Vorlage* and to Hebrew and cognate lexicography.

The working hypothesis of this study draws primarily from the third and eighth possibility listed here.⁸ The study will attempt to demonstrate that the Greek and the Syriac textual traditions of the Psalms of Solomon are derived from independent translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage*. The focus will be on those passages where the Greek and the Syriac texts differ. (When the texts are in agreement, it is impossible to tell who translated whom.) It is in the variations where the proposal for a Hebrew *Vorlage* can best be tested, and if the test of the working hypothesis demonstrates a high degree of probability, it should be relatively easy to account for the differences in the Greek and Syriac translations.

Essentially what follows in this study is (1) a corroboration of the conclusion made by Wright (above, page 6) and a number of other scholars before him (above, footnote 8) that the Greek text of the Psalms of Solomon is from a Hebrew *Vorlage*, and (2) a corroboration of Kuhn's confident conclusion ("... daß \mathfrak{S} nicht aus \mathfrak{G} , sondern direkt aus \mathfrak{H} übersetzt hat" [1937:8]) and Trafton's cautious agreement that the Syriac text comes from a Hebrew *Vorlage*. In this study, all eighteen of the Psalms of Solomon are reviewed and it has

⁸ Kuhn (1937) worked with the same assumptions and presented eighteen passages which appeared to him to have been translated directly from the Hebrew, but Trafton (1985), in light of his reservations cite above, appears to have worked with the first and the eighth possibilities. On the other hand, Harris (1909, 1911), Viteau (1911), Gray (1913), Harris and Mingana (1916), Begrich (1939), and Baars (1972) worked solely with the first possibility. No one has ventured to suggest that possibilities two, four, five, six, or seven have any merit beyond being theoretical possibilities.

been demonstrated that a shared *Vorlage* can account for the differences between the Greek and Syriac psalms in more than 200 passages.

Methodology

A history of the scholarly consensus that the Greek texts of the Psalms of Solomon are translations of psalms written originally in Hebrew will not be given in this study since Viteau (1911) and Trafton (1985) have provided adequate summaries. This study provides a reconstructed *Vorlage* for the poetic lines which are examined. However, a full *Vorlage* of all the psalms has not been provided in this study since several “back translations” have already been done for the Greek text of the psalms by Franz Delitzsch (manuscript, n.d.), Frankenberg (1896), and Stein (1969–1970).

Since this study concentrates on those passages where the Greek and Syriac differ, the verses where the Syriac and the Greek are substantially the same have not be discussed unless the texts which are in agreement are unintelligible or are contextually inappropriate translations. (Passages where the Greek and the Syriac texts differ but the differences can be accounted for by appeal to inner–Greek or inner–Syriac corruptions have not been reviewed.)

This study of the Psalms of Solomon accepts the integrity of work of the most recent textual critics: Wright for the Greek text, and Baars and Trafton for the Syriac text. The writer examined those passages where a textual variant in the Greek text tradition or the Syriac textual tradition might possibly resolve the issue. But this method was seldom productive. It became necessary to translate the Greek text where it disagreed with the Syriac text into Hebrew and, likewise, to translate the Syriac text into Hebrew when it disagreed with the Greek text.

This process required the selection of one Hebrew word from a broad range of synonyms for the particular Greek or Syriac word to be reflected in the reconstructed Hebrew. The semantic range of the various synonyms had to be carefully

monitored. Once the reconstructed Hebrew schematization was in focus, it was necessary to work concurrently with the following three methods: (A) a text critical examination of the options for the proposed Hebrew *Vorlage*, (B) an exegetical analysis of the lexical options under review which was sensitive to the semantic range of the words, recognizing that different translators may have opted for different nuances of the same word, and (C) a philological inquiry into other options available when the first two methods proved unsuccessful.

A. The text critical examination of the reconstructed Hebrew options meant looking for

- (1) possibilities of graphically similar letters being confused in a manner which could have produced translations which could account for the differences between the Greek and the Syriac texts
- (2) a combination of Hebrew consonants which could have contributed to a haplography which would account for differences between the Greek and the Syriac texts
- (3) a combination of Hebrew consonants which could have contributed to a dittography or the formation of doublets which would account for differences
- (4) a combination of Hebrew consonants which could have contributed to a metathetic shift in a word which would account for differences
- (5) a combination of Hebrew consonants which could have produced homographs in the unvocalized text which would account for differences
- (6) a combination of Hebrew consonants which could have been so misdivided that the words created by a different word division would account for the differences.

B. The exegetical method used in this study focused on selecting the right definition of a word in the proposed Hebrew *Vorlage* which would account for the differences between the Greek and the Syriac texts. This involved

- (1) a review of the semantic range of all the Hebrew words which could have been read by either the Greek translator or the Syriac translator,
- (2) looking for occurrence of metonymy which could have produced the differences in the two translations,
- (3) looking for Semitic idioms which could have been rendered differently in Greek than in Syriac,
- (4) looking for homographs in the unvocalized text which could account for such differences as active versus passive voice,
- (5) looking for confusion which could occur due to *scriptio plena* versus *scriptio defectiva*.

C. The philological method, narrowly defined involved

- (1) checking lexical options in the cognate Semitic languages since the translators of the Greek and Syriac texts were not restricted to the vocabulary found in current Hebrew lexicons,
- (2) looking for archaic Hebrew and archaisms which could have gone unrecognized by the Greek and Syriac translators, i.e., looking for such items as archaic emphatic particles, double-duty prepositions, double-duty verbs, double-duty negatives, and double-duty vocatives,
- (3) looking for occurrence of aural similarities which could have resulted in different readings *in* the different *Vorlagen* or a different reading *of* the *Vorlagen*.

Short of the discovery of a Hebrew manuscript of the Psalms of Solomon, certainty about a Hebrew *Vorlage* is not possible. However, if in a significant number of passages

where the Greek and Syriac texts are different the differences can be demonstrated by the above methodology to be explained only by a Hebrew *Vorlage*, then the probability of a Hebrew *Vorlage* has been established.

CHAPTER TWO

TEXT AND COMMENTARY

Psalm One

1:1

ἐβόησα πρὸς κύριον ἐν τῷ θλίβεσθαί με εἰς τέλος

I cried out to the Lord when I was severely troubled.⁹

ܩܪܝܬܝ ܐܠ ܝܗܘܗ ܒܥܘܪܝ ܒܢܘܨܝ ܕܝܘܡܝ ܕܥܝܢܝ ܕܥܝܢܝ ܕܥܝܢܝ¹⁰

I called out to the Lord when I was distressed at my end.¹¹

קראתי אל יהוה בצרתי בנצחי

I cried to Yahweh in my distress at my defeat

The Syriac ܩܪܝܬܝ and the Greek εἰς τέλος are very problematic. Perles (1902: 10–12), followed by Gray (1913: 631), suggested that the εἰς τέλος translated למנצח “to the chief musician” and is now dislocated from its original position as the title of the Psalm. If εἰς τέλος did not originate as a misplaced psalm title, Gray conjectured, following Ryle and James (1891:2–3) and Kittel (1900: 130), that it was probably an intensification to be translated in context as “when I was in *sore* distress.” Wright (1985: 651), following Viteau’s “tribulation extrême” (1911:254–255) and most other scholars, also regarded this phrase as an intensive. Trafton (1985: 24) pointed out that the Syriac does not support either of these suggestions. He noted that in Psalm 2:5, “where the idea of intensification is clear the Syriac has appropriately ܩܪܝܬܝ

⁹ All English translations of the Greek unless otherwise noted are from Wright 1985: 651–670.

¹⁰ The Syriac font was designed by R. B. Wright.

¹¹ All English translations of the Syriac, unless otherwise noted, are from Trafton 1985: *passim*.

ܠܫܘܠܡܐ “utterly disgraced” for εἰς τέλος.” He concluded that in 1:1a “The idea of intensification fits the context best, but the origin of the Syriac remains unclear.”

However, greater clarity might come from examining alternative Hebrew words which could explain the Greek and Syriac. First, it is important to note that in the LXX εἰς τέλος or just τέλος never translates תּוֹחַר־יָחַד “later” or תּוֹחַר “other, another,” which are the Hebrew cognates of ܠܫܘܠܡܐ (see Hatch and Redpath, 1344). This mitigates against (1) any assumption or argument that τέλος reflects a Hebrew or Syriac *Vorlage* having the vocable תּוֹחַר, or (2) that the Syriac ܠܫܘܠܡܐ was a translation of a Greek τέλος instead of a Hebrew *Vorlage* with a stem other than תּוֹחַר (contra Trafton, 1985: 24). Since there is no clear evidence for equating תּוֹחַר and τέλος, it is necessary to look for another explanation.

A Hebrew *Vorlage* which would account for the Syriac ܠܫܘܠܡܐ and the Greek εἰς τέλος could have been a Hebrew text with either the noun תְּכֵלִית “end” or נֵצַח “end” (see Jastrow, 1668 and 928, respectively).¹² In the LXX εἰς (τὸ) τέλος frequently translates the stem כָּלָה “to come to the end, to complete,” from which comes the noun תְּכֵלִית “end.” Were the Hebrew *Vorlage* תְּכֵלִיתִי “my end” (or any other form of כָּלָה) the corresponding stem in Syriac, ܠܫܘܠܡܐ “to withhold, to restrain,” would not have matched the meaning of Hebrew כָּלָה. However, had the Hebrew *Vorlage* been תְּכֵלִית, the Syriac ܠܫܘܠܡܐ “end” would be the anticipated equivalent.¹³

Were the Hebrew *Vorlage* נֵצַח “end” rather than תְּכֵלִית “end,” the corresponding Syriac homophone ܠܫܘܠܡܐ, which

¹² The Hebrew *Vorlage* probably was neither סוּף “end” nor קֵץ “end” since one would then expect the Syriac to have used the same stem, ܠܫܘܠܡܐ “end” or ܠܫܘܠܡܐ “end.” Franz Delitzsch (n.d., *ad loc.*) initially considered ܠܫܘܠܡܐ but settled on the translation ܠܫܘܠܡܐ.

¹³ Syriac ܠܫܘܠܡܐ is also cognate to the Arabic اٰخِر “the last, the end” (see Lane, 1863: 32; J. Payne Smith, 1903: 11).

means “to be glad, to sing, to be victorious,” would obviously have been an inappropriate translation given the context of distress. However, the Greek τέλος and the Syriac ܫܘܬܘܪ both could reflect another meaning of the Hebrew נצח “endurance” (BDB, 664, stem I), which occurs in the expressions עד נצח “unto the end” and לנצח “forever, to the end.” In such a case, the translators would have missed the fact that the conjectured נצחי in the *Vorlage* would have been from נצח “to win, to be victorious” (which can be designated as stem II), i.e., a *niph^eal* participle with 1cs suffix (נצחי, with the assimilation of the נ of the stem), having the meaning “my being defeated.” This form in Hebrew would correspond to the Aramaic active *pa^eel* “to be victorious, to overpower, to conquer” (Jastrow, 928) and the passive *ʾitpe^eal*, occurring in the Targum Jerusalmi of Exodus 32:18, which reads in part, “it is not the voice of men victorious in battle I hear; nor is it the voice of the feeble, defeated (דַּמָּה נִצְחִי) in battle I hear.” (Neophyti I, 213, 506).

Therefore, a proposed Hebrew *Vorlage*, with either a תכלית or a נצח “end,” can explain both the Greek τέλος and the Syriac ܫܘܬܘܪ here. The translators independently, or dependently, chose the contextually incorrect meaning of either תכלית or נצח, both of which in other contexts would be well translated by τέλος and ܫܘܬܘܪ. The תכלית or נצח of the conjectured *Vorlage* should have been rendered by Greek or Syriac words for “annihilation” or “defeat.” Were the *Vorlage* some form of כלה the LXX and Syriac would then reflect translations at the wrong end of the semantic range since כלה has the semantic range of “to complete, to end, a complete end,” i.e., “annihilation.” It is easy to see how a Hebrew *Vorlage* with either תכלית or נצח, rather than אחר, can account for both the Syriac and Greek readings.

The reconstructed *Vorlage* uses נצח “to be defeated” since the psalmist—though defeated—was alive and able to compose a psalm. Had the poet been annihilated (לה), the psalm would have gone unwritten.

1:3

ἐλογισάμην ἐν καρδίᾳ μου
ὅτι ἐπλήσθην δικαιοσύνης
ἐν τῷ εὐθηνῆσαί με
καὶ πολλὴν γενέσθαι ἐν τέκνοις.

I considered in my heart that
I was full of righteousness,
for I had prospered and had many children.

ܐܠܘܓܝܫܐܡܝܢ ܝܢ ܟܪܕܝܐ ܡܘܘ
ܕܝܩܝܘܫܘܬܝܢ ܕܝܟܝܘܫܘܬܝܢ
ܕܝܩܝܘܫܘܬܝܢ ܕܝܩܝܘܫܘܬܝܢ
ܕܝܩܝܘܫܘܬܝܢ ܕܝܩܝܘܫܘܬܝܢ

And I thought in my heart because
I have been filled with righteousness,
When I was rich and was
with a multitude of children.

ܚܫܒܬܝ ܒܠܒܝ ܟܝ ܡܠܐܬܝ ܒܘܨܕܩ
ܟܝ ܫܠܘܬܝ ܘܐܬܝܐ ܪܒܒ ܒܢܝܡ.

*and I thought in my heart that I was filled
with righteousness because I had prospered
and became one having many children*

Trafton (1985: 25) translated the last two words of this verse, ܐܠܘܫܘܬܝܢ ܕܝܩܝܘܫܘܬܝܢ, as “. . . with a multitude of children.” He commented that “the last clause in Sy is difficult. Gk means something like ‘I had become large with (or, by means of) children’ [καὶ πολλὴν γενέσθαι ἐν τέκνοις] There is no obvious explanation for Sy here.”

The difference between the Greek and the Syriac and the difficulty of the Syriac may be explained by suggesting an underlying Hebrew text that may have had the consonant cluster ܪܒܒܢܝܡ, which the Greek read as ܪܒ ܒܢܝܡ “great in sons” (reading the preposition ܒ prefixed to ܢܝܡ). The Syriac translator, seeing the same consonant cluster, read the consonants ܪܒܒ ܢܝܡ, “one having many sons” (the participle ܪܒܒ in a construct chain). The lack of the preposition in the

end of the earth.”¹⁴ It is most likely a case where the Syriac followed the Semitic idiom while the Greek (as in the LXX example cited) moves from the Semitic idiom to the Greek idiom. A *Vorlage* that had the construct plural, עַד יִרְכְּתֵי אֲרֶץ, rather than a construct singular (like עַד קִצְוֵה הָאָרֶץ “until the end of the earth”) would explain the difference between the Greek and Syriac translation of this phrase.

1:6a

καὶ ἐξέυβρισαν ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς αὐτῶν

they were arrogant in their possessions

וְקָלְלוּ בְּטוֹבוֹתָם

and they cursed in their prosperity

וְקָלְלוּ בְּטוֹבוֹתָם

they were arrogant in their prosperity

In 1:6a, the Syriac has “they cursed in their prosperity,” using קָלַל for “cursed,” while the Greek has ἐξέυβρισαν “to act insolently.” Trafton (1985: 26) agreed with Harris and Mingana (1868: 143) that this phrase is “foreign to Syriac” and judging the Syriac to be secondary, he concluded, “Nor is there any ‘obvious’ Hb reading which would account for Gk translating one way and Sy another.” However, Hatch and Redpath (1897: 1379) listed four Hebrew words which ὑβριζειν translates, namely, גָּאָה, גִּאָוָה, עָלָז, and קָלַל, the last of which means “to vilify, to curse, to despise” and approximates the idea of “acting insolently.” This equation of ὑβριζειν with קָלַל can easily explain the Syriac verb meaning “cursed.”¹⁵ The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text.

¹⁴ Consistently in the LXX the Hebrew masculine plural construct “ends of the earth” is translated as “end of the earth.” See Deuteronomy 33:17; I Samuel 2:10; Psalms 22:27, 59:13, 67:7, 72:8, 98:5; Proverbs 30:4; Isaiah 45:22, 52:10; Micah 5:4; and Zechariah 9:10.

¹⁵ For an instance of קָלַל being translated by ὑβριζειν see II Samuel 19:43 (MT 19:44) “Why then do you despise us (וּמַדְרִיעַ הֵקָל לַתַּנִּי)?”

Psalm Two

2:1a

ἐν τῷ ὑπερηφανεύεσθαι τὸν ἁμαρτωλὸν
 ἐν κριῶ κατέβαλε τείχη ὄχυρά καὶ οὐκ ἐκώλυσας
 Arrogantly the sinner broke down the strong walls
 with a battering ram And you did not interfere.

כְּבָרָה יָמִי, כְּבָרָה יָמִי, כְּבָרָה יָמִי
 חָלַלְתָּ חָלַלְתָּ חָלַלְתָּ חָלַלְתָּ

In his arrogance the lawless one cast down strong walls
 on the feast day And you did not restrain him.

הָעוֹל בְּנֹאֲוָתוֹ חָמוֹת בְּצוּרוֹת בְּכַר הַפִּיל

*The attacker in his arrogance brought down
 the impregnable walls
 with a battering ram*

or

הַחֲטָא גֵאוּתוֹ חָמוֹת בְּצוּרוֹת בְּכַר הַפִּיל

*The “General” in his arrogance brought down
 the impregnable walls
 with a battering ram.*

Despite the differences in translation, there seems to be no real difference between the Syriac and the Greek. The Greek has ἁμαρτωλὸν “sinner” and the Syriac has ܕܠܐ, which Trafton (1985: 29) translated “lawless one,” but which has also the meaning “sinner.” Trafton (1985: 31) indicated that ܕܠܐ is represented by ἁμαρτωλὸς sixteen times in the Psalms of Solomon, suggesting that behind the Syriac and the Greek was a Hebrew *Vorlage* with עוֹל “sinner.” It is of interest to note that עוֹל is never translated by ἁμαρτωλὸς in the LXX. But the failure to equate עוֹל and ἁμαρτωλὸς in the LXX does not mean that the translator of the Psalms of Solomon could not have made the equation (it simply means the LXX is not an exhaustive collection of Greek–Hebrew equivalents).

There are, however, two other options to consider in reconstructing the *Vorlage*. First, since the Hebrew עוֹל also has the possible meaning “to attack,” the poet may have intended עוֹל to have this meaning here and in 1:1. This

definition of עול fits the context as well as “sinner” or “lawless one.” If עול “an attacker” had been the intent of the poet, both the Syriac and Greek translators missed the point.¹⁶

While it is possible that the Syriac and Greek agree here with each other (Greek ἀμαρτωλόν, “sinner” equals the Syriac ܠܘܣܐ “lawless one”), it still seems problematic that a Roman would have been called by the very Jewish word חטא “sinner.” This problem may be the basis for the translation of the Syriac ܠܘܣܐ as “lawless one.” Since the Septuagint does not use ἀμαρτωλός to translate Hebrew עול, there is no basis for insisting here in 2:1a or in 1:1 that the stem עול, if it were in the *Vorlage*, had to mean “sinner” rather than “attacker.”

On the other hand, the *Vorlage* may have had חטא “to be in authority,” a by-form of the Arabic cognate حوط “to defend, to hem in (a town), to have men under one’s power” (Lane, 1865: 670; Qur’an 17: 62), which I designate as חטא stem II.¹⁷ The Syriac ܠܘܣܐ equals the well attested חטא “to sin” (which can be designated חטא stem I), indicating that the translator did not recognize the more rare homograph חטא stem II “to be in authority.” The Greek translator, likewise, failed to note

¹⁶ Pope (1965: 192) argued for עול “attack” in Job 30:13, נִתְּיָבְתִי לְהִוָּתִי, לֹא עֲזָרָה לְמוֹן לֹא עֲזָרָה לְמוֹן which he translated “break up my path to destroy me; they attack with none to stay them.” See McDaniel (1983: 64–65 and 297–98) for a detailed discussion on the Arabic and Ugaritic cognates meaning “to attack.”

¹⁷ The meaning of חטא “to be in authority” has been proposed by McDaniel (1994) for understanding Shem Tob’s Hebrew text of Matthew at 8:9, וְאֵנִי אֲדָם, חוֹטֵא, which Howard (1987:32–33) translated as “I am a sinful man” McDaniel argued that it seems unlikely a high Roman official would call himself a “sinner” with all the theological baggage carried with this very Jewish word. By reading אדם not as “man, human being” but as “chief,” a meaning attested in Arabic (Lane: 36^b هو أدمة قومه “he is the *chief*, the *provost* of his people”) the phrase in Matthew 8:9 would read “I am the chief / provost (אדם) of the guard (חוט).” On the חטא / חוט by-forms, see GKC § 77^a, especially the note “Thus from the root חט there appear with the same meaning חט, חט, חט, חט to strike, to crush”

שׁוֹטֵם stem II, but translated it as ἀμαρτωλὸν “sinner,” which the LXX usually does.

The Arabic cognate حوط has also the meaning “to hem in a town” (Lane , 1865: 671), a meaning which would also be very appropriate in a Hebrew *Vorlage* having שׁוֹטֵם, given the fact that Pompey—after having the gates of Jerusalem opened to him by the Hyrcanites—hemmed in for more than three months the Temple Mount, where the Patriots had entrenched themselves, and slaughtered more than 12,000 Jews once the wall was breached. The שׁוֹטֵם of the *Vorlage* could have been used with a *double entendre* which was missed by the translators. Since one cannot be certain as to whether the *Vorlage* had the stem עוֹל or שׁוֹטֵם, both options are listed. If the *Vorlage* had העוֹל there may have been a *double entendre* meaning “the lawless one” and “the attacker.” But if the *Vorlage* had הַשׁוֹטֵם there may have been a *double entendre* meaning “the one in authority” (paraphrased “the General”) and “the besieger (of Jerusalem).”

2:1b

ἐν τῷ ὑπερηφανεύεσθαι τὸν ἀμαρτωλὸν
ἐν κριῶ κατέβαλε τείχη ὄχυρά καὶ οὐκ ἐκώλυσας

Arrogantly the sinner broke down the strong walls
with a battering ram
and you did not interfere.

בַּמְפָּאָה בְּהִתְפַּחֵם אֶת־הַחֲמַצִּים
בְּהִתְפַּחֵם אֶת־הַחֲמַצִּים

In his arrogance the lawless one cast down
strong walls on the feast day,
and you did not restrain him.

העוֹל בְּגִאוֹתוֹ הִפִּיל בְּכַר חַמּוֹת בְּצוּרוֹת

*The attacker in his arrogance brought down
the impregnable walls with a battering ram*

It is difficult to see how the Greek or Syriac is a translation of each other. The Greek text is supported by Josephus (*Antiquities* 14: 4: 2) that Pompey had “imported the machine

from Tyre.” Trafton (1985: 32) correctly noted that the difference between the Greek and Syriac “can hardly be explained as a confusion of Greek κριος with εορτη,” thus an inner corruption of the Greek is not likely. Harris and Mingana (1911: I, 79) suggested that Syriac ܟܪܗܘܢܐ “on a feast day” is a corruption of ܟܪܗܘܢܐ “with great beams.” Trafton (1985: 32) suggested either that the “Syriac translator misread an original Hebrew כר (“battering-ram”) as כרה (“feast days”), or, alternately, that the Greek translator misread an original כרה as כר.” Trafton is correct in my opinion, and, were the *Vorlage* as I have proposed above, it is easy to see how the misreading could have occurred. The last two words, בכר הפיל “with a battering ram brought down,” were corrupted by a dittography of the ה, resulting in an erroneous בכר ההפיל “with a battering ram he (*sic*) brought down,” which the Syriac translator read as בכרה הפיל “on a feast day he brought down.” The reconstructed *Vorlage* for this phrase follows the Greek text tradition.

2:1b

οὐκ ἐκώλυσας

you did not interfere

וּלֹא כָלַמְתָּ

And you did not restrain {him}

וְאַתָּה לֹא כָהַדְתָּ

and you did not restrain him

Trafton (1985: 32) indicated that “neither Sy nor Gk has a direct object,” but he rightly restored “{him}” in his translation. A Hebrew *Vorlage* with כההו from the root כהה “to restrain, to reproach, to denounce” with the 3ms verbal suffix, (like the קנהו of Leviticus 27:24 “he acquired him”) meaning “he restrained him” could explain the lack of a direct object in the Greek and the Syriac. The ה of the suffix הו was read as the ה of the stem and the ו of the הו was read as the conjunction. The first word of 2:3 in Syriac begins with the

copula and Trafton rightly noted (1985: 32) that the “Greek has no parallel to the Waw–copulative twice in this verse.”

A similar explanation would work if the root were כלא (‘‘to restrain’’ as in Genesis 8:2, ‘‘the rain from the heavens was restrained,’’ or Exodus 36:6, ‘‘so the people were restrained’’). The *Vorlage* could have had כלאו = to כלאהו, ‘‘he restrained him’’ (see GKC § 74^c where יקראו = יקראהו). A *Vorlage* with either כההו or כלאו would be ambiguous because both words could mean either ‘‘he restrained and . . .’’ or ‘‘he restrained him . . .’’ In either case, the Syriac and the Greek translators missed in their unpointed *Vorlage* the suffix הו since the ה of the suffix was read as the conjunction ו and the ה of the suffix was taken to be final radical of the stem. The reconstructed *Vorlage* uses the suffixed verb כההו (= כההו), which provides for assonance with the pronoun אתה.

2:2b

κατεπατούσαν ἐν ὑποδήμασιν αὐτῶν ἐν ὑπερηφανία
they arrogantly trampled (it) with their sandals

וְהָיוּ לְרַגְלֵיהֶם בְּרִגְלֵיהֶם בְּרִגְלֵיהֶם
and they were trampling (it) with their shoes in arrogance

וּסְאוֹנֵיהֶם בְּדוֹן רַמְסוֹ

and with their boots in arrogance they trampled (it).¹⁸

Again, neither the Greek or the Syriac has a direct object. A Hebrew *Vorlage* that contained רמס ‘‘to trample’’ (as in Isaiah 16:4, תִּמְנֶה רַגְלֵךָ מִן־הָאָרֶץ, ‘‘and he who *tramples under foot* [italics added] has vanished from the land’’) would not require a direct object and, therefore, neither the Syriac or the Greek would necessarily have one. The Syriac translator did not choose the root פת ‘‘to tread (dances), to beat the ground (in dancing),’’ the Syriac synonym of רמס (‘‘to tread’’), because of the military overtones of 2:2a which פת would not

¹⁸ Franz Delitzsch (n.d., *ad loc.*), Frankenberg (1896: 66), and Stein (1969: 438) also used רמס for ‘‘trample,’’ but none used סאון for ‘‘boot,’’ all three having instead the noun נעל.

reflect. Instead the translator chose the synonym **ד.ג.ב**, using the participle plural **ג.ב.ג.ב.ב**, “(they) were trampling.”

A military nuance may also be suggested for the *Vorlage* by using **סאון** “shoe.” This noun appears in Isaiah 9:4, **כִּי כָל־סַאֲוֹן סַאֲוֹן בְּרַעַשׁ וְשִׁמְלָה מְגֹלְלָה בְּדַמִּים**, which the RSV translated “for every boot (סַאֲוֹן) of the trampling warrior (סַאֲוֹן) in battle tumult, and every garment rolled in blood,” which depicts a military scene like that in Psalms of Solomon 2. An explicit military nuance, which is suggested by the Syriac **ܫܘܢܘܢܝܢ**, in 2:2a is not evident in the Greek text.

The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek and Syriac texts. Hebrew **סאון** “boot,” which is the word of choice for the footwear mentioned, is the cognate of Syriac **ܫܘܢܘܢܝܢ** “sandal” (from the root **ܫ.ܘ.ܢ**).

2:4a

ἕνεκεν τούτων εἶπεν

because of these things he said

על דבר אמו

on account of this he said

על דבר אמר

on account of these things he said

The Syriac has the singular **אמו** while the Greek has the plural **τούτων**. If the Hebrew *Vorlage* had the phrase **על דבר**, it would have been indeterminate enough to allow either a singular or a plural translation. If this were the case, the Greek read **על דבר** as a plural and the Syriac read it as a singular. The translation of the *Vorlage* uses the plural “these,” despite the Syriac singular, since (1) the Syriac text of 2:3 indicates that there were two acts of defilement by the “sons of Jerusalem,” and (2) the Greek has the plural **τούτων**.

2:4a

ἀπορρίψατε αὐτὰ μακρὰν ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ

remove them far from me

דאז עפסו מצדו אמו חב

remove them and cast them away from me

PSALM TWO

הרחק השליכום ממני

cast them afar off from me

The word order is different between Greek and Syriac here. The Syriac has *verb, verb, direct object, and suffixed preposition*; but the Greek has *verb, direct object, adverb and preposition plus pronoun*. Trafton suggested that ܐܘܨܘܦܐ “to be removed far away” could be a translation of μακρᾶν (if the Syriac were derived from the Greek), or the Hebrew *Vorlage* could simply have had two verbs. If the *Vorlage* had two words, it is problematic why the Greek, generally quite literal, does not have two verbs. A solution comes from assuming a Hebrew *Vorlage* with infinitive absolute and a finite verb. The Greek translation rendered the infinitive absolute by an adverb μακρᾶν “far” (the equivalent of מרחק), and the Syriac translation opted to translate it as the imperative ܐܘܨܘܦܐ “remove.”

2:4b

οὐκ εὐόδωκεν αὐτοῖς (Wright: 1995)¹⁹they are not sweet-smelling

ܐܠܐ ܐܘܨܘܦܐ ܒܚܘܡܐ

and he did not establish with them

ܐܠܐ ܡܢ ܩܝܡܐ

and he did not prosper them (i.e., the sons of Jerusalem)

The Greek manuscripts are divided here between some form of εὐωδέω “to be fragrant, to be sweet-smelling” and εὐδοκέω “to be pleased in, to take delight in.” It is possible that the change to

¹⁹ Rahlfs reading is οὐκ εὐδοκῶ ἐν αὐτοῖς, but it is not the basis for Wright’s translation. None of the Greek manuscripts of the Psalms of Solomon read εὐδοκῶ. Rahlfs indicated that this reading follows the suggestions of von Gebhardt (1868, 1895), Hilgenfeld (1868), and Wellhausen (1924).

²⁰ Contra Stein (1969: 438) and Frankenberg (1896: 67) who translated this as ܐܠܐ ܐܘܨܘܦܐ ܒܚܘܡܐ (using רצה, “to be pleased with”), and Franz Delitzsch (n.d., *ad loc.*) who used the synonym ܩܝܡܐ.

εὐδοκέω is correct and thus restores the original Greek reading.²¹ The range of meaning of εὐδοκέω includes “to be favored, to prosper” (Liddell and Scott [1940: 710]), meanings which are not far from the Syriac ܩܘܠܝܢ “to establish.” The Syriac could then be a translation of εὐδοκέω, or the Greek could be a translation of the Syriac. But the suggestion of Harris and Mingana (1868: 89) that ܩܘܠܝܢ is a “rough” translation of εὐδοκέω is most unlikely since the range of meanings for the words do not overlap.

A better possibility is to reconstruct a Hebrew *Vorlage* that explains the difference between the Greek and the Syriac. Kuhn (1937: 9–10) suggested that ܩܘܠܝܢ and εὐδοκέω are perhaps independent translations of an original Hebrew ܩܘܠܝܢ ܩܘܠܝܢ “he did not prosper them.” But this retroversion does not solve the problem if the Greek were εὐδοκέω. Therefore, my reconstruction uses the stem ܩܘܠܝܢ “to setup, to establish, to remedy, to improve,” the same stem that the Syriac translator used.

If the verb were a participle with a preformative ܩ and the verbal suffix ܩ “them” (= ܩܘܠܝܢ), it would be easy to see how the Greek translator could have read the noun ܩܘܠܝܢ “sweet-smelling ones” rather than ܩܘܠܝܢ “establishing them,” reflecting a confusion or a ܩ and a ܩ.²²

2:5 (G), 2:4b (S)

τὸ κάλλος τῆς δόξης αὐτῆς

the beauty of his glory²³

²¹ Mss 260, 149, 471, 606 have εὐδωκεν. Mss 655 and 659 have ἐνέδωκεν (apparently some form of ἐν + εὐδοκέω) and the others have εὐδωκεν, as in Wright’s text cited above.

²² The root ܩܘܠܝܢ, “sweet” is well attested in Hebrew (Job 24:20, 21:33; Proverbs 9:17; Exodus 15:25; and Psalm 55:15).

²³ Rahlfs read τὸ κάλλος τῆς δόξης αὐτῆς “the beauty of her glory.”

PSALM TWO

ܡܫܘܒܘܬܐ ܩܝܡܐ

the beauty of her glory²⁴

שׁוֹר בְּכִבוֹד

*the ruler in his glory*²⁵

The issues in this poetic line are of gender and whose “glory” is being referred to. Trafton opted for the variant with the suffix ܐ “her” in Syriac ms 10hl. Rahlfs also read with three manuscripts αὐτῆς “her.” Syriac manuscripts, other than 10hl, have the masculine suffix ܐ, and eight of the Greek manuscripts have the masculine αὐτοῦ. If the pronominal element were masculine, the reference about who or what was not being established could have any of the preceding masculine singular nouns mentioned in verses 2:1–4, starting with the ἀμαρτωλὸν in 2:1. Since “God” is mentioned in the next phrase of 2:5, the pronoun cannot refer to him (unless one were to argue for an Aramaic-style anticipatory pronoun).²⁶ In fact, the ἀμαρτωλὸν / ܩܘܘܠܐ referred to in 2:1 and understood to mean “the General” or “the attacker” or “the besieger”²⁷ is the most likely candidate. If so, the pronoun refers to Pompey. (If the pronoun was originally αὐτῆς, the reference must have been to [the feminine] Jerusalem.)

In deciding which of these alternative readings was original, we could accept the feminine ܐ reading of Syriac ms 10hl,

²⁴ Trafton is following the Syriac manuscript 10hl here which has a variant with the diacritical point that makes ܡܫܘܒܘܬܐ feminine (see Robinson, 1949: 24). This enabled him to see “her” as Jerusalem, clarifying verse 6 where reference is made to “her sons and her daughters.”

²⁵ Perhaps “glory” refers to Jerusalem, i.e., Jerusalem’s being his (God’s) glory. See Ginzberg’s (1968: vol. 5, 417) discussion of the story in *Orehot Zaddikim* of Moses’ visiting the heavens where the angels, after reading in the Torah about the third day of creation, “chant the glory of Jerusalem.”

²⁶ Wright (1985: 652) made the pronoun refer to God by interpreting “his glory” to be a reference to either the Temple, to a theophany, or to the *swl* (*sic*, MT שׁוֹל) “the draperies” or “tapestries” of the Temple.

²⁷ See the discussion, above, on 2:1.

although it is not supported by the majority of the Greek manuscripts. But it needs to be noted that, if the Syriac was translated before the 4th century C.E., the Syriac would have been ambiguous for it was only after this that diacritical marks were added to the Syriac text.²⁸ Or we could follow the eight Greek manuscripts (as did Franz Delitzsch [n.d., *ad loc.*], who translated כְּבוֹדוֹ) and the Syriac ms 16hl and read “his,” referring to the “one with authority” (i.e., “the General”), an option which fits the context.

The primary meaning of the Syriac ܦܘܢܐ is “to be beautiful, fair, lovely” (a cognate to the Hebrew שָׁפָר). It is easy to see the preference for “her” here. However, a Hebrew *Vorlage* can be restored which could favor the reading “his.” Mendenhall (1973: 163) noted that Hebrew שָׁפָר could also be a cognate of Akkadian *šapiru* “governor, or someone in authority” (analogous to the Arabic حوٓط “to be in authority,” discussed above). The place name *Qiryat-Sofer*, commonly understood to be “the city of the scribe” (assuming the interchange of ס and ש) is better understood to be the “city of the *šapiru* = governor.”²⁹ In support of this interpretation he referred to Judges 5:14, וּמִזְבֻּלֵן בְּשָׂבֶט מַרְשָׁלִים בְּשֶׁבֶט, “and from Zebulun those who bear the *marshal’s* staff” (RSV, italics added).

²⁸ See Roberts (1951:225), noting especially his statement that

. . . it has been shown that the vocalization and pointing of the Hebrew text is indebted, in part at least, to the first pointing of the Syriac Scriptures. Here we note that the influence was mutual, for Syriac vocalization, too, was developed to a large extent under the tradition of textual transmission among the Jews The Jacobite Massorah is to be found in the Peshitta revision of Jacob of Edessa (about A.D. 705) and in the *Auzar Raze* of bar-Hebraeus, 1278.

The issue of number depending on the use of the *seyame* and the ambiguity of the text before its use, comes up in the following passages of the Psalms of Solomon: 2:4, 6; 3:7,8; 4:4, 9, 23; 5:11; 6:5; 9:3, 6, 7; 10:3; 11:2; 12:1; 13:4, 9; 14:2,3; 16:2; 17:14, 26; 18:1

²⁹ See von Soden (1981: 1172–1173) for the meaning of *šapiru* “Beamter, König, Gebietskommissar, or Flusskommandant.”

If שֹׁפֵר “ruler” (= *šapiru*) were in the Hebrew *Vorlage* it could be a reference to Aristobulus II who was dethroned by Pompey. If so, the pronominal “his” would be preferable. Consequently, the *Vorlage* is best represented by the Greek manuscripts and Syriac ms 16hl. It has been reconstructed as שֹׁפֵר בְּכַבְדּוֹ “the ruler in his glory.”³⁰

2:5–6a (G), 2:4b–6a (S)

ἐξουθενώθη ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἠτιμώθη ἕως εἰς τέλος
οἱ υἱοὶ καὶ αἱ θυγατέρες ἐν αἰχμαλωσίᾳ πονηρᾷ

[the beauty of his glory] was despised before God
it was completely disgraced.

The sons and the daughters (were) in harsh captivity,

ܘܗܘܐ ܘܨܘܒܘܢ ܕܘܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܘܨܪܐ ܕܡܘܨܪܐ
ܕܡܘܨܪܐ ܕܡܘܨܪܐ ܕܡܘܨܪܐ ܕܡܘܨܪܐ

It was despised before the Lord

It was utterly disgraced.

Her sons and her daughters were in bitter captivity.

נבזה לפני אלהים בוש בש

בניו ובנותו בשבות רעה

[the ruler] was despised before God, he was utterly ashamed;
his sons and his daughters were in harsh captivity.

The problem in these two verses continues to be the issue of gender in the translation of the Greek and the suffixes in the Syriac. Since Syriac has no neuter, the use of “it” in Trafton’s translation is somewhat misleading. The verb ܘܨܘܒܘܢ has the 3ms suffix “his” and ܘܗܘܐ ܘܨܘܒܘܢ has either the 3fs or 2ms suffix. These latter two forms are alike in Syriac and both seem odd in this context. The Greek is also ambiguous for ἐξουθενώθη and ἠτιμώθη are 3c aorist passive indicatives, and thus could be either masculine or feminine. In 2:6, the Greek (except for mss 253, 655

³⁰ The preposition ב of בכבודו was apparently lost by haplography.

and 659) does not have possessive pronouns, but it does have definite articles. The Syriac in 2:6 does not have the definite emphatic state³¹ but it has the *seyame* to indicate “her.” At least one Syriac manuscript, 16hl, omits the *seyame* and thus is masculine. The system of diacriticals did not come into existence prior to the 4th century C.E. Singular and plural forms in any text prior to that time would have been ambiguous.³² The reconstructed *Vorlage* carries through with the masculine, with the antecedent of “his” being the “ruler” of Jerusalem who was not established (probably Aristobulus).

2:6b

ἐν σφραγιῶνι ὁ τράχηλος αὐτῶν ἐν ἐπισημῶ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν
 their neck in a seal, a spectacle before the gentiles.

ܐܢ ܫܦܪܳܝܳܓܳܝܳܢܳܝ ܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܢ ܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܢ ܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܘܳܗܳܘܳܢ

And upon their neck was placed the sealed yoke of the nations.

על צוארָהֶם שִׁים על בחֲחִים בְּאַמּוֹת

Upon their neck was placed a yoke with chains on the forearms.

The Greek and the Syriac are notably different here. Ryle and James (1891: 12) refer to this as a passage of “great obscurity,” but Trafton (1985: 35) said that “. . . Gk is very difficult . . . Sy, on the other hand, makes excellent sense.” Trafton’s translation, “And upon their neck was placed the sealed yoke of the nations,” does not produce an image any more clear than the Greek. What is a “sealed yoke of the nations”? The expression does not occur in the Hebrew Bible. Trafton conjectured that the Syriac may represent an attempt to clarify a corrupt Greek text or that the Syriac rightly translated some Hebrew text and the Greek is corruption of that

³¹ Unlike Hebrew and Arabic, Aramaic, including Syriac, does not have a prefixed definite article but makes extensive use of a suffixed **ס** for the “emphatic state.”

³² This applies also to 2:38 and 2:39 where there are differences in number (rather than gender) between the Greek and the Syriac texts.

Hebrew text. In my opinion, the Syriac and the Greek are both corruptions of the Hebrew *Vorlage* given above. The *Vorlage*, as reconstructed, has על twice. However, the second על is not the preposition “upon, about” but the noun “yoke” (well attested in Hebrew) which the Syriac translated as ܢܘܢ “yoke.”

The Syriac and the Greek translators misread the suggested original בחים “chains” as בחים “seal.”³³ Hebrew חים occurs in Ezekiel 19:4, וַיִּבְאֵהוּ בַחֲחִים אֶל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, “and they brought him [i.e., a lion symbolizing Judah’s fallen king] in chains to the land of Egypt”; and this is followed in 19:9 by, וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ בַסּוּגָר, וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ בַסּוּגָר וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ בַסּוּגָר וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ בַסּוּגָר “he [Judah’s fallen king] was put in a cage in chains and brought to the king of Babylon.”

In our text, whereas the Syriac and Greek read באמות as the preposition ב and a plural of אמה “people, nations,” I read באמות as the plural of the noun אמה “forearm. While אמה “forearm” does not appear in Biblical Hebrew, the noun is well attested in other Hebrew texts (Jastrow 1950: 75) and in cognate Semitic languages. It survives in modern Israeli Hebrew (see Ben Yehuda and Weinstein, 1964: 11).

Wright’s translation of ἐπισήμῳ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν as “spectacle before the nations,” differs from Trafton’s (1985: 35) “with a badge among the nations,” but Wright correctly picked up the nuance of being “conspicuous” or “notorious” (see Liddell and Scott, 1940: 656). The Syriac and the Greek are misreadings of על צוארם שים על בחים באמות, and both missed the meaning of this line. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the word order of the Syriac text, but it differs from the Syriac in the understanding of two of the four nouns.

2:8

ἀπέστρεψεν γὰρ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ
ἀπὸ ἐλέους αὐτῶν νέον καὶ πρεσβύτην
for he turned away his face from their mercy;
(from) young and old

³³ See Delitzsch, 1920: 110, § 106^{a-c}, for examples of the confusion of ח and ה.

אֶחָפֵי לֵבָא אֶפְתֵּי, כִּי וְעָבַט
 לְלֵבָא הַשְׁבֵּר הַכְּנֻסָא אֶבְשֵׁרָא

for he turned away his face from his mercy

וְסוּר פָּנָיו מֵרַחֲמָיו

and he turned aside his face from his mercy

The Greek manuscripts (except for ms 336, which agrees with the Syriac) have “their mercy” while the Syriac texts have “his mercy.” Trafton (1985: 35) concluded that the “[Gk] . . . perhaps makes better sense, although it is certainly possible that ‘his’ stood in the original Hb.” If מֵרַחֲמָיו “his compassion” were in the Hebrew *Vorlage*, the Syriac accurately reflects the original. It would have been easy for the Greek translator to have read the final ם as a מ³⁴ and to have translated it “their mercy.” Thus, the *Vorlage* מֵרַחֲמָיו was read correctly by the Syriac translator as “his mercy” and misread by the Greek translator as “their mercy.”

2:8b (G), 2:9 (S)

εἰς ἅπαξ τοῦ μὴ ἀκούειν

once again by not listening

דִּלְגָא נִשְׁמַעֵנָא

that they might not hear me

וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ אֹתוֹ

and they did not hear him

Trafton (1985: 36) correctly noted that the “me” of the Syriac is out of place and that it would be expected that the Syriac would have “him” in this verse, as the Greek implies: (him = God). A Hebrew *Vorlage* with the suffixed direct object particle אֹתוֹ

³⁴ See Delitzsch (1920: 120, §132e) for the misreading of ם as a מ. He noted, for example, Nehemiah 2:1, where לִפְנֵי and לִפְנֵי were confused, and Psalm 141:10, where מִכְמָרִי was confused with מִכְמָר. Franz Delitzsch (n.d., *ad loc.*) paraphrased וְלֹא רַחַם עֲלֵיהֶם.

misread as ܘܢܝܢ (reflecting the very common confusion of ܢ and ܝ)³⁵ would easily explain the Syriac “me.” Consequently, the reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text in this poetic line.

2:9 (G), 2:10 (S)

καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς ἐβαρuthύμησεν
and the heavens were weighed down

ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ ܠܡܥܘܢ ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ
and heaven was angered greatly,

וכעס השמים

and the heavens were exceedingly angry

As the differences between the translations of Wright and Trafton point to a Greek *Vorlage*, the difference between the Syriac text and the Greek text point to a Hebrew *Vorlage*. The Syriac ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ ܠܡܥܘܢ ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ preserved the poetic parallelism with “the earth despised them” of the next line. Wright translated ἐβαρuthύμησεν, an aorist active indicative 3s, as the passive “(they) were weighed down.” However, the translation of ἐβαρuthύμησεν ought to be active”—something like “the heavens loathed” (see Liddell and Scott [1940: 312]), or “(they) weighed down,” or “(they) oppressed” or “(they) wearied”—and ought to parallel “the earth despised them.” The Greek also lacks a parallel to the intensifying adverb of the Syriac ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ “greatly.”

There are several possibilities for a *Vorlage* which can explain these differences. First, the Hebrew *Vorlage* could have had the verb ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ “to treat violently,” which the Syriac translator read as ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ, “to be or become warm.” Taking ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ as a synonym of ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ “to be hot, to be angry, to be wrathful,” it was rendered by the verb as ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ. Even if the Greek ἐβαρuthύμησεν reflected this meaning, it would not explain the Syriac’s intensifying adverb ܕܠܘܒܝܢܐܝܢ “greatly” or the lack of parallel modifier in the Greek.

³⁵ Delitzsch (1920: 103–105) has two pages listing passages where this confusion has been noted.

Second, the apparent difference in English between “it angered” and “it weighed down” may not have been in the Greek. In Liddell and Scott (1940: 312) ἐβαρῦθησεν has the definition “to be indignant,” which, while not an exact match with “anger,” is not too distant a nuance. Indeed, ἐβαρῦθησεν in Numbers 16:15 translates Hebrew יָרַח (for which the RSV has “anger”).

A Hebrew *Vorlage* with the verb “to be angry” in the intensive *pi^cel* could explain the intensifying adverb of the Syriac. The difference between the *qal* and the *pi^cel* would be obvious only in a pointed text. The verb כָּעַב, “to be vexed, angry,” (attested in the *pi^cel* in I Samuel 1:6 and Deuteronomy 32:21) could be read as כָּעַבְּ, an intensive *pi^cel* the Syriac translator represented with the intensive ܕܠܚܘܒܝܢܐ. If the Greek read כָּעַב as the *qal* כָּעַבְּ, there would have been no need for an adverb of intensity. Consequently, while it is tempting when reconstructing the *Vorlage* to follow the Syriac and have an adverb like ܕܘܢܐ “greatly” in the text — and one would have to explain its loss in Greek—I am opting for the intensifying *pi^cel* כָּעַבְּ which may be rendered by a verb *and* an adverb.

2:10 (G), 2:12 (S)

καὶ γινώσεται ἡ γῆ

and the earth shall know

ܕܘܢܐ ܕܠܚܘܒܝܢܐ

and in order that the earth might know.

וּתְדַע הָאָרֶץ

that the earth might know.

One difference between the Greek and Syriac in this phrase is evident in Wright’s and Trafton’s translations. The Greek has the future and the Syriac has the imperfect. Trafton (1985: 36) argued rightly that no errors need be posited, but he did not deal with the ܐ of the Syriac other than to observe “. . . neither is there an obvious Hb reading which would explain its presence.” However, a bit more can be said.

The Greek future γνώσεται can simply be a translation of an imperfect in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. The issue of the Syriac particle ܐ remains. It is not necessary to posit as Gray (1913: 632) did that the Greek translator missed the sense of the *waw*-consecutive of an original Hebrew text³⁶ to explain either the tense of the Greek or the lack of some representation in Greek of the particle. The ܐ has many more meanings and uses than simply as the copula, some of which correspond to meanings of the particle ܐ in Syriac (see BDB 251–254). The Syriac translator and the Greek translator did not reflect in their translations of this verse the other nuances of the ܐ.

2:13a (G), 2:14b (S)

καὶ θυγατέρες Ἱερουσαλήμ βέβηλοι
and the daughters of Jerusalem were available to all³⁷

ܩܘܪܝܬܐ ܕܝܪܘܫܠܝܡ ܩܘܪܝܬܐ ܕܝܪܘܫܠܝܡ
and the daughters of Jerusalem were defiled

בנות ירושלם מטמאות
and the daughters of Jerusalem, (were) the ones defiled

The Greek βεβηλόω means “to be profaned, to be defiled, to be unholy, to be polluted.” The Greek βέβηλοι is an adjective, but the Syriac has a verb, an *’ethpe’el* perfect. Consequently, even though the Greek and Syriac texts express the idea of defilement, they are not easily explained as being a translation of each other. However, if the Hebrew *Vorlage* had a participle, it would be well within attested translation patterns that the Syriac translated the participle by a perfect and the Greek translated it by an adjective. Thus, while the difference in meaning between the Greek and the Syriac

³⁶ While there are uses of the *waw*-consecutive in the Hebrew Psalter, they are relatively rare and one should assume that they are as rare in this late poetry as in the Psalter. An examination and comparison of the poetry at Qumran might be helpful in determining the likelihood of the *waw*-consecutive in late poetry.

³⁷ Wright’s translation of βέβηλοι appears to be derived from the context of the next line, “. . . they defiled themselves with improper intercourse.” It is unusual in a translation that most often is fairly literal.

in this line is minimal, their morphological difference supports the argument that there was an original Hebrew *Vorlage* common to both.

2:13b (G), 2:15a (S)

ὧν αὐταὶ ἐμίαιωσαν αὐτὰς ἐν φυρμῶ ἀναμείξεως
 because they defiled themselves with improper intercourse
 ܠܗܘܢ ܐܘܬܐܪܝܢ ܥܡܘܬܗܘܢ ܥܢ ܦܘܪܡܘܘ ܐܢܐܡܝܝܚܘܘܫ
 because they defiled themselves with a mingling of
intemperance

כי הנה טמאו נפשותיהן במסך תאוה
because they defiled themselves with a mixture of appetite(s)

Wright translated φυρμῶ ἀναμείξεως as “improper intercourse,” following Gray’s (1913: 632) “unnatural intercourse” and Ryle and James’ (1891: 17) “unclean intercourse.” Greek φυρμῶ primarily has the meaning of “confusion, mixture, disorder” and is not attested elsewhere with any sexual connotation (Liddell and Scott 1940: 1962–1963). Although ἀναμείξεως carries primarily the sense of “mingling, admixture,” it has a secondary sense of “promiscuity” (attested in Herodotus and Galenus) and the verb ἀναμίσγω was used in medical contexts with the meaning “to have intercourse,” while the verb ἀναμείγνυμι was used for “social intercourse” (Liddell and Scott, 1940: 112–113). Since the Greek φυρμῶ ἀναμείξεως literally means “in a mixture of mingling,” it need not have explicit sexual nuance in this non-medical text.

The Syriac ܠܗܘܢ ܐܘܬܐܪܝܢ “intemperance” (from the root: ܐܘܬܐܪܝܢ “to range, to rove, to indulge in debauchery”) may have sexual connotations including “wantonly, lasciviously, intemperately.” This mitigates against the Greek text being a translation of the Syriac text (or vice versa) since the Syriac has this more explicit ܠܗܘܢ ܐܘܬܐܪܝܢ which the Greek does not replicate. It is difficult to decide on a *Vorlage* since the Greek appears to be a doublet for the Syriac ܠܗܘܢ ܐܘܬܐܪܝܢ “mingling, making (social) contact, mixing,” with no apparent equivalent for the Syriac ܠܗܘܢ ܐܘܬܐܪܝܢ, unless it

be like the occasional use of the adverb ἀναμείξ “promiscuously,” attested in Herodotus and Galenus.

2:19a (G), 2:20 (S)

ὠνεΐδισαν γὰρ ἔθνη Ἱερουσαλημ ἐν καταπατήσει
for the Gentiles insulted Jerusalem, trampling (her) down

ܘܠܥܘܕܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ ܘܠܥܘܕܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ ܘܠܥܘܕܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ
for the nations reviled Jerusalem in their wickedness

כי חרפו גוים ירושלם ברמסהם

for the nations were reproaching Jerusalem in their violence

The Greek and the Syriac differ in the last part of the line where the Greek has καταπατήσει “trampling under foot, trampling down,” whereas the Syriac has ܘܠܥܘܕܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ “in their wickedness.” Trafton (1985: 38) cited two possibilities: the Syriac ܘܠܥܘܕܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ could be a corruption of ܘܠܥܘܕܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ “with their trampling” (i.e., a confusion of ܘܠ and ܘܠܝ), or the Greek translator misread a Hebrew *Vorlage* that had ברשעהם “in their wickedness” as ברשעהם “in their trampling” (i.e., confusing a ܘܠ and ܘܠܝ, along with the loss of an ܘܠ).

