



University  
of Glasgow

de Jong, Adam (2011) *The writer of Hebrews as a reader of Hebrew: an inquiry into the linguistic and hermeneutical use of the Old Testament quotations in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. MTh(R) thesis.

<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/2329/>

Copyright and moral rights for this thesis are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

# **The Writer of Hebrews as a Reader of Hebrew**

**An Inquiry into the Linguistic and Hermeneutical Use  
of the Old Testament Quotations in the Epistle to the Hebrews**

**Thesis  
submitted for the degree of  
Master of Theology  
at  
Free Church of Scotland College  
by  
Adam de Jong**

**Supervisor  
Professor John A. Macleod**

**Edinburgh,  
12 July 2010.**

## Acknowledgments

The little I understand of the fascinating Hebrew language was learned from Professor John L. Mackay, for which I am very grateful. For his teaching of the Greek language and on Hebrews, but in particular for his constructive comments, encouragement and interest during the writing of this study, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Professor John A. Macleod. Much thanks is due to my wife, Dita, for patiently putting up with the whole adventure. Above all, my thanks are to my heavenly Father; completion of this effort was always *Deo Volente* and the result is *Soli Deo Gloria*.

## Dedication

*To Dita, with love.*

De Brief aan de Hebreëën presenteert zichzelf als 'een woord ter bemoediging'. Als zodanig is ook dit dank-je-wel bedoeld.

## Declaration

The research regarding this thesis has been composed and carried out by the candidate. The candidate confirms that this thesis has not been accepted in fulfillment of the requirements for any other degree or professional qualification. The word count meets the required minimum.

© Adam de Jong

**Adam de Jong**  
adam.dejong@btinternet.com

Edinburgh, 30 April 2010.

## Abstract

**Title of the Document:** The Writer of Hebrews as a Reader of Hebrew  
An Inquiry into the Linguistic and Hermeneutical Use of the Old  
Testament Quotations in the Epistle to the Hebrews

**Name of the Candidate:** Adam de Jong, MBA, BTh

**Supervisor:** Professor John A. Macleod, Free Church of Scotland  
College

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is regularly considered to depend on the Greek text of the Old Testament for his quotations, also when the translation diverges from the Hebrew. In addition, he is at times found to use hermeneutical techniques associated with Second Temple hermeneutics, which do not always respect the Old Testament context.

Examples are his alleged use of *gezerah shawah* in Hebrews 4:4-9 in connecting one concept of rest in Psalm 95 (מנוחה) with a different one in Genesis 2:2 (שבת) relying on the Greek which translates both with *κατάπαυσις*; and the dependency in his use in Hebrews 10:5-7 of the quotation from Psalm 40 on a LXX translation of the Hebrew אֲנִיִּים with *σῶμα*.

Through a review of selected quotations, their Old Testament context, any differences between the Hebrew and Greek text and the writer's possible amendments and his hermeneutical use of these quotations, this study tests the hypothesis that the writer did have an understanding of Hebrew and did respect the Old Testament context of his quotations.

It is concluded this hypothesis provides a good explanation of the analysed evidence.

**Key words:** Hebrews, Old Testament quotations, LXX dependency, hermeneutics.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                                              |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>1. QUESTION AND THESIS</b> .....                                                          | 1   |
| <b>2. THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS: INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS</b> .....                        | 8   |
| 2.1 <i>Author, audience and date</i> .....                                                   | 8   |
| 2.2 <i>Genre and structure</i> .....                                                         | 9   |
| 2.3 <i>Hermeneutics</i> .....                                                                | 14  |
| 2.4 <i>Texts used</i> .....                                                                  | 23  |
| 2.5 <i>The OT in the Epistle to the Hebrews</i> .....                                        | 24  |
| <b>3. THE SCENE: THE 2 SAMUEL 7, PSALMS 2 AND 110 QUOTATIONS</b> .....                       | 31  |
| 3.1 <i>OT context and exegetical comments</i> .....                                          | 32  |
| 3.2 <i>Use in Hebrews and hermeneutical comments</i> .....                                   | 38  |
| <b>4. HEBREW OR NO HEBREW: THE OTHER OT QUOTATIONS</b> .....                                 | 45  |
| 4.1 <i>Hebrews 1:6 and Deuteronomy 32:43 or Psalm 97:7</i> .....                             | 45  |
| 4.2 <i>Hebrews 1:7 and Psalm 104:4</i> .....                                                 | 56  |
| 4.3 <i>Hebrews 1:8-9 and Psalm 45:6-7</i> .....                                              | 61  |
| 4.4 <i>Hebrews 1:10-12 and Psalm 102:25-27</i> .....                                         | 70  |
| 4.5 <i>Hebrews 2:6-8 and Psalm 8:4-6</i> .....                                               | 79  |
| 4.6 <i>Hebrews 2:12 and Psalm 22:22</i> .....                                                | 92  |
| 4.7 <i>Hebrews 2:13 and Isaiah 8:17b &amp; Isaiah 8:18a</i> .....                            | 98  |
| 4.8 <i>Hebrews 3:7-11, 15; 4:3, 5, 7 &amp; 4:4 and Psalm 95:7-11 &amp; Genesis 2:2</i> ..... | 104 |
| 4.9 <i>Hebrews 10:5-7 and Psalm 40:6-8</i> .....                                             | 124 |
| 4.10 <i>Hebrews 10:30 and Deuteronomy 32:35-36</i> .....                                     | 135 |
| 4.11 <i>Hebrews 10:37-38 and Isaiah 26:20 &amp; Habakkuk 2:3b-4</i> .....                    | 143 |
| 4.12 <i>Hebrews 12:5-6 and Proverbs 3:11-12</i> .....                                        | 152 |
| 4.13 <i>Hebrews 12:26b and Haggai 2:6</i> .....                                              | 159 |
| 4.14 <i>Hebrews 13:5 and Deuteronomy 31:6 or Joshua 1:5</i> .....                            | 169 |
| 4.15 <i>Other quotations or allusions</i> .....                                              | 173 |
| <b>5. CONCLUDING COMMENTS</b> .....                                                          | 175 |
| 5.1 <i>Concluding comments: the author's knowledge of Hebrew</i> .....                       | 175 |
| 5.2 <i>Concluding comments: the author's respect for the Hebrew text</i> .....               | 179 |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....                                                                    | 185 |

# 1. Question and thesis

## *The question*

The first thesis<sup>1</sup> accompanying Kistemaker's seminal study on the psalm-quotations in Hebrews is:

'The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews had no knowledge of the Hebrew language.'

This is a broadly held view<sup>2</sup> and its importance might be limited to the questions of authorship and audience, were it not for two other factors: (i) Hebrews' use of Old Testament ("OT") quotations in its discourse is considered at times to depend on a Greek translation deviating meaningfully from the Hebrew text;<sup>3</sup> and (ii) this dependence on a Greek text is, in certain cases, supposed to facilitate the alleged use of Second Temple hermeneutical techniques.<sup>4</sup>

These techniques do, in practice, often not respect the context of quotations in the traditional historical-grammatical sense, resembling a post-modern hermeneutical

---

<sup>1</sup> Kistemaker, 1961. This book is his doctoral dissertation and in accordance with Dutch practice accompanied by a number of separate brief theses for discussion during the public *viva* exam preceding the promotion ceremony. The first one reads: 'De auteur van de Brief aan de Hebreëen bezat geen kennis van de Hebreeuwse taal.'; the translation is mine.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Lane, 1991, p.cxvii: 'A virtual consensus has been reached that the writer read his Bible in Greek.' Ellingworth, 1993, p.37: 'There is no compelling evidence that the author had access to any Hebrew text.' Karrer, 2006, p.339: 'We do not find a single Hebrew or Aramaic relic in the quotations or elsewhere in Hebrews. Moreover, no quotation presents us with undisputable evidence of a correction by our author toward the Hebrew (Proto-MT) text.'

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Attridge, 1989, p.23: 'The scripture that Hebrews interprets is certainly a Greek form of the Old Testament. This is particularly clear from those cases where the scriptural citations contain characteristic variant readings of the LXX, which are probably erroneous or tendentious translations.' And: 'Dependence on a Greek form of the Old Testament is also clear from exegetical arguments such as that of 4:4-5, which only work on the basis of the etymological similarity between words in the Greek texts of Ps 95(94) and Gen 2:2.'

Similarly Ellingworth, 1993, p.37: 'In several places the argument depends on a LXX reading which diverges from the Hebrew, and in many more, the language and thought of Hebrews appear to presuppose a Septuagintal rather than a Hebrew reading.' Schröger's is frequently cited as the seminal work in this respect.

Longenecker, 1975, p.169: '...it appears that the writer...had no immediate knowledge of any Hebrew version...'. He notes that, while six quotations cannot be accounted for by reference to either LXX-A (Alexandrinus) or LXX-B (Vaticanus), of the remaining thirty-two eighteen agree with both the LXX and MT and fourteen with the LXX against the MT (see Table 2.5).

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Attridge, 1989, p.24: '[t]he appropriation of Old Testament passages...clearly involves a process of decontextualizing.' And: 'Recontextualizing passages is frequently the major interpretative device. For others, the exegesis turns on the vocabulary or syntax of the passage and standard Jewish exegetical techniques surface.'

approach *avant la lettre*. And as a result of both (i) and (ii) the author is said to draw theological conclusions not supported by the Hebrew texts which are the quotations' ultimate source.<sup>5</sup>

Consequently, two questions arise, in general, but certainly for the Reformed tradition: (i) whether inspired Scripture is dependent on unrecognized mistranslations of other parts of Scripture;<sup>6</sup> and (ii) whether Scripture itself exegetes Scripture without respecting the historical-grammatical context.

Those who do not hold Scripture to be inspired, or belong to a different hermeneutical school, may consider the Epistle just one moment on the trajectory of an interpretative tradition, trying to understand and apply older texts within its own temporal and cultural horizon, and using the hermeneutical tools of its time in doing so. Thus they answer in the affirmative.

Others, closer to the Reformed tradition, do the same. Enns for example sees the historical-grammatical approach as an imposition of our standards and wishes to follow the NT-writers in their use of 'christotelic' hermeneutics.<sup>7</sup> Kidner seems to consider a deviating LXX as a helpful (messianic) interpretative tradition, rightly informing Hebrews' exegesis.<sup>8</sup>

Still others have resorted to declaring OT-texts messianic-*only*, so justifying the perceived NT-application but leaving them meaningless in their own historical context.<sup>9</sup>

These two questions and the various answers are important and fascinating, but the prior question is: *Is it true that the author had no Hebrew?*

---

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Schröger, 1968, pp.262-265, identifies ten such texts (2 Sam.7:14, Psa.104:4, Psa.45:7-8, Psa.102:26-28, Psa.8:5-7, Num.12:7, Psa.95:7-11, Psa.40:7-9, Hab.2:3-4 and Hag.2:6) and lists six of the author's conclusions which could not have been drawn on the basis of the Hebrew text: (i) God created the world through Christ, which cannot be based on Psalm 102:26-28 alone; (ii) Christ's humiliation was necessary and planned; (iii) Christ and Moses cannot be compared with πιστός as the *tertium comparationis*; (iv) the promise of rest as *Heilsgut* could not have been derived from the quoted texts; (v) only Christ's death is a sacrifice acceptable to God; and (vi) the exhortation to persevere could not have based on the coming judgment using Habakkuk and Haggai.

<sup>6</sup> Unless it is assumed the LXX is an inspired translation. This alternative hypothesis and its consequences are not further considered here in order to limit the scope of this inquiry.

<sup>7</sup> Enns, 2005, pp.158-159.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. Kidner, 1975, p.363; see also §4.4.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. Harman, 1974, pp.338, 345; see also §4.3.

A different answer to this, our primary question, implies that the two other questions, which follow in its wake, can be approached in a different light.

### *The nature of the inquiry*

As phrased above, the question is a pursuit of truth. And this raises the methodological question of whether and how truth can be ascertained in an academic context. It is a vast question outside the scope of this study, which largely uses the insights of Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn.

Popper has observed theories should be bold conjectures with as much explanatory and predictive power as possible. Then they can be tested: not for verification,<sup>10</sup> but for falsification.<sup>11</sup> This is the required ‘context of justification’. Views, expectations, beliefs are valuable as a source for hypotheses, the ‘context of discovery’.<sup>12</sup>

Although Popper does not think truth allows itself to be shaped by the human mind,<sup>13</sup> he accepts that the falsification data are always interpretations in the light of theory.<sup>14</sup> Falsification remains ultimately a decision.

And how are these decisions taken, and why are they accepted?

---

<sup>10</sup> Popper points out that science tries to make universal statements (laws), which cannot be justified on the basis of the evident and contingent. It is Hume’s induction problem: a law like  $(x)(P_1 > P_2)$  can in principle not be proven because of the universal quantor. To reduce science to elementary sentences, à la Wittgenstein, does not work. Even primitive terms (“table”) rely on law-like-behaviour in as much as they refer to many objects not present. ‘All observation involves interpretation in the light of our theoretical knowledge’. Popper, 1963, p.23, attempts to rely on probability or verisimilitude have to fail. The number of verifications divided by the number of possible outcomes is always zero. Improving the likelihood of verification can be achieved by reducing the empirical content of theories (tautologies are always true), but that does not further our knowledge.

<sup>11</sup> Even numerous observations  $Rx$  do not prove  $(x)Rx$ , but one  $\neg Rx$  does negate  $(x)Rx$ . Logically we can never be certain a theory is true, only that it is not true. This then calls for a new, better theory.

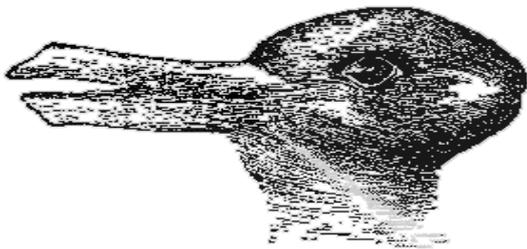
<sup>12</sup> Popper rejects the view that metaphysical statements are cognitively meaningless. Psychological or other a priori knowledge is important as a source of inspiration for scientific hypotheses. Their origin does not matter so long as they are bold conjectures with empirical content and forecasts open to refutation.

<sup>13</sup> And about Kant’s view in this respect he says: ‘...I feel it is a little too radical, and I should like to put it therefore in the following modified form: our intellect... *tries*...to impose upon nature laws which it freely invents’ (Popper, 1963, p 191; my italics).

<sup>14</sup> Therefore: ‘[f]rom a logical point of view, the testing of a theory depends on basic statements whose acceptance or rejection, in its turn, depends on our decisions’. Popper, 1963, p 387.

Kuhn, reflecting on this question, does not believe that scientists are always busy making new bold conjectures or trying to refute them. In periods of ‘normal science’, the prevailing paradigm<sup>15</sup> is accepted.<sup>16</sup> Only when the cumulative burden of unresolved anomalies becomes too great may there, as an exception, be the switch to a new paradigm.

And, ‘although the world does not change...the scientist then works in a different world’.<sup>17</sup> The debate between different theories remains often difficult because of a difference in worldview and the sociological stickiness of theoretical traditions.



Rabbit or duck? <sup>18</sup> A question of paradigm!

Kuhn rightly draws attention to the importance of ‘academic interpretative traditions’. However, Popper’s contribution remains his insistence that (i) there is no reason to abandon the concept of an objective truth; (ii) its existence allows it to function as a regulative principle in developing theories with as much explanatory and predictive power as possible; and (iii) presuppositions, expectations and beliefs can not be

---

<sup>15</sup> *Paradigma* can mean many things, but is used here in the sense of the whole constellation of convictions, values and techniques, which members of a given community (e.g. an academic school) have in common.

<sup>16</sup> Scientists are trying to support the paradigm, careers are being pursued, articles published in journals and dissertations written solving small remaining puzzles and patching up problems. Kuhn, 1972, pp.39-50.

<sup>17</sup> Kuhn, 1972, p.143: Communication between paradigms, facts being theory-laden and therefore an inadequate independent arbiter, is often very difficult. The scientific revolution resembles a religious conversion. Lakatos, 1970, pp.173-177, and others have tried to develop criteria to rationally decide between competing research programmes. A major challenge has been not to slide into pragmatism: true is what works best, whereby ‘best’ then often is defined by the scientist’s political or other worldview. There is here no scope to review that issue further.

<sup>18</sup> Kihlstrom, J.F., *Joseph Jastrom and His Duck, Or Is It a Rabbit?* <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~kihlstrm/JastrowDuck.htm>, [accessed 12/03/2010]. Jastrom’s cartoon was originally published in Harper’s Weekly, 19/11/1882, p.1114.

qualified as meaningless. They are entirely legitimate, if not critical, in formulating theoretical hypotheses.

Popper, however, fails to establish that a debate about truth and meaning can always be settled rationally.<sup>19</sup> This does not necessarily imply that truth or meaning itself is polyvalent or that it is neither available nor desirable (i.e. ‘an intentional fallacy’).<sup>20</sup> In the words of Vanhoozer: ‘It is possible to believe in a single correct interpretation [truth] without believing one has full possession of it.’<sup>21</sup>

However, rationalism can no longer be the final arbiter and pluralism is likely to be a fact of life.<sup>22</sup> Rationality becomes now an attitude of clarity (what are the consequences of the hypotheses), a readiness to give account (of the presuppositions of the hypotheses) and openness (to criticism of the consequences and failings of the explanatory power of the hypotheses).

Reflecting the above, this study attempts to be both *bold* and *modest*.

### *A bold hypothesis*

The Reformed tradition holds to the inspiration, unity and perspicuity of Scripture and follows a historical-grammatical hermeneutical approach.<sup>23</sup> Such tradition is a ‘context of discovery’ in which it is both legitimate and unsurprising to formulate a hypothesis reflecting these tenets.

---

<sup>19</sup> Because presuppositions are critical in formulating the hypotheses and facts are theory-laden.

<sup>20</sup> Vanhoozer, 1998, pp.82-85, identifies four variations of the view that an attempt to derive meaning from the author and his intention is a mistake: this would be a fallacy (i) of relevancy (what the author wanted to do is no help in determining what he has done); (ii) of transparency (an author’s conscious intentions may hide his unconscious fears); (iii) of identity (from the act of writing onwards the author’s intention and the meaning of the text cease to coincide); and (iv) of objectivity (the interpretative object has no real independence, standing over and against the interpretative acts; and there is no glass slipper to identify the Cinderella amongst the contending interpretations). In similar vein, the concept of multivalence has appeared in textual criticism, where not only the concept of one authorial meaning, but also the existence of an authoritative text and a fixed canon is to be abandoned; see Schnabel, 2004, p.75.

<sup>21</sup> Vanhoozer, 1998, p.300. Although it may be better to say one can believe to have the truth, but not purely rationally prove it.

<sup>22</sup> See also Osborne, 1991, p.413.

<sup>23</sup> E.g. Turretin, 1679, pp.62-85, 143-147 and 149-154. It is recognized that not all texts present themselves as historical narratives; the expression is used here in the sense Turretin for example describes the ‘literal’ sense, p.150: ‘that which the Holy Spirit or the author intends’. The former implies that there may be a sense which goes beyond what the human author understood (see §2.3)

A rational discourse does require, however, that the hypothesis is proposed in a format which can be tested and refuted. In this respect our hypothesis attempts to be bold.

And in response to the question ‘Is it true the author had no Hebrew?’ and the follow-on questions regarding his use of the OT-quotations, our proposed hypothesis is:

- (i) the author of Hebrews understands the Hebrew language, but (a) uses Greek for the benefit of his audience; and (b) does not criticize or correct the Greek if not strictly necessary in order to avoid creating uncertainty about the authority of the OT-text he cites in support of his discourse; and
- (ii) the author of Hebrews, in using quotations, applies hermeneutical techniques which respect the OT-context as expressed in the Hebrew text.

Assuming this hypothesis to be correct, one might expect the following findings: (i) any divergence between the Hebrew and Greek text is not critical to his argument; (ii) when paraphrasing, exegeting or amending,<sup>24</sup> the author follows or moves towards the Hebrew (con-)textual meaning; (iii) otherwise, he ignores and is silent regarding any divergence; (iv) any Greek text so divergent that ignoring differences is difficult and correction would constitute a major change is not presented as an (inspired) quotation; and (v) the OT-context of the quotation is congruent with its use in Hebrews (§2.3 attempts to further articulate this).

### *A modest approach*

The hypothesis must be bold, but the approach and its conclusions are modest; modest because of the limited knowledge of the present writer, the limited scope available for this study and the limitations of any rational debate.

An introduction to the Epistle to the Hebrews and its own statements on hermeneutics (§2.1-3) provide a minimal background to the exegetical review in §3 and 4.

---

<sup>24</sup> Amendments which do not affect meaning and may have been made for stylistic reasons are not considered.

## *1. Question and thesis*

The primary components (i) and (ii) of the hypothesis will in these paragraphs be tested against quotations in Hebrews. Their textual form and the selection used are explained in §2.4-5.

The sub-components (a) and (b) are not tested, but at this stage merely offered as a more or less plausible explanation.

In §5 some general and hermeneutical conclusions are drawn, whose limitations reflect the scope of this endeavor.

If this study stimulates reflection on the question posed, it has served its purpose.

## 2. The Epistle to the Hebrews: introductory observations

### 2.1 Author, audience and date

Thirteen names Ellingworth<sup>25</sup> lists as people from whose pen Hebrews may have flowed and many writers end their review of authorship with Origen's conclusion: τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς θεὸς οἶδεν.

Hebrews is always received as Pauline in the Eastern Church,<sup>26</sup> but already Eusebius notes doubts in the West.<sup>27</sup> Assuming Pauline authorship would answer our primary question. However, since the Epistle is anonymous it appears prudent not to go any further than Origen.

At times alongside Pauline authorship, the audience is assumed to be the Hebrew-speaking church in Palestine, possibly addressed in Hebrew.<sup>28</sup> Others argue for a Hellenistic Jewish congregation in Rome,<sup>29</sup> or more generally to such a congregation in the Diaspora.<sup>30</sup> Neither is certain, but what is clear, from both the way the author

---

<sup>25</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.3. Either as directly the author, or in the capacity of scribe, amanuensis or translator.

<sup>26</sup> Harris, 1969, p.268.

<sup>27</sup> Possibly because of the Montanist controversy and Hebrews 6:1-6. See furthermore Eusebius, 3.3 (p.94), and also 6.14 (p.217) and 6.25 (p.227) respectively on Clement of Alexandria who assumes the Epistle written to Hebrews, but with Paul omitting his name in order not to offend them. And on Origen who observes 'the thoughts are the apostle's but the style and construction reflect someone who recalled the apostle's teaching and interpreted them.' And concludes: 'If any church, then, regards this epistle as Paul's, it should be commended, since men of old had good reason to hand it down as his.'

<sup>28</sup> E.g. Raymond, 2000, pp.281-282 and Geertsema, 2001, pp.132-135, who understands 'the approaching day' of Hebrews 10:25 (when combined with Hebrews 8:13) as the looming destruction of Jerusalem with its temple and the ἀνασταυροῦντας as a reference to the support Jerusalem's population gave to Jesus' crucifixion. Clement assumed a translation into Greek by Luke (Eusebius, 6.14).

<sup>29</sup> E.g. Lane, 1991, pp.lxiii-lxvi; linking the past pressures on them to the Claudian expulsion and the impending ones to Nero. But Suetonius' sentence often referred to ('*Iudaeos impulsore Chresto adsidue tumultuantes Roma expulit*') is too vague: it may mean those Jews in Rome who were rioting (possibly about some of them joining Christianity – if *Chresto* is assumed to refer to Christ) were removed; or: since the Jews were making disturbances (possibly even in Palestine, which is the context Suetonius writes about) Claudius had as warning the Jews in Rome thrown out. In that case there is no reason to postulate a mainly Jewish Christian congregation in Rome prior to 49AD, which was then removed from Rome.

<sup>30</sup> See Attridge, 1989, pp.10-12. Such congregation subject to internal and external pressures tempted to move back to Judaism as a *religio licita*. The phrase ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας is not of much help in choosing, since it gives no indication as to where these Italians were; it only suggests that they were known to the audience.

argues throughout the Epistle and his explicit comment ‘ὅστε γὰρ...’,<sup>31</sup> is that they knew and respected the OT.

For the purpose of this study no assumptions are made regarding authorship and audience other than that *in its preserved form* the document was meant for an audience which knew the OT, considered it authoritative and relied on a Greek version.<sup>32</sup>

Also the date of the Epistle to the Hebrews is in dispute. Here no assumptions are made other than assuming that the author was familiar with the *traditions* reported in the Gospels, even where not all of them may have been written down at the time of the Epistle.

## 2.2 Genre and structure

### *Genre*

The limited background knowledge makes it more difficult to define the nature of Hebrews which ends like a letter, but lacks the usual introduction, salutation and prayer of epistles like Paul’s. Many attempts have been made to determine the genre and structure of Hebrews.<sup>33</sup> No agreement has been reached and a detailed review is outside our scope. This makes it even more important to listen to what the author himself says about the nature and content of his writing.<sup>34</sup>

In two sentences the author presents it as (i) a written paraenetic homily, based on (ii) a Christology presenting Jesus as the Davidic Son and our heavenly high priest.

---

<sup>31</sup> Hebrews 12:17. The verb-form can be indicative or imperative perfect. We found only one translation (the Luther Bible with ‘Wisset aber...’) taking the latter. See also Ellingworth, 1993, pp.23, 667 and Lane, 1991, p.liv.

<sup>32</sup> Compare Lane, 1991, p.liv: ‘Their [the addressees] source of authority is the Bible in an old Greek version...’.

<sup>33</sup> For a review of the many contributions, see Ellingworth, 1993, pp.50-62, Lane, 1991, pp.lxix-xcviii, Westfall, 2005, pp.1-20.

<sup>34</sup> It is noted that it is possible the author explicitly says one thing and implicitly does another, but our analysis below does not provide any evidence for this.

In Hebrews 13:22 he gives the well-known description of what his Epistle is: ἀδελφοί, ἀνέχεσθε τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως· καὶ γὰρ διὰ βραχέων ἐπέστειλα ὑμῖν. It is a word of exhortation, a sermon encouraging perseverance in faith and obedience, and many analyses of Hebrews have recognized this.<sup>35</sup> Not only is the Epistle replete with exhortations, also their pattern is similar<sup>36</sup> and, as may be evident from the brief and limited comments below on the structure of sections containing several quotations, they are the concluding climaxes of his discourses.

In Hebrews 8:1-2 the author summarizes his main argument supporting his exhortations to persevere: κεφάλαιον δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις, τοιοῦτον ἔχομεν ἀρχιερέα. We must, and can, persevere because we have such a high priest as Jesus. The summary contains many of the main features of his Christology: the τοιοῦτον refers back to Christ as (i) the Son having atoned for sin through His once-for-all sacrifice (Heb.7:27b-28b), who (ii) has completed His work and is now seated at God's right hand in heaven (Heb.8:1b), where (iii) He act as our mediator (Heb.8:2a) in (iv) a sanctuary which transcends all OT-institutions (Heb.8:2b).<sup>37</sup>

These two observations indicate the author (i) wished to convince his audience to adopt certain behaviour, based on a certain argument; and (ii) in a form which was intended to be spoken, but under the circumstances had to be written.<sup>38</sup>

Therefore, the use of rhetorical strategies may be expected. However, in view of the ongoing debate, no specific techniques have been supposed or imposed; the versatility of the author suggests he did not feel beholden to one particular approach.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> The (not authentic?) title 'To the Hebrews' may suggest a letter, but the 'oral, sermonic character' is often recognized, e.g. Lane, 1991, p.lxxiv, and Ellingworth, 1993, p.62. It is at times also used to explain certain changes to the text of the quotations the author may have made to achieve a more memorably sounding text through *paronomasia*; see Jobes, 1991 and 1992.

<sup>36</sup> McKnight, 1992, pp.22, 25, identifies a parallel pattern of (i) *addressees*, which are at risk of committing (ii) a *sin*, against which they are warned in (iii) an *exhortation*, which if not heeded will have (iv) *consequences* in five warning passages: Hebrews 2:1-4, 3:7-4:13, 5:11-6:12, 10:19-25 and 12:1-29.

<sup>37</sup> It should be noted this summarizing sentence sits right in the middle of the author's long discourse, which – apart from Hebrews 6:1-12 - is primarily describing Jesus as high priest (Heb.5:1-10:18), but draws in the earlier description of Him as the divine and human Son (Heb.1:1-3:6a). It can therefore appropriately be considered a summary of all the main points of his Christology in the Epistle and not just a 'local' summary.

<sup>38</sup> Note Hebrews 13:19, 22-24.

<sup>39</sup> Lane, 1991, p.lxxix, e.g. notes: 'The difficulty in classifying Hebrews as "deliberative" or "epideictic" [rhetoric] is easy to understand. Deliberative rhetoric is concerned with persuading an audience to make a choice on the basis of some future benefit or to dissuade them from some inappropriate action. ... Epideictic rhetoric is concerned with reinforcing beliefs already accepted by the audience.' And both apply.

The oral character of a sermon may also be recognized. However, considering his audience had the written text available (including the quotations), it is not assumed that the author derived from this the freedom to change the authoritative quotations to make them more memorable.

### *Structure*

The author does not comment on the structure, he presents it. Here only two aspects are briefly touched upon, with the aim of providing background to the exegetical efforts in §3-4: (i) the overall structure of the Epistle; and (ii) the introductions and ‘summarizing overlaps’ bracketing the first two sections.

*Overall structure.* Many different approaches are taken to determine the structure of Hebrews,<sup>40</sup> and they have led to many different proposals.<sup>41</sup> In addition, Guthrie observes in his attempt to distinguish the different explanatory and hortatory units in the discourse by charting ‘cohesion shifts’, that the transition is often made by such devices as ‘hookwords’ and ‘overlapping constituents’.<sup>42</sup> As a result there are not only many different approaches for drawing-the-lines between sections, it is also likely no sharp lines can be drawn.<sup>43</sup>

Westfall argues, based on her discourse analysis, for a tripartite structure with two thematic discourse peaks; around which proposal there appears some convergence.

---

<sup>40</sup> Westfall, 2005, pp.1-20, lists content analysis (e.g. F.F. Bruce, P.E. Hughes), rhetorical criticism (e.g. H.W. Attridge, D.A. deSilva), literary analysis (A. Vanhoye), W.Nauck’s tripartite structure, an agnostic approach (e.g. J. Moffatt) and discourse analysis (L.L. Neely, G.H. Guthrie, 1994). The agnostic view basically gives up on finding a compelling solution and Moffatt is quoted as concluding: ‘The flow of thought...is best followed from point to point’.