A third possibility is more likely, namely, there was a confusion between the Hebrew verbs חמס “to treat violently, to wrong (someone)” and רמס “to trample,” reflecting the confusion of a ܘܠ and a ܘܠܝ.³⁸ The ܘܠܥܘܕܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ “wickedness” could be a translation of חמס, and the καταπατήσει “trampling down” would be a translation of רמס. This latter stem best accounts for the Syriac and Greek textual differences and is used in the *Vorlage* above. But either חמס or רמס could have been in the *Vorlage*, and, thus, either the

³⁸ See Delitzsch (1920: 116) where he cited Ewald’s emendation of I Samuel 13:6 as an example. The Hebrew text has the men of Israel hiding (among other places) in the בחוריים, “the briars” or “brambles.” Unless the men of Israel were “Br’er Rabbits” at home in the “Briar Patch,” (see Jeremiah 5:29) it is an unlikely place to hide. Ewald, on the basis of I Samuel 14:11, where the MT has the men of Israel coming מן החורים “from the holes,” also suggested reading חור instead of חורח in I Samuel 13:6.

Syriac translator or the Greek translator could be responsible for the misreading.

2:19b (G), 2:20b (S)

κατεσπάσθη τὸ κάλλος αὐτῆς ἀπὸ θρόνου δόξης

he dragged her beauty down from the throne of glory

ܩܬܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ ܘܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ³⁹ ܩܬܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ ܘܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ

and her beauty was cut down from the throne of his glory

הורר שפחה מכסא כבודו

and he [God] brought down her ruler

from the throne of his glory

Here, as in 2:5, we once again have **ܩܬܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ**, reflecting a Hebrew *Vorlage* which must have had **רַשָּׁא** meaning “ruler” not “beauty.” Mendenhall’s (1973: 163) recognition that, in light of Akkadian *šapiru* “governor,” the place name Qiryat–Sofer means “city of the governor” (rather than “city of the scribe”) is also very suggestive for this verse, since two of the Syriac manuscripts (16hl and 10hl) have **ܩܬܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ** “her book.”

Compared to the Greek *κάλλο* “beauty,” the Syriac **ܩܬܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ** is the more difficult and preferred reading. The Greek *κάλλο* cannot be the source of the Syriac **ܩܬܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ**. Consequently, we have additional strong support for a Hebrew *Vorlage* underlying this psalm. A Hebrew original with **רַשָּׁא** “governor” could also have been read as **רַשָּׁא** “beauty” or as **רַשָּׁא** (= **רַשָּׁא** “book”). This ambiguity would explain the Greek *κάλλο* and the Syriac **ܩܬܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ**, as well as the **ܩܬܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ** of Syriac mss. 16hl and 10hl. Neither the Greek or the Syriac traditions recognized the now rare, but contextually more probable, meaning of **רַשָּׁא** “ruler.”⁴⁰

³⁹ The Syriac has the Greek loan word **ܘܠܘܢܐܝܗܘܢ** (= *θρόνου*). A cognate of the Hebrew **כִּסֵּא** “throne” was not available in Syriac because the stem **ܠܘܢܐ** means “to pile up, to amass.” See the discussion below on Trafton’s (1985: 48) arguments on 2:36 that the use of Greek loan words in Syriac does not mean that the Syriac is a translation of the Greek.

⁴⁰ See my discussion above on 2:5 and footnote 20.

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The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text in reading the verb as an active perfect, in contrast to the passive of the Syriac; and שפרה “her ruler” is taken to be the direct object. The *Vorlage* probably had כבוד “his glory,” as reflected in the Syriac text, but a simple metathesis of the ך of כבוד produced the *plene* spelling, כבוד, reflected in the Greek text.

2:20 (G), 2:21 (S)

περιεζώσατο σάκκον ἀντὶ ἐνδύματος εὐπρεπείας
 σχοινίου περὶ τῆν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς ἀντὶ στεφάνου

she put on sackcloth instead of beautiful clothes,
 a rope around her head instead of a crown.

ܩܘܨܬܐܢܐܘܬܐ ܩܘܨܬܐܢܐܘܬܐ ܩܘܨܬܐܢܐܘܬܐ
 ܩܘܨܬܐܢܐܘܬܐ ܩܘܨܬܐܢܐܘܬܐ

and she was clothed in sackcloth in place of clothing of beauty,
 and a rope was placed upon her head in place of a crown

והטעית סך תחת לבוש שפר חבל לראשה תחת עתרה
 and she girded herself in sackcloth instead of royal clothing
 and a rope upon her head instead of a crown

The Greek aorist active middle indicative περιεζώσατο “she put on” and the Syriac simple passive ʿethpeʿal ܩܘܨܬܐܢܐܘܬܐ “she was clothed” are not likely to be translations of each other. The difference could be accounted for by a *Vorlage* with והטעית, which the Greek translator read (or had in the *Vorlage*) as a *hiphʿil* verb with an affixed conjunction meaning “and she put on.” But the Syriac translator read (or had in his *Vorlage*) הוטעית “she was clothed,” a passive (*hophʿal*) form of the verb resulting from the metathesis of the ך of והטעית.

Once again, as in 2:5 and in the discussion immediately above, it is most likely that a Hebrew *Vorlage* with שפר “to govern, to rule” lies behind these Greek and Syriac lines. “Royal clothing (לבוש שפר)” would be the synonymous parallel of the “crown” in the next line, providing the parallelism one expects in this psalm. Neither the Syriac or Greek translator recognized שפר meaning “to govern, to rule.” The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text

in its use of active verbs because of the active verbs in the next verse in both the Greek and the Syriac.

2:21 (G), 2:22 (S)

περιείλατο μίτραν δόξης

she took off the wreath of glory

ܠܫܘܒܘܬܗܐ ܠܘܐ ܘܠܘܢܐ ܘܠܘܢܐ

she took off from herself the brightness of glory

ܗܫܝܒܘܬܗܐ ܘܝܪ ܟܒܘܕ

she took off the wreath of glory

The Greek text has μίτραν δόξης “the wreath of glory,” while the Syriac has ܠܫܘܒܘܬܗܐ ܠܘܐ “the brightness of glory.” This difference suggests a confusion in the *Vorlage* of וַר or וִר “wreath, crown” (BDB, 267; Jastrow, 396) with וִי “shining, splendor” (Jastrow, 392)⁴¹ The Greek correctly read וִר and translated it with μίτραν “crown,” whereas the Syriac read וִי “shining,” instead of וִר, and translated it with ܠܘܐ.

2:21b (G), 2:23 (S)

ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ τὸ κάλλος αὐτῆς ἀπερρίφη ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν

in dishonor her beauty was thrown to the ground

ܟܝܘܢ ܠܘܠܐ ܘܠܘܢܐ ܘܠܘܢܐ ܘܠܘܢܐ

in disgrace her beauty was cast upon the ground

ܗܫܠܟܗ ܫܦܪܗ ܒܒܫܬ ܘܪܥܗ

her ruler was cast down in shame to the ground

Again, as in 2:5 (S 2:4), 2:20 (S 2:21) and 2:19b (S 2:20b) the now rare noun שֹׁפֵר “ruler” of the Hebrew *Vorlage* was misunderstood as the homograph שֹׁפֵר “beauty.” A full discussion has been provided above.

⁴¹ See Delitzsch (1920: 111§109^b) for other examples of the misreading of וִ with וִ or וִ.

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2:23 (G), 2:25 (S)

ὅτι ἐνέπαιξαν καὶ οὐκ ἐφείσαντο
ἐν ὀργῇ καὶ θυμῷ μετὰ μνησίσεως

for they ridiculed (her) and did not refrain

in anger and vicious rage

ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ

because they mocked unsparingly

in anger and in rebuke

כי קצף ולא חסו בחרון אף וחרפה
for they mocked and did not hold back
their anger and reproach

In 2: 23, the Greek has three words for “anger,” ὀργη, θυμω and μνησίσεως; whereas the Syriac has only two matching words, ܡܠܟܐ “anger” and ܡܫܝܚܐ “rebuke.” The Greek could be a triplet, such as are common in the Lucianic recension of the Septuagint.⁴² Conversely, the Syriac could have omitted a word in its translation from its *Vorlage*, whether it was Hebrew or Greek.

If the Greek translator missed the idiomatic expression of ܡܠܟܐ “with the heat of (the) nostril” or (mis)read the phrase as ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ “in heat and anger” (i.e., reading the final ܟ as a ܠ, and reading a ܠ as a ܟ),⁴³ it would be easy to account for the Greek ὀργη καὶ θυμω “anger and rage.” Together or separately ܡܠܟܐ and ܡܫܝܚܐ mean “anger” and are translated in the LXX by θυμός (Liddell and Scott 1940: 660).

The Syriac translator would certainly have understood the idiomatic ܡܠܟܐ, and he rightly rendered it as ܡܠܟܐ “anger.” The Greek μνησίσεως “wrath, revenge” and the Syriac ܡܫܝܚܐ “rebuke, reproof, censure” may well be a translation of a *Vorlage* having ܡܫܝܚܐ “shame, scorn.” However, since the Syriac ܡܫܝܚܐ,

⁴² For a discussion on the Lucianic recension, see Roberts (1951: 142–43).

⁴³ Note the use of ܡܠܟܐ(ܗ) ܕܡܫܝܚܐ in Exodus 11:8; I Samuel 20:34; II Chronicles 25:10; and Isaiah 7:4.

unlike Hebrew תָּרַח , means “to mix, to mingle,” it was not the verb of choice in Syriac to translate תָּרַח . While $\mu\eta\nu\acute{\iota}\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ and ܪܫܝܘܬܐ are not an exact match, each has a semantic range with overlapping nuances. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text which rightly understood the Hebrew idiom.

2:24 (G), 2:27 (S)

ὅτι οὐκ ἐν ζήλει ἐποίησαν ἀλλ’ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ ψυχῆς
for they have not done it in zeal, but in emotional passion

$\text{ܘܠܐ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ}$
 $\text{ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ}$

for it was not in zeal that they did (this),
(but) in the desire of the soul

$\text{ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܢܝܗܘܢ}$
for it was indeed in zealousness they did (this)
and in emotional passion

The negatives ܠܐ and οὐκ are surprising and do not fit the context of this passage. Wright (1985: 653) recognized the difficulty of the negative οὐκ in the poetic line and suggested that ἐν ζήλει ἐποίησαν “they acted in zeal” was the “zeal of the Lord” executed by Gentiles acting as God’s agent. If this were the case, one would expect the pronoun “your” to be suffixed to the noun “zeal.” But in this case, the οὐκ indicates that they had acted outside of their commission to be the “zeal of the Lord.”

The negatives in the Greek and Syriac could possibly reflect a Hebrew *Vorlage* with an emphatic *lamed*. The emphatic *lamed* frequently survives as a prefixed ל , but more often it is a לֵ (which should have been vocalized לֵי). It went unrecognized by the Masoretes who always read the לֵ as the negative particle לֹ . The presence of the emphatic *lamed* in classical Hebrew (as well as in other cognate languages) has been widely recognized. At issue here is how late the emphatic *lamed* appears. Dahood has argued convincingly for the presence of the emphatic *lamed* in many of the canonical Psalms (22:29, 25:14, 31:3, 69:1, 69: 23,

85:10, 89:19, 109:16), some of which could well be post-exilic psalms. While not all scholars are convinced by all of Dahood's proposals, at least several of these are widely acknowledged to be instances where the emphatic *lamed* is present.⁴⁴ McDaniel (1968: 206–208) demonstrated the use of the emphatic *lamed* into the exilic period⁴⁵

The emphatic *lamed* may have been used in the Hebrew text of Sirach 29:7, which reads, πολλοὶ οὐ χάριν πονηρίας ἀπέστρεψαν ἀποστερηθῆναι δωρεὰν ἐλάβηθησαν.⁴⁶ But the negative οὐ does not fit the context, giving credibility to the textual variant οὐν “therefore.”⁴⁷ But the Hebrew *Vorlage* of this poetic line may well have had the emphatic *lamed*, lying hidden behind the οὐ and the οὐν. If so, Sirach 29:7, with the emphatic *lamed*, would have to be translated, “because of such wickedness, *indeed*, many have

⁴⁴ See Dahood (1966: 143), (1970: 403–406); Huehnergard (1983: 569–93); Waltke and Connor (1990: 211–212). One example which appears in a number of discussions of the emphatic *lamed* is Qoheleth 9:4, כִּי־לֶכֶֿלֶב חַי הוּא טוֹב מִן־בַּיַּת לֵבָיִת הַמֵּת where the *lamed* prefix of לֶכֶֿלֶב is not a negative but an emphatic, meaning, “*Indeed* a live dog is better than a dead lion.” Indeed, the particle כִּי in 9:4 is probably an emphatic כִּי (see Dahood and Penar 1970: 402–405), added as a gloss defining the meaning of the *lamed* prefix.

⁴⁵ In addition to its occurrence in Lamentations 4:3, as proposed by Israel Eitan in *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 45 (1928) 202, McDaniel illustrates its occurrence twice more in 3:37–38, לֹא צָנָה מִפִּי עֲלִיּוֹן, “*Verily*, the Lord has ordained it! *Verily* from the mouth of the most High goes forth good and bad” [italics added]. See also Hillers (1972: 58), who agreed with McDaniel’s proposals.

⁴⁶ If, on the basis of Sirach’s description of the High Priest Simon II (219–196 B.C.E.), the book Sirach can be dated between 200–180 B.C.E., it may be possible to push the use of the emphatic *lamed* to at least this date. The RSV opted for the variant reading variant οὐν and translated, “because of such wickedness, *therefore*, [italics added] many have refused to lend; they have been afraid of being defrauded needlessly.” The NRSV opted for the negative οὐ and translated, “many refused to lend, *not* [italics added] because of meanness, but from fear of being defrauded needlessly.”

⁴⁷ See Ziegler 1965: 261.

refused to lend”. The Hebrew *Vorlage* of Psalms of Solomon 2:24a, as reconstructed, may add support for finding the emphatic *lamed* as late as the turn of the era. It would permit the following translation of 2:24a, “for it was indeed in zealousness they did (this).”⁴⁸

2:25b (G), 2:29 (S)

τοῦ εἰπεῖν τὴν ὑπερηφανίαν τοῦ δράκοντος ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ
to declare dishonorable the arrogance of the dragon

ܠܘܨܬܐ ܕܥܘܒܪܐ ܕܕܪܐܟܘܢ ܕܥܘܒܪܐ
to cast down the pride of the dragon in disgrace

משל גאות תנין בקלון
casting down the pride of the dragon in disgrace

The Greek has the difficult τοῦ εἰπεῖν “to declare [dishonorable]” the pride of the dragon; whereas the Syriac has ܠܘܨܬܐ “to cast down” the pride of the dragon. Trafton (1985: 42–44) discussed the proposed solutions which assume a corruption:

(1) in the Greek tradition (requiring the emendation of εἰπεῖν to εἰκεῖν “to give up” or τρεπεῖν “to turn” or ταπεινοῦν “to humble” or ριπτεῖν “to toss about, to throw”),

⁴⁸ The emphatic *lamed* may be attested in New Testament times. The fourteenth century Hebrew text of the Gospel of Matthew found in the *Evan Bohan* of Shem Tob ben-Issac ben-Shaprut (which has been published by Howard [1987, and republished in 1995]) may well contain elements from the original Hebrew Gospel of Matthew referred to by the church fathers. Matthew 19:22 in the Shem Tob text has a very dubious negative particle, which would be better read as an emphatic *lamed*. The text has, שלא היה לו קרקעות רבות ויהי כשמוע הבחור הלך לפי, which Howard translated as “It came to pass when the young man heard he went away (angry) because he did *not* [italics added] have much property.” Given the context of the statement and the next line of 19:22 where Jesus spoke about “how hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven,” the negative שלא is very problematic. However, were the לא recognized as an emphatic *lamed*, the verse would mean, “It came to pass when the young man heard he went away because he *indeed* had a great deal of property.” This interpretation exactly fits the context of the story.

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(2) or in the Hebrew *Vorlage* (which had דבר “to destroy” or “to speak” or להמיר “to change, to turn” — which was misread as לאמר “to say”, or למיר, למור/למור [= לאמר]),

(3) or due to an inner Syriac corruption of **ܠܡܝܪ** [= του εἰπεῖν] to **ܠܡܝܪܐ**.

After evaluating the various proposals, Trafton argued for the **ܠܡܝܪܐ** of ms 16hl as possibly being a “direct translation of the Hebrew” and having “the best claim to being original.” But in a footnote he stated, “It is unclear what Hebrew word could also have given rise to the reading του εἰπεῖν . . .”

I agree with Trafton that the Syriac provides the clue, rather than the Greek, and propose the following solution. The *Vorlage* may have had מושל “casting down,” which was (mis)understood by the Greek translator as having the same meaning as מושל in Ezekiel 21:5 (MT), ממשל מושלים “one speaking proverbs.” The Greek του εἰπεῖν would then be quite appropriate. However, מושל (*scriptio defectiva* for מושיל) could also be the *hiph^l* participle of נשל “to cast down,” and was so read by the Syriac translator. Thus, the Syriac serves as the basis for the reconstructed *Vorlage*.

2:26b (G), 2:30a (S)

ἐκκεκεντημένον ἐπὶ τῶν ὄρεων Αἰγύπτου

pierced on the mountains of Egypt

ܩܢܩܢܬܝܡܝܢܘܢ ܥܠ ܩܘܪܝܐܝܢ ܡܘܨܠܝܢ

when he was slain among the mountains of Egypt

ܟܢܟܪܐ ܒܚܪܝܡ ܡܘܨܪܝܡ

when he was pierced by the nobles in Egypt

The Greek ἐκκεκεντημένον “pierced” does not match the Syriac **ܩܢܩܢܬܝܡܝܢܘܢ** “slain.” Trafton (1985: 45) noted that the Syriac would be an “unusual” translation” of the Greek. A *Vorlage* with either נכה “smitten” or נכרה (the *niph^{al}* of כרה) “pierced” might have caused the different translations of the Greek and the Syriac.

Of these two words, it is more likely that נכרה was original and that the כ was missed by the Syriac rather than that assuming the Greek added it. This reconstruction follows the Greek and would account for the Greek “pierced” and the Syriac “slain.”⁴⁹

Another difficulty in this verse is the Greek and the Syriac reference to “the mountains of Egypt.” First, there are no mountains in Lower Egypt or in the delta. Secondly, the tradition about Pompey’s death is that, after losing a decisive battle to Caesar, he was murdered upon arriving in Egypt by the ruling aristocracy there.⁵⁰ John Morrison (1995, oral communication) suggested that the *Vorlage* read חרי (scriptio defectiva for חרי “nobles,” referring to the ruling party who murdered Pompey) rather than חרי “mountains.” In light of the tradition given by Plutarch, I find Morrison’s suggestion convincing. It is also possible that the *Vorlage* of both the Greek and the Syriac texts already contained this reading. In this instance, neither the Greek or the Syriac texts reflect the reconstructed *Vorlage* which assumes that the original text read חרי “nobles.”

2:26b (G), 2:30b (S)

ὑπὲρ ἐλάχιστον ἐξουδενωμένον ἐπὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης
more despised than the smallest thing on earth or sea

⁴⁹ Less likely, one could reconstruct a *Vorlage* having the *hoph'al* חמה “he was put to death,” which became the Syriac “slain” and Greek “pierced” (assuming the translator knew how Pompey died).

⁵⁰ Plutarch in *The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans* described Pompey’s death at the hands of Achilles, Septimus, Salvius, a centurion, and three or four other soldiers who went out in a fishing boat to his galley to “greet” him. Pompey got into the fishing boat where the conspirators murdered him with swords. The Greek “pierced” can thus be explained by this account but not the “mountains of Egypt.” Gray (1913: 633) noted that Dio Cassius (42: 3–5) stated that Pompey was slain πρὸς τῷ Κασσιῶ ὄρει, i.e., Mons Cassius which was near Pelusium. One cannot fail to notice that Κασσιῶ ὄρει comes close to Hebrew חרי “the mountains of Cush” or חרי “the nobles of Cush,” with חרי being a synonym or metonym for Egypt.)

וְעַל הַיָּם וְעַל הַיַּבְשָׁה בְּיַד אֲנָשִׁים קְטָנִים

and more than the least (he was) being despised
upon the land and upon the sea

נִבְזָה בְּמִזְעָר עַל הַיָּם וְהָאָרֶץ

he was disgraced by a few men on the land and on the sea

It is difficult to see how either the Syriac or the Greek could be a literal translation of the other. Rahlfs's edition has ὑπὲρ ἐλάχιστον, an emendation which was first proposed by Geiger (1871: 82) and became widely accepted.⁵¹ The preposition ὑπὲρ followed by an accusative ἐλάχιστον gives the sense “more than the smallest.” However, none of the Greek manuscripts of Psalms of Solomon have ἐλάχιστον. All have ὑπὲρ ἐλάχιστου, the preposition followed by a genitive, meaning “on behalf of the smallest.” Greek ὑπὲρ followed by a genitive cannot mean “more than” (Liddell and Scott 1940: 1857–1858). Wright's translation, “more despised than the smallest thing,” reflects the emendation to ὑπὲρ ἐλάχιστον. The proposed *Vorlage* eliminates the need to emend the Greek text.

Plutarch's account of Pompey's death has some of Pompey's enemies standing on the shore awaiting his arrival, as well as other enemies in a small fishing boat that had come to take him from his galley to the shore. The phrase עַל הַיָּם וְהָאָרֶץ “on land and sea” may well refer to the two contingents of Pompey's enemies who greeted him. The meaning of ὑπὲρ could be “on behalf of,” but ὑπὲρ also translates the Hebrew prepositions ל “to” and ב “in.” In this poetic line, ὑπὲρ most likely translates the preposition ב. The Greek ἐλάχιστον “small, short, meanest, littlest” overlaps the semantic range of זָעִיר “little,” but it misses the sense of “few” which מְזַעֵר conveys (as in Isaiah 16:14 and 24:6).

The choice of נִבְזָה “he was disgraced” reflects what happened to Pompey's body after his death. Wright (1985: 653, note e2)

⁵¹ See, for example, Ryle and James (1891: 25), von Gebhardt (1895: 74), and Kittel (1900: 133).

commented on the disgrace: “The worst indignity at death was to fail to have a proper burial (Ps 79:3; 2Kgs 9:10; Jer 22:19). Pompey’s decapitated and decomposing body was burned on a pyre of driftwood.”⁵²

The Greek and the Syriac traditions failed to understand the Hebrew *Vorlage* at this point, and both translations are slightly askew for this verse. The proposed Hebrew *Vorlage* explains the variants in both traditions and eliminates the necessity of emending the Greek text against all the manuscript evidence.

2:27 (G), 2:31 (S)

τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ διαφερόμενον ἐπὶ κυμάτων

his body was carried about on the waves

וּפְנָרוֹ קָרַב עַל גְּלִים

but his body, when it was going upon the waves

וּפְנָרוֹ קָרַב עַל גְּלִים

and his corpse was going upon the waves

This is one passage where the Greek and the Syriac agree but a Hebrew *Vorlage* could provide an explanation of the variants in the Greek manuscripts. Mss 149, 260, 471, 606 have *διεφθαρμενον* “rotting” rather than *διαφερόμενον* “carried about.” These manuscripts are all in the 260 family in the *stemma* and could simply be an internal Greek corruption of *διαφερόμενον* to *διεφθαρμενον*. However, a *Vorlage* with קָרַב “to draw near, to bring near (*hiph'il*),” as proposed above, would suggest not only that Pompey’s body was carried on the waves, but the waves were moving the body toward the shore. Manuscripts having *διεφθαρμενον* “rotting” evidently (mis)read קָרַב as רָקַב, reflecting a metathesis

⁵² The disgrace that goes with not being buried is also evident in Greek thought. In Sophocles’ drama *Antigone*, Antigone risked her life to give a proper burial to her brother, Polynieces — after Creon had forbidden his burial — because the gods demanded a burial for all.

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of the ק and the ר. The reading of קרב as רqb would have some impact upon the formation of a *stemma* for the Psalms of Solomon, suggesting an independent translation of a Hebrew *Vorlage* behind mss 149, 260, 471, and 606.

2:29b (G), 2:33b (S)

καὶ οὐκ ἐπέγνω ὅτι ὁ θεὸς μέγας

and he did not understand that it is God who is great

אלהים הגדול והמבואר

and he did not know that the Lord is God

ולא ידע כי יהוה אל

and he did not know that YHWH is God

The Syriac אלהים הגדול והמבואר and the Greek ὁ θεὸς μέγας cannot be translations of each other. Syriac could well have read a *Vorlage* with יהוה אל and translated “the Lord is God.” The Greek translator read the *Vorlage* as “God (= YHWH) is great,” understanding אל as “great” (in the sense of power and strength [see (BDB): 42–43]), a meaning found in Ezekiel 31:11, אל גוים “mighty one of the nations” and in Job 41:7 אלים “mighty men.”⁵³ Aside from the divine name, the Syriac is the equivalent of the proposed *Vorlage*, retaining the sense of the original Hebrew.

2:31b (G), 2:35a (S)

καὶ κοιμίζω ὑπερηφάνους εἰς ἀπώλειαν αἰῶνος

but putting to sleep the arrogant for eternal destruction

וישן זדים להבליה עולם

and is causing the proud to sleep not for a time but forever

ויישן זדים להבליה עולם

and he will put to sleep the arrogant for eternal destruction

⁵³ Other passages where אל has been understood having this meaning are Ezekiel 17:13, II Kings 24:15, Genesis 31:29, Proverbs 3:27, and Nehemiah 5:5.

Translators and commentators have proposed emending the Greek⁵⁴ and the Syriac texts to move away from the motif of “sleeping.”⁵⁵ However, there is no need to emend the Greek or the Syriac since שָׁן “to sleep” in the *piel* has the meaning “to sleep the sleep of death”—as in Daniel 12:2, וְרַבִּים מִיִּשְׁנֵי אֲדָמַת־עָפָר, יִקְוּצוּ “and many of those *sleeping* in the ground of dust will awake.” It appears to be a euphemism for death, like the English usage of “putting a pet to sleep.” The Greek and the Syriac translators understood the Hebrew verb to be the *piel*, with its overtones of death.

The Syriac phrase ܠܐ ܒܘܢܐ ܐܠܐ ܠܥܠܡ ܕܥܠܡ “not for a time but for ever” and the Greek phrase εἰς ἀπώλειαν αἰῶνος “for eternal destruction” cannot be translations of each other. A *Vorlage* which could account for the difference could have been לתבלית עולם, literally, “for a destruction eternal.” But the Syriac seems to have a doublet for the עולם in its *Vorlage*, namely ܠܥܠܡ “for ever” and ܐܠܐ “but” (= אולם “but”). If so, this would be an example of a doublet due to an aural error. Moreover, if תבלית “destruction” were in the *Vorlage*, it would appear that the Syriac text read the noun as the phrase בל לעת “not for a time,” which would have been another aural error (confusing the syllable ית [. . .ith] with עת [. . .eth]), as well as a scribal error wherein the initial ת of תבלית was dropped.

The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text tradition since it points to the more poetic 2 + 2 metrical line, ויישן זדים, לתבלית עולם—compared to rather prosaic wording suggested by the Syriac: ויישן זדים בל לעת אולם עולם.

⁵⁴ Fritzsche (1871: 572), followed by Hilgenfeld (1871: 389) and Pick (1883: 788), emended κοιμίζω to κομιζω “bringing.”

⁵⁵ Harris and Mingana (1916: 89) wanted to emend מוּרַבַּי to מוּרַבַּי “brought down, lowered, brought low.”

PSALM TWO

2:32b (G), 2:36b (S)

κρίνων τῆν ὑπ' οὐρανόν

judging what is under heaven

ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ

and is judging what is under all of heaven

ידין אשר תחת כל השמים

he is judging what is under all the heavens

The Greek lacks an equivalent of the Syriac ܕܥܠܡܐ “all,” but this is not unusual in translating from Hebrew to Greek. The phrase תחת כל השמים “under all the heavens” appears seven times in the Hebrew scriptures (Genesis 7:19; Deuteronomy 2:25, 4:19; Job 28:24, 37:3, 41:3; and Daniel 9:12), and only once in the LXX is the ܕܥܠܡܐ translated (Job 37:3 has ὑποκάτω παντὸς [= כל] τοῦ οὐρανοῦ for תחת כל השמים). The Syriac translated the phrase literally, while the Greek moved to the idiom “under heaven,” which dropped the Hebrew plural, as well. The Syriac supports the proposed *Vorlage*.

2:33a (G), 2:37a (S)

εὐλογεῖτε τὸν θεόν οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον ἐν ἐπιστήμῃ

praise God, you who fear the Lord with understanding

ܒܪܟܗ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ

bless the Lord, those who fear him in form

ברכו יהוה יראי אלהים בכסל

bless Yahweh, you who fear God in confidence

The presence of the Greek loan word ܕܥܠܡܐ (ἀσχήμα) “form” in the Syriac does not fit the context in this verse and is problematic. Trafton (1985: 48) noted correctly that the ἀσχήμα cannot be used as evidence that the Syriac is a translation from the Greek since the Greek has ἐπιστήμη “understanding,” not ἀσχήμα. Additional support for Trafton comes from Jastrow (1950: 94) where ܕܥܠܡܐ is noted as a loan word in Aramaic as

well, appearing in the Targum of Proverbs 7:10, where it translates the Hebrew ת״שׁ “planning, simulation.” This loanword also appears as a feminine noun in Targum Yerushalmi in Genesis 31:14 and Numbers 32:25, meaning “consent, agreement.” The use of ἀσχημα in the Targums, which certainly did not come from a Greek source, supports the position that the presence of ἀσχημα in a Syriac text does not mean the Syriac text must be derived from a Greek source. The use of the word here still remains problematic in light of the context, but it is not proof of its being translated from some other Greek text.

The use of ἀσχημα in Aramaic and Syriac is not a basis for assuming that the Hebrew *Vorlage* of 2:33a used the word. The Greek ἐπιστήμη “understanding” and the Syriac ܠܫܘܢܐ “form” suggest that the *Vorlage* had כסל (or כסלה) “confidence” (as in Job 4:6; Psalm 78:7, 85:9; and Proverbs 3:26) which was misread by the Syriac and Greek translators (or the scribes producing their *Vorlagen*) as שכל / סכל “to be prudent” (BDB, 698, 968). The ἐπιστήμη would well translate שכל “prudence, insight” and the Syriac ܠܫׁܘܢܐ “form” would well translate שכל when read in light of its Arabic cognate شكل “the shape, form, or figure of a thing” (Lane, 1872: 1587). The context of 2:33a is much like Job 4:6, הֲלֹא יִרְאַתְךָ כִּסְלֹתֶיךָ וְתָם דְּרָכֶיךָ תִּקְוֹתֶיךָ. “Is not your *fear* of God your *confidence*, and the integrity of your ways your hope?” (RSV, italics added). The conflation of כסל and אר in Job 4:6 provided the clues for the reconstructed *Vorlage* given above.

Psalm Three

The Syriac of 3:1–6, where the Syriac S source (a marginal note in the *Hymns of Severus* which survives only in these verses)⁵⁶ differs from the Syriac mss 10hl and 16hl, has some interesting variants. Trafton (1981: 74, 381, 387; 1985: 240–241) noted that

⁵⁶ See Brooks (1911: vol. 7, 726) for his account of his discovery of this Syriac fragment of the Psalms of Solomon.

in the first five verses (10 text lines) S disagrees twenty times with mss 10hl and 16hl. He concluded:

Thus, the difference might be explained on the assumption that the scribe wrote the verses from memory, with the result that what looks like a different textual tradition is really the product of a reasonably accurate, but not photographic, memory.

Another explanation can be offered, namely, that S was an independent translation of the original Hebrew. Of the three variants examined next, two address inner-Syriac differences which can be better understood in the light of an underlying Hebrew, and one of the inner-Syriac variants (in 3:4a) suggests the translator may have been reading a different *Vorlage*.

3:1

ἵνα τί ὑπνοῖς ψυχῇ καὶ οὐκ ἐὐλογεῖς τὸν κύριον

why do you sleep, soul, and do not praise the Lord

ܠܡܢ ܠܢܝܢܐ ܕܡܢܝܢܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܒܪܟܐ ܕܠܗ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ (16hl and 10hl)

why do you sleep, O my soul, and do not bless the Lord

ܠܡܢ ܠܢܝܢܐ ܕܡܢܝܢܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܒܪܟܐ ܕܠܗ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ (S)

why do you sleep, O my soul,

and you are not drawing near to the Lord

על־מה תישני נפשי ולא תברכי את־יהוה⁵⁷

why do you sleep, O my soul, and not bless the Lord

Mss 10hl and 16hl have the feminine participle (ending with ܐܝܢܐ suffix) of ܢܒܪܟܐ “to bless,” in agreement with the Greek ἐὐλογεῖς “praise,” and Syriac S has the participle of ܢܒܪܟܐ “to draw near, to approach” and the 2fs pronoun ܕܡܢܝܢܐ. The differences could be an inner-Syriac confusion of ܢܒܪܟܐ and ܢܒܪܟܐ and the loss of the ܕܡܢܝܢܐ of the S, ܕܡܢܝܢܐ. But it is more likely that the

⁵⁷ In basic agreement with Stein (410). Compare Frankenberg’s (69) על־מה תישני נפשי ולא תברכי את־יהוה.

ܫܘܠܬܘܢܘܢ of the S source is a free rendering of a תברכ' in the *Vorlage*, with the ܫܘܠܬܘܢܘܢ here having the meaning “to ingratiate one’s self.” This nuance would parallel the use of the root קרב in Arabic (Lane 1885: 2506^a), where *تقرب به إلى الله* means “he advanced himself in the favor of God,” and the noun *قربان* (קרבן) “offering” was considered the equivalent of prayer (“the divinely appointed act of prayer is the قربان to God of every pious person”).

Mss 16hl and 10hl and S have . . . נפשו . . . “my soul and . . .” and the Greek has ψυχή και . . . “soul and . . .,” the latter lacking a pronominal element corresponding to the 1cs suffix in the Syriac. A simple case of haplography evidently occurred in the Greek translator’s reading a *Vorlage* in which נפשי ואל had been corrupted to נפשו ואל with the subsequent loss of one of the two ך’s. As a result, the Greek has no pronominal element as do the Syriac manuscripts. In this instance the Syriac has preserved the Hebrew *Vorlage* while the Greek has not.

3:1b–3:2a (G), 3:2 (S)

ψάλατε τῷ θεῷ τῷ αἰνετῷ . . . ψάλλε

sing a new song to God . . . sing

.ܫܘܠܬܘܢܘܢ ܠܐܠܘܗܝܢ

sing a new hymn to God

זמרי זמיר חדש לאל . . . שירי

sing a new song to God . . . sing

The Greek plural imperative ψάλατε coming between the singular “my soul” (in 3:1) and the singular “a glad heart” (in 3:2b)—which are the only possible subjects for the verb—is very problematic. Of the suggestions made, the least likely ones are the ones of Viteau (1911:267) who simply emended it to the singular ψάλλε and Ryle and James (1891:30–31) who attributed it to poetic license or the unconscious adoption of the language of the canonical psalms.⁵⁸ Ryle and James, however, were correct in

⁵⁸ See Wright 1985: 654, note b.

recognizing the misreading of an original singular זָמַר in the *Vorlage* as the plural זָמְרוּ, another example of the widely attested confusion of ך and ך (see Delitzsch, 1920: p 103 § 103). Frankenberg (1896: 69) and Stein (1969: 440) used the singular זָמַר in agreement with Ryle and James, although Franz Delitzsch (n.d., *ad loc.*) used the plural זָמְרוּ. The Syriac rightly reflects a singular that must have been in the *Vorlage*, but the Greek probably retains the two synonymous imperatives. The reconstructed *Vorlage* attempts to restore alliteration as well as synonymous parallelism.

3:2a

καὶ γρηγόρησον ἐπὶ τῆν γρηγόρησιν αὐτοῦ

and be aware of how he is aware of you

ܘܗܝܬܘܢ ܥܘܝܢܝܢ ܥܘܝܢܝܢ ܥܘܝܢܝܢ

and be excited in his excitement

והתעוררי בעירותו

and rejoice with his Watchers

Wright (1985: 654), commenting on this difficult passage, indicates that “The Greek and the Syriac are obscure to the point of unintelligibility.” The Greek γρηγόρησον ἐπὶ τῆν γρηγόρησιν αὐτοῦ means literally “keep watching for his watching” or “be awake in his wakefulness,” and the Syriac ܘܗܝܬܘܢ ܥܘܝܢܝܢ also means “to be awake.” None of the explanations of the commentators (see Trafton, 1985:52–53) are convincing. The best proposals are those of Ryle and James (1891: 31) who thought there was a confusion of עור and רוע and Trafton who settled on the root עור. Whereas Ryle and James assumed a *Vorlage* with רוע “to shout,” Trafton’s conclusion that the *Vorlage* contained a *hithpolel* of עור “to be excited,” which became in the Syriac the *ethpa’al* of ܘܗܝܬܘܢ ܥܘܝܢܝܢ, is the more tenable.

Trafton noted that the Greek translator missed this nuance in his use of γρηγόρεω, “to be awake” resulting in an “unintelligible reading.” But his translation, “be excited in his excitement,” does not fit the context any better than “to be awake.” Moreover the

Syriac has the *ettaph^eal*, a passive causative (“he was made to be awake”), rather than an *ethpe^eal*, a simple passive (“he was awakened”).

The nuance of ܘܚܘܢ required for this context cannot be the exercise of spiritual gifts, as in the Peshitta of II Timothy 1:6, “I remind you to stir [ܘܚܘܢ] up the gift of God which is in you,” or a metaphor for being alive, as in I Thessalonians 5:10, “whether we wake [ܘܚܘܢ] or sleep, we shall be with him.” Rather, the nuance is to be found with the use of ܘܚܘܢ “the Watchers” in Daniel 4:13, 23 [MT 4:10, 20], ἄγγελος ἐν ἰσχύι (which is rendered in Aquila and Symmachus as ἐγρηγόρος). The “Watchers” or “the wakeful ones” (i.e., those who by nature never need to sleep) of Daniel 4 are identified in I Enoch 71:17 as the *cherubim*, the *seraphim*, and the *ophanim* who—without sleep—guard the Divine and endlessly sing his praises.⁵⁹ It is only this interpretation which does justice to the αὐτοῦ of γρηγόρησιν αὐτοῦ, recognizing that ܘܚܘܢ which was translated as γρηγόρησιν would have been better translated as ἐγρηγόρος. In the previous poetic line the poet questioned “why do you sleep, O my soul.” Therefore, it seems unlikely that the poet shifted after only one verse to a concern about God’s staying awake.

The Syriac ܘܚܘܢܘܢܘܢ can be parsed as a feminine collective noun (see GKC § 122^b) with an affixed preposition and a 3ms suffix, which would have to be translated “with his Watchers.”⁶⁰ Since the context has ܘܚܘܢ and ܘܚܘܢ, the nuance ܘܚܘܢ is not “to be excited” but “to rejoice, to exult” (as in Job 31:29, where ܘܚܘܢ occurs in synonymous parallelism with ܘܚܘܢ “to rejoice”).⁶¹ Contextually, the Greek and the Syriac require a *Vorlage* with ܘܚܘܢ,

⁵⁹ For other passages dealing with the ܘܚܘܢ see I Enoch 1:5, 12:2–3, 14:1, 20:1, 40:2, 61:12, II Enoch 18:1–8, and perhaps Psalm 121.

⁶⁰ The stem ܘܚܘܢ could also mean “chaff, fine dust, smoke” or “blindness” (Payne Smith, 1967: 407), but these meanings are contextually unlikely.

⁶¹ Trafton cited Job 31:29 as an example of ܘܚܘܢ with the meaning of “to be excited,” but the key to its meaning is in the parallel “to rejoice.”

but translators in both traditions missed the nuance of “the Watchers.” The anticipated use of parallelism in poetry supports the parallel imperatives in the Greek text tradition. The psalmist is exhorting himself to “rejoice with the Watchers” who never sleep but rejoice before God continually “to remember the Lord always” (3:1).

3:3b

καὶ δικαιώσει τὰ κρίματα κυρίου

and proving the Lord’s judgements right

ܠܘܬܐܝܢܐ ܕܡܝܢܐ ܠܕܝܢܐܝܢܐ

and in righteousness the judgements of the Lord

וּנְצַדִּיק בְּמִשְׁפָּטֵי יְהוָה

and (the righteous one) was vindicated

by the judgements of the Lord

The problems in this poetic line are the use of the abstract noun ܠܘܬܐܝܢܐ “righteousness” in Syriac and the ambiguity of the Greek δικαιώσει which can be either a dative of δικαιώσις, or a 3s indicative future of δικαιώω, or, as suggested by Ryle and James (1891: 32), a corruption of the 3pl present δικαιοῦσι. Ryle and James translated “and justify the judgements of the Lord [with thanksgiving],” and Trafton preferred “and declare righteous the judgements of the Lord.”

If the suggestions of Ryle and James or Trafton are accepted, a theological problem arises, namely, the idea that members of the faith community were called upon to pass judgement on God’s righteousness. The phrase καὶ δικαιώσει τὰ κρίματα κυρίου does not appear elsewhere in the LXX. The uniqueness of the phrase in biblical literature and the uniqueness of the theological concept raise suspicions about its integrity. The suspicions are diminished when a *Vorlage* with ܠܘܬܐܝܢܐ (*scriptio defectiva*) “to justify, to vindicate” is recognized as a misreading of an original ܠܘܬܐܝܢܐ “to be justified, to be vindicated,” i.e., the misreading of a *niph^{al}* as a *hiph^{al}* reflecting the confusion of a ܐ and a ܢ (see Delitzsch, 1920: 116 §123^c).

The preposition **ב** of **בְּחִשְׁבוֹתָיו** has no parallel in the Greek text, rendering it also suspect. Were the preposition transposed as a prefix to **חֲשָׁבוֹתָיו** “his judgements,” coupled with the reading of the *niph^cal* **נִצְדָּק**, a more traditional theological statement would appear, namely, the members of the faith community “were vindicated by the judgements of the Lord.” The misreading in the *Vorlage* of **הַצְדָּק** instead of **נִצְדָּק** is reflected in the Syriac which read the **ה** of **הַצְדָּק** as the definite article rather than the *hiph^cil* prefix, suggesting that its *Vorlage* was also *scriptio defectiva* (**הַצְדָּק**). The reason why “the whole verse is difficult,” to quote Trafton (1985: 53), is because neither Greek or Syriac had an accurate *Vorlage*. The original Hebrew, **וְנִצְדָּק בְּחִשְׁבוֹתָיו יְהוָה**, must have been corrupted before the two traditions emerged.

3:4a

οὐκ ὀλιγοθήσει δίκαιος παιδευόμενος ὑπὸ κυρίου
the righteous does not lightly esteem discipline from the Lord

כִּי יִצְדָּק בְּחִשְׁבוֹתָיו יְהוָה וְלֹא יִשְׁחָחֵהוּ (16hl and 10hl)

the righteous one who is chastened
by the Lord will not disregard {him}

כִּי יִצְדָּק בְּחִשְׁבוֹתָיו יְהוָה וְלֹא יִשְׁחָחֵהוּ (S)

the righteous one who is chastened
by the Lord will not be faint-hearted

לֹא יִכְחָה צְדִיק מִוֶּסֶר יְהוָה

*the righteous one who is chastened
by the Lord will not be faint-hearted*

Mss 16hl and 10hl have **שָׁחַח** “to disregard,” which corresponds to the Greek, while S has the phrase **וְלֹא יִשְׁחָחֵהוּ** “lacking courage” (Jennings, 1926: 67, I Thessalonians 5:14). This difference reflects a confusion in the reading at some point in the Hebrew tradition of **מָחָה** “to delay, to disregard” and **כָּחַה** “to be faint, to grow dim”—a simple misreading of the graphically similar

ו and ם (see Delitzsch, 1920: 114, § 115).⁶² The scribe or translator behind S may have misread his *Vorlage*, or he may have had a *Vorlage* with םהה instead of םהה, resulting from an earlier misreading in the tradition.

3:5

προσέκοψεν ὁ δίκαιος καὶ ἔδικαίωσεν τὸν κύριον
ἔπεσεν καὶ ἀποβλέπει τί ποιήσει αὐτῷ ὁ θεός

The righteous stumbles and proves the Lord right;
he falls and watches for what God will do about him.

ܪܫܘܢܐ ܕܝܘܨܬܐ ܘܕܝܘܨܬܐ ܕܝܘܨܬܐ
ܢܦܠ ܘܢܩܝܡ ܕܝܘܨܬܐ ܕܝܘܨܬܐ ܕܝܘܨܬܐ

The righteous one stumbled and justified God,
he fell and waits for what the Lord will do to him.

נכשל הצדיק והתצדק את יהוה נפל ונבט מהיעשה־לו אלהים
the righteous one stumbled and made himself right with Yahweh
he fell and waited for what God would do for him.

The unusual statements in the English translations of the Syriac and the Greek, that the sinner vindicates God, is probably rooted in a misreading of the *hithpa^cel* הִתְצַדֵּק instead of the *hiph^cil* הִצַּדִּיק (*scriptio plene* הִצַּדִּיק) in the *Vorlage*, as in 3:3b. Although the Greek ἐδικαίωσεν could be translated “to justify oneself,” the accusative τὸν κύριον, making God the recipient of the action, would indicate that the *Vorlage* was read as a *hiph^cil*.

The *ܫܒܪ* “to wait for, to look for, to expect; to lie in wait” of 16hl and 10hl has a different semantic range than ἀποβλέπω “to look after, to look away, to pay attention,” suggesting that neither the Greek nor the Syriac is a translation of the other. The Syriac S source has *ܢܩܝܡ* “to look, to behold, to gaze,” and as Trafton (1985: 54) noted, it could be a translation of or a correction to

⁶² The Hebrew םהה may be a by-form of the Syriac cognate *ܢܩܝܡ* “to disregard.”

ἀποβλέπω. The differences between ܠܫܒ, ܝܘܨ, and ἀποβλέπω could all be rooted in a *Vorlage* having ܠܫܒ, the semantic range of which includes “to look, to pay attention to, to expect.”

3:6b (G), 3:7b (S)

αὐλίζεται ἐν οἴκῳ δικαίου
visit the house of the righteous
 ܠܫܒ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܕܝܘܨܝܢܐ
lodges in the house of the righteous
 לינים בית הצדיק
dwelling in the house of the righteous

The use of the present active indicative in Greek for what appears in the Syriac as a active participle is a widely attested variation. The difference between the Syriac passive participle and the present active indicative is another matter. The Syriac passive participle ܠܫܒ “was lodged” and the Greek αὐλίζεται “lodges” can be derived from a *Vorlage* with לינים, the plural participle of לון “to lodge.”⁶³ The *scriptio plene* לינים was misread by the Syriac as the passive participle לוניים, another occurrence of the frequent confusion of ו and ך (see Delitzsch, 1920: 103 § 103). The compound subject of the *Vorlage* would permit either a singular or plural verbal element. Even though the Greek has the singular verb, its use of the active is the more probable reading.

3:7 (G), 3:8 (S)

ἐπισκέπτεται διὰ παντὸς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ ὁ δίκαιος
the righteous constantly searches his house
 ܠܫܒ ܕܒܝܬܐ ܕܝܘܨܝܢܐ
 for he always inspects the house of the righteous one
 יפקוד תמיד ביתו הצדיק
the righteous one continually inspects his house

⁶³ The passive participle of לון follows a pattern of מול “circumcised” and פון “scattered.”

Greek differs from Syriac in that it is the “righteous” one who searches his own house, whereas in the Syriac it is God (literally “he” = God) who searches the house of the righteous. Trafton proposed that the Hebrew *Vorlage* was ביתו הצדיק “his house [the direct object] the righteous one [the subject],” which the Syriac translator misread. This is quite plausible if ביתו was read as an Aramaism, with the ך being understood as an anticipatory 3ms suffix, “the house of him (who is) the righteous one.” The Greek seems preferable in this phrase.

3:10 (G), 3:13 (S)

ἔπεσεν ὅτι ποιηρὸν τὸ πτώμα αὐτοῦ

he falls—his fall is serious—

נפל והוא רבוע רבוע

he fell and because his fall was evil

כי באש מפלתו

indeed, his fallen body was stinking

The versification of Greek 3:10 and 11, as well as the versification of Syriac 3:12–13, has contributed to the misunderstanding of these poetic lines. The Greek ἔπεσεν “he falls” and the Syriac נפל “he fell” are the last word in their respective lines, not the first word of a new line. The *Vorlage*, no doubt, had נפל, but it was incorrectly read as a *qal* (נפל) in both traditions. It should have been read as a *niph^cal* (נפל).⁶⁴ The preceding poetic line would have read “He added sin upon sin to/in his life and he was *felled/overthrown*.” The Greek ὅτι and the Syriac והוא begin what was once a new poetic line which probably had the meaning, “(and) because his carcass stinks, he surely will not rise.”

The clues pointing to a *Vorlage* with this meaning are (1) πτώμα “a fall, a ruin, a corpse” (Liddell and Scott 1940: 1549); (2) מפלת “ruin, overthrow, carcass” (BDB 658); and רבוע “evil” a

⁶⁴ The *niph^cal* of נפל is not listed in BDB; but it is cited by Jastrow (1950: 924)

homograph of its Jewish Aramaic cognate ב"ש "bad, wrong, ill, sick" (Jastrow, 167). Considering these clauses in reverse order, it must be noted that רָעָה is from the root רָעָה (medial ר = medial ר), which corresponds to the Hebrew רָעָה "to have a bad smell, to stink, to decay" (BDB, 92; Jastrow, 195). Therefore a *Vorlage* with רָעָה could mean either "to be evil" or "to give off an odor (from decaying)." Similarly, a *Vorlage* with מַפְלֵת could be read in two different ways: מַפְלֵת could be "a ruin, an overthrow" or "a carcass," as in Judges 14:8, "he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion (מַפְלֵת הַלֵּוֹן)." Moreover, Greek πτώμα "fall, misfortune, calamity" may also mean "a fallen body, a corpse."

Even the subordinate conjunctions ὅτι and וְ, which support the reconstruction of a *Vorlage* with כִּי, permit other interpretations since כִּי can also mean "for, because" or "surely."⁶⁵

Therefore, a *Vorlage* which read כִּי רָעָה מַפְלֵתוֹ could have been translated "(and) because his fall was bad" or, equally, "indeed, his fallen body stinks." The poet's choice of the word in the original Hebrew could have intentionally carried this double meaning. It was not just a matter of a "bad fall" from which the sinner might recover, it was a permanent fall. If the sinner's corpse is already smelling, the poet concluded: οὐκ ἀναστήσεται / רָעָה וְעָמַד "he will not arise!"

Although Psalm 3 is not usually considered a historical psalm, it has some similarities to Psalm 2, particularly if the above reconstruction of a Hebrew *Vorlage* for verse 10 is correct. The "stinking, fallen body" called to mind the image found in Psalm 2: 27 where Pompey's headless body was carried about on the waves. Indeed, the placement of this Psalm following Psalm Two may be because of this verse and that identification.

3:12b (G), 3:26b (S)

καὶ ἡ ζωὴ αὐτῶν . . . οὐκ ἐκλείψει ἔτι
and their life . . . and it shall never end

⁶⁵ On the emphatic כִּי, see Dahood and Penar, 1970: 400.

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וְחַיֵּיהֶם . . . וְלֹא יִכְלֶיהָ עוֹד

and their lives (plural) . . . and it will not perish ever again

וְחַיֵּיהֶם . . . וְלֹא יִכְלֶיהָ עוֹד
and *their life* . . . and *will never end*

The debate with this poetic line has centered on the unusual singular verb in Syriac, used with a plural subject. Harris and Mingana (1868: 106–107) argued that the singular verb is a literal translation of ἐκλείψει, but Trafton (1985: 57), citing GKC (462, § 145) and Nöldeke (1904: 255) has demonstrated that although it is unusual there are numerous examples in Hebrew, and at least one example in Syriac, of a singular verb with a plural subject. One example in Hebrew not cited in GKC is Genesis 47:28, “the *years* of his life *was* (וַיְהִי) a hundred and forty-seven years.” The singular of 47:28 should be retained as *lectio difficilior* even though, as noted in BHS, the Samaritan text, Syriac and the Targums read or translate this as though it were the plural וַיְהִי. Similarly, the Syriac, independent of the Greek, singular verb, may have read a *Vorlage* with וְלֹא יִכְלֶיהָ עוֹד.

Psalm Four

4:1

ἵνα τί σύ βέβηλε κάθησαι ἐν συνεδρίῳ ὁσίων

why are you sitting in the council
of the devout, you profaner

לָמָּה אַתָּה יָשִׁיב בְּסוּד חַסִּדִּים

לָמָּה אַתָּה יָשִׁיב בְּסוּד חַסִּדִּים

why do you sit, O wicked man,
in the council of the righteous

לָמָּה חָלַל תֵּשֵׁב בְּסוּד חַסִּדִּים

*why, O profane one, are you sitting
in the council of the righteous?*

The Greek βέβηλε and Syriac ܠܘܘܬܐ ܫܘܢܐ are not translations of each other. Both could translate a *Vorlage* with the stem ܠܠܐ “to profane.” Although Syriac has the stem ܠܠܐ, its meaning “to purify” is the opposite of the Hebrew ܠܠܐ.⁶⁶ The root ܠܠܐ would be an alternative for a *Vorlage* with ܠܠܐ, but its meaning in the Syriac differs from that of Hebrew ܠܠܐ. In Syriac it has the meaning “to paganize, to turn aside to idolatry, to apostatize,” whereas the Hebrew is less specific, meaning “to pollute (the land)” and in Isaiah 9:16 it occurs as a synonym of רעע (כִּי רָעוּ) “for everyone is godless and an evil doer.” However, since ܠܠܐ is translated by βέβηλε in Ezekiel 21:30⁶⁷ and occurs as a synonym of רשע (the cognate of the Syriac ܠܘܘܬܐ used in 4:1) it has been chosen for the *Vorlage* here.

Similarly, the Greek όσίος and the Syriac ܠܘܘܬܐ ܫܘܢܐ cannot be translations of each other, but both would be adequate translations of a *Vorlage* with ܠܠܐ “(loving) kindness” (Liddell and Scott, 1018). In contrast to Hebrew, Aramaic ܠܠܐ, including Syriac, means “to revile, to scorn, to reproach” (J. Payne Smith, 150; Jastrow, 486). Hebrew ܠܠܐ occurs in Syriac and Aramaic as a loanword, but ordinarily Syriac uses ܠܘܘܬܐ, as in Hosea 10:12 where ܠܠܐ occurs in parallelism with ܠܠܐ. In both instances, the Greek and the Syriac chose contextually different words within the semantic range of the proposed Hebrew *Vorlage*.

4:3b

ἐν ποικιλίᾳ ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ ἐν ἀκρασίαις

in a variety of sins and intemperance

ܠܘܘܬܐ ܫܘܢܐ ܠܘܘܬܐ ܫܘܢܐ

of a multitude of intemperance of sinners

⁶⁶ The Syriac and the Arabic take the root meaning “inclination” and direct it away from evil, whereas the Hebrew makes the inclination towards evil. See BDB, 337.

⁶⁷ ܠܠܐ ܠܠܐ ܠܠܐ ܠܠܐ is translated καὶ σύ βέβηλε ἄνομε ἀφηγοῦμενε τοῦ Ἰσραηλ.

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ברב רשעות הוללות ופשעים שגעונים

a wide variety of intemperate cruelty and crazy crimes

The Greek ποικιλία “manifold” and the Syriac ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ “many” could be translations of each other or accurate translations of a *Vorlage* having ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ; but ἀμαρτιῶν καὶ ἐν ἀκρασίαις and ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ cannot be translations of each other, even if the ἀμαρτωλῶν in mss 253, 655, and 659 was original since it agrees with the Syriac ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ. The Greek genitive ἀμαρτιῶν / ἀμαρτωλῶν and the Syriac particle ܕ suggests a construct chain in the *Vorlage*, but a simple reversal of the order of the two or three bound nouns does not bring the Greek and Syriac into conformity. The difference can mostly likely be explained by a haplography of a *Vorlage* which read ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ “a wide variety of intemperate cruelty and crazy crimes.” The רשעות “cruelty,” which can be read as a singular abstract noun or a feminine plural noun of רשע, would account for the ἀμαρτιῶν / ἀμαρτωλῶν variants in the Greek. The Greek *Vorlage* or translator read only ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ “wide variety of intemperate cruelty,” whereas the Syriac translator read only ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ “with a multitude of intemperances and sinners.” The graphic similarity of רשע and פשע in the poetic line could have been the reason for the haplography.

4:4a

οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν γυναῖκα ἄνευ διαστολῆ

his eyes are on every woman indiscriminately

ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ

his eyes are upon every woman without modesty

עניו על כל אשה בלי כלא

his eyes are upon every woman without restraint

The Greek ἄνευ διαστολῆ and the Syriac ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ cannot be translations of each other. Commentators have argued for a *Vorlage* with either ܡܒܫܬܐ “speaking rashly” (Geiger, 1871) or ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ “unlawfully” (Frankenberg, 1896: 70) or ܠܘܢܐܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܐܘܬܐ “with a multitude of intemperances and sinners.”

“Keuschheit [immodestly]” (Perles, 1902: 22). Trafton (1985: 62) summarized the debate to date which generally, in light of the Syriac **ܕܠܐ ܢܦܗܘܬܐ**, supports Perles’ reconstruction and assumes the Greek translator incorrectly translated **בלי פרישות**.

However, if the *Vorlage* had the stem **כלא** “to restrain (the eyes)” (Jastrow, 641, citing the Targum of Isaiah 33:15), it would provide the basis for the Greek and the Syriac translations. Since final **ס** stems can also be attested as final **ה** stems or final **י** stems, the root **כלא** could have been written as **כלי** or **כלה**. If so, there could have been a confusion of **ה** and **נ** (Delitzsch, 1920: 116, §122^a), and the **כלם** resulting from the confusion would have had the meaning “to be restrained, to be put to shame, to be embarrassed.” Moreover, **כלא** and **כלם** could be by-forms of each other.⁶⁸ A *Vorlage* as proposed above with **כלה** explains both the Greek and the Syriac texts of this phrase.

4:5a

ἀμαρτάνει ὡς οὐχ ὁρώμενος

he sins as if no one saw

ܕܠܐ ܢܦܗܘܬܐ

as if unseen

כמו באין רואה חוטא

he sins as if no one sees

The Syriac lacks an equivalent for **ἀμαρτάνει**, leading Trafton (1985: 62) to conclude that an **ܢܦܘܠܐ** must have dropped out of the text. In support of Trafton it may be noted that the next line in the *Vorlage* probably had **בטה** “to speak rashly, thoughtlessly.” If so, the *Vorlage* of these two lines would have included the words **חטא** **חטא** “sinning speaking.” Given this consonant cluster it is easy

⁶⁸ McDaniel (1983: 232) has recognized the existence of the by-forms **הלם** and **הלל** in Judges 5:22.

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to see how a haplography occurred wherein the **סז** was lost under the influence of the **ס** of the **סזב**.

4:5b

ἐν συνταγῇ κακίας
of illicit affairs

כס נכס דכס נכס
in an evil scheme

בזממים רעים
with evil plans

Trafton (1985: 62) and Wright (1985: 655) had difficulty with the Greek *συνταγή* “an order, a command, a preconceived signal, at an appointed time” (Liddell and Scott, 1724), which occurs in Judges 20:38 and II Esdras 10:14. Trafton’s translation of ἐν *συνταγῇ κακίας* as “in an evil command (or, contract)” missed the nuance of *συνταγῇ* “appointed time.” Wright’s “evil arrangements” and “affair”—suggesting an illicit rendezvous—indirectly picked up the idea of an appointed time. The *Vorlage* could have been one of the following:

- (1) **זמן** “appointed time” (as in Judges 20:38), or
- (2) **זמם** “to devise, to purpose” (used for “evil purpose” in Genesis), or
- (3) **זמ** “a plan” (used in a bad sense in Psalm 140:9).

The difference between **זמן** or **זמם** is a matter of the well attested confusion of **ז** and **ז** (Delitzsch, 1920: 117–118, §128^{a-b}). The Syriac read the *Vorlage* as (3) **זמ** “a plan” and the Greek took the meaning to be (1) **זמן** “an appointed time.” The context, in my opinion, requires (2) **זמם** “to devise, to purpose (evil).”

4:5b(G), 4:6b(S)

εἰς πᾶσαν οἰκίαν ἐν ἰλαρότητι ὡς ἄκακος
every house as though innocent

אִיִּין עוֹלָא דְלִיבָא בְּתַתְּמִי
 as one in whom there is no evil
 בכל בית כאין עול
into every house as one without evil

Although this is a case where the Greek or the Syriac could be translations of each other, they could be a translation of a *Vorlage* with אִיִּין עוֹלָא “without iniquity” (as in Jeremiah 5:21, Jonah 1:6 and Psalm 104:25). If so, the Greek opted to translate the compound אִיִּין עוֹלָא with a single word, whereas the Syriac opted for an idiomatic compound phrase.

4:6a(G), 4:7a(S)

τοὺς ἐν ὑποκρίσει ζῶντας μετὰ ὀσίω
from the devout those who live in hypocrisy

לְאִמְלֵי דְבַרְכַּאֲרָב כַּרְפָּא דְמִינֵי
 those who judge with partiality . . . with the upright man
 הדנים הנשאים פנים עם צדיק
*the ones judging, lifting up the face
 against the righteous one*

The Greek and the Syriac are quite different in this passage and cannot be translations of each other. The difference between them are the ζῶντας “living ones” and the אִמְלֵי “judging ones,” which probably reflects a misreading of a *Vorlage* having דְנִיִּים “judging ones” (*scriptio defectiva* for דְנִיִּים) wherein the initial ד was confused with a כ, ⁶⁹ reading it as כְנִיִּים “the living ones.” The error in reading seems to have made by the Greek translator or it was already in his *exemplar*. The Syriac has a doublet in this verse,

⁶⁹ Delitzsch (1920: p116 § 123^e) cited the misreading of a כ and a ד, although he does not list the confusion of כ and ד. Since a כ and a ד have been confused a confusion of a כ and ד would not be unusual. A poorly aligned ד could also have been misread as כ.

reflecting a *Vorlage* with 𐤒𐤓𐤓 and 𐤒𐤓𐤓—unless the Syriac translator created the doublet himself.⁷⁰ The doublet is the ܕܢܝܒܝܢ in 4:7a and the ܕܢܝܒܝܢ in 4:7b, with ܕܢܝܒܝܢ corresponding to Greek ζῶντας in 4:6a [= Syriac 4:7a]. In either case, the (mis)reading of 𐤒𐤓𐤓 and 𐤒𐤓𐤓 reflects the well attested confusion of ך and 𐤒 (see Delitzsch, 1920: 111–112 § 110^{a-c}).

The μετὰ could mean “against” (BAG, 510, s.v. 3^a) rather than “with,” especially if it is derived from a *Vorlage* with 𐤒ܘܢ that can mean “against” as well as “with” (BDB, 767, s.v. 1^c). The verse is best translated, with the *Vorlage* in mind, “May God remove those who judge, lifting their face against the upright man for (causing) the wasting of his body and the impoverishment of his life.”

4:7(G), 4:8a (S)

τὰ ἔργα ἀνθρώπων ἀνθρωπαρέσκων
the deeds of those who try to impress people

ܕܢܝܒܝܢ ܕܢܝܒܝܢ ܕܢܝܒܝܢ ܕܢܝܒܝܢ

the deeds of those who please men

מַעֲשֵׂי נִשְׂאִים פְּנִים

the deeds of the ones showing partiality

The Greek ἀνθρώπων is not reflected in the Syriac which simply has the demonstrative pronoun ܕܢܝܒܝܢ. It appears that a *Vorlage* with the participle ܢܝܒܝܢ “lifting” was represented differently in the Greek and the Syriac. The Greek used ἀνθρώπων to reflect the participle and the Syriac simply used the demonstrative pronoun ܕܢܝܒܝܢ. Both could be considered correct translations of

⁷⁰ One needs to be careful in following Trafton’s translation of what he calls, “two lines in antithetical parallelism: ‘but God remove those who judge with partiality, but he (i.e., God) lives with the upright man in the corruption of his (i.e., the upright man’s) flesh and in the poverty of his (i.e., the upright man’s) life.’” The idea that God lives with the upright man in the corruption of his flesh and in his poverty would be a novel theological statement. One would need more evidence to support the idea that the “he” of “he lives” refers to God.

the *Vorlage* which has פניו פניו as in Deuteronomy 10:17 with the sense of “to show partiality.”

4:8a (G), 4:9b (S)

ἐν τῷ ἐξαίρεσθαι ἀμαρτωλοὺς

when sinners are driven out

כַּבְּרֵי רְשָׁעִים וְרָחֳמֵי רָחֳמֵי

when the wicked are removed

בִּישְׂאֵי הַחַטָּאִים

when the wicked are taken away

The Greek ἐν τῷ and the Syriac כַּבְּ could possibly be a translation of each other, but they are more likely to be different translations from a *Vorlage* in which there was a confusion of כַּ “in” and כַּ “when, as.” The confusion of כַּ and כַּ is widely attested (Delitzsch, 1920: 110, § 108^{a-c}).

4:8b (G), 4:10 (S)

λαλοῦντα νόμον μετὰ δόλου

who deceitfully quote the Law

דַּבְּרֵי חֻמְרֵי בְּרֵי

who speaks the law with deceit

הַמְסַפֵּר הַתּוֹרָה בְּעֵרְמָה

the one speaking the Law with deceit

The use of the Greek loanword in the Syriac (חֻמְרֵי) cannot be used as an argument for the Syriac translation being derived from the Greek. Jastrow (905, 913) cited νόμος (נְמוֹס, נִימוֹס) as a commonly used noun in Hebrew and in Aramaic texts which definitely were not based upon Greek originals.

4:9b (G), 4:11b (S)

διαλῦσαι σοφίαν ἀλλήλων

destroys the wisdom of others

עֲבָרֵי עֲבָרֵי כֻלָּם

the wisdom of each one

105–107, §104^{a-c}) and has already been noted above. The context requires a negative nuance to the noun, supporting the Greek text and the assumption that its *Vorlage* had רַחֵם. Consequently, the Syriac translator must have added the negative modifier לֹא, which was not in his *Vorlage*, since the verb רַחֵם without a modifier would have a very positive meaning.

4:10b (G), 4:13a (S)

οὐκ ἀπέστη ἕως ἐνίκησεν σκορπίσαι ὡς ἐν ὀρφανία

he did not stop until he succeeded
in scattering (them) as orphans

לֹא עָמַד עַד נִצַּח זַבְדֵּי דְמָוִת כְּאֵלֵּי אֹרְפָנִיָּא

and he did not depart until
he scattered (them) among death

לֹא עָמַד עַד נִצַּח כְּמָתוּיִם
he did not cease until he scattered (them)
like those brought to grief

The Greek ἀπέστη “cease” is read as ἀνέστη “stand up” in mss 149, 260, 471, and 206, a difference which is not likely to be due to graphic or aural similarity of the π and the ν. The Syriac text has the stem עָמַד “to depart, to withdrawal, to cease” (J. Payne Smith, 464). All three readings can be derived from a *Vorlage* having the root עָמַד “to stand,” which may also have the meaning “to stand still, to cease (moving), to cease (an action).”⁷³

Liddell and Scott (1940: 1176) give νικάω the meaning “to succeed” only for this passage in the Psalms of Solomon, and this definition has been adopted by Wright (1985: 656). Elsewhere, νικάω has the meaning “to conquer, to prevail, to win,” which would make it the equivalent of Hebrew נָצַח (stem I), discussed

⁷³ See BDB, 764, 2.a and 2.d., where Genesis 29:35, 30:9, Joshua 10:13, I Samuel 9:27, II Samuel 2:38, II Kings 13:18, and Job 3:11 are cited.

above with reference to the εἰς τέλος in Psalm 1:1, meaning in the *qal* “to win” and in the *niph^{al}* “to be defeated.”

The Greek σκυρπίζω “to distribute, to scatter, to disburse” (Liddell and Scott, 1614) is the equivalent of פצץ (stem II) meaning “to scatter, to sprinkle” (BDB, 664). Since the Syriac has no equivalent for νικάω, one can conclude that the Greek ἐνίκησεν σκυρπίσαι “he succeeded to scatter” is a doublet for the פצץ in the *Vorlage* i.e., ἐνίκησεν = פצץ (stem I) and σκυρπίσαι = פצץ (stem II). Given this coincidence of equivalents for פצץ, the presence of a doublet in the Greek seems more likely than the loss of a word in the Syriac text tradition.

The Greek ὡς ἐν ὀρφανία “as an orphan” and the Syriac ܪܗܘܐ ܕܘܬܐ “house of death, in death” are not translations of each other. Both can be derived from a *Vorlage* having the *hoph^{al}* participle of מות “to be in pain, to grieve” (BDB, 1063; Jastrow, 1651). The plural participle with the preposition ב or כ would have been written במתים or כמתים, which closely approximates the *qal* stative participle of the stem מות “to die,” and which with the preposition ב or כ would have been written במתים “among the dead” or במתים “like the dead” The Greek read כמתים and the Syriac read במתים.⁷⁴

4:12a (G), 4:15a (S)

ἐπλήσθη ἐν παρανομία ἐν ταύτη

he is satiated with lawless action at one (place)

ܪܗܘܐ ܕܘܬܐ ܕܘܬܐ

and he was filled with this lawlessness

ܘܡܠܐ ܒܙܗ ܥܘܪ

and he was full of contemptuous lawlessness

⁷⁴ McDaniel (1994 lecture) noted that the difficult saying of Jesus in Matthew 8:21 “let the dead bury the dead,” could reflect a misunderstanding of a written text of Jesus’ words, “let the ones who are grief stricken (מתים) bury the dead.” There is no aural similarity between מתים (*mōtīm*) and מתים (*mētīm*), consequently it would have to be a misreading of a written tradition.

Wright's translation of ἐν ταύτῃ as "at one (place)" instead of "in this" reflects the difficulty of the demonstrative pronoun in the context of this poetic line. Trafton (1985: 67) summarized the numerous proposed emendations for ἐν ταύτῃ (ἐν ἄσλῃ, ἐν οἰκῶ, ἐν κοίτῃ, ἐν διαίτῃ, ἐν ἐντατῇ, and ἐνταῦθα), the proposed Hebrew *Vorlage* of Ryle and James (בִּזְאֵר), and suggested several possibilities of his own. While many of the suggestions are inventive, even ingenious, none are convincing. It is, however, possible to construct a *Vorlage* which does explain the Greek and the Syriac and it is the Greek, with the preposition ἐν, which rightly retains the clue to the original *Vorlage*.

It might well be that the demonstrative pronoun was not in the original Hebrew *Vorlage* since בִּזְאֵר could be a homograph of the feminine noun בִּזְאֵר "contempt" (BDB, 100) when written *scriptio defectiva* as בִּזְאֵ. The Syriac read it as the demonstrative pronoun ܒܝܝܗ. The Greek also took it as the pronoun but retained the ܒ which is represented by the ἐν, but the Greek translator did not recognize בִּזְאֵ as the defective spelling of בִּזְאֵר, and thus missed the meaning "contempt." Neither the Greek or the Syriac has fully captured the meaning of the suggested *Vorlage*, "contemptuous lawlessness."

4:12b (G), 4:15b (S)

ἐν λόγοις ἀναπτερώσεως

with agitating words

(literally: "words that give wings")

ܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܝܢܐ

with words which put to flight

בדבר מאבדים

with words of destruction

The Greek and the Syriac agree, but neither the Greek λόγοις ἀναπτερώσεως "words that give wings" nor the Syriac ܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܝܢܐ "words which put to flight" fit within the context of anticipated destruction in this verse. A *Vorlage* with a *hiph'el* of

PSALM FOUR

Hebrew **סבך** “to destroy, to put to death” (BDB, 2) was probably misread by both the Greek and the Syriac as **סבר** “to fly, to move pinions” (BDB, 7, as in Job 39:29). The *hiph'il* participle form **מאבירי** was misread as **מאבירי** by both the Greek and the Syriac.

4:14a (G), 4:15–16 (S)

γένοιτο κύριε ἡ μερίς αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀτιμία

Lord, let his part be in disgrace

במלך כלם וחסד זמור

in all these things may it be , O Lord

יהוה יהי חלקו בקלון

Lord, let his portion be in disgrace

The Greek ἡ μερίς has no counterpart in Syriac. In the LXX, μερίς translates twenty-two Hebrew words (Hatch–Redpath, 911). In light of Job 27:13, “This is the portion (חלק) of the wicked with God and the heritage that oppressors receive from God,” the *Vorlage* probably had חלק “a portion, a share.” The Greek ἡ μερίς correctly translates חלק which was for some reason omitted by the Syriac translator. Job 27:13–23 makes a good commentary for these verses in the Psalms of Solomon (4:16–23).

4:18 (G), 4:20 (S)

ἐν μονώσει ἀτεκνίας τὸ γῆρας αὐτοῦ εἰς ἀνάληψιν
may his old age be in lonely childlessness until his removal

ומן ילדיו לא יקברו

and from his offspring may each make war with him

תעורר שיבתו עד לקח

מן ילדיו לא אחד יקברו

may his old age be bereft (of children)

from his children not one will bury him

The differences between the Greek and the Syriac translations in this poetic line are greater than other differences encountered thus far. This is the first place where Frankenberg (1896: 71) felt forced to do only a partial translation: “... ל יבתו ל” The translations share the idea of loneliness but they express it in entirely different ways. Since they cannot be a translation of each other, and there is no apparent common *Vorlage* to account for all their differences, the Syriac and Greek can best be read as sequential lines, reflecting the loss of some text of the *Vorlage* in both traditions. Combining the Syriac and the Greek, the original Hebrew must have meant “may he be bereft of children in his old age until his removal (by death), so that not one from his children will bury him.”

The Syriac has no equivalent for τὸ γῆρας αὐτοῦ “his old age” which is likely to have been שׁיבתו in the *Vorlage*. The Greek ἐν μονώσει ἀτεκνίας “in lonely childlessness” is a phrase lacking a verb (which is supplied by Wright’s addition of “may he be”). Although the verb is lacking in Greek, the verb שׁכלל “to be bereaved (of children)” or ערר “to be stripped (of children)” could have been in the *Vorlage*. With either verb, “the children” is implicit in the Hebrew word, and the Greek ἐν μονώσει ἀτεκνίας could reflect either verb and not require an additional word for μονώσε.⁷⁵

The Greek εἰς ἀνάλημψιν, which has no corresponding element in the Syriac translation, is most likely to be from a *Vorlage* having לקח. The nuance of לקח found in Isaiah 53:8 (“he was taken away [לקח] . . . who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living”) fits perfectly the context of this verse which has its hint of death.

Shifting to the Syriac text, the verb ,ܡܘܬܘܢܝܢ, which has no equivalent element in the Greek translation, has been translated by Trafton (1985: 69) as the *aph^cel* ܡܘܬܘܢܝܢ “he makes war with him.”

⁷⁵ See ערירי in Leviticus 20:20–21 and Jeremiah 22:30. Compare Arabic تكل in Lane (1863: 345^{b-c}).

Opting for this meaning, Trafton disagreed with Harris and Mingana (1868: 92) who restored the א from ms 10hl. Since it is more likely that א dropped out of ms 16hl rather than being added to 10hl, it is best to retain the א and assume the presence of the א in the Hebrew Vorlage.

In agreement with Trafton, the phrase, א בן אביו, read as the *pa'el* “he will not carry him,” does not fit the context. If the *Vorlage* read א לא יקבר אהו “he will not bury him” (by a metathesis of the א and ב) instead of א לא יקבר אהו “he will not carry him,” the phrase would fit the context of this poetic line perfectly since the motif of non-burial is one of many ancient curse formulae. Hillers (1964: 68–69) cited several of the Assyrian Esarhaddon treaty curses where non-burial is mentioned, including, “May his corpse drop and have no one to bury it” and “I let the jackals (or, vultures) eat the corpses of their warriors by not burying them.” Close parallels to the curse of non-burial are also attested in Deuteronomy 28:26, I Samuel 17:43–46, and Jeremiah 34:20, among others. If this restoration of the *Vorlage* proves to be correct, Psalms of Solomon 4:18a can be added to the list of non-burial curses.

All elements of the Greek and the Syriac, including the א, should be retained and by reading the Syriac following the Greek a meaningful line becomes apparent. If the sequential reading of the Greek and Syriac texts is correct and the reconstructed *Vorlage* approximates the original Hebrew, the poet was actually praying that the profane, wicked man would experience the death of his offspring and thus in his own time be faced with the ignominy of death without burial.

4:20b (G), 4:23b (S)

καὶ ἐσκόρπισαν ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ
and greedily scattered (them)

א בן אביו, א בן אביו
and they scattered him in desire

וַיִּפְזְרוּם בַּתְּאוּדָה

and they scattered them in desire

Wright has supplied the direct object “them” which is lacking in the Greek text. The Syriac text has a singular “him” although the context does require the plural “them.” It is difficult to explain the absence of the direct object in the Greek, unless it is a case of haplography resulting from the graphic similarity of the final ׀ followed by the preposition ׀.⁷⁶ This confusion apparently occurs again in 5:1 of the Psalms of Solomon, which will be discussed below. In the case of the Syriac it could be due to a misreading of a ׀ (3ms object suffix) instead of a ׀.

4:24 (G), 4:28 (S)

ἐξάραι ὁ θεὸς τοὺς ποιούντας

ἐν ὑπερηφανία πᾶσαν ἀδικίαν

may God banish those who arrogantly
commit all (kinds of) unrighteousness

ܐܘܪܝܢ ܐܠܗܝܢ ܕܥܘܣܝܢ ܕܥܘܣܝܢ

ܐܠܗܝܢ ܕܥܘܣܝܢ ܕܥܘܣܝܢ

God destroyed all those

who do injustice in pride

יְנַה אֱלֹהִים כָּל עוֹשִׂים חָמָס בְּגִאוֹן

may God destroy all those who do injustice in pride

The issue in this poetic line is the Greek ἐξάρα “may he banish” and the Syriac ܐܘܪܝܢ “he destroyed.” There is a difference in tense as well as meaning. A *Vorlage* with the stem יְנַה “to oppress, to suppress, to maltreat” (BDB, 413) would have been ambiguous since יְנַה (3ms perfect) and יְנַה (3ms imperfect, like יְנַה and יְנַה) are consonantal homographs. The semantic range of יְנַה could include ἐξάρα and ܐܘܪܝܢ. The Greek optative reflects the יְנַה read as a jussive, and the Syriac reflects the perfect יְנַה.

⁷⁶ See Delitzsch, 1920: 113, § 114^{a-b}.

PSALM FIVE

The position of the noun כל “all” was positioned differently in the *Vorlage* of the Greek and the Syriac. The *Vorlage* of the former had כל חמס “all kinds of violence/ injustice,” but the latter read כל עושים “all the ones doing.” The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text on this point.

Psalm Five

5:1a

κύριε ὁ θεός αἰνέσω τῷ ὀνόματί σου

Lord God, I will joyfully praise your name

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי אֲבָרְכָה בְּהִלָּל

O Lord, my God, I will praise your name in exaltation

יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים בְּגִילָה אֶהְלֵל שִׁמְךָ

O Lord God in joy I will praise your name

The Greek has κύριε ὁ θεός “Lord God” while the Syriac has the suffixed ,ܘܗܘܐ ܐܠܘܗܝ “O Lord, my God.” The Syriac reflects a Hebrew *Vorlage* having יהוה אלהי and the Greek reflects one with יהוה אלהים. The above proposed *Vorlage* explains the difference as a simple haplography with the well attested confusion of the graphically similar final ם of אלהים with the initial ב of בגילה (see Delitzsch, 1920: 113, § 114^{a-c}). The Greek is to be preferred in this poetic line.

5:6a (G), 5:8a (S)

μὴ βαρύνῃς τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς
do not weigh down your hand on us

לֹא תַשְׁכֵּחַ יְדְךָ מֵעַמּוֹ

do not let your hand delay from us

אַל תִּתְּכֵן יָדְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ

do not weigh down your hand on us

The clues for the difference between the Greek $\mu\eta\ \beta\alpha\rho\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta\varsigma$ “do not weigh down” and the Syriac ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ “do not delay” are not to be found by looking for an inner Greek corruption of $\beta\alpha\rho\acute{\upsilon}\nu\omega$ “to weigh down, to oppress, to depress, to disable” and $\beta\rho\alpha\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\omega$ “to slow down, to delay, to loiter,” as Harris (1911: 41) proposed, followed by Begrich (1939: 137–38). Kuhn’s proposal (1937: 19) that an inner Syriac corruption of ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ (= Hebrew אל תכבד) was first misread as ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ , and again misread ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ , is not convincing. Nor is Ryle and James’ proposal (1891: 56) for a *Vorlage* having אל תכבד ידך (in light of Job 33:7 and Psalm 32:4).⁷⁷ Trafton’s (1985: 75) reworking of Kuhn’s argument is as complex as that of Harris, suggesting the following sequence of misreadings: the original $\text{אל תכבד ידך עליונו}$ was correctly translated as ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ , but the ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ was corrupted to ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ , and ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ was lengthened to ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ . Moreover, the preposition ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ was changed to ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ to go with the new verb ܘܢܐܘܚܘܢ .

An easier and more convincing explanation can be made by recognizing that the proposed *Vorlage* could have had the verb כּוֹן “to remain, to linger” (as in Psalm 101:7, “no one who utters lies shall continue [יִכּוֹן] in my presence”), i.e., reading אל תכן ידך “let not your hand linger.”⁷⁸ But the stem כּוֹן was read by the Greek translator as the verb תכן “to weigh, to measure.” The אל תכן ידך of the *Vorlage* was read as אל תתכן ידך .⁷⁹ Thus, the difference was either haplography (the תת became simply ת) or dittography (the ת became תת). Contextually, the proposed *Vorlage* of the

⁷⁷ Note Job 14:21, where תכבד = $\beta\alpha\rho\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$ “honor.”

⁷⁸ See II Kings 12:12 for תכן being used for the weighing and measuring of silver.

⁷⁹ Another possibility is that a *Vorlage* with כהה “to be heavy in spirit, to faint, be dim or dull,” which became $\beta\alpha\rho\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta\varsigma$ in the Greek, was read as כהה by the Syriac, i.e. a confusion of כ and ח (see Delitzsch, 1920: 114, § 115^{a-b}). Since כהה is not attested elsewhere with יד , this suggestion must be offered with all due caution.

Greek tradition is preferable, meaning there was an error of haplography in the Syriac tradition.

5:6b (G), 5:8b (S)

ἵνα μὴ δι' ἀνάγκην ἀμάρτωμεν
lest under duress we sin

ܕܠܝܢܢ ܕܠܝܢܢ ܕܠܝܢܢ

lest we be overpowered that we might sin

פן בכרח נחטא

lest *unwillingly* we sin

Contrary to the argument of Harris and Mingana, (1868: 94) who regarded the Syriac here as a “paraphrase” of the Greek, the Greek ἀνάγκην “necessity, compulsion, distress” and the Syriac ܕܠܝܢܢ “to be subdued, to be overcome, to be tyrannized” cannot be translations of each other. If the Hebrew *Vorlage* had כרח “force, unwillingness, necessity,” (Jastrow, 666) (which would explain the Greek text) and כרח was read as כנע “to subdue, to overpower” by the Syriac translator (reflecting a confusion of נ and ר and a confusion of ע and פ, or *vis versa*, פ and ע),⁸⁰ it would account for the difference between the Greek and the Syriac.⁸¹ Even though the *Vorlage* above has כרח, because both כרח and כנע fit the context, there is no way to determine which would have been in the original Hebrew.

5:7a (G), 5:9a (S)

καὶ ἐὰν μὴ ἐπιστρέψῃς ἡμᾶς οὐκ ἀφεξόμεθα
even if you do not restore us we will not stay away

⁸⁰ See Delitzsch, 1920: 120 § 131 for the confusion of ע and פ in Nehemiah 4:11 and 112 § 111 for the confusion of נ and ר.

⁸¹ Note the confusion of ר and נ in Trafton (1985: 67, note 50) where בערל הוזה occurs along with בעול הוזה.

ⲁⲗ 5:9b ⲁⲙⲉⲧⲁⲣⲉⲧⲁⲥⲁⲧⲁⲥⲁⲧⲁⲥ
and do not turn your face from us lest . . .

ⲁⲫⲓⲁⲗ ⲁⲗ ⲧⲏⲥⲓⲃ ⲙⲁⲛⲛⲟ
and do not remove your face from us

Trafton's reconstruction of the *Vorlage* as ⲁⲫⲓⲁⲗ “do not turn your face” (which uses the cognate of the Syriac and a direct object) may be correct, although one would expect ⲁⲗ plus the jussive for the negative imperative in Hebrew. Some caution needs to be exercised, though, since the verbs generally used in Hebrew for “to turn the face” are סור, סבב, שוב and נתן. Hebrew ⲁⲫⲓⲁⲗ occurs in Jeremiah 30:6 (וְנִהְפְּכוּ כָּל-פָּנִים לְיָרְקוֹן) (“(why) has every face turned pale?”) and II Kings 21:13 (מָחָה וְהִפְּךָ עַל-פָּנֶיהָ) (“wiping it [a dish] and turning it upside down”), but with a different construction and nuance. Trafton translated the first word of 5:9b, ⲁⲗ, as “lest,” but it could simply be the equivalent of the Greek “for we will not” Therefore, the clues for the differences in Syriac and Greek are to be found (1) in the Greek καὶ ἐὰν “even if,” which is lacking in Syriac, and (2) the Syriac has ⲁⲫⲓⲁⲗ “your face,” which is lacking in Greek. A retroversion of καὶ ἐὰν to Hebrew would equal אף כי or אף כי, and the retroversion of ⲁⲫⲓⲁⲗ “your face” into Hebrew would be אפך or אפך.

Given these readings, the *Vorlage* may have had ⲁⲫⲓⲁⲗ ⲧⲏⲥⲓⲃ ⲙⲁⲛⲛⲟ, which equals the Syriac. But the Greek translator apparently read אף כי (or his *Vorlage* had a metathesis of the ך and the ך) rather than אפך and missed the sense of “your face.” This mitigated against translating or retaining the ⲙⲁⲛⲛⲟ which became unintelligible in this changed context. The Syriac ⲁⲗ “lest” translates the “double duty” ⲫⲏ of 5:6b.

5:12a (G), 5:14a (S)

καὶ σὺ ἐπακούσῃ ὅτι τίς χρηστὸς καὶ ἐπιεικὴς ἀλλ' ἢ σὺ
and you will listen. For who is good and kind but you

ⲁⲛⲁⲧⲁⲥⲁⲧⲁⲥⲁⲧⲁⲥⲁⲧⲁⲥ ⲁⲙⲉⲧⲁⲣⲉⲧⲁⲥⲁⲧⲁⲥⲁⲧⲁⲥ
and you will answer him because you are kind and gentle

PSALM FIVE

וְאַתָּה תַעֲנֵנִי כִּי טוֹב וְסֶלַח אַתָּה

and you will answer him because good and gentle (are) you

As Hatch and Redpath (1954: 45) include ענה “he answered” among the words translated by ἀκούω “to listen,” the crux in the Syriac and Greek of this poetic line is not the ἐπακούση “you will listen” versus the ܘܢܘܨܘܢܘܬܐ “you will answer him” but the difference between ܘܢܘܨܘܢܘܬܐ “because” and ὅτι τίς “for who is.” This difference reflects a dittography in the translation by the Greek translator, or in his *Vorlage*, of the particle כִּי and the subsequent confusion of a כ and a נ, i.e., the כִּי was duplicated to כִּיכִי, and this senseless word was given meaning by changing it to the question, כִּי נִי “for who (is).” The *Vorlage* follows the Syriac rather than the Greek for this poetic line.

5:12b (G), 5:14b (S)

ἐὺφρᾶναι ψυχῆν ταπεινοῦ

making the humble person happy

ܘܢܘܨܘܢܘܬܐ, ܢܦܫܐ

and his soul will be satisfied

שׁוֹבֵעַ נֶפֶשׁ עֹנִי

satisfying the appetite of the one afflicted (from fasting)

The Greek ἐὺφρᾶναι and the Syriac ܘܢܘܨܘܢܘܬܐ cannot be accurate translations of each other. Trafton (1985: 77) noted the difference in the Syriac tradition where ms 16hl has a 3fs ܘܢܘܨܘܢܘܬܐ “(the soul) will be satisfied,” whereas manuscript 16hl* reads it as a 3fs or a 2ms imperfect ܘܢܘܨܘܢܘܬܐ “you will satisfy (his soul).”⁸² He suggested that there may have been a misreading of an original שׁוֹבֵעַ as שׁוֹבֵעַ, but this is less likely since it requires a confusion of a כ and a נ as

⁸² Trafton appeals to manuscript 16hl* beginning with Psalm 2:4 but failed to identify it in his discussion of extant manuscript evidence of the Psalms of Solomon (1985:6–7).

well as an ׀ and a ן.⁸³ However, Trafton's calling attention to the prayer of the "hungry man" mentioned in 5:12 points the interpreter in the right direction. The Greek ψυχὴν and the Syriac ܡܝܢܢܐ certainly suggest that נפשׁ was in the *Vorlage*. The collocation of נפשׁ "soul" and שבע "to satisfy, to satiate" would suggest that the nuance of נפשׁ probably retains the meaning of "appetite, emotions, passions" (Gordon, 1965: 446; BDB, 660).⁸⁴ The poet may have intended the very physical "satisfying the appetite" of a hungry man rather than some spiritual satisfaction of a soul.

The Greek ταπεινός is definitely not just a contextual translation controlled by the ψυχὴν "soul" rather than נפשׁ "appetite."⁸⁵ The collocation of ψυχῆς and τεταπεινωμένην in Isaiah 58:10 (ἰδοὺς πεινώντι τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ ψυχῆς σου καὶ ψυχὴν τεταπεινωμένην, "if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted . . ."), coupled with the ענה נפשׁ in Leviticus 16:29 and 23:27 (אָ-תֵ-עֲנִי-נַפְשֵׁי-כֶם = LXX ταπεινώσετε τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν, "you shall afflict yourselves") strengthens the integrity of the Greek text and its *Vorlage*. The phrase ענה נפשׁ in the context of the Day of Atonement had clear connotations of fasting (being primarily a prohibition against eating, but perhaps also requiring sexual abstinence and cessation of work).

The Syriac translator, or the scribe producing the *Vorlage*, misread עני נפשׁ as נפשׁ שׁ (the עני mistaken for שׁ).⁸⁶ The

⁸³ See above, note 59, and on the confusion of ן and ׀, along with numerous examples of the confusion of ך and ם, see Delitzsch (1920: 113, § 114–115).

⁸⁴ Note Proverbs 23:2 and Ecclesiastes 6:7 where KJV rendered נפשׁ by "appetite." The archaic meaning of נפשׁ "throat" survives in Habakkuk 2:5, "he opened wide his throat (נפשׁו) as Sheol" (KJV "who enlargeth his desire as hell").

⁸⁵ Liddell and Scott, 1757 *s.v.* definition 4, noted that ταπεινώω had the meaning of "denying, abasing, humbling oneself," particularly with fasting which parallels the way ענה נפשׁ is used as a synonym for צום "fasting" or לֹא-לֶחֶם "not eat bread" (II Samuel 12:17).

⁸⁶ Note the confusion of שׁ and ׀ cited by Delitzsch (1920: 119, § 131).

erroneous נפש שו / נפש שו was subsequently interpreted as נפש. Consequently, it appears that the Greek provides the clearest clues for reconstructing the *Vorlage*. However, modern translators of the Greek⁸⁷ missed the contextual nuance of ταπεινῶς. In light of the reference to hunger in 5:10b and God's *feeding* kings and rulers in 5:11a, the focus probably remains on the theme of God's satisfying the appetite of the hungry, especially those who out of piety are hungry from fasting.

5:13a (G), 5:15b (S)

καὶ ἐὰν δευτερώσῃ ἄνευ γογγυσμοῦ
καὶ τοῦτο θαυμάσιας

and if (it comes) a second time
without complaint, this is remarkable

□ וּ בְּ אִם לֵאמֹר לֵאמֹר אִם לֵאמֹר
אִם לֵאמֹר לֵאמֹר

and if the one who gives again does not grumble,
this also is wonderful

וְאִם יִשְׁנֶה תַּת בְּלֵא צוּחָה וַיִּתְמַח הַזֶּה
and if he would repeat giving without grumbling,
then this would be remarkable

The Greek *aorist* optative δευτερώσῃ plus the conditional ἐὰν (“if he would repeat”) and the Syriac imperfect לֵאמֹר, plus the conditional אִם לֵאמֹר (“and if he would repeat”), could be translations of each other or of a *Vorlage* having וְאִם יִשְׁנֶה “and if he would repeat.” The additional infinitive in the Syriac, לֵאמֹר “to give,” which has no corresponding element in the Greek, would point to a *Vorlage* with וְאִם יִשְׁנֶה לֵאמֹר “and if he would repeat to give.” However, the Greek δευτερώσῃ could be a one word equivalent of וְאִם יִשְׁנֶה, in which case the Syriac text would provided the best clue for reconstructing the *Vorlage*.

⁸⁷ Gray (1913: 638) read “making glad the soul of the humble,” and Wright (1985: 657) provided “making the humble person happy.”

The Greek *aorist* optative 2s θαυμάσειας was correctly translated by Ryle and James (1891: 59) as “thou wouldst marvel,” and Trafton (1985: 78) offered “you would wonder at this.” But other translations actually paraphrase to avoid the difficulty of the second person.⁸⁸ The Syriac has the noun ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ “wonder,” presumably going back to a *Vorlage* with ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ or ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ. Either of these words could account for the difference between the Greek having a verb and the Syriac having a noun since the difficulty is with the prefix rather than the stem. Following the conditional ܐܝܢ “if,” one would expect a ܐ “then” + imperfect in the apodosis. This would suggest an original ܐܝܢ ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ “then you would wonder.”

In the Syriac tradition the ܐܝܢ of ܐܝܢ ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ (or ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ) was evidently read as the definite article ܐ affixed to the noun, whereas in the Greek tradition the ܐܝܢ was read as the 2ms verb prefix ܐ.⁸⁹ Contextually, the second person would have to be addressed to God, but it is most unlikely that the poet wanted to tell God that he (God) would be amazed by a second act of human charity. Therefore, the Syriac text is preferable for reconstructing a *Vorlage* which would account for the differences in the text traditions.

5:14b (G), 5:16b (S)

καὶ οὐ̅ ἔστιν ἡ ἐλπίς ἐπὶ σέ̅ οὐ̅ φείσεται ἐν δόματι
and the one whose hope is in you will not be lacking gifts

ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ ܐܝܢ ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ ܐܝܢ ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ

and there is no hope towards you
which will be sparing with gifts

⁸⁸ Gray (1913: 639) translated “even that is marvelous” and Wright (1985: 657) rendered it “this is remarkable.”

⁸⁹ If the stem were ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ, there may have been confusion of ܐܝܢ ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ and ܐܝܢ ܠܘܡܢܘܗܝ, i.e., a dittography or haplography of the ܐ. On the confusion of ܐ and ܐܝܢ which is analogous to the confusion of ܐ and ܐܝܢ, see Delitzsch, 1920: 121 §132.

PSALM FIVE

אִין שִׁבֵּר לְךָ לֹא יִחְסֵר בְּמִתְּוֹן
the weary one hoping in you will not be lacking
in (receiving) gifts

The Greek tradition is inconsistent in that mss 253, 655, and 659 read the negative οὐκ instead of the relative οὖ. The negative ܘܠܐ in the first phrase of the Syriac has no corresponding negative particle in the majority of the Greek manuscripts, and the negative οὖ in the second half of this line has no corresponding negative in the Syriac. The first of these differences between the Syriac and the majority of the Greek manuscripts could be accounted for by assuming the Syriac translator used one of the three manuscripts having οὐκ (or a manuscript in the same recension). Otherwise, if the Syriac were translating from the Greek one would have to assume the Syriac translator in this case failed to distinguish the difference between smooth breathing and rough breathing, as well as the absence of the κ of the negative particle coming before a vowel. Of the twenty occurrences of οὐ (either the negative particle or the relative) there is no other example of the Syriac translator confusing the οὖ and the οὐ.⁹⁰ Of the sixty-five occurrences of οὖ, οὐ and οὐκ, there is no similar confusion. The differences between the Syriac and the Greek requires a more reasonable explanation.

The differences are best accounted for by positing a *Vorlage* which began with אִין or אִיִן. Hebrew אִיִן has four possible meanings, the most common of which is its being the particle of non-existence, אִיִן “is not,” and the least common meaning being “whence.” Other meanings are listed in the lexicons under the root אִיִן “trouble, sorrow, oppression, falsehood” (BDB, 19; Jastrow, 29–27). The Arabic cognate of אִיִן is the medial ’ stem اِن, meaning either “to be present” or “to be fatigued, to be tired” (Lane, 1863: 138).

⁹⁰ Of the forty-five times οὐκ appears in the Psalms of Solomon, it is missing twice (in 3:1 in ms 253* and in 17:5 in ms 769) and in 4:21 the κ was lost through haplography following an inversion of καὶ οὐκ to οὐ καὶ.

A *Vorlage* with 𐤒𐤓 or 𐤒𐤓𐤕 or 𐤒𐤓𐤕 could have been understood as the active participle 𐤒𐤓 or 𐤒𐤓⁹¹ meaning “being tired” or “being present.” The Greek οὐ̄ ἐστὶν equals the latter definition, i.e., 𐤒𐤓 “being present,” whereas the Syriac ܕܠ equals the very common 𐤒𐤓 “is not.” Given the context which speaks of distress and hunger, the poet probably intended the 𐤒𐤓 or 𐤒𐤓 to have the meaning “being tired, being fatigued.”

Once the Syriac understood the 𐤒𐤓 or 𐤒𐤓 in its *Vorlage* to be the negative particle 𐤒𐤓, the negative particle in the second half of the line, which would have matched the Greek οὐ̄ φείσεται “he will not be lacking,” would have produced a contradictory statement. Consequently, its second negative (𐤒𐤓 . . . 𐤒𐤓) dropped out of the Hebrew translation.

5:16a (G), 5:18 (S)

μακάριος οὐ̄ μνημονεύει ὁ θεὸς
ἐν συμμετρίᾳ ἀνταρκείας

happy is (the person) whom God remembers
with a moderate sufficiency

ܕܠܘܬܘܬܐ ܕܠܘܬܘܬܐ ܕܠܘܬܘܬܐ

blessed is the man whom the Lord remembers in poverty

אשרי אשר יפקד יהוה במנת די
*blessed is the one (to) whom Yahweh appoints
a measure of sufficiency*

The Greek ἀνταρκεία “sufficiency” and the Syriac ܕܠܘܬܘܬܐ “sufficiency” (found as the first word of Syriac 5:19) could be translations of each other or of a *Vorlage* having 𐤒. But the Syriac ܕܠܘܬܘܬܐ and the Greek συμμετρία cannot be translations of each other. The Greek συμμετρία “measured, due portion” (Wright’s “moderate”) points to the stem ܕܠܘܬܘܬܐ in the *Vorlage*, and

⁹¹ See GKC § 72^p and the example cited of the active participle 𐤒𐤓, with the vowel letter 𐤒, for the anticipated usual participle 𐤒𐤓 without the vowel letter.

the Syriac **ܐܘܨܪܘܬܐ** “poverty” points to the noun **מִי־כָה**, from the stem **מוך**, meaning “reduction to poverty” (BDB, 557; Jastrow, 741, 773). Were **מִי־כָה** written *scriptio defectiva* as **מִכָּה** it closely resembles **מָנָה**. Therefore, the difference in the two translations appears to be an error in the Syriac of reading a **כ** for a **נ**, an error well attested elsewhere.⁹² The Syriac *Vorlage* must have been: . . . **אֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא דְיוֹ אֱלֹהִים בְּמִכָּתוֹ: דְיוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא דְיוֹ אֱלֹהִים בְּמִכָּתוֹ: דְיוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא דְיוֹ אֱלֹהִים בְּמִכָּתוֹ:** “blessed is the one whom God has appointed for poverty. His sufficiency . . .” The reading of “sufficiency” with the next verse must have come after the misreading of the **כ** for a **נ**, since “poverty of sufficiency” would have produced an oxymoron.

The **μνημονεύει** and **ܐܘܨܪܘܬܐ** could reflect translations of **זָכַר** “to remember” or **פָּקַד** “to remember (I Samuel 15:2, KJV), to appoint” (Nehemiah 7:1). The reconstructed *Vorlage* uses **פָּקַד** since the divine appointments rather than divine memory seems to be the issue addressed by the poet.

5:17a (G), 5:20a (S)

ἰκανὸν τὸ μέτρον ἐν δικαιοσύνη
moderate (wealth) is adequate – with righteousness

ܐܘܨܪܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܐ ܕܐܘܨܪܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܐ ܕܐܘܨܪܘܬܐ
advantageous is poverty with righteousness

יְשׁוּהָ מִנָּה בְצִדְקָה
the portion will be rightly equal

Trafton (1985: 80) has correctly noted that “**פָּמַד** would not be a normal translation of **ἰκανός**.” If the *Vorlage* had the root **שׁוּה** “to be equal, fit, worthy, adequate, suitable” (BDB, 1000) its semantic range would be broad enough to include **פָּמַד** “advantageous” and **ἰκανός** “adequate.” The Syriac has been consistent in reading **מִי־כָה** / **מִכָּה** here as in the preceding verse instead of **מָנָה** “portion.” But the Greek **μέτρον** “within measure” would be a good translation of **מָנָה**.

⁹² See Delitzsch, 1920: 116 §120^b.

Psalm Six

6:1a

μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ
 ἑτοίμη ἐπικαλέσασθαι τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου

happy is the man whose heart
 is ready to call on the name of the Lord

בֵּרַכְתָּ הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 לְבַרְכָּהּ בְּעַמְּךָ זְמוּרָה

blessed is the man whose heart is prepared
 to call upon the name of the Lord

אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְעַתָּד לְבֹנוֹ לְעַתְרָה אֵל יְהוָה
 blessed is the man whose heart is prepared
 to entreat Yahweh

The reconstructed *Vorlage* could have been the same as the back translations of Frankenberg (1896:72) and Stein (1969: 445): יהוה “happy is the man whose heart is ready to call on the name of the Lord.” (Franz Delitzsch [n.d., *ad loc.*] differed slightly, ending with לקרוה יהוה.) The Greek ἑτοίμη and the Syriac ܙܡܘܪܗ would be translations of the *niph'al* of כוון “to establish, to make, to prepare.” But the stem ܘܢܘܪܗ makes the Hebrew cognate עתד “to prepare” the more likely option. The Greek ἑτοίμος translates עתד in Deuteronomy 32:35 and Esther 3:14 and 8:13 (noting that ἑτοίμος more frequently translates כון). Using the stem עתד would restore paronomasia and alliteration. If the ܙܡܘܪܗ ܘܢܘܪܗ and the ἐπικαλέσασθαι “to call upon the name of the Lord” are retroverted to יהוה אל לעתר אל “to entreat Yahweh,” they bring together in the poetic line עתד and עתר.

The verb עתר usually takes the preposition ל or אל followed by the name יהוה. The Syriac ܙܡܘܪܗ ܘܢܘܪܗ and the Greek τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου “the name of the Lord” may be a poetic or pious circumlocution for the holy name יהוה.

PSALM SIX

6:2a (G), 6:3a (S)

αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ κατευθύνονται ὑπὸ κυρίου
his ways are directed by the Lord

ⲁⲗⲁ ⲙⲓⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ ⲁⲗ ⲉⲃⲣ ⲡⲛⲓⲟⲩⲁ ⲙⲓⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ

and his ways are made straight before the Lord

דרכיו מישרים אל עבר פניו יהוה

his ways are made 'perfectly straight' by the Lord

Trafton (1985: 82) noted that ⲉⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ “before” never corresponds to ὑπὸ “by” in the Psalms of Solomon and suggested that ⲉⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ could be secondary. But the difference is probably due to differences in the *Vorlage*. The clue for the *Vorlage* comes from Ezekiel 1:9, 1:12, and 10:22, all of which have the phrase אִישׁ אֶל־עִבְרָתוֹ “each of them moved straight ahead.” The *Vorlage* of 6:2a could have been מִיְהוּדָה אֶל עִבְרָתוֹ מִיְהוּדָה, “his ways are made ‘perfectly straight’ by the Lord.” If so, the Syriac must have read פְּנִיּוֹ מִיְהוּדָה instead of פְּנִיּוֹ מִיְהוּדָה, reflecting the confusion of both ׀ and a ׀ and a final ׀ for an initial ׀. The misread phrase אֶל עִבְרָתוֹ “straight ahead” was translated ⲉⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ “before.” The Greek κατευθύνονται ὑπὸ κυρίου “being made straight by the Lord” accurately reflects the probable *Vorlage* and the Syriac misread the Hebrew.

6:3a (G), 6:4–6:5a (S)

ἀπὸ ὀράσεως πονηρῶν ἐνεπνίωσεν αὐτοῦ οὐ
ταραχθήσεται ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ

his soul will not be disturbed
by the vision of evil dreams

ⲁⲙⲟⲩⲟⲩⲁ ⲙⲓⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ ⲁⲗ ⲉⲃⲣ ⲡⲛⲓⲟⲩⲁ ⲙⲓⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ

ⲙⲓⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ ⲁⲗ ⲉⲃⲣ ⲡⲛⲓⲟⲩⲁ ⲙⲓⲃⲣⲏⲟⲩⲁ . . .

and his evil vision in the night will not be disturbed
because he is his; and his soul . . .