<sup>41</sup> Guthrie, 1994, p.22, shows a schematic overview of nine different alternatives, and even these are a selection. Joslin, 2007, p.122, after a review of eight approaches to the structure of Hebrews: ‘...there is little consensus regarding the structure of Hebrews.’

<sup>42</sup> Guthrie, 1994, pp.96-102 (hookwords: rhetorically anchoring the connection between the two units in the use of the same word (e.g. ‘angels’ in Hebrews 1:4, 6, 7, 13 and 2:2, 5, 16)) and pp.102-104 (overlapping constituents: Hebrews 4:14-16 and 10:19-25 are identified as belonging to both the previous and the following section).

<sup>43</sup> The observation no single rhetorical strategy may have been used, suggests that also mechanical adherence to one structural scheme is unlikely. In view of the oral nature (and the fact that even as a written document is may have been read to most of its intended audience), it seems unlikely that any highly intricate, complicated structural devices are used intentionally, certainly not if they stretch out over long parts of the text.

She notes: '[t]he patterned use of the hortatory subjunctive occurs at major discourse shifts [including the two peaks] and functions as a transition from one unit to the next, so the hortatory subjunctives are both destination and point of departure of the surrounding units – they belong to both units.'<sup>44</sup> The indicative spans of text in between, whether long or short, are on this understanding consistently signalled (often through the conjunction γὰρ) as support material for the exhortations (often following an inferential conjunction such as οὖν).

This is consistent with the view taken above that the Epistle is best understood as a word of exhortation frequently supported by christological observations; and not a theological treatise providing a Christology proving Jesus to be the messiah.

The resulting understanding of the structure of Hebrews is:<sup>45</sup>

- (i) Persevere, considering Jesus, the divine Son (Heb.1:1-4:16);
- (ii) Persevere, considering Jesus, the high priest (Heb.4:14-10:25); and
- (iii) Persevere considering the consequences: your Christian life (Heb.10:19-13:15).

In the first section, the audience is exhorted (a) to heed the *word* God now speaks through the Son, superior to the (word brought by) angels (Heb.1:1-2:4);<sup>46</sup> (b) to consider the obedient service of Jesus, who humbled Himself and is a mediator better than Moses (Heb.2:1-3-6a); and (c) not to forego the approach to throne of grace, to which Jesus has opened the way (Heb.3:1-4:16).

The second movement urges the readers to consider Jesus as the high priest, who through His obedience has effected the once-and-for-all *sacrifice*, thus not only surpassing the inadequate OT word and mediator, but also its temple-cult. Jesus now mediates for us directly before the throne of God in heaven.

The third segment is more diverse in character, but exhorts the Hebrews to draw the consequences: (a) to persevere in view of the coming judgment, like the OT-heroes (Heb.10:19-12:4); (b) to come to a better and more awesome Zion and worship God

---

<sup>44</sup> Westfall, 2005, p.297.

<sup>45</sup> This outline follows Westfall, 2005, pp.299-301, in the breakdown of the tripartite structure, but not always in the detail within the three major components and the summary of their content.

<sup>46</sup> It may be argued the *exordium* functions as the introduction to the whole Epistle, but this is not further reviewed here.

with reverence (Heb.12:1-12:29); and (c) to live a daily life before His presence (Heb.12:29-13:5).

The two ‘overlaps’, also described as ‘peaks’, of Hebrews 4:16-18 and 10:19-25 are the transitions between the three sections and contain the summarizing exhortation of the author.<sup>47</sup> They are preceded by a set of parallel introductions and reviewed in more detail below.

*Two introductions and two summaries.* Two of the main sections presenting Jesus respectively as the obedient, divine Son (Heb.1:1-4:16) and the once-and-for-all high priest (Heb.5:1-10:39) are introduced by a parallel set of double quotations.

The first in Hebrews 1:5 joins 2 Samuel 7:14 to Psalm 2:7, followed by an exposition of Jesus, the Son, as the divine ruler and creator, who came to earth to become man with His people and to lead them into rest. The second in Hebrews 5:5-6 combines 2 Samuel 7:14 with Psalm 110:4 and introduces a discourse on how and why Jesus as high priest supersedes and replaces the OT atonement rituals.

Each main section is followed by an exhortation, which show remarkable parallels and may well be understood as the author in homiletical fashion repeating and summarizing his main message. Hebrews 3:1-2 with 4:14-16 is considered the first and 10:19-25 the second high point of the Epistle.

Both summarizing exhortations each contain the following main elements:

- (i) ***the addressees***: brothers and partners in the heavenly calling (Heb.3:1, 10:19);
- (ii) ***the time and need of his audience***: a time of need and approaching judgment (Heb.4:16, 10:25);
- (iii) ***the state and comfort of/for his audience***: they have in Jesus, the Son of God, a high priest in heaven (Heb.4:14, 10:19-21);
- (iv) ***the reason for this comfort***: Jesus like man was tempted, but He remained obedient and thus through His sacrifice He opened the way to God (Heb.3:2, 10:19-20);

---

<sup>47</sup> Although the structure of the Epistle is not the focus of this study and the point cannot be argued *in extenso*, the verses of Hebrews 3:1-2a are considered part of the first ‘peak’, followed by a comparison of Jesus and Moses and a long excursus on the entry to rest/God’s presence. It makes the parallel with Hebrews 10:19-25 clearer and it seems unnecessary to force this versatile author in the harness of too mechanical a scheme.

- (v) ***the exhortation to his audience***: look at Jesus, hold fast your confession and make your approach with boldness (Heb.3:1, 4:14, 16, 10:22, 23); and finally
- (vi) ***the goal for his audience***: entry into the Holies, before the throne of grace, into the presence of God (Heb.4:16, 10:19).

When reflecting upon parts of the text and how the author uses the OT-quotations it will be helpful to keep his own summary of his message in mind.

### 2.3 Hermeneutics

Since the author's perceived lack of Hebrew is, at times, linked with the use of certain hermeneutical techniques, we will below briefly consider what the Epistle itself suggests regarding its hermeneutics against the background of some different approaches.

#### *Summary of hermeneutical approaches*

Many linguistic and philosophical questions, including post-modern doubts about the possibility of reconstructing authorial intent because of the 'hermeneutical circle', surface when reflecting on how texts are exegeted. There is no scope here to review this in any depth, but, when considering the use of OT quotations in Hebrews, it is helpful to briefly reflect upon some hermeneutical approaches.

Trull discerns seven different possible categories of NT intertextual use of biblical texts.<sup>48</sup>

- (1) Hermeneutical error: the writer applies the used text wrongly.
- (2) Jewish hermeneutics: the NT use of the OT is considered an example of the hermeneutics of Second Temple Judaism. Given the perceived importance of this approach for the author it is below reviewed in more detail.

---

<sup>48</sup> Trull, 2004, pp.199ff. His review is of Peter's use of Psalm 16 in Acts 2, but his approach is helpful here also.

(3) *Sensus Plenior*: here the text is seen as having a first level grammatical-historical meaning and the same time a deeper meaning already intended by God, but possibly not fully understood by the original writer. This deeper meaning can be made known (δηλώω<sup>49</sup>) in later revelation.<sup>50</sup> For those who believe with the author and Peter that all scripture is inspired<sup>51</sup> this possibility is recognized in 1 Peter 1:10-12. There, the apostle states that the OT prophets, then already inspired by Christ, with prophecies they themselves did not fully understand (ἐξεζήτησαν καὶ ἐξηρέυνησαν), ‘ministered things’ to later believers which the Holy Spirit would then explain (ἃ νῦν ἀνηγγέλη ὑμῖν).

However, as Moo has pointed out the *sensus plenior* needs to respect the original meaning and be developed in the canonical context.<sup>52</sup>

(4) Single message: Kaiser<sup>53</sup> maintains that each text has one and the same meaning for its own time and for later, i.e. the original author’s intended meaning. Regarding Psalm 110, for example, this implies David understood he was speaking about his son(s) and ultimately also about the Messiah as royal priests in the sense Hebrews 7 explains Him. Only of the time was he ignorant.

It is, however, difficult to find any evidence that David’s understanding was so detailed.<sup>54</sup>

(5) Directly prophetic or messianic: regarding e.g. Psalm 110, several commentators<sup>55</sup> take the position that David was not speaking about his son(s), but directly, possibly without recognizing the implications of his prophecy, about his great Son. Davis

---

<sup>49</sup> Louw-Nida, no. 28.42: δηλώω: ‘to make something known by making evident what was either unknown before or what may have been difficult to understand’ - ‘to make known, to make plain, to reveal.’ See also Ellingworth, 1993, p.437.

<sup>50</sup> For R.E.Brown, whose name is associated with this concept, such revelation could come from the Roman Catholic Church as well, but the concept can also be used limiting such additional revelation to the Bible itself as the only authoritative source. There must be a relationship between the original, literal sense and the fuller sense; and the concept applies to text, rather than events or things (see Moo, 1986, p.202) to discern it from typology. Or put differently: it is ‘words about words’ (see also Ellingworth, 1993, p.208).

<sup>51</sup> Compare 2 Peter 2:21 and 1 Peter 1:10-12.

<sup>52</sup> Moo, 1986, pp.201-208.

<sup>53</sup> Kaiser, 1985, p.235. His exegesis (pp.17-23) of 1 Peter 1:10-12 and Daniel 12:6-9 however is criticized (Bock, 1986, p.490), as is his attempt to limit a different understanding in the OT and NT to the difference between meaning and application (Silva, 1986, p.493).

<sup>54</sup> Kaiser, 1974, pp.310, 316 and 318, has argued, convincingly in our view, that David understood the promise of the Davidic covenant was one of great scope and importance, which is reflected e.g. in Psalm 110. However it does not follow that David did address this psalm *only* to the Messiah, nor that he understood the full extent and all the details, which the NT later reveals. See §3.1.

<sup>55</sup> Delitzsch, p.66 (through Waltke, 1981, p.6).

contends the psalm is messianic-*only*.<sup>56</sup> A similar view is held by Harman on Psalm 45, when explaining the author's use of it in Hebrews.

Although it simplifies the life of an exegete considerably, this approach often seems to sit uneasily with the way God may be perceived to work in and through history.<sup>57</sup> Why would David compose a psalm which was meaningless in his time<sup>58</sup> and why would a Psalter-editor retain it hundreds of years later? The approach heavily relies on direct intervention, like a *Deus ex machina*, in the process of inspiration.

(6) Typological-prophetic approach: here, the later text uses a historical person or event of an earlier text as a type of the then current situation.<sup>59</sup> The emphasis is on *prophetic* if the earlier event was forward looking and anticipated fulfilment, and on *typological* if the later event was not obviously anticipated, but the fulfilment recognized in hindsight.

(7) Canonical process approach: this approach, proposed by Waltke, can be seen as a refinement and integration of (3), (5) when applicable, and of (6).<sup>60</sup> For the psalms he suggests identifying the meanings of the text for the poet (e.g. David), for the time following (e.g. the monarchy with focus on his successors), in the Second Temple period (focus on the messianic hope) and in the NT (focus on Christ) respectively. Poythress, in a similar manner, sees both progressive understanding and progressive revelation and concludes a text should be read in 'three progressively larger contexts':<sup>61</sup> the book, the canon up to the point of writing, and now the entire Bible.

The hermeneutics of Second Temple Judaism are often described as *midrash*. The verb שׁוֹרֵץ means 'to seek, inquire' and has a wide range of application: from seeking lost animals to divine guidance. The derived noun became a technical term indicating the searching, for its meaning, in a written text.<sup>62</sup> Both its definition and origin are,

---

<sup>56</sup> Davis, 2000, pp.164 and 173. E.E. Johnson, 1992, p.432.

<sup>57</sup> See also Allen, 1983, p.113.

<sup>58</sup> While texts such as 1 Peter 1:10-12 appear to imply there was in certain cases more meaning to prophecies beyond what the prophets at the time understood, it seems going very far to assume there was no contemporary meaning. The Daniel text in a way indicates how unusual this was: in Daniel 12:9 an explanation is specifically refused and the words said to be closed up and sealed.

<sup>59</sup> Or a current 'thing' can be the anti-type of a prior 'thing', e.g. the tabernacle as the anti-type of the type in heaven shown to Moses (Heb.8:5). There is no scope to explore this further.

<sup>60</sup> Waltke, 1981, p.8. Although he emphasizes the continuity in the various stages of the text's meaning compared to a divergent *sensus plenior* approach.

<sup>61</sup> Poythress, 1986, p.268.

<sup>62</sup> Probably in the second century. The term does not provide any precision in identifying its hermeneutics. And J. Neusner observed that: 'Midrash presently stands for pretty much anything any Jew in antiquity did in reading and interpreting Scripture', through Leschert, 1994, p.173.

however, in dispute and a detailed review falls outside our scope. We will, therefore, follow Bateman and Leschert in a brief overview.<sup>63</sup>

*Midrash* can be understood as (i) an interpretative stand, which seeks to apply Scripture to contemporary issues not directly addressed, to explain perceived inconsistencies or to find hidden meanings, often using isolated textual units; (ii) a hermeneutical methodology frequently associated with the rules of Hillel,<sup>64</sup> which are discussed below; and (iii) a literary genre which is the resulting secondary literature about Scripture, characteristically with both interpreter and audience accepting its authority.

It includes rabbinic *midrash* (halakah and haggadah), the Targums and also (disputed) *Pesher*.<sup>65</sup> The latter writing, often closely associated with the Qumran community, is a strongly eschatological application of Scripture to (the time of) its audience and regularly seems to assume the real meaning of Scripture is cryptic, a mystery only revealed in the end-time to a chosen interpreter.

Of Hillel's rules three<sup>66</sup> are regularly identified as being used in Hebrews: (i) *qal wahomer* (קל וחומר): a logical syllogism which argues *a fortiori* (what applies in a less important case applies in a more important one); (ii) *gezerah shawah* (גיזרה שווה): the

---

<sup>63</sup> Bateman, 1997, pp.1-21, believes the author applies early Jewish hermeneutics. Leschert, 1994, pp.172-186, does not.

<sup>64</sup> Hillel reputedly lived somewhere between 110BC-10AD; and his seven rules, *middoth*, were later elaborated and refined allegedly into 13 by R. Ishmael and 39 by R. Eliezer. Codification may not have taken place before the time of R. Ishmael, 130AD. However, it is uncertain whether Hillel invented, simply used or codified (some of) these rules. The use of *midrash* was prevalent in Jewish circles from the time of Constantine, but it is difficult to assess how widespread its use was in the NT time. Towner states: 'Scholars have struggled to find evidence that the Jews who wrote the New Testament were familiar with the *middot* of Hillel...' (Towner, 1982, p.133). See also Bateman, 1997, p.4, citing there R.B. Hays, and pp.9-11. Also see Leschert, 1994, p.175. The Qumran findings can not necessarily be taken as representative: it was a sect with views that were far from mainstream; and their library and writings on the rock in the desert may have reflected this.

<sup>65</sup> The (Aramaic) noun פֶּשֶׁר appears most frequently in Daniel, where it refers to the (initially hidden) meaning of a dream, to be revealed (הודא –MT, δηλόω –LXX) only by Daniel.

<sup>66</sup> The others, which are less frequently cited, are:

(iii) *Binyan av mikatuv ahad* (בנין אב מכתוב אחד): the meaning of a phrase found in one text may inform the meaning of others (a family) where it is also found.

(iv) *Binyan av mi-shenei khetuvim* (בנין אב משני כתובים): as above, but now based on two texts taken together.

(v) *Kelal u-ferat* (כלל ופרט): a general principle may be restricted by a particularisation, or a particular rule generally applied.

(vi) *Kayose bo bemaqom aher* (כיוצא בו במקום אחר): as (ii), but the analogy can go beyond a verbal one.

Bateman claims to have identified also (iv) and (vi) in Hebrews (Bateman, 1997, pp.241-245).

use of verbal analogy (if texts share a common term, one can be used to explain the other); and (vii) *dabar halamed me-inyano* (דבר הלמד מעיניו): a meaning can be established by the context.

Phrased this way few would take exception to these rules, but their application is frequently very creative and texts are used atomistically to such an extent that it goes well beyond the biblical context or even results in disrespect for it.<sup>67</sup>

Enns, together with many others attributing to the author such ‘apostolic hermeneutics’,<sup>68</sup> has commented that this approach frequently does not require the quoted text to be historical (it may well be myth without undermining the argument); nor does it always respect authorial intent.<sup>69</sup> NT writers exegete according to the tradition of their time, their cultural moment, and they were driven by their eschatological moment: to proclaim the risen Christ. Enns calls this their ‘christotelic approach’.<sup>70</sup> Thus, the NT itself contains exegesis which the historical-grammatical method of the Reformation would consider inadmissible, but the interpreter should feel free to follow. He cites the use of Psalm 95 in Hebrews as an example.<sup>71</sup>

Longenecker similarly identifies the use of Jewish hermeneutics.<sup>72</sup> However, he is more cautious in his conclusion: the author is perceived as still trying to understand ‘[w]hat do the Scriptures mean when viewed from a Christocentric perspective?’, although at times providing ‘a mild allegorical-etymological treatment’.<sup>73</sup>

In a variation of this theme, the author has been associated with a ‘Hellenized’ version of Jewish hermeneutics and both in his conceptual<sup>74</sup> and hermeneutical approach

---

<sup>67</sup> E.g. Leschert, 1994, p.180, points at R. Eliezer’s ‘sub-rules’ of *gematria* (meaning of a word is derived from their numerical value) and *notarikon* (meaning of a word is derived by transforming the letters in an acrostic). Towner, 1982, p.124, relates a use of rule (vii): Since the Exo.20:13 command ‘you shall not steal’ is given in the context of a discussion of crimes deserving capital punishment, this command also refers only to actions resulting in capital punishment, i.e. stealing of people; therefore, it does not speak to stealing of goods which is not punishable by death. Which exegesis, as Bateman, 1997, p.20 comments, is ‘contrary to the original intention of the human author’.

<sup>68</sup> The hermeneutics of the apostolic NT writers are for him very similar: ‘... one [c]ould easily understand the NT as a Second Temple interpretative text.’ Enns, 2003, p.268.

<sup>69</sup> Enns, 2003, p.267.

<sup>70</sup> Enns, 2003, pp.275-277 and Enns, 2005, p.154.

<sup>71</sup> Enns, 1993; in addition he mentions Matthew 2:15-Hosea 11:1, 2 Corinthians 6:2-Isaiah 49:8, Galatians 3:16-Genesis 12:7, Romans 11:26-27-Isaiah 59:20 (Enns, 2005, pp.132ff.). And while he does not mention Psalm 110 and Hebrews 7 as an example, these texts presumably would fit his bill as well.

<sup>72</sup> Longenecker, 1975, p.185, e.g. the principles of *gezerah shawah* and *dabar halamed me-inyano*.

<sup>73</sup> Longenecker, 1975, p.185.

<sup>74</sup> E.g. in his understanding of the concept of ‘rest’.

considered akin to, if not dependent on, Philo and Alexandrian Judaism. Any conceptual affinity will be considered later where relevant for his use of quotations. Concerning his hermeneutics, it suffices to observe that there is hardly a trace of the at times extreme allegorical exegesis characteristic of Alexandria.<sup>75</sup>

### *Indications on hermeneutics in Hebrews*

Leschert<sup>76</sup> tries to demonstrate that the author uses what he identifies as the historical-grammatical hermeneutics of the Reformation. However, in a review of Leschert's book, Enns comments: 'The author of Hebrews is not permitted to set his own hermeneutical agenda. Rather, one is imposed on him.'<sup>77</sup>

To avoid imposing any such agenda, an attempt is made in this research to understand the author's approach, which can be done in two ways: (i) by identifying his actual practice in the way he quotes, exegetes and uses the OT in the broader context of his Epistle; and (ii) by listening to what he himself says in this respect.

The first approach would require not only an analysis of how quotations are cited and commented on, which will be undertaken in §3-4, but also an analysis of how all OT information functions in his overall discourse. This goes well beyond the scope of this study. Our conclusions on his hermeneutics therefore remain necessarily tentative.

The above limitation makes the second approach of listening to what the author himself says even more relevant and it is remarkable how explicit the author is about

---

<sup>75</sup> See Longenecker, 1975, p.171, who also describes how tenaciously theories can survive the facts in quoting S. Sowers who writes: 'The absence of this hermeneutical tool [allegory] is particularly conspicuous because of the Alexandrian background of the epistle. Because allegory was the outstanding exegetical principle practiced in Alexandrian circles, its omission in Hebrews also means that the writer has excluded Alexandrian hermeneutics *par excellence*.'

<sup>76</sup> Leschert, 1994, p.16.

<sup>77</sup> Enns, 1998, p.164. His review of Leschert's book is vivid, if not livid. Enns, however, makes no attempt to listen to what the author of Hebrews himself says about his hermeneutical views and proceeds to foist upon him the hermeneutics of Second Temple Judaism, apparently used by some of the author's contemporaries (p.166). The review is an interesting example of the 'we-in-the-know...'-attitude of the academic purveyors of a prevailing paradigm; note his comment: 'Those familiar with the literature and hermeneutics of the Second Temple world, and who understand the need to view apostolic exegesis somewhere within those parameters, will hardly be satisfied with Leschert's insistence on the universality of historical-grammatical hermeneutics.' (p.165).

his view on Scripture.<sup>78</sup> Although he does not give a systematic account in today's terminology, it can fairly be summarized as follows:

(1) Inspiration. Scripture, although spoken through human beings, e.g. the prophets, is the word of God. The confirmation is made explicitly in Hebrews 1:1 and 4:7.

(2) Validity/authority. As a corollary of inspiration, Scripture is recognized as still valid and authoritative in the present. This is not only clear from his enlisting the quotations in support of his argument, but also from his frequent introduction of them as God speaking in the present tense. He explicitly confirms the OT as βέβαιος (Heb.2:2) and the word of God as 'living' (Heb.4:12).<sup>79</sup>

(3) Unity. Also as a corollary of inspiration, the unity of Scripture is recognized. It is the basis on which the author can draw conclusions from taking statements across time, as he e.g. does in Hebrews 4:4-5 and explicitly uses as part of his argument in Hebrews 4:7: ἐν Δαυὶδ λέγων, μετὰ τοσοῦτον χρόνον.<sup>80</sup> In this respect, he may well have drawn comfort from his confession in Hebrews 13:8 that the one who speaks, Christ, is always the same.<sup>81</sup>

However, God's word is, for the author, not static, as he appears to perceive that there is:

(4) Progression in the History of Redemption and of Revelation. The first, although strictly speaking maybe not a hermeneutical concept, is in evidence in the discussion of the movement from the old to the new covenant in e.g. Hebrews 8:13, 9:8-10, 11:13; and this progression, he writes in Hebrews 12:25-27, is set to continue. The second aspect is announced in the opening statement of the author: God spoke in the past through the prophets, but now through the Son. In parallel therewith, he argues that his audience now knows more than the OT people, and that this brings heavier responsibilities and makes his exhortations more urgent. It is reflected in the repeated

---

<sup>78</sup> It is again noted that it is possible the author explicitly says one thing about his hermeneutics and implicitly does another, but our analysis below does not provide any evidence for this.

<sup>79</sup> Taking Hebrews 2:2 in isolation it could be argued βέβαιος (Louw-Nida, no.28.043: 'pertaining to that which is known with certainty' - 'known to be true, certain, verified.') applies only for the OT-time, but in the broader context this appears unlikely: it should be noted the expression ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ in Hebrews 13:7 refers to the NT-message, while in Hebrews 4:12, coming after an extensive quotation, it appears to refer to the OT. With Ellingworth, 1993, p.260, we have taken the genitive as subjective and, although the word is personified, not read it as a reference to Christ, but to God's speaking in both OT and NT.

<sup>80</sup> The unity and validity across time is here seen by the author as both intra-testamental and inter-testamental.

<sup>81</sup> God, Christ and the Holy Spirit are used interchangeably at times in the Epistle and that may be applied here as well.

a *fortiori*-reasoning (πολλῶ μᾶλλον) in e.g. Hebrews 2:2-3 and Hebrews 12:25-27, which compares the OT and NT speaking of God.<sup>82</sup>

In the combination of the dynamics of history progressing and the constancy of authoritative unity the author recognizes three further concepts:

(5) Prophecy or promise and fulfillment. The author not only confirms that that which God spoke in the past has come true (Heb.6:15), he bases his exhortations on the conviction that this continues to be true (Heb.10:36).

(6) *Sensus plenior*. The verb δηλόω, discussed in above, returns in Hebrews 9:8. Having described the arrangements for the OT tabernacle, the author observes that the Holy Spirit is, through these arrangements, indicating (τοῦτο δηλοῦντος, present participle) that the way into the sanctuary had not yet been opened (πεφανερωσθαι, perfect infinitive). The present participle suggests that, while the message to the visitors of this OT sanctuary was that the sacrifices do not provide a free-for-all road into God's presence, the Holy Spirit now reveals this was temporary.<sup>83</sup> The information that another solution than the regular sacrifices was required and would come (Christ, Heb.9:11), although implied in the OT procedures, is a deeper meaning only now becoming clear. The verb is used in a similar way in Hebrews 12:27.

(7) Typology. In fact, these OT arrangements are a type of what was to come. In the author's typology an earthly reality can, as antitype (ὑπόδειγμα, ἀντίτυπος, σκιά), refer back to a heavenly reality (τύπος) as in Hebrews 8:5 and 9:23; or, alternatively, as type (σκιά, παραβολή)<sup>84</sup> foreshadow it as in Hebrews 9:8-10 and 10:1.

---

<sup>82</sup> See also Longenecker, 1975, pp.173-174: '...the writer to the Hebrews thought in terms of historical redemption...'; '...Hebrews begins on the premise that history is divinely purposes and revelatory by design, pointing...to a promised consummation by God.'; '...Hebrew is concerned with the tension between prophetic anticipation and fulfillment...' and '...Hebrews spells out typological correspondences existing within the framework of redemptive history...'.

<sup>83</sup> As long as the first tabernacle is standing (vs.8: ἔτι τῆς πρώτης σκηνῆς ἐχούσης στάσιν, present participle), for the then present time (vs.9: εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεστηκότα, perfect participle), until the time of reformation/restoration (vs.10: μέχρι καιροῦ διορθώσεως).

<sup>84</sup> Louw-Nida, no.58.63: τύπος; παραβολή: 'a model or example which anticipates or precedes a later realization' - 'archetype, figure, foreshadow, symbol.'

*Concluding comments*

To review whether Second Temple hermeneutics were clearly defined and widely used in the NT time, how they today can best be described and whether the author's approach can reasonably be classified as such, is well beyond the scope of our study. There is also significant overlap between some of Hillel's rules in their general formulation and the exegetical approach as formulated for example by Waltke. Therefore, our interest is not so much in whether the labelling of the author's hermeneutics is correct,<sup>85</sup> but in whether the author's approach, when labelled as Second Temple hermeneutics, shows a disregard for the original meaning of quotations as it may reasonably be established within the OT context.

While it is recognized that the above summary of the author's hermeneutical comments does not amount to a systematic doctrine, some observations may nevertheless be made: (i) the author's comments are compatible with the approach outlined above by Waltke; and (ii) they indicate no affinity with an approach which does not respect the OT meaning, nor assume a cryptic OT meaning waiting to be revealed by the author.

Although not all four steps are always applicable, we will broadly follow Waltke's approach and seek first to understand the OT text in its own setting; then try to understand how the author uses the quotation exegetically in his argument; possibly with an eschatological, typological or *sensus plenior* meaning as long as this can be plausibly supported by the progress of the history of redemption and revelation and is compatible with the original meaning.<sup>86</sup>

Whenever this approach yields a satisfactory explanation, it may be concluded that there is no need to suggest that the author uses Second Temple hermeneutics to the extent that this implies a disregard for the historical-grammatical meaning.

---

<sup>85</sup> E.g. whether an argument is described as *a fortiori* or as *qal wahomer* may be a matter of fashion or compliance with the prevailing paradigm.

<sup>86</sup> Or as Abasciano, 2005, p.232, describes it regarding Paul's use of the OT in Romans: 'To say that Paul uses OT texts in accordance with their original intentions at least means that his application of them is a logical extension or development of those intentions.' To label any interpretation which goes beyond a passage's strict original intention 'non-contextual' is too restrictive a definition (p.231).

## 2.4 Texts used

When drawing conclusions from comparing texts, the importance of textual criticism has to be acknowledged: which LXX (and possibly Hebrew) texts the author did have in front of him<sup>87</sup> and what exactly he wrote is of great importance. But this vast and fascinating topic is outside our scope; only an account of the choices made when comparing texts can be given.

For Hebrew the Masoretic Text (“MT”) is used.<sup>88</sup> In the only deviation from the MT in §4.1 the guidelines provided by Jobes-Silva are kept in mind.<sup>89</sup>

Several inquiries have been made into which version of the Septuagint the author may have used, but no clear alignment with any of the known manuscripts (“MSS”) has emerged.<sup>90</sup> Here Ralphs’ Septuagint (“LXX”) has been used.<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> Apart from inquiring which LXX-variant the author used, it is also possible to assume he only had access to a limited numbers of scrolls. Karrer, 2006, p.342-3, considers it likely he had only the Psalms, Jeremiah and maybe the Pentateuch, which could explain the variations in the quotations from e.g. the Minor Prophets. Here no such assumption is used.

<sup>88</sup> The Codex Leningradensis Hebrew Text, as presented on Bibleworks 8. *Plus* and *minus* against the MT in the Septuagint were already identified in Origen’s Hexapla and the existence of other texts, which may have been the Septuagint’s *Vorlage*, confirmed in the findings of Qumran. The decision on which text-variant to accept as original is often a matter of disposition. See Jobes and Silva, 2000, pp.151-152. They view a new eclectic, critically constructed text of the Hebrew Bible as having serious theoretical and many practical problems.

<sup>89</sup> Jobes and Silva, 2000, pp.52 and 153. The guidelines for deviating from the MT based on the Septuagint are: (i) establish the Septuagint is unlikely to be a mistranslation; (ii) if applicable, any proposed retroversion is a sensible one, (iii) establish there is a reasonable basis for the assumption another *Vorlage* actually existed; and (iv) maintain consistency in the assumptions regarding the textual quality of the MT and Septuagint-*Vorlage* for the whole of the OT book under consideration. On this last point it may be noted that Jobes and Silva, 2000, pp.155-156, make a similar analysis for Deuteronomy 31:1 as §4.1 does for Deuteronomy 32:43.