מְחֻזָּזוֹת בַּחלֹם לַיְלָה הָרְעָה לֹא תִזְעֶנּוּ נַפְשׁוֹ

*his soul will not be disturbed by a bad vision
of a dream in the night*

The Greek and Syriac in this poetic line share many words in common (soul, vision, dreams, bad, and disturb) but it would be difficult to explain how they could be a translation of each other. By listing the Hebrew equivalents of the shared words of the Syriac and the Greek, the following word cluster appears: מַחְזוֹת בַּחֲלוֹם לַיְלָה הַרְעָה לֹא תִזְעֶנּוּ נַפְשׁוֹ. If the *Vorlage* approximated this cluster then it becomes obvious that the differences between the Syriac and the Greek are rooted in different understandings of the Hebrew syntax. If the first word in the list could be vocalized as מַחְזוֹת, then the phrase מַחְזוֹת בַּחֲלוֹם “from the vision of a dream” could have been read as a construct chain with an intervening preposition ב, ⁹³ with the modifier הַרְעָה “bad” coming after the bound noun and its modifier לַיְלָה “night.” If this were the *Vorlage*, the Greek took the feminine נַפְשׁוֹ “his soul” to be the subject of the verb, but the Syriac took the feminine חֲזוֹת “vision” to be the subject of תִּזְעֶנּוּ “it will disturb” and made the נַפְשׁוֹ the subject of the verb in the next sentence.

The Syriac lacks a corresponding word for ἐνυπνίωσιν “vision, dream”; and the Greek lacks a word corresponding to בַּלַּיְלָה “in the night.” In light of Genesis 20:3, 31:24, I Kings 3:5, and IV Ezra 13:1, one could expect a reference to a dream in the *Vorlage* to be בַּחֲלוֹם לַיְלָה “in a night dream.” If so, the Greek lacked the לַיְלָה, and the Syriac lacked the בַּחֲלוֹם. Trafton also noted (1985: 83) that the Greek lacks a match for the מַעַל דְּהַלְמָה מֵהִי “because he is his.” This difference could come from a misreading of בַּחֲלוֹם “in a dream” as כְּהוֹלְמוֹ “as he (is) to him,” reflecting in the Syriac tradition a confusion of ב and כ, plus a misreading of אַחַד as הוּא. The misread הוּא was taken to be the pronoun הוּא, and the לְמוֹ was read as the poetic equivalent of לוֹ “to him.”⁹⁴

⁹³ Compare the הַלְכֵי עַל דַּרְךְ “the ones walking along the road” of Judges 5:10.

⁹⁴ Compare the *Qere* / *Kethib* of Jeremiah 29:23 where הוּא יִדְעֵם appears for הוּא יִדְעֵם. Note BDB, 510 where לְמוֹ is cited as meaning “to him” or “to them.”

6:3b (G), 6:5a (S)

ἐν διαβάσει ποταμῶν
in the crossing of rivers

ܐܘܢܐܝܢܐ ܕܢܗܪܐ
in the (crossing) of a river

בעבר נהרות
in the crossing of rivers

The emendation of Baars (1972: 10) of ܐܘܢܐܝܢܐ to ܐܘܢܐܝܢܐ in ms 16hl is an obviously convincing correction (the “making of a river” is contextually unlikely). But given the frequent confusion of ܐ and ܐ in Hebrew, one ought not to conclude that the ܐܘܢܐܝܢܐ (“in the making”) for ܐܘܢܐܝܢܐ (“in the crossing”) error was necessarily an inner-Syriac misreading of the ܐ as a ܐ. The misreading was probably already in a *Vorlage* in which a ܐ and a ܐ were confused, with the Syriac ܐܘܢܐܝܢܐ being a very literal translation of the *lectio difficilior* עבר “to make” rather than עבר “to cross.”

6:4a (G), 6:6a (S)

ἐξανέσθη ἐξ ὑπνου αὐτοῦ
he gets up from his sleep

ܥܘܣܬܐ ܥܘܣܬܐ ܥܘܣܬܐ
for he rose from his sleep

כי קם משנתו
indeed, he arose from his sleep

The Greek does not have the particle ὅτι corresponding to the Syriac ܐܘܢܐܝܢܐ “because” which would suggest that the Hebrew *Vorlage* used by the Syriac translator had the particle ܕ. If the *Vorlage* did indeed have a ܕ, it could have been the emphatic ܕ, well attested in Biblical Psalms.⁹⁵ If so, the Greek translator omitted the emphasis, and the Syriac translator mistook it as the homographic

⁹⁵ See Blommerde (1969: 30) and Dahood and Penar (1970: 402–405) for a discussion of the emphatic particle ܕ and a list of occurrence.

causative particle. (A similar difference occurs in 7:2, discussed below.)

6:5a (G), 6:7b (S)

καὶ ἐδεήθη τοῦ προσώπου κυρίου
he prays to the Lord

ܘܒܩܫ ܘܥܒܕ ܘܥܒܕ ܘܥܒܕ ܘܥܒܕ
and he petitioned the face of the Lord

ובקש פני יהוה
and he sought the face of Yahweh

The Syriac ܘܒܩܫ ܘܥܒܕ ܘܥܒܕ ܘܥܒܕ means literally “from before his faces of the Lord.” This cumbersome expression is probably a doublet. Just two words express a similar idea in Psalm 105:5 (and elsewhere), בִּקְשׁוּ פָּנָיו “seek his presence.” The ܘܥܒܕ could be a translation of מִלְּפָנָיו “from before” (BDB, 817, section 5), and the ܘܥܒܕ could be the translation of אַתְּ פָּנָיו “his face.” The Greek τοῦ προσώπου supports reading פָּנָיו יהוה in the reconstructed Vorlage.

Psalm Seven

7:1

μη ἀποσκηνώσης ἀφ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός
do not move away from us, O God

ܘܠܘܬܘܢܝܢ ܘܥܒܕ ܘܥܒܕ ܘܥܒܕ
do not remove your dwelling place from us, O God

אל תרחק שכינתך ממנו אלהים
do not remove your presence/dwelling from us, O God

The Syriac ܘܥܒܕ “thy dwelling place” has no corresponding element in the Greek text. Although Trafton (1985: 85) suggested that the Greek and Syriac reflect the same idea, it must be noted that the Greek speaks of personal presence but the Syriac speaks of a place. If the *Vorlage* had שְׁכִינָה “the Shekinah, the divine presence,” it would become obvious how the two translations

PSALM SEVEN

emerged. The Greek went with the Shekinah, the divine presence, but the Syriac took שכינה in its more literal sense, “royal residence” (Jastrow, 1573).

7:2

μη πατησάτω ὁ ποὺς αὐτῶν
do not let their feet trample
 ܕܠܐ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ
that their foot might not trample upon
 ܕܠܐ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ
that their feet not trample

The ܕ “that” prefixed to the negative particle, ܠܐ, is not reflected in the Greek. This is a difference which approximates the one discussed above with reference to 6:4a (G) where the Greek does not have the particle ὅτι corresponding to the Syriac ܕܠܐ “because.” In 6:4a it was suggested that the Syriac *Vorlage* had the particle ܕܠܐ. But here in 7:2b, it appears that the Syriac *Vorlage* also used ܕܠܐ to express purpose (BDB, 471). The *aorist* in the Greek, ὅτι ἀπόσω αὐτούς, and the *perfect* in Syriac (ܕܡܠܝܚܐ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܡܝܢ) with which the verse begins would require a perfect tense in the *Vorlage* indicating the enemy’s having been “forced back” (in battle). The *aorist* and the *perfect* tense support the reading of the Syriac that the action of the second verb was a statement of fact (that they would/could not again trample) rather than a wish expressed by a jussive/optative. The Greek may have had a ܕܠܐ in its *Vorlage*, but if so, it was taken to be an emphatic rather than a causative particle and was left untranslated, as in 6:4a.⁹⁶

7:3

σὺ ἐν θελήματί σου παίδευσον ἡμᾶς
discipline us as you wish

⁹⁶ Liddell and Scott (2031, section I, 2.) noted the use of ὠθέω in the context of military action.

אָטוּ כַּיְיָ בְּכַפְּי יִדְבֶּק

in your will chasten me yourself

אַתָּה יִסְרֵנוּ כְּרִצּוֹנְךָ

according to your pleasure, chasten us yourself

A *Vorlage* with יִסְרֵנוּ “chasten us” could easily have been misread as יִסְרֵנִי “chastened me,” given the common confusion of י and נ. Trafton (1985: 85) concurred with Harris and Mingana (1868: 95) and Baars (1972: 11) in emending יִדְבֶּק “chasten me” to כַּפְּי “chasten us”. Given the graphic dissimilarity of יִדְבֶּק and כַּפְּי, compared to יִסְרֵנִי and יִסְרֵנוּ, it is more likely that the error occurred in the Hebrew *Vorlage* rather than in the Syriac tradition. The difference between “according to” in the *Vorlage* and ἐν or כַּ assumes a confusion of כ and כּ, discussed above.

7:4

ἐὰν γὰρ ἀποστείλῃς θάνατον σὺ

ἐντελεῖν αὐτῷ περὶ ἡμῶν

for if you send death (himself)

you would give him (special) instructions about us

כִּי אִם תִּשְׁלַח מוֹת אַתָּה תְּצַוֶּה לָנוּ בְּעַבְרֵינוּ

for if you send death you set it over us

כִּי אִם תִּשְׁלַח מוֹת אַתָּה תְּצַוֶּה לָנוּ בְּעַבְרֵינוּ

for if you send Death you would command him

for our sake (to pass over us)

In the LXX ἐτέλλεσθαι “to command” translates צוּה “to command” about 400 times; consequently, there is good reason to suppose that ἐντελεῖν may reflect a *Vorlage* with צוּה. This lends support to the suggestion of Harris and Mingana (1868: 95) that the Syriac ܕܒܝܢܘ “set” should be emended to the participle ܕܒܝܢܘ “commanding.”

There are definitely overtones of Exodus 12:12–30 in this poetic line. If the περὶ ἡμῶν and the ܕܒܝܢܘ “about us, concerning us” are a translation of בעברינו “for us, on our account” (i.e., the

compound preposition ב plus עבר), the choice of עבר which also means “to cross over” is suggestive of פסח “to pass over.” It seems as if the poet is using a *double entendre* to say that when (the angel of) Death is dispatched, Death will be commanded “for the sake of” (בעבר) the righteous “to pass over” (עבר) them. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the fuller Greek text and the English translation of the *Vorlage* includes a parenthetical addition to reflect that *double entendre*.

7:6b(G), 7:6a (S)

καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσει πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἔθνος

and the gentile will not overcome us

וְלֹא יִבְחַשׁוּ בְּחַזְקָא לְאַחַדְנֵם חַלְפֵי

and the nations will not be able to overpower us

וְהַגּוֹיִם לֹא יִבְכְּלוּ יִבְלֹת עֲלֵינוּ

and the nations *will not be able to overpower* us

The Greek lacks anything corresponding to נבחשו “they will find.” Trafton (1985: 85) similarly omitted the translation of נבחשו, although he included it in his discussion of the verse. The Syriac root בח “to find” can also mean “to be able,” occurring with this meaning as a participle in Matthew 3:9 (בחבנד) in both the Peshitta and the Old Syriac and as a feminine noun (בחבשה) in Mark 10:27.⁹⁷ In light of the semantic range of בח, it is most likely that נבחשו “they will be able” and לא יבחשו “to prevail” translated the compound phrase יבכלו יבלות “they will be able to prevail.” The Greek translator, or his *Vorlage*, treated the יבכלו יבלות as a doublet or a dittography and translated it simply as ἴσχυσε.

⁹⁷ In this respect, בח parallels the usage of מצא “to find” which also has the meaning “to be able” in Lev 12:8 (אם לא תמצא “if she not be able to bring”), 25:28 (אם לא תמצאה “if she not be able to restore”), and Psalm 76:6 (ולא מצאו “not able to use their hands”).

7:7a (G), 7:6b (S)

ὅτι σὺ ὑπερασπιστὴς ἡμῶν
for you are our protection

ܘܥܡܟܐ ܕܝܫܪܐܝܝܠ ܘܥܘܠܡܐ

because you are our power

כי אתה שליטנו

you are our ruler

The Greek ὑπερασπιστὴς ἡμῶν “or shield” and the Syriac ܘܥܡܟܐ “our power” cannot be accurate translations of each other, but both could be correct translations of a *Vorlage* with שליטנו or שלטנו (*scriptio defectiva*). The stem שלט appears as the noun שָׁלַט “shield” and as the noun שָׁלִיט “the ruler, the one having mastery” (BDB, 1020). The Syriac ܘܥܡܟܐ reflects the שָׁלִיט (or שָׁלַט) and the Greek ὑπερασπιστὴς reflects the שָׁלַט.

7:8a (G), 7:8a (S)

ὅτι σὺ οἰκτιρήσεις τὸ γένος Ἰσραὴλ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα
for you will have compassion on the people Israel forever

ܘܥܘܠܡܐ ܘܥܘܠܡܐ ܘܥܘܠܡܐ ܘܥܘܠܡܐ ܘܥܘܠܡܐ

because you will have pity on the seed of Israel forever

כי תרחם זרע ישראל לעולם

for you will have compassion on the seed of Israel forever

Trafton (1985: 86) has convincingly demonstrated in light of the way the γένος of the New Testament is translated into Syriac (which renders it by the loanword ܪܘܡܐ or by ܪܘܡܐܘܢܐ “kin,” or ܪܘܡܐܘܢܐ “generation,” or ܪܘܡܐ “from,” or ܪܘܡܐ “kind, species”) that ܘܥܘܠܡܐ “seed” is not a likely a translation of γένος. He rightly concluded that “. . . both ܘܥܘܠܡܐ and γένος could be independent translations of an original Hb זרע.”⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Trafton (1985: 86) footnoted the use of γένος for זרע in Jeremiah 31:37 (LXX 38:35).

7:8b (G), 7:8b (S)

καὶ οὐκ ἀπόσω
and you will not reject (them)

ܘܡܠܘܟܝܗ ܠܐܝܢ
and you will not lead it astray

ܘܠܐ ܬܙܢܗ
and you will not reject (them)

The Syriac ܘܡܠܘܟܝܗ “lead astray” and the Greek ἀπόσω “drive away, reject” cannot be accurate translations of each other. But, as Trafton (1985: 87) noted, both verbs could be correct translations of a *Vorlage* with 𐤏𐤍𐤅, “. . . since the *hiph'el* of 𐤏𐤍𐤅 ‘move away’ can mean both ‘drive away’ and ‘lead astray’.”

The Syriac is lacking a verse corresponding to 7:9 of the Greek text for reasons which are not apparent. (The omission of a Syriac verse at 5:20b, corresponding to the Greek 5:17b, may, as Trafton [1985: 80] proposed be due to a parablepsis.)

7:10b (G), 7:9b (S)

εἰς ἡμέραν ἐν ἣ ἔπηγγείλω αὐτοῖς
on the day when you promised (it) to them

ܠܝܘܡ ܕܡܚܝܒܐ ܠܗܘܢ
for the day which is prepared for them

ליום אשר אמרת למו
for the day you promised to them

The Greek ἐπηγγείλω “promised” and the Syriac ܡܚܝܒܐ “prepared” cannot be translations of each other. In the LXX ἐπαγγέλλειν translates ܐܡܪ “to say,” which has no graphic similarity to ܥܬܒ “to prepare,” the cognate of ܡܚܝܒܐ. However, ܐܚܣ “to bind” may have the meaning “to prepare,” as in I Kings 18:44, “go up, say unto Ahab, ‘prepare *thy chariot*’⁹⁹ and get thee down . . .” (KJV). In Leviticus Rabbah 22, ܐܚܣ is used with the sense of

⁹⁹ KJV “thy chariot” is an addition base on the LXX reading τὸ ἄρμα σου.

obligation: “had not the Lord bound himself by an oath” (Jastrow, 98). The ideas of obligation and promise do overlap. The Greek ἐπαγγέλλειν (= ַמְנָה) carries the positive connotations the context requires, whereas the expression “the day prepared for them” found in the Syriac carries negative connotations of apocalyptic gloom. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text.

Psalm Eight

8:1

τὸ οὖς μου φωνήν

my ear heard

שְׁמַעַי שְׁמַעַי

my ears heard

שְׁמַעוּ אָזְנֵי

my ears heard

The difference between the Greek and the Hebrew in this phrase is the dual/plural שְׁמַעַי “my ears” and the singular τὸ οὖς μου “my ear.” The Syriac system of designating a plural by two dots over the word is relatively late (before the pointing was added the singular/plural difference would not be obvious). The difference between שְׁמַעַי and τὸ οὖς μου could also be due to the homographs of “my ear” (אָזְנִי = אָזְנִי) and “my ears” (אָזְנַי = אָזְנַי) in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. In the unpointed text of the *Vorlage* there would be no way to tell the difference between a singular and a dual/plural except by the number used by the verb, in which case it would be either שְׁמַעוּ or שְׁמַעוּהוּ, a difference of הוּ or וּ in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. Given the well attested confusion of הוּ and וּ (Delitzsch, 1920: 114 § 116^a; 116, §123^a), the difference could have originated in the *Vorlage*. Since ears generally are referred to by the dual in Semitic idiom, the Syriac is more likely to reflect the *Vorlage*.¹⁰⁰ The plural of the Syriac text of the manuscripts could

¹⁰⁰ See below the discussion on שְׁמַעוּהוּ and שְׁמַעוּהוּ in 8:26.

not be a translation of the Greek singular, but both could be translations of the above proposed *Vorlage*.

8:1b

φωνήν σάλπιγγος

the blast of the trumpet

מלחמה וה

and the sound of war

והרועת קרר [כדר]

and the sound [of war-like tumult]

of tearing down (the wall)

The Greek σάλπιγγος “of the trumpet” and the Syriac מלחמה “war” cannot be translations of each other. Trafton (1985: 90) suggested there was a confusion in the *Vorlage* of קרר “horn” and קרב “war.” However, although Delitzsch (1920: 117, §127^b) cited several examples of the confusion of נ and כ, he listed no examples of the final ך being confused with כ or ב. The graphic dissimilarity of the final ך and the ב mitigates against this solution.

Two more likely explanations could account for the difference in this poetic line. First, the *Vorlage* may have had the word כידור “tumult,” especially the war-like tumult which appears in Job 15:24 with the meaning of “attack.”¹⁰¹ The Arabic cognate (Lane 1885, 2596^{b-c}) provides an excellent example: أنكدر عليهم العدو “the enemy poured down on them.” If the root כדר was in the *Vorlage*, the Syriac translator focused on the war itself (מלחמה), whereas the Greek translator focused on the sounds of battle, specifically on the trumpet signals.

Second, the *Vorlage* could have had the root קרר “to tear down (walls)” (BDB, 903; Jastrow, 1427 “to burst forth”), which

¹⁰¹ Gesenius and Robinson, 1888: s.v. See Pope, 1965: 111, “Distress and anguish overwhelm him like a king set for attack.” Pope referred to the Arabic cognate, but he did not cite Lane’s lexicon.

is attested in Isaiah 22:5, “for the Lord God of hosts has a day of tumult and trampling and confusion in the valley of vision, a battering down of walls (בִּקְרַרְרֵי קִיר) and a shouting to the mountains.” Although the stem appears in Isaiah 22:5 in the *pilpel* participle, it could occur in the *qal* participle, probably with or without the direct object קִיר “wall.” The phrase קִלְ קִרְרֵי “the sound of demolishing (walls)” of the *Vorlage* was apparently misread by the Syriac translator as קִלְ קִרְבֵי “the sound of war,” and the Greek translator must have misread קִלְ קִרְרֵי “the sound of a horn”.¹⁰²

If the *Vorlage* originally read the alliterative קִלְ קִרְרֵי קִיר “the sound of tearing down the wall,” the קִיר “wall” was dropped through haplography with the verb קִרְרֵי. Since the context permits reading either קִרְרֵי or כִּדְרֵי, both have been included in the reconstructed *Vorlage*. One should not be misled by the Syriac ܟܘܪܒܐ “war” in assuming that the Hebrew *Vorlage* would have been קִרְבֵי. The Syriac ܒܘܝܘܢܐ “to become weak” is not a cognate of Hebrew כִּדְרֵי “tumult,” therefore ܟܘܪܒܐ would be a satisfactory translation of כִּדְרֵי.

8:2a

ὡς ἀνέμου πολλοῦ σφόδρα

as of a violent storm

זַחֵא וְזַחֵא גְּזַחֵא וְזַחֵא

like a strong and great wind

כְּרוּחַ גְּדוּלָה וְכִבִּיר

like a great and mighty wind

Aside from the presence or absence of the Syriac conjunction *ܘ*, the Syriac ܟܘܪܒܐܘܟܘܪܒܐ “strong and great” and the

¹⁰² The confusion of ב and פ would be analogous to the confusion of כ and פ, cited by Delitzsch (1920: 119, § 131). Examples of the confusion of פ and final פ have also been cited by Delitzsch (1920: 112, § 111) in the textual variants of Joshua 19:29 and in Psalm 18:33 compared to II Samuel 22:33.

Greek πολλοῦ σφόδρα “very great” could be translations of each other or of a *Vorlage* with גדולה “great” and כביר “mighty.” The Syriac has two adjectives, whereas the Greek has an adjective and an adverb, a difference which points to independent translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage*. In the LXX σφόδρα was used to translate באד, but it is unlikely that באד was in the original phrase since there is no verb in the comparison. However, the use of the adverb σφόδρα in the Greek suggests that the translator may have read רוח as a verb as well as a noun. Although the verb רוח / ריח is attested in Hebrew, it generally has the meaning “to smell, to perceive odors.” But in Arabic the cognate روح means “to be (violently) windy” (Lane, 1867: 1177). In light of the Arabic cognate, it appears that the Greek translator was uncertain whether רוח was a noun or verb, so both possibilities were addressed. As a noun, רוח was modified by πολλου, and as a verb (רוח = روح), it was modified by σφόδρα. Since רוח is normally a noun, the *Vorlage* has been reconstructed without the adverbial באד.

8:2b

φερομένου δι' ἐρήμου

sweeping through the wilderness

זאחא על מדינא

that comes upon the desert

באה על המדבר

rushing upon the desert

The Greek φερομένου “moving, rushing, being borne along” and the Syriac זאחא “coming,” can be explained as translations of a *Vorlage* with the *qal* feminine singular participle באה. In Ezra 8:15 וַיִּקְבְּצֵם אֶל-הַנְּהַר הַבָּא אֶל-אֲחָוָא (“I gathered them to the river that runs to Ahava”) the masculine participle אֲבָה has rightly been translated “runs.” The Greek and the Syriac translations fit within the semantic range of the root בא, and both would accurately represent a *Vorlage* with אֲבָה.

8:2c (G), 8:3 (S)

ποῦ ἄρα κρινεῖ αὐτὸν ὁ θεός
when then will God judge it?

דאִבְכָּא בְּזֵאָה לֵאמֹר
where then is he judging him

אִף כִּי יִשְׁפֹּטנוּ אֱלֹהִים
surely God is judging us

Ryle and James (1891: 74–75) and Gray (1913: 640) regarded the Greek ποῦ ἄρα “where then” as a translation of an erroneous Hebrew text with אִפֵּא (Gray, אִפֵּא or אִנָּה), which did not mean “where” but “surely,” a meaning required by the context. However, אִפֵּא with the sense of “surely” is not attested in the lexicons (BDB, 33; Jastrow, 58). Instead of אִפֵּא, it is more likely that the uncorrupted *Vorlage* had אִף כִּי “surely, indeed.” This misreading involved a confusion of אִפֵּא and אִף כִּי by the Greek and Syriac translators or—since both have the sense of “where”—in the *Vorlage* itself.

The proposed *Vorlage* above contains אִף כִּי “surely” and follows Ryle and James (1891: 74–75) in reading the plural “us,” as required by the context. The suffix ׁנ in Hebrew can be either ׁנ “him” or ׁנ “us.” The writer concurs with Ryle and James and others that the ποῦ ἄρα “when then” and the דאִבְכָּא בְּ “where then” are not a reliable reflection of the uncorrupted *Vorlage*.

8:5a

συνεπίβη ἡ ὀσφύς μου ἀπὸ ἀκοῆς
my stomach was crushed at what I heard.

אֲרֵאצְמוֹתַי, עֲמַצְמוֹתַי, עֲסָהּ מִכֵּן שָׁמַעַר

and the joints of my back were loosened at what I heard

מַעֲדוֹ חֲלִיּוֹת חֲלָצִי מִשְׁמַעַ

the bones of my back quivered¹⁰³ at what I heard

¹⁰³ This expression is similar to the English usage of “chills running up and down the spine.”

The Syriac **ܣܝܘܢܝܘܬܝ** “the vertebrae of my spine” (J. Payne Smith, 1903: 132) and the Greek ὀσφύς μου “my loins”¹⁰⁴ are not accurate translations of each other. They are probably translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* which had any of the following words for “loins” or “the back (of the body)”: **יֶרֶךְ** or **חֲלָץ** or **כִּסְלִי** or **מִתְנַיִם**. The phrase **וַיִּמְתְּנֵיהֶם וַיִּמְיֵד הַמַּעַד** “and make their loins tremble continually” (Psalm 69:24) offers a good basis for reconstructing the verb in the *Vorlage*. The semantic range of **מַעַד** (BDB, 588) covers the Greek συνετρίβη “broken” (Liddell and Scott, 1728–1729) and the Syriac **ܐܘܨܬܐܘܪܐ** “loosened” (J. Payne Smith, 595). The **ܣܝܘܢܝܘܬܝ** appears to be a rendering of **חֲלָיוֹת חֲלָצֵי** “bones of my back”¹⁰⁵ and this retroversion has been adopted for the *Vorlage*. The **חֲלָ** of **חֲלָצֵי** and **חֲלָיוֹת** may have contributed to the haplography by the Greek translator or in his *Vorlage*.¹⁰⁶

8:5b

παρελύθη γόνατά μου

my knees were weak

ܐܘܨܬܐܘܪܐ **ܘܚܝܠܝܐܝ**

and my knees shook

ܟܫܠܘ ܒܪܚܝ

my knees were weak

The Greek παρελύθη “they were weak” and the Syriac **ܐܘܨܬܐܘܪܐ** “they shook” cannot be translations of each other, but they could be translations of a *Vorlage* with the stem **ܟܫܠ** “to be weak.” In Genesis 19:11, the LXX translated **ܟܫܠ** by παραλύειν, and **ܐܘܨܬܐܘܪܐ**

¹⁰⁴ Wright (1985: 658) translated ὀσφύς “the lower part of the back” as “stomach.”

¹⁰⁵ See BDB, 323 for **יֶרֶךְ**, and Jastrow, 434 for **חֲלָיוֹת**.

¹⁰⁶ Trafton (1985: 92) noted the omission by homoioteleuton in the Syriac tradition of any Hebrew equivalent of the Greek ἐφοβήθη ἡ καρδία μου “my heart was afraid.” If the Hebrew equivalent were **לִבִּי לִרְדַּד**, following Frankenberg (1896: 74) and Stein (1969: 447), the expression is attested in Deuteronomy 28:6, Psalm 27:3, 86:11, and Isaiah 35:4.

has essentially the same meaning, “to reel, to quiver.” Psalm 109:24, “my knees are weak (כשׁל) from fasting” (KJV) provides a good example of the כשׁל being used for weak and wobbly knees. This particular nuance of כשׁל is reflected in the above proposed *Vorlage* and its translation.

8:7a (G), 8:7b (S)

ἀνελογισάμην τὰ κρίματα τοῦ θεοῦ

I thought about the judgements of God

ܠܚܝܢܐ ,ܡܘܠܐ ܕܝܚܝܢܐܝܐ

and I remembered the judgements of the Lord

זכרתי מןפני יהוה

I remembered the judgements of the Lord

The Greek ἀνελογισάμην “I summed up, I calculated, I considered” and the Syriac ܕܝܚܝܢܐܝܐ “I remembered” are expressions of different mental activity and are unlikely to be translations of each other. In the LXX, ἀναλογίζομαι is never used to translate the זכר “to remember,” which occurs over 250 times. The difference between ἀνελογισάμην and ܕܝܚܝܢܐܝܐ is probably due a misreading of the *Vorlage*. The Greek ἀναλογίζομαι could be a translation of Hebrew ܕܡ “to devise, to consider, to purpose,”¹⁰⁷ and the Syriac *’ethpe’al* ܝܚܝܢܐܝܐ is most likely a translation of its Hebrew cognate זכר “to remember.”

The misreading of ܕܡ for זכר, or vice versa, reflects two well attested misreadings of graphically similar letters: the confusion of ܕ and ܡ as well as the confusion of ܡ and ܚ.¹⁰⁸ The expression

¹⁰⁷ Hebrew ܕܡ usually has negative overtones, as in Genesis 11:6, “and nothing they propose (זכרו) to do will be impossible for them.” But ܕܡ is used with very positive overtones as well, as in Proverbs 31:16, “she considers (זכרה) a field and buys it.” The LXX translated the first phrase of 31:16 as θεωρήσασα γεώργιον “she perceived the field . . .,” with θεωρέω in this context having to do with mental perception rather than physical or spiritual perception.

¹⁰⁸ See Delitzsch, 1920: 114, § 115^{a-b} (for the confusion of ܕ and ܡ) and 119 § 131 (for the confusion of ܡ and ܚ).

ἐμνήσθη τῶν κριμάτων σου “I remembered your judgements” of Psalm 119:52 (LXX 118:52), with the collocation of “remember” and “judgments,” supports the Syriac reading of this phrase and is the basis for the reconstructed *Vorlage*.

8:7a

ἀπὸ κτίσεως οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς
since the creation of heaven and earth
 ܠܘܘܬܐ ܘܠܥܡܐ ܘܠܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܡܢ ܕܝܗܘܐ
 which are from the time
 when heaven and earth were created
 ܡܢ ܕܝܗܘܐ ܘܘܪܝܝܢ
 since heaven and earth were created

The Greek noun κτίσεως “creation” (found elsewhere in Judith 9:12 and in 3 Maccabees 2:2, 7) and the Syriac verb ܠܘܘܬܐ “were created,” though they have in common the word for creation, are not likely to be a translation of each other since one would expect obvious nouns and verbs to be rendered literally. However, κτίσεως (found elsewhere in Psalm 8:7, Judith 9:12, and 3 Maccabees 3:2, 7) and ܠܘܘܬܐ can be accounted for by a *Vorlage* having ܡܢ ܕܝܗܘܐ, which can be read either as (1) the *niph^cal* infinitive ܕܝܗܘܐ “were created,” with the preposition ܡܢ, or (2) the preposition ܡܢ attached to a masculine noun with the ܝ of the definite article.¹⁰⁹ Since a masculine noun ܕܝܗܘܐ or ܕܝܗܘܐ meaning “creation” is unattested elsewhere, the reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text in reading a passive infinitive. (There is no need to render the ܡܢ ܕܝܗܘܐ “since, from when” with the expanded wording used by Trafton, “which are from the time when.”)

¹⁰⁹ The feminine noun ܕܝܗܘܐ “creation” is attested once in Numbers 16:30. Trafton’s (1985: 92) proposal to read an infinitive was correct — but it would have to be specifically a *niph^cal* infinitive to account for the passive of the Syriac.

8:7b

ἐδικαίωσα τὸν θεὸν ἐν τοῖς κρίμασιν αὐτοῦ τοῖς ἀπ'
αἰῶνος

I proved God right in his judgements in ages past

וְיָדַעְתִּי אֱלֹהִים בְּכָל דִּבְרֵי חַסְדֵּם
and I justified God in all his judgements which are from eternity

וְאֶצְדִּיק מֵאֱלֹהִים בְּכָל מִשְׁפָּטָיו מֵעוֹלָם
and I was justified by God in all his eternal judgements

In the discussion of the phrase καὶ δικαίωσει τὰ κρίματα κυρίου in 3:3b, it was noted that the expression does not appear elsewhere in the LXX. Here in 8:7b, as in 3:3b, the meaning of the Greek and Syriac is problematic in that it speaks of God's being justified by members of the community. A *Vorlage* with the *niph^{al}* *waw*-consecutive קִיְדִיקְתִּי (scriptio plena) "I was justified" was probably read as the *hiph^{il}* קִיְדִיקְתִּי "I justified," i.e., the misreading of significance of vowel letter ך, taking it to be the usual sign of the *i* vowel of the *hiph^{il}* rather than the unusual *scriptio plena* for the *e* vowel of the *niph^{al}* imperfect. This unusual *niph^{al}* קִיְדִיקְתִּי must have been in the *Vorlage* before the separate Syriac and Greek traditions emerged.

8:8a

ἀνεκάλυψεν ὁ θεὸς τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν

God exposed their sins

גַּלְתָּ אֱלֹהִים דְּבָרֵי חַסְדֵּם

but God revealed their deeds

גַּלְתָּ אֱלֹהִים עֲבֵרוֹתֵיהֶם

God exposed their sins

The Syriac חַסְדֵּם "their deeds" and the Greek ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν "their sins" cannot be translations of each other. Harris and Mingana (1868: 96), followed by Trafton (1985: 92), concluded that the problem was an inner-Syriac corruption of חַסְדֵּם "their transgressions" to חַסְדֵּם "their deeds." But the

confusion could just as readily have been in the reading of a *Vorlage* in which עברותיהם “their transgressions” (Jastrow, 1038) was misread as עבודותיהם “their deeds.” The graphic similarity of ך and ך is somewhat greater than that of ך or ך (or ך and ך). In light of the αἰ παρανομίαι “lawlessness” in 8:9a, the preferred reading is with the Greek ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν and the *Vorlage* has been reconstructed to follow it.

8:8b

ἔγνων πάσα ἡ γῆ τὰ κρίματα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ δίκαια
the whole earth knew the righteous judgements of God

כָּל־אֲרָצוֹת וְכָל־יַבְשָׁתִים, וְכָל־אֲרָצוֹת לְבָרָא וְכָל־אֲרָצוֹת
and the righteous judgements of the Lord
became known to all the earth

וַיֵּדַע כָּל־הָאָרֶץ מִשְׁפַּטֵי אֱלֹהִים הַצְדִּיקִים
and the whole earth acknowledged
the righteous judgements of God

The Greek θεοῦ “God” reflects a *Vorlage* with אלהים and the Syriac ܠܘܕܝܢ “Lord” reflects a *Vorlage* with יהוה, a difference which hints at a different *Vorlage* for each. Trafton (1985: 92) faulted Baars’ reading (1972: 12) ܠܘܕܝܢ (possibly an *aph^cel* of ܠܘܕܝܢ “to let flow, to give vent”) for ܠܘܕܝܢ “it became known” and followed Harris and Mingana (1868: 96) in reading the singular ܠܘܕܝܢ, even though the subject of the verb is plural.

In addition to these variants, there is also a difference between the active and the passive voice in the two traditions. This difference can also be understood by recognition of a variant in the *Vorlage*. The Greek ἔγνων reflects a *Vorlage* having וידע, whereas the Syriac read the *niph^cal* perfect וידע, i.e., a confusion of ך for ך, or vice versa. Several examples of the confusion of ך and ך have already been noted, as well as the confusion of ך and ך.¹¹⁰ Since the

¹¹⁰ See Delitzsch, 1920: 103–105, § 103^{a-c} and 111–112, § 110^{a-b}.

waw-consecutive was apparently used elsewhere in this psalm, and in light of the conjunction affixed to the verb in the Syriac text, the *waw*-consecutive has been used in reconstructing the *Vorlage*.

8:9a

ἐν καταγαίοις κρυφίοις αἱ παρανομίαι αὐτῶν
ἐν παροργισμῶ

in secret places¹¹¹ underground was their lawbreaking
provoking (him)

ܘܗܘܘܢ ܗܘܘܬܘܢ ܕܘܢܘܢ ܕܘܢܘܢ ܕܘܢܘܢ

for they were committing lawlessness
in the hiding places of the earth

בתחתית ארץ הנסתרות מעולים

in the secret subterranean places they were lawbreaking

The Greek κρυφίοις “secret places” and the Syriac ܘܗܘܘܢ ܗܘܘܬܘܢ “hiding places” could be translations of each other, and αἱ παρανομίαι αὐτῶν “their lawbreaking” and ܘܗܘܘܢ ܗܘܘܬܘܢ “they were being lawless” essentially equal each other. But the significant differences between the Greek and the Syriac in this poetic line preclude their being derived from each other. The Greek masculine plural adjective καταγαίοις “underground” and παροργισμῶ “provoking” are not reflected in the Syriac, nor is the Syriac ܘܗܘܘܬܘܢ “of the earth” reflected in the Greek.

The textual variant in II Kings 6:9 may provide a clue for understanding the source of καταγαίοις “underground.” The MT of 6:9 has the participle ܢܗܝܘܢ “going down,” but the LXX translated it as κέκρυπται, as though its *Vorlage* had ܢܗܝܘܢ “hidden.” A similar confusion of the stems ܗܘܘܬܘܢ (= ܗܘܘܬܘܢ) “to hide” and ܗܘܘܬܘܢ “to be under” or ܗܘܘܬܘܢ “to go down” could underlie the

¹¹¹ Κατάγαιος is found as a translation of תחתים “lower (decks)” in Genesis 6:16, and the verb κατάγειν translates eleven different words in the Septuagint, but none of them approximate in meaning or appearance the noun ארץ “earth.”

καταγαίους of 8:9a. However, because the Syriac has ܠܗܝܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܘܬܗ “of the earth,” which is lacking in the Greek, it is more likely that the *Vorlage* had the bound nouns ܐܪܥܝܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܘܬܗ “lowest places of the earth” (attested in Psalm 63:10) or ܐܪܥܝܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܘܬܗ “lowest places of earth” (found in Isaiah 44:23) or ܐܪܥܝܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܘܬܗ “the world below, the underworld” (found in Ezekiel 31:14, 16, 18). In light of these examples ἐν καταγαίους κρυφίοις could translate ܐܪܥܝܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܘܬܗ ܕܗܘܝܘܬܗ meaning, “in the lowest places of the earth, the hidden (ones),” which equals “in the hidden under ground (places).”

The παροργισμῶ “provoking (him),” for which there is no corresponding element in the Syriac, is problematic. The verb παροργίζεις and the noun παροργισμός translate ten different Hebrew words, but none of them are graphically similar to מעולים or the sixteen other words used in the LXX to translate παράνομος. The closest similarity is between חמס and כעס, which have more of an aural similarity rather than a visual one. Therefore, it is unlikely to be an addition in the Greek due to ditto-graphy, or missing in the Syriac due to haplography. At best, it may be a doublet in the Greek text stemming from an aural error. Therefore, it is not reflected in the reconstructed *Vorlage*.

8:11b (G), 8:12b (S)

ὡς μὴ ὄντος κληρονόμου λυτρουμένου

as if there were no redeeming heir

ܐܘܟܠܐ ܕܐܘܟܠܐ ܕܐܘܟܠܐ ܕܐܘܟܠܐ

as if there was not one who inherits and saves

ܟܡܘ ܐܝܢ ܝܪܫܘܢܐ ܘܓܘܐܠ

as if there was *neither one-who-inherits*

nor one-who-redeems

Ryle and James (1891: 78–79) recognized that κληρονόμου was the equivalent of the גאל “the kinsman who should take on the rights and obligations of the inheritance.” However, since κληρονόμου translates ורש “inheritor” in Judges 18:7 and elsewhere, they concluded: “κληρονόμου λυτρουμένου are a duplicate

rendering of the same word, κληρονόμου representing the rightful claim of the ‘go’êl,’ λυτρουμένου his effectual act of deliverance or redemption.” They proposed a *Vorlage* with יִרְשׁ גֹּאֲלֵ וְאִין גֹּאֲלֵ or simply וְאִין גֹּאֲלֵ. Trafton (1985: 93) stated his presence for גֹּאֲלֵ וְאִין יִרְשׁ. However, in view of the Syriac conjunction א, it seems best to retain all three elements, i.e., the two nouns and the conjunction (= יִרְשׁ וְגֹאֲלֵ) as reflected in the above *Vorlage*.

8:12a (G), 8:13a (S)

ἐπατοῦσαν τὸ θυσιαστήριον κυρίου
they walked on the place of sacrifice of the Lord

מְבַלְלִים אֶת־בֵּית־אֱלֹהִים
and they were trampling his temple

רַמְסוּ מִקְדָּשׁוֹ
they were trampling his temple

The Greek θυσιαστήριον “place of sacrifice” and the Syriac מְבַלְלִים “temple” are not literal translations of each other. But both may translate a *Vorlage* having מִקְדָּשׁ “holy place.” This probability for a *Vorlage* with מִקְדָּשׁ is prompted by Isaiah 63:18, which reads, “our adversaries have trampled down your sanctuary (מִקְדָּשְׁךָ).” In 8:11, the poet used τὰ ἅγια τοῦ θεοῦ / בְּבֵית־אֱלֹהִים מְבַלְלִים “the sacred house / place of God.” The equivalent of מִקְדָּשׁ “holy place” in 8:12 would be a synonymous parallel of what was probably קְדָשׁ אֱלֹהִים in the *Vorlage*. The Syriac used the cognate of הֵיכַל “temple” since הֵיכַל had become the general designation of the second temple (BDB, 228, section d, noting especially the מִקְדָּשׁוֹ of Malachi 3:1). By using the cognate of הֵיכַל, the Syriac had no need to specify יְהוּדָה הֵיכַל, whereas the Greek translator needed the modifier κυρίου since θυσιαστήριον “altar” was a more generic noun in Greek than הֵיכַל in post-exilic Hebrew.

8:12a (G), 8:13a (S)

ἀπὸ πάσης ἀκαθαρσίας
(coming) from all kinds of uncleanness

PSALM EIGHT

ܐܡܬܘܪܐܟܠܐ ܒܠܘܬܐ
in all their defilement

בכל טמאיהם
in all their defilement

The Greek preposition ἀπο “from” is odd compared to the contextually appropriate ܐ “in” of the Syriac. They obviously are not translations of each other. The difference can be accounted for by assuming a *Vorlage* with the poetic ܒܠܘܬܐ “in” which was misread as ܒܠܐ, reflecting the confusion of a ܠ and a final ܐ (Delitzsch, 1920: 111 § 110^a). Once the ܠ was read as ܐ, creating the pre-position ܐܠܐ “from,” the initial ܐ “in” was dropped.

The difference between Greek ἀκαθαρσίας, without a pronomial modifier and Syriac ܐܡܬܘܪܐܟܠܐ with the suffixed “their” probably goes back to a misreading of the original ܘܡܝܘܬܐ “their uncleanness” as ܘܡܝܘܬܐ “unclean(ness)” written *scriptio plena*.

8:12b(G), 8:13b (S)

καὶ ἐν ἀφένδρῳ αἵματος
and (coming) with menstrual blood (on them)

ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ
with the blood of menstruation

בדם דוי
with the blood of the sick

The Greek ἀφένδρῳ αἵματος “the menstruation of blood” and the Syriac ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ “blood of menstruation” reflect the same words or idea but the word order is reversed. Kuhn (1937: 12–13) argued for a *Vorlage* with ܒܕם ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ (following the Syriac); and Begrich preferred (1939: 149–150) ܕם ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ (following the Greek).¹¹² In the Septuagint, ἀφένδρος is used to translate ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ

¹¹² Begrich also asserted that the Syriac translator transposed the Greek word order and the ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ “dirty” (= ἀφένδρος) was subsequently changed to ܕܘܡܝܘܬܐ “menstruous.”

“(menstrual) impurity” and דוה “menstruous, unwell, faint,” a by-form of דו “illness.” If the *Vorlage* had the stem דו rather than דוה, there would be a graphic similarity between דו and דוה. Delitzsch (1920: 127 § 145) noted the confusion of דוה and דו in Genesis 20:4 and Zephaniah 2:14. A similar confusion of דו and דוה could have occurred with דוה and דו. If the *Vorlage* had read דוה דו, it could, by analogy to the דוה/דו errors, have been misread דוה דו.

In light of (a) Leviticus 22:18–22, which prohibits the sacrifice of a blemished, blind, or maimed animal having a discharge or itch, and (b) the end of the 8:13b in Syriac: ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ “as if defiled meat,” the agenda for the poet does not seem to have been the presence of menstruants at the altar, but the sacrificing of diseased or hemorrhaging animals. Also, in Malachi 1:7, 13–14, the sacrifice of such animals is condemned.

The Greek and the Syriac texts are not very different in this line; either both misread the *Vorlage* or the corruption had already taken place in the Hebrew text they translated. Neither the Greek or the Syriac texts seems to be contextually appropriate. The proposed *Vorlage* and the translation, reflect the nuance of the condemnation of the offering of diseased or sick animals as a sacrifice.

8:14b (G), 8:15b (S)

ἐπότισεν αὐτοὺς ποτήριον οἴνου ἀκράτου εἰς μέθην
gave them a cup of undiluted wine to make them drunk

ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ

and he made them drink a living cup

that they might become drunk

ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ

he gave them a cup of undiluted wine to make them drunk

If the Syriac were a translation of the Greek, one would expect to find in Syriac the loanword ܕܘܗܘܢ (ἀκράτος) “unmixed, undiluted,” attested in Revelation 14:10. Trafton (1985: 94) is correct in his conclusion, “Presumably Sy originally read ܕܘܗܘܢ ܕܘܗܘܢ [“a cup of living wine”], the similarity of ܕܘܗܘܢ and

ܠܡܢܐ accounting for the accidental omission of ܠܡܢܐ in transmission.” The reconstructed Syriac, ܠܡܢܐ ܠܡܢܐ, and the Greek ποτήριον οἴνου ἀκράτου could be idiomatic translations of כּוֹס יַיִן חַמֵּר.

8:15b (G), 8:17a (S)

ἔκρινεν τὸν πόλεμον ἐπὶ Ἱερουσαλημ
he declared war against Jerusalem

ܘܗܝܘܐ ܠܡܢܐ ܠܡܢܐ

{he waged} war against Jerusalem

וַיַּכֵּן מִלְחָמָה עַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם

he prepared (for) war against Jerusalem

The Greek ἔκρινεν “he judged” (Wright’s “he declared”) and the Syriac ܘܗܝܘܐ “and he judged” could be translations of each other, but in that case the expression “he judged war” is anomalous. Ryle and James (1891: 80–81) suggested,

But as the word ܝܚܝܝܢ ‘he maketh ready’ is what we should naturally expect in the present passage, we conjecture that ܝܚܝܝܢ by an error of a scribe may have been changed to ܝܚܝܝܢ; of this error a probable instance is presented by Ezek. vii. 14 ‘They have blown the trumpet and made all ready’ which is rendered in the LXX σαλπίζετε ἐν σάλπιγγι καὶ κρίνατε [“sound the trumpet and decide”] (Sym ἐτοιμάσατε [“prepare”]; Hebrew ܝܚܝܝܢ [“and he prepared”]).¹¹³

It is difficult to improve upon this suggestion, although, as Trafton (1985: 95) noted, “most scholars have attempted to make sense out of the text as it stands.”

8:16a (G), 8:18a (S)

ἀπήντησαν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄρχοντες τῆς γῆς
the leaders of the country met him

¹¹³ See Delitzsch (1920: 119 § 131) for examples of the confusion of ܘܚܝܝܢ and ܘܚܝܝܢ.

רָאִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־הָאָרֶץ, וְהַגְּמִלּוּ־לָאֵלֹהִים
 and the judges of the land met him
 קְדֻמוֹהוּ רֵאשֵׁי הָאָרֶץ
the leaders of the country met him

Trafton (1985: 95) rightfully proposed, in light of the Greek ἄρχοντες “rulers,” that the Syriac ܕܒܢܝܐܪܥܝܐ was a corruption of ܕܒܢܝܐܪܥܝܐ “rulers.” This error may have occurred under the influence of the erroneous ܕܒܢܝܐܪܥܝܐ, discussed immediately above. Although Franz Delitzsch (n.d., *ad loc.*), Frankenberg (1896: 74) and Stein (1969: 448) opted for שְׂרֵי הָאָרֶץ in their back-translations, the probable Syriac ܕܒܢܝܐܪܥܝܐ has been the basis for the רֵאשֵׁי הָאָרֶץ in the reconstructed *Vorlage*.

8:16b (G), 8:18b (S)

ἔΠΕΥΚΤῆ ἢ ὁδός σου
 may your way be blessed
 ܕܘܫܬܘܒܝܐ ܕܘܫܬܘܒܝܐ
 your way will be established
 יקם דרכך
your way will be established

In Jeremiah 20:14 the phrase אֲלֵי־יְהוָה בְּרוּךְ “let it not be blessed” appears in the LXX as μὴ ἔστω ἐπευκτή “let it not be longed for,” and this is the basis for Gray’s translating ἐπευκτή here in 8:16 as “be blessed” (1913: 641). However, since the Syriac has the verb ܕܘܫܬܘܒܝܐ “will be established,” it may well be that בְּרוּךְ was not in the *Vorlage* of either text tradition. (It is obvious that they are not a translation of each other.) If the Syriac *Vorlage* had the stem קָם meaning “to be established” (as in I Samuel 24:21, “the kingdom of Israel will be established . . .”) it would be graphically similar to the stem קָה “to look eagerly for, to long

for”¹¹⁴ which was normally translated in the LXX by ἐπευκτη. The Greek translator thus read קום as קוה. This difference corresponds exactly to the well known variant of Genesis 1:9, where the MT אֶל-מְקוֹם אֶחָד “unto one place” was rendered in the LXX as εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς “into the collections”—as in 1:10, where the LXX has συστήματα for MT מְקוֹה “a mass, a collection” (BDB, 876).¹¹⁵

Of the three options (1) ἐπευκτη = ברוך “blessed be,” (2) אֱסֻמָּה = תקום “it will be established,” or (3) קוה “to be longed for, to look eagerly for,” the reference in 8:17 to “grading the rough roads before his coming” lends support for assuming the *Vorlage* had the stem קום with its physical nuances.

8:20a (G), 8:23a (S)

καὶ πᾶν σοφὸν ἐν βουλῇ
and every (man) wise in counsel
ܘܟܝ ܕܥܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ
because (he was) wise in counsel
וכל חכם עצה
and every (man) wise in counsel

The Greek πᾶν “all” and the Syriac ܘܟܝ “because” are not translations of each other. Instead, they reflect the confusion of a ך and a ך in the *Vorlage*, i.e., the Greek must have been translating from a text with כל, but the Syriac translator read the כל as כי. A similar confusion of ך and ך is found in the parallel texts of I Kings 5:25 (RSV 5:11) and II Chronicles 2:9 (RSV 2:10). In Kings, the text speaks of עֶשְׂרִים אֲלֶף כֹּר חִטִּים מִפְּלֶת לְבֵיתוֹ “twenty thousand cors of wheat as food for his household,”¹¹⁶ but in

¹¹⁴ See Delitzsch (1920: 118 § 129^a) for examples of the confusion of ך and ך.

¹¹⁵ For numerous other examples of the confusion of ך and ך, see Delitzsch, 1920: 118 § 129^a.

¹¹⁶ The variants in the Greek tradition suggest other Hebrew texts had לכל or

Chronicles it reads, עֲשָׂרִים אֲלֶף כֹּרִים חֲטִיִּים מִכּוֹת לְעַבְדֶּיךָ, “twenty thousand cors of crushed wheat for your servants.” The difference between מִכּוֹת “crushed” and מַכְלֶת “food” is strikingly similar to the כִּי / כָּל variant under review. The context of the psalm and the traditions of Josephus (*Antiquities* 14.4.2) support the plural of the Greek text tradition.

8:22b (G), 8:26 (S)

ἐμίαναν Ἱερουσαλημ
they defiled Jerusalem

מְלִאֵם אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
and Jerusalem defiled

טמאו ירושלים
they defiled Jerusalem

The difficulty in this phrase, whether the verb should be singular or plural, is identical to the one discussed above in reference to 8:1 as to whether the *Vorlage* had שָׁמְעוּ or שָׁמְעָה. The confusion of ך and ך is clearly attested in Obadiah 1, where עֲלִיָּה should be read for עֲלִיָּי.¹¹⁷ The suggestion of Trafton (1985: 96), in disagreement with Begrich (1939: 136–137), that the Syriac goes back to a Hebrew *Vorlage* in which an original טמאו was corrupted to טמאוה is attractive and has been adopted in reconstructing the *Vorlage*.

8:25a (G) 8:30 (S)

ἰδοὺ δὴ ὁ θεὸς ἔδειξας ἡμῖν τὸ κρίμα σου
ἐν τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου

see, now, God, you have shown us how you rightly judge

הִנֵּה עַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִשְׁפָּטֵינוּ
behold, you, O God have shown us your righteousness

כָּל or כִּי. For other examples of the confusion of ל and ך or ך and ך, see Delitzsch, 1920: 115, §119^a.

¹¹⁷ For other examples of the confusion of ך and ך, see Delitzsch, 1920: 116, §123^a.

PSALM NINE

הִא אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים הִרְאִיתֵנוּ דִּינְךָ צְדָקָה
behold, you, O God, have shown us your judging rightly

The initial difference between the Greek and Syriac is that of δῆ “now” and אַתָּה “you.” If the δῆ is a translation of עַתָּה and the אַתָּה is a translation of אַתָּה, it may well be that the traditions reflect an aural error, indicative of the fact that the psalm had a oral history and that the voiced laryngal fricative ע had lost its unique quality and coalesced with unvoiced glottal plosive א.

The synonymous parallelism in Psalm 9:9, הוֹדָא יִשְׁפֹּט-תִּבְלָל, הוֹדָא יִשְׁפֹּט-תִּבְלָל, בְּצִדְקָה יִדִּין לְאֻמִּים בְּמִישְׁרִים “Indeed, he judges the world in righteousness and he judges the people with equity,” reflects the quasi-parallelism of the Psalms of Solomon 8:24–25: “. . . who judges the whole earth in his righteousness,” which is followed by “. . . your judgement in your righteousness.” It is perhaps a mere coincidence, but the Syriac text of Psalm 9:9 differs from the MT in that it has no verb corresponding to יִדִּין — just as the Syriac Psalms of Solomon 8:30 (Greek 8:25) lacks a noun corresponding to τὸ κρίμα (= דִּין). Perhaps דִּין was misread as דָּק, which then dropped from the text when it was adjacent with the דָּק of צְדָקָה. The דָּק צְדָקָה in the reconstructed *Vorlage* can be read as a participle or a noun followed by an adverbial accusative, which restores (or creates) an alliterative phrase, “your judging rightly.”

Psalm Nine

9:2

ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει ἢ διασπορὰ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ
 the dispersion of Israel (was) among every nation

בְּכָל-גּוֹיִם הָיִים פְּזוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 among all the nations was the dispersion of Israel

בְּכָל-הַגּוֹיִם הַיּוֹמִים פְּזוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
among all the nations was the dispersing of Israel

Trafton (1985: 100) noted that the Greek has ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει “among every nation” as if this is different from the Syriac בְּכָל-גּוֹיִם הָיִים “among all the nations.” However, a *Vorlage*

with כל could mean either “all” or “every.” The Greek and the Syriac both would translate כל correctly. The second difference in this poetic line is the absence of any corresponding element in the Greek for the Syriac ܠܐܫܐ “was.” The Greek ἔθει suggests a *Vorlage* with ܠܗܘܘܝܝܢ, which is graphically similar to the plural participle ܗܘܝܝܢ “the ones who were,” which can be used with the force of the finite verb (as in Exodus 9:3, ܒְּמִקְנֶךָ ܝַד־יְהוָה ܗֹיָה “the hand of the LORD will be upon your cattle”). The proposed *Vorlage* suggests that the Greek, through haplography, omitted any representation of ܗܘܝܝܢ in its translation. Thus, the Syriac is the preferred reading and provides the basis for reconstructing the *Vorlage*.

9:3a (G), 9:5b (S)

ἀπὸ τῆς γνώσεώς σου

from your knowledge

ܠܗܘܘܝܢ ܠܗܘܝܢ

from your mind

מִן דַּעְתְּךָ

from your *knowledge*

The Greek has γνώσεώς σου, “your knowledge” while the Syriac has ܠܗܘܘܝܢ, “your mind.” Trafton (1985: 100) noted that ܠܗܘܘܝܢ here and in verse 6 would be an “unusual translation” of γνώσεώς σου.” Psalm 139:2, 17, along with Job 16:21, provide the key to the understanding the difference between the Greek and the Syriac in this phrase. Dahood (1970: 286, 296) cited Job 16:21, “can mere man argue with God, or mortal discern (בין) his thoughts (לרעהו),” as evidence for his translation of לרעהו as “his thoughts” in 139:2, 17 (over against the LXX and the Syriac versions which read לדעי “my knowledge”). Thus, Hebrew רעה “thought” is attested in two passages and Aramaic רעה “thought” is attested in Daniel 2:29.

The *Vorlage* could have had either (1) רעתך (which the Greek translator misread as דעתך “your knowledge” or understood it as

רעתך “your thoughts” [as in Psalm 139:2, 17 and Job 16:21]), or (2) דעתך (which the Syriac translator must have read as רעתך “your thought”). The difference reflects another example of the confusion of a ר and a ד. The Greek text is preferred for reconstructing the Hebrew *Vorlage* of this line since the semantic range of רעה moves in the direction of “striving, longing” rather than “knowing.”

9:4a (G), 9:7a (S)

τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἐν ἐκλογῇ καὶ ἐξουσίᾳ τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν
Our works (are) in the choosing and power of our souls

כַּעֲשִׂינוּ בְּחֹרֶר וּבְבַחֲרָה כַּעֲשִׂינוּ
for we do {things} in freedom and in choosing of our soul

כַּעֲשִׂינוּ בְּבַחֲרָה וּבְחֹרֶר נַפְשֵׁנוּ
indeed we act in freedom and in the choice of our souls

There are two differences between the Greek and the Syriac in this poetic line. First the Greek has τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν “our works,” but the Syriac has כַּעֲשִׂינוּ “we do (things).” The Greek could reflect a *Vorlage* with the participle מַעֲשֵׂינוּ “our works.” The Syriac *Vorlage* read either עֲשִׂינוּ “we did (things)” or כַּעֲשִׂינוּ “indeed, we did (things).” The emphatic “indeed” is suggested by the Syriac כַּעֲשִׂינוּ which could reflect the preposition כ or the particle כִּי. What was read as a כ in the Syriac *Vorlage* was (mis)read as a כּ in the Greek *Vorlage*. In the translation of the proposed *Vorlage*, the כ is read as an emphatic כ “indeed, surely,” which fits the context of the verse.

The second difference is between the Greek ἐν ἐκλογῇ καὶ ἐξουσίᾳ “in choosing and in power” and the Syriac כַּעֲשִׂינוּ בְּחֹרֶר וּבְבַחֲרָה “in freedom and in choosing.” The Syriac and Greek reflect the בחר “to choose,” but the Syriac כַּעֲשִׂינוּ “in freedom” requires בְּחֹרֶר, i.e. the preposition ב plus the substantive חֹרֶר “free, born free, nobleman” (BDB, 359). The Greek tradition read the חֹרֶר “freedom” as חֹל “power.” Delitzsch (115, § 119^b) cited Genesis 15:18 and Isaiah 21:8 as two examples of the

confusion of a ך and a ל.¹¹⁸ Compared to the Greek, the Syriac is the contextually more appropriate reading.

9:5a (G), 9:9a (S)

ὁ ποιῶν δικαιοσύνην θησαυρίζει ζωὴν αὐτῷ παρὰ κυρίῳ
the one who does what is right saves up life
for himself with the Lord

ܘܥܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܢܐ ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ
ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܘܬܐ

for he who does righteousness lays up for himself
with the Lord a treasure of life

עוֹשֶׂה צְדָקָה אוֹצֵר אוֹצֵר חַיִּים לוֹ אֵת יְהוָה
*he who does righteousness lays up a treasure of life
for himself with the Lord*

Trafton (1985: 102) rightly critiqued Harris' (1911: 43) claim that the Syriac phrase ܘܥܘܠܘܬܐ . . . ܘܢܝܘܬܐ "cannot be a Hebrew form of speech, we are obliged to admit that the play on words is due to the ingenuity of the translator," and proposed a Hebrew *Vorlage* having אוֹצֵר אוֹצֵר "laying up a treasure." Additional support for reading אוֹצֵר אוֹצֵר comes from the Latin Apocalypse of IV Ezra 8:54, which reads in part ". . . and in the end the treasures of immortality (*thesaurus immortalitatis*) are made manifest." If the Syriac ܘܥܘܠܘܬܐ . . . ܘܢܝܘܬܐ "a treasure of life . . . with the Lord" is thematically related, there is no reason to reject the Syriac ܘܥܘܠܘܬܐ (equals Hebrew אוֹצֵר "treasure") out of hand. Trafton's (1985: 102) back translation אוֹצֵר אוֹצֵר approximates Franz Delitzsch's (1970:10) back translation of Matthew 6:20, לְכֻם אוֹצְרוּת בַּשָּׁמַיִם, "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Moreover, ܘܥܘܠܘܬܐ . . . ܘܢܝܘܬܐ seems to suggest something other than "saving one's life" at the present on earth. The idea of saving one's life here on earth is well

¹¹⁸ See Gesenius (1888: 499, 949) in his introduction to the letters ך and ל for other examples of the interchange.

attested, for example, in these passages: Psalm 6:4 “Turn, O Lord, save my life (חלצה נפשי); deliver me for the sake of thy steadfast love”; Psalm 116:4 “. . . O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul (נפשי מלטה);” Ezekiel 33:9 “if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul (נפתי);” and Jeremiah 38:2 “he shall have his life as a prize of war, and live (והיהתהאלו נפשו לשלל וחי).”

There is no reason to conjecture that the Syriac text here is a translation of the Greek text. The Greek and the Syriac texts could actually reflect a Hebrew *Vorlage* which gave rise to an aural error in which there was possibly a confusion of עוֹרֵר and אֹרֵר, even though the LXX does not use *θησαυρίζειν* to translate אֹרֵר.¹¹⁹ The Greek *θησαυρίζει* and the Syriac *ܐܘܪܝܥܐ* are probably based upon a tradition having אֹרֵר. The cognate accusative before the verb, אֹרֵר . . . אֹרֵר, could reflect an original infinitive absolute which preceded the verb, אֹרֵר אֹרֵר. In either case, a cognate accusative or an infinitive absolute, the Greek translator omitted it or it had already dropped out of the *Vorlage* of the Greek text. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text.

9:6b (G), 9:12b (S)

ἐν ἑξομολογήσει ἐν ἑξαγορίαις

in confessing, in restoring

בְּהוֹדוֹתָיו

in his confession

בְּהוֹדוֹתָיו

when he confesses

Gray (1913: 642) recognized that ἐν ἑξαγορίαις “in acknowledgement” is probably a doublet for the ἐν ἑξομολογήσει “in confession,” but made no conjecture whether the doublet originated in the Greek text or in a Hebrew *Vorlage*. Since the semantic range of ἑξαγορίαις includes “to redeem, to ransom, to tell, to

¹¹⁹ Other examples of aural errors are discussed with reference to 8:11, 8:25a, 17:6a, and 17:13.

confess, to make known, to declare,”¹²⁰ it is possible that the phrase simply uses synonymous apposition; but the absence of any corresponding element in the Syriac for ἐν ἐξαγορίαις lends support to Gray’s conjecture.

While it is possible that the Syriac text reflects a haplography of its equivalent for ἐν ἐξαγορίαις, it is more likely that the Hebrew *Vorlage* had a doublet reflecting what was an aural uncertainty as to whether the root was עָדַע “to acknowledge” or כָּדַע “to confess.” Since Delitzsch (1920) does not list any scribal errors involving כָּ and עָ, one must conjecture that at some point in the *oral* transmission that the עָדַע and the כָּדַע were confused.¹²¹ By the time of the composition of the Psalms of Solomon, the עָ (the voiced laryngeal fricative) had coalesced with the כָּ (the unvoiced glottal plosive), as attested by the Phoenician variant spellings of כָּעַל as כָּעַל or כָּעַל.¹²² But in Hebrew, where the עָ was consistently retained in the spelling, in hearing the עָ and כָּ (the unvoiced glottal fricative) could easily have been confused. Therefore, the reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text reflecting the writer’s concurrence with Gray, followed by Trafton.

9:9b (G), 9:18b (S)

καὶ οὐκ ἀπόσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (Rahlfs)¹²³

καὶ οὐ καταπαύσεις εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα

and it will not cease forever

וְלֹא תִפְּסֵי עַד עַד

and you will not cease forever

¹²⁰ Wright (1985: 661), for reasons which are not obvious, translated ἐν ἐξαγορίαις as “in restoring,” a nuance not cited by (Liddell and Scott, 580).

¹²¹ For other examples which suggest errors in an oral transmission see the discussion on 8:11b, 8:25a, 16:16, and 17:13.

¹²² See Friedrich and Rollig, 1970: 13, § 31.

¹²³ Rahlfs accepted an emendation proposed by von Gebhardt which none of the Greek manuscripts supports. The second Greek line is from Wright’s (1995: 61) volume on the Psalms of Solomon..

ולא תפסק לעולם
and [the race of Israel] will never cease

The Greek provides three alternatives for the corresponding Syriac ܐܘܠܐܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ “you / she will not cease,” namely, οὐ καταπαύσεις “you will not cease,” οὐ καταπαύσῃ and οὐ καταπαύσει “he will not cease.”¹²⁴ Begrich (1939: 138) conjectured that καταπαύσεις and καταπαύσῃ are corruptions of καταπαύσει and that the Syriac is a translation of the corrupted καταπαύσεις. Trafton’s (1985:103–104) summary of opinions reflects the division of opinion on whether “you [God] will not cease” or “it [the name of God] will not cease” was original in the Greek.

Not satisfied with the three attested Greek options, von Gebhardt (1895: 78) emended οὐ καταπαύσεις “you will not cease” to οὐκ ἀπόσῃ “you will not reject (us),” and Rahlfs adopted the emendation in his text. But the solution to the problem is not to be found in emending the Greek, but in recognizing that the Greek variants are due to a misunderstanding of the verb תפסק in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. The prefix ת could be either a 2ms or a 3fs imperfect form of the verb. The problem was not with the verb, per se, but with determining the subject of the verb. Contrary to all the evidence or arguments favoring a 2ms “you [God] will not . . .” a or 3ms “it [the name] will not . . .,” the subject was most likely a 3fs זרעיה “race, descendants, family” (Jastrow, 414), used as a synonym of the masculine σπέρμα (= זרע) in 9:9a. The phrase זרעיה לא תפסקה “his race shall never cease” is attested in Kilayim 32^c of the Palestinian Talmud.

Consequently, the Syriac ܐܘܠܐܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܐܒܪܗܡܐ should be translated “it [the race (f.) of Abraham] will never cease,” and the οὐ καταπαύσῃ (of mss 149, 260, 471, 606, 629, and 769) and the οὐ καταπαύσει (of mss 366), may also reflect the 3fs ܐܘܠܐܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ or ܐܘܠܐܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ (*scriptio plene*). For these reason, the reconstructed *Vorlage* uses a 3fs verb having the feminine noun

¹²⁴ As in Hebrew, the Syriac 3fs and the 2ms imperfect verbs are homographs, their identification being fixed solely by context.

זרעית in 9:9a as its subject. The Greek οὐ καταπαύσει “it will not cease” matches this reconstruction, but the “it” has as its antecedent the feminine זרעית, not the masculine שֶׁם יְהוָה. Once the correct antecedent is recognized, emendation is unnecessary.

Psalm Ten

10:1a

ὁ κύριος ἐμνήσθη ἐν ἐλεγμῶ
 the Lord remembers with rebuking
 ܠܗܘܘܢ ܕܠܗܘܢ ܩܘܒܘܠܐ
 whom God remembered in poverty
 זכר יְהוָה בְּתוֹכָהּ
 (*whom*) *Yahweh remembers with reproach*

The Syriac ܠܗܘܘܢ “in poverty” and the Greek ἐν ἐλεγμῶ “with rebuking” cannot be translations of each other. Harris and Mingana (1868: 96–97) and Baars (1972: 15) recognized a metathetic error in which an original ܠܗܘܘܢ “in reproach” was mistakingly written or read as ܠܗܘܘܢ “in poverty.” The erroneous metathesis of letters has probably occurred also in the Hebrew *Vorlage* (in 2:27, 4:18 and elsewhere). The reconstructed *Vorlage*, therefore, follows the Greek text.

10:1b

ἐκυκλώθη ἀπὸ ὁδοῦ πονηρᾶς μᾶστιγι
 and protects from the evil way with a whip
 ܠܗܘܘܢ ܕܠܗܘܢ ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܠܗܘܘܢ
 and he restrained him with scourgings from the way of evil
 וְהִכְלִיחוּ מִדֶּרֶךְ רָעָה בְּשׁוֹט
 and *he restrained him from the evil way with a whip*

The Greek ἐκυκλώθη “he protects” and the Syriac ܠܗܘܘܢ “he restrained him” cannot be translations of each other. Trafton (1985: 106) has rightly noted “The Gk ἐκυκλώθη (lit. ‘he was encircled’)

is notoriously problematic.” The best suggestion to date was offered by Fritzsche (1871: 580) who proposed the emendation to ἐκωλύθη “he was restrained,” which brought the Greek text into conformity with the Syriac.

The Greek translator read מִדֶּרֶךְ רַעָה (or מִאֲרֵחַ רַעָה) as the noun with an apositional modifier (“from the way, the evil one”), whereas the Syriac read the phrase as a construct chain (“from the way of evil”). The Syriac provided the clue for the correction of the Greek text of this poetic line, and the reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text.

10:1b–2a

ἀπὸ ἀμαρτίας . . . υῶτου

from sin . . . (his) back

מִ~~דֶּרֶךְ~~ סִינ . . . מִ~~אֲרֵחַ~~ סִינ

from his sin . . . his back

גִּוּ . . . חַטֵּאֵיִו

from his sin . . . his back

In 10:1c the Syriac apparently read a *Vorlage* having חַטֵּאֵיִו “his sin” but the Greek translator read חַטֵּאֵה “sin (f.)” reflecting the confusion of ו׳ and ה׳.¹²⁵ In 10:2a the reader is confronted with a variant between the Syriac and the Greek involving the confusion of a ו׳ and a ה׳.¹²⁶ Whereas the Syriac translator read גִּוּ “his back,” the Greek translator read גִּוּה “back.” The אֶרֶב in 10:2, which has no corresponding element in the Greek, is probably a doublet of the גִּוּ which was misread as גִּוּה.¹²⁷ Both Syriac and Greek have synonymous parallelism (חַטֵּאֵיִו and גִּוּ in the Syriac and חַטֵּאֵה and

¹²⁵ See Delitzsch, 1920: 120, § 132^{a-b}.

¹²⁶ See Delitzsch, 1920: 114, § 116^a.

¹²⁷ See Delitzsch, 1920: 120, § 132^{c, e, f}.

תנן in the Greek). Contextually, the Syriac reading is preferable¹²⁸ and has been used in reconstructing the *Vorlage*.

10:3

ὀρθώσει γὰρ ὁδοὺς δικαίων
for he will straighten the ways of the righteous

ܕܡܫܠܝܢ ܡܫܘܒܝܢ
for the way of the righteous one is straight
יִשָּׁר דַּרְכֵי צְדִיקִים
for he will straighten the ways of the righteous

Trafton (1985: 107) cited Kuhn's (1937: 13) concurrence with Frankenberg (1896: 77) that the difference between the Greek ὀρθώσει "he will make straight" and the Syriac ܡܫܠܝܢ "is straight" is due to the reading of a *Vorlage* having יִשָּׁר. The Greek translator read it as a *pi^cel* causative but the Syriac translator read it as a simple *qal*. The reconstructed *Vorlage* concurs with the Greek translator in reading a causative, recognizing that יִשָּׁר could be a *hiph^cil* (*scriptio defectiva*) as in Proverbs 4:25, as well as a *pi^cel*.

10:3b

καὶ οὐ διαστρέψει ἐν παιδείᾳ
and [God] will not bend (them) by discipline

ܘܠܐ ܡܫܘܒܝܢ ܠܡ ܡܫܠܝܢ
and chastisement does not make it crooked
לֹא סָב בַּתּוֹכַחָה
and he does not bend (them) by discipline

The Greek διαστρέψει (a simple indicative) and the Syriac ܡܫܠܝܢ (a causative feminine participle) are not likely to be

¹²⁸ Note Wright's (1985: 661) contextual addition of "(his)" to avoid the ambiguity of the translation "the one who prepares a back for the whip . . .," which could be misunderstood as a reference to one who executes the whipping.

translations of each other. However, the differences between the indicative and the causative and between the present tense and the participle stem can be accounted for by a *Vorlage* having a consonant cluster סבבת־תוכחה. The Syriac translator or tradition read —due to a dittography of the ת— סבבת תוכחה as the feminine participle סבבת and the the feminine תוכחה “chastisement.” Consequently, the Syriac read תוכחה as the subject of the participle. But the Greek translator or tradition read the consonant cluster סבבת־תוכחה as סב בתוכחה, i.e., the masculine participle followed by a preposition ב affixed to the feminine noun תוכחה, with the masculine subject of the participle being understood contextually as God.

Kuhn (1937: 13–14) reconstructed a *Vorlage* with ולא יעות בתוכחה, asserting:

. . . daß das ב vor תוכחה, das ט^(y) richtig bot, in ט^(w) ausgelassen war, oder von ε bei der Übersetzung unberücksichtigt gelassen wurde, weil es ihm — eben wegen seiner falschen Vokalisation יִשֶׁר — unverständlich war.

But it is difficult to imagine that such a common verb as יָשַׁר and the preposition ב would have been incomprehensible to the Syriac translator. Although Kuhn chose the verb עוה (which was translated by διαστρέφειν in the LXX), the stem סבב (which was translated by επιστρέφειν in the LXX), more naturally explains the preposition ἐν in the Greek text.

10:3c

καὶ τὸ ἔλεος κυρίου
and the mercy of the Lord

לִּי הַחַסֵּד
for the sight of the Lord

וּחֲנוּן יְהוָה
for the grace of Yahweh

The Greek ἔλεος “mercy” and the Syriac ܡܫܘܐ “sight” are obviously not translations of each other. Trafton (1985: 108) has proposed an inner Syriac confusion of ܡܘܫܘܐ “grace” and ܡܫܘܐ “sight,” but the graphic similarity of these two words is not nearly as close as the corresponding Hebrew הַנּוֹן “grace” and הַזֵּן “sight.” Therefore, it seems more likely that the confusion was in the Hebrew *Vorlage* rather than originating in the Syriac text, since the confusion of ך and ך is well attested elsewhere in Hebrew.¹²⁹ The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text since הַזֵּן and הַזֵּן are among the twelve words translated by ἔλεος .

10:5b

ἡ μαρτυρία κυρίου ἐπὶ ὁδοῦς ἀνθρώπων ἐν ἐπισκοπῇ
and the testimony of the Lord (is) in the ways of men
in (his) supervision

ܡܫܘܫܘܐ ܕܡܫܘܐ ܡܫܘܐ ܡܫܘܐ
ܡܫܘܐ ܡܫܘܐ ܡܫܘܐ ܡܫܘܐ

the testimony of the Lord is in the ways of men
in visitation

עדות יהוה בפקודים על הלכות אדם
the lawcodes of the Lord in the commandments
(are) above the rules of man

The semantic ranges of the Greek ἐπισκοπῇ “supervision” and the Syriac ܡܫܘܐ “visitation” are such that they could well be translations of each other. However, the semantic range of ἐπισκοπῇ and ܡܫܘܐ do not offer any meaning which gives sense to this poetic line. However, if ἐπισκοπῇ and ܡܫܘܐ are translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* with פקודים (scriptio defectiva = פקד) “commandments, precepts,” the translators can be excused for translating the masculine plural פקודים “commandments” as though it were the feminine singular פקודה “visitation.”

¹²⁹ See Delitzsch, 1920: 113, § 112^d and 116, § 123^c

The confusion of פקדה and פקדה would be like the confusion of הנה (MT) and הנם (with 𐤄, 𐤅, 𐤆) in II Kings 6:20.

The Greek ἐπί points to a *Vorlage* with על. The Syriac ܐܘܬܘܪܐ and the Greek ὁδὸς point to the noun ִדְרָךְ “road” or ִקְלָכָה “practice, rule, tradition.” Frankenberg (1896: 77) translated ἐπὶ ὁδὸς ἀνθρώπων as על דרכי אדם [“in the ways of man”]— Franz Delitzsch (n.d., *ad loc.*) differed only by having the definite article on אדם—and Stein (1969: 451) similarly rendered it as על דרכי אנשים [“in the ways of men”]. But all three seem to have misunderstood the context due to the Greek ἐπισκοπή and the Syriac ܐܘܬܘܪܐ which reflect most likely a misreading of פקדה “visitation” instead of פקדה “precept” (see above) — which made the ִקְלָכָה of the *Vorlage* appear to be “the roads for visiting people,” rather than recognizing אדם ִקְלָכָה as the antithetical parallel to יהוה עדות “the lawcodes of Yahweh.” Both the Greek and the Syriac missed the nuance of the text, and commentators to date have not been able to offer an intelligible translation. The *Vorlage*, as reconstructed, offers insight into the primacy of Torah for the poet.

10:8 (G), 10:9 (S)

τοῦ κυρίου ἡ σωτηρία ἐπὶ οἴκον Ἰσραὴλ
εἰς εὐφροσύνην αἰώνιον

the Lord’s salvation (be) upon the house of Israel
(that they may be) happy forever

דְּמוּת מַלְכוּת מַלְכוּת מַלְכוּת מַלְכוּת מַלְכוּת
דְּמוּת מַלְכוּת מַלְכוּת מַלְכוּת מַלְכוּת מַלְכוּת

for the salvation of the Lord is upon the house of Israel
for the kingdom which is forever

כי השועה יהוה על בית ישראל לרונות עולם
for the salvation of the Lord is on the house of Israel.

Indeed, His Lordship (is) forever

The Greek εὐφροσύνη “happy” and the Syriac ܐܘܬܘܪܐ “kingdom” cannot be translations of each other. However, they are related to each other by virtue of the fact that they may be derived

from a *Vorlage* having the noun רִנּוֹת “lordship.”¹³⁰ The Greek text misread רִנּוֹת as רְנוֹת “exultation” (like the רְנָנוֹת “joyful lips” in Psalm 63:6). One must postulate the abstract noun רִנּוֹת, unattested in Biblical Hebrew, which functioned as a synonym for מַלְכוּת “kingship.” The analogy to רִנּוֹת is the use of אֲדִנּוֹת “lordship” in Modern Hebrew (which is not attested in Biblical Hebrew, although אֲדִין appears frequently).

The Greek εἰς and the Syriac ܐ are reflected in the *Vorlage* by the ל prefixed to רִנּוֹת, but this ל is not to be read, following the Greek and Syriac texts, as the preposition “to” but read as the emphatic ל “indeed.”¹³¹ The Syriac ܐ “for” could reflect a *Vorlage* with a כ or כִּי. If so, the כ or כִּי would probably be an emphatic particle in synonymous parallelism with the emphatic ל, rather than the particle meaning “for.”

Psalm Eleven

11:1

σαλπίζατε ἐν Σιων ἐν σάλπιγγι σημασίας

sound in Zion the signal trumpet

כִּי יִשְׁמַע בְּצִוְיֹן בְּחֹמֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם

blow in Zion on the known trumpet

תִּקְעוּ בְצִוְיֹן בְּחֹמֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם . . . הַתְרוּעָה

sound in Zion the *signal trumpet*

If the Syriac כִּי יִשְׁמַע בְּצִוְיֹן בְּחֹמֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם, “known trumpet,” were כִּי יִשְׁמַע בְּצִוְיֹן בְּחֹמֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם, with the verb in the *ʾaph^cel*, meaning “to make known by trumpet,” the Syriac would approximate the Greek

¹³⁰ See BDB (931) where the plural participle is cited as a substantive meaning “rulers, potentates” and comes in parallel or in synonymous parallelism with מַלְכִים in Judges 5:3; Psalm 2:2; Proverbs 8:15, 31:4 and Habbakuk 1:10. Note also Ecclesiasticus 33:4 where רִנּוֹנִים is in parallelism with שְׂרֵי גוֹיִם (although the Greek ἠούμενοι λαοῦ suggests שְׂרֵי עַם “scribes of the people”).

¹³¹ See Blommerde 1969: 31 and Dahood and Penar 1970:406 for a bibliography on and a discussion of the emphatic ל.

σάλπιγγι σημασίας “signal trumpet.” But the *aph^eel* participle is not easily mistaken for *pe^eal* passive participle. The clue for understanding the difference between the Greek and Syriac is provided by Numbers 10:9, **וַיִּהְיֶה עִתְּךָ בְּהַצְצֹרֹת** “then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets.” In the *Vorlage* the instrument translated “trumpet” could have been **שׁוֹפָר** “ram’s horn” or **הַצְצָרָה** “clarion” or **יֹבֵל** “cornet,” none of which would have created problems. But it was not the instrument, itself, which was misunderstood, but the modifier of the instrument, **הַתְרוּעָה**, usually meaning “an alarm, a war cry, a shout of joy (for a religious purpose).” This noun with the definite article, **הַתְרוּעָה** (or *scriptio defectiva* **הַתְרֵעָה**), was evidently misread by the Syriac translator as **הַתִּירְעָה**, a *hithpa^eel* perfect of the stem **יִרַע**. The confusion of **ר** and **ד** is well attested, as is the confusion of **ר** and **ג**.¹³²

11:4 (G) 11:5 (S)

ὄρη ὑψηλὰ ἐταπείνωσεν εἰς ὀμαλισμὸν αὐτοῖς
he flattened high mountains into level ground for them

ܘܫܘܪܝܢ ܘܥܘܠܝܢ ܘܥܒܪܝܢ ܘܥܘܠܝܢ ܘܥܘܠܝܢ

high mountains he humbled, and he made them low

שׁוּהַ הַרִים רַמִּים לְשַׁפִּילָהּ לָהֶם

he flattened high mountains into lowlands for them

The variant reading of ms 10hl is noteworthy in understanding the difference between the Greek and Syriac texts of this line. Whereas ms 16hl has **וַיִּשְׁטַח** “and he laid low, he strew flat,” ms 10hl has **וַיַּשְׁמַח** “and he made plain/smooth.” While this could be an inner-Syriac corruption, it could also reflect a different reading of the *Vorlage*. If the Greek **ἐταπείνωσεν εἰς ὀμαλισμὸν αὐτοῖς** came from a *Vorlage* reading **לְשַׁפִּילָהּ לָהֶם**, it would appear that ms 10hl suffered a haplography of the **לָה** of **לְשַׁפִּילָהּ לָהֶם** and the **לָה** of **לָהֶם**. On the other hand, both mss 16hl and 10hl evidently read

¹³² See Delitzsch, 1920: 105–107, § 109^{a-c} and 111, § 109^b.

the לשפילה of the *Vorlage* as a 3ms *hiph'il* with a 3mpl object suffix, ושפילם “and he made them low,” reflecting a confusion of ל and ו.¹³³ The redundancy of the Syriac line is prosaic, not poetic, consequently, the Greek text appears to have retained the better reading and has been used in reconstructing the *Vorlage*.

11:5 (G), 11:6b (S)

οἱ δρυμοὶ ἐσκίασαν αὐτοῖς ἐν τῇ παρόδῳ αὐτῶν

the forest shaded them as they passed by

ܐܘܪܐ ܕܥܘܪܐ ܕܥܘܪܐ ܕܥܘܪܐ ܕܥܘܪܐ ܕܥܘܪܐ

he shaded the cedars over them when they were passing by

הצלו חרשים להם בעברם

the woods shaded them in their passing by

Greek ms 629 has οἱ βουνοί “the hills” instead of οἱ δρυμοί “the forest,” and the Syriac has ܐܘܪܐ “the cedars.” It is obvious that these variants are not literal translations of each other. The Greek βουνοί and δρυμοί have some graphic similarity, but the degree of similarity is hardly sufficient to be cause of the threefold difference. The differences probably stem from a Hebrew *Vorlage* which could have been interpreted in several different ways. The clue for understanding this poetic line and its variants is Ezekiel 31:3, which reads in part, הנה אשור ארזו בלבנון יפה ענף וחרש מצל, “Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a forest-like shade” (ASV). The collocation of ארזו “cedar” and וחרש מצל “forest-like shade” parallels the variant readings of βούνοι, δρυμοί, and ܐܘܪܐ here in 11:5. Hebrew חרש can mean “a wooded height, a forest” (BDB, 361). The Greek δρυμοί focused the meaning of חרש on the “forest” element, whereas the Greek βουνοί focused the meaning on the element of “height.” The Syriac ܐܘܪܐ “he shaded the cedars” is a free translation of הצלו חרשים “the woods shaded”

¹³³ See Delitzsch, 1920: 115, § 119^a.

which associated the forest-like shade with the legendary shady cedars (of Lebanon).¹³⁴

11:5b (G), 11:7 (S)

πᾶν ξύλον εὐωδίας ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς ὁ θεός

God made every fragrant tree to grow for them

ܟܠܟܘܠ ܥܘܘܕܝܐ ܕܥܝܠܘܬܐ ܕܥܝܠܘܬܐ ܕܥܝܠܘܬܐ ܕܥܝܠܘܬܐ

and God caused every tree of sweet smell to breathe on them

ויריח אלהים כל עץ בשם להם

and God caused every fragrant tree to give off scent for them

The Greek ἀνέτειλεν “to grow” and the Syriac ܥܝܠܘܬܐ “to breathe, to give off scent” cannot be accurate translations of each other. The verb ἀνέτειλεν appears to be a translation of the *hiphʿil* of the verb ַרַח “to rise, to go forth,” used generally for the rising of the sun, with the noun ַרְחֵיב being used for “sunrise” or “the place of the sunrise, the East.” But the noun ַרְחֵיב “one rising from the soil” (BDB, 28) is attested in Psalm 37:35 “I have seen a violent, wicked man spreading himself like a luxuriant tree in its native soil (ַרְחֵיב ַרְחֵיב)” (NAS). Since ἀνέτειλεν can be used for the coming forth of plants, as well as the “springing forth” of people, water, mountains, or hair, it was the appropriate word to translate ַרַח “and he caused to sprout forth.”

However, the Syriac translator or his *Vorlage* did not read ַרַח but ַרְחֵיב “and he caused [the cedars] to give off scent.” This reflects a confusion in the *Vorlage* of either the Syriac text tradition or the Greek text tradition of a ַ and a ַ, a confusion which is attested in Ezekiel 47:17–19, where ַרְחֵיב appears three times instead of ַרְחֵיב.¹³⁵ Given the fact that the poet spoke of the children of the diaspora traveling along shady roads to Jerusalem,

¹³⁴ In addition to Ezekiel 31:3, note also Numbers 24:6, Psalm 37:35; 80:1; 92:12; and Isaiah 2:13.

¹³⁵ See BHS for a summary of the evidence of the versions; and note Delitzsch (1920: 112, § 112^a) for another example of the confusion of ַ and ַ in Proverbs 8:29.

the Greek ἀνέτειλεν is very difficult. It would be an appropriate verb were the poet depicting the redevelopment of the land of Israel/Judah once the diaspora Jews were resettled in the land. Consequently, the Syriac reflects a contextually more appropriate reading. Aside from the Greek ἀνέτειλεν, there is no suggestion that the returnees would tarry along the way, waiting for trees to spring up or mature sufficiently to give off a scent. In the poet's vision, as interpreted by the Syriac translator, the scent of cedar would be pleasant for the Zion bound travelers. Consequently, the reconstructed *Vorlage* has followed the Syriac text.¹³⁶

Psalm Twelve

12:2a

ἐν ποικιλίᾳ στροφῆς οἱ λόγοι τῆς γλώσσης
ἀνδρὸς πονηροῦ (Greek^a)

ἐν ποίησει διαστροφῆς οἱ λόγοι τῆς γλώσσης
ἀνδρὸς πονηροῦ (Greek^b)

the words of the wicked man's tongue
(are) twisted so many ways

ܠܘܟܠܘܨܐܘܪܐ ܕܡܢ ܘܫܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ

ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܘܫܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ

for the tongue of the transgressor is

in the turning of words

בְּחַפְּזָה חֶשֶׁב מְלִים לְשׁוֹן אִישׁ רָע

the tongue of a wicked man is for ingenious twisting of words

Trafton (1985: 115) acknowledged the difficulty of this poetic line in Greek and Syriac. In Greek, mss 149, 260, 471, and 606 (= Greek^b in this section) read ἐν ποίησει διαστροφῆς “in the doing of perversity” for ἐν ποικιλίᾳ στροφῆς “in diversity of turning”

¹³⁶ The paronomasia in the Syriac (ܘܫܝܘܢܐ . . . ܡܘܬܐ), which Trafton (1985: 112–113) dealt with, appears to be secondary. It is not original to the Hebrew if the proposed reconstruction proves to be correct.

in mss 253 and 336 (= Greek^a in this section); and the corresponding phrase in Syriac is ܠܗܘܘܢ . . . ܘܢܘܩܘܢ “the turning of words.” The Greek variants are not visually similar and are not likely to reflect an inner-Greek corruption; and the Syriac cannot be a translation of either Greek text. The differences are best accounted for by appealing to a Hebrew *Vorlage*. Trafton proposed reading ܕܒܪܝܡ ܠܫׁׁן ܒܗܦܚ ܕܗܦܚ, commenting, “the Sy translator correctly understood the first two words as being in a construct relationship, while the Gk translator understood such a relationship for the last two words.” But this *Vorlage* does not account for the ποικιλία or the ποιήσει of the Greek texts.

This writer proposes a different *Vorlage*, reading ܒܗܦܚ ܗܫܒ “for ingenious twisting of words.” The ܗܦܚ could be either ܗܦܚ “turning” (which equals στροφή) or ܗܦܚ “perversity” (which equals διαστροφή and ܘܢܘܩܘܢ). In the LXX the stem ܗܫܒ is translated by ποικιλία (which also translated ܡܥܫܗ “work, deed”) and by ποιήσις (which also translated ܡܥܫܗ “work, deed”).¹³⁷ Mss 149, 260, 471, and 606 rendered ܗܫܒ by ποιήσις; and mss 253 and 236 translated it by ποικιλία. However, all the Greek readings missed the most likely identification of ܗܫܒ here. It was the noun ܗܫܒ “ingenious.” If the Greek translators can be faulted for missing the nuance, the Syriac translator missed the word entirely; that is to say, a corresponding word for ܗܫܒ is lacking in the Syriac.

Moreover, when ποικιλία is translated as “manifoldly twisted” (Gray (1913: 644) or “diversity” (Trafton 1985: 134) or “twisted” (Wright 1985: 662) the translation misses an important nuance of ποικιλία cited by Liddell and Scott (1940: 1429): “versatility, subtly, mostly in a bad sense.” Thus, ποικιλία is a close match for ܗܫܒ “ingenious.”

12:2b

ὡσπερ ἐν λαῶ πῦρ ἀνάπτου
καλλονὴν αὐτοῦ (Greek^a)

¹³⁷ See Hatch and Redpath, 1954: 1168, for ποικιλία and ποιήσις.

ὡσπερ ἐν ἄλω πῦρ ἀνάπτον
καλάμην αὐτοῦ (Greek^b)

(they are) as a fire among a people
which scorches its beauty (Greek^a)
as on a threshing floor a fire
burning up its stubble (Greek^b)

כִּי נִרְאֶה כְּמַמְלֵא שׁוֹפֵר וְקִדְדָא אִשׁ בְּגוּי עַל נַעֲמָתוֹ
כְּכַבֵּב כְּרִיבָא בְּמִצְוָה

for he pretends {to be} like one who acts properly,

but he kindles fire among the people

כִּי נִרְאֶה כְּמַמְלֵא שׁוֹפֵר וְקִדְדָא אִשׁ בְּגוּי עַל נַעֲמָתוֹ

for he appears like one who speaks conciliation,

but he kindles a fire among the people according to his pleasure

Greek mss 149, 260, and 471 (= Greek^b in this section) read differently from mss 253 and 336 (= Greek^a in this section), having ὡσπερ ἐν ἄλω πῦρ ἀνάπτον καλάμην αὐτοῦ “as on a threshing floor a fire burning up its stubble.” Greek^a and Greek^b are not translations of each other and the Syriac cannot be a translation of either since it lacks a corresponding word for καλλονὴν αὐτοῦ “its beauty” or καλάμην αὐτοῦ “his stubble.” It is possible to interpret λαῶ and ἄλω, as well as καλλονὴν and καλάμην, as inner-Greek corruptions, and Trafton (1985: 116–117) has well summarized the debate as to the original Greek reading.¹³⁸

But it is equally possible that the difficulties are due to the Hebrew *Vorlage*. A solution to the problems in the line lies in recognizing the confusion of ך and ך, of ך and ך, and of ך and

¹³⁸ Kittel (1900: 141) argued for the ὡσπερ ἐν ἄλω πῦρ ἀνάπτον καλάμην αὐτοῦ of manuscripts 149, 260 and 471 (= Greek^b) as original while Swete (1894: 15), Viteau (1911: 314–317) and von Gebhardt (1895: 178–180) opted for the ὡσπερ ἐν λαῶ πῦρ ἀνάπτον καλλονὴν αὐτοῦ of the other manuscripts. Gray’s (1913: 644) comment that “It is very questionable whether any of the readings or conjectures preserve or recover the sense of the original” provides an apt evaluation of the conjectures.

ג.¹³⁹ The *Vorlage* of Greek^b must have had גרן “threshing floor,” which was a misreading of גוי “people” (equal to ἐν λαῶ of Greek^a and the Syriac ܓܘܝܐ). The *Vorlage* also had נעמתו “his beauty,” which was misread by Greek^b as נערתו “his stubble, straw” (reflecting the confusion of ר and ג). The ὡσπερ “as for” of both Greek^a and Greek^b (which could equal כ or כ״) may well be all that survived of the missing introductory phrase (to be discussed next), suggesting that the Greek text suffers from an omission rather than the Syriac text having an addition.

Although Syriac lacks a corresponding element for the נערתו or נעמתו it does have a phrase not found in the Greek, namely, ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ, “for he pretends {to be} like one who acts properly.” (Trafton cited [1985:114–116] but did not discuss this phrase.) The *Vorlage* of the extra line was probably ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ “for he appears as one speaking conciliation.” The Syriac stem ܒܢܝܢܐ “to do” was used for *filling* offices, for *consecrating* kings and bishops, and for the *passing* of time (J. Payne Smith, 395). This semantic range matches well the semantic range of Hebrew root מלא “to fill,” which was also used for *consecrating* priests, for the *passing* of time, and for *keeping* a promise.

However, if the Syriac *Vorlage* had ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ “for he appears as one speaking,” it may be that ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ “as one speaking conciliation” was a misreading of ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ “as one who speaks goodly (words).” This phrase would be the equivalent of הַנֹּתֵן אִמְרֵי־שָׁפָר “the one who gives goodly words” (Genesis 49:21). Since the *piel* of שָׁפָר means “to make pleasing, to conciliate, to harmonize” (Jastrow, 1619), ܒܢܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ would contrast significantly with the inflammatory speech referred to in the next line.

The *Vorlage* follows the Syriac for this poetic line and retains the additional phrase of the Syriac text even though none of the

¹³⁹ See Delitzsch 1920: 112 § 110^b, 112 § 109^a, and 119 § 131, respectively.

Greek manuscripts or the Syriac has completely represented the probable *Vorlage*.

12:3

ἡ παροιμία αὐτοῦ ἐμπρῆσαι οἴκους ἐν γλώσση ψεύδει

his visit fills homes with a false tongue

חַנּוּתוֹ לֵב לְחַנּוּת כְּחֵס כְּחֵס בְּמַלְלֵי דְבָרָא

for his sojourning is that he might fill houses with lying talk

גור/גוריו מלא בתים במלים שקרים

his quarreling (visit) fills homes with lying words

The Syriac חַנּוּתוֹ “his sojourning” could be the equivalent of Hebrew גּוּר “to reside (as an alien),” since בָּנִי can mean “to colonize” (J. Payne Smith (1903: 418). The Greek παροιμία also may include the idea of residing as an alien or stranger (Liddell and Scott 1940: 1342). However, the poet may well have intended גּוּר stem II, meaning “to stir up strife” (BDB, 158), or he may have intended a *double entendre*, with גּוּר I “to sojourn” and גּוּר II “to quarrel.”¹⁴⁰ Far from being conciliatory, the “lawless one” was inflammatory.

The choice between ἐν γλώσση ψεύδει “lying tongues” (attested in Psalm 109:2, Proverbs 6:17, 12:19, 21:6, and 26:28) or “lying words” (found in Exodus 5:9, Isaiah 32:7, 59:13; Jeremiah 29:23, and elsewhere) is difficult to decide. There is no Semitic root which could account for a confusion of לְשׁוֹן “tongue” with דְּבָר or אָמַר or מַלְלָל, all of which mean “word.” Trafton makes the most convincing case for a *Vorlage* (having paronomasia) such as לְמַלֵּא בְתֵימִים בְּמַלְלָה “filling house with words.” This suggestion has been adopted in the above *Vorlage*, differing only in favor of the plural בְּמַלְלֵי “with lying words.”

¹⁴⁰ Note Kittel’s suggestion (1900: 141) for a *Vorlage* with קָגוּר (from stem III) “terror” instead of קָגוּר (from stem II) “to sojourn.”

12:3b

ἐκκόψαι δένδρα εὐφροσύνης φλογιζούσης παρανόμους
cuts down trees of joy, inflaming criminals

מָלַךְ אֵילָנִים זָהֲרָהּ בַּמִּטְהָרָה זָהֲבָה נִבְחָשָׁה

he cut down the trees of his delight
in the burning of transgression

כרת עצים משוש בעבר תורה

he gleefully cut down trees in violation of Torah

The difficulty of this poetic line is evidenced by the fact that von Gebhardt (1895: 80–81), Frankenberg (1896: 78), and Gray (1913: 644) left the line untranslated or partially untranslated. Trafton (1985: 118–119) summarized the conjectures over the past century, none of which—including Geiger’s (1871: 14) “putting the evil doer into the fire” and Kittel’s (1900: 141–142) “from igniting malice”—have been convincing.

The clue to the line is in the Syriac זָהֲבָה which Trafton translated as “which is transgressing” or “of the transgressor.” He associated זָהֲבָה with the preceding בַּמִּטְהָרָה “in the conflagration” and conjectured it meant “in the heat of transgression,” even though בַּמִּטְהָרָה is in the emphatic state rather than the construct state. Nevertheless, זָהֲבָה and בַּמִּטְהָרָה need to be addressed together since they appear to be a doublet from a *Vorlage* which originally had the verb עָבַר “to transgress.” It is obvious that בָּרַח “to burn, to set on fire” is the equivalent of בָּעַר “to burn.” But far less obvious was the metathetic shift which changed the original עָבַר “to transgress” into the verb בָּעַר “to burn.” Even though in English we speak of “inflammatory speech,” it seems doubtful that בָּעַר was originally in the *Vorlage*. It was a variant reading which survived as a doublet in the *Vorlage* and in the Greek and Syriac traditions. Consequently, both φλογιζούσης and בַּמִּטְהָרָה are correct translations of בָּעַר, the doublet of עָבַר.

It seems most likely that the *Vorlage* initially dealt simply with the cutting down of trees, without any subsequent reference to burning of them or anything else. The idea of burning inserted

itself in the tradition through the misreading of עבר as בער. The issue addressed in the poetic line was the prohibition in Deuteronomy 20:19–20, “when you besiege a city for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them; for you may eat of them, but you shall not cut them down.”

Contrary to the Torah, the “lawless one” mention in 12:1 was cutting down trees “to his heart’s content” (εὐφροσύνης and כהשמח), thus *transgressing the law* (παρὰ νόμους and חבא נחמא). The Greek παρὰ νόμους and Syriac חבא נחמא are the equivalent of the Hebrew עבר תורה which appears in Isaiah 24:5 (“for they have transgressed the laws [פִּי־עֲבָרוּ תוֹרֹת], violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant”) and Daniel 9:11 (“all Israel has transgressed thy law [וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עָבְרוּ] וְאַתָּה־תוֹרַתְךָ”).

The phrase כרת עצים משוש in the reconstructed *Vorlage* consists of a *qal* perfect (or participle), followed by a plural direct object, and an adverb. Through a haplography of a consecutive מ ׀, the Syriac mistakenly read the two nouns as the construct chain חבא נחמא “the trees of his delight” and supplied a possessive suffix.

12:3c (G), 12:4a (S)

συγγέαι οἴκους παρὰ νόμους¹⁴¹

ἐν πολέμῳ χεῖλεσιν ψιθύροις

by slander he incites [criminal]¹³²

homes to fighting

ܚܒܘܢ ܚܘܼܡܝܢ ܕܚܒܘܢ ܕܚܒܘܢ

ܚܘܼܡܝܢ ܚܘܼܡܝܢ ܚܘܼܡܝܢ

he destroyed the houses of transgressors

with war and with whispering lips

אבד בתי הפשעים בלחם ובמתלחשות

he destroyed the houses of the rebels by war and by rumor

¹⁴¹ παρὰ νόμους is found in mss 149, 260, 471, and 606.

Since συγχέαι can mean “to demolish” (Liddell and Scott 1940: 1668), συγχέαι οἴκους παρανόμους ἐν πολέμῳ “demolish criminal houses in war” and ܠܘܟܠܐ ܕܠܘܟܠܐ ܕܠܘܟܠܐ ܕܠܘܟܠܐ “he destroyed the houses of those transgressing the law with war” could be translations of each other. Similarly, the Greek χείλεσιν ψιθύροις “whispering lips” (= Wright’s translating “by slander”) and ܠܘܟܠܐ ܕܠܘܟܠܐ “and (with) whispering lips” could be translations of each other. The difficulty with this line is not the wording per se but with the idea expressed that, seemingly, the “lawless one” was destroying not the righteous but other lawless ones. Ryle and James (1891: 105) attempted to defuse the problem as follows:

... if it [the clause συγχέαι| ψιθύροις] is to be joined to v.3, the sense may very well be that the slanderer will not scruple to set those of his own party by the ears (ἐν πολέμῳ), and that there is no real ‘honour among thieves.’

However, παρανόμους “criminal” and ܠܘܟܠܐ ܕܠܘܟܠܐ “of transgressors against the law” in this context are probably not translations of a *Vorlage* with ܠܘܟܠܐ “the wicked” but one with ܠܘܟܠܐ “the rebellious ones” (as used in I Kings 12:19, “so Israel has been in rebellion (ܠܘܟܠܐ ܕܠܘܟܠܐ) against the house of David to this day.” The “lawless one” of 12:1 (ܠܘܟܠܐ or παρανόμου) and of 12:2 (ἀνδρὸς πονηροῦ or ܠܘܟܠܐ [ms 10h1] or ܠܘܟܠܐ ܕܠܘܟܠܐ [ms 16h1]) was not out to destroy his own kind, but those who rebelled against him and his kind. The reconstructed *Vorlage* attempts to remove the ambiguity in the Greek and Syriac texts by introducing ܠܘܟܠܐ rather than ܠܘܟܠܐ.

Psalm Thirteen

13:1

δεξιὰ κυρίου ἐσκέπασέν με
 δεξιὰ κυρίου ἐφείσατο ἡμῶν
 the right hand of the Lord covered me,
 the right hand of the Lord spared me,

ܡܚܝܢܐ ܕܝܡܝܢ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ
 ܡܚܝܢܐ ܕܝܡܝܢ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ
 the right hand of the Lord covered us,
 the right hand of the Lord spared us
 'מִיַּיִן יְהוָה הִסְתִּירְתֵּנוּ יְמִין יְהוָה חִשְׁבָה אֹתֵנוּ
the right hand of the Lord covered us,
the right hand of the Lord spared us

The difference between the Greek and Syriac is a minor one of whether the pronomial element is singular or plural. The Greek ἐσκέπασέν με “covered me” does not match the Syriac ܡܚܝܢܐ “covered us.” The ἐφείσατο ἡμῶν “spared us” (contra Wright [1985: 662] “spared me”) is in agreement with the Syriac ܡܚܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ “spared us.” Trafton (1985: 123) has correctly observed that the Syriac is to be preferred and “Gk could reflect a misreading of something like כסתנו for כסתני.” This would be another example of the widespread confusion of ך and ן.¹⁴² The same error occurs in 12:2 where the Syriac ms 16hl reads ܦܘܣܡܐ “he saved me” where ms 10hl has the contextually more appropriate ܦܘܣܡܐ, which equals the Greek ἔσωσεν ἡμᾶς “he saved us.”

13:2

ἀπὸ ῥομφαίας διαπορευομένης
 from the sword that passes through
 ܡܚܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ
 from the moving spear
 מִן הַשֵּׁלַח מִתְּהַלֵּכֶת
from the weapon that penetrates

According to Trafton (1985: 122), the Syriac ܡܚܝܢܐ “to move” would be an unlikely translation of the Greek διαπορεύω “to pass through.” But Hatch and Redpath (1954: 308) cited fourteen passages where διαπορεύω is used to translate הלך “to walk.”

¹⁴² See Delitzsch, 1920: 103–105, §103.

Consequently, the *Vorlage* of the Greek and Syriac could have been הלך. Of interest on the wide semantic range of הלך are Proverbs 23:31, “וַיִּנְהַלֶּךְ בְּמִישָׁרִים” . . . , wine . . . moveth itself aright” (KJV) or “goes down smoothly” (NRSV) and Psalm 78:39, “הוֹלֵךְ וְלֹא יָשׁוּב רְיֹחַ” (RSV). (Modern Hebrew uses הֶלֶךְ for “speed.”)

The *Vorlage* behind ῥομφαίας and ܠܘܚܿܘܿܬܿܐ could have been the more generic שֶׁלַח “missile, weapon,” which has the meaning “sword” in Job 36:12, “hand–weapon” in II Chronicles 23:10, and “spear” in II Samuel 18:13—even though the collocation of דִּבְרַת “pestilence” and רָעָב “famine” and חֶרֶב “sword” thirteen times in Jeremiah, three times in Ezekiel and once in Revelation could lead one to assume that חֶרֶב was in the *Vorlage*. However, since Syriac has a cognate of חֶרֶב, ܠܘܿܚܿܘܿܬܿܐ “sword, blade, dagger,” one would expect this cognate to have been used in Syriac if חֶרֶב was in the *Vorlage*. Since ܠܘܿܚܿܘܿܬܿܐ is not in the Syriac text, it is more like that more generic השלח was in the *Vorlage*, permitting the Greek translator to use ῥομφαίας and the Syriac translator to use ܠܘܿܚܿܘܿܬܿܐ. For this reason the reconstructed *Vorlage* uses השלח “the weapon” rather than החרב “the sword.”