<sup>90</sup> See e.g. Thomas, 1965, and McCullough, 1980, in a general inquiry; and Gheorghita, 2003, pp.170-174, for a selected text, Habakkuk 2:3-4, (although, oddly, he prints as his conclusion the Hebrews text rather than the selected LXX-text). Thomas, 1965, p.303, identifies 56 variations from LXX A/B (the two principal witnesses to the LXX) in what he counts as 29 quotations. He assumes LXX A/B represent two traditions from a single parent, of which a more primitive edition was used by the author, p.325. The variations from LXX A/B he considers deliberate and frequently meaningful. McCullough, 1980, p.363, disagrees and posits the author did not use an archetype, but a, now unknown, local version of the LXX, possibly the one in use with his audience to avoid confusion or opposition. He concludes the author’s variations were limited and either stylistic or clarifying his interpretation of the quotation, showing ‘a reverent and cautious attitude to this text which contrasts sharply with that found among many of his contemporaries’ (p.379).

<sup>91</sup> LXX Septuaginta (Old Greek Jewish Scriptures) edited by Alfred Rahlfs, copyright © 1935 by the Württembergische Bibelanstalt / Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (as presented on Bibleworks 8), which is largely based on the Codices A (Alexandrinus), B (Vaticanus) and S or Ⲛ (Sinaiticus). It is interesting to note that Jobes and Silva, 2000, pp.54-55, consider that a Lucianic recension of the Greek Old Testament (next to the Hexaplaric recension) may have been limited to stylistics, while substantive

For Hebrews the Byzantine or Majority text (“BYZ”) is used,<sup>92</sup> for methodological and historical reasons.<sup>93</sup>

The view taken here is not that there is one preserved exact copy of the autograph somewhere in the body of the Byzantine MSS (e.g. the *Textus Receptus*, “TR”), nor that the subjectivity of weighing internal and external evidences can be excluded, but that the majority of the (families<sup>94</sup> of) MSS should be given more weight. Confronted with the choice between a (reasoned) eclectic text which is largely Alexandrian<sup>95</sup> and a Byzantine-text reflecting the majority of the MSS,<sup>96</sup> the latter has been selected. Where the differences with the Nestle/UBS-text (“NA”) are meaningful, such has been noted.

The English text used is the New King James (“NKJ”) and all textual references are to it, unless indicated otherwise.<sup>97</sup>

## 2.5 The OT in the Epistle to the Hebrews

When considering the question whether the writer of Hebrews had any Hebrew and, secondarily, what hermeneutical method he applied, the pervasive presence of the OT

---

revisions in the direction of a pre-MT Hebrew text are from an Antiochene or Proto-Lucianic recension.

<sup>92</sup> Robinson and Pierpont, 2005. The alternative would have been Z.C. Hodges and A. L. Farstad (eds.), *The Greek New Testament according to the Majority Text*, Nashville TN: Nelson, 1985. But since the major differences are outside Hebrews (Revelation and the *pericope adulterae*, Wallace, 1994, p.199); availability on Bibleworks 8 led to Robinson and Pierpont.

<sup>93</sup> To argue this choice at any depth is outside the scope of this study, but it is noted that Wallace, 1994, pp.197 and 168 describes the ‘MT [here: Majority Text] movement’ as ‘a popular movement within conservative circles bolstered by an occasional scholar’ ‘trying to reopen an issue once thought to be settled’ often driven by the theological *a priori* of providential preservation of the *Textus Receptus* (“TR”) or the King James’ Version – as the case may be.

<sup>94</sup> Establishing such families (Robinson, 2005, no.54, Van Bruggen, 1976, p.17) will involve judgment.

<sup>95</sup> Robinson, 2005, fn107, quotes research indicating the papyri and uncials (i.e. important sources for NA) for Hebrews may be of a shared, Egyptian provenance. Ellingworth, 1993, pp.81-84, following the NA, lists only two Byzantine sources, the uncials K 018 and L 020 (both 9<sup>th</sup> century).

<sup>96</sup> Simply taking the majority could be considered too mechanical an approach. Robinson and Pierpont, 2005, p.xiv, state that, although their text reflects >70% of the MSS, ‘the primary basis of textual determination remains non-quantitative’, They describe their method as ‘reasoned transmissionalism’.

<sup>97</sup> It is noted the NKJ is based on the TR, which may well be inferior to the BYZ, but it seems the closest approximation in a recognized English translation.

in Hebrews provides an embarrassment of riches in the many instances of intertextuality. However, not all are equally helpful and a selection needs to be made on two grounds: (i) the identification of actual quotations; and (ii) the quotations' suitability for this enquiry, i.e. those which may evidence dependence of the LXX rather than the MT.

### *Quotations and allusions*

Intertextuality presents itself in different forms. Koch has distinguished between quotation, paraphrase, allusion and phraseology.

A quotation he describes as a conscious incorporation of a formulation from another text in one's own, which is only effective if the author can count on his audience recognizing this.<sup>98</sup> He proposes a number of criteria for identifying a quotation: (i) most clearly when introduced by an introduction formula ("IF"), directly, or in an earlier instance; (ii) when followed by exegetical comments; (iii) when there are syntactical or stylistic pointers (e.g. emphasizing particles or peculiar integration in the sentence); and (iv) when it is a text clearly belonging to a shared cultural tradition (e.g. the LXX-text).<sup>99</sup> Criteria (iii) and (iv) have been criticized as possibly vague and, as he himself notes, this raises the question as to what extent the foreign intrusion would be recognized as such. And even *criterium* (ii) does not always yield clear conclusions.<sup>100</sup>

The degree of certainty with which the (intended) existence and audience-recognition can be established diminishes further for the other forms of intertextuality Koch identified.

Hays has reflected upon the concept of 'echo', which overlaps with these categories, and in his view it is not necessarily dependent on the author's deliberate intention, nor on recognition by the perceived audience.

An echo can be identified when a text has the rhetorical or semantic effect of linking a text with an earlier text. Through the rhetorical figure of *metalepsis* the audience is

---

<sup>98</sup> Koch, 1986, pp.11-12.

<sup>99</sup> Koch, 1986, pp.13-15.

<sup>100</sup> Koch, 1986, pp.13, 22, identifies two examples in the Pauline corpus, 1 Corinthians 15:27 and 2 Corinthians 3:16-17, of which the first makes common sense, but the second is much less convincing.

caused to interpret the new text by the (unconscious) recall of aspects of the original context not explicitly quoted: '[t]he figurative effect of an echo can lie in the unstated or suppressed (transumed) points of resonance between the two texts'.<sup>101</sup> It is an unstated, and possibly uninvited, murmuring in one's ear. However, the demarcation, or 'vanishing point', between an allusive and illusive echo is difficult to identify. And its interpretation is also difficult; for when 'am I creating my own poem by misreading elements given by...Paul?'<sup>102</sup>

While Hays' approach does not help much in identifying quotations beyond Koch's *criterium* (i), it puts the spotlight firmly on the occurrence of resonance, i.e. the importance of the context of the earlier text for the reader.<sup>103</sup>

Because of the relevance of context in any echo, it could be argued that for a study of the author's hermeneutics the vagueness of the demarcation is less of a problem: a comparison of the contexts of the new and the 'echoed' text is to be undertaken anyway.<sup>104</sup> However, for our primary inquiry into the likelihood of the author's understanding of Hebrew, the congruency of the MT, LXX and his own writing is much more important and a narrow definition is to be preferred. Questions of textual criticism and incidence already complicate comparison; adding uncertainties as to whether differences are a consequence of paraphrasing or allusion make any analysis of the results of a comparison very speculative.

---

<sup>101</sup> Hays, 1989, p.20 and 1993, p.43.

<sup>102</sup> Hays, 1989, p.26. The recognition is difficult because 'the murmur in one's ear' may be like 'beauty in the eye of the beholder'; and between Hays and C.A. Evans they produce an example of this: Hays considered 'abyss' in Romans 10:7 as derived from Sirach 24:5; Evans, however, notes that *Targum Neofiti* employs 'abyss' in an interpretation of Deuteronomy 30:12-13. And Hays compliments Evans as 'a better reader', a 'more competent hearer' (Hays, 1993, p.72). Determining the meaning is difficult because Hays wants to hold 'in creative tension' the views of all those in whose ear the relevant murmurings take place: Paul, his original audience, the present reader himself or his interpretative community (pp.26-27). This problem is further aggravated because Hays subsequently agrees with Evans that what is resonating is not the Scriptural text but the 'interpreted tradition'. The tune one hears in one's ear is turning into a polyphony of the author, various intermediate interpretative traditions and today's hearer and his companions; indeed, a deafening cacophony can not be far off (Hays, 1993, pp.71-72).

<sup>103</sup> This the more so if it is considered that, in an era of expensive writing materials and no isolated quoted texts called up on computer-screens, for both the author and his audience quoted or alluded texts were likely part of a larger memorized context. Abasciano, 2005, p.231 notes that for Paul the allusions are possibly pointers to their original broader context and that he uses them as such in his discourse.

<sup>104</sup> Abasciano, 2005, p.226, argues the relevance of studying allusions to gain an understanding of the use of the OT by NT writers to be at a par with studying quotations.

There is also another reason to be cautious in blurring the distinction in Hebrews between a quotation and another form of intertextuality, and that is the Epistle itself.

While Koch notes that for a quotation to function it needed to be recognized as such, he also comments that an IF could be lacking and the indication less clear if an empathic IF was considered to disrupt the otherwise elegant flow of the discourse.<sup>105</sup> However, while the author is often recognized as an accomplished, articulate and elegant rhetorician, his many IFs stand out, and their frequency could be considered less than elegant.

The explanation for this may lie in his use of quotations. In a narrative they might function to give color to the picture painted and their introduction and reception may be unconscious. Hebrews, however, is a paraenetic homily and for the author quotations are authoritative sources, enlisted to support his argument, and to be effective they had to be recognized and acknowledged as such by his audience. This is reflected in the explicit use of a marker (e.g. λέγει) and the referencing back to it through καὶ πάλιν, which in its frequency makes it all the more empathic. It seems reasonable, therefore, to assume that when the author intended to use a quotation he used an IF.

The texts thus selected as quotations are shown in Table 2.5, which does not contain many surprises.<sup>106</sup>

The notable absentee is Hebrews 10:37-38, which is often considered a conflated quotation from Isaiah 26:20 and Habakkuk 2:3-4. The absence of both the usual IF and the καὶ πάλιν separating quotations is, however, remarkable. The only indication for considering it a quotation could be the use of γάρ, which, even in Koch's long list, is the weakest indicator.<sup>107</sup> In light of the author's consistent and articulate use of the IF elsewhere, its absence here is important.<sup>108</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> Koch, 1986, p.12.

<sup>106</sup> The number of quotations identified in Hebrews varies (Longenecker, 1975, p.164) from the high twenties to the high thirties. But this is more a function of different ways of counting of repetitions and combinations than of disagreements about the actual texts (see Table 2.5).

<sup>107</sup> Koch, 1986, p.15: 'wenn der Verfasser mit einer leichten sprachlichen Hervorhebung (z.B....einem eingefügten γάρ...) den übernommenen Wortlaut zumindest beiläufig als solchen [i.e. a quotation] markiert'.

<sup>108</sup> Karrer, 2006, p.337-338, is one of the few who not only explicitly notes the quotations are usually marked by introductory formulae, but also draws the conclusion of not listing it under quotations. He puts it in the category 'most commentators add [to the quotations]'. He concludes: 'So our author indicates a greater poetic license where he abstains from introductory formulae. The

*LXX and MT dependence*

While for a study of the author's hermeneutics all quotations and arguably all recognizable echoes should be considered, for our primary question the selection can be smaller. A lack of Hebrew on the part of the author can be deemed highly likely when it can be demonstrated that (i) the Greek meaningfully deviates from the Hebrew; and (ii) the author's argumentation is dependent on, or facilitated by, such deviation. Quotations which might meet both criteria are thus the primary object of this study.

It is possible to attempt to explain texts which meet *criterium* (i) as the result of unknown variant readings of the author's Greek or Hebrew *Vorlage*, or assume for texts in category (ii) that he considered the LXX not just a translation, but also an inspired text. However, mindful of Occam's Razor,<sup>109</sup> we have drawn back from such additional assumptions.

Not many commentators explicitly reflect upon the author's supposed lack of Hebrew-capabilities, and often Schröger is cited as the source of wisdom in this respect. However, there appears to be a considerable degree of consensus about the texts which allegedly meet both criteria.<sup>110</sup> In some cases the dependence on the LXX, and its perceived eschatological or messianic slant, is based on the LXX-context of the quotation; these are included in our selection.

The reverse, i.e. dependence on the Hebrew text, is rarely argued. Howard's attempt appears the best-known for selected cases.<sup>111</sup>

In Table 2.5 below the resulting selection of the quotations meeting criteria (i) and (ii) is shown. These quotations are discussed in some detail in §4.1-14.

---

dividing line between quotations and allusions becomes blurred. Hence one should modestly weigh such quotations.'

<sup>109</sup> The principle (*entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*) is attributed to the logician and theologian William of Ockham. Its validity is debated, but, to the extent it simplifies theories and their assumptions and testing, often preferred.

<sup>110</sup> In fairness it should be noted that reviewing whether texts meet criteria (i) and (ii) is asking many commentators a question which they did not necessarily set out to answer and the results need to be interpreted with caution. Dependence on Greek only is, at times, implicitly assumed or hinted at, or simply not commented on.

<sup>111</sup> Howard, 1986, pp.208-216. His analysis is brief and based on a comparison of the quotations with possible *Vorlagen*. It does not consider any exegesis of either the Hebrew or the quoted texts.

When considering the selected texts, the question regularly surfaces as to whether the author assumes their messianic character and, if so, whether that is appropriate considering either the MT or the LXX.

None of the frequent quotations of Psalms 2 and 110, or of 2 Samuel 7 falls in category (i), but, since they provide a framework for the Epistle, they are reviewed briefly in §3 in order to determine whether they can be considered messianic and what implications this has for the author's hermeneutical approach in dealing with the other quotations.

The remaining quotations were briefly reviewed to determine whether they provide any refutation of our hypothesis. The result is presented in §4.15.

**Table 2.5: Quotations in Hebrews.**

This table lists those verses in Hebrews which are with some frequency considered quotations. The view taken in this enquiry is shown in the last column.

An attempt has also been made to determine whether selected writers consider the author's use of the OT a quotation and dependent on a LXX version. The results should be treated with caution however, since this is asking questions which these writers did not necessarily set out to answer.

| <i>Hebrews</i> | <i>Source</i>           | <i>IF</i> | <i>Speaker</i> | <i>A</i> | <i>E</i> | <i>Gh</i> | <i>Gu</i> | <i>H</i> | <i>K</i> | <i>La</i> | <i>Lo</i> | <i>NA</i> | <i>S</i> | <i>Here</i> |
|----------------|-------------------------|-----------|----------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| 1:5a           | Psa.2:7                 | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | y-       | y-       | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-3         |
| 1:5b           | 2Sam.7:14               | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | y-       | yc       | y         | y         | y         | yc       | y-3         |
| 1:6            | Deu.32:43/Psa.97:7      | v         | God            | yg       | yg       | yg        | yg        | yh       | yg       | yg        | y         | y         | yg       | y-4.1       |
| 1:7            | Psa.104:1               | v         | God            | yg       | yg       | -         | yg        | y-       | yg       | yg        | y         | y         | yg       | y-4.2       |
| 1:8-9          | Psa.45:6-7              | v         | God            | yg       | yg       | yc        | y         | y-       | yg       | y         | y         | y         | yg       | y-4.3       |
| 1:10-12        | Psa.102:25-27           | v         | God            | y        | yg       | yc        | yg        | yg       | yg       | yc        | yg        | y         | yg       | y-4.4       |
| 1:13           | Psa.110:1               | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | y-       | y        | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-3         |
| 2:6-8a         | Psa.8:4-6               | v         | Someone        | yg       | yg       | yg        | yg        | yg       | yg       | yg        | y         | y         | yg       | y-4.5       |
| 2:12           | Psa.22:23               | v         | Jesus          | y        | y        | yc        | y-        | yh       | y-       | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-4.6       |
| 2:13a          | Isa.8:17/2Sam.22:3      | v         | Jesus          | y        | y        | yc        | y         | yh       | y-       | y         | y         | y         | y?       | y-4.7       |
| 2:13b          | Isa.8:18                | v         | Jesus          | y        | y        | yc        | y         | yg       | y-       | y         | y         | y         | y?       | y-4.7       |
| 3:2&5          | Num.12:7                |           |                | n,y      | n        | n         | n         | y-       | y?       | n         | n         | n         | yg       | n           |
| 3:7-11, 15     | Psa.95:7-11             | v         | Holy Spirit    | yg       | yg       | yg        | yg        | yg       | yg       | yg        | yg        | y         | yg       | y-4.8       |
| 4:4            | Gen.2:2                 | v         | God            | yg       | yg       | -         | yg        | y-       | y        | yg        | yg        | y         | yg       | y-4.8       |
| 4:3&5, 7       | Psa.95:11, 7            | v         | God            | yg       | yg       |           | yg        |          |          | yg        | yg        | y         | yg       | y-4.8       |
| 5:5            | Psa.2:7                 | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         |          | y-       | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-3         |
| 5:6            | Psa.110:4b              | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y-        | yh       | y        | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-3         |
| 6:14           | Gen.22:17a              | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | y-       | y        | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-4.15      |
| 7:1-2          | Gen.14:17-20            |           |                | y?       | n        | -         | n         | n        | y?       | y         | n         | y         | y        | n           |
| 7:17           | Psa.110:4b              | v         | Open/God       | y        | y        | -         | y         |          | y        | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-3         |
| 7:21           | Psa.110:4a              | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | y-       | y        | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-3         |
| 8:5b           | Exo.25:40               | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | y-       | y        | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-4.15      |
| 8:8-12         | Jer.31:31-34            | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | yg       | y        | y         | yg        | y         | y        | y-4.15      |
| 9:20           | Exo.24:8b               | v         | Moses          | y        | y        | -         | y         | yh       | y        | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-4.15      |
| 10:5-7         | Psa.40:6-8              | v         | Jesus          | yg       | yg       | yg        | y         | yg       | yg       | yg        | yg        | y         | yg       | y-4.9       |
| 10:16-17       | Jer.31:33a&34b          | v         | Holy Spirit    | y        | y        | -         | y         |          |          | y         | yg        | y         | yg       | y-4.15      |
| 10:30a         | Deu.32:35a              | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y*        | y-       | yg       | y         | y         | y         | yg       | y-4.10      |
| 10:30b         | Deu.32:36a              | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | y-       | y-       | y         | y         | y         | yg       | y-4.10      |
| 10:37-38       | Isa.26:20 and Hab.2:3-4 |           |                | yg       | yg       | yg        | yg        | yg       | yg       | yg        | yg        | y         | yg       | n-4.11      |
| 11:18          | Gen.21:12               | v         | God            | y        | y        | -         | y         | y-       | y-       | y         | y         | y         | yg       | y-4.15      |
| 11:21          | Gen.47:31               |           |                | yg       | y        | yg        | n         | y-       | n        | yg        | n         | y         | yg       | n           |
| 12:5-6         | Prov.3:11-12            | v         | Teacher/God    | yg       | y        | yc        | yg        | yh       | y-       | y         | yg        | y         | yg       | y-4.12      |
| 12:12-13       | Isa.35:3/Pro.4:26       |           |                | n        | n        | -         | n         | yh       | n        | n         | n         | n         | n        | n           |
| 12:20          | Exo.19:13b              | v?        | God            | n?       | y        | -         | n         | n        | y-       | n         | y         | y         | n        | n-4.15      |
| 12:21          | Deu.9:19                | v?        | Moses          | n        | y        | -         | n         | n        | y        | n         | y         | y         | n        | n-4.15      |
| 12:26          | Hag.2:6                 | v         | God            | yg       | yg       | -         | yg        | yg       | y        | y-        | yg        | y         | yg       | y-4.13      |
| 13:5           | Deu.31:6/Jos.1:5        | v         | God            | yg       | y?       | -         | y?        | yh       | yg       | y         | y         | y         | yg       | y-4.14      |
| 13:6           | Psa.118:6               | v         | We             | y        | y        | yg        | y         | y-       | y        | y         | y         | y         | y        | y-4.15      |

(w Scripture)

**Legend:**

IF: Introductory Formula; A: Attridge, 1989; E: Ellingworth, 1993; Gh: Gheorghita, 2003; Gu: Guthrie, 2007; H: Howard, 1968; K: Kistemaker, 1961; La: Lane, 1991; Lo: Longenecker, 1975; NA: Nestle-Aland; S: Schröger, 1968. v: yes; y: considered quotation; yc: considered quotation, its use *dependent on or facilitated by* the LXX context; yg: considered quotation, its use *dependent on or facilitated by* the LXX-text; yh: considered quotation influenced by a Hebrew text; y-: considered quotation, no influence can be distinguished; n: not considered quotation; and: - not commented on. y-3, y-4.1-14 and y-4.15: considered quotation, reviewed in §3, respectively §4.1-14 or §4.15; n, n-4.11 and n-4.15: not considered quotation and not reviewed, reviewed in §4.11 or reported on in §4.15 respectively.

### 3. The scene: the 2 Samuel 7, Psalms 2 and 110 quotations

Buchanan famously considered Hebrews a homiletical *midrash* based on Psalm 110. While that is an exaggeration, the psalm's importance is easily recognized.<sup>112</sup> And in the development of the Christological argument supporting the exhortation, the Davidic covenant looms large through the many allusions and quotations of 2 Samuel 7 and Psalms 2 and 110.<sup>113</sup> Not only are they frequent, they also appear in pairs at the start of the main components of the discourse about Christ's importance as the Son (Heb.1:5, 13) and high priest (Heb.5:5-6).

The author is not considered to depend on a deviating Greek text in his use of any of these quotations. A messianic slant, going beyond the MT, has been detected in the LXX translation ἀναστήσω τὸ σπέρμα σου of 2 Samuel 7:12,<sup>114</sup> but the evidence is slight since the MT uses a Hiphil waw-consecutive perfect of קים.

Steyn speculates a reason the author may have connected Psalms 2 and 110 is they are the only texts in the MT using the word ילדיה. This would suggest knowledge of Hebrew, but his comment is unconvincing.<sup>115</sup> Other arguments for knowledge of Hebrew are not compelling either.<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Psalm 110 is quoted four times: Hebrews 1:13 (vs.1), and Hebrews 5:6, 7:17, 21 (vs.4). And is six times alluded to: vs.1 in Hebrews 1:3, 8:1, 10:12 and 12:2, all pointing at Jesus' exaltation (Guthrie, 2007, p.943); and vs.4 in Hebrews 5:10, 6:20 (see also Hay, 1973, pp.163-166).

<sup>113</sup> The quotations identified are listed in Table 2.5. For the reasons given earlier the frequent allusions, such as to Psalm 110, are not reviewed. The Davidic background is arguably also relevant in the other quotations considered Davidic, such as Psalms 22, 40 and 95, but they are reviewed in §4. The quotations reviewed here are considered as *constituting* the Davidic background.

<sup>114</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.20, feels this translation 'points to a successor who will be raised up after the death of David'. He is followed by Schröger, 1968, pp.42, 262: 2 Samuel 7:12 'ist in der LXX-Fassung deutlicher messianisch als im hebräischen Grundtext.', and so also Lane, 1991, p.25. Supposedly this would have given the author the comfort to apply 2 Samuel 7:14 messianically to Christ.

<sup>115</sup> Steyn, 2003, p.265. The word appears in Psalm 2:7 and 110:3. However the noun from Psalm 110 (ילדיה) also occurs in Ecclesiastes 11:9-10, while in Psalm 2 it is a common verb (ילד). He also notes, p.274, the author avoids quoting the IF of the oracle in Psalm 2:7, where the translation diverges: the MT has a cohortative (אספירה) and the LXX a participle (διαγέλλων). He does not draw any conclusions about language-capabilities. His suggestion the author may identified a common context for both psalms is more to the point.

<sup>116</sup> All three times Psalm 110:4 is quoted the author omits, against the LXX and with the MT, the verb εἶ, but since it is clearly implied, not much can be concluded from this. More interesting is that in all four allusions to Psalm 110:1 the author deviates from the literal LXX-text ἐκ δεξιῶν, which he does use in his quotation, and moves towards the MT in using the singular ἐν δεξιᾷ. (See Kistemaker, 1961, p.28. It may have originated under influence of (liturgical) use in the Early Church according to Hay, 1973, p.35, but it remains noteworthy.) However, the change does not appear to imply any difference in meaning.

For the inquiry into our first hypothesis (understanding of the Hebrew text) these quotations are less helpful.

They are, however, relevant for the second part (respect for the Hebrew text) of our hypothesis.

There is broad agreement that the author applies these texts, directly or indirectly, messianically to Jesus.<sup>117</sup> However, there is less agreement on whether they can appropriately be used as messianic while still respecting the OT-context.<sup>118</sup>

The inquiry into the hermeneutics of the author, therefore, demands a view on the possible messianic character of these quotations; more specifically on the question: can it plausibly be assumed that David entertained messianic expectations? And how can 2 Samuel 7 and Psalms 2 and 110 be understood against this background?

Since the topic of messianic expectations is outside the scope of this study, only some brief observations are offered outlining the working assumption used.

### 3.1 OT context and exegetical comments

#### *The background of Deuteronomy 17 and the Davidic covenant*

Reflecting more narrowly upon Psalms 2 and 110, it seems appropriate to ask whether David's own view on kingship, and its possible messianic overtones, as it is reflected in the historical books,<sup>119</sup> can give a more precise and articulate framework for understanding what he meant to convey in these psalms.

---

<sup>117</sup> See e.g. Schröger, 1968, pp.259-260: 'im Schema: Weissagung – Erfüllung'.

<sup>118</sup> As noted, one alternative is to declare them messianic-*only*; so solving the problem by assuming they had no contemporaneous contextual meaning. E.g. Davis, 2000, pp.163 and 173, on Psalm 110. Another is not to consider these OT-texts messianic and to conclude the author has imposed a messianic interpretation on his quotations (possibly in line with a later, post-exilic tradition in Judaism). E.g. Lane, 1991, p.25: '[i]n a narrow sense the oracle of Nathan...had reference to Solomon, but in the LXX a messianic interpretation had been encouraged...' and Schröger, 1968, pp. 259-262, and his discussion of Hebrews 1:5, 13, 5:5, 6 and 7:17, 21.

<sup>119</sup> The historical books are preferred over the psalms in the attempt to identify David's views. Although the psalms contains references that could be interpreted as messianic, there is the realistic possibility that they are (in the first instance) addressed to an earthly, historical king, but at the same time contain poetic hyperbole or are written in an exuberant court style. This makes it more difficult to derive conclusions from the psalms as to their original messianic character. It should be noted that e.g. Grant can (to a certain extent) avoid the question of authorship of the Deuteronomistic History ('DtrH') by pointing out that his focus is the canonical shape of the Psalter

In *Deuteronomy 17* the king is, as a *primus inter pares*, not to rely on military (horses), diplomatic (wives, Egypt) or economic (gold) power, but on the Lord. He is to live by the law of the Lord and then he will lead his people for a long time. He is to be what Grant has called an exemplar-king.<sup>120</sup>

Saul was rejected for not – as was required by *Deuteronomy 17* - obeying and trusting God (1 Sam.15:10-32). And David's close encounter with the sad warning of Saul's failed kingship can be expected to have had a formative influence on his views.

The key to his views may lie in the passages in which *the Davidic covenant* is recounted.<sup>121</sup> In important features that emerge there the profile of the exemplar-king can be recognised: (i) David acknowledges that he and his successors need to rule in obedience to the Lord and (as an example to the people) walk in his ways;<sup>122</sup> (ii) the Lord shall establish David's house and his descendants shall be His sons;<sup>123</sup> (iii) He shall defeat his enemies<sup>124</sup> and give His people rest;<sup>125</sup> (iv) do so forever;<sup>126</sup> and (v) then David's house will be a blessing for the people.<sup>127</sup>

The deuteronomic view on kingship is now complemented with the promise that David's son will build the Lord's dwelling place with His people, symbolizing the access they have to God.<sup>128</sup>

Whether David entertained messianic expectations<sup>129</sup> is not easy to determine. Rose, acknowledging that the OT contains texts with a forward-looking orientation,<sup>130</sup>

---

(Grant, 2004, p.190). The post-exilic composition of the Psalter may have been completed after an assumed late DtrH. However, with our assumption of Davidic authorship we need to assume that if not the historic books themselves then at a minimum the traditions upon which they are based are at least as old as Psalms 2 and 110 and are accurate. Otherwise, no conclusions regarding David's views on kingship and how they may impact on the interpretation of these psalms are possible. This assumption we make. We can, therefore, for a Davidic view on kingship analyse numerous texts in both these psalms and the historic books. We will limit ourselves here to a brief review of the latter.

<sup>120</sup> Grant, 2004, p.213. Grant has suggested that the Law-for-the-King of *Deuteronomy 17* can be used as a paradigm for explaining some of the features of the organisation of the Psalter around certain psalms; he identifies Psalms 1-2, 18-21, 118-119. This paradigm of course then also needs to be in harmony with the actual content of the relevant psalms.

<sup>121</sup> They are 2 Samuel 7, its parallel passage in 1 Chronicles 17 and the subsequent reflections on it by David in his 'Last Words' (2 Sam.23:1-7) and his charge to Solomon (1 Kin.2:1-4 and 1 Chr.28:1-10) and by Solomon, citing his father at the dedication of the temple (1 Kin.8:25-26 and 2 Chr.6:4-11).

<sup>122</sup> 2 Samuel 23:3, 1 Kings 2:3 and 8:58 and 61.

<sup>123</sup> 2 Samuel 7:8, 11 and 14.

<sup>124</sup> 2 Samuel 7:9 and 12 and 23:6-7.

<sup>125</sup> 2 Samuel 7:10 and 1 Kings 8:57.

<sup>126</sup> 2 Samuel 7:16 and 23:5 and 1 Kings 2:4.

<sup>127</sup> 2 Samuel 23:4, 1 Kings 2:3 and 8:55.

<sup>128</sup> 2 Chronicles 6:6-9.

concludes, based on a study of the word משיח, that in 1-2 Samuel it refers to the dynastic or present king, not a future one.<sup>131</sup>

Kaiser, translating 2 Samuel 7:19 (וְזָאת תּוֹרַת הָאָדָם) as David referring to God's promise as 'this torah for/of mankind', reads here David's recognition of the eternalness and un-conditionality of the Davidic covenant. He concludes that David realized the greatness of the promise and understood the Messiah would be one of his descendants.<sup>132</sup>

Kaiser seems to conclude much from a difficult clause. However, David's frequent references to 'forever' and his words in 2 Samuel 23:5 (an everlasting covenant for his house), in combination with his life-experience of the sinfulness of this house,<sup>133</sup> imply that, at a minimum, he understood this was more than a *quid pro quo* covenant promising a ruling descendant as long as they followed God's way.

The answer to the question of whether David had messianic expectations is probably not as black and white as Rose suggests.<sup>134</sup> The demarcation between poetic hyperbole or court-style (in the psalms), contemporaneous, possibly inarticulate, messianic expectations and *sensus plenior* is not always very precise.

Solomon on his throne, and the expectation that this son would build the temple, may have loomed large on David's horizon in Psalms 2 and 110, but it appears also likely he was aware of the contours, however vague, of a greater descendent beyond Solomon.

---

<sup>129</sup> Rose, 2001, p.279, defines 'messianic expectations' as: 'expectations focusing on a future royal figure sent by God who will bring salvation to God's people and the world and establish a kingdom characterized by features such as peace and justice'.

<sup>130</sup> Rose, 2001, pp.279-281. This orientation, which at times looks far into the future (i.e. Gen.3:15 and 12:3), is in this study also referred to as 'eschatological'.

<sup>131</sup> References to 'the messiah' only appear once the disappointment with the monarchy has set in, which intensifies after the institution has disappeared altogether with the exile. Rose, 2001, pp.281-282: references to messiah are usually in a compound phrase (the Lord's/His anointed) and also Hannah's song and 2 Samuel 7 refer to David and his dynasty. And p.283: later, i.e. in the eighth century prophets Amos, Isaiah, Micah, references are to *the* messiah (with the definite article).

<sup>132</sup> Kaiser, 1974, p.310ff. The verse demonstrates 'the *conscious awareness* David had of the universal and messianic implications of that promise ...'. p.316. See also Kaiser, 1985, p.181.

<sup>133</sup> Reading Psalm 40 (see §4.9) it is clear David anticipated that already he, himself, would fall short in worship and obedience.

<sup>134</sup> He agrees the later expectations were 'rooted in the dynastic oracle of 2 Sam 7' and that some psalms picture a king with 'characteristics which go beyond what is common'. Rose, 2001, pp.283 and 284 respectively.

It seems appropriate, therefore, to assume a congruency between these psalms' historical context<sup>135</sup> and their messianic applicability; and in that light consider the quotations in Hebrews.

### *2 Samuel 7, Psalms 2 and 110*

Since we consider *2 Samuel 7* foundational for Psalms 2 and 110 we will look at the quotations starting with the announcement by Nathan of the Davidic covenant.

David's wish to build a house for God in Jerusalem is denied, and the roles are reversed. God will build a house for him. In addition, God declares David's off-spring to be His son. Obedience is still required of this son to the divine father, and, when sinning, he will be corrected, but not abandoned like Saul. David's house will be forever. The oppression by foreign people from the times of the judges will end and he will have rest from his enemies. In addition, this son is allowed to build God's house, as confirmation of God's benevolence towards David's city, Zion.

The actual phrase quoted in Hebrews is the linchpin of the promise and no doubt is used to evoke the whole prophecy.

Our working assumption is that Psalm 2 and Psalm 110 were composed by David for the occasion of Solomon's second coronation.<sup>136</sup> In this setting, it would be natural to see both psalms as a poetic reflection on, and reciting of, the promise of *2 Samuel 7*, now applied to Solomon.

*Psalm 2* has a vivid and dramatic character.

First (vss.1-3), the psalmist reports the revolutionary mutterings of foreign, subjugated kings.<sup>137</sup> Secondly (vss.4-6), he cites God as promising that this revolt will

---

<sup>135</sup> Here assumed to be David, entertaining (vague) messianic expectations, composing these psalms for Solomon's second coronation, see below.

<sup>136</sup> Psalm 2 is attributed in Acts 4:25 to David. We will use this as a basis rather than any assumption of a later dating, since it fits the text well. During his co-regency, after the hasty first coronation to stave off the Adonijah revolt, David had some time to prepare for the second event, presumably intended to solidify the succession with an official celebration. Subsequently the psalm may have become a fixture in the coronation rituals of the Judaic kings, thus ensuring its preservation.

<sup>137</sup> David had through conquest created a significant realm and both David and Solomon are reported as having rest from the enemies all around (2 Sam.7:1, 11 and 2 Chr.22:9, 18). Even so, for

not succeed and that the king God Himself has installed in Zion will prevail. David is proclaiming this to reinforce the young king's position. Thirdly (vss.7-9), he introduces the new king as applying the promise ('decree') of the Davidic covenant to himself. This verse about his adoption as God's son is quoted in Hebrews. In the same section Solomon acknowledges his dependence on God ('ask of me') and professes his confidence that, if he so acts in accordance with the Law-for-the-King, he will prevail over his opponents. The latter is expressed in poetic hyperbole: as ruling till the ends of the earth, dashing the enemies to pieces with an iron sceptre.

And lastly (vss.10-12), David, as the psalmist, offers his own advice: potential opponents would be wise to fear the Lord and submit to His anointed and blessed are all (advice also for Solomon?) who trust the Lord.

David is later, pre- and post-exile, seen as a type of the messiah (Jer.30:9, Eze.34:23-24, 37:24-25) and the psalm is widely recognised as a messianic psalm in later Judaism<sup>138</sup> and this may have prompted the editor of the Psalter to retain it after the monarchy's demise.

In *Psalms 110* David, identified in the title as the composer, speaks in an *inclusio* to the people in vss.1a and 7 and, in between, to his son Solomon, citing the Lord twice.<sup>139</sup> The following parallel structure has been discerned: a solemn IF (vss.1a, 4a), an oracle of the Lord (vss.1b, 4b), an elaboration (vss.2-3a, 5-6) and a concluding exaltation (vss.3b, 7).<sup>140</sup>

The first IF states the oracle to be לְאֲדֹנָי, and David could appropriately address his co-regent in this manner, serving to underline his authority; but the ambiguity also allows for Jesus' later application of it to Himself as the divine Son. The first oracle repeats the promise that the Lord would establish David's house, throne and kingdom for him (2 Sam.7:13, 16).

---

subjugated people to revolt at a succession, to test the new man or to benefit from any internal strife was a frequent occurrence in the ANE.

<sup>138</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.37ff. and Kistemaker, 1961, pp.17ff.

<sup>139</sup> Although it is acknowledged the transitions are at times difficult to identify and vs.1a could also be addressed to Solomon, presumably during the coronation ceremony in full hearing of the people. Also the third person masculine singular in vs.6 is here understood as referring to God (in vs.5), but it could be read as referring to the same person as in vs.7. Considerations of poetic structure and meaning led to the proposed interpretation.

<sup>140</sup> The result is a fairly well balanced structure with after the title two stanzas of 71 syllables each: the IFs (7 and 9), oracles (16 and 15), elaborations (36 and 34) and exaltations (12 and 13). This reading requires none of the numerous proposed emendations, although it should be noted it assumes a break between vss.3a and 3b.

The first elaboration describes how *the Lord will empower* David's successor: He will extend his rod from the Davidic city, he is exhorted to rule, and his people will be 'willingness itself' for him.<sup>141</sup>

The linguistically difficult phrase in vs.3b is understood in parallel with vs.7 as a poetic exaltation addressed to the new king.<sup>142</sup> He will always be vigorous, strong and will prevail.

The second elaboration pronounces that *the Lord will be victorious for* his successor, crush his enemies and give him rest all around, which rest 'the man of rest' used to build the temple – the house of rest.<sup>143</sup>

Similarly, as are these two elaborations, also the final exaltation is in line with Deuteronomy 17. Here דרך is understood as metaphorically referring to the law (the way of the Lord<sup>144</sup>) and drinking from the stream of this way as following his commandments. In doing this, the son's head will be lifted up, i.e. he will prevail.

The remaining, intriguing, issue is the meaning of the second oracle in vs.4b. What did David mean, and why could he call his son a priest? The answer has often been phrased in dynastic and political terms.<sup>145</sup> Here it is assumed David that saw the

<sup>141</sup> After the difficult unification of his own tribe with the northern tribes initially loyal to Saul this would probably be an important statement.

The Hebrew is difficult, but נרבה ('freewill offerings') here understood as a 'predicative and intensifying plural' meaning 'willingness itself' (Allen, 1983, p.80). The noun נרבה is used for both volunteering for the Lord's battle (Deborah's exhortations in Jud.5:2, 9) and for gifts for the building of the temple, the very activity David had Solomon charged with and was so close to his heart. See: 1 Chronicles 29:5 and also for the tabernacle in Exodus 36:3.

The verbal root הדר means 'to show respect' and the noun designates that which deserves respect 'glory, splendour, honour' and is often used of God. TWOT (No.477c) has also noted the possibility of the root meaning 'visitation, appearance, revelation'. This on the basis of a parallelism, commonly used in Semitic poetry, found in an Ugaritic song, where the same root appears. This alternative is not necessarily contradictory, since the visitation or appearance of an overlord was undoubtedly an occasion on which splendour was in evidence and respect due. This approach does fit Psalm 110:3. קדש can mean 'apartness' or 'holiness' (TWOT, no.1990a) and is here assumed to refer to Solomon's dedication to his task of being a godly king and building the temple. And, taking this colon as in parallel with the preceding one, would paraphrase it as: 'at (the time of) the glorious appearance of (your) holiness/dedication'. Vs3aβ is admittedly difficult to interpret, but this reading seems preferable to a random reference to a dress-code.

<sup>142</sup> 'The dew of your youth' is maybe best read as indicating continuous freshness, vitality and strength. 'From the womb of the dawn' may hint at the ultimate source of this strength, i.e. the creator; or at the continuity of this strength, it being provided every day anew.

<sup>143</sup> 1 Chronicles 22:9.

<sup>144</sup> TWOT, no.453a. The notion of צדיקים דרך appears in Psalm 1:6 and of יהוה דרך in 1 Kings 2:3, David's instruction of Solomon. The usual image of 'walking in' the way of the Lord may here have been changed into 'drinking from the brook along/at' the way of the Lord to parallel the 'dew of your youth' in vs.3b, both reflecting an idea of *eternal* vitality, youth or strength. That the verse depicts a refreshment scene at some random brook appears unlikely. At times the alternative of the new king drinking from the Gihon spring is suggested, but the meaning of such act is unclear.

<sup>145</sup> Many suggestions have been made: (i) David wished to establish a unifying new religious centre for both parts of his kingdom on neutral territory, i.e. his own city. (ii) He wished to pacify

provision of a place where God dwelt among His people as part of the duties of the Deuteronomic exemplar-king, and as part of the Davidic covenant. Having been prevented from building the temple himself, he was promised a son who would do so. In his capacity as king, Solomon was to be the guardian and organiser of the cult, just as David had been in 1 Chronicles 23-26.<sup>146</sup> The king Melchizedek of Genesis 14 had been a priest of God Most High, outside the Levitical genealogy, in Jerusalem. David's successors were to be the same,<sup>147</sup> and, per the Davidic covenant, for ever. The exemplar-king had as his first duty, not the exercise of military, diplomatic or economic power, but to lead in obedience. Only thus could the people continue to dwell in the land and retain access to God and the temple.

In Psalm 110, David impresses on Solomon and the people both the promise that the Lord would enable him to prevail (vs.1b) and the duty to fulfil this priestly role (vs.4b).

### 3.2 Use in Hebrews and hermeneutical comments

*Use in Hebrews 1, 5 and 7.*

As noted in §2.2 combinations of Psalm 2:7 with 2 Samuel 7:14 and Psalm 110:4 respectively function as introductions in Hebrews 1:5 and 5:5.

In Hebrews 1:13 the catena about Jesus as the Son is brought to a close with Psalm 110:1, already alluded to in vs.3. And in Hebrews 7 the portraying of Jesus as high priest is worked out, using the earlier quotation of Psalm 110:4.

---

Jebusite traditions under the influence of a mighty Jebusite priest, Zadok, or of Bathsheba, who was allegedly part Jebusite. Or (iii) he wished to install his dynasty as a regular ANE king-priest.

<sup>146</sup> There is no evidence that David or Solomon ever intruded (like Uzziah) onto the priestly prerogatives, but organising the temple-service, sacrificing and blessing are mentioned and several functionaries who may have assisted David in these duties are identified as priests. Uzziah was punished for usurping the ministry of reconciliation (2 Chr.26:18), but in 2 Samuel 8:18 David's sons are called priests, כהנים, (1 Chronicles 18:17 calls them ראשונים, chief officials, leading some to suggest 2 Samuel should have *sokenim*, stewards, but such emendation is not necessary, since both may be true) as are others who may not have been of Aaronic descent. Between Sinai and Christ the Levitical priests exercised the ministry of reconciliation.

<sup>147</sup> The question whether על-הבדתי is to be understood as causal (priest for a different reason or by a different calling) or modal (priest of a different kind) is not considered relevant, as both are true.

Hebrews 1:5, 13. In the *exordium*, God is introduced as first speaking through the prophets and now through the Son. Vs.5 opens with: Τίνι γὰρ εἶπέν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων. The subject is still God, quoting this earlier speaking through the prophets Nathan and David.

The whole verse is a rhetorical question<sup>148</sup> based on the quotations from Psalm 2:7 and 2 Samuel 7:14,<sup>149</sup> suggesting as answer: ‘of course to no angel, only to Jesus’. In thus applying this verse to Jesus the author makes it the basis of a *catena* of quotations.<sup>150</sup> To be more precise, our understanding is that the author substantiates that Jesus is the divine Son in vs.5 and then proceeds, having established Jesus is God, to demonstrate Him to be superior to the angels in vss.6-12, and summarizes his conclusion in vss.13-14.<sup>151</sup>

In an *inclusio*, the rhetorical question is repeated in vs.13 ahead of the concluding quotation from Psalm 110:1. Like Psalm 2, the context of Psalm 110 is the enthronement and the beginning of a *king’s rule*, and it finds its contrast in the *servicing angels*. The combination of vss.13 and 14 make clear that Jesus’ superiority over them is still the point the author is driving at.

The author’s own confirmation of the answer is suspended till Hebrews 2:1-4. There, following the *catena*, he draws his intended conclusion that his addressees must therefore heed Jesus’ words, which supersede even the OT, the word brought through the mediation of angels.

Through the same rhetorical question the author presents these three texts, which originally referred to Solomon in the context of his adoption as God’s son and enthronement as king over God’s people,<sup>152</sup> as literally God speaking to Jesus. This he

---

<sup>148</sup> To derive from his use of a rhetorical question, that the author held to the rabbinical hermeneutical assumption of *quod non in Thora, non in mundo* seems to be a stretch; Ellingworth, 1993, p.110.

<sup>149</sup> Or 1 Chronicles 17:17 and since these are identical in Greek and Hebrew and the context similar, there is not much too choose from.

<sup>150</sup> According to Attridge vss.5-14 ‘not only develop the theme announced in vs.4, Christ’s superiority to the angels, but also substantiate the affirmations made of Christ in the hymnic language of the *exordium*’, Attridge, 1989, p.50.

<sup>151</sup> There is no scope for a review in any detail, but the reading is that vs.5, for the author, confirms Jesus divinity, vs.6 concludes that, since He is God, angels bow before Him, while vss.8-12 on the same basis apply texts speaking about God, as ruler and creator, to Jesus, illustrating his superiority over the angels. It is *not* assumed that these texts have a messianic character and are therefore applied to Jesus to prove His divinity.

<sup>152</sup> Guthrie, 2007, p.928, notes that, since Jesus was considered the Son prior to creation, Psalm 2:7 does ‘refer to Jesus’ induction into his royal position as king of the universe at the resurrection and

does with the objective of presenting Jesus as God's Son, who therefore is superior to angels.

*Hebrews 5:5-6.* The quotation from Psalm 2:7, combined with 2 Samuel 7:14 and Psalm 110:1, led to the author's exhortation to heed the words of Jesus; and similarly, the same quotation, paired with Psalm 110:4, introduces his exhortations to consider the sacrifice and intercession of Jesus as the high priest.

The quotations are from the same Davidic covenantal background, with the king's obedience of Deuteronomy 17 echoing in Hebrews 5:7-9, and are introduced as God calling Jesus.

The first quotation reminds the audience of what was established earlier: Jesus is God's Son.<sup>153</sup> The second introduces the thought that Jesus was called as (high) priest, like the Davidic king, in the order of Melchizedek.<sup>154</sup> This theme, hinted at in Hebrews 2:17, is mentioned here and in Hebrews 5:10-11<sup>155</sup> and picked up again in Hebrews 6:20b, before it is expanded on more fully in Hebrews 7:1-10:18.

*Hebrews 7:17, 21.* The expression κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδεκ is an enigmatic phrase about an enigmatic man. The author refers to the king from Genesis 14:18-20 in emphasizing the royal character of Christ's superior priesthood in Hebrews 7:1-11: He is said to be a 'king of righteousness' and a 'king of peace'.

In receiving the tithes from Abraham, he is also superior to Levi; and the focus then shifts to the inferiority and inadequacy of the Aaronic priestly order when compared

---

exaltation. ...an interpretation that fits the OT context well.' It fits also with the interpretation of the IF in vs.6a in §4.1.

<sup>153</sup> The introduction of the speaking subject is indirectly through a reference to the earlier quotation: ὁ λαλήσας; Jesus was called by the speaker of Hebrews 1:5.

<sup>154</sup> Attridge (1989, pp.146-147) warns against attempts to be overly precise about the timing of Christ's high priesthood and the relationship with His sonship. And his warning is appropriate, as it is not the author's intention to articulate a comprehensive Christology. The sacrifice and obedience alluded to (Hebrews 2:16b and 5:3, respectively 5:8) obviously refer to His earthly life, while the intercession in the heavenly sanctuary (Hebrews 8:1-2 and 9:11-12) takes place after His exaltation, but the author does not emphasize any temporal sequence.

<sup>155</sup> Where it is identified as a difficult topic and followed by an exhortation to progress on the basis of God's certain promise, Hebrews 5:10-6:20a

to the superior priestly order of Psalm 110. Two features are emphasized: Christ's intercessory priesthood brings *guaranteed* access to heaven *for ever*.

While the Aaronic priesthood never satisfied (its sacrifices always had to be repeated and it ended with the death of the incumbent), Christ's sacrifice is once-and-for-all and His priesthood never ends. In Hebrews 7:16-17 the author posits the eternal character of this priesthood: there is in the order of Melchizedek no succession based on the death of the predecessor; it is, according to Psalm 110, eternal.<sup>156</sup> In addition, he also states Jesus has a permanent priesthood, because He lives forever.<sup>157</sup>

The second quotation, which is part of the parenthetical clause in Hebrews 7:20b-21, also includes the IF of the Psalm 110:4 oracle in order to emphasize the oath of God, which undergirds the certainty of this eternal priesthood. Access to God is now possible under a better covenant since an oath guarantees Jesus' eternal intercession (vs.25).<sup>158</sup>

Also Psalm 110:4, initially a divine or Davidic speaking to Solomon about his priestly duties as a king (leading in obedience, facilitating access to God by building the temple and guarding the cult), is now understood as God, speaking to Jesus, indicating the eternity and certainty of access to God in a greater covenant resulting from His priestly work.

---

<sup>156</sup> The repeated quotation is introduced with μαρτυρεῖ (an indicative present active; in the NA μαρτυρεῖται, an indicative present passive). It is a more neutral IF, which may refer back to the author's earlier citation of the text in Hebrews 5:6.

<sup>157</sup> Hebrews 7:3 (ἀπάτωρ, ἀμήτωρ, ἀγενεαλόγητος, μήτε ἀρχὴν ἡμερῶν μήτε ζωῆς τέλος ἔχων) reports Melchizedek as a priest outside any priesthood based on genealogy and death. To what extent Hebrews 7:3 (μένει ἱερεὺς εἰς τὸ διηνεκές), 7:8 (ἐκεῖ δέ, μαρτυρούμενος ὅτι ζῆ) and 7:16 (κατὰ δύνάμιν ζωῆς ἀκατάλυτου) suggest Melchizedek's own eternity is outside our scope. It is not critical for our point, since in 7:24 (ὁ δέ, διὰ τὸ μένειν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἀπαράβατον ἔχει τὴν ἱερωσύνην) the for ever is presented as a consequence of Jesus' eternity, not Melchizedek's.

<sup>158</sup> The earlier covenant gave no guarantee of an eternal and certain continuation of the Aaronic priesthood as the episode in Exodus 32, where God threatens to destroy Israel after the sin of the golden calf, reveals.

*Hermeneutics employed*

Schröger identifies the hermeneutical approach in the use of all seven quotations as ‘messianically interpreted prophecy, fulfilled in the person of Christ’.<sup>159</sup> However, he does not consider the two psalms or the Nathan-promise to be ‘directly messianic’, as the original texts did not refer to a second person of the Trinity. Nor does he think that the author considered the historical context.<sup>160</sup> Nevertheless, he deems the use acceptable (but ‘nur mit Einschränkungen’), because the (Greek) text ‘dem Verfasser messianisch gedeutet vorliegt’;<sup>161</sup> and considers this interpretation compatible with the original historical meaning.

Likewise Kistemaker<sup>162</sup> notes that 2 Samuel 7 and Psalm 2, sometimes already used together, were messianically understood in Judaism (before the parting of the ways) and early Christianity. In his view, a messianic application is acceptable, because it would have been effective, given that the audience recognised these texts as speaking about the messiah.<sup>163</sup>

Commenting on the structure of the *catena*, many have identified the use of the rabbinical hermeneutical technique of *haraz* (‘string of pearls’), with verbal analogies as the string that keeps them together.<sup>164</sup> Others go further, suggesting the author was

---

<sup>159</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.38, 45 and 75 and 259-261

<sup>160</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.38-39, 41 and 46.

<sup>161</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.38, 43, 45 and 75. The quotations are at best considered ‘indirectly messianic’, e.g. for Psalm 110, since there is no contemporaneous explanation for vs.4b. But he agrees with E.K.A. Riehm who points out that the OT itself shows a messianic reorientation, e.g. in Jeremiah 31:31-34 which the author will later quote.

<sup>162</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.17. Similarly, Guthrie, 2007, p.943.

<sup>163</sup> In addition, Attridge perceives a tension between the γεγέννηκά σε of Psalm 2 and the existence from eternity, possibly undermining the coherence of the author’s Christology (Attridge, 1989, p.54). And, one might add, a conflict with the immutability some see the author arguing for. The question has been raised (see e.g. Ellingworth, 1993, p.113) whether the ‘begetting today’ refers to the eternal generation, incarnation, baptism, resurrection or exaltation of Jesus. The metaphorical adoption of the Davidic king took place at the start of his rule and, similarly, Jesus’ eternal rule becomes more gloriously visible at His exaltation as he returns to heaven after his resurrection. The introduction to vs.6 (see §4.1) is compatible with this understanding and the concluding quotation (Heb.1:13) seems to support it. However, the issue should not be pressed, since the author does not appear to be trying to answer this precise question. (In which case the author might not object to other interpretations such as the eternal generation based on the opaque reference in Psalm 110:3: ἐκ γαστρὸς πρὸ ἑωσφόρου ἐξεγέννησά σε, mentioned by Ellingworth, 1993, p.113). It is also less of a problem if the text’s purpose is not assumed to be arguing for immutability or to present a comprehensive Christology.

<sup>164</sup> Guthrie, 2007, pp.925, 927 and 929. ‘Tethered together’ by *gezerah shawah* using the words ‘son’ ‘me/I’ and ‘father’. The chain is said to ultimately lead to a *qal wahomer* argument in Hebrews 2:1-4. So also Bateman, 1997, pp.139-146, who identifies here the use of several rules of Hillel.

quoting from a presumably widely circulated and recognised ‘Testimony-book’ or *florilegium*, but without any notion as to where the quotations came from – and by implication clueless about context.<sup>165</sup>

From the review of Hebrews’ use of 2 Samuel 7 and Psalms 2 and 110, it is clear the author goes beyond the historical context. He moves from the metaphorical (the king is adopted as God’s son) to the ontological (Jesus is indeed God’s Son); from eternal in a dynastic (an eternal house) to eternal in a personal (an indestructible life) sense; and from providing access to God in an earthly sanctuary (leading in obedience, building/guarding the temple) to granting access to a heavenly sanctuary (λειτουργός τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς ἀληθινῆς).<sup>166</sup>

The question of the justification for this (re-)interpretation remains crucial in considering the author’s hermeneutic.

A number of observations can be made. (i) As indicated above, the texts in their original setting already likely had messianic overtones. The ideal of the exemplar-king no earthly king could match – as David knew full well. It can thus rightly be seen as a foreshadowing, a type, of the messiah.<sup>167</sup> (ii) The progression of the history of redemption (David’s house no longer functions) and revelation (the later prophets have a stronger messianic orientation) had made even more clear that the ultimate meaning lay not with the Davidic monarch, but with a future messiah. (iii) Psalms 2 and 110 were probably retained at the composition of the Psalter on this basis. (iv) Finally, the story of Jesus’ life was the latest revelation. And His words and the events in His life confirm that He was the divine fulfilment of the Davidic messianic promise.<sup>168</sup> That the author sets great store by this last element is made clear in Hebrews 2:3-4.

---

<sup>165</sup> E.g. F.C. Synge, quoted through Schröger, 1968, pp.43-44, who himself does not go that far.

<sup>166</sup> In addition, it may be noted, Jesus’ priestly service re-integrates the Aaronic priestly ministry of reconciliation which since Sinai had been their privilege in an OT separation of powers.

<sup>167</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.37-38, quoting E.K.A. Riehm in agreement: ‘Das alttestamentliche Königtum ist nur das Schattenbild eines jene Idee verwirklichenden Königtums. Aber gerade als eines solches Schattenbild ist es auch eines weissagendes Vorbild (Typus) des messianischen Königtums.’

<sup>168</sup> There are several occasions which reveal Jesus as the Son of God. Very explicit are Matthew 3:17 (His baptism), Matthew 22:41-45 (His claim to be the divine Son of David of Psalm 110), Matthew 26:63-64 (His testimony to the Sanhedrin) and John 5:16-30 (He is the Son, sent by the father).

*In conclusion:* the author's hermeneutical approach in using and combining these quotations relies not so much on verbal analogies stringing texts together as on *respect for* the close connection they already had in their *historical context* of the Davidic covenant.

He does not impose a messianic interpretation, but recognises the original messianic character, which has been reinforced by the subsequent *history of redemption and revelation*. For him, this history self-testifies to the inadequacy of OT institutions and, in its continuing revelation, points forward to a future fulfilment.<sup>169</sup>

Hebrews understands the son, lord and priest of these texts to be a *type* of Christ, pre-figuring the messiah. Likewise, he identifies the congruency of the OT and NT contexts in many aspects: the royal son ruling (Heb.1:3, 13) and priest serving (Heb.5:5-6, 8:1-2), by God's will, leading in obedience (Heb.2:10, 10:9), building God's house (Heb.3:3) and safeguarding the people's access to God (Heb.4:16, 10:22).

Concerning hypothesis (i) the quotations from 2 Samuel 7 and Psalms 2 and 110 are silent. They do not refute the assumption the author understood Hebrew, but also at best offer only weak support for it. Regarding (ii), the author's hermeneutical use respects and utilizes the messianic character they already had in the original context, reinforced and clarified by the subsequent history.

---

<sup>169</sup> Caird, 1959, p.47: 'It is not the purpose of the author...to establish the inadequacy of the old order. His interest is in the *confessed* inadequacy of the old order.' (my italics). And Motyer, 1999, pp.20: it is the discrepancy between aspiration and historical reality 'which creates a typological projection into the future, making the text (as word of God) available for a rereading in relation to Jesus Christ.' See also the comments on the author's use of Psalm 40 in §4.9.

## 4. Hebrew or no Hebrew: the other OT quotations

The following §4.1-14 review the selected quotations and allusions thought to evidence the author's dependence on the LXX-text, or more specifically on the variation of the LXX from the MT.

In this review, for each of the texts, the following approach is taken:

### *The MT and the LXX*

- A brief exegetical review of the quotation in its original context and setting.
- A description of the relevant differences between the MT and LXX translation.

### *Hebrews and the LXX*

- A description of any (perceived) use by the author of LXX-specific features and of any differences between Hebrews and the LXX.
- A brief exegetical review of the quotation in its context in Hebrews.

### *Analysis*

- An analysis of (i) the perceived dependency of the author on the LXX and (ii) conclusions regarding his alleged hermeneutical approach of the LXX.
- An analysis of the plausibility of the alternative hypothesis that (i) the author had access to the MT and (ii) respected the context of his quotations.

Finally, §4.15 comments briefly on the remaining quotations.

### **4.1 Hebrews 1:6 and Deuteronomy 32:43 or Psalm 97:7**

The quotation in Hebrews 1:6 is announced as God, the subject of the λέγει in vs.5, speaking about His firstborn, the Son.

As always, the source of the quotation is unidentified and three different possibilities have been suggested: Deuteronomy 32:43 (the LXX; the MT does not have this language), Psalm 97:7 or Odes 2:43.

The text in Hebrews is actually closest to Odes, which in turn is only a slight variation on the LXX-text in Deuteronomy. However, since there is little or no evidence for quotations from outside the MT-canon elsewhere in Hebrews, and, moreover, since the differences between Hebrews and the other texts can be otherwise explained, the introduction of the major assumption of the author's belief in inspired quotations from outside the MT-canon hardly seems justified for this one instance. Accordingly, we will not pursue this alternative, but only consider Deuteronomy 32 and Psalm 97.

*The MT and the LXX*

| MT Psalm 97:7                                                                                          | LXX Psalm 96:7                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>יִבְשׁוּ כָּל-עַבְדֵי פֶסֶל<br/>הַמִּתְהַלְּלִים בְּאֱלִילִים<br/>הַשֹּׁתְחוּ-לוֹ כָּל-אֱלֹהִים</p> | <p>αἰσχυθήτωσαν πάντες οἱ προσκυνῶντες<br/>τοῖς γλυπτοῖς<br/>οἱ ἐγκαυχώμενοι ἐν τοῖς εἰδώλοις αὐτῶν<br/>προσκυνήσατε αὐτῷ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι<br/>αὐτοῦ</p> |

*Psalm 97* has been called an enthronement psalm, celebrating the Lord's kingship. The origin is unclear: the LXX mentions David, but the psalm is often thought to be post-exilic.<sup>170</sup> Tellingly, His kingship is said to extend across the world, which is suggestive of an eschatological, although not necessarily messianic, perspective. The psalm is an exhortation to the world and to the righteous (vss.1, 12) to rejoice because the Lord reigns (vs.1), comes to judge in righteousness (vss.2, 8) and delivers (vss.10-11). After a proclamation of the Lord's might in vss.2-6, vs.7 expresses the confidence<sup>171</sup> that all those who worship idols instead of the Lord will be put to shame, and draws as its conclusion a command to worship Him.

<sup>170</sup> E.g. Kraus, 1989, p.258, Tate, 1990, p.518, Westermann, 1984, p.257. Weiser, 1959, p.631, on the other hand places the psalm, not unusual for him, at a monarchical Covenant Renewal Festival.