13:2b

ἀπὸ λιμοῦ καὶ θανάτου ἀμαρτωλῶν
and from famine and the sinner’s death

ܘܡܿܝܢ ܠܘܿܚܿܘܿܬܿܐ ܘܡܿܝܢ ܕܰܡܰܘܬܰܐ
and from famine and the death of sinners

ܡܰܪܰעܰב ܘܡܰוܰת רשעים
and from famine and the death (befitting) sinners

In light of the suffering predicted of IV Ezra 15:5, “I will bring evils upon the world, the sword and famine and death and destruction” and 15:49, “I will send evils upon you, widowhood, poverty, famine, sword, and pestilence,” the poet could have used any number of deadly agents in addition to the דִּבְרַת “pestilence” רָעָב “famine,” and חֶרֶב “sword” mentioned in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The addition of “(befitting)” in the translation of the

Vorlage is suggested by III Maccabees 3:25, “you are to send to us those who live among you, together with their wives and children, with insulting and harsh treatment, and bound securely with iron fetters, to suffer the sure and shameful death that befits (πρέποντα) enemies.” What was explicitly stated by the author of III Maccabees 3:25, was only implicitly stated by the poet in the Psalms of Solomon 13:2b, who could have been explicit had he used פְּנִי “seemly” (one of the two stems translated by πρέπειν in the LXX [(Hatch and Redpath 1940: 1201)]).

13:3a

θηρία ἐπεδράμοσαν αὐτοῖς πονηρά
wild animals [they] attacked them viciously

ܠܗܘܘܢ ܩܝܘܡܘܢ ܥܠܝܗܘܢ ܥܝܠܝܘܢ
he brought evil beasts quickly upon them

חיות רעות הרצה עליהם

he [the Lord] brought wild animals quickly upon them

The difference in this line between the Greek and Syriac is the subject of the verb. The Greek has the plural ἐπεδράμοσαν “they rushed upon, attacked,” making the wild animals the subject of the verb; but the Syriac singular ܥܝܠܝܘܢ (an *aph^eel*) “he brought quickly,” requires ܠܗܘܘܢ “the Lord,” mentioned as the *casus pendens* in 13:1–2 (“right hand of the Lord . . . the arm of the Lord),” to be subject.

The Greek πονηρά, which appears as the adverb “viciously” in Wright’s translation, in the *Vorlage* was probably intended to be the appositional modifier of the animals. The term for wild animals in Hebrew is חיות רעות, literally, “animals, bad ones.” The “wild” of the “wild animals” in Wright’s translation is required to convey the meaning of θηρία “beasts.” The רעה used in the Semitic idiom for a wild animal (חיה רעה) was misunderstood as an adverb and translated πονηρά. The *hiph^eil* of Hebrew פָּנָה and the *aph^eel* of Syriac ܥܝܠܝܘܢ carry with them the idea of moving or bringing (something) with haste. The adverb “quickly” in the English translations of the Syriac and the *Vorlage* are based upon the form

of the verb, not upon a separate word. The *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text here.

13:3b

καὶ ἐν ταῖς μύλαις ἔθλων ὀστᾶ αὐτῶν
and crushed their bones with their molars

ܘܥܩܪܘ ܘܥܩܪܘ ܘܥܩܪܘ ܘܥܩܪܘ ܘܥܩܪܘ ܘܥܩܪܘ
and were cutting off their bones with millstones

and were cutting off their bones with millstones

ܘܒܠܚܝܝܗܡ ܫܒܪܘ ܥܘܘܡܘܬܗܡ

and *crushed their bones with their jawbones*

The Greek ἔθλων “crushed” and the Syriac ܘܥܩܪܘ “cutting off” cannot be translations of each other, nor can ὀστᾶ “tooth, molar” be a translation of ܘܥܩܪܘ “millstone,” or vice versa. But the differences can be accounted for by a *Vorlage* having the verb רָצַץ “to crush,” which appears in the Greek text tradition. But the Syriac translator or the source of his *Vorlage* misread רָצַץ as קָצַץ “to cut off.” The confusion of ק and ר is attested elsewhere in Judges 7:21, where MT ܩܠ-ܗܡܫܝܚܘܢܐ ܘܝܩܘܢ “and all the army ran” is to be read ܩܠ-ܗܡܫܝܚܘܢܐ ܘܝܩܘܢ “and all the army awoke with a start” (Boling, 1975: 147).

The Greek μύλαις can mean “molars” and “millstones,” but the Syriac ܘܥܩܪܘ can mean only “millstone.” Kuhn (1937: 27–28) assumed that the Syriac translator did not know the rare Hebrew word תַּמְלָעוֹת “molars” and based his translation at this point on the μύλαις of the Greek text. Begrich (1939: 134–135) faulted Kuhn for not recognizing that all of the Syriac was a translation of the Greek. Trafton (1985: 125) rightly faulted Kuhn and Begrich, stating, “. . . they also imply a certain lack of intelligence on his [the Syriac translator’s] part to miss such an obvious synonymous parallelism [of ‘teeth’ in the previous line].” However, the synonymous parallelism was not one of “teeth” and “molars” but of “teeth” and “jaw-bone(s).” The *Vorlage* must have had ܘܥܩܪܘ (dual) “jawbones” (BDB, 534); but this was misread by the Syriac translator as ܘܥܩܪܘ (dual) “millstones” (Jastrow, 1466). The confusion of ܘܥܩܪܘ and ܘܥܩܪܘ is attested elsewhere, most notably in Genesis

15:18, where MT reads מְנַהֵר מִצְרַיִם “the river of Egypt” instead of מְנַהֵל מִצְרַיִם “the wadi of Egypt” (i.e., the modern Wādi el-‘Arīsh).¹⁴³ The paronomasia of the *bones . . . jawbones* in the English translation of the *Vorlage* is no more conspicuous than the עצמותם . . . לחייהם in the *Vorlage*. This poetic line provides a good example of the Syriac translator’s literal style. Even though “cutting (סַס) bones with a millstone” would be a difficult feat, the translator called it as he saw it. In his *Vorlage* he saw לחייהם, not לחיהם.

13:7–8

καὶ ἡ καταστροφή τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν (8) ἐν περιστολῇ
 . . . as the destruction of sinners. (8) In secret . . .

כְּהִתְחַלְתָּ (7) לְחַכְמָא דְכֹלְמָא

like the overthrow of the lawless (7) who are in knowledge

כְּתַבּוּסַת הַרְשָׁעִים בְּדַעְתָּהֶם

like the overthrow of the wicked with their knowledge

The difficulty in understanding the parallelism in 13:7–8 is demonstrated by Gray’s (1913: 645) parenthetical gloss “(for sins done)” on the Greek τῶν δικαίων ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ, which was followed by Wright (1985: 663) who glossed “(for things done).” The poet is not permitted by the translators to make the claim, literally in Syriac, that “the chastening of those who are unknowingly righteous is dissimilar to the overthrow of knowledgeable sinners.”

The Greek ἐν περιστολῇ “in secret” and the Syriac כְּהִתְחַלְתָּ “with knowledge” cannot be translations of each other. Contextually, one would expect an *antithetical* parallel to the ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ / כְּהִתְחַלְתָּ “ignorance,” matching the *antithetical* parallel τῶν δικαίων / הַדֹּרְשִׁים “the righteous” in the previous stich. Since the Syriac text (13:6) has the balanced antithetical parallelisms (a) “righteous” and “lawless” and (b) “in ignorance” and “in knowledge,” it is the preferred text. The differences between the Greek and Syriac translations are probably derived in

¹⁴³ See Speiser, 1964: 114 and Delitzsch, 1920: 115 §119^b.

part from a *Vorlage* having the root **פָּשַׁח** “to think, to plan, to do (something) with intention” (BDB 363). If so, the Greek περιστολή “wrapping” reflects a misreading of **פָּשַׁח** as **פָּשַׁח** “to bind, to bind on, to bind up” (BDB, 289). Consequently, περιστολή—which Wright translated as “in secret”¹⁴⁴—actually stands in lieu of a word which should be translated “intentional.” Kuhn’s proposal (1937: 30) that περιστολή goes back to a misreading of **בְּמַזִּיד** “intentional” as **מַזִּיד** “bandage” is also noteworthy. Either way, περιστολή reflects a misreading of a Hebrew original having either **פָּשַׁח** or **מַזִּיד**—either of which could be translated into Syriac by **ܟܘܢܘܘܟܐ** “with knowledge, knowingly.”

13:12 (G), 13:11 (S)

καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς φοβουμένους αὐτὸν τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ

and his mercy is upon¹⁴⁵ those who fear him

¹⁴⁶ **ܠܗܘܝܠܗܘܢ ܕܗܘܢܘܢ ܕܗܘܢܘܢ**

he will have compassion on all who fear him

ܟܘܢܘܘܟܐ ܥܠ ܟܠ ܝܪܝܘܝ

and his compassion (is) on all those who hold him in awe

The synonymous parallelism of **ὄσιους** and **ἔλεος** matches the parallelism of **ܟܘܢܘܘܟܐ** and **ܗܘܝܠܗܘܢ**. However, the Greek and Syriac differ in several respects: (1) with respect to “mercy,” the Greek

¹⁴⁴ Ryle and James (1891: 109) noted, “The word occurs nowhere in the LXX or the N.T. and no other instance of its use in Hellenistic Greek is known to us. In classical Greek its one meaning seems to be the decking out of a corpse for burial.” If Ryle and James are correct, **περιστολή** “wrapping, decking out” would literally indicate a public, rather than a secretive, action.

¹⁴⁵ Wright’s note d. on 13:12 that the Syriac has “he will treasure” is problematic since J. Payne Smith (1903: 538) gives no such meaning for **ܟܘܢܘܘܟܐ**.

¹⁴⁶ In light of the example of **ܟܘܢܘܘܟܐ** cited by J. Payne Smith (1903: 538), “I will not pity (**ܗܘܝܠܗܘܢ**) or have compassion (**ܟܘܢܘܘܟܐ**),” there is no basis for Kuhn’s suggestion (1937:33) for a *Vorlage* with **ܗܦܚܐ** “to shelter” (which was corrupted in the Greek tradition to **ܗܦܚܐ** “to delight in”) in order to account for the **ܟܘܢܘܘܟܐ** of the Syriac. **ܟܘܢܘܘܟܐ** is an excellent parallel for **ܗܘܝܠܗܘܢ**.

has a noun and the Syriac has a verb in the imperfect, and the noun / verb variation may be due simply to a participle in the *Vorlage* which was translated correctly but differently; (2) the Greek reads ἔλεος αὐτοῦ “his mercy,” which equals ܘܕܘܚܘܕܘܬܐ but the Syriac has ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ “he will have compassion,” which equals ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ; and (3) Syriac has ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ “all of those” for which there is no corresponding element in Greek.

In Mss 253, 655, and 659, the αὐτὸν of φοβουμένους αὐτὸν is lacking, and this difference could be due to a *Vorlage* which had the suffixed participle ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ “ones fearing him,” which was misread in the tradition of the S stemma¹⁴⁷ as ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ / ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ “ones fearing.” Is so, this misreading would be another example of the confusion of ܘܕ and ܘܝ (Delitzsch, 1920: 120, § 132°). The ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ (= כל) was probably a doublet from a misreading of על as כל, or the original על כל of the *Vorlage* possibly became by way of haplography simply על in the Greek text tradition. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text tradition in having the noun ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ instead of the verb ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ and having simply על instead of על כל.

Psalm Fourteen

14:1

τοῖς πορευομένοις ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ
προσταγμάτων αὐτοῦ

To those who live in the righteousness
of his commandments,

ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ

to those who walk in righteousness in his commandment

ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ

to those who walk in righteousness

(according to) his statutes

The only real difference between the Greek προσταγμάτων αὐτοῦ and the Syriac ܘܕܘܚܘܬܐ is that the Greek has a genitive and

¹⁴⁷ See Wright, 1994: 16.

the Syriac has a preposition. Kuhn (1937: 34–35), followed by Trafton (1985: 131–132), reconstructed for this phrase and the next the following *Vorlage* for the Greek: לחיים להולכים בצדק חקותיו and the almost identical *Vorlage* for the Syriac: לחיים לנו לתורה צוה לנו לחיים להולכים בצדק בחקותיו תורה צוה לנו לחיים, differing only on the location of the second prepositional כ.

It is most likely that the early translators interpreted the text by what modern grammarians call “the double-duty preposition,”¹⁴⁸ where a preposition in one stich controlled a noun in the next or previous stich. If the כ of בצדק was read as a double duty preposition, the translations could have differed with reference to the second noun which the כ controlled. It appears that the Syriac read a double-duty כ and applied it to the next word, making it appositional and precluding צדק from being read as a construct noun. But the Greek translator, seemingly, applied the double-duty כ to the next stich.¹⁴⁹ The parenthetical “(according to)” in the reconstructed *Vorlage* is the equivalent of the double-duty כ of בצדק.

14:2b

ἐν νόμῳ ᾧ ἐνετείλατο ἡμῖν εἰς ζωὴν ἡμῶν
in the law which he has commanded for our life.

ܠܗܘܘܢ ܠܗܘܘܢ ܠܗܘܘܢ

he gave us the law for life

צוה התורה אלינו לחיותנו

he commanded the Torah for us to live by

As noted in the paragraph above, the Greek ἐν has no corresponding preposition in the Syriac. The translations also differ with respect to the whether the word for “life” had a modifier. Greek has εἰς ζωὴν ἡμῶν “for our life” but Syriac has simply ܠܗܘܘܢ “for life.”

¹⁴⁸ See Blommerde, 1969: 25–26; and Dahood and Penar, 1970: 435–437.

¹⁴⁹ Given the fact that כ was used as direct object indicator with only a very limited number of verbs (see BDB, 90, section IV), Trafton’s (1985: 132) interpretation that the Syriac translator correctly read כ as a direct object sign with צוה must be accepted with caution.

The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text, using לחיותנו, which was translated as the infinitive “for us to live by” (following Franz Delitzsch [n.d., *ad loc.*] and Stein [1969: 454]), even though לחיותנו could also be read as the preposition attached to the suffixed abstract noun “for our living” (as in II Samuel 20:3).¹⁵⁰

14:6b (G), 14:4b (S)

οἱ ἠγάπησαν ἡμέραν ἐν μετοχῇ ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν
who love (to spend) the day in sharing their sin

אֵלֶּם זֵאֵבֵה זֵמַחַ כַּסְפֵּלָא זַגְלֵמָא
those who love the day in the approval of sin

הַאֲחֵבִים יוֹמָם חִבְרַת הַטְּאִיָּהִם
who daily love the fellowship of their (fellow) sinners

The Syriac אֵלֶּם זֵאֵבֵה זֵמַחַ כַּסְפֵּלָא “in the approval of sin” and the Greek ἐν μετοχῇ ἀμαρτίας “in sharing sin” cannot be accurate translations of each other. The difference between them can readily be accounted for by assuming a *Vorlage* with בחבר “in fellowship with” (= ἐν μετοχῇ), which—due to a metathesis of פ and ב—became בבחר “in choosing” (= כַּסְפֵּלָא). A similar confusion of חבר and בחר is attested in I Samuel 20:30, where the MT reads כִּי־בָחַר אֶתְּהָ לְבֶן־יֵשׁוּעַ “I know that you have chosen the son of Jesse,” but the LXX reads γὰρ οἶδα ὅτι μέτοχος εἶσὺ τῷ υἱῷ Ἰεσσαί “for I know that you are an accomplice of the son of Jesse.” Another example is in Ecclesiastes 9:4, “but he who is joined with all the living has hope,” where the MT has a *Qere*^o/*Ketib* variant reading יִחְבֵּר “is joined” for יִבְחֵר “is chosen.”

The phrase יוֹמָם חִבְרַת הַטְּאִיָּהִם in the *Vorlage* assumes that . . . ב יוֹמָם (= ἡμέραν ἐν) was a misreading of an original . . . יוֹמָם “daily,” being another example of the confusion of י מ ו and ב.¹⁵¹ The noun in the *Vorlage* that was translated by ἀμαρτίας and by אֵלֶּם was probably the plural of טַיִת “sinner” rather than טַיִתִּים or

¹⁵⁰ Compare Frankenberg, 1896: 79.

¹⁵¹ See Delitzsch, 1920: 113, § 114^{a-c}.

הַשָּׂדֵה “sin.” The αὐτῶν properly reflects a ׀׀ 3mpl suffix, although there is no corresponding suffix in the Syriac.

14:7 (G), 4:4c (S)

ἐν μικρότητι σαπρίας ἢ ἐπιθυμία αὐτῶν
their enjoyment is brief and decaying

ܠܡܘܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܒܐ ܕܝܗܘܒܐ ܕܝܗܘܒܐ
for their desire is in the brevity of evil

כִּי חִמְדָּתָם מַעֲט וְסָרְחוֹן

for their enjoyment is worthless and offensive

The Greek σαπρίας “decaying” and the Syriac ܠܡܘܬܐ “evil” are not translations of each other. Kuhn (1937: 37–38) proposed a *Vorlage* with רָמַה “to decay, to putrefy” which the Greek correctly translated as σαπρίας, but was misread by the Syriac translator as רעה “evil, bad” and translated accordingly as ܠܡܘܬܐ “bad, evil”. However, Delitzsch (1920) did not cite a single example of the confusion of מ and ע in the entire Biblical text. Thus, while a רָמַה / רעה error is possible, it seems unlikely.

However, a *Vorlage* with סָרַח could account for the differences. The root סָרַח has several meanings, including (1) “to decay,” which would have been the basis for the Greek text’s having σαπρίας “decaying”; (2) “to offend, to sin,” which would have been the basis for the Syriac text’s having ܠܡܘܬܐ “bad, evil”; (3) “to go free, to exceed, to be excessive”; and (4) “to intercept, to lacerate” (BDB, 710; Jastrow, 1024). The cognate of סָרַח, ܣܪܚܐ, is attested in Syriac, but the Syriac translator might have chosen another stem since ܣܪܚܐ also has a wide variety of meanings (including “to hurt, to injure,” or “to defile [a maiden]” or “to signify, to indicate”) which could lead to an uncertain reading. The Syriac translator’s use of ܠܡܘܬܐ “evil” would have removed the ambiguity of the Hebrew סָרַח, and at the same time a *Vorlage* with סָרַח would account for the Greek σαπρίας “decaying.”

Wright (1985: 664) omitted the ἐν and added a καί, both of which are necessary to give meaning to a text which means literally, “their desire in brevity of decay.” The reconstructed *Vorlage* shifted the ἐν (= ב) to כִּי “for” and also added a conjunction. The

translation “worthless” reflects a reading of **לעז** in this context as having a qualitative nuance rather than being quantitative.

Psalm Fifteen

15:1

εἰς βοήθειαν ἤλπισα τοῦ θεοῦ Ἰακωβ

I expected the help of Jacob’s God

כּוּמַחַמְלֵל שׁוֹמֵר וְיִשְׁמְרֵנִי

and I called to the God of Jacob for my aid

וּקְרָאתִי לְעֹזֵר וְלַעֲזָרָה אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב

and I called for (my) salvation/strength to the God of Jacob

Both the Greek and the Syriac are contextually appropriate but they cannot be translations of each other. The semantic range of the Greek ἤλπισα “I expected, I hoped” and the Syriac **שׁוֹמֵר** “I called” do not overlap. Trafton (1985: 137–138) cited Kuhn’s (1937: 15, 39) suggestion for a Hebrew *Vorlage* with קְרִיתִי¹⁵² “I hoped” (which the Greek accurately translated with ἤλπισα and the Syriac misread as קְרִיתִי “I called”) as evidence for the improbability of Begrich’s (1939: 138) argument that the Syriac was in this instance a mis-translation of the Greek. Trafton also noted

On the other hand, Kuhn’s argument can be reversed: Hb had קְרִיתִי, which was rendered correctly by the Sy translator but was misread by the Gk translator as קְרִיתִי [as in the proposed *Vorlage*]. In either case, of course, Sy would be explained on the basis of a Hb *Vorlage*.

The second difference between the Greek and the Syriac, the lack of a possessive pronoun in the Greek text matching the Syriac’s “my aid,” could be explained by a *Vorlage* with either וְלַעֲזָרָה “and for my strength” or לְעֹזֵר “for salvation. If the *Vorlage* were וְלַעֲזָרָה, the

¹⁵² The **ס** of the stem **קְרָת** has been elided. For instances of this well attested feature of final **ס** verbs see Delitzsch (1920: 21–22 § 14^{a-c} and 36–37 § 31^{a-c}), McDaniel (1983: 124, 222 n. 238) and (GKC § 68^{h,k}).

Syriac possessive suffix on ܡܝܢܢܐܘܐ was an accurate reflection of the Hebrew. The Greek translator apparently misread the ם as a ך. Consequently, the Greek text has no corresponding element for the possessive suffix. The Syriac text, with its equivalent of the *waw*-consecutive,¹⁵³ more accurately reflects the proposed *Vorlage* here

15:2 (G), 15:3 (S)

τίς γὰρ ἰσχύει ὁ θεός εἰ μὴ
ἐξομολογήσασθαί σοι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ
for who, O God, is strong

except he who confesses you in truth

ܡܝܢܢܐܘܐ ܠܝ ܢܗܝܢ ܢܗܝܢ ܠܝ ܢܗܝܢ ܠܝ ܢܗܝܢ

for who, being strong, will praise you in truth

כְּמִי אֱלֹהִים חֹזֵק רַק זֹמֵר לְךָ בְּשֶׁרֶר

for who is strong,¹⁵⁴ O God,

except he who praises you in truth

Two elements in the Greek text, ὁ θεός and εἰ μὴ, have no equivalents in the Syriac text. In light of the use of double-duty vocatives in classical Hebrew (discussed by Dahood and Penar [1970: 439–441], who listed thirteen examples in the MT), it is most likely that the Greek translator made explicit what was implicit in Hebrew and Syriac, although, given the Syriac word, order one cannot be absolutely sure on this issue. The absence of a Syriac equivalent of the εἰ μὴ “except” (= רַק) is probably due to a haplography of רַק חֹזֵק where the רַק dropped out of the text

¹⁵³ As Trafton (1985: 137) noted, in 15:2 and 15:12, the Greek does not reflect the Hebrew *waw*-consecutive.

¹⁵⁴ In 15:2b, the Greek τί δυνατός ἄνθρωπος “what a power (is) a man” and the Syriac ܡܝܢܢܐܘܐ ܠܝ ܢܗܝܢ ܢܗܝܢ ܠܝ ܢܗܝܢ ܠܝ ܢܗܝܢ “and what is the might of man” may reflect a *Vorlage* having the bound nouns אִישׁ חָיִל (as in I Chronicles 26:8, אִישׁ־חָיִל “qualified man”). If so, the Greek translator read the two words as a noun clause, while the Syriac translator recognized the construct state but reversed the word order.

because it was confused with the קי of קי. ¹⁵⁵ Trafton's (1985: 138) proposal for homoioteleuton, in which the phrase מלך ללך לך לך "O God, except he will praise" ended up being read as לך, is attractive, although one cannot be certain that there was a corruption since the Syriac translator may have recognized the double-duty vocative. The reconstructed *Vorlage* draws from the Syriac and the Greek.

15:3b (G), 15:5b (S)

ἐν ὀργάνῳ ἠρμωσμένῳ γλώσσης
with the tuned instrument of the tongue

כבדו דתהם גלגל

with an instrument which is established by the tongue

בכלי כונן לשון

with a tuned instrument for the tongue

The Greek ἠρμωσμένῳ "tuned" (Liddell and Scott, 243) and the Syriac תהם "which is established" cannot be translations of each other, but both can be good translations of a *Vorlage* which had the verb כנן or כון "to establish." The Syriac translator read the verb as כנן, a *polal* form of כון "to establish" and translated it appropriately by the תהם "to establish" (J. Payne Smith, 1903: 618). But the Greek translator recognized it as כון, a *piel* of the same stem, and gave it the meaning "to tune," a meaning which is still used in Modern Hebrew. However, the Greek translator, while having the contextually more appropriate ἠρμωσμένῳ, missed the double-duty preposition which was prefixed to כל. The Syriac translator appropriately rendered the single preposition with two prepositions: "with an instrument . . . by the tongue."

15:3b (G), 15:5b (S)

ἀπαρχὴν χειλέων
the first fruits of the lips

¹⁵⁵ On the confusion of ק and י see Delitzsch, 1920: 113, § 112^c.

PSALM FIFTEEN

כֹּהֵנִים דְּשִׁמְרֵי
 the first fruits of the lips
 ברורי שפתים
first-fruits of the lips

While it is true, as Begrich noted (1939: 140–141), that the phrase “*first fruits of the lips*” does not occur in the Hebrew Bible, the “fruit of the lips” appears in Isaiah 57:18, Hosea 14:2, and Hebrews 13:15.¹⁵⁶ Stein (1969: 455, like Franz Delitzsch [n.d., *ad loc.*]) used שפתים in his translation of 15:3b, and followed it with שפתים בכורי in 15c. Begrich’s (1939: 140–141) conclusion that ἀπαρχὴν translated תְּרוּמָה “offering” and conclusion that χειλέων “of the lips” was a corruption of χεῖρῶν “of the hands,” overlooked the most obvious synonymous parallelism of the singular bound–noun, “fruit of the lips,” and the plural bound–noun, “the first–fruit of the lips.” Wright’s (1985: 664) translation, cited above, of the feminine singular ἀπαρχὴν as the plural “first fruits” obscures the difference between the Greek and the Syriac in this line. The Syriac quite correctly preserves the parallelism between “fruit [singular] of the lips” and “first–fruits [plural] of the lips.”

15:4b (G), 15:6b (S)

φλόξ πυρὸς καὶ ὀργὴ ἀδίκων οὐχ ἄψεται αὐτοῦ
 the flame of fire and anger against the unrighteous
 will not touch him

כֹּהֵנִים דְּשִׁמְרֵי
 כֹּהֵנִים דְּשִׁמְרֵי
 כֹּהֵנִים דְּשִׁמְרֵי

the flame of fire and the anger of the lawless
 will not touch them

להבת אש ועברת עליון לא תגענתם
for the flame of fire and the anger of the Most High
will not touch them

¹⁵⁶ The Greek ἀπαρχὴ occurs seventy–six times in the LXX and translates five different Hebrew words.

The Greek ὀργῆ ἀδικῶν, which could reflect a construct chain in Hebrew, was translated by Wright (1985: 664) as “anger *against the* [italics added] unrighteous.” The need to add “against the” hints at the difficulty of this poetic line. Wright’s translation is sensitive to context, but the addition of a preposition without textual support is problematic. An alternative solution is to recognize a misreading of one of the words in the Hebrew *Vorlage* in the Greek and Syriac traditions, namely, the misreading of עולה “lawless one” instead of the proposed original עליון “Most High.” The motif of God (the Most High) sending fire is well attested.¹⁵⁷ The point that the poet seems to be making is that the righteous will not be touched by the anger of the Most High when he sends fire against the unrighteous.

The text as it now stands makes it difficult for the reader to easily identify the antecedents for the recurring third person pronouns “they” and “them.” The Greek οὐχ ἄψεται αὐτοῦ “it will not touch him” stands in contrast to the Syriac ܠܐ ܢܬܝܚܘܢ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ “it will not touch them.” This difference is probably another example of a misreading of the *Vorlage* in which the original verb תגענתם “it will touch them” was misread as תגענהבו (confusing בו and ב) “it will touch him.” The ambiguity of the pronoun “they” and “them” in 15:9 (Syriac) may be due in part to the misreading of עליון as עולה.¹⁵⁸ Otherwise it would appear that the poet was having the anger of the “lawless” being directed “against the sinners from before the Most High,” and the pronoun “they” or “them” could refer to the sinner as easily as to the righteous. The Greek text is free from ambiguity even though it apparently misread עולה for עליון.

¹⁵⁷ Ezekiel 39:6; Hosea 8:14; Amos 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 2:2, 5; and IV Ezra 1:23.

¹⁵⁸ On the confusion of ה and ך see Delitzsch, 1920: 121, § 133, where he cited among numerous examples (1) the *Qere*³ and the *Ketib* in II Samuel 21:20 of אִישׁ מִדִּין and אִישׁ מִדִּין and its variant in I Chronicles 20:6, as אִישׁ מִדִּה, and (2) the difference between שלמה or שלמון in Ruth 4:20 and שלמא or Σαλαμαν or Σαλαμων reflected in I Chronicles 2:11.

PSALM FIFTEEN

15:5a (G), 15:7a (S)

ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου
from the Lord's presence

ܡܟ ܡܝܢ ܡܘܨܚܐ

from before the Most High

מפני יהוה עליון

from before Yahweh Most High

The Greek κυρίου “Lord” and the Syriac ܡܘܨܚܐ “Most High” cannot be translations of each other. Trafton (1985: 140) concurred with Charlesworth (1977: 755) that the Syriac ܡܘܨܚܐ is a corruption of the Syriac ܡܘܨܚܐ “Lord,” a corruption which is also attested in the Odes of Solomon 23:4. However, in light of the use of יהוה עליון “Yahweh, Most High” in Psalm 7:18 (אֲנִיְהוָה יְהוָה כְּצִדְקֶיךָ) “I will give to the Lord the thanks due to his righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord, the Most High”) and in Psalm 47:3 (כִּי־יְהוָה עֲלִיּוֹן נוֹרָא מְלֶכֶּךָ גְדוֹל עַל־) “For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth”), a word may have dropped out of the Greek and Syriac text traditions. In the Greek text it appears that [ליון] was lost, whereas in Syriac it was יהוה which was omitted. Therefore, a conflation of the Greek and Syriac variants may prove to be the correct way to reconstruct the *Vorlage*.

15:7a (G), 15:8b (S)

λιμὸς καὶ ῥομφαία καὶ θάνατος
famine and sword and death

ܡܘܬܐ ܘܟܝܘܪܐ ܘܡܘܬܐ

for death and spear and famine

רעב ושלח ומות

for famine and spear and death

The Greek and Syriac word differ in this phrase, and the Greek ῥομφαία “sword” and the Syriac ܟܝܘܪܐ “spear” are not the usual equivalents to each other. As noted in the discussion of 13:2, the

Vorlage behind ῥομφαίας and ܠܡܚܘܒܝܬ was perhaps the more generic ܠܘܠܝܐ “missile, weapon” (BDB, 1019), which has the meaning “sword” in Job 36:12 and “hand-weapon” in II Chronicles 23:10, and “spear” in II Samuel 18:13.

15:7b (G), 15:9a (S)

φεύξονται γὰρ ὡς διωκόμενοι πολέμου ἀπὸ ὁσίων (Rahlf)

φεύξονται γὰρ ὡς διωκόμενου λιμοῦ ἀπὸ ὁσίων (Wright)

for they will retreat from the devout

like those pursued by famine (Wright)

for they will flee, as famine being pursued

from/by the holy ones (Trafton)

ܠܡܚܘܒܝܬ ܠܘܠܝܐ ܠܡܘܬܝܢ ܕܡܝܬܝܢ ܕܡܝܬܝܢ ܕܡܝܬܝܢ

for they will flee from them as death flees from life

כי ינוסו כפן וחרב תמותע מפני החסידים

כי כפן ירדוף החסידים

מותן מחיים

for they [famine, sword, pestilence]

will flee from the righteous ones —

*indeed, famine will flee from the righteous and pestilence
from the living!*

The differences between the Greek and the Syriac of this poetic line are so great that it appears that both texts are defective. Trafton (1985: 141–142) has provided a summary of the conjectures offered to bring meaning to the bewildering Greek text and the slightly less perplexing Syriac text. Rahlf’s text, cited above, follows von Gebhardt’s (1895: 81–82) emendation of λιμοῦ to πολέμου, and Wright’s translation reflects a reworking of the word order in order to make the subject of the verb “retreat” to be “famine, sword and death” instead of its being the “righteous.” Trafton’s translation of the Greek, while more literal, is no more intelligible.

Several keys for understanding this poetic line come from properly reconstructing the poetic lines in verses 15:4–6 (Syriac 15: 6–9) and recognizing (1) that the singular κακοῦ “evil” can be a

reference to the “evil one,” (2) the probability that מוֹתָן “pestilence” was misread or confused with מוֹת “death,” and (3) that the emphatic כִּי “indeed” was misread as the particle כִּי “for.” The singular ἐξέλθη “it / he goes forth” cannot be a reference to the compound nouns “flame of fire and anger” of 5:4b, but it can be the singular verb with the singular κακοῦ of 15:4a as its subject. By inverting 15:4b and 15:5–6, the singular noun κακοῦ and the singular verb ἐξέλθη come naturally together, and the two nouns “fire and anger” are followed by the three nouns “famine and sword and death” with their respective verbs.¹⁵⁹ Reading the text in this manner it becomes apparent that it is “the evil / evil one” who went forth from the presence of God — just as the adversary went forth from the presence of God in the prologue of Job. The Syriac use of ܐܘܪܝܢ “evil, the evil one” and the Greek use of κακοῦ “evil” may well indicate a *Vorlage* having צַר “adversary, enemy.” The parallels to the Job prologue seem obvious.

The collocation of כָּפֶן “famine” and מוֹתָן “pestilence” in Taʿa-nith 19^b provides the basis for reconstructing the *Vorlage* with these two words rather than with רָעַב “famine” and מוֹת “death.” The reconstructed *Vorlage* and translation offered above reflect what is considered to be the poet’s use of a double-duty verb and a double-duty emphatic כִּי which have, heretofore, been unrecognized by the translators and the commentators.¹⁶⁰ The proposal to add the ׀ to מוֹתָן and a final ׀ to מוֹתָי, even without textual support, offers a solution

¹⁵⁹ The rearrangement of the lines and the interpretation offered for individual words or phrases provides for the following logically consistent translation:

15:4a *Everyone who does these things will never be disturbed by (the) adversary*
 15:5 *when he goes out from the Lord’s presence against sinners*
to destroy every foundation of (the) sinner’s.
 15:4b *The flame of fire and the anger of the Most High shall not touch them.*
 15:6 *For God’s mark is on the righteous for their salvation.*
 15:7 *Famine, sword and death shall be far from the righteous*
for they [famine, sword, pestilence] will flee from the righteous ones —
indeed, famine will flee from the righteous and pestilence from the living!

¹⁶⁰ For the review on double-duty prepositions see the above discussion on Psalm of Solomon 14:1.

unavailable from other studies (summarized by Trafton) which have assumed corruptions in the Greek text without addressing the differences in the Syriac tradition, or solutions which have assumed corruptions in the Syriac text but have not addressed the difficulties of the Greek text. Since the corruption is assumed to have been inherent in a Hebrew *Vorlage*,¹⁶¹ it has been possible to come to conclusions which can account for the differences in the textual traditions and offer an intelligible reading of these enigmatic poetic lines.

15:9a (G), 15:9b (S)

ὡς ὑπὸ πολεμίων ἐμπείρων καταλημφθήσονται
they shall be overtaken as by those experienced in war

~~אֲרָם מִלְחָמָה לְפָנֵיהֶם יֵלְכוּ~~
for they will go before them as those who know war

כִּי בַמְלִמְדֵי מִלְחָמָה יִקְדְּמוּ
indeed, by those trained (for) warfare
they will be confronted

Contrary to Trafton's (1985: 143) statement, "On the other hand, Syriac **ܘܡܢ** would certainly be an unusual translation of καταλαμβάνω," in the Septuagint καταλαμβάνω translates Hebrew **קָדַם** twice in Micah 6:6, which makes it quite probable that in this line there is no basic difference between the Greek and the Syriac. The ἐμπείρων and **ܘܡܢ** could be translations of each other or of a Hebrew *Vorlage* with **לָמַד** having the meaning, "trained (for war)" or "experienced (in warfare)" as in Song of Solomon 3:8.

15:9b (G), 15:10 (S)

ἐπὶ τοῦ μετώπου αὐτῶν
for on their forehead

¹⁶¹ Trafton's (1985: 143) critique of Kuhn's conjecture (that a transposition of the same line occurred independently in the Greek and Syriac texts of this psalm) appears valid. Trafton recognized that his critique (that the coincidence would have been too rare) would have been invalid if the corruption had been in the Hebrew *Vorlage* shared in common by the Greek and Syriac traditions.

PSALM FIFTEEN

ܠܥܦܢܝܗܘܢ
 upon their face
 על פניהם
 upon *their face*

The Greek μετώπου, at first glance, would appear to be the equivalent of the Hebrew מִצָּח “forehead, brow” and would not be the equivalent of the Syriac ܐܦܢܐ “nose, nostril.” In Ezekiel 16:12, Hebrew פָּה may mean “forehead” (KJV “and I put a jewel on thy forehead”). The Greek and Syriac terms for “forehead” have etymologically the same meaning of “between the eyes,” but the Greek μετώπου also means “with front foremost” and is used metaphorically for “front, face of anything” (Liddell and Scott, 1123). Consequently, μετώπου here could reflect a *Vorlage* with פניהם, which would then correspond to the Syriac ܠܥܦܢܝܗܘܢ since ܐܦܢܐ could easily translate פניהם. Therefore, the reconstructed *Vorlage* has פניהם rather than מִצָּחיהם.

15:10b (G), 15:11b (S)

καὶ αἱ ἀνομίαι αὐτῶν διώξονται αὐτούς
 and their lawless actions shall pursue them
 ܠܥܦܢܝܗܘܢ ܥܘܒܪܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ
 and their lawlessness will pursue them
 ופשעיהם ירדפם
 and *their rebellious acts will pursue* them

The difference between the Greek plural διώξονται and the Syriac singular ܥܘܒܪܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ is probably due to the verb ירדפם “they will pursue them” having been written *scriptio defectiva* as ירדפם (= ירדפם).¹⁶² The Syriac translator read ירדפם as a singular, but the Greek translator read it as a plural.

15:13a (G), 15:15a (S)

οἱ δὲ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον ἐλεηθήσονται ἐν αὐτῇ
 but those who fear the Lord shall find mercy in it

¹⁶² Compare the verb יִרְדְּפוּ “they slay them” in Zechariah 11:5.

ܘܥܠ ܕܥܠܡܝ ܕܗܘܐ ܗܝ ܡܪܥܡܝ ܕܥܠܡܝ ܕܗܘܐ
 but in it there will be mercy upon those that fear the Lord

וירחם בה יראי יהוה
*and he will have mercy to those fearing
 Yahweh upon it [the earth]*

The Greek passive ἐλεηθήσονται “they shall receive mercy” and the Syriac active ܘܥܠ ܕܥܠܡܝ “there will be mercy” are unlikely to be translations of each other, even though the verbs mean the same thing. The difference between the active and the passive in the two traditions can be accounted for by a Hebrew *Vorlage* with ׀ררם which was read as a *pu*’al passive by the Greek translator, but it was read as a *pi*’el active by the Syriac translator. Once read as a passive, in the context of this verse, the subject could only have been “those who fear the Lord,” even if there were no third masculine plural suffix on the verb. There is nothing in the Syriac corresponding to the Greek phrase ἐν αὐτῇ, the feminine pronoun which must have the τῆν γῆν of the previous line as its antecedent.

Psalm Sixteen

16:1a

ἐν τῷ νυστάξαι ψυχῆν μου
 ἀπὸ κυρίου παρὰ μικρὸν
 when my soul slumbered, (I was far away)
 from the Lord, wretched for a time
 [in the sleepiness of my soul
 from God (sic) by a little wretchedness]
 ܕܘ ܕܥܠܡܝ ܕܗܘܐ ܗܝ ܡܪܥܡܝ ܕܥܠܡܝ ܕܗܘܐ
 when my soul disregarded the Lord a little
 בישנתה נפשי מיהודה כמעט
when my soul forsook the Lord for a bit

The difficulty of the Greek is reflected in Wright’s parenthetical addition and the literal translation given in a note [shown in brackets]. The Greek νυστάξαι “slumbered” and the Syriac ܕܘ ܕܥܠܡܝ

“disregarded” cannot be translations of each other. But they can be variant readings from a Hebrew *Vorlage* which was read (1) in the Greek tradition as *בישנתה* “when (my soul) slept” and (2) in the Syriac text tradition as *בשנתה* “when (my soul) forsook.”

Frankenberg (1896: 80) and Stein (1969: 455) translated *νυστάξαι* by *נרם* “become drowsy,” which appears in parallelism with *ישן* “to sleep” in Psalm 121:4. But it would be difficult to account for the difference between the Greek and Syriac texts if *נרם* were in the *Vorlage*. However, in certain forms the roots *שנה* and *שן* could more easily have been confused. The stem *שנה* is well attested in Aramaic and Syriac (Jastrow, 1606; J. Payne Smith 1957, 586) meaning “to change, to transfer, to desert, to forsake.”¹⁶³ In Hebrew, the stem is sometimes confused with *שנא* “to hate,” but it probably occurs in Psalm 119:128, “I forsake every false way” (rather than, “I hate every false way”) and Sirach 7:26, “do not trust yourself to one whom you forsook” (rather than, “. . . whom you hate”).¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ It is of interest to note that Franz Delitzsch (n.d., *ad loc.*) initially translated the phrase . . . *נפש רחוק מיי* “when sleeps my soul at a distance from Yahweh . . .” but scratched the *רחוק* and drew a line also through *נפש*. On a separate sheet he translated instead . . . *נפש רחוק מיי* “when sleeps my soul from Yahweh awhile . . .”

¹⁶⁴ McDaniel (1994) noted that Jesus’ difficult statement in Luke 14:26, “if anyone comes to me and does not *hate* (*οὐ μισεῖ*) his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple,” is probably rooted in a written Hebrew or Aramaic tradition in which the word *שנא* / *שנה* was misread. He noted that the Greek *μισεῖ* equals *תשנא* “you hate,” but the context and parallel accounts suggest that *תשנה* or *תשנא* should have been rendered *ἀποτάσσειται* “you forsake,” which occurs in Luke 14:33 and equals *תשנא* or *תשנה*. As the vocalization indicates, the confusion of *תשנא* or *תשנה* and *תשנא* could not have been an aural error since the sound of *ש* and *נ* are distinctly different, but both sounds were represented by *ש* in the orthography of Jesus’ time. (The variant spelling of *שנה* “sleep” as *שנא* is also noteworthy as another example of the interchange of *ש* and *נ*.)

16:1b

παρὰ μικρὸν ὠλίσθησα¹⁶⁵ ἐν καταφορᾷ¹⁶⁶
 ὑπνούντων μακρὰν ἀπὸ θεοῦ
 wretched for a time; I sank into a sleep far from God¹⁶⁷

ܠܘܠܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܝܟܪܐ ܕܡܝܠܝܫܬܝܫܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܝܠܝܫܬܝܫܐ
 ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܝܠܝܫܬܝܫܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܝܠܝܫܬܝܫܐ
 I was almost in the lapses of the sleep of corruption,
and when I was far from the Lord

כמעט נמתי בשנת שחת וכד חקתי מאלהים
 for a while I sank into a deadly coma;
 and when I was far from the Lord

In 16:1a, παρα μικρὸν “by a little” corresponds to לַלְלוּ “a little while,” and in 16:2a παρ’ ὀλίγον “for a moment” corresponds to לַלְלוּ ܠܘܠܐ “almost”—all of which equal Hebrew מְעַט or רְגַע: However, in 16:1b nothing in the Greek text corresponds to the ܠܘܠܐ in the Syriac text.

The Greek manuscript variants ὠλίσθησα “I had slipped” (all mss except 336) and ὑπνωσα “I slept” (ms 336) are not due to scribal corruptions of graphically similar letters or words. There is not a single Semitic root which can mean both ὠλίσθησα and ὑπνωσα. These variants are most likely due to two different ways of reading a word in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. The root מְעַט (= ὠλίσθησα) “a little

¹⁶⁵ Ms 336 reads ὑπνωσα “I slept” (= וְשָׁנָה), which appears to be a misplaced doublet of τῶ νυστάξαι ψυχὴν μου “slumbering of my soul,” which would mean that ms 336 lacks a word corresponding to ὠλίσθησα.

¹⁶⁶ Mss 149, 260, 336, 471, 629, and 769 read καταφορᾷ “destruction, death, ruin” (equals the noun פָּשָׁה I.), whereas mss 253, 606, 655, and 659 read καταφορᾷ “bringing down, a downward stroke, a downward motion, a sloping place” (equals the noun פָּשָׁה II., from the root פָּשָׁה or פָּשָׁה). Since, both καταφορᾷ and καταφορᾷ can be valid translations of the פָּשָׁה I. or II., there is no need to postulate a scribal error.

¹⁶⁷ The “wretched” and “wretchedness” in Wright’s translation (1985: 604) apparently renders καταφορα or καταφθορα,

(while)” could have been confused with מעד “to slip, to slide, to totter”—especially since the aural similarity of the words is as close as their graphic similarity.¹⁶⁸ The confusion of מעד with מעט would account for the absence of any corresponding element for the Syriac ܠܠܢ ܚܘ (= מעט) in the Greek text of 16:1b since ὀλίσθησα “I had slipped” translates מעד rather than מעט, and there is not corresponding word for מעט (= ܠܠܢ ܚܘ) in the Greek text of 16:1^b.

The נמת' בשנת in the reconstructed *Vorlage* is based on the שנתם נמו שנתם “they sank into sleep” of Psalm 76:6. If the *Vorlage* read שנת שנת, it would appear the Syriac translator read נמת' as a masculine plural construct noun meaning “the lapses of,” which was followed by an intervening preposition before the *nomen rectum*, “the lapses of the sleep of corruption.” The Greek text, in contrast, appears to have rendered שנת שנת in reverse word order since ἐν καταφορᾷ ὑπνοῦντων translates the construct chain שנת שנת.

The Greek has no corresponding equivalent to the . . . ܐܘܢ in the Syriac text, i.e., it is lacking a conjunction, a particle, and the first person singular verb prefix, which together mean “and I was almost . . .” However, the τῶ τό of ms 336 (and possibly ms 629) could be what survives as a translation of וכך in the Hebrew *Vorlage*, the equivalent of the Syriac ܐܘܢ. This equation assumes that the attested τῶ τό is a corruption of an original τότε. If the Hebrew *Vorlage* had the verb רחקתי “I was far away,” the Syriac rendered it as an ^oaph^eel, but the Greek read it as the feminine noun ῥαχקה or ῥαχקהת “a distant one, a distance.”

16:3a

διενεχθη̅ναι ψυχῆν μου
my soul was drawn away
ܠܠܢ ܚܘܘܢܐ
when my soul bent down

¹⁶⁸ Delitzsch (1920: 119 § 131) cited only the variants in I Samuel 27:8, where the MT ܡܘܢܐ appears in the LXX as ἀπὸ Τ/Γελαμ(ψουρ). Note McCarter’s (1980, 413) translation “from Telem” for MT ܡܘܢܐ.

השתחוה נפשי

my soul was drawn away

The Greek $\delta\iota\epsilon\nu\epsilon\chi\theta\eta\nu\alpha\iota$ “was drawn away” and the Syriac ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ “was bent down” cannot be translations of each other, but they can be accurate translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* having the root שׁוּח . This root in Hebrew is etymologically derived from two proto-Semitic stems which survived independently in Arabic, namely, سوخ “to sink down” [swḥ became šwḥ in Hebrew] and سوح “to flow or melt away, to spread” [swḥ became šwḥ in Hebrew]. The Greek $\delta\iota\epsilon\nu\epsilon\chi\theta\eta\nu\alpha\iota$ reflects שׁוּח (= سوح) and the Syriac may reflect שׁוּח (= سوخ). Since the Greek has a passive infinitive, presumably the *Vorlage* had a passive, but if the stem were the passive of שׁוּח it would most likely have been the distinctive *hithpa^cel* form השתחוה ,¹⁶⁹ which would have been difficult for any Syriac translator to have rendered as an active verb. Therefore, it may well be that the Syriac translator read השתחוה as השתחוה “to bend down, to prostrate oneself,” which, in other context, would correspond closely to ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ “prostrate adoration” (J. Payne Smith, 542).

16:4a

$\epsilon\nu\sigma\iota\epsilon\nu \mu\epsilon \omega\varsigma \kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\rho\nu \acute{\iota}\pi\pi\omicron\upsilon \acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota \tau\eta\nu \gamma\rho\eta\gamma\omicron\rho\eta\sigma\iota\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$

he jabbed me as a horse is goaded to keep it awake

$\text{ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ}$

he pierced me like the goad of a horse for its arousal

$\text{דקרני במלמד סוס להעירי}$

he jabbed me with a horse-goad to arouse me

The Greek $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\rho\nu \acute{\iota}\pi\pi\omicron\upsilon$ “a horse-goad” and the Syriac ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ ܕܘܚܝܕܝܐ “the horse-goad” could be translations of each other or of a Hebrew *Vorlage* with מלמד סוס or דרבן סוס . The proposal by Kuhn (1937: 49) to read the סוס דרבן of his reconstructed *Vorlage* as subject-object (“the *goad* pierced the *horse*”)

¹⁶⁹ For the passive use of the *hithpa^cel* see GKC § 54^e.

rather than as a construct chain (“the goad of a horse”) seems gratuitous in light of the מלמד בקר “an ox-goad” in Judges 3:31. However, the Greek and Syriac translators seem to have misread two letters of the *Vorlage*, namely, (1) the preposition ב “by, with” was misread as the preposition כ “as, like” (= ὡς and כ), and (2) the ך suffix on the *hiphʿil* infinitive להעירי “to arouse me” was read as a ך, i.e., להעירו “to arouse him [the horse].” Since the Greek and Syriac texts reflect this same error, the misreading of ך as ך and כ as כ was more like a matter of scribal errors in the *Vorlage* itself.

16:5

ὅτι ἀντελάβου μου εἰς σωτηρίαν
who came to my aid for (my) salvation

כך עזרתני בַּחֲסוּדֶיךָ

you helped me with your salvation

עזרתני בתשועתך

you rescued me with your salvation

The Greek text lacks a pronomial element corresponding to the כ “your” suffix in the Syriac. Wright’s (1985: 665) translation provides “(my)” as a gloss, suggesting that a μου dropped out of the Greek text or a ך dropped out of its Hebrew *Vorlage*. Since the Syriac is unambiguous in reading “your salvation,” it seems more likely that a σου dropped out of the Greek text or a ך dropped out of its Hebrew *Vorlage*. The MT provides several examples of תשועה with the ך suffix and with the ך suffix: תשועתי “my salvation” appears in Psalm 38:24 and 51:16, and ותשועתך or ותשועתך “(and) thy salvation” appears in Psalm 40:11, 17; 71:15; 119:41 and 81. Since either suffix is possible, there is no apparent reason for not following the Syriac text.

16:6b

μηδὲ τῆς μνήμης σου

nor your memory

אל תזכורני

do not let your remembrance depart

זכרנוך
nor your memory

At first glance it appears that a verb corresponding to the Syriac **ܠܚܒ** “depart” has dropped out of the Greek text, analogous to the loss of a σου or a ἢ, as discussed immediately above. However, the Greek text, as it stands, probably reflects perfectly the original Hebrew poetic line in which the poet used a double-duty verb.¹⁷⁰ What the poet and the Greek translator left implicit, the Syriac translator made explicit by adding **ܠܚܒ** as a verbal gloss. The “nor” in the translation of the reconstructed *Vorlage* reflects the simple conjunction ך. The negative μηδὲ in the Greek text is probably a gloss for what was a double-duty negative **לֹא** in the original Hebrew.

16:7a

ἐπικράτησόν μου ὁ θεός ἀπὸ ἀμαρτίας ποιηρᾶς

restrain me, O God, from sordid sin (Wright)

rule me, O God, (keeping me back)

from wicked sin (Gray)

פּוֹסַעַנִי מִזֵּוֹלָה מִפְּשָׁעָא בְּזֵוֹלָה

save me, O Lord, from evil sin

דּוּחַנִי אֱלֹהִים מֵאִשָּׁם חַטָּא

cleans me, O God, from the guilt of sin

The Greek ἐπικράτησόν μου “rule over me ” and the Syriac **פּוֹסַעַנִי** “save me” cannot be translations of each other. In the Septuagint, ἐπικράτειν translates **בָּקַע**, **גָּבַר**, **חָזַק**, **טָפַח**, **רָדַה**, and **שָׁלַיַח**, none of which have the meaning “to restrain.” Ryle and James (1891: 121) suggested that the Hebrew *Vorlage* had the verb **חָזַק** “to hold fast, to protect,” whereas Kuhn (1937: 51–52) proposed a *Vorlage* with **חָשַׁכְנִי** “he held me back” which was subsequently

¹⁷⁰ See Dahood and Penar, 1970, 435.

corrupted to קזקב׳ “he held me fast.”¹⁷¹ But as Trafton (1985: 151) noted, “Kuhn’s suggestion is ingenious but not wholly convincing.”