<sup>171</sup> Alternatively, it is a wish ('let them be put to shame'). The Qal imperfect of בּוֹשׁ can be jussive (which has no unique form) in meaning, but the context does not suggest this. The LXX appears to read a jussive, translating it with an imperative aorist.

The context suggests that this command in vs.7c is addressed to these idols or, alternatively, to those (rulers) who worship them. Both alternatives are possible here, and in vs.9, as a translation of אלהים, which in itself can mean God or gods, but also rulers or angels. However, if the psalm is to be read in association with Psalm 96, as was obviously the intention of the compiler of the Psalter, the translation ‘gods’ has the edge. Psalm 96 also celebrates the Lord’s reign and in vss.4-6 the expression כל-אלהים clearly refers to other gods.

*MT-LXX differences.* This is not, however, reflected in the LXX, which addresses the command to angels, possibly because the translator perceived a chiasm between heaven and earth in vss.6-7. It also adds a possessive pronoun, αὐτοῦ, apparently referring to God as antecedent.

It is difficult to conceive of a theological motivation for this rendering; and with no evidence of a different *Vorlage* it may simply be a weak translation.

To suggest the author used this psalm as his source is to assume: (a) that he either did not know which Hebrew word ἄγγελοι translated or that he accepted the LXX translation; (b) that he did not notice that αὐτοῦ is a LXX addition and replaced it with θεοῦ for clarification, which in itself would not be unusual for him when justified by the context; (c) that, in order to fit the quotation into the flow of his argument, he switches the verb from the second to the third person; (d) he introduced καί, the need for which is unclear; and last but not least (e) that he, like the LXX, did not respect the context which makes it unlikely angels are addressed in the psalm.

Before making any of these assumptions, it is worth looking at the possibility that the quotation comes from Deuteronomy.

<sup>MT</sup> Deuteronomy 32:43a

<sup>LXX</sup> Deuteronomy 32:43a

|                                           |                                                |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| (a) - [הַרְנִינוּ שָׁמַיִם עִמּוֹ]        | (a) εὐφράνθητε οὐρανοὶ ἅμα αὐτῷ                |
| (b) - [וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִּי לֹא כָל-אֱלֹהִים] | (b) καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες υἱοὶ θεοῦ  |
| (c) [ - ] הַרְנִינוּ גּוֹיִם עִמּוֹ       | (c) εὐφράνθητε ἔθνη μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ        |
| (d) [ - ] -                               | (d) καὶ ἐνισχυσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι θεοῦ |

*Deuteronomy 32:43a* is the last verse of the Song of Moses, which, as the introduction and the epilogue (vss.44-47) state, was his final teaching (vs.2) to the Israelites as they were about to enter the Promised Land.

The song itself tells of God's goodness and faithfulness towards a foolish people (vss.4-14), the people's prosperity and apostasy (vss.15-18), the Lord's judgment over their unfaithfulness (vss.19-25), followed by the Lord suspending judgment (vss.26-35) and the confirmation that He will come to bring judgment, compassion and vindicate His people (vss.36-43).

Vs.43 appears to be a final exhortation drawing the conclusion from the foregoing. In the MT, the exhortation is to 'joyfully shout in praise' (normally in the OT praise addressed to the Lord<sup>172</sup>) and is addressed to the gentiles. And they are to do so with, for, or because of, His (the Lord's) people, who presumably are already doing the same because of their deliverance. The exhortation in vs.43a is motivated by three clauses describing the Lord's actions in vs.43b.

*MT-LXX differences.* In these last three clauses, the LXX order follows the MT, though it is somewhat more expansive.<sup>173</sup>

The brief, first hortatory clause in the MT is rendered in the LXX as two parallel, carefully structured, sentences containing parallel second person plural instructions to the heavens to rejoice ἄμα αὐτῷ (i.e. with God or, more likely, the people<sup>174</sup>) and to the gentiles to rejoice with His people. Both sentences are followed by a parallel third person plural injunction to 'all the sons of God' to worship Him and 'all the angels of God' to strengthen themselves in Him.

The elaborate structure of the LXX variation seems to suggest a *Vorlage* different from the MT, rather than a mistranslation. And that there once was a more extensive

---

<sup>172</sup> Harris, 1980, no.2179.0.

<sup>173</sup> In vs.43bα it adds to the first clause καὶ ἐκδικήσει and in vs.43bβ it explicitly mentions the Lord as the one who acts by providing κύριος. Cockerill, 1999, p.54, gives a detailed comparison.

<sup>174</sup> Masculine in Hebrew and neuter in Greek.

Hebrew version is suggested by the text found in Qumran,<sup>175</sup> printed above between brackets, which has a clause similar to Psalm 97.<sup>176</sup>

In conclusion, the changes to Psalm 97 identified above, while some are not implausible, are rather extensive for what is introduced as a quotation.<sup>177</sup> On the other hand, his quotation from LXX-Deuteronomy is close and, if the author had a Hebrew 4QDeut-like text of Deuteronomy 32:43, consistent with the Hebrew.

Thus, while the evidence as to where the author sources his quotation may not be conclusive, on balance Deuteronomy seems most likely.

### Hebrews and the LXX

BYZ **Hebrews 1:6**

LXX **Deuteronomy 32:43a**

Ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγη τὸν  
πρωτότοκον εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην λέγει,

Καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες  
ἄγγελοι θεοῦ

εὐφράνθητε οὐρανοὶ ἅμα αὐτῷ  
καὶ προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες υἱοὶ  
θεοῦ  
εὐφράνθητε ἔθνη μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ  
καὶ ἐνισχυσάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι  
θεοῦ

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The textual uncertainty surrounding the LXX and its *Vorlage*<sup>178</sup> makes it difficult to determine what, if anything, the author changed. When

<sup>175</sup> See Ellingworth, 1993, p.119: ‘The most probable explanation is that he is quoting Dt.32:43b in a form not now directly attested, but to which 4QDeuteronomy [“4QDeut”] gives indirect support’. McConville, 2002, p.450, also notes the longer 4QDeut text, but considers the second part of the parallel an expansion by the LXX.

<sup>176</sup> The text of 4QDeut has for vs.43a parallels with the LXX for clauses (a) and (b), but not for (c) and (d). This is not due to damage to the document, since it is complete for this stretch of text (Ulrich, 1995, p.141). The LXX-clauses (c) and (d) can reflect a conflation with the MT for (c) plus a supplied elaboration for (d), or one can assume a Hebrew original, which was fuller than both 4QDeut and the MT (so Cockerill, 1999, p.56).

<sup>177</sup> For a similar conclusion, see Cockerill, 1999, p.52.

<sup>178</sup> 4QDeut with מַלְאָכֵי אֱלֹהִים does not explain why the LXX has υἱοὶ θεοῦ. Possibly the translator saw both expressions as referring to angels or the Odes-text is a better translation of the original Hebrew. It is interesting to note that Brenton’s LXX translation of Deuteronomy is equal to Odes. Further reflection on this issue is outside our scope.

he rearranges or interrupts the sequence there is at times an indication of this,<sup>179</sup> but not here.

It suggests he had a Greek text of Deuteronomy similar to Odes 2:43, which is identical to LXX-Deuteronomy 32:43 apart from reversing υἱοὶ θεοῦ and ἄγγελοι θεοῦ.<sup>180</sup> In that case, both the author's Greek version and Odes may stem from a 4QDeut-like Hebrew text.

Alternatively, the author, against the background of the invitation to the heavens to rejoice, may have considered that the Hebrew מִיְהוָה could quite legitimately be translated into Greek as ἄγγελοι and for the sake of clarity used the latter. If he and his audience understood υἱοὶ and ἄγγελοι to have the same referent,<sup>181</sup> such change would have been acceptable.

*Hebrews 1:6.* The introduction to the quotation is open to different interpretations in several respects.

In vs.5b καὶ πάλιν refers back to the λέγει of vs.5a and thus introduces another confirmation through a second quotation, but in vs.6 πάλιν stands before εἰσαγάγη, temporally modifying this verb rather than λέγει.<sup>182</sup> ὅταν and the subjunctive aorist εἰσαγάγη may suggest an indefinite: 'whenever'.<sup>183</sup>

The οἰκουμένη is often translated as 'the inhabitable world' and the event then thought of as the incarnation. However, in line with Hebrews 2:5 it may also be understood as

---

<sup>179</sup> E.g. Hebrews 2:13, 10:16-17 and 30.

<sup>180</sup> Docherty, p.361, following R.T. McLay and G.J. Steyn, observes the author may have faithfully followed a text preserving a tradition not reflected in the MT and slightly different from the LXX.

<sup>181</sup> This implies he did not read the text as a chiasm, but a chiasm is unlikely anyway, since υἱοὶ θεοῦ and ἔθνη are incongruent.

<sup>182</sup> Andriessen, 1976, pp.296-297, argues otherwise the exact reverse word-order for ὅταν δὲ πάλιν should be expected; and that the transposition of two words would make any metathesis too forced.

<sup>183</sup> Wallace, 1996, p.479, notes the subjunctive is at times used in an indefinite temporal clause, e.g. with ὅταν translated as 'whenever'. The suggestion 'it indicates a future contingency from the perspective of the time of the main verb' is probably more applicable to clauses with μέχρι etc., discussed in the same paragraph. Alternatively, the futurity may be with the time of Deuteronomy, see, Caneday, 2008, p.32; and Ellingworth, 1993, p.117, mentions the same possibility. Andriessen, 1976, p.296, who considers the phrase to refer to the exaltation of Jesus, comments: 'le problème de syntaxe que pose le subjonctif aoriste, se simplifie plus que la phrase, localisée dans le passé historique, indique un futur prochain; pris dans son sens plénier et prophétique, elle indique le futur messianique.'

the world-to-come or God's Kingdom.<sup>184</sup> The phrase then refers to Christ's *parousia* or His re-entry into heaven after His death, at His exaltation.<sup>185</sup>

However, *πάλιν* understood as adverbial, not as a connective, does not necessitate a reference to the *parousia* (as an 'again' coming), but is best 'understood as referring to the Son's enthronement that has already taken place in anticipation of its consummation at the *parousia*.'<sup>186</sup> This event is also referred to at the end of this section in vs.13. The reference there is to Psalm 110, where the Son is installed as ruler and judge.

Andriessen<sup>187</sup> points out the verbal analogy of vs.6 and Deuteronomy 6:10, 'ὅταν εἰσαγάγη σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου εἰς τὴν γῆν', and Israel's designation as God's firstborn in Exodus 4:22, 'λέγει κύριος υἱὸς πρωτότοκός μου Ἰσραηλ'.

The first echo or allusion in the IF would place the quotation close to Deuteronomy 32:43, namely, at the entry into the Promised Land.

Considering the second, Andriessen suggests it is Israel, which is led again into the presence of God; and he discerns a parallel with the *πάλιν* of Hebrews 4:7.<sup>188</sup>

However, it is difficult to escape the impression that in selecting the term *πρωτότοκος* the author also deliberately alludes to the Davidide firstborn of Psalm 89:26-27 and that the focus is thus clearly on Jesus.<sup>189</sup>

In the Song of Moses quoted here, is seen as vindicating<sup>190</sup> His people in judging their oppressors and atoning for them. Therefore, the heavens are instructed to rejoice (in the LXX and 4QDeut) and sons or angels to worship God (in the LXX respectively 4QDeut). In Hebrews, after Jesus *had already been demonstrated* to be God's Son

---

<sup>184</sup> The author refers to the incarnation in Hebrews 10:5, but uses another term: *εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον*. Our understanding may be seen as a parallel to Hebrews 2:5: *εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγόντα*, where is spoken of the people, to whom Jesus was the 'Firstborn' or the *ἀρχηγός*.

<sup>185</sup> See e.g. Lane, 1991, p.25: '...οἰκουμένη customarily signifies habitable land... The context, however, points in another direction. ...the entrance of Christ into the heavenly world following his sacrificial death.'

<sup>186</sup> Caneday, 2008, p.33. See also Bruce, 1964, p.17. Andriessen, 1976, p.294, listing six arguments concludes that: 'ce verset a trait à l'entrée du Christ au ciel.'

<sup>187</sup> Andriessen, 1976, pp.295-297.

<sup>188</sup> Andriessen, 1976, p.300.

<sup>189</sup> Possibly, Jesus, as the corporate representative who later (Hebrews 2:10) leads His people into rest, is referred to here. Andriessen, 1976, p.301, points at Deuteronomy 31:3, where the Lord will be at the head of His people entering the Promised Land.

<sup>190</sup> Deuteronomy 32:43: 'he will avenge the blood of his servants'.

(vs.5), this worship by angels is applied to Him as He returns to heaven, exalted (Heb.1:3b $\alpha$ , 13) after vindicating, through purification, His people (Heb.1:3b $\beta$ ).

And because He is the divine Son, God's word from the OT is cited as saying the angels are to worship Him, illustrating His superiority over them.

### *Analysis*

Unsurprisingly, this quotation has been mentioned as evidence that the author had no Hebrew, as he would otherwise have noted that the very evidence he cited was not part of the Hebrew text of Deuteronomy (MT) or that he relied on an unusual translation of אלהים (4QDeut).<sup>191</sup>

And if Psalm 97 is seen as the source, the author is said to have missed points (a) and (b) above,<sup>192</sup> as a result of his lack of Hebrew.

The alternative is to suggest that he knew, but did not care because he considered the LXX inspired Scripture.

Regarding either of the two sources, the author stands accused of poor hermeneutics in ignoring the context.

In the psalm, the context, which was accessible to him in Greek, notwithstanding the translation ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ, only allows for the interpretation of אלהים as 'gods' or 'rulers'. And yet, if the quotation was taken from there, he ignores this, because in his use of it the reference to angels is critical. It amounts to *gezerah shawah*, disregarding the context.

On the other hand, if Deuteronomy is the source, as Schröger assumes, the text can only be used to prove the author's point 'auf Wege einer massiven Umdeutung...in einem Sinn, den es im Alten Testament nicht hat.'<sup>193</sup> In the OT, this is a statement about God, but the author makes it one about Christ. Attempts to relate this text to Christ through either a literal exegesis or typology, or a prophecy-fulfilment approach,

---

<sup>191</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, pp.43 and 53.

<sup>192</sup> (a): the LXX translating אלהים with ἄγγελοι, and (b): the LXX adding αὐτοῦ.

<sup>193</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.53.

he sees as in vain. And Schröger concludes that the author is using a *midrash-pesher* method. The text is exegeted by focussing on certain key-words, but at the same time, in some inspired manner, related to the time of the exegete.<sup>194</sup>

Only by an unjustified replacing of God with Christ as the person to whom  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$  refers can the author use this text as proof for his argument. Ellingworth observes: 'It is generally assumed that this involves distortion of the OT text which refers to God.'<sup>195</sup> He then continues by indicating that the author may have understood the less explicit text in LXX-Deuteronomy as a 'dialogue of divine persons in which the Father presents the Son to the angels...'. But that hardly makes the hermeneutical method of the author better.

Also Gheorghita sees the author relying, at best, on an unclear LXX: 'the pronoun  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$ ..., due to its lack of a clear antecedent, made the reading of Dt. 32 [in the LXX] more christologically germane from the standpoint of the author.'<sup>196</sup>

But is the assumption that the author (a) in his understanding of the OT had no Hebrew, and (b) in his hermeneutical use of the OT had little respect for the original setting and meaning, indeed the most suitable way to explain his use of this quotation? Or is there reason to suggest he did understand the original text and did respect its original meaning?

As we have already argued our preference for the source of the quotation, we will focus on Deuteronomy 32:43.

Above, we saw that there was a Hebrew *Vorlage* closer than the MT to the text of LXX-Deuteronomy and the Hebrews quotation. If the author had access to it,<sup>197</sup> his selection of this quotation and his amendment of the LXX translation to 'angels' can be readily explained.

---

<sup>194</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.54-55. Schröger does not proceed with outlining how these techniques are used here by the author. Supposedly the message of the prophet (here Moses) had a literal meaning, but also a hidden eschatological one. This hidden meaning is unlocked by using keys such as replacing words or letters based on other texts, often using analogy or allegory. In absence of any commentary the author sometimes supplies with the quotations, Schröger does not have much to work with in substantiating his view.

<sup>195</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.120. And Attridge, 1989, p.57: 'The text has been taken out of context and the pronoun..., thus made ambiguous, has been taken as a reference to Christ'.

<sup>196</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.43. He returns to the assumption the author had no Hebrew.

<sup>197</sup> Cockerill, 1999, p.55, argues the author had a Greek text which followed the 4QDeut tradition. However, while there is evidence for a Hebrew text different from the MT, there is not for an LXX-alternative. The assumption he read Hebrew is much simpler.

Hebrews 1:1-4 can be understood as the author's *exordium*, followed by a *catena* of texts in vs.5-14 to support it. The *exordium* is an intricate statement with many facets and any attempt to summarise it remains a crude one. However, the following elements may be recognised: (a) in the OT past God spoke through the prophets, now He speaks through Christ (although only introduced by this name in Hebrews 2:9); (b) Christ is (i) divine and (ii) the creator and sustainer of the world; (c) His message surpasses the OT,<sup>198</sup> just as He is superior to the angels; and (d) this Christ will, after having achieved, through purification, vindication for his people, come to rule and judge the world.

It is worthwhile to note that the implied theme under (c) is made explicit after the *catena* in the exhortation in Hebrews 2:1-4, where the discourse continues by drawing the conclusion (διὰ τοῦτο) by way of application.

The author then continues, using the two quotations in vs.5 to support (b)(i).

When πάλιν is read with λέγει, vs.6 could be understood as a continuation of that argument: the author is still demonstrating that Christ is divine. This is how, implicitly, Schröger and others<sup>199</sup> read it:

‘angels worship Christ (Deuteronomy 32:43)’  
*therefore*, ‘Christ is divine and thus superior to angels’.

And they conclude the reasoning is faulty<sup>200</sup> since it does not respect the OT text, which does not prophesy the angels would worship a Christ, but God.

However, we have argued above that πάλιν is better taken with εἰσαγάγη. In that case, the author can be understood as moving on to his next point, i.e. the support of (c). He has already argued that Christ is the divine Son and now emphasises that He (together with his message) is superior to the angels (and their message, the OT<sup>201</sup>):

‘Christ is the divine Son’ (vs.5)  
*and* ‘angels worship God’ (Deuteronomy 32:43)

---

<sup>198</sup> The ‘surpassing’ does not imply a rejection or lack of respect. It was still God speaking and is quoted because of its authority. It implies progress towards ‘more fully’.

<sup>199</sup> E.g. Schröger, 1968, p.53.

<sup>200</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.56: ‘Von einem “Schriftbeweis” im strengen Sinne des Wortes kann hier jedoch nicht die Rede sein.’

<sup>201</sup> In the Jewish tradition the angels were understood to be the messengers who brought the Pentateuch, based on Deuteronomy 33:2, also referred to by Paul in Galatians 3:19. The concept is again referred to in the concluding exhortation in Hebrews 2:2.

*therefore*, ‘angels worship Christ and he is thus superior to angels’.

The quotation serves not so much to prove His divinity, but, based on His divinity, to demonstrate His superiority over angels and, by consequence, provide evidence of the superiority of His message over that brought by angels.

In vs.7, he then continues to argue the superiority of the Son over the angels, taking another angle, namely (b)(ii): Jesus is the creator and ruler.

In (4QDeut and LXX) Deuteronomy, after God has vindicated His sinful people and comes to judge their oppressors, the heavens are urged to rejoice and angels called upon to worship God. In Hebrews, the context is congruent: in vs.1:3b the elements of the vindication of His sinful people (through purification) and the judgement (through the allusion to Psalm 110) return, and so does the heavenly scene in the IF of vs.6a. The author thus respects the context of the quotation.

The major difference is its application to Christ. However, this change was not imposed or assumed; the author has already argued that Christ is the divine Son in vs.5. And, he may have felt, this application was even more justified because in the progression of both revelation and redemption, Christ had been presented as the Son (e.g. Luke 3:22) and He had vindicated His people through the atonement on the cross. Thus, when the divine Son re-enters heaven after His exaltation, having achieved vindication, Deuteronomy 32:42 is applied to Him.<sup>202</sup>

*In conclusion*, allowing for a possible 4QDeut-like Hebrew *Vorlage* and understanding vs.6b as a quotation from Deuteronomy 32:43a: (i) it cannot be concluded that the author relied on a Greek text only; in fact, he corrects it; and (ii) in his hermeneutics he respects the OT context. The progression in the history of revelation and redemption may have given additional comfort to apply the text literally to Christ.

---

<sup>202</sup> The question may arise as to where the author gets his confidence that God still makes this statement (λέγει). Possibly the Author considered the statements later reported in John 12:28 (the Father glorifying His name in Jesus) or John 17:1-5 (on the glorification of Jesus) as contemporaneous evidence (in §2.1 it is assumed the author was familiar with the traditions reported in the gospels, even where they themselves may not yet have been written).

## 4.2 Hebrews 1:7 and Psalm 104:4

This verse in Hebrews presents itself on the one hand, through the conjunction καί and the affirmative particle μέν, as a continuation of the argument in the previous verse, and on the other hand, through the IF λέγει, as another quotation from Scripture.

At the same time this quotation is placed in contrast with the quotations following in vss.8-12 through the construction καὶ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἀγγέλους...πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν, ('and indeed about the angels...but about/to the Son').

The consensus is that the quotation comes from Psalm 104:4.

*The MT and the LXX*

<sup>MT</sup> Psalm 104:4

<sup>LXX</sup> Psalm 103:4

עֲשֵׂה מְלֶאכֶיךָ רוּחוֹת מְשָׁרְתָיו אֵשׁ לִהְיוֹת

ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα  
καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πῦρ φλέγον

*Psalm 104* is a song of praise of God as the creator of the world and its ruler and sustainer. No specific historical setting is in evidence and its general nature does not require one.

After an opening address to God, vss.2b, 3a and 5ff. describe how God created the world from its foundations to its superstructures, and in vss.3b-4, the psalmist pays tribute to God's control over all things.

The events of nature such as 'clouds', 'winds' and 'raging fires', which are so utterly uncontrollable for mankind, God turns into subjects serving Him: 'chariots', 'messengers' and 'servants'.

The two clauses of vs.4 are in themselves difficult to translate as it is unclear whether 'winds' and 'raging fires' are the subject or the predicate.<sup>203</sup> However, the parallel of

<sup>203</sup> E.g. ELB, LSG, NBS, and NIV take winds and fire as subjects, while the NKJ and ESV do the reverse.

vs.3b is clear: ‘clouds’ are turned into His ‘chariot’, and so the context suggests that powers of nature are turned into objects for God’s use.

It is unlikely that the psalm intends to make a statement about the angels, e.g. proclaiming their mutability; the psalm is not about angels but about God, and His control over nature.<sup>204</sup>

*MT-LXX differences.* The LXX resolves the grammatical ambiguity of the clauses in vs.4, but only by ignoring the parallel with vs.3b. It has taken ‘His angels’ and ‘His servants’ as the subject and they are being turned into ‘winds’ or ‘spirits’ and ‘fire’. In addition, the Hebrew  $\text{רוּח}$  in vs.3b and 4a is first translated as  $\alpha\upsilon\epsilon\mu\omicron\varsigma$  and then switches to  $\pi\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$ , which results in ambiguity.<sup>205</sup>

Possibly, the translation reflects a greater interest in angels in later Judaism, or it is simply a weak translation. It is unlikely that it reflects a more pronounced messianic or eschatological orientation of the LXX; the selected translation does not further such a case.

Schröger states<sup>206</sup> that the psalm does not speak of angels in the MT but about messengers. However, that appears to be too sweeping a statement, given that  $\text{מַלְאָךְ}$  is also elsewhere translated as angel.<sup>207</sup>

One other point of note is that the LXX has  $\pi\tilde{\upsilon}\rho$   $\phi\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\nu$ , a noun followed by an adjectival participle (‘a raging fire’). The MT has a feminine noun followed by a masculine participle, sometimes interpreted as a hendiadys (‘a fire, a flame’). While the LXX translation seems appropriate, the peculiar Hebrew expression may have given rise to alternative ways of translating it in other Greek versions.<sup>208</sup>

---

<sup>204</sup> See Allen, 1983, p.26: ‘The quotation of v 4 in Heb 1:7 is basically from LXX and is understood in a disparaging sense by reversing predicate and object, an interpretation grammatically possible but contextually improbable’. See also Kistemaker, 1961, p.23, who notes the Targum Jonathan was apparently confused.

<sup>205</sup>  $\alpha\upsilon\epsilon\mu\omicron\varsigma$  unequivocally means wind (Louw-Nida, no.14.4), but  $\pi\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$  can mean wind, breath and spirit (Louw-Nida, no. 12.33, 14.4, 23.168)

<sup>206</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.57.

<sup>207</sup> E.g. Genesis 24:7, 40, 2 Chronicles 32:21, Psalm 78:49, 91:11, 148:2 and Zachariah 1. But also, notable because its proximity, in Psalm 103:20, where the angels are also subordinated beings.

<sup>208</sup> E.g. Symmachus with  $\pi\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\nu\eta\nu$   $\phi\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\alpha$  and Aquila with  $\pi\tilde{\upsilon}\rho$   $\lambda\acute{\alpha}\theta\rho\nu$ , Docherty, p.359.

Hebrews and the LXX

| BYZ Hebrews 1:7                                                                                                          | LXX Psalm 103:4                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Καὶ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἀγγέλους λέγει,<br>Ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα,<br>καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πυρὸς<br>φλόγα· | -<br>ὁ ποιῶν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ πνεύματα<br>καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ πῦρ φλέγον |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The author quotes the LXX with one change: πῦρ φλέγον to πυρὸς φλόγα. Jobes has suggested this is an example of *paronomasia*, a rhetorical device of phonetic assonance to semantically juxtapose πνεύματα and φλόγα.<sup>209</sup>

The alternative is that he had a different *Vorlage*, although Schröger states that this variation is only found in ‘unbedeutenden LXX-Handschriften’.<sup>210</sup> The change does not appear theologically important and the peculiar Hebrew text noted above allows for both.

*Hebrews 1:7.* As concluded above, the author has argued that the angels are to worship Christ; and here he continues to elaborate on their subordinate position by comparing them with Christ through the καὶ πρὸς μὲν...πρὸς δὲ construction.

The contrast is thought by some<sup>211</sup> to be between the mutability of angels, derived from the LXX translation of the psalm, and the immutability of Christ in the vss.8, 11-12. This interpretation is usually associated with the attribution of Platonic leanings to the author. However, as will be argued below, that is not the context of the following two quotations with which he contrasts the present quotation. If he was arguing immutability, he could have made the point better by limiting himself to vss.8a and 12b, but the quotations are longer, which suggests another intention.

<sup>209</sup> Jobes, 1991, p.392 and 1992, p.182; similarly Kistemaker, 1961, who assumes this text was part of the early church liturgy and for reasons of balance and rhythm was changed in this manner, p.24.

<sup>210</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.249. Docherty, p.359, notes more recent findings varying from Rahlfs’ LXX, and she considers it ‘more likely’ the source text used by the author contained a variant reading.

<sup>211</sup> E.g. Attridge, 1989, p.58. But he misses the point the author makes in the contrast. So also Schröger, 1968, p.58. Gheorghita, 2003, p.60, sees the contrast largely between angels as created beings and the eternal existence of the Son.

This and the next two quotations support the description in vss.2-3 of Christ as eternal creator and righteous ruler in contrast to the angels.

Here, he quotes Psalm 104 to illustrate that angels are merely created beings and servants. The broader context is still Hebrews 1:7-12 illustrating the superiority of Christ (the creator and ruler/judge of the world) and His message over the angels (creatures and servants) and their message.

Indeed, the conclusion of the *catena* in the vss.13-14 is not about immutability, but rather about Christ as ruler, confirmed through the quotation from Psalm 110.

### *Analysis*

Schröger observes in general that ‘es ist so gut wie sicher, dass im Hebräerbrief nur nach der LXX zitiert wird, nicht aber nach dem masoretischen Text.’<sup>212</sup> And here he is quite clear in his conclusion about the author’s dependence on the deviating LXX: ‘Es ist also festzustellen, dass gerade die Abweichung des LXX-Textes vom MT die Zitation möglich macht...’<sup>213</sup>

However, for Schröger, the author’s focus was exactly on the immutability,<sup>214</sup> which finds its basis in the translation which the LXX has used for the two difficult Hebrew clauses.

The author’s hermeneutical method is, according to Schröger, equal to the Rabbis’ and Qumran-sectaries: it is *solely* a literary connection: the same words (angels, winds) are used, but the meanings in the psalm (God controls creation) and in Hebrews (angels are mutable) are totally different.<sup>215</sup>

This assumes that the author had (i) no Hebrew in his reading of the OT; and (ii) in his hermeneutical use of the OT, little respect for the original setting and meaning.

---

<sup>212</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.59. Similarly Attridge, 1989, p.57.

<sup>213</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.59. Similarly Lane, 1991, p.28: ‘It [the quotation] offers a striking example of the writer’s dependence upon the Greek Bible, for the text was useful to him only in this form.’ He also suggests that for the writer the ‘mutable form of the angels underscores their inferiority...’.

<sup>214</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.58: ‘Denn gerade auf die Aussage “wandelbar” kommt es dem Verfasser an.’ Attridge, 1989, p.58, notes the subordination of angels, but then continues: ‘Equally significant is the transitory and mutable quality of these angelic servants...and the abiding quality of the Son...’

<sup>215</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.59.

However, is this explanation of the author's use of this quotation correct? Or is there reason to suggest he did understand the original text and did respect its original meaning?

The choice made in the LXX where the angels/servants and the winds/raging fire are respectively the subject and the predicate is, as we saw above, not to be preferred given the wider context of the psalm in the MT. Nor is this choice very helpful in the context of the author's argument which contrasts Christ with the angels as creator-ruler versus creatures-servants. The MT actually lends greater support to his argument and an understanding of Hebrew may well have given him the comfort to use the text as he does.

We have seen above that the psalm celebrates the greatness of God who can turn even nature's uncontrollable forces into his messengers-angels and servants. Although it was not the focus of the psalm, the author could rightly deduce from the MT that angels are creatures and servants of God, and this he uses to demonstrate that they are inferior to Christ.

If, indeed, mutability was his point, the author can be said to be either dependent on the LXX owing to his lack of Hebrew, or be accused of disrespect for the MT. But if that was not his point, both conclusions fall.

This leaves the question why, if he knew Hebrew, he did not follow the MT. Our hypothesis is that he sought to invoke the OT in support of his point, which the MT clearly allowed him to do, but did not want to muddy the waters by arguing with the LXX translation. This would be even more relevant if, as has been suggested,<sup>216</sup> the LXX-text was part of the liturgy of the synagogue and the early church.

In addition, the author was not burdened by the subsequent debate about his alleged Hellenism. To expect him to eliminate any LXX implication of mutability and prevent this confusion would be an anachronism. It may also be noted here that the stark bifurcation between these two exegeses (mutability versus createdness) is the result of the subsequent debate about the author's perceived Platonism. The author himself

---

<sup>216</sup> E.g. Kistemaker, 1961, p.23.

may have thought of mutability as a consequence of createdness, with the latter remaining the key issue.

*In conclusion*, there is no evidence that the author was merely relying on verbal analogy; his literal use of the quotation respects its context. And, in his application, it is more likely he relied on the MT than on the LXX, which is less helpful for his argument.

### 4.3 Hebrews 1:8-9 and Psalm 45:6-7

Through the IF λέγει in Hebrews 1:7 vss.8-9 are also presented as a quotation from Scripture. As discussed above, this quotation is placed in contrast with vs.7.

The consensus is that the quotation comes from Psalm 45:6-7.

*The MT and the LXX*

| MT Psalm 45:7-8                                                                                                                                                                                                          | LXX Psalm 44:7-8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>בְּסֵאֵף אֱלֹהִים עוֹלָם וָעֶד<br/> שָׁבַט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל שָׁבַט מְלֹכֹתָיִךְ<br/> אֶהְבֶּתָּ צְדָקָה וְתִשְׁנֵא רָשָׁע<sup>8</sup><br/> עַל־כֵּן מְשַׁחֵךְ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֶיךָ שֶׁמֶן שִׁשְׁוֹן<br/> מִחֲבַרְיִיךָ</p> | <p>ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεός εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος<br/> ῥάβδος ἐυθύτητος ἢ ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας σου<br/> <sup>8</sup> ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν<br/> διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεός σου<br/> ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους σου</p> |

*Psalm 45* is considered a royal wedding song.<sup>217</sup> The setting is unknown. A number of addressees have been suggested, ranging from Solomon to Jehoram, son of

<sup>217</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.58; Craigie, 1983, p.337; Dahood, 1970, p.270.

Jehoshaphat, or the northern king Ahab,<sup>218</sup> but an address to a Davidic king is plausible.<sup>219</sup>

In the first verse, the psalmist relates how he came to compose the psalm. Vss.2-5 address the king in his splendid attire and military prowess, although it should be noted that vs.4 especially ('ride out...on behalf of truth, humility and righteousness') has overtones of the Law-for-the-King of Deuteronomy 17. Vss.6-8 celebrate his God-given dominion through which he exercises his just and joyful rule for ever, and it is here that the quotation derives from. In the second half, the psalm addresses the royal bride (vss.9-15), and again the king, promising him an eternal dynasty (vss.16-17).

Psalm 45:6a is often seen as the *crux interpretum*. If the psalm is understood as addressed to a Davidic king, the eternity of his rule can be seen as the result of the promise to David in 2 Samuel 7, which the author has already cited at the start of his *catena* in Hebrews 1:5a. Likewise, his closeness to God for as long as he is obedient can be understood as proclaimed in Psalm 2 ('son'), already cited in Hebrews 1:5b. But do (dynastic) eternity and sonship (through adoption) justify calling the king 'god', which happens nowhere else in the OT?

A great variety of translations and explanations for vs.6a have been proposed. Some translations opt for not taking אלהים as a vocative, but as a nominative with adjectival force: 'your divine throne'. Others take it as a predicate: 'your throne is God'.<sup>220</sup> Still others, including Schröger,<sup>221</sup> assume a comparison: 'your throne is like God's throne'. Harman in his review concludes that there is little syntactical support for this third option.<sup>222</sup> Also, the first seems a tour de force<sup>223</sup> and in the second alternative the

---

<sup>218</sup> See e.g. Leschert, 1994, pp.59-60. It is here assumed a Davidic king is addressed.

<sup>219</sup> Ahab and Joram have been suggested, because Tyre is mentioned. But also Solomon had many foreign wives and good connections with Tyre. The allusions to Nathan's prophecy in vss.2, 6-7 and its place in Book II of the Psalter, which is sometimes understood as reflecting on the Davidic monarchy in its hey-day (e.g. Walton, 1991, p.24: 'David's Reign'), make a Davidic king more likely (Walton, p.26, suggests David himself). See also Bateman, 2001, p.4.

<sup>220</sup> For an overview see Harris, 1984, and Leschert, 1994, pp.40-78.

<sup>221</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.61, following C.R. North.

<sup>222</sup> Harman, 1974, pp.338-340: there is no *kaph* in the MT or anywhere else to suggest a comparison, nor is there any evidence of a development of idiom that allows one to assume such comparison without it. So also Leschert, 1994, pp.42-43.

<sup>223</sup> Craigie, 1983, p.337. He states the syntax does not support this alternative. Harris, 1984, p.71, notes that a construction whereby 'throne' is qualified by a combination of a genitive of possession (⊃)

meaning has to be a symbolic one: ‘God is your strength’.<sup>224</sup> However, the argument that this is also the case in the next clause does not appear strong. Dahood,<sup>225</sup> followed by Craigie,<sup>226</sup> emends the vocalisation of the MT and translates: ‘The eternal and everlasting God has enthroned you’. However, Harman points out that there is not much evidence for the changed vocalisation, nor for the existence of a denominative verb ‘to enthrone’.<sup>227</sup>

In a comprehensive review, Harris analyses six different proposed emendations, but concludes that without much MSS support, and already five different translations of the existing text, emendation seems an ill-advised course of despair.<sup>228</sup> Of these five, Harris concludes, the vocative, addressing the Davidic king as God’s deputy on earth, is to be preferred.<sup>229</sup>

Also Harman, along with many others, prefers the most obvious translation ‘Your throne, O God, [is] for ever and ever’. He resolves the issue of how an Israelite king can be addressed as god<sup>230</sup> by identifying these two verses as suddenly and directly messianic.<sup>231</sup> He accepts that this leaves the question of the intelligibility of these verses for the original hearers (and composer!) unanswered, but on the basis of many similar sudden changes in the prophets, e.g. Isaiah 9:6-7, deems this solution preferable. The psalmist then abruptly addresses not the marrying king, but only Christ, and calls Him God.

In vs.7b the related question of the appropriate translation surfaces. Attridge, based on the precedent of vs.6, again favours reading a vocative: ‘therefore O God, your God has set you...’, but many others prefer a nominative: ‘therefore God, your God,

---

and an adjectival genitive (אלהים) is without precedent in the OT. Leschert, 1994, p.41, comes to the same conclusion.

<sup>224</sup> B.F. Westcott and K.J. Thomas through Schröger, 1968, p.61. But such metaphor would be unusual.

<sup>225</sup> Dahood, 1970, pp.272-3: he changes אלהים into אלהם and understands it as a noun in the construct state with an enclitic *mem* where the genitive, ועלם ועד, is a composite noun, and revocalizes כסאך as the Piel of an otherwise unknown denominative verb ‘to enthrone’.

<sup>226</sup> Craigie, 1983, pp.336-337.

<sup>227</sup> Harman, 1974, pp.340-342.

<sup>228</sup> Harris 1984, p.70.

<sup>229</sup> Harris 1984, pp.80-85. A similar use of אלהים is found in Exodus 7:1 regarding Moses.

<sup>230</sup> If this is simply seen as a Canaanite left-over or a parallel with other ANE royal songs, then this may not be an issue. However within the canonical context addressing a human king as God would be unique and questionable.

<sup>231</sup> Harman, 1974, p.344.

has...'. The resolution here is not critical, since either way it is clear that someone other than the king, namely his God, elevates him above his companions, and God does so because the king, in compliance with the royal charter, loves righteousness and hates wickedness, i.e. is obedient (vs.7a).

Considering the above, it seems preferable to read אלהים in vs.6a as a vocative and understand it as poetic hyperbole. The exaggeration is corrected and kept in check in the next verse reminding the king that his rule ('set above your companions') is a gift from God, associated with, if not dependent on, continued compliance to the law.<sup>232</sup> Harris' concluding observation that 'a king of David's line could be addressed as אלהים because he foreshadowed the coming one who would perfectly realise the dynastic ideal...' <sup>233</sup> may be correct. However, this view cannot necessarily be attributed to the poet.

*MT-LXX differences.* The LXX translation appears to follow the Hebrew closely, but some observations must be made.

Attridge<sup>234</sup> points out that θεός is not the formal vocative form, allowing for a translation of the Greek equal to 'your throne is God', but agrees that the nominative form is widely used as a vocative. In view of the parallel with vs.5, where the LXX adds the vocative δυνατέ, and θεός being articular (unlike the first ῥάβδος in the parallel of vs.6b which is a predicate), Harris also concludes that the LXX presents a vocative.<sup>235</sup> Schröger<sup>236</sup> also takes θεός as vocative, but argues that the MT requires a different translation than the LXX provides, a fact not recognised or ignored by the author, who follows the LXX vocative, which is more conducive to a messianic interpretation.

---

<sup>232</sup> So also Harris 1984, p.85: 'The poet's exuberance is tempered, however, by his theological propriety.'

<sup>233</sup> Harris 1984, p.85.

<sup>234</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.59.

<sup>235</sup> Harris 1984, pp.88-89.

<sup>236</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.61, follows H.J. Kraus in suggesting the MT's אלהים was originally יהיה, and concludes that the psalm did not address the king as god.

Schröger considers the verbs אהב and שנה in vs.7a to be *perfecta prophetica*,<sup>237</sup> giving a current characterisation of the king. In addition, he understands על-כן as expressing purpose. The anointment is to *enable* the king to love righteousness. In his view, the LXX changes this by translating the verbs as aorists and על-כן with διὰ τοῦτο, thus indicating the anointing was a reward, *a consequence*. Unbeknownst to the author, the LXX is thus more amenable than the MT to a messianic interpretation of Jesus' life. In both cases he appears to exaggerate any potential difference in meaning.

Looking at the broader context, also Gheorghita has argued that the LXX has a more messianic leaning, which may have attracted the author. He draws attention to the LXX translation of the first clause of the psalm's title: εἰς τὸ τέλος. This divergence from the Hebrew may, in his view, have given the psalm a more messianic nuance.<sup>238</sup>

#### Hebrews and the LXX

| BYZ Hebrews 1:8-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | LXX Psalm 44:7-8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν,<br/>                     Ὁ θρόνος σου, ὁ θεός, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα<br/>                     τοῦ αἰῶνος·<br/>                     ῥάβδος εὐθύτητος ἢ ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας<br/>                     σου.<br/> <sup>9</sup> Ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην, καὶ ἐμίσησας<br/>                     ἀνομίαν·<br/>                     διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεός, ὁ θεός σου,<br/>                     ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους<br/>                     σου.</p> | <p>-<br/>                     ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεός εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ<br/>                     αἰῶνος<br/>                     ῥάβδος εὐθύτητος ἢ ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας<br/>                     σου<br/> <sup>8</sup> ἠγάπησας δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἐμίσησας<br/>                     ἀνομίαν<br/>                     διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέν σε ὁ θεός ὁ θεός σου<br/>                     ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως παρὰ τοὺς μετόχους<br/>                     σου</p> |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* It is immediately clear that the oft-discussed differences between the LXX and Hebrews are with the NA-text, which has in vs.7b καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος τῆς εὐθύτητος ῥάβδος τῆς βασιλείας σου. While an analysis of the merits of these particular divergences is outside the scope of this study, we will briefly look at the NA-variations with the LXX.

<sup>237</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.63; (Qal perfect of 'to love', and Qal waw consecutive imperfect of 'to hate').

<sup>238</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, pp.59-60. The MT has כננת (for the chief musician').

Both ‘throne’ and ‘sceptre’ represent the rule of the king, and later Christ; a rule which is eternal and just. And Ellingworth states that the reversal of subject and predicate by the NA-text of Hebrews is one of focus rather than meaning.<sup>239</sup>

Schröger,<sup>240</sup> however, considers it more important: the additional *καί* gives the clause more emphasis by introducing it as a separate thought, and the generic statement to the king ‘your rule is a righteous one’ becomes more messianic in ‘and *the* righteous sceptre is the sceptre of *His* kingdom’.

Attridge, for his part, reads *ὁ θεός* in vs.9 as a second vocative addressing Christ, and understands the author to be following the LXX, which he claims also has a vocative while the MT has a nominative. He also suggests that while the *חבר* of the MT refers in general to a companion, the LXX *μετόχοι* allows the author to imply that these are the angels referred to in vs.7.<sup>241</sup>

Combined with the use of the aorists and the conjunction *διὰ τοῦτο* in Psalm 44:8b-LXX mentioned above, which made the LXX distinctly more messianic, the author is thus seen as quoting the nuptial song for an Israelite king as a messianic prophecy that Christ is divine, immutable and eternal.

*Hebrews 1:8-9*. The question is, however, whether that is the point here for the author. He may well have agreed with these attributes detailed above, but he seems to be arguing something else.

The introduction to this quotation and the next makes clear that they stand in contrast to vs.7. This verse does not emphasize angels are non-divine, but that they are servants and creatures. The contrast to these is (i) a ruler and (ii) a creator.

The first quotation illustrates the first point, i.e. that Christ is a ruler. In Psalm 45, the Davidic king, in poetic hyperbole addressed as god, was exalted, and his rule, represented by the throne and sceptre, is said to be eternal and just.

---

<sup>239</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.123.

<sup>240</sup> It should be noted he follows P46, **א** and B which have *βασιλείας αὐτοῦ* in both the psalm and Hebrews. Schröger, 1968, p.60, follows this reading. It raises the question which text influenced the other in what direction, but this is outside our scope. It is the more difficult reading, since it conflicts with the vocative *ὁ θεός*. See also Guthrie, 2007, p.938.

<sup>241</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.60. Schröger, 1968, p.64, sees the MT referring to the king’s royal colleagues.

The author applies this to Christ, who had revealed Himself as the Davidic successor (Matthew 22:41-46). If divinity and eternity (and for some, immutability) were what he wanted to ‘prove’, vs.8a would have sufficed. Vss.8b-9, however, further highlights his dominion: he is set over, superior to his companions<sup>242</sup> and his rule is a righteous one, as the Deuteronomic and Davidic kingship should be.

Thus He is not a servant, but a ruler.<sup>243</sup> The same is later also the conclusion of the *catena* in vss.13-14, which in turn is the basis for the exhortation in Hebrews 2:1-4.

### *Analysis*

Schröger<sup>244</sup> considers this text in the MT as, at best, indirectly messianic, but sees the author as ignoring the original setting and reading it based on the LXX translation as more clearly messianic. Similarly Ellingworth<sup>245</sup> seems to suggest that the author could only happily use the quotation being unaware of Hebrew-language issues such as the אלהים vocative-versus-alternatives debate in vss.6-7. Unfamiliarity with Hebrew and dependence on a more messianic LXX allow the author to use, in Schröger’s words, a hermeneutical approach of considering the psalm a messianic prophecy which finds its fulfilment in Christ.

Harman agrees, but does not need to posit dependence on the LXX, since, as we saw, he considers the Hebrew text itself directly messianic.

The author’s argument is analysed as follows:

‘The messianic Psalm 45 calls the Davidic king God’

(the author’s LXX based reading)

and ‘Christ is the messiah/Davidic king’ (vs.5)

therefore, ‘Christ is God and thus divine, eternal’ (vs.8) and ‘above angels’ (vs.9).<sup>246</sup>

---

<sup>242</sup> As to Attridge’s comment, there is no need to narrow this down to angels. Neither is there a strong argument to equate it with Hebrews 3:14. This latter text stands in a different context and does not emphasise subordination, but partnership.

<sup>243</sup> See also Ellingworth, 1993, p.122: ‘the Son exercises royal power, whereas the angels are mere λειτουργοι’.

<sup>244</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.255.

<sup>245</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.122.

<sup>246</sup> See e.g. Guthrie, 2007, p.939: ‘The eternity of the Son is critical to the author’s argument in the rest of the book...’ and ‘Further, the *ho theos* of 1:8...proclaim[s] the deity of Christ...’

This quotation and the next are understood to focus on eternity and to be linked together through verbal analogy of the pronoun *σὺ*.<sup>247</sup>

But does the author's use of this quotation show that he (a) had no Hebrew, because he depended on the LXX facilitated messianic understanding of this psalm, and (b) in his hermeneutical use completely ignored the original setting and meaning? Or is there reason to assume he understood the original text and respected its meaning?

Much of the debate about the original Hebrew text of Psalm 45:7-MT and the meaning of Hebrews 1:8 takes place against the background of the latter text being a *locus classicus* for the divinity of Christ.

However, from our analysis in the previous paragraphs, it appears the author has already established that point in vs.5. As suggested above, for him it is not a conclusion he derives in vs.8, but it is a given he uses:

‘Psalm 45 praises the Davidide (addressed as ‘god’) as a just, obedient ruler’  
(vss.8-9)

and ‘Jesus is the Davidide and divine Son’ (vs.5)

therefore, ‘Jesus is the just ruler, and thus superior to the (serving) angels.’

His ultimate argument is that they should heed Christ's words even more than those of the OT, mediated by angels. He progresses it by drawing out the consequence of Christ's sonship and divinity, namely, that Christ is superior to the angels. He does so by contrasting them as servants and creatures with Christ as ruler/sustainer and creator. The first of these points he supports with this quotation in vss.8-9.

The rule of the Davidic king was to be, in accordance with royal charter of Deuteronomy 17 and the eternal covenant of 2 Samuel 7, just and obedient. That is reflected in the tribute to the marrying king in Psalm 45: he is lauded for being such a king. The author applies this to Jesus, presenting him as ruler in comparison with the servant-angels. Proving the deity of Christ does not appear to be his focus: the *tertium comparationis* is not divinity, but the concept of rule and superiority.<sup>248</sup>

---

<sup>247</sup> Guthrie, 2007, p.939.

<sup>248</sup> Two comments can be made in passing. First, in using this text as illustrating the divinity of Christ one needs to recognize (a) the author is moving beyond Psalm 45 (see below) and (b) it is not the primary message of the text. Secondly, the debate over whether Psalm 45 sees the Israelite king as a

To posit that these verses in Psalm 45 are directly messianic is unnecessary. It is also unsatisfactory, because it has an element of circularity. Harman notes ‘the normative character of NT interpretation for our understanding of the OT scriptures’, but it is his own presupposition that Hebrews 1:8 is about Christ’s divinity which leads him to conclude that Psalm 45:6-7 *must be directly messianic*.<sup>249</sup> The author is actually going in the other direction and with the help of the OT he illuminates a NT reality. Harman’s approach also leaves unanswered the questions of what the original hearers are supposed to have understood, why the editor of the book of psalms retained an unintelligible text, and why the composer came up with it in the first place.

The process is better understood as the history of redemption informing and progressing the history of revelation. Being familiar with Jesus’ self-witness to His divinity, and having argued that Jesus is the divine Son in vs.5, he has no issue with applying literally to Jesus the vocative ὁ θεός, which he could still respect as poetic hyperbole in the psalm. This *sensus plenior*, for which the premise of inspired scripture allows, was unknown or only partially apprehended in the OT, but was now clear to the author.

*In conclusion*, no hermeneutic disregarding the original meaning of the text can be attributed to the author.

The text addressing the Davidic king as a just ruler is literally applied to Jesus, who already was identified as the divine Davidide in Hebrews 1:5. The progression of the history of revelation may have given him additional comfort in applying the qualification God to Jesus, recognizing a *sensus plenior* in the text.

For his use of the text the author is not dependent on a more messianic LXX translation.

---

god (either in parallel with other ANE royal songs or because it is directly messianic) is largely irrelevant for the author’s use of the text.

<sup>249</sup> Harman, 1974, pp.338 and 345. As outlined in §4.5 Leschert comes, reasoning along similar lines, to the same lame conclusion regarding Psalm 8: it is difficult to find any OT-evidence, but it *must be messianic*, Leschert, 1994, p.121.

## 4.4 Hebrews 1:10-12 and Psalm 102:25-27

These verses in Hebrews are introduced by *καί*. The conjunction distinguishes it from the previous quotation but also implies the repetition of *λέγει* and *πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν* of vss.8-9, with God still speaking about the Son.

They are generally recognised as a quotation from Psalm 102:25-27.<sup>250</sup>

*The MT and the LXX*

| MT Psalm 102:26-28                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | LXX Psalm 101:26-28                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>לְפָנִים הָאָרֶץ יִסְדֹּתָ<br/> וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיךָ שָׁמַיִם<br/> וְהַמָּה יֵאבְדוּ וְאַתָּה תִעְמַד<br/> וְכָל־מִן כַּבֵּד יִבְלוּ<br/> כְּלָבוֹשׁ תִּחְלִיפִם וְיִחְלְפוּ<br/> וְאַתָּה־הוּא וְשָׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתְמוּ<sup>28</sup></p> | <p>κατ' ἀρχὰς σύ κύριε τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας<br/> καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ<br/> οὐρανοί<br/> <sup>27</sup> αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται σὺ δὲ διαμενεῖς<br/> καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται<br/> καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἀλλάξεις αὐτοῦς<br/> καὶ ἀλλαγῆσονται<br/> <sup>28</sup> σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ<br/> ἐκλείψουσιν</p> |

*Psalm 102* is variously described as a penitential psalm, a personal lament of an ill man, or a composite psalm.<sup>251</sup> The speaker is thought to be a pre-exilic king or a post-exilic composer lamenting the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, using as his basis an older personal song of complaint. The challenge is to reconcile the two strands of what appears to be a personal lament with a more corporate concern for Zion. Possibly the psalmist's illness could be considered to coincide with, or even be the result of, his concern for the sad state of Zion.

In any case, the solution in the psalm is not a response to the initial complaint about his health (vss.1-11) in the form of healing or a long life, but the preservation of Zion and its people (vss.12-28). If, indeed, his suffering resulted from the threat to Zion, the psalmist's complaint appears to be that he is running out of time as his life is

<sup>250</sup> As indicated in §2.4, all references in the text are to the NKJ, where in Psalm 102 the verses are numbered n-1 compared to the MT and LXX.

<sup>251</sup> See Allen, 1983, pp.11-12 and Kraus, 1989, p.284.

coming to an end (vss.11, 23-24a); and, consequently, he will neither see, nor personally experience, let alone contribute to, the salvation of Zion. He derives his consolation, however, from the fact that the Lord will be there to see to it. The Lord as the creator (vs.25) will have the power, as the eternal one He, unlike the psalmist himself, will be there (vss.26-27) and as the covenant-Lord will be with Zion and its people (vss.16, 19-20). This is the response to the prayer of the destitute psalmist (vss.1, 17).

The verses quoted in Hebrews are part of the last stanza (vss.23-28) summarizing the psalm. It begins by repeating his complaint about illness and his request for health or life. The solution is, however, not a long, healthy life, but a joyful acknowledgement that God is the eternal creator (and it is this part the author quotes), who will take care of his people. The request and acknowledgement are formulated as an address by the psalmist to God introduced with ‘And I said: “O my God...”’ in vs.24.

*MT-LXX differences.* It is possible that the LXX understood vss.25-27 differently because of a different reading of the preceding verses (vss.23-24), which will, therefore, be reviewed first.

| MT Psalm 102:24-25                                                                                                                                                       | LXX Psalm 101:24-25                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>עֲנֵה בַדְרֹךְ ( לַחַי ) [ בְּחַי ]<br/> קֶצֶר יָמַי:<br/> <sup>25</sup> אִמַּר אֱלֹהִי<br/> אֱלֹהֵי תֵּעָלֵנִי בְּחַצֵּי יָמַי<br/> בְּדֹר דֹּרִים שְׁנוֹתַיִךְ:</p> | <p>ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ ἐν ὁδῷ ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ<br/> τὴν ὀλιγότητα τῶν ἡμερῶν μου<br/> ἀνάγγειλόν μοι<br/> <sup>25</sup> μὴ ἀναγάγῃς με ἐν ἡμίσει ἡμερῶν μου<br/> ἐν γενεᾷ γενεῶν τὰ ἔτη σου</p> |

A different vocalization and allocation of vs.24a to vs.23 are cited as the possible reasons for the resulting translation: ‘He [God, the subject from the previous verse]

answered him in the way of His strength, declare to me the fewness of my days'.<sup>252</sup>

The result is, as Kidner correctly concludes, obscure.

He goes on, however, to say that a feature of the LXX is that vss.25-28 are 'the words of God to the psalmist, whom God addresses as Lord and Creator; and this is how Hebrews 1:10-12 quotes verses 25-27, in proof of the Son's deity'.<sup>253</sup> The whole psalm is now messianic, with the psalmist/messiah speaking about his death ('fewness of days') and with God telling him His death is only a half-way intermezzo, since He and His days and work will continue forever. And Kidner concludes 'the LXX performs a service in pointing to the Messianic character of the psalm...' Gheorghita sees this emphasis on the eternal existence of the Son as 'the main thematic link'<sup>254</sup> between the quotations from Psalms 45 and 102. Ellingworth, also, sees the author as understanding this as an address by God to the Son.<sup>255</sup>

However, as Motyer<sup>256</sup> points out, the immediately following pronouncement (vss.23b-24a) is incomprehensible as God's words.<sup>257</sup>

And Gheorghita notes: the psalmist's complaint in vs.23a about his shortened life in the MT thus becomes in the LXX-text God's encouraging response to the psalmist's prayer. He is of the view that the antecedent of the supplied  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$  in vs.23 can neither be the psalmist nor God. He follows Motyer in making the  $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$  of vss.12-22 the referent. This  $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ , supplied again by the LXX in vs.25, Gheorghita understands as an ambiguous overlap of God and his anointed, the Davidic king who builds up Zion.<sup>258</sup> In vss.23-28, the psalmist now portrays God as speaking to the messiah of vss.12-22. But in the fuzziness of the overlap the difficulty of the antecedent of  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$  and  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  in vs.23 remains unresolved. If the psalmist in the LXX version has God speaking to the messiah, why is this messiah referred to in the third person ( $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$ )? If

<sup>252</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.61. ענה is read as a Qal and homonym I, like in Job 40:1, ('to answer') instead of the Piel perfect of homonym III ('to oppress, humble'). Because of the context  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$  is supplied and then the *kethib* taken as correct. In the next clause קצר is revocalised as a noun, אצר as an imperative and אצלי as a preposition with a first person suffix, giving: 'declare to me the fewness...'.  
<sup>253</sup> Kidner, 1975, p.363.  
<sup>254</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, pp.60-61.  
<sup>255</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.126.  
<sup>256</sup> Motyer, 1999, p.20, fn.54.  
<sup>257</sup> Kidner's gloss is too vague to determine whether he is doing so, but the only way to make sense of it is to assume vss.23b-24a are a summary of this messiah's complaint. The LXX-text however gives no indication of yet another change of speaker.  
<sup>258</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.61; Motyer, 1999, p.20. The latter places the LXX-psalm in the setting of a Zion theology, where God's Kingdom and Davidic rule overlap, which then develops in an overlap between the names of Yahweh and the Davidic king, both called  $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ , addressed in vs.25.

He is, one would have expected here a second person or the vocative of vs.25, not a reference to a third person.

The unsatisfactory result of attempts to make sense of this obscurity indicates that the simplest hypothesis is not some different LXX messianic view but, as Ellingworth suggests, a mistranslation.

The most noteworthy difference between the MT and LXX in the quotation itself is the supply in vs.25 of the vocative σύ κύριε. It does little to resolve the earlier issues, but if indeed the translator had difficulties with the previous verses, the parallel with vs.12 may have given him the comfort to use κύριε resumptively. He may have done so in an attempt to leave the confusion behind and clearly identify יהיה as the addressee again.

The other variations appear to be of minor importance: καί is added before the third clause in vs.27, ἔργα translates a singular and the verb ἀλλάσσω ('to bring about a change in nature') may have a different nuance from הִלֵּךְ (in the Hiphil of a garment: 'to replace'). To read a different eschatological perspective in this nuance seems a stretch.

*Hebrews and the LXX*

BYZ **Hebrews 1:10-12**

LXX **Psalms 101:26-28**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Καί,<br/>         Σὺ κατ' ἀρχάς, κύριε, τὴν γῆν<br/>         ἐθεμελίωσας,<br/>         καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ<br/>         οὐρανοί·<br/> <sup>11</sup> αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις·<br/>         καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται,<br/> <sup>12</sup> καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἐλίξεις αὐτούς,<br/>         καὶ ἀλλαγῆσονται·<br/>         σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ, καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ<br/>         ἐκλείψουσιν.</p> | <p>-<br/> <sup>26</sup> κατ' ἀρχὰς σύ κύριε τὴν γῆν<br/>         ἐθεμελίωσας<br/>         καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ<br/>         οὐρανοί<br/> <sup>27</sup> αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται σὺ δὲ διαμένεις<br/>         καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται<br/>         καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἀλλάξεις αὐτούς<br/>         καὶ ἀλλαγῆσονται<br/> <sup>28</sup> σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ<br/>         ἐκλείψουσιν</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* When comparing the author's text with the LXX, a few differences become obvious.

The author retains the κύριε supplied by the LXX, and places σύ at the beginning of the sentence. The words σύ κύριε are found in the MSS at various places in the clause so the author may have had this variation in his *Vorlage*, but the emphasis is anyway clear.

He also retains the plural ἔργα and in some MSS a resumptive ὡς ἰμάτιον appears.<sup>259</sup> None of these features are deemed to be significant.

The text of Hebrews has the present διαμένεις, while the LXX has the future tense as a translation of the MT's imperfect. The latter is in line with the previous verb and the three following verbs; the author's present tense parallels Psalm 102:27a/Hebrews 1:12bα. To conclude from this a deliberate emphasis by the author on God as unchangeable assumes not only that both his LXX and his own Epistle were written with accent marks,<sup>260</sup> but also that he knowingly changed the meaning of the LXX-text before him. This would be unusual and unexpected, as it must have carried the risk of undermining the authority of the quotation.<sup>261</sup> If the present tense διαμένεις is understood as a gnomic present,<sup>262</sup> any difference with the LXX need not be very significant and deriving conclusions from it rather speculative.

The last difference is in vs.12 where the verb ἐλίσσω ('to roll up') instead of ἀλλάσσω ('to change'). The change is noteworthy because the MT, like the LXX, uses the same verb twice in this verse. Amending only one of the occurrences because of a particular eschatological meaning seems very odd.<sup>263</sup> Variations in meaning are unlikely to have caused this, since all the verbs used (ἐλίσσω, ἀλλάσσω, הִלִּיף) can be understood as painting the same picture of the creator deciding that the current creation is no longer

---

<sup>259</sup> The NA-text shows the resumptive use in vs.12, which is also found in some Greek MSS, McCullough, p.40, and in the Hebrew Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs-a), Docherty, p.362.