A more likely reason for the presence of the very different ἐπικράτησόν and ܦܘܪܘܨܢܐ is that the *Vorlage* had the verb קוּחַ “to cleanse (away), to wash, to rinse” which was misread by the Greek translator as קדח “to rule over, to have dominion.”¹⁷² The verb קוּחַ appears also in Isaiah 4:4, אִם רָחַץ אֶדְנִי אֵת צִיּוֹן בְּנוֹת־צִיּוֹן וְאֵת־ דְּמֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם יְדַיֵּחַ “when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem.” In the Septuagint, ἀμαρτίας translates אָשָׁם or אָשָׁם or אֲשָׁמָה “offence, guilt, wrong-doing, guiltiness” in Genesis 42:21, Exodus 6:6, and Isaiah 53:10. The stem אָשָׁם would well fit the verb קוּחַ to express the idea “cleanse (me) from the guilt of sin.” The semantic range of Syriac ܦܘܪܘܨܢܐ “to depart from, to remove” J. Payne Smith (1903: 464–465) is broad enough to accommodate Trafton’s translation “save me” and the Hebrew קוּחַ used in the reconstructed *Vorlage* meaning “to cleanse.”

16:8b

καὶ παντὸς ὑποκειμένου ἀπὸ ἀμαρτίας ἀνωφελούς

nor anyone subject to useless sin (Wright)

and anything existing from unprofitable sin (Trafton)

אֵין כּוֹל עֲוֹנוֹתַי דְּאֵין

nor any sin which there is

וְכָל נְשֵׂי אֵין

nor any evil women

The Greek καὶ “and” and the Syriac אֵין “nor” are not exactly the same. Wright’s (1985: 665) translating καὶ as “nor” is

¹⁷¹ In support of the aural error, Kuhn cited the variant in the Jerusalem Talmud Pesahim 15, 7, where כּוּחַ is attested in the Berlin edition of 1920, but in the 1926 Wilna edition כּוּחַ rightly appears.

¹⁷² On the confusion of קוּחַ and קדח and on the confusion of קדח and קדח, see Delitzsch, 1920: 105–107, § 104^{a-c}, and 109, § 109^{a-b}, respectively.

contextually correct, making explicit what was implicit in the poet's use of a double-duty negative.¹⁷³ In this respect, Wright's translating "not . . . nor" for the Greek $\mu\eta . . . \kappa\alpha\iota$ follows the Syriac translator's use of compound negatives: ܐܘܠܐ . . . ܕܠܐ . The poet's use of double-duty negatives was a stylistic option, analogous to English usage of a single or double negative, such as: "not (this) or (that)" or "not (this) nor (that)."

The Syriac text lacks any corresponding adjective for $\acute{\alpha}\nu\omega\phi\epsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ "useless," which appears in the Septuagint as the translation of בלתי הועיל "that is profitable for nothing" in Isaiah 44:10 and of לא הועיל "things that do not profit" in Jeremiah 2:8. But the Syriac ܕܘܠܐ . . . ܕܠܐ "all that exists" (= כל יש) and the Greek $\acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$, along with the Syriac ܕܘܠܐ (= און "wickedness"), provide the clues for determining the origin of the problematic $\acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ $\acute{\alpha}\nu\omega\phi\epsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ "useless sin" and the puzzling ܕܘܠܐ ܕܘܠܐ "sin which exists." The conflation of כל . . . יש and און produces the word cluster כל יש און "all exists wicked," a senseless phrase which, however, is graphically similar to כל נשי און "all women of wickedness"—a word cluster which would be a very meaningful parallel to the "lawless women" mentioned in 8a. It seems very probable, therefore, that the Greek $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\kappa\epsilon\iota\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ "existing" and the Syriac ܕܘܠܐ "which exists" reflect a shared *Vorlage* in which נשי "women of" was misspelled or misread as יש "exists." The Greek $\acute{\alpha}\nu\omega\phi\epsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, which has no parallel in the Syriac text, would appear to be a doublet reflecting the misreading or misspelling of the original כל נשי און (= כל נשי און) as כל יש און (= כל יש און "not exist value" or "useless"). In light of this analysis of the differences between the Greek and Syriac texts, the reconstructed *Vorlage* is as short as the Syriac text but differs from the Greek and the Syriac texts by exchanging יש , the particle of existence, for the construct noun נשי "the women of . . ."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ On the double-duty negative, see Dahood and Penar, 1970, 437–438.

¹⁷⁴ For the reconstructed און נשי "women of wickedness," compare און נשי "wicked men" in Job 22:15 and און נשי "wicked men" in Job 34:36.

PSALM SIXTEEN

16:10b

ὀργήν καὶ θυμὸν ἄλογον μακρὰν ποιήσον ἀπ' ἐμοῦ
 put anger and thoughtless rage far from me

ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ
¹⁷⁵ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ
 remove from me anger and wrath which is unreasoning

I will not be like one who does not have
understanding, like animals

עברה וחמה בלי דעת הרחיקה ממני
 ולא אהיה בלי דעת כשחיות

*put anger and thoughtless rage far from me
 and I will not be without knowledge as the animals*

The Greek ἄλογον “thoughtless” and the Syriac ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ “unreasoning” could be translations of each other or they both could be accurate translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* having בלי דעת. Contrary to Begrich’s (1939: 134–135) statement, “Denn der syriacische Ausdruck ist eine wörtliche Wiedergabe des griechischen und wirkt im Zusammenhang des Textes in seinem Sinn befremdlich,” the Syriac could simply be a translation of a Hebrew *Vorlage* having בלי דעת “without knowledge.” The Peshitta translates בלי־דעת in Job 38:2 (“who is this that darkens counsel by words *without knowledge?*”) as ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ “with words lacking understanding” and in Job 42:3 (“who is this that hides counsel *without knowledge?*”) as ܕܠܐ ܗܘܝܬ “without knowledge.” Therefore, to insist that the Syriac is dependent upon the Greek, seems itself rather “befremdlich.”¹⁷⁶

The expanded Syriac text, cited above, stands in contrast to those places where the Syriac has presented a significantly shorter text, namely in 5:17 (S, 5:20), 7:9 (S 7:8b), and 8:5 (S, 8:6) (noted above

¹⁷⁵ This line is found only in mss 14kl and 16g7.

¹⁷⁶ It is surprising that the Greek translator of Job seems to have had difficulty with the negative phrase בלי דעת. In Job 38:2 and in 42:3 the LXX offers only a paraphrase, suggesting that in 38:2 that בלי was misread as בלבי “in my heart.”

in the discussion on 7:8b), at which points no commentator suggested that the longer Greek texts were glosses. The significantly longer Syriac text of 16:10b in mss 14kl and 16g7 has been regarded by Trafton (1985: 154) as an explanatory gloss since it breaks up “the a-b-a-b-a-b pattern of vv. 6–12.” The expansion in 16:10c of the motif of “thoughtlessness” which the poet introduced in 16:10b cannot be so easily dismissed as a gloss for two reasons: first, there is really no difficulty in understanding *בלי דעת* or *בלבד*; second, the Greek and Syriac texts are essentially free of even one or two word glosses, so that the suggestion that an entire *poetic* line is a gloss seems as an overly simplistic solution. Since the line does not readily qualify for being a gloss, it is more likely that the line was originally in the psalm and that was omitted—for unknown reasons—in the Syriac ms 16hl and in all of the Greek manuscripts. Therefore, the reconstructed *Vorlage* has adopted the fuller Syriac text and no suggestion is being offered for its absence in other manuscripts.¹⁷⁷

16:11a

γογγυσμὸν καὶ ὀλιγοψυχίαν ἐν θλίψει
μάκρυνον ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ

put grumbling and discouragement in persecution
far from me

ܘܠܝܚܘܒܝܢ ܘܠܝܚܘܒܝܢ ܘܠܝܚܘܒܝܢ ܘܠܝܚܘܒܝܢ ܘܠܝܚܘܒܝܢ ܘܠܝܚܘܒܝܢ

remove from me murmuring
and faintheartedness in tribulation

רחק ממני תלנה ולב דוי בלחץ
remove from me murmuring

and faintheartedness in tribulation

The Greek text and the Syriac text of this line could be translations of each other or of a shared Hebrew *Vorlage*. The Greek

¹⁷⁷ The motif of “irrational animals” introduced by the poet in 16:10c is found elsewhere in the literature coming from essentially the same period, namely, in IV Maccabees 14:14 and 18, “. . . and indeed, here, even the irrational animals have for their young an affection and love similar to men’s . . . and what need have we of examples of the love of offspring among irrational animals”

Similarly, the Greek σαπρίας αὐτοῦ “his stench” (which Wright paraphrased by “mortality”) could reflect a *Vorlage* with סררַחֲוֹנִי “my stench, my offense” or סררַחֲוֹנֵי “his stench, his offense,” with ambiguity due to uncertainty as to whether the last letter of the word was a ך or a ך׃. Lastly, the Greek ἡ δοκιμασία σου is the equivalent of Hebrew בַּחֲנֹךְ “your testing,” but the consonantal בַּחֲנֹךְ (= בַּחֲנֹךְ) is graphically identical to the word בַּחֲנֹךְ (= בַּחֲנֹךְ) “by your grace.” The latter word, בַּחֲנֹךְ, fits the context much better than the former word, בַּחֲנֹךְ.

The remaining uncertainty in the reconstructed *Vorlage* for this phrase is limited to the suffix ending, as to whether it was “my” or “his.” In 16:1–12, the focus is on the *first* person and verse 16:14 makes a fitting conclusion for a *personal* confession which included the phrase “. . . of *my* being cleansed of his stench.” However, since verse 16:15 in Syriac and 16:14a in Greek have the *third* person singular, the verse now designated 16:14a/16:15 could have been intended to shift the focus from the first person to the third person by making the statement, “. . . of *his* being cleansed of his stench.”

Psalm Seventeen

17:1

κύριε σὺ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς ἡμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι

Lord, you are our king forevermore

ܘܢܘܨܝܢܐ ܘܥܘܠܡܝܢܐ ܘܥܘܠܡܝܢܐ

O Lord, you are our king now and forever

אדני אתה מלכנו עתה ועולם ועד

O Lord, you are our king, now and for evermore

It is possible that the Greek εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι “for ever and beyond” and the Syriac ܘܢܘܨܝܢܐ ܘܥܘܠܡܝܢܐ “now and forever” could be idiomatic translations of each other,¹⁸¹ or they could reflect a slightly

¹⁸¹ Note that Wright (1985: 665) included καὶ ἔτι in “forevermore,” in contrast to Gray (1913: 647), whose translation “for ever and ever” reflected the conjunction.

different *Vorlage*, the Greek having had **ועד עולם** and the Syriac having had **עתה עולם ועד**. The differences between the Greek and the Syriac suggest that the original Hebrew had **עד** and **עתה**, as well as **עולם**. The reconstructed *Vorlage* uses **אדני** instead of **יהוה** in order to provide for greater assonance which was a common element in Hebrew poetry.

17:2a

καὶ τίς ὁ χρόνος ζωῆς ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς
how long is the time of a person's life on the earth

ܡܢܢ ܐܝܢ ܗܘܐ ܗܝܘܬܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ ܥܠ ܗܝܘܬܐ ܕܐܪܥܐ
and what is the life of a man upon the earth

ומה עת חי אדם על הארץ
but what is the time of the life of man upon the earth

The Syriac text lacks a corresponding element for the Greek ὁ χρόνος “the time,” having simply the question, “what is the life of man . . . ?” This absence of a word corresponding to χρόνος and the presence of **ܡܢܢ** “now, already, at present,” for which there is no corresponding word in Greek, are apparently related to each other. Χρόνος equals Hebrew **עת** and **ܡܢܢ** equals Hebrew **עתה**. A confusion of the consonant cluster **עתחי** and **עהה ו**, though in different lines, could easily be made. On the other hand, Kuhn (1937: 56) suggested that the *Vorlage* began with the question **מה הם היי** and concluded, “**מה הם היי** gab **Θ** sinngemäß ganz richtig wieder durch **τίς ὁ χρόνος ζωῆς**, während **Σ** genauer übersetzte **מהם היו היי**,” (i.e., the original Hebrew **הם** was translated by the plural copula **ܐܘܪܐ**). However, the unnecessary copula, **ܐܘܪܐ** is probably a doublet for a misreading of **מה** “what” as the metathetic **הם** “them.” Appeal to paraphrase should be made only when other explanations are lacking.

17:2b

καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς αὐτοῦ ἐπ' αὐτόν
so also is his hope in him

ܡܢ ܐܝܢ ܗܘܐ ܗܝܘܬܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ ܥܠ ܗܝܘܬܐ ܕܐܪܥܐ

so also is his flesh

כִּן שִׁבְרוּ עֲלֶיהָ
so also is his hope upon her [the earth]

The Greek ἡ ἐλπίς αὐτοῦ “his hope” and the Syriac ܡܝܫܐ “his flesh” cannot be translations of each other. Trafton (1985: 156) suggested that ܡܝܫܐ was an inner-Syriac corruption of an original ܡܝܫܐ “hope.” But the erroneous metathesis could just as easily have been made in Hebrew, with בֶּשֶׂר “flesh” having been corrupted to שִׁבְר “hope.”

The masculine ἐπ’ αὐτόν, for which there is no corresponding element in the Syriac text, could be a corruption of the feminine ἐπ’ αὐτήν, with its antecedent being ܘܢܫܐ in the proposed *Vorlage* of 17:2a. Other proposals have been made to read the antecedent of ἐπ’ αὐτόν as χρόνος (= עת) “time of” (Geiger, 1871: 67), or ἀνθρώπου (= אדם) “man” (Ryle and James (1891: 129), or coming from a *Vorlage* having אִלּוֹ “himself” (Kuhn, 1937: 57).¹⁸² The Greek text has been followed in reconstructing the *Vorlage* for this phrase, although liberty has been taken to change the gender of the pronoun.

17:5b (G), 17:6b (S)

καὶ ἔξωσαν ἡμᾶς οἷς οὐκ ἐπηγγείλω
 μετὰ βίας ἀφείλαντο

καὶ οὐκ ἐδόξασαν τὸ ὄνομά σου τὸ ἔντιμον

. . . and drove us out. Those to whom you did not (make)
 the promise, they took away (from us) by force

ܘܗܕܪܦܢܘ ܐܫܪ ܠܐ ܐܡܪܬ ܠܡܘ ܗܡܐ ܠܩܚܘ ܒܚܘܩܗ

[.] ܘܗܕܪܦܢܘ ܐܫܪ ܠܐ ܐܡܪܬ ܠܡܘ ܗܡܐ ܠܩܚܘ ܒܚܘܩܗ

. . . and took me away; With force they took the things
 which you did not give charge to them

והדרפנו אשר לא אמרת למו המה לקחו בחזקה
*and drove us out, those to whom you did not (make)
 the promise, they took with force*

¹⁸² Trafton’s (1985: 160) statement that Kuhn proposed עליו [sic] “himself,” when he actually proposed אִלּוֹ “himself,” demonstrates how the confusion of א and ע can make its way into even the most carefully prepared texts.

The Greek ἔξωσαν ἡμᾶς “they drove us out” and the Syriac ܥܘܨܘܢܝܢܐ “and took me away” cannot be accurate translation of each other. But both texts could be translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* having a first person verbal suffix. The Greek translator correctly read the suffix as ַנּ “us” but the Syriac translator took the ַנּ to be ַנִּ, which would be another example of the confusion of a ַ and a ַי.¹⁸³ The actual verb which carried the suffix is uncertain. The Greek ἔξωσαν suggests the root ַדָּרַךְ “to drive, to push, to thrust,” and the Syriac ܥܘܨܘܢܝܢܐ suggests a *Vorlage* having the root ַדָּרַךְ “to take, to seize, to snatch away.” Were either ַדָּרַךְ or ַדָּרַךְ in the *Vorlage*, it is easy to see how they could have been confused with each other.¹⁸⁴

The difference between the Greek οὐκ ἐπηγγείλω “did not promise” and the Syriac ܕܢܐܘܨܘܢܝܢܐ “did not give charge” is too great for them to be translations of each other, but both could be based upon a Hebrew *Vorlage* having the root ַאָמַר “to say.” Hebrew ַאָמַר, like ἐπαγγέλομαι, can mean “to promise,” as well as “to command.” The Greek οἷς and the Syriac ܥܘܨܘܢܝܢܐ are reflected in the reconstructed *Vorlage* by the relative ܠܡܘ . . . אֲשֶׁר, which could be either personal (with the Greek) or impersonal (with the Syriac). The translation of the *Vorlage* (“promise . . .” and “those . . .”) indicates that the Greek text is followed for this line.

17:6a (G), 17:7b (S)

ἔθεντο βασιλείον ἀντὶ ὑψους αὐτῶν

they set up a monarchy because of their arrogance

ܥܘܨܘܢܝܢܐ ܥܠ ܥܘܨܘܢܝܢܐ ܥܘܨܘܢܝܢܐ

and they put a kingdom in place of their exalted position

וּחְלַפוּ נֹר חֲלוּף/תַּחַת גְּבוּעוֹתֵיהֶם

and they exchanged their (priestly) turbans for a crown

The Greek βασιλείον “kingdom” and the Syriac ܥܘܨܘܢܝܢܐ “kingdom” could well be translations of each other or of a common *Vorlage*. The following proposal of Begrich (1939: 141–142) that a

¹⁸³ See Delitzsch, 1920: 103–104, § 103–104^{a-c}.

¹⁸⁴ See Delitzsch, 1920: 109, § 106^{a-c} on the confusion of ַדָּ and ַדָּי, and 105–107 § 104^{a-c} on the confusion of ַדָּ and ַדָּי.

misunderstood *Vorlage* lies behind βασιλειον and כִּהְלָבֹשׁ is quite convincing:

Bereits Geiger und Wellhausen haben erkannt, daß mit βασιλειον ein hebräisches כִּהְלָבֹשׁ wiedergegeben wird wie II Sam 1 10. Wenn aber von einem Diadem die Rede ist, dann muß hinter ὑψους ἀπτῶν sich eine andere Kopfdedeckung verbergen, welche durch das Diadem verdrängt worden ist und die an sich der Stellung der Betreffenden, der hasmonäischen Priester, angemessen war. Diese Überlegung führt auf כִּהְלָבֹשׁ als ursprünglichen hebräischen Text. Dieses seltene Wort . . . ist von dem griechischen Übersetzer verkannt, wenn nicht seine Vorlage etwa hier aus dem gleichen Grunde entstellt gewesen ist, mit גְּבוּהָ »Höhe« zusammengebracht und entsprechend übersetzt worden.

Begrich's choice of גְּבוּהָ as the underlying word for the head-gear provides another example of an error originating from sound rather than sight.¹⁸⁵ The confusion of גְּבוּהָ “high, height, turban” to the near homophonic גְּבוּהָ “high, exalted, arrogance” could easily occur. (The stem גְּבוּהָ is translated by ὑψους ten times in the LXX). In Exodus 28:40, 29:9, and Leviticus 8:13, גְּבוּהָ is used for the head-gear of the common priest. However, in Exodus 39:28, פְּאֵרֵי תְּהִמְנִיבֵת appears in a list of garments made for Aaron and his sons; and in Ezekiel 44:18, פְּאֵרֵי פְּשָׁתִים, “linen turbans” are designated to be used by Levitical priests descended from Zadok.

Although Trafton (1985: 162) found Begrich's arguments “hardly compelling,” in the opinion of this writer, Begrich's argument has been convincing and the reconstructed *Vorlage* follows his proposal, rather than taking either the Greek or the Syriac as accurate (re-)productions of the original poetic lines.

17:6b (G), 17:8a (S)

ἠρήμωσαν τὸν θρόνον Δαυὶδ ἐν ὑπερηφανία ἀλλάγματος
they despoiled the throne of David with arrogant shouting

¹⁸⁵ Other examples of aural errors are presented above in the discussions on 8:9a, 8:25a, 9:6b, and 16:1b.

PSALM SEVENTEEN

ⲁⲩⲙⲁⲗⲁⲓⲙⲁⲩⲟⲩ ⲕⲓⲧⲙⲁⲩⲁⲥ ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲁⲥ ⲁⲥⲧⲁⲕ

and they devastated the throne of David
in the pride of their change

וּכְלוּ כִסֵּא דָוִד בְּחִלְפֵיהֶם הַזֶּה

and they terminated the throne of David
in their audacious coup d'etat

The Greek ἀλαλάγματος “shouting” of mss 260 (149, 471, 606, and 3004) and the Syriac ⲁⲩⲙⲁⲗⲁⲓⲙⲁⲩⲟⲩ “of their change” cannot be translations of each other, although ἀλλάγματος “change,” found in the other manuscripts, could (1) be the source of the Syriac, or (2) be a translation of the Syriac, or (3) be an independent translation of a shared *Vorlage*. If the Greek and Syriac both come from a Hebrew *Vorlage*, the Hebrew root could well have been חָלַף, the cognate of Syriac ܠܦ “to change.” If so, there may be particularly strong political overtones in light of the Arabic cognate خلف “the ‘Calif,’ i.e., the successor” (BDB, 322, Lane, 1865, 792–799). In light of Jastrow’s (1950, 472) citation of חָלַף and חָלַף as synonyms of תָּחַף “in place of, instead,” the stem could also have been in the *Vorlage* of 17:6a, replacing תָּחַף “instead,” which would have provided for enhanced paronomasia in Hebrew. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text and the Greek texts having ἀλλάγματος “(ex)-changing,” over against ἀλαλάγματος “shouting,” which contextually is best rendered *coup d’etat*.

17:8b (G), 17:10b (S)

εὐρεθῆναι αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν

it happened to them according to their actions

ⲁⲩⲙⲁⲗⲁⲓⲙⲁⲩⲟⲩ ⲕⲓⲧⲙⲁⲩⲁⲥ ⲁⲩⲙⲁⲗⲁⲓⲙⲁⲩⲟⲩ

and it will be found to them according to their works

כַּמַּעֲלֵיהֶם יִגְמַל עֲלֵיהֶם

it will be dealt out to them according to their works

The Greek infinitive ἐύρεθῆναι, rendered by Wright (1985, 666) as “it happened,”¹⁸⁶ and the Syriac imperfect ܐܘܪܝܬܘܢ “and it will be found” cannot be accurate translations of each other, but each could be a translation of a Hebrew *Vorlage* having the stem ʾנח “to encounter, to be opportune, to meet” or ܩܠܩ “to assign, to apportion” or ܩܪܗ/ܩܪܐ “to befall, to encounter, to meet.” In light of synonymous parallelism κατὰ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα αὐτῶν . . . κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν, one expects a synonym of ἀποδώσεις “you rewarded” to appear in 17:8b. Stein (1969: 457) used תשלם “you will recompense” in his translation of 17:8b. If this were the original verb in 17:8a, גמל “to recompense, to deal out to” might well be the synonymous parallel in 17:8b. Appropriate parallels of גמל used with על can be found in Psalm 13:6, 116:7, 119:17 and 142:8. Although here one cannot be certain what the exact Hebrew was, the difference between the Greek and the Syriac, is probably due to the semantic range of the original Hebrew. The ܡܘܕܝܢ “may you (not) repay” in ms 16hl* instead of ܡܘܕܝܢ “may you (not) have mercy,” in 17:11 (S) appears to be a misplaced variant for ܐܘܪܝܬܘܢ for 17:10b (S), cited above, which equals the גמל in the reconstructed *Vorlage* and supports the use of this word as the synonymous parallel.

17:9b (G), 17:11b (S)

καὶ οὐκ ἀφήκεν αὐτῶν ἕνα
and did not let even one of them go

ܐܘܪܝܬܘܢ ܐܘܪܝܬܘܢ ܐܘܪܝܬܘܢ
and do not leave even one of them

אַל סלח לאחד מנהם
do not give pardon to any one of them

The Greek οὐκ ἀφήκεν “he did not let go” and the Syriac ܐܘܪܝܬܘܢ “you will not leave,” aside from the difference of

¹⁸⁶ Mss 253, 336, 655, 659, and 769 have the infinitive, but all other manuscripts read the optative ἐύρεθείη.

person and form,¹⁸⁷ could be translations of each other. But it is difficult to account for the differences in the tenses between the Greek and Syriac text if they are translations of each other. Therefore, it is more likely that ἀφῆκεν and ܘܢܫܘܚܐ are translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* having the verb meaning “to forgive,” such as כפר, נשא, or סלח “to forgive, to pardon.”

Since the verb סלח takes the preposition ל (as in Psalm 25:11), the ל here could account for the difference between the Greek αὐτῶν ἕνα “a single one of them” (= לֹא אֶחָד מֵהֵם) and the Syriac ܘܢܫܘܚܐ ܘܠܐܝܢܐ “not even a single one of them” (= לֹא אֶחָד מֵהֵם). If the *Vorlage* had אֶל סֶלַח לְאֶחָד מֵהֵם, then the לֹא אֶחָד was read by the Greek translator as the preposition ל and the noun אֶחָד (= “to one”), but the Syriac translator read the לֹא אֶחָד as the negative particle לֹא and the noun אֶחָד (= “not one”) — an understandable error since in Syriac the root אֶחָד is the verb “to seize” (= Hebrew אָחַז), not the number “one” (which is ܘܢܝܘܢ = אֶחָד, as in Ezekiel 33:30). The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text with reference to the tense of the verb and the Greek text by having a single negative particle.

17:11a (G), 17:13a (S)

ἀπὸ ἐνοικούντων αὐτήν

so that no one inhabited it (Wright)

from (ἀπὸ) those who were inhabiting it (Trafton)

ܘܠܐܝܢܐ ܘܠܐܝܢܐ ܘܠܐܝܢܐ

no one was living in it

[for lack of one living in it]

מאין יובש בה

no one was living in it

Contrary to Wright’s translation of ἀπο as “so that no one. . .,” the Greek text of this line does not have a negative element

¹⁸⁷ The Greek text of 17:7–9 has *one* future indicative and *two* aorist indicatives, but the Syriac (17:5a–8a) has *two* imperfects (which, with the negative particle ܠܐ, have the force of the imperative) and *one* imperative.

corresponding to the Syriac ܘܢܘܢܘܢ “for lack of, without.” Kuhn’s (1937: 60) proposal, which followed the earlier suggestion of Delitzsch, that the Hebrew *Vorlage* was ܘܢܘܢܘܢ ܘܢܘܢܘܢ has been adopted above, but not his explanation: “während ܘܢܘܢܘܢ etwas frier übersetzen mußte.” It was probably not a matter of a more free translation, but a matter of the Greek having a slightly different *Vorlage*. The Greek translator must have read ܘܢܘܢ (= ἀπὸ) rather than ܘܢܘܢܘܢ, literally, “*from nought of*,” reflecting the loss of the ܢ in his *Vorlage*. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac, since as Wright’s translation indicates, the context requires a negative.

17:12a (G), 17:14a (S)

ἐν ὀργῇ κάλλους αὐτοῦ

in his blameless wrath (Wright’s text)
[the wrath of his beauty] (Wright’s note)

ܘܢܘܢܘܢ ܘܢܘܢܘܢ

in the beauty of his wrath

בשרפת עברתו

in the fire of his wrath

Aside from an inverted word order, the Greek and Syriac texts could be translations of each other. But commentators have long viewed the phrase in Greek with suspicion. Proposals have been made to emend κάλλους “beauty” to ζήλους “zeal” or to reconstruct a *Vorlage* in which (1) תפארת, as a synonym of נדון, meant “boastful,” or (2) that אפיו “wrath” was corrupted to פיו “his beauty,” or (3) נפשו “his soul” was corrupted to פיו “his beauty.”¹⁸⁸ Two other suggestions need to be made. First, the confusion could have been with הדר “splendor” (which is also used in the LXX to translate κάλλος) and חרר “to burn.” Second—and more probable than any of the other suggestions—is the confusion of שפרת

¹⁸⁸ See Trafton, 1985: 164–165, for a summary and bibliography on the three proposals.

“beauty” with שרפה “burning.”¹⁸⁹ In light of the use “burning wrath” in IV Ezra (II Esdras) 16:68 and the expression בַּאֲשֶׁר־עִבְרָתִי “the fire of his wrath” in Ezekiel 21:31, 36; 22:21, 31; and 38:19, the Syriac word order was probably original, and the noun of choice for “wrath” in reconstructing the *Vorlage* here is עִבְרָה.

17:13 (G), 17:15 (S)

ἐν ἀλλοτριότητι ὁ ἐχθρὸς ἐποίησεν ὑπερηφανίαν
καὶ ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ ἀλλοτρία ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν

as the enemy (was) a stranger and his heart alien
to our God, he acted arrogantly

ܘܥܒܪܗ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ
ܘܥܒܪܗ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ

the enemy was boasting in a foreign manner
and his heart was foreign from our God

הצר בער בנכר ונכרם לבו אלהינו
the enemy was brutal in a cunningly–evil manner
and his heart was estranged from our God

Aside from their form, the Greek ὑπερηφανίαν “arrogantly, brutally, sumptuous” and the Syriac ܘܥܒܪܗ “boasting” could be translations of each other, but they may also be translations of a *Vorlage* in which there was a confusion of בער “inhumane, brutal” (= ὑπερηφανίαν) and בהר “boastful” (= ܘܥܒܪܗ).¹⁹⁰ This suggestion has the support of Ezekiel 31:31 and 21:36, which collocates אֵשׁ עִבְרָתִי “the fire of my wrath” and בְּעָרִים אֲנָשִׁים “brutal men.” Although Delitzsch (1920: 120, § 131) listed examples of the confusion of ע and פ (and the reverse confusion of פ and ע), he cited no examples of the confusion of ע and ה. The confusion of בהר and

¹⁸⁹ Metathetic errors have been noted above in the discussions on 2:27, 4:18, 12:3b14:6, and below on 18:2a. See also Delitzsch, 1920: 118, § 129^c.

¹⁹⁰ Compare Kuhn (1937: 61) who proposed a *Vorlage* having the stem זרד “to boil up, to seethe,” and Begrich (1939: 142–143) who suggested that the original Hebrew was עשה גארה “acted arrogantly.”

בַּעַר could have been another example of an aural error (see, above, the discussion on 17:6a). The context supports the Greek text with ὑπερηφανίαν/ ὑπερηφανίαν being understood as “brutal.”

The Greek ἀλλοτρία “alien” and the Syriac ܠܗܘܢܘܢܘܢ “in a foreign manner” could be translations of each other, or they could be comparable translations of a *Vorlage* with the stem נכר “foreign.”¹⁹¹ If the root were נכר,¹⁹² the poet may have intended a *double entendre* since נכר stem I means “to recognize” and stem II means “to be alien” (BDB, 648). The semantic range of the Arabic cognate of stem II is noteworthy. The Arabic نكر “cunning” is said of a man who is “intelligent and evil.” Lane (1893, 2850) cited the Qur’an, Sura 18:73, “Verily, thou has done a bad, an evil, an abominable, or a foul thing (نكرا).”¹⁹³

17:14a (G), 17:16a (S)

καὶ πάντα ἐποίησεν ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ
So he did in Jerusalem all the things

וכלהם עשה בירושלם
and Jerusalem did everything

וכל-אשר עשה בירושלים
and all that he did in Jerusalem

¹⁹¹ Compare Frankenberg’s (1896: 95) suggestion for the *Vorlage* having בודון “in pride” and Gray’s (1913, 648) proposal for a *Vorlage* having כנכר “like an alien” for בנכר.

¹⁹² The nuances of stem II in Arabic are of interest. نكر can mean “to be ignorant of, to be unacquainted with, to disavow, to deny” (Hava, 1915: 797). In stem IV (= *hiph’il*) it has the meaning “to deny, to disown, to disacknowledge” (Lane, 2849). In the Qur’an, Sura 16:85 states, “they confess . . . the favor of God; then they deny it (تنكرونها).” If נכר had a similar nuance, it would give additional support to the interpretation that the enemy was the Hasmonians who have disavowed and denied the faith, despite their confessions.

¹⁹³ Two of the angels of death are Munkar (منكر) and Nakir (نكير). On the use of Hebrew נִכְר “calamity,” see Job 31:3 and Obadiah 12.

The Syriac and the Greek differ in that in Syriac “Jerusalem” is the subject of the verb while the Greek has ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ (the Syriac text lacks any equivalent for the ἐν) “in Jerusalem.” However, this can hardly be explained as Kuhn (1937: 62–63) proposed, as an instance where the Syriac translator found the text “unverständlich” and stumbled over a preposition. As noted with reference to Psalm 17:8–13 (S 17:10–15), the Syriac and the Greek had difficulty in understanding the *Vorlage*, but they usually got the preposition ܐ straight. It is also unlikely that the Syriac and Greek texts are translations of each other.

The difference, as to whether or not “Jerusalem” was the subject of the verb was probably due to a confusion of a ܐ and a ܐ in the *Vorlage*, i.e., whether the verb was עשה “he did” or עשה “she did”. The Greek *Vorlage*, no doubt, had a third masculine singular עשה, and consequently “the enemy” became the subject; the Syriac read עשה as third feminine singular and, consequently, “Jerusalem” became the subject. If the Syriac *Vorlage* had a ܐ preposition prefixed to ܝܪܘܫܠܝܡ, the ܐ could easily have been read as an emphatic ܐ which went untranslated.¹⁹⁴ In this context the Greek best represents the *Vorlage* and the reconstruction above follows the Greek text.

17:15a (G), 17:17a (S)

καὶ ἐπεκρατοῦσαν αὐτῶν οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς διαθήκης
 ἐν μέσῳ ἐθνῶν συμμίκτων
 and the children of the covenant (living)
 among the gentile rabble adopted these (practices)
 ܝܪܘܫܠܝܡ ܐܝܬܝܢ ܐܝܬܝܢ ¹⁹⁵ ܐܝܬܝܢ ܐܝܬܝܢ
ܐܝܬܝܢ ܐܝܬܝܢ ܐܝܬܝܢ
 and the sons of the covenant were holding them
 among mixed nations

¹⁹⁴ On the emphatic ܐ see Dahood and Penar (1970: 402–405).

¹⁹⁵ Trafton (1985: 166) has the Syriac here as ܐܝܬܝܢ rather than ܐܝܬܝܢ.

וגברו בהם בני ברית בתוך רב הגוים
*and the sons of the covenant in
 the midst of the mix of the gentiles maintained them*

The Greek ἐπεκρατοῦσαν “maintained” and the Syriac ܐܫܬܝܢܐ “holding, adhering to, maintaining” could be translations of each other, or they could be accurate translations of a shared *Vorlage*. Hatch and Redpath (1954: 523) lists six words translated by ἐπι-κρατέω, including גבר and חזק, both meaning “to strengthen.” In light of Daniel 9:27, where גבר is used with ברית with the sense of “confirming a covenant” (BDB, 149; Montgomery, 1927: 385), גבר is more likely to have been in the *Vorlage* than חזק. The behavior referred to in Psalm 106:35, וַיִּתְעַרְבוּ בְּגוֹיִם וַיִּלְמְדוּ מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם, “they mingled with the nations and learned to do as they did,” corresponds to the behavior described in this verse. Wright’s (1985: 666) rendering ἐθνῶν συμμίκτων as “gentile rabble” is a contextually based pejorative, rather than a strictly literal, translation. However, his parenthetical “(practices)” is contextually correct and indirectly reflects the phrase “all the things the gentiles do for their gods” of the preceding verse. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows closely the Greek and Syriac texts which approximate each other.

17:15c (G), 17:17b (S)

οὐκ ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς ὁ ποιῶν . . . ἔλεος καὶ ἀλήθειαν
 no one among them . . . acted . . . (with) mercy or truth

ܐܘܟܐܢ ܐܝܢ ܒܗܡܢ ܘܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ

and there was not among them anyone
 who was doing mercy and {truth}

¹⁹⁶ . . . ולא היה בהם עשה חסד ואמת . . .
*and there was not among them one
 who was doing mercy and truth*

¹⁹⁶ The reconstructed *Vorlage* of this line follows Stein (1969: 458).

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The Greek and Syriac texts of this line are essentially the same, but Syriac ms 16hl reads ܩܝܘܢܐ “and we were doing truth.” The difference between ܩܝܘܢܐ and ܩܝܘܢܐ reflects a confusion of ܩ and ܩ, i.e., a misreading of the plural noun ܩܝܘܢܐ as ܩܝܘܢܐ, the first person plural verb. The Greek text and the context argues against the reading of 16hl. The reconstructed *Vorlage* has followed the Greek text and the other Syriac manuscripts.

17:16 (G), 17:18b (S)

ὡς στρουθία ἐξεπετάσθησαν

ἀπὸ κοίτης αὐτῶν

as sparrows fled from their nest

ܩܝܘܢܐ ܩܝܘܢܐ ܩܝܘܢܐ ܩܝܘܢܐ ܩܝܘܢܐ ܩܝܘܢܐ

and they flew like sparrows who fly from their nest

כצפרים דאיו ממעונם

like sparrows they flew from their nest

The Syriac text has a doublet. The initial ܩܝܘܢܐ “they flew” corresponds to the Greek ἐξεπετάσθησαν “they fled.”¹⁹⁷ The Greek suggests that the *Vorlage* had the root ܩܝܘܢܐ in the *hiph‘il* meaning “to take wing,” as in Job 39:26 ܩܝܘܢܐ ܩܝܘܢܐ “the hawk soars.” But the doublet favors the stem ܩܝܘܢܐ, wherein the original ܩܝܘܢܐ “they flew” was read as ܩܝܘܢܐ (= ܩܝܘܢܐ) “flying ones,” reflecting a confusion of ܩ and ܩ.¹⁹⁸ The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek and omits any equivalent for the relative particle and the participle, ܩܝܘܢܐ.

17:17a (G), 17:19a (S)

ἐπλανῶντο ἐν ἐρήμοις

σωθῆναι ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἀπὸ κακοῦ

(they became) refugees in the wilderness

to save their lives from evil

¹⁹⁷ Wright’s (1985: 666) “(they) fled” for ἐξεπετάσθησαν “they flew, they stretch forth, they expanded (sails)” (Liddell and Scott, 516) is strange unless it is a misprint for “flew” under the influence of the “fled” of the previous line.

¹⁹⁸ On the confusion of ܩ and ܩ see Delitzsch, 1920: 121, § 132^c, 132^f.

ܡܠܝܚܝܢ ܡܗܘܢ ܒܡܨܝܪܐ
 ܘܢܦܫܘܬܗܘܢ ܢܨܘܬܘܢ ܡܢ ܥܝܠ
 and they were wandering in the desert
in order to save their soul from evil
 תעו במדבר להושע נפשיהם מרעה
*they wandered in the wilderness
 to save their souls from evil*

The Greek passive verb σωθῆναι “they might be saved” (which Wright translated as active, “to save”) and the Syriac active infinitive ܡܠܝܚܝܢ are not accurate translations of each other. Kuhn’s (1937: 15–16, 66) suggestion that the Hebrew *Vorlage* had the *hiph^eil* infinitive להמלט “to save” (= להמלט, or with *scriptio plena* להמלית), which the Greek translator read as the *niph^eal* להמלט “to be saved,” is quite convincing. However, the root need not to have been מלט, for the same ambiguity would have occurred with *niph^eal* and *hiph^eil* of ישע “to save.”

The Syriac *Vorlage* may have had נפשתימו (*scriptio defectiva*) for נפשתימו “their souls,” in which case the Syriac misread נפשתימו instead of נפשתימו. The reconstructed *Vorlage* has adopted the active infinitive of the Syriac and the plural ψυχὰς αὐτῶν “their souls / their lives” of the Greek.

17:17b (G), 17:19b (S)
 καὶ τίμιον ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς παροικίας
 ψυχὴ σεσωσμένη ἐξ αὐτῶν
 the life of even one who was saved
 from them was precious in the eyes of the exiles
 ܘܢܦܫܘܬܗܘܢ ܢܨܘܬܘܢ ܡܢ ܥܝܠ
 ܘܢܦܫܘܬܗܘܢ ܢܨܘܬܘܢ ܡܢ ܥܝܠ
 and the sojourning of the soul which was saved
 from them was precious in their eyes
 ויקר בעיני המגורים נפש מושע מהם
*and precious in the eyes of the [refugees]
 wandering [in the desert]*

(was) the person who had been saved
from them [i.e., the mixed gentiles]

The Greek and Syriac texts have words in this poetic line which correspond to each other, but they have a very different syntax, making it impossible for them to be an accurate translation of each other. But both texts could go back to a Hebrew *Vorlage* which could have been read in different ways. Kuhn (1937: 16, 67) proposed that the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the Syriac was וַיִּקַּר בְּעֵינֵיהֶם מִגּוֹרֵי נַפְשׁ, whereas the Hebrew *Vorlage* behind the Greek text must have been וַיִּקַּר בְּעֵינֵי הַמְּגוֹרִים נַפְשׁ. The difference between the two texts was the position of the הֵם / הֵמוּ in the middle of the phrase. It was either affixed to the prefixed noun בְּעֵינֵי meaning “in their eyes” (= Syriac) or it was prefixed to the following bound noun, מִגּוֹרֵי meaning “the ones sojourning” (= Greek), in which case the extra ם of the הַמְּגוֹרִים became the suffix, changing הַמְּגוֹרֵי to הֵמִיגּוֹרִים. Begrich’s (1939: 148–149) reservations about the equation of παροικίας with מִגּוֹרֵים were unfounded in light of the fact that Hatch and Redpath (1954: 1071) listed twelve examples of πάροικος having been used to translate גֵּר “sojourner, or גֵּר “to sojourn.”

Kuhn’s proposal may not be *absolutely* correct,¹⁹⁹ but to challenge it, as did Trafton, in favor of speculative possible adjustments by a Syriac paraphraser’s unspecified misreadings of the Greek text — while asserting, at the same time, that the Syriac text could reflect accurately a Hebrew *Vorlage* — seems contradictory and unnecessarily cautious.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁹ Since παροικίας was used in the LXX to translate גּוֹלָה “exile,” as well as גּוֹר, גּוֹרָה, and מְגוֹרָה “to sojourn, sojourning,” one cannot not preclude the possibility that the *Vorlage* had the stem גּוֹלָה. If the *Vorlage* had גּוֹר, the Greek translator could have used προσηλύτος, as in Ezekiel 14:7, where בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּמְהַגְּר אֲשֶׁר־יָגוּר “or of the immigrants who stay in Israel” (NAS) appears in the LXX as αἱ ἐκ τῶν προσηλύτων τῶν προσηλυτευόντων ἐν τῷ Ἰσραηλ.

²⁰⁰ Trafton’s (1985: 168–169) reservations about Kuhn’s ideas are surprisingly speculative. He noted:

But Kuhn’s argument is not absolutely convincing either. He was correct in pointing out numerous, if indeed minor, differences between Sy and Gk in this

The reconstructed *Vorlage*, above, follows Kuhn's analysis, but not his conclusion. He thought that the Syriac reading was correct, but this writer finds the Greek reading to be preferable since the Syriac syntax is awkward and atypical in producing the expression ܠܘܘܝܢ ܡܫܝܚܝܢ "the sojourning of the soul." The collocation of ܫܝܚܝܢ and ܠܘܘܝܢ in this manner is unattested elsewhere. The Greek text reflects a more traditional syntax with its disassociating, through case endings, παροικίας from ψυχη, even though they are adjacent to each other in the poetic line.

17:20a (G), 17:21b (S)

καὶ λαοῦ ἐλαχίστου

to the commonest of the people (Wright)
and of the least people (Trafton)

ܠܘܘܝܢ ܡܫܝܚܝܢ ܠܘܘܝܢ
to their least ones

עַד צַעֲרֵיהֶם

to their least ones

The λαοῦ "people" of the Greek text and the ܠܘܘܝܢ "and to" of the Syriac text cannot be translations of each other. Begrich (1939: 149) suspected that the Syriac translator, using the Greek text, translated καὶ λαοῦ as ܠܘܘܝܢ "and of the people" which was subsequently contextually corrupted to ܠܘܘܝܢ "and to." Trafton (1985: 169) followed Begrich and suggested that the corruptions were intentionally done by the Syriac translator, who (apparently for this word or verse) used the Greek text as the basis of his translation.

The above reconstructed *Vorlage* follows Gray (1913: 626) in recognizing a misreading of a Hebrew *Vorlage* in which עַד(ו) was read by the Greek translator as ܠܘܘܝܢ(ו). Delitzsch (1920, *passim*, especially 119, § 131) listed numerous places where ܠ and ܘ were

line, and his solution is plausible. But it is also possible that the Sy translator misread part of Gk and then made other adjustments accordingly, or simply that the Sy translator paraphrased Gk. Finally, both Sy and Gk make sense in the context; thus, either could reflect the original Hebrew.

confused with ב, כ, ו, י, נ, ה, פ, ר, and ט. Consequently, a proposal for an occasional confusion of ט and כ is not unreasonable.

17:22a (G), 17:24b (S)

ἄρχοντας ἀδίκους
the unrighteous rulers

ܐܪܚܘܢܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ
the rulers of lawlessness

שליטים שנים
sinful rulers

The differences between the Syriac ܐܪܚܘܢܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ “rulers who are lawless” of ms 10hl and ܐܪܚܘܢܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ “rulers of lawlessness” of ms 16hl, as well as the Greek ἄρχοντας ἀδίκους “lawless rulers,” are probably due to the position of a ה in the *Vorlage*. The Greek text and Syriac ms 10hl evidently read שליטים שנים, i.e., the plural noun followed by its appositional plural modifier, literally, “rulers, sinful ones.” The Syriac ms 16hl evidently read שליטי מן עוול “rulers of lawlessness,” i.e., the construct plural noun followed by the *nomen rectum*. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek and Syriac ms 10hl.

17:22b (G), 17:25a (S)

καθαρίσαι²⁰¹ Ἱερουσαλημ
to purge Jerusalem

ܕܢܘܨܘܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ
that he might purify Jerusalem

יטהר ירושלם

that he [the son of David] might purify Jerusalem

The Greek infinitive καθαρίσαι “to purge” and the Syriac imperfect ܕܢܘܨܘܬܐ “that he might purge her” cannot be accurate translations of each other even though both use their respective

²⁰¹ The Greek καθαρίσαι in Rahlfs’ text, followed by Wright, is an emendation of καθάρισον.

words meaning “to purge.” The simple Syriac imperfect (with its prefixed relative ܐ and the anticipatory suffix ܡ) does not support the statement of Kuhn (1937: 69): “καθάρισον ist Korruptel in ̄ für ursprüngliches καθαρίσαι (Inf. Aor.), wie schon Geiger erkannte und wie es jetzt ̄ bestätigt.” The Syriac can only confirm that the *Vorlage* did not have an imperative, even though καθαρίσον could be parsed as (1) a second singular imperative (Trafton, 1985:171; and was so recognized by Gray, 1913: 649), or (2) a second singular aorist imperfect active. It appears that the Greek translator read a *pīel* infinitive ܠܫܘܪ, whereas the Syriac translator read the imperfect ܫܘܪ, reflecting the confusion of ܠ and ܫ.²⁰² The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text, noting that Trafton correctly used the modal “that he might purify” for the Syriac imperfect.

17:25a (G), 17:27b (S)

ἐν ἀπειλῇ αὐτοῦ

at his warning

ܡܫܘܪܐ

at his rebuke

במזוהיר

at his warning

The Greek ἀπειλή “warning” and the Syriac ܡܫܘܪܐ “rebuke” are not literal translations of each other. The broad semantic range of ἀπειλή “to promise, to threaten, to boast, to brag” (Liddell and Scott, 183–183) and the narrow semantic range of ܡܘܪܐ (J. Payne Smith, 1903: 201, 203) “to reprove, to rebuke, to chide” do not overlap to include both ideas of “warning” and “rebuke.” But ἀπειλή and ܡܫܘܪܐ could be literal translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* having ܫܘܪ, stem II (attested in the *hiphʿil* and *niphʿal* only) meaning “to instruct, to teach, to warn, to admonish.” In contrast to Stein (1969: 459) who used the stem ܨܘܪ “rebuke,” (as did Franz Delitzsch [n. d., *ad loc.*

²⁰² On the confusion of ܠ and ܫ, see Delitzsch 192: 115 § 119^a.

17:27b), the reconstructed *Vorlage* uses ׀הר to accommodate the ideas expressed by the Greek and the Syriac.

17:26a (G), 17:28a (S)

οὗ ἀφηγήσεται ἐν δικαιοσύνη
whom he will lead in righteousness

ܘܢܫܘܬܐܘܢܐ ܘܢܫܘܬܐܘܢܐ

which will boast in righteousness

אשר ינהל בצדקה

whom *he will lead* in righteousness

The Greek ἀφηγήσεται “he will lead” and the Syriac ܘܢܫܘܬܐܘܢܐ “he will boast” cannot be translations of each other. Kuhn (1937: 16–17, 70) was on target with his suggestion that in reading the *Vorlage* there was a confusion of the root נהל “to lead” and the root הלל, which in the *qal* and the *hiph'el* means “to boast.” Kuhn opted for a *hithpa'el* יהלל, but in light of Psalm 75:5, where the *qal* of הלל is attested with one ל (אל תהללו) “do not be boastful”), the *Vorlage* could have been the *piel* ינהל (the *qal*, with the ׀ assimilated, is unattested). In this case, the Syriac translator misread, or his *Vorlage* had, יהל²⁰³ for ינהל. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text which is contextually appropriate.

17:29a (G), 17:31b (S)

κρινεῖ λαοὺς καὶ ἔθνη
he will judge peoples and nations

ܘܠܘܘܢܐ ܘܠܘܘܢܐ ܘܠܘܘܢܐ
because he judges nations and cities

כי ידין עמים וגוים

surely, he will judge the peoples and the nations

²⁰³ On the forms of ע"ע verbs see GKC, 177, § 67^{f-g}.

The Syriac ܐܘܪܝܢ “because” has no corresponding particle in the Greek text. The extended debate, as to whether or not ܐܘܪܝܢ is derived from a misreading of ἔτι (in 17:28) as the particle ὅτι, has been summarized by Trafton (1985: 173–175). Surprisingly, no one has suggested that the Greek text could have been ἔτι ὅτι, and that the ὅτι was dropped from the Greek due to haplography. On the other hand, the Syriac ܐܘܪܝܢ suggests that the Hebrew *Vorlage* had an initial emphatic ַ or ְ, which was misread as the preposition. In either case, the force of the emphatic ְ in the original Hebrew went unrecognized by the Syriac and Greek translators. The hint of its presence survives only in ܐܘܪܝܢ, which is unnecessary as a causal particle.

The Syriac ܩܘܪܝܢ, “cities” does not translate the Greek λαοὺς or ἔθνη. A Hebrew *Vorlage* with עַמִּים “peoples” (an alternative spelling of עַמְמִים as in Isaiah 2:3 and Nehemiah 9:22) was misread by the Syriac translator as עַרְיִים “cities.”²⁰⁴ The reconstructed *Vorlage* restores the emphatic and follows the Greek collocation of “nations and peoples.”

17:30a (G), 17:32a (S)

καὶ ἔξει λαοὺς ἐθνῶν

and he will have gentile nations

ܐܘܪܝܢ ܩܘܪܝܢ ܩܘܪܝܢ ܩܘܪܝܢ

and he will possess a nation from the nations

וַיִּרְשׁ עַמִּים גּוִיִּם

and *he will possess gentile peoples*

The Greek ἔξει “he will have” and the Syriac ܐܘܪܝܢ “he will possess” could be translations of each other, but the absence of ἀπό from the Greek text corresponding to the Syriac ܩܘܪܝܢ “from” suggests that the translations are derived from a Hebrew *Vorlage* having the

²⁰⁴ See the discussion above on 17:22 for other examples of the confusion of ַ with ְ or ְ.

verb ירש (which equals the מרס “to possess”) which was misread by the Greek translator as the particle ש “being, having.”

The preposition מ probably comes from a *Vorlage* which had עמים גוים “peoples, gentile (ones).” However, it was read by the Syriac translator as עמי מגוים “the peoples from the gentiles.”²⁰⁵ The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek and has no preposition equivalent to the Syriac מ.

17:30b (G), 17:32b (S)

καὶ τὸν κύριον δοξάσει ἐν ἐπισημῶ πάσης τῆς γῆς
and he will glorify the Lord in (a place) prominent
(above) the whole earth

וְעַבְדֵיכֶם יְגַלְּלוּ לַיהוָה בְּכָל אֶרֶץ

and they will glorify the Lord openly in all the land

יִכְבְּדוּ יְהוָה דָּרָר בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ

they will glorify Yahweh freely in all the earth

The Syriac גַּלְגַּל “publicly” and the Greek ἐν ἐπισημῶ “in prominence” cannot be accurate translations of each other. However, they may be translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* which had the noun דָּרָר “liberty,” used as an adverbial accusative meaning “freely, openly, publicly,” which the Greek translator misread as הָדָר “splendor, honor.” A similar confusion of דָּרָר with הָדָר “splendor” according to Hoffmann (*ZAW* 1882, 103, cited in BDB 214), occurs in Micah 2:9, נָשִׁי עַמִּי תִגְרְשׁוּן מִבֵּית תַּעֲנִיגָהָ מֵעַל עַלְלִיָּהָ תִקְחוּ, הָדָרִי לְעוֹלָם, “the women of my people you drive out from their pleasant houses; from their young children you take *freedom for ever*” (RSV, “. . . my glory forever”).²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ For other examples of a construct chain with an intervening preposition see the discussions on 6:3a and 16:1b.

²⁰⁶ On the confusion of דָּ with הָ and the confusion of דָּ with רָ, see Delitzsch, 1920: 105–106, § 104^{a-b} and 114, § 114^d.