<sup>260</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.26, who considers it unlikely.

<sup>261</sup> If the author wanted to convince his audience by quoting what is, for them, an authoritative text, he would avoid the risk of being caught meaningfully changing it, unless really necessary.

<sup>262</sup> Wallace, 1996, pp.524-525, who cites Hebrews 3:4 as another example.

<sup>263</sup> See previous paragraph; versus Gheorghita, 2003, p.43.

good enough. Since some LXX-MSS have this variation, it is possible the author found it in his.<sup>264</sup>

*Hebrews 1:10-12*. As described in §4.3, the quotations in vss.8-12 stand in contrast to vs.7 where the angels are identified with the help of the OT as servants and creatures. The first quotation presents Christ as the opposite of a servant: a ruler, also over the angels. This second quotation continues to speak about Jesus, but now as the creator. In Psalm 102:26-27, the psalmist addresses the Lord. His own life may end soon and he may neither see nor contribute to the salvation of a threatened Zion. But his consolation is that God, the creator of heavens and earth, will ensure that the deliverance happens.

The author has already presented Jesus as God in vs.3a and supported this by applying OT-texts identifying Him as the Son of God in vs.5. He now applies the psalm-verses about God to Christ. God, as the one who inspired the author of the psalm, is introduced as witnessing that Jesus is creator, an aspect which had already been hinted at in vs.2b.

And He is the creator who will bring salvation to Zion. This element is not elaborated in any comment on this text – indeed, in the catena there is no comment at all - but it is already briefly alluded to in vs.3b (‘purification of sin’) and surfaces in more detail in Hebrews 2:3, 10 (‘salvation’).

There is also a similarity of setting: in the psalm, Zion was under threat; and the recipients of the Epistle to the Hebrews were at risk of falling away because they were under pressure.

The question of why the author did not think vs.10 was sufficient to prove his point remains however. Some<sup>265</sup> have noted that the concept of eternity or, more precisely, of immutability, is to be found as an *inclusio* in vs.8a and vs.12b. Their conclusion is that this is the key issue in the author’s argument in these two quotations or even the very reason he quoted Psalm 102.<sup>266</sup>

---

<sup>264</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.67.

<sup>265</sup> E.g. Lane, 1991, p.30.

<sup>266</sup> E.g. Schröger, 1968, p.69: ‘der Verfasser [hat] diese Psalmstelle gewählt, weil in ihr genau das ausgedrückt wird, was er hervorgeben will: den Gegensatz des wandelbaren Geschöpfes zum ewigen und unwandelbaren Schöpfer’.

The author doubtless would have affirmed God's and Christ's eternity and, like the psalmist, derived consolation from it. Indeed, he may have extended the quotation for this reason. But, as in the psalm, the focus is then on God's ability, stemming from his power and perdurance as eternal creator, to procure salvation. The intended encouragement (Heb.2:1-4) is based on Christ's superior ability to act for Zion, not on the applicability of some Platonic concept of immutability.

In addition, the second part of the quotation may (certainly in its allusion to Isaiah 34:4<sup>267</sup> through the verb ἐλίσσω) hint at judgment, a theme which is elaborated later (Heb.3:12-13 and Heb.12:23).<sup>268</sup> That this element cannot have been far from his mind is clear from the pivotal Psalm 110, referred to at the beginning and end of the catena, where God, or the ruler at God's right hand, is also judge (Psa.110:6). Jesus' position as judge of creation not only places him above the angels, but also provides an additional incentive, both positive and negative, to heed His words. This would be a good reason to extend the quotation.

### *Analysis*

According to Ellingworth, the author presents in vs.10a God as addressing the Son, which is made possible through the mistranslation of ענה in the LXX<sup>269</sup> and through understanding the supplied πρὸς as 'to'.<sup>270</sup> In parallel with vs.8, God, in direct speech to Jesus, confirms His divinity in this text.<sup>271</sup> The author relies in his use of the text on an LXX mistranslation, which gives the psalm a messianic twist.<sup>272</sup>

This reliance on an incorrect translation is furthermore thought to be evident in the author's retention of the vocative κύριε in the LXX, which he emphasises through his

---

<sup>267</sup> Many commentators point this out, e.g. Attridge, 1989, p.61, Schröger, 1968, p.67. The context of Isaiah 34 is the judgment on the nations, also fitting well in Psalm 102.

<sup>268</sup> Hebrews most often attributes judgment to God with Christ as mediator, but this distinction should not be pressed. Psalm 110:6 leaves open who is judging.

<sup>269</sup> In the Piel ענה is often translated with homonym III: 'to humble', rather than with homonym I: 'to answer'; the LXX with ἀπεκρίθη selects this translation.

<sup>270</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, pp.125-126.

<sup>271</sup> So also Attridge, 1989, p.60.

<sup>272</sup> So also Lane, 1991, p.30: 'In the LXX, however, a mistranslation of the unpointed Hebrew text opened the door for the christological appropriation of the passage.'

repositioning of *κύριε*. This vocative is, according to Kistemaker,<sup>273</sup> what the author needed for his messianic application of the psalm; apparently neither noticing *κύριε* is missing in the MT nor that 'über Christus steht in dieser Psalmstelle unmittelbar nichts'.<sup>274</sup> As Motyer puts it, '[o]nce again, it appears that the author is relying on the LXX-interpretation of the Psalm'.<sup>275</sup>

Some have suggested the author selected the psalm because of the vocative, others like Gheorghita<sup>276</sup> and Schröger<sup>277</sup> suggest that he selected the psalm because it speaks about eternity and immutability and that this selection was facilitated by the LXX addition of *κύριε*; it made the verses 'zitierfähig'.

Having observed that the psalm has no direct messianic character and concluded the *κύριε* to be crucial for the author, his hermeneutical approach is thought to be *midrash pesher*. He derives his conclusions about Jesus, be it His immutability or His divinity, by applying the psalm to Him, based on the use of the same word *κύριε*, notwithstanding the fact that it has two different referents: God in the psalm, and Jesus in his Epistle. But this method can, concludes Schröger, for us today not 'prove' the conclusion.<sup>278</sup>

The conclusion that the author used the psalm messianically, but without the need to posit the author's ignorance of, or disregard for, the MT (con)text, is also reached by those who, like Kidner, attribute a directly messianic character to the whole psalm. However, we have already concluded this approach to be unsatisfactory.

But does the author (a) in his understanding of the psalm rely entirely on the LXX, and (b) does he, in his hermeneutical use of his source, have little use for the original meaning? Or did he understand the original text and respect its meaning?

---

<sup>273</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.80.

<sup>274</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.71.

<sup>275</sup> Motyer, 1999, p.19. And on p.20: 'It is a measure of his dependence on the LXX, of course, that *κύριε* in verse 26 is not matched by anything in the MT.'

<sup>276</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, pp.60-61.

<sup>277</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.68-70.

<sup>278</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.80; Schröger, 1968, p.71: 'Um einen Beweis im Sinne heutiger historisch-kritischer Exegese kann es sich hier naturgemäss nicht handeln...'

If the LXX's ἀπεκρίθη was as important to his understanding of the text as is suggested, why did he not include it in the quotation? A possible explanation is precisely that he had read the MT, recognised how confused LXX translation of vs.23 was and noticed the addressee of vss.24ff. is אֱלֹהֵי (‘my God’, which the LXX translates with μοι). Starting his quotation at vs.25, the resumptive use of the addressee of this verse, identified in the MT in vs.24, would be very natural and a good reason to retain κύριε already supplied by the LXX. The distinction between אֱלֹהֵי and יְהוָה (God in His capacity as the almighty creator and covenant Lord) was in this context not relevant enough to bother his audience with.

A less likely alternative is to see the source for his retention of κύριε in vs.12.

The question remains how he could, without deriving from the LXX a messianic meaning of the psalm or utilising a *midrash-pesher* hermeneutic, apply a psalm which speaks about God to Christ?

The most likely answer is again that he is not using the psalm to prove Christ is divine. Neither a perceived messianic character, nor the bridge of the κύριε were for him essential. That Jesus was God he had already established in vss.3, 5. Here he draws out the conclusion that, since God in the psalm is called the creator (and subsidiary: eternal, judge and bringing salvation to Zion), this applies also to Jesus. The immediately relevant aspect in the context of the contrast drawn up in vss.7-12 is the emphasis on His ‘creatorship’, because that places Him above the created angels. The subsidiary aspects may, for him, have made the quotation even more suitable. The use of ‘eternal’ reinforces both the superiority and the ability to bring about salvation. The theme of judgement and Christ’s role as saviour are elaborated on later in the Epistle (Heb.4:12, 12:23 and 2:10, 12:24, respectively).

*In conclusion*, it is when this section is understood as yet another fresh attempt to ‘prove’ Jesus is divine, immutable or otherwise equal to God, that reliance on the Greek text resulting in a messianic reading of the psalm or on the use of *midrash-pesher* hermeneutics are required.

But the author has already moved on. He avoids the LXX confusion in vss.23-24, starts his quotation with a resumptive use of the address to God, which he found in

vs.24 in the MT (but is lost in the LXX), and, because He is divine, applies this psalm literally to the Son, presenting Him as the creator.

The quotation provides clear evidence the author had access to Hebrew and respected the Hebrew context.

#### 4.5 Hebrews 2:6-8 and Psalm 8:4-6

These verses in Hebrews are generally recognised to be a quotation from Psalm 8:4-6. They are also introduced as a quotation bearing the authority consistent with the author's respect for the words God spoke through the prophets (Heb.1:1). However, the attribution is vaguer than usual and not directly to God, presumably because the words are so clearly those of a human being, surprised by God's grace to him and paying tribute to God.

#### The MT and the LXX

| MT Psalm 8:5-7                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | LXX Psalm 8:5-7                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>מִהֲאָנוּשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֵנוּ<br/> וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקֹדֵנוּ<br/> וְתַחֲסֶרְהוּ מְעַט מַאֲלֵהִים<sup>6</sup><br/> וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תִּעֲטֶרְהוּ<br/> תִּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיךָ<sup>7</sup><br/> כָּל שָׁתָה תַּחֲתֵרְגְּלָיו :</p> | <p>τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὅτι μιμηθήσκη αὐτοῦ<br/> ἢ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ὅτι ἐπισκέπη αὐτόν<br/> <sup>6</sup> ἠλάττωσας αὐτὸν βραχὺ τι παρ'<br/> ἀγγέλους<br/> δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας αὐτόν<br/> <sup>7</sup> καὶ κατέστησας αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὰ ἔργα τῶν<br/> χειρῶν σου<br/> πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν<br/> αὐτοῦ</p> |

Psalm 8 is described as a psalm of praise and of creation.<sup>279</sup> Both the MT and LXX attribute the psalm to David, but its general pronouncements make it difficult to identify a more specific historical or cultic setting.<sup>280</sup>

<sup>279</sup> Craigie, 1983, p.106.

<sup>280</sup> Acknowledging the different possible understandings of the expression לָדוּד.

The psalm starts and ends with the same expression of praise for God's name and in between the psalmist expresses the basis for this praise in three sections: vss.1b-2: God's majesty and might as reflected in creation, vss.3-4: man's insignificance compared to creation, and vss.5-8: his astonished delight at God's role for mankind in this creation. The quotation is from vss.4-6.

In vs.4 the verb זכר is neutral and פקר can be pejorative. However, the context makes clear that God's attention here is beneficial. These verbs' anarthrous object is without doubt mortal man in general: אנוש, denoting mankind in its frailty, and its parallel אדם בן אדם refer to a member of the human race,<sup>281</sup> but as corporate representative, not a specific individual.

The Piel form of the verb חסר in vs.5a in general means 'cause to be lacking' and the adjective מעט is gradual or qualitative, not temporal. The expression raises the question with whom mankind is compared in this 'falling short a little bit': with God, or with gods, rulers or heavenly beings? 'God' is the most common translation for אלהים. However, since the psalmist is speaking to God but here not using the second person pronoun, the alternative of a third party seems preferable. A reference to earthly rulers is unlikely, since the psalmist is considering mankind's position. This leaves the alternative of heavenly beings.

It is clear that the comparison is not negative ('below somebody'), but that the psalmist is delighted about mankind's elevated position, described in the MT in chiasmic parallels (vss.5a-5b).

The elevation, mankind's rule over creation, is expressed in language reminiscent of Genesis 1:26-28, where God did place אדם over His creation.<sup>282</sup>

The verbs in vss.5-6 are often translated as referring to the past and the LXX has four aorists. However, Craigie notes that the MT has a chiasmic structure with a perfect in vs.5a (resulting from the waw-consecutive imperfect) and vs.6b and imperfects in vss.5b-6a. He assumes this change is deliberate and must have a reason; he concludes: 'it may be that the poet is contrasting what God has accomplished for mankind (perfect) and also what will be mankind's future (imperfect).'<sup>283</sup>

---

<sup>281</sup> Cf. Leschert, 1994, p.84.

<sup>282</sup> So e.g. Childs, 1969, p.21: 'the psalmist....was dependent on the tradition of the priestly writer which is reflected in Genesis 1.'

<sup>283</sup> Craigie, 1983, pp.105-106.

There may also be a good reason to retain this tension between the present and the future in the psalm. Notwithstanding the poet's obvious delight in mankind's position, and granting him the privilege of poetic hyperbole, it must have been clear to him that, since the Fall, mankind's rule over creation is far from complete or perfect. Indeed, the ruinous consequences of the Fall are recognised elsewhere<sup>284</sup> in the despairing answers to the same question 'what is man?' The psalm in its original meaning, while hinting at the creation order, recognises the contemporaneous reality,<sup>285</sup> but may, at the same time, already have had a prophetic, *eschatological* element.

However, there appears little justification for identifying a *messianic* tone, and Schröger is half right in saying: 'Im Psalm ist nicht die Spur einer eschatologisch-messianischen Auffassung erkennbar.'<sup>286</sup>

*MT-LXX differences.* Regarding the LXX translation two topics deserve some attention.<sup>287</sup>

First, as identified above, the LXX uses four aorists in vss.5-6, ignoring the distinction between the waw-consecutive-imperfect and perfect in vss.5a, 6b on the one hand and the imperfects in vss.5b-6a on the other. The LXX indicates an event in the past<sup>288</sup> and so do many modern translations.<sup>289</sup>

As Craigie points out in his excursus on the translation of tenses in Hebrew poetry,<sup>290</sup> the suffixed-verb (perfect) has the aspect of completed action and the prefixed-verb (imperfect) of incomplete action. In English the first is usually translated by a past or present tense, the latter with a future tense. However, the translation of a prefixed-verb with a past tense, or (as in the LXX aorist) with a form indicating a past event,

---

<sup>284</sup> E.g. Job 7:17-19 and Psalm 144:3-4. See Childs, 1969, p.29, Leschert, 1994, p.86.

<sup>285</sup> Childs, 1969, p.27, notes: 'Calvin reads into the psalm the doctrine of the fall of mankind and suggests as the context for the Hebrew psalm the ideal state of man before his disobedience..', but then objects: 'A dogmatic context has been constructed from material outside both [OT and NT] texts which fits the various parts into a whole foreign to both.' But surely, after having identified the link with Genesis (p.21), a canonical approach should allow for mankind's position before the Fall to be taken into account.

<sup>286</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.81.

<sup>287</sup> In addition the LXX, followed by the author, omits the conjunction twice in vss.5-6.

<sup>288</sup> Wallace, 1996, p.554. An indicative aorist is a 'snapshot' of an event in the past, although he notes it can be used as a proleptic aorist (p.563). In any case, the LXX loses the distinctions in the MT.

<sup>289</sup> E.g. ESV, NKJ, NIV.

<sup>290</sup> Craigie, 1983, pp.110-113. The NEB follows Craigie somewhat by using the present tense for the Hebrew imperfects.

can be justified since there may have been in early Hebrew a second prefixed form, the preterite tense, indicating action completed in the past.

In making the choice between the two prefixed alternatives, the question arises as to whether identifying this as a preterite form makes much sense considering the limited difference (action completed versus completed in the past) between perfect and preterite tense. Why would the poet have bothered making such a minor distinction? In view of the imperfect rule of mankind over creation after the Fall, the distinction the poet makes is more likely between completed action (man was initially set over creation) and incomplete action (at some point in time the rule will again be perfect). This, however, is not reflected in the LXX.

Secondly, the translation of vs.5a raises three issues.

The verb  $\text{חסר}$  has in the Piel a fairly broad and neutral meaning of ‘cause to lack, need’, while the Greek  $\epsilon\lambda\alpha\tau\tau\acute{o}\omega$  more narrowly means ‘to make less in status or rank’. Given the context which clearly refers to rank and status, this translation seems appropriate.

The Hebrew adjective  $\text{מעט}$  is, unless indicated otherwise, gradual and qualitative: ‘a little bit’. The Greek  $\beta\rho\alpha\chi\acute{\upsilon}\ \tau\iota$  also has this meaning, but is more ambiguous since it can also be temporal, as in ‘a little while’.

The LXX opts for  $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\iota$  as a translation of  $\text{אלהים}$ . Although this is usually the translation of the Hebrew  $\text{מלאך}$ , the LXX choice is, in view of our discussion above, possible.  $\text{מלאך}$  (messenger) refers to the frequent function of angels, as those sent to communicate information. The MT comparison can be understood either functionally or ontologically (‘heavenly beings’). In the latter case, the focus is not on proclamation, but on superiority and rule, which is the context of the Psalm (8:6). And with what heavenly beings could man be compared other than God (which as reviewed above is not likely here) or the angels?

Hebrews and the LXX

| BYZ <b>Hebrews 2:6-8a</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | LXX <b>Psalms 8:5-7</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Διεμαρτύρατο δέ πού τις λέγων,<br/>                     Τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, ὅτι μιμήσκη αὐτοῦ;<br/>                     ἢ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, ὅτι ἐπισκέπη αὐτόν;<br/> <sup>7</sup> ἤλάττωσας αὐτὸν βραχύ τι παρ’<br/>                     ἀγγέλους·<br/>                     δόξη καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας αὐτόν·<br/>                     -<br/> <sup>8</sup> πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν<br/>                     αὐτοῦ.</p> | <p>-<br/>                     τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὅτι μιμήσκη αὐτοῦ<br/>                     ἢ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ὅτι ἐπισκέπη αὐτόν<br/> <sup>6</sup> ἤλάττωσας αὐτὸν βραχύ τι παρ’<br/>                     ἀγγέλους<br/>                     δόξη καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας αὐτόν<br/> <sup>7</sup> καὶ κατέστησας αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὰ ἔργα τῶν<br/>                     χειρῶν σου<br/>                     πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν<br/>                     αὐτοῦ</p> |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The author follows the LXX closely. The only exception is his omission of the first clause of Psalm 8:7.<sup>291</sup>

Attridge suggests that this is because the clause, with its emphasis on man’s rule over the present world, ‘would make more difficult the interpretation of the psalm in terms of Christ, his temporary subjection, and his eschatological reign.’<sup>292</sup> He assumes the clause got in the way of the author’s messianic use of the psalm.

However, Ellingworth comments he omitted the clause because his focus is on man’s place in the world-to-come, rather than on the details of his relation to creation.<sup>293</sup>

This is more in line with the introduction of vs.5 and the author’s continued interest in the world-to-come (Heb.12:22ff.). It also fits with his decision not to quote further from the Psalm and its continued references to creation. In the author’s comment on the text, he only points out the fact that creation is not yet subjected to man, but then leads the discourse in a different direction and does not pursue the topic of creation further.

<sup>291</sup> Although attested by some early MSS, neither the BYZ nor the NA have these words; see Metzger, 1994, pp.593-594. Guthrie, 2007, p.946, notes that the word ‘appointed’ plays an important role elsewhere in Hebrews and that scribes may have omitted the sentence, because of a perceived conflict with Jesus as creator in the Psalm 102 quotation. The proposed exegesis below does not suggest there was any reason for not including the sentence; it would have fitted into the discourse. There is, somewhat surprisingly, also no indication (e.g. καί) of this omission.

<sup>292</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.71.

<sup>293</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.149.

Readings and emendations attributing a more messianic text of vs.4 to the author, such as the interrogative τίς for τί and turning the references to mankind into references to a specific person<sup>294</sup> are generally rejected as lacking support in the MSS.

*Hebrews 2:6-8a.* In Hebrews 1:1-2:4 the author has in the *exordium* and supporting *catena* expounded the superiority of the Son over the angels, and thus the superiority of God's speaking through Him beyond His speaking through the angels – although the latter remained God's speech and is quoted as authoritative support for his argument. This has led to his conclusion and exhortation to pay most careful attention to this Son's message.

In the following section of Hebrews 2:5-18, the author now adds another reason to pay attention to this Son: He has come, entered into solidarity with us, to take hold of us in order to (re-)gain in the world-to-come the position originally intended for man at creation before man's fall into the slavery of death (Heb.2:14-15). Jesus does so in the role of a human, suffering high priest as shown in vs.17; not in the position of a ruler of creation *à la* Psalm 8. And his argument leads in conclusion to the next exhortation in Hebrews 3:1: "Ὁθεν, ...κατανοήσατε... Ἰησοῦν χριστόν.

In Hebrews 2:5, the author embarks on this new argument through the conjunction γάρ. The comparison between the Son and the angels is concluded, but since the angels are supposedly held in high regard by his audience, he uses them once more in his new introduction. It is not to angels that God (still the subject from vs.4) has subjected the world-to-come about which the author had been speaking in Hebrews 1:6. He leaves the question 'But to whom then?' hanging until vs.16 where the angels are again referred to in what Lane describes as an *inclusio*. There, the οὐ γάρ from vs.5 is repeated, emphasised by δήπου and then complemented by ἀλλά. It is now confirmed that the contrast is not 'angels versus Son', but 'angels versus man'; and man here is defined further as Abraham's descendants.

The author begins his answer to the unspoken question 'But to whom then?' by quoting Psalm 8, followed by his own comment. This comment raises two key

---

<sup>294</sup> E.g. ἄνθρωπος becoming ἄνθρωπος ('the man') and ἢ read not as a conjunction, but an asseverative ('or' becomes 'indeed'); see review by Attridge, 1989, p.71.

questions: (a) how far does the comment on the psalm extend, and (b) to whom does the αὐτῷ in vs.8 refer, man or Jesus?

Quite often the comments are assumed to extend throughout vss.8b-9 and the referent of ‘him’ in vs.8 in the mind of the author is, according to many commentators, Jesus. This is then thought to be confirmed in vs.9. The latter conclusion is drawn with various degrees of hesitation, equivocation and directness and by attributing to the author certain hermeneutical approaches (see below).

The text itself, however, presents only the first clause as a commentary in which the author repeats, and so emphasises, the prophetic element of the psalm, namely, that God has left nothing ‘unsubjectable’ to man.<sup>295</sup>

What follows are not two further deductions from the psalm, but two observations about reality: οὐπω ὀρώμεν and βλέπομεν.

The first observation, introduced by the adversative νῦν δὲ, breaks off the comment on the psalm. It compares the psalm’s perspective with an observation about reality with which the recipients of the Epistle could easily agree from their own experience: at present one does not see everything subjected to man.<sup>296</sup>

But, secondly, what they could metaphorically ‘see’ is Jesus (τὸν δὲ...βλέπομεν), since they were familiar with the gospel and had just been reminded of what the witnesses confirmed and God testified about Him (Heb.2:2-4). More specifically, the author makes two further comments about Jesus, couched in language alluding to the psalm.<sup>297</sup>

The first comment is that Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, i.e. God had brought him (ἡλαττωμένον) to *that same level* at which, according to the psalm, mankind also resided. To translate βραχὺ τι as ‘a little while’ or to supply ‘now’ in

---

<sup>295</sup> The verbal adjective ἀνυπότακτον translated as ‘unsubjectable’, see Attridge, 1989, p.72 and Ellingworth, 1993, p.152 following A. Vanhoye (*insoumissible*). This translation fits better than the translation ‘not-subjected’, which would contradict the next clause. It also better reflects the psalm.

<sup>296</sup> Here still mankind in general. The transition to the particular ‘sons and daughters’, ‘descendants of Abraham’ or believers is made later, see §4.6.

<sup>297</sup> The contrast of νῦν δὲ..δὲ is between the not-seeing of man ruling and the indeed-seeing of Jesus being crowned.

vs.9<sup>298</sup> introduces an assumed reference to a temporal sequence with a phase of humiliation transitioning into one of exaltation. However, a reference to a temporary element of Christ's humiliation is not evident in the text, is not followed up nor elaborated on by the author and results in a temporal juxtaposition between ἡλαττωμένον and ἑστεφανωμένον.<sup>299</sup>

The emphasis in this clause is on the solidarity between Jesus and His people: He came to where they were (βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους). The purpose of this submission into solidarity follows after a parenthetical clause of χάριτι θεοῦ (who was the acting party in the two preceding participles): ὅπως ὑπὲρ παντὸς γεύσηται θανάτου. As vs.10 continues to explain, in this sharing suffering and death – the very experiences which emphasize mankind's curtailed ruling position - God makes Jesus 'fit for purpose' (τελειῶσαι) to be the ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν. The solidarity with humans is phrased in the language of the psalm, but derived from observation. This observation is supported with the quotations following in vss.12-13 and again mentioned towards the end of the section in vss.17-18.<sup>300</sup>

The second comment, presented in the parenthetical clause, is that Jesus was also crowned by God with honour and glory. This the author had already described in Hebrews 1:4, 6 and 13 and it anticipates the return to the topic of Christ's glory in Hebrews 3:3 and 4:14.

Both aspects of Jesus (i) having brought the sacrifice of becoming human and subject to death and (ii) being in a position to intercede in heaven will be summarized in the description of Him as high priest to be introduced in Hebrews 2:17.

---

<sup>298</sup> For 'a little while', see e.g. the Dutch NBG, for the addition of 'now', see the NIV.

<sup>299</sup> A temporal juxtaposition is also not suggested by the use twice of the perfect participle and the insertion of 'now' in translations is uncalled for.

<sup>300</sup> See §2.2.

*Analysis*

The *crux interpretum* for the author's use of the quotation is to whom he applies it and to what effect. The answer to this question, in turn, is a function of (i) how the γάρ in vs.5 is understood, and (ii) to whom the αὐτῶ in vs.8 is considered to refer.

Γάρ can be marker of cause/reason or of transition.<sup>301</sup> Lane opts for the latter and translates it as the introduction to a new thought: 'Now...'.<sup>302</sup> If one selects the former, the issue arises as to what vs.5ff. are giving an explanation of: (a) the whole previous section Hebrews 1:1-2:4, arguing a Christological point of Jesus' superiority over the angels; or of (b) the exhortation to carefully heed His message (Heb.2:2)?

Assuming (a) suggests the answer to the unspoken question 'to whom was the world then subjected, if not to angels?' is: 'Jesus'. It then follows naturally that one should look for a Christological application of the psalm in vs.8-9.<sup>303</sup>

However, if the section is not understood primarily as a doctrinal exposition on Christology, but as leading to an exhortation, the main point of the comparison between Jesus and the angels is the encouragement to 'heed Jesus' message'. This is the warning immediately preceding γάρ and a similar exhortation follows in Hebrews 3:1.<sup>304</sup> Alternative (b) seems, therefore, more natural, taking the conjunction as explaining and reinforcing the exhortation, or even – moving into Lane's direction – as taking a new, different angle with the argument leading to a parallel conclusion: 'fix your thoughts on Jesus'. In this approach, no messianic application of the psalm is required.

The tendency to apply it to Jesus and make Him the referent of αὐτῶ remains strong, however, as can be seen in a number of contemporary treatments.

Kistemaker assumes a syllogism: God subjected all things to man (*propositio major*), but at present not all things are subjected to man (*propositio minor*); therefore the

---

<sup>301</sup> Louw-Nida, no.89.3 and 91.1.

<sup>302</sup> Lane, 1991, p.42.

<sup>303</sup> E.g. Kistemaker, 1961, p.81, Grogan, 1969, p.58. Also Childs, 1969, p.25: 'the writer proceeds to read into the psalm a full Christology.'

<sup>304</sup> See Westfall, 2005, p.100.

psalm was prophetic and is fulfilled in Jesus: all things not subjected to angels, but to Jesus in His human state (*conclusio*).<sup>305</sup>

In similar vein, Schröger states that the author already had in mind to substitute Jesus for man in the psalm, ‘obwohl die Beziehung auf υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου grammatikalisch eindeutig ist.’<sup>306</sup>

Lane agrees that the author did not find a Christological title in the psalm, but thinks he wanted to ‘emphasise that Jesus, in a representative sense, fulfilled the vocation intended for mankind.’<sup>307</sup> This, he then suggests, the author reads back into the psalm as he regarded the psalm’s ‘statements as descriptive of three stages in the experience of Jesus:<sup>308</sup> humiliation (vs.7a), exaltation (vs.7b) and final triumph (vs.8a).

Similarly, Attridge finds that for the author the psalm is not primarily about the lofty state of mankind, but an oracle describing the humiliation and exaltation of Christ. For him, the author keeps the referent of αὐτῶ in vs.8 ambiguous with the possibility that vs.8 refers to the subjection of the world-to-come to mankind, but resolves this ambiguity in vs.9 where the referent becomes Jesus.<sup>309</sup>

Grogan, acknowledging that the psalm refers to mankind’s position, has made an attempt to apply it in an indirect messianic way to Christ by pointing to (a) the combined Christological use of Psalms 8 and 110 elsewhere in the NT, and (b) the use of the expression ‘Son of Man’ in Daniel 7 which may have been a conceptual bridge between these psalms.<sup>310</sup> He proposes to resolve the conflict by seeing Jesus as the corporate representative of His people. The author’s profound conception of the solidarity of Christ with His people allowed him to understand an anthropological passage in Psalm 8 as Christological and ecclesiological.<sup>311</sup> However, others have

---

<sup>305</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.102.

<sup>306</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.86: namely mankind.

<sup>307</sup> Lane, 1991, p.47.

<sup>308</sup> Lane, 1991, p.44.

<sup>309</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.72. Kistemaker, 1961, p.105, however observes that τὸν δε (vs.9) always denotes a change of subject.

<sup>310</sup> Grogan, 1969, pp.56-58. Possible NT texts combining the psalms christologically are: 1 Corinthians 15:25-27, Ephesians 1:22, Philippians 3:21 and 1 Peter 3:22. Some have suggested an early church *testimonium*-book with this combination of psalms. There is no scope here to review these texts in detail. But the suggestion appears tenuous at best and does not resolve the issue of the author’s hermeneutics.