The difference between the Greek δοξάσει “he will glorify” and the Syriac ܢܥܒܕܝܢܗܘܗܘܗ “they will glorify” can readily be accounted for by a *Vorlage* having ܢܥܒܕܝܢܗܘܗܘܗ “they will glorify Yahweh,” in which the final ܢ of ܢܥܒܕܝܢ was lost by haplography due to the initial ܢ of ܢܗܘܗܘܗ. The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Syriac text at this point.

The Greek remains problematic as Gray (1913: 650) indicated by his inserting “(?)” in his translation and Wright’s (1985: 667) inserting “(a place)” and “(above)” in his translation. Here is an example of the importance of the Syriac text as a possible corrective to the Greek text which needs to be recognized by those who work with the theology of the Psalms of Solomon. The haplography of a single letter can transform a statement of universalism (“they [the nations which serve the son of David] will glorify Yahweh freely in all the earth”) into a narrow, nationalistic statement (“he [the son of David] will glorify Yahweh freely in all the earth”).

17:31b (G), 17:34b (S)

τοὺς ἐξησθενηκότας υἱοὺς αὐτῆς

her children who had been driven out (Wright)

her sons who had fainted (Trafton)

ܠܒܢܝܗܘܗܘܗܘܗ ܢܥܒܕܝܢܗܘܗܘܗ

to her sons who were scattered from her

ܠܒܢܝܗܘܗܘܗܘܗ

to her sons, the ones scattered

The Greek ἐξησθενηκότας “who were faint” and the Syriac ܢܥܒܕܝܢܗܘܗܘܗ “those who were scattered” cannot be translations of each other. For this participle, Wright (1985: 667) apparently translated the Syriac verb rather than the Greek. Kuhn (1937: 17, 72–73) proposed a Hebrew *Vorlage* with ܘܚܘܒܝܢܗܘܗܘܗ “the ones scattered” which became corrupted to ܘܚܘܒܝܢܗܘܗܘܗ “the ones who became faint.” Begrich (1939: 146) argued against Kuhn, noting that a corruption of ܘ and ܘ is not likely. Delitzsch (1920, *passim*) listed numerous examples of the ܘ being confused with ܘ, ܘ, ܘ, and ܘ, but he

cited no example of the confusion of פ and פ, which lends support to Begrich's reservations.

Nevertheless, Kuhn's approach was correct although his targeting of the roots פנר and פזר may have been in error. In light of the MT of Ezekiel 6:8, בְּהִזְרֹתֵיכֶם בְּאֶרְצוֹת, "when you are scattered through the country," and Ezekiel 36:19, וְאֶפֶיץ אֹתָם בְּגוֹיִם וְיִזְרוּ בְּאֶרְצוֹת "I scattered them among the nations and they were dispersed through the countries," it is much more likely that the Hebrew *Vorlage* had the root פזר, which was misread by the Greek translator as פה "to be faint, to be ill."²⁰⁷

In light of Isaiah 49:22, "and they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders" (direct object) and Isaiah 60:4 and 9, "and your daughters shall be carried in the arms. . . . to bring your sons from far, their silver and gold with them" (indirect object), υἱὸς αὐτῆς "her [Jerusalem's] sons" could be either the direct object or the indirect object. The Greek understood it to be the former ("to bring as gifts her children"), and the Syriac took it to be the latter ("they bring gifts to her sons"). The reconstructed *Vorlage* has followed the Syriac text, making "her sons" the recipients of gifts which were carried.

17:32c (G), 17:36c (S)

καὶ βασιλεὺς αὐτῶν χριστὸς κυρίος
and their king shall be the Lord Messiah

מלכא משיחא דמלכא
and their king (will be) the Lord Messiah

ומלכם משיח אדון
and their king (will be) an anointed lord

In much the same manner in which בְּיַהֲנֵהוּ מְשִׁיחוֹ in I Samuel 16:6 (LXX ἐνώπιον κυρίου χριστὸς) was interpreted to mean the "LORD'S anointed is before him" (KJV, RSV), the χριστὸς κυρίος

²⁰⁷ On the confusion of פ with פ and פ with פ, see Delitzsch, 1920, 113 §112^c and 111 § 109^b.

in this poetic line has generally, but incorrectly, been emended to $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ $\kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon$ and considered to be the equivalent of מְשִׁיחַ הַיהוָה . Gray (1913: 650) translated it as “the anointed of the Lord”; and Wellhausen (1924: 162) similarly rendered it “der Gesalbte des Herrn”; and the emendation appeared in Rahlfs’s text (1935, 488). However, the $\kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ of $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ $\kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$ ” is not a reference to הַיהוָה but to the Judean king introduced in 17:21, “raise up for them their king, the son of David” and referred to as “lord” in 17:34.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ The collocation of “O Lord,” “their king,” and “O God” in 17:21 (Syriac 17:23) provides the clue for understanding the use of “Lord” in all of 17:20–51. Reference to “the king” in 17:20 is clearly the earthly ruler (seemingly the Hasmoneans who exchanged the priest’s turban for the king’s crown). The divine “Lord” and “King” (= הַיהוָה) is referred to in the following verses:

Greek 21a	(Syriac 23a)	“O Lord”
Greek 21b	(Syriac 23b)	“O God”
Greek 26b	(Syriac 28a)	“the Lord their (Syriac = ‘his’) God”
Greek 30a	(Syriac 32b)	“the Lord”
Greek 31a	(Syriac 35a)	“with which God”
Greek 31b	(Syriac 35b)	“by God”
Greek 34a	(Syriac 38a)	“for the Lord (Syriac + ‘himself’) is his king”
Greek 34b	(Syriac 38b)	“his God”
Greek 37a	(Syriac 42a)	“his God”
Greek 37b		“for God”
Greek 38	(Syriac 43)	“of the Lord”
Greek 39	(Syriac 44a)	“in the Lord” (Syriac “. . . the Lord”)
Greek 40a	(Syriac 44b)	“fear of (Syriac + ‘his’) God”
Greek 40b	(Syriac 45a)	“of the Lord”
Greek 42a		“which God knew”
Greek 44		“which God will”
Greek 45		“may God”
Greek 46	(Syriac 51b)	“the Lord (Greek + ‘Himself’)”

The earthly “lord” or “king” is the antecedent of the explicit / implicit “he / him” in 17:21–44 (Syriac 17:23–50); but in 17:45 (Syriac 17:51) the antecedent of the third person singular pronouns is God. In 17:45–46 (Syriac 17:51) the noun “Lord” is in synonymous parallelism with “God,” and the third person singular pronouns are a reference to God. In contrast, the “anointed lord” here in 17:32c (Syriac 17:36b) is clearly not a reference to הַיהוָה — who would be the מְשִׁיחַ “the anointer” — but to the מְשִׁיחַ “the anointed.”

The Syriac phrase, ܠܝܗ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ, consists of two nouns in the emphatic state, namely, “the anointed” and its appositional modifier, “the lord.” The syntax differs from the similar phrase ܠܝܗܐ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ in Lamentations 4:20, which has both nouns in the emphatic state, but the relative pronoun stands between them, requiring the meaning to be “the anointed of the Lord.” It is noteworthy that the definite article is not attested with either *χριστός* or *κύριος*.²⁰⁹

Hann (1982: 138–139, 176; 1985: 620–627) and Wright (1985: 667–668) were correct in accepting the *χριστός κύριος* as it appears in the manuscripts, recognizing that it is analogous to the title βασιλεύς κύριος given to Herod the Great and Herod Agrippa. מְשִׁיחַ אֲדֹנָי “an anointed lord” appears in the reconstructed *Vorlage* above, in contrast to Frankenberg’s (1896: 84) מְשִׁיחַ יְהוָה וּמַלְכָּם and Franz Delitzsch’s (n. d., *ad loc.* 17:36b) and Stein’s (1969: 459) וּמַלְכָּם יְהוָה מְשִׁיחַ, all of which need to be translated “their king, the anointed of Yahweh.”²¹⁰

17:33b (G), 17:37b (S)

καὶ πολλοῖς λαοῖς οὐ συνάξει ἐλπίδας (Rahlf)

καὶ πολλοῖς οὐ συνάξει ἐλπίδας (Wright)

nor will he build up hope in a multitude (Wright)

and to many things he will not gather hope (Trafton)

וְלֹא יִבְנוּ בְּל מַלְכֵי
and he will not trust in many

וְלֹא יִשְׁבֵּר שִׁבְרֵי אֱלֹהִים רַבִּים

and he will not place his hope upon the generals

²⁰⁹ However, the absence of the definite article is not decisive for reading אֲדֹנָי (over against אֲדֹנָי) as “lord” rather than “the Lord.” In Exodus 23:17, for example, the phrase אֶל־פְּנֵי יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי, “before the Lord Yahweh” was paraphrased in the LXX as ἐνώπιον κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου, “before (the) Lord the God of you.”

²¹⁰ Ordinarily, the attributive modifier (which, in this case, is מְשִׁיחַ) follows the noun (which, in this case, is אֲדֹנָי). But Gesenius (GKC § 132^b) has noted examples where the adjectival attribute stands appositionally before its substantive for emphasis. Note Joosten’s study (1993) on the “ante-position” of the attributive adjective.

The Greek συναξει ἐλπίδας “he will gather hope” and the Syriac ܩܘܒܐ “he will hope” are not literal translations of each other, though they express a similar idea. Likewise, Wright’s (1985: 668) translation of πολλοῖς as “multitude” is not equivalent to Trafton’s (1985: 179) translation of πολλοῖς as “many things,” for “multitude” permits the reference to be to people (as though Wright was drawing on Rahlfs’s [1935, 488] addition of λαοῖς to the text), whereas “many things” precludes πολλοῖς from referring to people.

The contextually enigmatic πολλοῖς οὐ συναξει ἐλπίδας has given rise to a number of emendations of the Greek text, well summarized in Trafton (1985: 178–179), including the following proposed “corrections” seeking to make sense of this poetic line within the context of verses 32–40:

πολλοῖς =	ܩܘܒܐ(ܬ)	“archers”	Geiger (1871: 159)
ἐλπίδας =	ἀσπίδας	“shields”	Hilgenfeld (1886, 160; 1871, 413)
ἐλπίδας =	ἄλλοις	“others”	Hilgenfeld
πολλοῖς =	παλτοῖς	“spears”	Hilgenfeld
πολλοῖς =	ὄπλοις	“weapons”	Hilgenfeld
πολλοῖς =	πλοίοις	“by ships”	Ryle and James (1891: 142–144)
συναξει =	ܩܘܒܐ	“hoping”	Ryle and James
ἐλπίδας =	ܩܘܒܐ	“hope”	Ryle and James
πολλοῖς =	πολλοῖς λαοῖς	“many people”	von Gephardt (1895, 187)
πολλοῖς =	ܩܘܒܐ(ܬ)	“Menge”	Kittel (1900, 147)
πολλοῖς =	πολλοῦς	“many”	Viteau (1911, 362–363)

Of all these proposals, only the suggestions of Geiger and Kittel for a *Vorlage* having ܩܘܒܐ “Menge, archers” lead to a reasonable interpretation of the poetic line. Their reconstruction to ܩܘܒܐ was correct, but Geiger and Kittel failed to recognize a more appropriate definition of ܩܘܒܐ. Although ܩܘܒܐ could be from ܩܘܒܐ stem II “to shoot (arrows)” or from ܩܘܒܐ stem I “much, many (either quantitative or qualitative),” ܩܘܒܐ probably had the special nuance

found in the following passages in which רב is a synonym for שר “officer”:

- (1) Jeremiah 39:3, where רב occurs twice in names/titles of the officers (שרי):

וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל שָׂרֵי מַלְאָךְ-בָּבֶל
 וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בַּשַּׁעַר הַתְּוֹךְ
 נְרִגְלֵ שַׁרְאָצֶר סַמְגַרְנֵבו שַׁר־סָכִים
 רַב־סָרִיס נְרִגְלֵ שַׁרְאָצֶר רַב־מָג
 וְכָל־שָׂאֲרֵי שָׂרֵי מַלְאָךְ בָּבֶל

“all the *princes* of the king of Babylon
 came and sat in the middle gate:

Nergalsharezer, Samgarnebo, Sarsechim
 the *Rabsaris*, Nergalsharezer the *Rabmag*,
 with all the rest of the *officers* of the king of Babylon.”

(The LXX [46:3 = MT 39:3] translates שָׂרֵי מַלְאָךְ בָּבֶל
 as ἡγεμόνες βασιλέως Βαβυλῶνος.)

- (2) Jeremiah 39:13, where רב occurs four times, three times as a name component and once in the phrase רַבֵּי מַלְאָךְ-בָּבֶל “chief officers of the king of Babylon”:²¹¹

וַיִּשְׁלַח נְבוּזַרְאֲדָן רַב־טַבָּחִים וְנְבוּשַׁזְבָּן רַב־סָרִיס
 וְנְרִגְלֵ שַׁרְאָצֶר רַב־מָג וְכָל רַבֵּי מַלְאָךְ-בָּבֶל

“So Nebuzaradan the *captain* of the guard,
 Nebushazban the *Rabsaris*,
 Nergalsharezer, *Rabmag*, and all the chief *officers*
 of the king of Babylon sent. . . .”

The LXX is lacking this part of Jeremiah, but in light of the translation of שָׂרֵי מַלְאָךְ בָּבֶל as ἡγεμόνες βασιλέως Βαβυλῶνος “officers of the king of Babylon,” one would expect the same translation for the synonymous רַבֵּי מַלְאָךְ-בָּבֶל.

²¹¹ These officers equal the שָׂרֵי מַלְאָךְ בָּבֶל in 39:3.

(3) Jeremiah 41:1, where הַמְלִיךְ הַרְבִּי appears as a synonym for שְׂרֵי מְלִיךְ:

בֶּן אִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן־נְתַנְיָהוּ
בֶּן־אֵלִישָׁמָע מְזִרְעַת הַמְּלוּכָה
וְרַבֵּי הַמְּלָךְ וַעֲשָׂרָה אַנְשִׁים אָתוּ

“Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama,
of the royal family, *one of the chief*
officers of the king, came with ten men”

Unfortunately the Greek text lost the equivalent phrase for הַמְּלִיךְ הַרְבִּי (or had a different Hebrew *Vorlage* lacking the phrase).

Since the Greek translator rightly rendered שְׂרֵי מְלִיךְ בְּבָבֶל as ἡγεμόνες βασιλέως Βαβυλῶνος, one can assume that he would have known the meaning of הַמְּלִיךְ הַרְבִּי in the same chapter. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude, even with the loss of the phrase from the LXX in verse 48:1, that הַמְּלִיךְ הַרְבִּי and שְׂרֵי מְלִיךְ are synonymous and that both would appear in Greek as ἡγεμόνες βασιλέως. The noun רַב would be the equivalent of ἡγεμόνες. The Greek and Syriac translators can be faulted, in words borrowed from Barr (1968: 268), for “a strong tendency towards leveling the vocabulary and the interpretation of that which is rare as if it was that which is more normal.” Instead of offering a contextually controlled translation of רַב, they gave πολλοῖς and ܩܠܝܠܝܢܐ, simple lexical equivalents.²¹²

The Syriac has only ܢܫܬܚܝܐ “he will hope” corresponding to the Greek phrase συναξει ἐλπίδας “he will bring about hope.” This difference suggests that the poet probably used a *schema etymologicum*, similar to that used in Lamentations 1:8, ܩܣܬܐ ܩܣܬܐ ܝܪܘܫܠܝܡ “Jerusalem sinned a sin.”²¹³ The Syriac translator evidently

²¹² Note the use of רַב in Esther 1:8, ܦܝܪܝܢ ܝܫܕ ܩܠܝܠܝܢܐ ܥܠ ܩܠ-ܪܒ ܒܝܬܐ, “the king had given orders to all the officials of his palace.” In Jeremiah 41:1, ܩܝܘܡܝܢ, “nobles, chiefs, princes” was the Peshitta’s word of choice for the הַמְּלִיךְ הַרְבִּי.

²¹³ See GKC § 117^{p-r}.

simplified the poetic line by translating the verb without its cognate accusative.

If one accepts any of the emendations noted above, the latent clues for the proper understanding of the poetic line become inaccessible. (Maintaining the integrity of the text does not require simple satisfaction with a literal interpretation of the text, especially when there is evidence that the text is a translation.) The reconstructed *Vorlage* has the *schema etymologicum* שֹׁבֵר שֹׁבֵר and it restores the technical nuance of רְבִימִים which is equal to ἡγεμόνες “generals, governors”²¹⁴ and נְדִבִים “nobles, chiefs, princes.”

17:34a (G), 17:38a (S)

ἐλπίς τοῦ δυνατοῦ ἐλπίδι θεοῦ

the hope of the one who has a strong hope in God (Wright)

the hope of the power by the hope of God (Trafton)

מַלְאָכָא דְּמַלְאָכָא בְּ מַלְאָכָא דְּמַלְאָכָא

his trust and his power are in the trust of God

יַחֲלֵת גְּבוּרַת בְּיַחֲלֵת אֱלֹהִים

the hope of the mighty man (is) in the hope of God

The Greek and the Syriac texts have four corresponding lexical elements in this line, but their syntax is very different. The ἐλπίς . . . ἐλπίδι is matched by מַלְאָכָא . . . מַלְאָכָא, τοῦ δυνατοῦ has a corresponding מַלְאָכָא, and θεοῦ is matched by מַלְאָכָא. But the Greek cases and the Syriac pronomial suffixes, preposition, and particle do not correspond. The translations of τοῦ δυνατοῦ differ. Wright made τοῦ δυνατοῦ personal; Trafton made it impersonal. In order to make sense out of the line, Wright made the dative ἐλπίδι the direct object of the genitive τοῦ δυνατοῦ, and Trafton introduced the preposition “by” to accommodate the dative ἐλπίδι.

²¹⁴ Note Thomson’s (1808, *ad loc.* [1960: 1208]) translation of Jeremiah 39:3 (LXX = MT), “and all the *generals* [italics added] of the king of Babylon entered and sat in the middle of the gate”

The third person singular suffixes ܡ and ܡ in the Syriac text are anticipatory suffixes, characteristic of Aramaic idiom. They would not have been in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. The balanced use of ܘ twice and ܠ three times in the reconstructed *Vorlage* seeks to restore what may have been the assonance in the original Hebrew.

17:36b (G), 17:41b (S)

ἐν ἰσχύι λόγου

by the strength of his word

ܡܘܠܡܘܬܐ

with his word

בדבֿי דברו

by the strength of his word

The Greek ἰσχύι “strength” has no counterpart in the Syriac text, and the suffix ܡ of the Syriac has no equivalent in the Greek text. The reconstructed *Vorlage* conflates the two traditions; and the root דבֿי “strength” was selected as the word of choice in restoring alliteration and a consonant cluster which could easily have led to haplography, namely, דבֿי דברו “the strength of his word.” The Samaritan (mis)spelling of MT דְּבִשְׁתִּי “your strength” in Deuteronomy 33:25 as דבֿי (ἡ ἰσχύς σου in the LXX and ܡܘܠܡܘܬܐ in Syriac), though it reflects the confusion of ܘ and ܠ, demonstrates that דבֿי and דבֿי were by-forms.²¹⁵ A *Vorlage* reading בדבֿי דברו was corrupted in the Syriac tradition to בדברו, consequently, the reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text.

²¹⁵ S. R. Driver (1903, 415) noted with reference to MT דְּבִשְׁתִּי, that it is “‘as yet unexplained’ (Di.). *Strength* (𐤃 𐤁 𐤌 Saad.) yields an excellent sense; but it has no philological justification, a root דבֿי not being known.” Since S. R. Driver wrote, the stem דבֿי has been attested in Ugaritic, and G. R. Driver (1971, 116–117) gave *dbà* the meaning of “prowess” in Baal IV, ii, I, line 21, “for Baal will anoint the horn of thy prowess (*qrn.dbà*).”

PSALM SEVENTEEN

17:37a (G), 17:42a (S)

καὶ οὐκ ἀσθενήσῃ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ
and he will not weaken in his days

מלך ה' מלך ה' יִכָּבֵד לֹא
and he will not be diminished in his days

ולא ימער בימיו

he will not stumble in his days

As Trafton (1985: 180) noted, “יִכָּבֵד would be an unusual translation of ἀσθενήσῃ.” But both יִכָּבֵד and ἀσθενήσῃ could be translations of a *Vorlage* having the stem מֵעַד “to slip, to totter, to fall,” which was confused with מֵעַל “to be or become small, to be diminished.” Hatch and Redpath (1954, 172) listed sixteen words in Hebrew translated by ἀσθενής, including מֵעַל. The confusion of מֵעַל and מֵעַד has been noted already in the discussion of 16:1a, on the line, “my soul forsook the Lord for a bit,” and 16:1b, on the phrase, “for a while I sank into a deadly coma.” The reconstructed *Vorlage*, having מֵעַד, is not a literal back-translation of either the Greek or the Syriac.

17:38b (G), 17:44a (S)

καὶ οὐκ ἀσθενήσῃ
and he will not weaken

מְבַדֵּל לֹא

and he did not grow weak

ולא יחלה

and he will not become weak

Aside from the matter of tense, the Greek and the Syriac texts could be translations of each other, but the difference in tense is enough to suggest that they are translations of a Hebrew *Vorlage* in which there was a confusion of the verbal prefix ה' (used for the perfect tense of the *hiph^cil* and *hoph^cal*, which is suggested by the Syriac) and the imperfect prefix ו' (used across the paradigm for the

third masculine singular, which is suggested by the Greek).²¹⁶ Since the poet in 17:34a spoke of power, which could have been חַיִל in the *Vorlage*, the word for “weakness” in this verse could have been חַלְה for assonance and paronomasia. A Hebrew text which read יַחַלְה (a *hoph'al* imperfect) would have been misread by the Syriac translator as הַחַלְה (a *hoph'al* perfect). The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the Greek text by having the imperfect tense.

17:39b (G), 17:44a (S)

καὶ τίς δύναται πρὸς αὐτόν
then who will succeed against him

חַיְה נַפְסָא לַמַּגְלָא
and who will rise up against him

מִי יְכוּל עָלָיו
who will prevail against him

The Greek τίς δύναται “who will succeed” and the Syriac חַיְה נַפְסָא “who will rise against” could possibly be free translations of each other. Kuhn (1937: 77) proposed that they were derived from a Hebrew *Vorlage* having מִי יָקוּם עָלָיו “who is standing before him.” However, Hatch and Redpath (1954, 355) listed twenty-five Hebrew words which are translated by δυνατός and קום was not one of them. The proposed Hebrew root in the *Vorlage* is כָּל “to be able, to have power,” with the nuance attested in Psalm 13:5, $\text{פֶּן־יֵאָמַר אֱמֹנֹת אֹיְבֵי יְקַלְתִּיו צָרִי יִגִּילוּ כִּי אֶמְצָא}$, “lest my enemy say, ‘I have prevailed over him’; lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.”

17:40c (G), 17:45b (S)

ἐν τῇ πομπῇ αὐτῶν
in their pasture

בְּרֹחַלְהוֹ
in his flock

²¹⁶ On the confusion of ח and י , see Delitzsch, 1920: 114, § 116^a.

PSALM SEVENTEEN

במרעתם
in the pasture

The Greek νομή αὐτῶν “their pasture” and the Syriac ܡܪܥܝܬܐ “his flock” do not appear to be translations of each other, but in light of the metonymy appearing in Jeremiah 10:21 (הַרְעִים) لَا تִרְשׁוּ עַל-כֵּן לֹא הִשְׁכִּילוּ כָּל-מִרְעֵיהֶם נִפְזָה כִּי נִבְעְרוּ וְאֵת-יְהוָה, “for the shepherds are stupid, and do not inquire of the Lord; therefore they have not prospered, and all their flock [literally, ‘their pasture’] is scattered”), either the Greek or the Syriac translator could have used the same device. If it were the Greek translator, he was wiser than the LXX translator of Jeremiah 10:21, who rendered the last half of the verse διὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐνόησεν πᾶσα ἡ νομή καὶ διεσκοπίσθησαν, “therefore, the whole pasture has failed, and have been scattered.”²¹⁷ The reconstructed *Vorlage* follows the מִרְעֵיהֶם attested in Jeremiah 10:21.

17:41a (G), 17:46a (S)

ἐν ἰσότητι πάντας αὐτοὺς ἄξει
 he will lead them in all holiness

ܠܒܠܫܬܐ ܕܡܢܘܨ ܕܡܢܘܨ
 he will gather all of them in serenity

במישרים ינחה כלם
he will lead all of them in righteousness

The Greek ἰσότητι “equality” or the variant ὁσιότης “pious” (found in mss 149, 260, 471, 606, and 769, which are the basis for Wright’s “holiness”) cannot be translations of the Syriac ܠܒܠܫܬܐ “simple, sincerity, serenity.” But all three readings could be derived from a Hebrew *Vorlage* having the root יָשַׁר “to be smooth, to be straight, to be right” or one of its derivatives like יָשָׁר “uprightness” or מִישָׁר “evenness, equity.” Stein (1969: 460) used this root in his

²¹⁷ Note Thomson’s (1808, *ad loc.* [1960, 1164]) use of metonymy, “therefore the whole *flock* [italics added] was thoughtless and they are scattered.”

translation, and the reconstructed *Vorlage* follows suit in light of the semantic range of יָשַׁר.²¹⁸

17:41b (G), 17:46b (S)

τοῦ καταδυναστευθῆναι ἐν αὐτοῖς

that any should be oppressed (Wright)

that any among them might be oppressed (Trafton)

ܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܒܪܐ

that it [arrogance] might prevail over them

that [arrogance] may not be heavy upon them (Ward)²¹⁹

תּוֹנָה [גְּאוּנָה] עֲלֵיהֶם

that [*pride*] *might bring oppression*²²⁰ upon them

The Greek articular passive infinitive καταδυναστευθῆναι “might be oppressed” and the Syriac imperfect ܩܘܪܝܢܐ “it may be heavy” are not accurate translations of each other. Trafton (1985: 181) suggested that the difference was due to an inner-Syriac corruption of ܩܘܪܝܢܐ “it (might) oppress” to ܩܘܪܝܢܐ “it (might) prevail,” but this does not account for the active/passive difference. Therefore, the difference in meaning and voice is more likely to be explained by a Hebrew *Vorlage* in which there was ambiguity over a *hiph^lil* or a *hoph^{al}* verb, for *hiph^lil* forms when written *scriptio defectiva* would be homographs of *hoph^{al}* forms. The *Vorlage* reconstructed above has the *hiph^lil* תּוֹנָה (= תּוֹנָה) “it [גְּאוּנָה] “pride”]

²¹⁸ Franz Delitzsch (n. d., *ad loc.* 17:46) initially translated בְּקִדְשׁ יִנְהַל אֶת־כֻּלָּם [“in holiness he will lead all of them”], but changed it to read בְּמִישְׁרִים יִנְהַל [“he will lead all of them equity”].

²¹⁹ The translation is based upon the nuance of ܩܘܪܝܢܐ cited by J. Payne Smith (1903: 430 [c.]) “sore, previous, heavy, hard, severe.”

²²⁰ The collocation of the stem גְּאוּנָה and יִנְהַל is attested in the *Qere*³ of Psalm 123:4, “Too long our soul has been sated with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of *the proud oppressors* (לְגִּיּוֹנִים לְגִּיּוֹנִים יִנְהַל).”

might bring oppression,” which could have been misread as the *hoph'al* תִּנְנָה (= תִּנְנָה) “it [גִּוֹאֵה] be oppressive.”

17:43a (G), 17:48a (S)

τὰ ῥήματα αὐτοῦ πεπυρωμένα ὑπὲρ χρυσίου
τὸ πρῶτον τίμιον

his words will be purer than the finest gold, the best

ܠܗܘܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܘܪܝܢܐ

his words will be proven more than gold and will be precious

אמרתיו מחרוץ בחור יקר

his words will be more precious than choice gold

The Greek πεπυρωμένα “fire-tested” and τὸ πρῶτον “the first, the finest, the choicest”²²¹ appear to be a doublet since a word corresponding to τὸ πρῶτον is lacking in the Syriac. The doublet reflects the confusion of בחן “to test” and בחר “to choose.” A similar confusion of בחר and בחן is attested in Isaiah 4:10, הֲנִיָּה זָרְבָתִיךָ, וְלֹא בִכְסֶף בְּחַרְתִּיךָ בְּכֹר עֲנִי “behold, I have refined you, but not like silver; I have chosen you in the furnace of affliction.” For the MT בְּחַרְתִּיךָ (= LXX ἐξελάμην), the Qumran scroll 1QIs^a reads בחנתיכה “I have tested you.”²²² The Greek τίμιον “the best” is used in the LXX primarily to translate the stem קר “precious,” indicating that in this line τίμιον is the equivalent of the Syriac ܠܗܘܢܐ “precious.” Stylistically, the Syriac translator produced a more idiomatic poetic line than the Greek translator, who read קר as an appositional adjective rather than a verb.²²³ The reconstructed *Vorlage* has an inverted word order — for emphasis — with the verb coming at the end. The word order follows the Greek text, which has τίμιον at the end of the line, as well as the Syriac text, which has

²²¹ Compare Luke 15:22, ἐξενέγκατε στολήν τὴν πρώτην “bring forth the choicest robe.”

²²² For the confusion of ܘܘܪܝܢܐ and ܘܘܪܝܢܐ, see Delitzsch, 1920: 112, §111.

²²³ Note that Stein (1969: 460) did not translate τίμιον. Frankenberg (1896: 84) translated it by the noun ܘܘܪܝܢܐ “refined gold.”

כֶּסֶף at the end of its line. The translation of χρυσίον as קָרָן “gold,” rather than כָּהָן which is the cognate of כֶּסֶף, highlights the fact that χρυσίον is a Semitic loanword in Greek, perhaps mediated through Mycenaean (Chantraine, 1968: 1278).

Psalm Eighteen

18:2a

οἱ ὀφθαλμοί σου ἐπιβλέποντες ἐπ’ αὐτά
your eyes are watching over them

כָּל מַה שֶׁ עָיַן בָּךְ

and your eyes see everything

וראו עניך כל עלימו

and your eyes see everything concerning them

The Greek ἐπ’ αὐτά “over them” and the Syriac כָּל “all” are not translation of each other, nor do they reflect different ways of translating the same word in a common Hebrew *Vorlage*. The ἐπ’ αὐτά could translate Hebrew עֲלֵיהֶם or עֲלֵימוֹ or אֲלֵיהֶם, and the כָּל would equal Hebrew כָּל—which has no graphic similarity to the suffixed prepositions. It may be best to conflate the variants, assuming that a different word dropped out of the Greek and Syriac textual traditions. The *Vorlage* has been reconstructed using this assumption.

18:2a

καὶ οὐχ ὑστερήσει ἐξ αὐτῶν
none of them will be in need

אֵין מִן כָּל מַה שֶׁ עָיַן בָּךְ

and there is nothing which is hidden from them

ולא יסתר מהם

and nothing is hidden from them [your eyes]

The difference between the Greek ὑστερήσει “will lack” and the Syriac אֵין “is hidden” can be accounted for by assuming that the Hebrew *Vorlage* had the verb סָתַר “to hide,” which was correctly

render in Syriac, but the Greek translator or his *Vorlage* read כסר “to lack” instead of סתר and translated accordingly. Metathetic variants have been noted elsewhere in this study, and the confusion of ט and פ has been well documented by Delitzsch (1920: 118, §129°).

18:2b

τὰ ὠτά σου ἐπακούει εἰς δέησιν πτωχοῦ ἐν ἐλπίδι

your ears listen to the hopeful prayer of the poor

אזניך תשמענה בתפלת דל בתוחלת
and your ears hear the hope of the poo[r]

אזניך תשמענה בתפלת דל בתוחלת
your ears harken to the hopeful prayers of the poor

The Greek δέησιν “prayer” has no corresponding element in the Syriac text. It would appear that a word has dropped out of the Syriac. If the *Vorlage* had בתוחלת “in hope” and בתפלת “to the prayers” (*scriptio defectiva*), it would be easy to account for a haplography of בתפלת or בתוחלת. Although שמע in Biblical Hebrew is generally followed by the preposition ל, the preposition ב is attested occasionally, as in Job 15:8, הֲבִסֹד אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַע, “Have you heard the counsel of God?” (NKJV).

18:3b (G), 18:4a (S)

ἡ ἀγάπη σου ἐπὶ σπέρμα Αβρααμ υἱοῦ Ισραηλ

and your love is for the descendants of Abraham, an Israelite

אזניך תשמענה בין זרע ישראל בן אברהם

and your love is upon the seed of Israel, the son of Abraham

ואהבתך על זרע ישראל בן אברהם

and your love is upon the seed of Israel, the son of Abraham

The singular υἱοῦ Ισραηλ was understood by Wright (1985: 669) as an appositional modifier of Αβρααμ, making Abraham an Israelite. On the other hand, Ryle and James (1891: 149) and Gray (1913: 651) followed mss 655 and 659 in reading the plural υἱοῦς Ισραηλ and translated, respectively, “even the sons of Israel” and

“the children of Israel.” For them, the plural *υἰοὺς* was the appositional modifier of the singular collective *σπέρμα* (*σπέρματα* in mss 655 and 659), making for a poetic parallel — though not a parallelism — with *Ισραηλ* being in parallel with *Αβρααμ* and *σπέρμα* / *σπέρματα* being in parallel with *υἰοὺς*.

The Syriac clearly makes *ܡܝܫܪܐ ܡܝܢ* “the son of Abraham” to be the modifier of the man named Israel, i.e., the singular “son” modified the singular proper name, not the singular noun *ܥܪܝܢ* “seed.” The ambiguity of *ܥܪܝܢ* in the Hebrew *Vorlage*, which could be a collective or a true singular, may have contributed to the secondary shift of *σπέρμα* to *σπέρματα* and *υἱοῦ* to *υἰοὺς*, as well as the inversion of the proper names in the Greek tradition.

If the Greek *ἐπὶ σπέρμα Αβρααμ υἱοῦ Ισραηλ* reflects the original meaning, it would seem to be an attempt to exclude the offspring of Ishmael and Esau, a exclusion which was a moot issue at the time of this psalm. Since Abraham is nowhere else in Jewish tradition identified as an “Israelite,” it appears that the Syriac text provides the best reading by making “the son of Abraham” a modifier of the proper noun “Israel,” rather than the common noun “seed.”

Summary

In the above psalm by psalm examination of the 18 psalms in 213 instances where the Greek and Syriac texts are not equal to each, three methodologies (text critical, exegetical and philological) have provided possible solutions to explain the differences. One hundred and forty-two of these proposals involve errors of the textual transmission and/or translation process (confusion of graphically similar letters, haplography, metathesis, doublets, and dittography).

Another 65 can be attributed to errors involving the semantic range of the proposed Hebrew *Vorlage* where either the Syriac or Greek translators (or both) chose the contextually inappropriate meaning or missed it altogether or because of the ambiguity of an unpointed Hebrew text. Again, Barr’s (1985:268) comments on the Septuagint translators are pertinent here:

SUMMARY

It seems to me in general that the ancient translators did their task remarkably well given the circumstances. Their grasp of Hebrew, however, was very often a grasp of that which was *average* and *customary* in HebrewWhere it is a matter, however, of obscure words in the normal contexts and of strange meanings for common words there was a strong tendency toward the leveling of the vocabulary and the interpretation of that which is rare as if it was that which was more normal.

There are only twelve instances where an appeal to cognate languages provides the clues for the differences between the Greek and Syriac and somewhat surprisingly, given the frequent appeal by Dahood in his *Anchor Bible* volumes on Psalms to Ugaritic, it was of no importance for these psalms. These Psalms are much later than the canonical Psalms but it might have been possible for some of the Ugaritic features to survive if there had been much conscious imitation of the canonical Psalter. The Greek variants were likewise of little importance—only twice were they able to provide the clues to the proposed *Vorlage*. Eight times the suggestion is made to redivide the proposed Hebrew consonantal text and in six places the emphatic particles went unrecognized by the Greek and Syriac translators. For seven of the examples the solution may go back to an aural stage in the transmission of the text. Five times the difference can be explained by the preservation of a Hebrew idiom in either the Greek or the Syriac and failure to recognize double-duty verbs, vocatives, prepositions, or negatives occurs eight times.

In only a relatively few instances is appeal made to a more speculative methodology such as idiomatic translation (5 times), conflation of the Greek and Syriac texts (4 times), inversion of a line (once) and emendation (only once in all of the eighteen psalms). On the whole the cumulative weight of the evidence indicates a high degree of probability for an original Hebrew *Vorlage*.

Following is a listing of the passages (using the Greek enumeration) under the different categories:

**89 occurrences of the confusion
of graphically similar letters:**

ו and י	17:31b	8:20a	ר and כ
2:8b	ו and ה	17:22b	8:15b
3:1b–2a	8:1	ל and ר	ש and ענ
3:6b	8:22b	9:4a	5:12b
6:2a	10:2a	13:3b	ה and נ
7:3	נ and י	ב and נ	3:3b
8:8b	2:4a	5:1a	נ and מ
12:2b	4:6a	14:6	4:5b
13:1	8:8b	כ and מ	נ and כ
16:4a	מ and ה	3:4a	5:16
16:14a	4:4a	9:4a	נ and ר
17:5b	8:16b	ו and מ	5:6b
ר and ד	10:4b	2:8	ק and ר
4:10a	מ and ר	13:12	13:3b
4:12b	8:7a	ה and ה	ד and מ
6:3b	12:2b	2:6b	17:20a
8:8a	17:29a	18:2a	מ and מ
9:3a	ו and ן	ל and ו	6:2a
11:1	2:23	11:4	כ and מ
17:30b	8:12a	י and ה	8:7a
כ and כ	15:3	ב and ה	ו and מ
4:8a	ד and ה	4:12a	8:12b
6:3a	4:6a	ה and ה	מ and ב
7:3	17:30b	17:14a	15:14b
16:14a	ו and ה	ה and ה	ר and ב
17:14a	5:13a	ה and ה	8:1b
ו and ר	10:1b	3a and 6	ר and ז
2:21	ד and ט	ע and ה	15:1
11:1	16:1b	5:6b	ד and ו
12:2	17:37a	ר and ה	17:31b
16:7a	ל and י	2:19a	

SUMMARY

ו and ו	יש	עולה and	and אף כי
11:5b	and	עלין	א"פא
ו and ו	נשי	15:4b	8:2
10:3c	16:8b		

**41 occurrences of a valid, but inappropriate,
choice within the semantic range of the Hebrew:**

1:1	2:31b	7:2	14:7
2:1a	3:2a	7:4	15:7a
2:2b	3:5	7:8a	15:9a
2:6b	3:10	8:5b	15:9b
2:10	3:13	8:9a	17:5b
2:19b	4:1	10:4b	17:8b
2:20	5:12b	12:2a	17:25a
2:21b	5:16a	12:3	17:33b
2:26b	5:17a	13:2	17:41a
2:29b	7:1	13:3a	18:3b

23 occurrences of haplography with one or two letters:

3:5	5:1a	9:2	17:11a
4:3b	5:6a	10:8	17:30a
4:5a	8:1b	11:4	17:30b
4:10b	8:5a	12:3b	17:36b
4:14a	8:14b	15:2	18:2b
4:20b	8:16a	16:5	

3 occurrences of haplography involving entire lines:

4:18 16:10b 16:14a

24 occurrences of ambiguity of the unpointed Hebrew text:

2:9	4:12	5:14b	8:2a
3:10	4:24	8:1	8:2b

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8:7a	9:9b	16:1a	17:17a
8:7b	14:2b	16:14a	17:41b
8:25a	15:13a		

with *scriptio defectiva*:

2:25b 2:26b 7:7a 10:3 15:10b

with *scriptio plene*:

8:12a

**15 occurrences of the metathesis
of two or more letters in a word:**

2:20	5:7a	14:6	17:2b
2:27	10:1a	16:3a	17:12a
2:33a	12:3b	16:7	18:2a
4:18	13:7–8	17:2a	

**12 occurrences where appeal to cognate
languages brings clarity to differences:**

Arabic:

2:1	3:1	8:2a	17:13
2:33a	8:1b	17:6b	

Akkadian: 2:5 2:19 2:21b

Aramaic: 3:7 17:34

**8 occurrences of the misdivision
of the consonantal text in (of) the *Vorlage*:**

1:3	2:6b	17:9b	17:22
2:1b	2:23	17:17b	17:30a

SUMMARY**7 occurrences of doublets:**

Greek: 2:13b 4:10b 8:9a 17:43a

Syriac: 6:5a 7:2a 17:16

**7 occurrences of aural errors
in the transmission of the text:**

8:9a 8:25a 9:5a 9:6b 16:1b
 17:6a 17:13

**6 occurrences where emphatics
particles went unrecognized:**

Emphatic ܕ: 6:4a 9:4a 15:7b 17:29a

Emphatic ܠ: 10:8 2:24

**5 occurrences where a Semitic idiom
is reflected in the Greek or the Syriac:**

1:4b 2:13a 2:32b 4:5b 8:12a

5 occurrences of idiomatic translation:

2:4a 3:1 3:12b 4:7 17:1

5 occurrences of dittography:

2:1b 5:12a 5:13a 7:6b 10:3b

**4 occurrences requiring the conflation
of the Greek and Syriac texts:**

4:18 15:5a 17:36b 18:2a

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2 occurrences where manuscript variants are appealed to for solution:

11:4 (Syriac) 17:6b (Greek)

2 occurrences of “double duty” prepositions::

14:1 15:3

2 occurrences of “double duty” verbs:

15:7b 16:6b

2 occurrences of “double duty” negatives:

16:6b 16:8b

1 occurrence of a “double duty” vocative:

15:2

1 occurrence of “double duty” emphatic:

15:7b

1 occurrence of the inversion of lines:

15:7b

1 occurrence of metonymy:

17:40c

1 proposed emendation:

15:7b

Since the focus of this chapter is on the disagreements of the Syriac and Greek texts, the issue of which text to follow in the proposal of a Hebrew *Vorlage* had to be decided in each instance.

Where the proposed *Vorlage* follows either the Greek or Syriac text in the proposed Hebrew the division was almost fifty-fifty. Sixty-six times the *Vorlage* followed the Syriac text and sixty-five times the Greek (out of the 215 total).

Fifty-three times the *Vorlage* followed neither the Greek or the Syriac arguing that neither had retained the sense of the proposed original Hebrew text. Both had been corrupted in the process of transmission or translation. However, without both the Greek and the Syriac texts the proposed *Vorlage* would have been much more difficult to produce and much more speculative. It is the control of having both texts and often the mistakes of both that in many instances provided the clue to the proposed *Vorlage*.

Twenty three times the Greek and the Syriac together provided the basis for the reconstruction of the *Vorlage* with both retaining some element of the proposed Hebrew. In six instances the Greek and the Syriac approximate each other and either could be used in the construction of the *Vorlage*. This was usually due to an overlapping semantic ranges of a word. While neither the Greek or the Syriac seems to more reliably preserve the Hebrew original in 61 % of the texts one or the other is followed in the proposed *Vorlage*. In about 25% of the above passages neither the Greek or the Syriac has been the basis for the Hebrew. Following is a summary by verses of the different categories:

Greek	3:7	6:2a	9:3a
	4:5a	6:3b	9:9b
1:6a	4:5b	7:3	10:1a
2:1b	4:8a	7:4	10:3
2:4a	4:10a	7:8b	10:3b
2:5b (+	4:10b	7:10b	10:3c
Syr)	4:14a	8:8a	11:1
2:5-6a	5:1a	8:8b	11:4
2:8a	5:6a	8:14b	11:5
2:8b	5:12b	8:20a	12:3
2:21	5:14b	8:22b	13:3b
3:6b	5:16a	8:25a	13:2

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14:1	17:2a	17:16	17:30
14:2b	17:2b	17:17b	17:36b
14:6	17:5b	17 : 22 a	17:38b
15:10b	17:14a	(+Syr)	18:2b
16:3a	17 : 15 c	17:26a	
16:6b	(+Syr)	17:29a	
Syriac	5:12a	8:12a	15:13a
	5:13a	8:16a	16:1a
1:4b	6:1a	8:16b	16:1b
2:1a	6:5a	9:2	16:5
2:1b	7:1	9:4a	16:7a
2:2b	7:2	9:5a	16:10b
2:4a	7:6b	9:6b	17:1
2:6b	7:7a	10:1b	17:6b (+
2:9	7:8a	10:1b–2a	Grk)
2:19a	7:8a	11:5b	17:11a
2:23	8:1	12:2b	17:12a
2:25	8:2a	13:1	17:20a
2:29b	8:5a	13:3a	17:22b
2:32b	8:7a	13:7–8	17:30b
3:4a	8:7a	15:1	17:31b
4:5b	8:11b	15:3b	18:2a
4:9b	8:12a	15:9b	18:3b
5:7a			
Neither Greek or Syriac	2:21b	4:1	8:1b
	2:24	4:3b	8:2c
	2:26b	4:4a	8:7b
	2:26b	4:6a	8:12b
1:1	2:33a	4:12	8:15b
2:1b	3:2a	4:12b	10:4b
2:6b	3:3b	4:18	10:8
2:10	3:5	4:20	12:2a
2:19b	3:10	6:3a	12:3b
2:20	3:12b	6:4a	12:3c

SUMMARY

13:2b	16:4a	17:13	17:37a
14:7	16:8b	17:32c	17:40c
15:4b	16:14a	17:33b	17:41a
15:7b	17:6a	17:34a	17:41b
16:1b			
Greek and Syriac	8:2b	17:17a	E i t h e r
	8:5b	17:25a	Greek
	8:9a	17:39b	or Syriac
	13:2	17:43a	1:3
2:13a	15:2	18:2a	2:4a
2:27	15:3b		5:17a
2:31b	15:4b	Uncertain	15:7a
3:1	15:5a	2:13b	15:9a
3:1–3:2a	17:8b	5:6b	16:11a
4:7	17:9b		
4:24	17:15a		

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSIONS

J. R. Harris who discovered the Syriac text of the Psalms of Solomon and the lost Odes of Solomon had little regard for the Psalms of Solomon, in contrast to the Odes of Solomon which he esteemed highly (1916: vii). He noted, “The Psalms of Solomon as they come to us are a very harsh and unpleasant product, the result of a couple of ungainly translations . . . it has little interest for ourselves and will probably have less for other people.” Previously (1911:46), he said “we cannot expect to get any nearer to the original language of the [Greek text of the] psalms by means of the Syriac.” Harris’ opinion notwithstanding, this study has shown that *without* a careful study of the Syriac text of the Psalms of Solomon no one can expect to get closer to the original language of these psalms. By using both the Syriac text and the Greek text, in key passages a Hebrew *Vorlage* has been reconstructed by a process of “triangulation.” The reconstructed *Vorlage*, rooted in the Syriac and Greek texts, in turn, shed new light on these textual traditions, resulting in an accumulative body of evidence which supports—with a high degree of probability—the argument that a Hebrew *Vorlage* lay behind the Greek text *and* the Syriac text of these psalms.

The discussion above (68–69) of the difficulty of the Greek in Psalm 3:2a provides a good illustration of the value of the Syriac. Both Wright (1985:654) and Trafton (1985:53) called the Greek of this poetic line “unintelligible,” and at first glance the Syriac (which Wright also called “unintelligible”) did not seem to be of any help in clarifying the meaning of the phrase in Greek. Trafton translated the Syriac phrase as “and be excited in his excitement,” which contextually makes no better sense than the Greek—which means literally, “be awake in his wakefulness. It was, however, the Syriac stem ܦܚܝܢܐ, which has a wider semantic range than simply “to become excited, to arouse (from sleep),” which provided the clue to the meaning. This stem is a cognate of the Aramaic/Hebrew פּוֹרֵץ which appears in

Daniel 4:1, 14, and 20 as a technical term for the “Watchers” of heaven who never sleep but continually praise God. This nuance, not the simple dictionary equivalent “to be excited,” is the basis for the proposed *Vorlage* meaning “rejoice with his Watchers.” Without the clue from the Syriac ܩܘܪܝܢܐ, the meaning of the Greek phrase would remain enigmatic. As it now stands, only Trafton’s translation of the Syriac is problematic since he missed here the nuance of ܩܘܪܝܢܐ.

While the cumulative weight of the psalm-by-psalm examination of the places where the Syriac and Greek texts disagree has indicated that both are translations of a Hebrew original, it is not possible to say with certainty exactly when the translations were made from the Hebrew. Because neither the Syriac or Greek textual variants were of much value in reconciling the difficulties or in providing clues for the reconstruction of the Hebrew *Vorlage*, it is likely that the translations of the psalms into Greek and Syriac were early and that most of the variants occurred in the later transmission of the texts in their independent traditions. This is indicated by many instances where the Syriac text disagreed with respect to singular/plural forms with the Greek text. Prior to the fourth century C.E., when the system of pointing nouns to distinguish between the singular and the plural, the Syriac text would have been ambiguous with reference to number. This argues for the translation from Hebrew into Syriac to have taken place at least before that date, and probably earlier as portions of the Peshitta were translated in the first century C.E.

An important aspect of this study is the methodology employed. Barr (1987: 5–8) in his introductory work on the philological methodology sets philology, which deals with new possibilities of meaning for existing texts (often with appeal to cognate languages), over against textual criticism, which deals with graphic errors in transmission (where an appeal to variant readings is possible and where, in the absence of such variants, contextual emendation is used). He asserted that “Philology undercuts the foundations of the textual treatment” and that the “philological treatment, if right, cancels out textual treatment.” He admitted, however “. . . these are not distinct [methodologies] in the sense that one must consistently follow one and ignore the other. A competent worker must under-

stand both, and as we have seen, it is a very common practice to mingle the two.”

This study illustrates the complimentary nature of textual criticism and philology, and the necessity to use both to reconcile differences in and between textual traditions or to reconstruct a *Vorlage* reflecting the traditions. These methodologies do not cancel out or undermine each other. Without the use of both methods, the argument for a Hebrew original for both the Greek and the Hebrew behind the Psalms of Solomon would have been much more speculative. While the majority of proposals presented in Chapter 2 are those within the arena of textual criticism resulting from the confusion of graphically similar letters, there are numerous instances where philology has supplied the best possible solution. Textual criticism, exegetical considerations dealing with the semantic range of a word, and philological inquiry into cognate languages were all indispensable.

In reconstructing the *Vorlage*, any individual word was selected from a list of synonyms. Consequently, while absolute certainty is not possible for any of the proposals, one can be certain of the value of the methodology. Compared to Trafton’s thirty-eight instances where the Syriac or the Greek supported a Hebrew *Vorlage*, this study offers 213 instances. Even if all of them are not as convincing to others who have worked with the Psalms of Solomon as they are to the author, none of them can be simply dismissed out of hand. The methodology employed in this study could easily be applied to many of the pseudepigraphical works believed to have been originally written in a Semitic language.

Another contribution has been the proposal of significant new translations which depart from Wright’s translation of the Greek and Trafton’s translation of the Syriac. The following new translations should be noted in particular:

- 1:1 “at my defeat” instead of “when I was severely troubled”
- 2:1b “general” instead of “sinner”
- 2:2 “boots” instead of “sandals”

CONCLUSIONS

- 2:6b “chains upon their forearms” rather than “their neck in a seal”
- 2:19b “ruler” instead of “beauty”
- 2:20b “ruler” instead of “beauty”
- 2:21b “ruler” instead of “beauty”
- 2:24 “indeed” instead of “not”
- 2:24 “pierced by the nobles of Egypt” instead of “pierced on the mountains of Egypt”
- 3:2a “Watchers” instead of “he is aware of you”
- 8:1 “the sound of tearing down walls” for “the blast of the trumpet”
- 10:4 “the law codes of the Lord in the commandments are above the rules of men” for “and the testimony of the Lord (is) in the ways of men”
- 10:8 “indeed” instead of “because”
- 16:1b “deadly coma” for “sleep”
- 17:6a “they exchanged their priestly turbans for a crown” rather than “they set up a monarchy because of their arrogance”
- 17:32c “anointed lord” for the controversial “Lord Messiah”
- 17:33b “generals” instead of “multitude”

These translations and the other new ones offered in Chapter 2 are important for any subsequent full translation of the Psalms of Solomon which draws upon both the Syriac and the Greek textual traditions.

These translations would also be of importance to anyone working on the theology of these psalms. The discussion and proposed *Vorlage* of 17:30a, for instance, supports the Greek text which speaks of a universal God who will “have gentile nations,” against the Syriac text which speaks of an ethnocentric God who “possess a nation from the nations,” perhaps in reference to the Jews in the diaspora. Which textual tradition is supported by the proposed *Vorlage* theologically makes a great deal of difference. Many other instances and the discussion of the textual differences between the Syriac and the Greek texts have similar import for understanding the theology of the Psalms of Solomon.

The above study also supports the conclusion that Psalm 2 (and perhaps Psalm 3) are about Pompey, and thus it supports a date for this psalm being not too long after the events referred to. If the proposed interpretation of Psalm 4:18b holds up, the curse “may his old age be bereft of children, from his children not one will bury him” needs to be added to the list of (treaty) curses. If the proposals for reading emphatic particles in 2:24, 6:4a, 9:4a, 10:8; 15:7b, and 17:29a are correct, then their use, especially that of the emphatic ל, survived much later than has been previously recognized.

All of the items highlighted in the above paragraph are significant in and of themselves as they resolve the differences between the textual traditions, but the demonstration of the probability of a Hebrew *Vorlage* behind both the Syriac and the Greek texts is still the main contribution of this study.

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