<sup>311</sup> Grogan, 1969, p.58. The tradition is a long standing one. Childs, 1969, p.27, quotes Luther: ‘Thus the Holy Spirit through the prophet David instructs us...about the following topics: Christ; the two natures of Christ, His divine and human nature...Christ’s dominion and kingdom...and of Christ’s resurrection, exaltation, and glorification.’ Childs observes that this type of interpretation ‘obliterated the Old Testament’.

rejected the ‘son of man’ connection.<sup>312</sup> Indeed, Jesus’ self-designation always carries the definite article, which the author makes no attempt to introduce; nor is the concept commented on later.<sup>313</sup>

Ellingworth, after an analysis of many arguments in favour of an anthropological *versus* Christological referent for ἀνθρώπου, concludes that ‘the primary reference is to Christ’, but then quotes J.Kögel that ‘Humanity and Messiah stand in close, indissoluble union with one another’.<sup>314</sup>

Leschert, who has set out to defend the author’s historical-grammatical hermeneutics, also ends in unsatisfactory vagueness. He concludes ‘that although Hebrews’ application of Psalm 8 to Christ extends beyond the contextual meaning..., it flows out of ideas implicit in the psalm and develops them along natural lines.’ The psalm, he concludes, ‘must be at least indirectly messianic’.<sup>315</sup>

This messianic interpretation of the psalm by the author, it is argued, is facilitated by his dependence on the Greek text and his hermeneutical approach.

Schröger is very clear: ‘sicher steht auch fest, dass erst die LXX-fassung des Psalmes dieses ‘christologische Verständnis’ möglich machte – nicht aber die masoretische Text’.<sup>316</sup> As we saw above, an assumed continued comparison in vs.5 between the angels and Jesus, rather than man, is conducive to the messianic application of the psalm and, therefore, the LXX translation of אלהים with ἄγγελοι critical. The translation of מעט with the more ambiguous βραχύ τι and the ‘narrow’ interpretation of חסר in the Greek ἐλαττώω both, in this analysis, support the author in reading in the psalm the juxtaposition in time of Christ’s humiliation and exaltation.<sup>317</sup> In doing so, says Schröger<sup>318</sup>, he again makes the point of Jesus’ superiority over the angels and at

---

<sup>312</sup> Lane, 1991, p.47, Attridge, 1989, pp.73-75.

<sup>313</sup> It is in fact conspicuously ignored. As Attridge points out, an ‘Adamic-christology’ does not feature prominently in Hebrews. The solidarity of the high priest, which the author presents, has not necessarily the same focus. The absence of any further references to the Son of Man is also noted by Leschert, 1994, who cites many others making this point, p.105.

<sup>314</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.152.

<sup>315</sup> Leschert, 1994, p.121.

<sup>316</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.82. Others concur in more or less subtle language: Kistemaker, 1961, p.30 and Gheorghita, 2003, p.46.

<sup>317</sup> E.g. Childs, 1969, p.25: ‘The Greek now opened the possibility of understanding...a temporal distinction...’.

<sup>318</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.84.

the same time can point to the OT as already prophesying that Jesus' humiliation ('for a little while') is temporary.

In addition, the author is said to rely on his midrashic hermeneutics in the construction of his argument. As Attridge (with some understatement) notices: '[a]uthor continues in an exegetical style to refer to the wording of the psalm and supplies that language with new meaning.'<sup>319</sup>

The psalm's reference to mankind is read as a prophecy about one person through the use of the ambiguous  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega$  in vs.8. Thus, the psalm's parallel between mankind being elevated to a position a little bit short of divine, and so being crowned with honour and glory, is turned into the juxtaposition of one person being placed, and possibly humbled, below the angels for a little while and crowned thereafter.

Kistemaker identifies here the three typical characteristics of *midrash-pesher* exegesis: (i) quotation of an entire passage, (ii) the repetition and exposition of certain words and phrases from the quotation and in it (iii) 'the tendentious changing of the text ... for possible interpretation applicable to the context of the exposition.'<sup>320</sup>

Schröger likewise concludes a *pesher*-method using the 'Kunstgriff der Substitution', a method of providing 'proof from scripture' incompatible with historical-critical exegesis.<sup>321</sup>

The messianic application of the psalm attributed to the author can, in the analysis of many, only be achieved through his use of the contemporaneous Jewish exegetical methods.

But is the assumption that (a) for the author the Greek text facilitated his argument, and (b) in his hermeneutical use of the psalm imposed a messianic meaning, indeed the most suitable to explain his use of this quotation? Or is there reason to suggest otherwise?

In the brief exegesis of the psalm and review of the LXX translation above, it was concluded that the Greek translation is an appropriate reflection of the Hebrew and,

---

<sup>319</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.72.

<sup>320</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, pp.82-83. Guthrie, 2007, p.944: 'midrashic commentary'.

<sup>321</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.86-87. He quotes in agreement J.v.d. Ploeg: '... l'auteur qui n'entend pas toujours interpréter les textes de l'Ancien Testament d'après les intentions directes des auteurs inspirés primitifs...'

consequently, that the author cannot be said to have relied solely on a misleading or skewed translation.

More importantly, our exegesis of this section in Hebrews concludes *he did not apply the psalm messianically*.<sup>322</sup> Thus, conclusions regarding his hermeneutics based on this assumption cannot stand.

The author draws only one conclusion from the long quotation (similar to his use of Jeremiah 31:31-34 in Hebrews 8:8-12), namely, that God makes everything subjectable to man. The expression ἀνυπότακτον reflects, in Attridge's words,<sup>323</sup> actuality and potentiality. It shows the author accurately reflecting the eschatological aspect in the psalm expressed through the use of the Hebrew imperfects in Psalm 8:5b-6a. This is rather the reverse from relying on Greek only, which in Psalm 8:5-6 has four aorists.

The author combines this conclusion with the common sense observation (made in language alluding to the psalm) that, at the moment, not everything is subjected to man. God's promise is not yet fulfilled. And, throughout vs.8, the referent of αὐτῶ is mankind, as in the psalm. He then makes a second (two-part) observation about Jesus, again in the language of the psalm: (i) Jesus is exalted – a statement anticipating his description of Jesus as the high priest in heaven where he performs His mediatorial service; and (ii), of more importance in the immediate context, Jesus has come down to the level of mankind to be its leader into salvation; His humanity has not ended after a little while, but still continues. Leschert notes the change from the aorist ἠλάττωσας in the psalm to the perfect ἠλάττωμένον in vs.9 and calls it 'a bit difficult to explain',<sup>324</sup> in connection with the temporal exegesis of βραχύ τι. But for the author the durative force of the perfect indicates that Jesus is still human and understands our weaknesses (vss.17-18).

Thus the gist of the argument is not a continuation of the superiority-comparison:

'Jesus was below the angels, but is now ('after a little while') again superior to them as the psalm predicted'.

---

<sup>322</sup> *Contra* Childs, 1969, p.26: 'The psalm becomes a christological proof-text'.

<sup>323</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.72. As noted above, similarly Ellingworth, 1993, p.152.

<sup>324</sup> Leschert, 1994, p.112.

Rather, it is:

‘Psalm 8 makes a statement about man: he is to rule creation’  
and ‘we see this is not yet fulfilled for man (because of disobedience)’  
and ‘we see Jesus come down to take hold of mankind and restore them to that  
position of glory (through His being obedient: perfect, faithful)’  
therefore, ‘fix your thoughts on Jesus’.

That is to say, it is reinforcement of his exhortation in Hebrews 2:2 using a different argument, leading to the next exhortation in Hebrews 3:1.

*In conclusion*, in this analysis the author has fully respected the original wording/meaning of the psalm and, if Craigie is right, he understood Psalm 8:5-6 better than the LXX. Nor is he dependent on the LXX translation ἀγγέλοι. It may have served as a ‘hookword’ in the flow of the discourse, but it is not critical for him; if it is substituted by ‘heavenly beings’ the argument still works.

This analysis does not deny that the author held to a concept of Jesus’ corporate representation of his people (this becomes clear in the next paragraph on Hebrews 2:12-13). Rather, the very reason he introduces these next quotations *in addition to* the Psalm 8 quotation is that he that did *not* derive this concept *from* Psalm 8, nor force any christological interpretation on it. Otherwise, there would have been no need for these subsequent quotations. There is no basis, therefore, to conclude to *peshet*-exegesis on his part. The psalm is literally applied to man.

#### 4.6 Hebrews 2:12 and Psalm 22:22

This verse in Hebrews is generally assumed to be a quotation from Psalm 22:22. It is introduced by the IF λέγων, the antecedent of which is ὁ τε γὰρ ἀγιάζων, which in turn refers to τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας, i.e. Jesus. There is no record of Jesus actually using these words, although He did quote the psalm on the cross.<sup>325</sup> The immediate purpose is to support the proposition that Jesus calls His people ‘brothers’.

---

<sup>325</sup> Matthew 27:46 and possibly John 19:30.

The broader context of this and the following quotations is to illustrate that Jesus and the ones He sanctified are indeed ἐξ ἑνός.

*The MT and the LXX*

<sup>MT</sup> Psalm 22:23

<sup>LXX</sup> Psalm 22:23

|                                                     |                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| אֶסְפְּרָה שְׁמִי לְאֹחַי בְּתוֹךְ קָהֵל אֲהַלְלֶךָ | διηγήσομαι τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|

*Psalm 22* is attributed to David. No specific setting is identified, but the psalmist is under severe pressure from his enemies and laments his perceived abandonment by God. The psalm may reflect on David’s experience during his persecution by Saul. He struggles to maintain the trust in God he and his parents had. When he finally manages to utter his prayer in vss.19-21 it is followed, not always translated as a separate clause, by the declaration: עֲנִיתָנִי (‘You answered me’), i.e. the Lord came to his rescue and is close again.

This marks the transition to the second half of the psalm, which is a song of thanksgiving and praise. In the first stanza (vss.1-21), the psalmist shares his joy over the Lord’s response with the congregation; in the second (vss.22-31), he announces in poetic hyperbole that the whole world and future generations will acknowledge the righteous rule of the Lord. The psalm closes with the exclamation, כִּי עָשָׂה, ‘because He [the Lord] achieved/did [it]’.

It is possible to discern for the original poet, and possibly more so for the composer of the Book of Psalms, a looking towards a distant future. However, to move from an eschatological hint to an originally messianic psalm, with David speaking on behalf of a future messiah, seems difficult to justify.<sup>326</sup>

The quotation comes from the first line in the first stanza of praise. The psalmist states his desire or intention to recount or show forth (כַּפֵּר) the name of the Lord to his

<sup>326</sup> *Contra* Kidner, 1975, p.105. He states: ‘...the language defies a naturalistic explanation’. And concludes it is ‘an acknowledged Messianic prophecy.’ There is, however, as Kistemaker, 1961, p.31 points out, little evidence this was acknowledged before the NT time.

brothers and praise Him in the midst of the assembly.  $\text{בְּקָרְבַּן}$  is a gathering, often religious in nature, and here of the people of God.

*MT-LXX differences.* The only issue of note in the LXX translation is the selection of  $\delta\iota\eta\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\mu\alpha\iota$  ('to relate fully'). The translation is common for the Piel of  $\text{דָּבַר}$  when there is a report to a person.<sup>327</sup> Where the verb is used to show forth the name or praise of the Lord, the LXX usually translates with a form of the verb  $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\lambda\omega$  ('to proclaim').<sup>328</sup> But the distinction is not sharp.<sup>329</sup>

### Hebrews and the LXX

BYZ **Hebrews 2:12**

LXX **Psalm 22:23**

|                                                                                 |                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| λέγων,<br>Ἀπαγγελῶ τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου, ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε. | -<br>διηγῆσομαι τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The above translation issue resurfaces in the comparison between Hebrews and the LXX.

The author's use has been explained as a deliberate change for a variety of reasons: preference for a word cognate with  $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\epsilon\upsilon\acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\acute{\iota}\zeta\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$  in Hebrews 4:2,<sup>330</sup> a word fitting better in the early Christian context;<sup>331</sup> or rhetorical reasons.<sup>332</sup> Kistemaker, having denied the author knowledge of Hebrew, suggests a different *Vorlage* or use of a liturgical text.<sup>333</sup> However, there is no MS evidence such a LXX variant existed.

<sup>327</sup> E.g. Genesis 24:66, 37:9.

<sup>328</sup> E.g. Exodus 9:15, Psalm 9:15, 78:4, 79:13, 102:21. See also Kistemaker, 1961, p.31.

<sup>329</sup> E.g. both verbs are used to translate the Piel of  $\text{דָּבַר}$  in a similar context in the same psalm (Psa.9:2 and 14)

<sup>330</sup> McCullough, 1980, p.368 and Thomas, 1965, p.306. Ellingworth, 1993, p.168, points at the use of  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omega$  in Psalm 22:31.

<sup>331</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.90.

<sup>332</sup> Jobes, 1991, p.392.

<sup>333</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.32.

Howard<sup>334</sup> notes that the author quotes according to the Hebrew; and if indeed it is a deliberate change for any of the reasons above the author may have felt it was justified by the Hebrew text.

*Hebrews 2:12*. Having quoted Psalm 8 and reminded his audience that man was given an elevated place in the world as God's vice-regent, the author observes that this is not yet fulfilled. On the contrary, instead of man's elevation we see Jesus becoming man and suffering (Heb.2:9a). In response to a possible unspoken, surprised objection from his audience against a suffering messiah, he states this was the approach God in His grace (χάριτι θεου) had to take (ἐπρεπεν γὰρ αὐτῷ).

He confirms in vss.10-11a: (i) God leads many sons to glory, (ii) perfecting their leader through suffering, (iii) who, indeed, had to become one with them. 'Sons' may refer to sons of man, i.e. mankind, or, more likely considering the following verses, to sons of God as in God's people.<sup>335</sup>

A review of the meaning of διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι is outside the scope of this research, but it is here assumed to be a parallel to γεύσομαι θανάτου and a reference to the Son's death in obedience to the Father for the sanctification of His people (ἀγιαζόμενοι). Thus, He restores their relationship to God and their position as vice-regent as described in Psalm 8 (εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγόντα).<sup>336</sup> The author in vs.11a reconfirms Jesus and His people are ἐξ ἑνός, of one kind, namely human, or of one Father.

The above three propositions are supported by the three quotations in vss.12-13.

In the first quotation introduced in vs.11b, the words of the psalmist in Psalm 22:23 are attributed to Jesus and in the first clause He confirms His humanity by calling them brothers. The author continues with a second clause which places Jesus amidst His people, consistent with the narrower interpretation of 'sons' in vs.10, and with ἀγιαζόμενοι in vs.11.

---

<sup>334</sup> Howard, 1986, p.215.

<sup>335</sup> Swetnam, 2007, p.524-525, has argued the ἐξ ἑνός in Hebrews 2:11, like 'Abraham's descendants' in vs.16, refer to 'the spiritual seed of Abraham composed of all those who, like Abraham, exercise faith-trust in God...'. This suggests the 'sons' may have the same referent. These are, of course, all human and that is also what Jesus became.

<sup>336</sup> Lane, 1991, p.56: 'The redemptive associations of the term *glory* are apparent in the subsequent phrase "their salvation"...'.

In his delight about a restored relationship with God, the psalmist praises God surrounded by the congregation. Jesus, who came down to earth to repair the rupture in man's relation with God and the world which kept him from taking the elevated position of Psalm 8, also praises God, the one bringing His people to glory, amidst His brothers. And, although praise, not oneness, is the focus of this verse in the psalm, in calling them 'brothers' Jesus confirms for the author His oneness with them.

### *Analysis*

Gheorghita has suggested that the Greek context of each of the three quotations may have suggested a messianic inclination, especially Psalm 22:20. There, the expression יהיירתי ('my only – and thus precious - one', referring to the poet's soul) is translated with τὴν μονογενῆ μου, making 'the verse pertinent for a Christological interpretation.'<sup>337</sup> However, the context, which was also available to the author in Greek, does not suggest any link with the one and only Son; the adjective is feminine, clearly referring to the poet's ψυχῆ.

There is no evidence of the author being dependent on the LXX translation or a more messianic reading of the Septuagint for his argument, for the simple reason that the LXX does not show such a deviation. If anything, it is the reverse. The LXX translation of ספר by διηγέομαι is, given the context, unusual and points away from any early Christian messianic connotations in this verse. If the author's change of διηγέομαι into ἀγγέλλω was deliberate, it might well be because he recognized this reflected the Hebrew better.<sup>338</sup>

Nevertheless, Schröger concludes, the author's hermeneutical approach is one of 'messianisch gedeutete Verheissung – Erfüllung in der Person Christi'.<sup>339</sup> He attributes to the author the view that Psalm 22 was a prophecy about the necessity of the incarnation. Since the OT-psalm before the NT-time did not, however, have any

---

<sup>337</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.63.

<sup>338</sup> Or to give the text a messianic character, which the LXX does not have, as also Schröger, 1968, p.89, notes.

<sup>339</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.90-91.

messianic connotations, he considers this method hardly acceptable for today's exegetical approach.

However, is this assumption, that the author in his hermeneutical use of Psalm 22 imposed a messianic meaning, indeed the most suitable to explain his use of this quotation? The better alternative may be to suggest that he did understand the original MT and did respect its original meaning.

As observed above, there is no report in the NT of Jesus having used the words of this verse in Psalm 22. Ellingworth, accordingly, disagrees with McCullough that the author 'is quoting, not so much the OT as Jesus'.<sup>340</sup> However, consideration should be given to the possibility that an OT quotation was not meant to merely recall the verse cited, but the broader context; this being facilitated by people more commonly having memorized the texts.

Especially when reflecting upon the first and sixth sayings on the cross, it appears that Jesus in his cry of abandonment (Psa.22:1) may have appealed to the whole first part of the psalm as an expression of the intensity of His suffering; and in His quoting the last verse of the psalm He proclaimed the triumph and joy of the second part of the psalm.<sup>341</sup> In doing so, he appropriated the whole psalm, including this quotation, as His own.

According to John, Jesus already shortly before His death, in the prayer of John 17, considers His followers to be His people and in the psalm-quotation He places Himself in their midst.

*In conclusion*, at its conception the psalm may not have been messianic, and, indeed, there is little evidence to suggest it was recognized as such. However, first, the fact of Jesus' suffering, revealed in the progression of redemptive history, and, secondly, His words of appropriation of the psalm in the progression of the history of revelation, provided the author with the justification to recognize the *sensus plenior* he, with the benefit of this hindsight, could see in the psalm.

---

<sup>340</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.167.

<sup>341</sup> It is recognized עשה (Psa.22:31) is a much more general expression than τελέω (Joh.19:30). However, in the respective contexts, both indicate the completion of a saving act.

There is no evidence the author had no Hebrew; if anything, the change from διηγέομαι to ἀγγέλλω suggests the reverse, although this should not be pressed.<sup>342</sup>

#### 4.7 Hebrews 2:13 and Isaiah 8:17b & Isaiah 8:18a

The second and third quotations in this section are attributed to Jesus, like the previous one, through the IF καὶ πάλιν, which refers back to λέγων in Hebrews 2:12. Through the repetition of the IF, they are presented as two quotations, each making a separate point.

There is no known occasion on which Jesus spoke these words and the quotations are thought to come from Isaiah 8:17b-18a, although for the first quotation also Isaiah 12:2 and 2 Samuel 22:3 (which has a parallel clause in Psalm 18:2) are also suggested as possible sources.

#### *The MT and the LXX*

| MT Isaiah 8:17b-18a                                                                                                               | LXX Isaiah 8:17b-18a                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p style="text-align: center;">וְקִוִּיתִי-לוֹ<br/>                     18 הֲנֵה אֲנֹכִי וְהִלְדִּים אֲשֶׁר נִתַּן-לִי יְהוָה</p> | <p>καὶ πεποιθὼς ἔσομαι ἐπ' αὐτῷ<br/>                     18 ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ παιδία ἃ μοι ἔδωκεν<br/>                     ὁ θεός</p> |

The expression πεποιθὼς ἔσομαι ἐπ' αὐτῷ in the three possible sources translates three different Hebrew verbs in three different contexts.

2 Samuel 22:3 is from David's song of deliverance from Saul and is an unlikely source. The verb used is the Qal of הסה ('to seek refuge'); it suggests insecurity and helplessness.<sup>343</sup> The Hebrew can be translated as: 'my God is my rock; I will seek refuge in Him', clearly referring to David seeking shelter with God during his

<sup>342</sup> Howard, 1986, p.215, has argued this shows knowledge of Hebrew. Guthrie, 2007, p.948, notes the semantic overlap between the two verbs is too large to do so.

<sup>343</sup> TWOT, no.700.

persecution by Saul. The LXX translation ὁ θεός μου φύλαξ ἔσται μου πεποιθῶς ἔσομαι ἐπ' αὐτῷ is identical to Isaiah 8:17b, but clearly, the context is different.<sup>344</sup>

*Isaiah 8:17* follows the Immanuel-prophecy in chapter 7 and precedes the prophecy of the reign of the righteous king in Isaiah 9:1-7, both often thought to be messianic. However, Isaiah 8 is not necessarily messianic.<sup>345</sup> It starts with the prophecy that Assyria will become a serious threat and warns against relying on political manoeuvring rather than trusting the Lord.<sup>346</sup> The prophet then (vs.16) instructs his audience to bind the testimony and seal the torah (thus affirming its certainty) and then proclaims his own stand. In the face of adversity and the seeming absence of God – reminiscent of Psalm 22 - he uses the Piel of כָּחַ (‘to wait’) and קָהָ (‘to wait in eager expectation or steadfast endurance’)<sup>347</sup> in tandem: he will confidently wait for the Lord (vs.17); he and the children the Lord gave him (vs.18).

*Isaiah 12:2* is part of a song of trust<sup>348</sup> the prophet puts on the lips of the people at some point in the future. The song follows, first, a prophecy of judgement on Israel and Assyria (Isa.9:8-10:19) and, secondly, a prophecy with eschatological overtones of the peaceful kingdom and the repentant remnant returning (Isa.10:20-11:16). The verb used is בָּטַח, meaning ‘to trust, feel confident in’, usually in the Lord; it should be noted the LXX supplies such reference to the Lord by adding ἐπ' αὐτῷ.

---

<sup>344</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.169: ‘the relevance to the argument of Hebrews appears less direct’, although he also notes: ‘All three passages...are linked by the theme of trust in God...’. The author may also have noted, even if he had no Hebrew, that this rendering in the LXX is different from Psalm 18:2 (βοηθός μου), making his quotation less attractive, since the aspect of obedience is less clear.

<sup>345</sup> The issue is outside our scope, but reflecting on the question whether chapter 8 is indeed messianic, the following may be considered: (i) to read vs.8b as God still speaking, but now switching to addressing an Immanuel, who according to Isaiah 7:14 was not yet born or at least still is a child is very surprising; (ii) like the vss.16ff., the vss.9-10 are the prophet’s comment on the prophecy he received from God and the question is whether that comment does not start with the last words of vs.8, as an exclamation (‘God is with us’) reflecting upon the prophecy that Judah’s situation will become difficult, but that it will not be overwhelmed (vs.8a); and (iii) the LXX translates in both vs.8 and vs.10 with μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός; the Jewish Tanakh goes even further and renders ‘But with us is God, Whose wings are spread as wide as your land is broad!’ In this last alternative the 3ms suffix to wings is understood as referring to God and not to the Assyrian king and the 2ms suffix to land to the people (vs.6) and not to the prophet or an Immanuel. The prophet’s commentary is then in the form of an *inclusio*. For an alternative, messianic reading, see Mackay, 2008, pp.201-206 and 219.

<sup>346</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.33, follows C.H. Dodd in seeing Isaiah 7:1-9:7 as one single complex unit of prophecy, but that seems a simplification.

<sup>347</sup> TWOT, no.0645: ‘The expressions "to wait for the Lord" in Isa 8:17 and "to wait for him" in Isa 64:4, connote an attitude of earnest expectation and confident hope.’

<sup>348</sup> Oswalt, 1998, p.289.

Although the choice between these last two possible sources is more difficult, there seems to be no compelling reason to deny the author took both from Isaiah 8:17-18 and only inserts *καὶ πάλιν* to emphasize them separately, as he does with Deuteronomy 32:35-36 in Hebrews 10:30.

Considering Isaiah 8:17-18, it may be noted that vs.17b seems to suggest not just waiting, but also an element of trusting obedience in the face of adversity. The adversity, i.e. the Assyrian threat, is obvious and vs.16 reminds the reader of the importance of the torah. Waiting for the Lord, rather than relying on alliances, requires obedience on the part of king Ahaz, in accordance with Deuteronomy 17:14-20.<sup>349</sup> The prophet professes his readiness to trust and obey, and in doing so he and his children, with their prophetic names, are a ‘testimony of God’s working among His people.’<sup>350</sup>

*MT-LXX differences.* The LXX follows the MT closely; the only matters of note being the translation of יהוה with θεός and the insertion of *καί* after the first clause of vs.18. However, the difference in meaning seems minimal.<sup>351</sup>

### Hebrews and LXX

| BYZ Hebrews 2:13                                                                                         | LXX Isaiah 8:17b-18a                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Καὶ πάλιν,<br>Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποιθὼς ἐπ’ αὐτῷ.<br>Καὶ πάλιν,<br>Ἴδου ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ παιδία ἃ μοι ἔδωκεν ὁ θεός. | -<br>καὶ πεποιθὼς ἔσομαι ἐπ’ αὐτῷ<br>-<br>18 Ἴδου ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ παιδία ἃ μοι ἔδωκεν ὁ θεός |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The author has supplied ἐγώ, which was implied in the LXX, and draws ἔσομαι forward. It gives added emphasis to the subject of the clause,

<sup>349</sup> Compare TWOT, no.1994, on יהוה: ‘Israel is encouraged to hold fast to love and justice, i.e. they are to follow the law faithfully and maintain consistently the standards of justice, at the same time preserving an attitude of godly love (Hos.12:6; cf. Psa.37:34; Job.4:6).’

<sup>350</sup> Oswalt, 1998, p.236.

<sup>351</sup> Schröger suggests this separates the two parts, making the first clause an expansion of the subject of vs.17: Isaiah *and* his children will put their trust in the Lord. And only the children now are (παιδία... ἔσται) a sign in Israel, but the context suggests the prophet includes himself in the action of vs.18b. In any case, the supplied *καί* is not part of the quotation.

but in view of the emphatic ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ in the next clause, the emphasis was already there.<sup>352</sup>

Otherwise, he has separated the quotation by inserting καὶ πάλιν, which has the effect of distinguishing the two aspects of the quotation.

*Hebrews 2:13.* Hebrews 2:5-9 ends with the startling observation that we see Jesus, the messiah, at the level of mankind and with them suffering death. And, since a suffering messiah was not widely anticipated, for his audience the question may have been: Why?

As noted vs.10 provides the answer: 'because it was appropriate for Him', i.e. it was part of God's plan, and he confirms in vss.10-11a: (i) God leads many sons<sup>353</sup> to glory;<sup>354</sup> (ii) makes the leader of their salvation perfect through suffering;<sup>355</sup> (iii) one who, indeed, had become one with them.

Having in vs.12 cited Psalm 22:23 in evidence of (iii), the author proceeds with supporting (ii) with his quotation of Isaiah 8:17b. There the prophet proclaimed his trusting obedience in God in the face of adversity (possibly facing risk of death from an annoyed king Ahaz or an Assyrian conqueror). These words are now put in the mouth of Jesus, who was obedient unto death and so was able to save His people. The statement is not about the future, and ἔσομαι is to be read as a periphrastic future<sup>356</sup> indicating an enduring state: he was, is and will be trusting, obeying God. Πειποιθῶς with the dative is to be understood as 'to trust upon/in',<sup>357</sup> an intensive perfect<sup>358</sup> indicating completed action with ongoing consequences.

The result of this obedience appears in the next clause. In support of (i) the author quotes Isaiah 8:18a. The prophet's trust resulted in him and his children, with their prophetic names, being there, presenting themselves as witnesses from the Lord, who

---

<sup>352</sup> So also Kistemaker, 1961, p.33: 'essential meaning...the same'.

<sup>353</sup> It is noted here without further elaboration that the author no longer refers to 'man', but to 'sons'.

<sup>354</sup> Presumably the same glory mentioned in Hebrews 2:7: man restored to his position of Psalm 8, the vice-regent over creation with unhindered access to God.

<sup>355</sup> It is also noted that the expression τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι has given rise to ample discussion, which cannot be reviewed here.

<sup>356</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.169.

<sup>357</sup> Homonym III, Thayer, no.4114.

<sup>358</sup> Wallace, 1996, pp.574-575.

is present on Zion. These words are cited as reflecting the result of Jesus' trust and obedience: there He was with His children whom He had brought before God.

### *Analysis*

As noted, the differences between the MT and LXX in the quotations themselves are minimal.

However, Gheorghita notes the LXX has made, in the near context of the quotation, two additions: Isaiah 8:14a: καὶ ἐὰν ἐπ' αὐτῷ πεποιθὼς ᾖς ('and if you will trust in him') and in vs.17a: καὶ ἐρεῖ ('he will say'). The effect, he suggests, is the introduction of another speaker, possibly being the messiah rather than the prophet, and the possibility of understanding a dialogue between divine persons.<sup>359</sup> This would have given the LXX a messianic potential, attractive to the author.

Schröger, too, points at this addition in vs.17a as giving the author the opportunity to interpret the text messianically and to attribute these words to Jesus.<sup>360</sup>

Schröger concludes that the author's hermeneutics are again taking the OT text as a messianically intended prophecy which finds its fulfilment in Christ. The author relied to some extent on the 'messianic potential' of the LXX, but essentially only focuses on the terms 'brothers' and 'children', and gives these terms 'einen neuen Sinn, der durch die Tendenz des Briefes bedingt ist.'<sup>361</sup>

Also Attridge finds that the context of the quotation does not mirror Isaiah's and states 'Hebrews's interpretations, however, regularly depend on the fact that verses are taken out of context and imaginatively fitted to a new situation. In this respect it differs little from contemporary Jewish exegesis as represented either at Qumran or in Philo.'<sup>362</sup>

But again, is the assumption that the author (a) in his understanding of the quotation relied on Greek additions and variations, and (b) in his hermeneutical use of the OT ignored the original setting and meaning, indeed the most plausible? Or is there

---

<sup>359</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.65, quoting Ellingworth.

<sup>360</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.93-94.

<sup>361</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.94-95.

<sup>362</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.91.

reason to suggest that he did understand the original text and respect its original meaning?

Gheorghita's suggestion above is not convincing, because Isaiah 8:12-15 is already God speaking about Himself in the third person and the addition in the LXX does not change this.

Whatever the reason for the LXX additions, the author does not even quote the additional  $\kappa\alpha\lambda\ \acute{\epsilon}\rho\epsilon\iota$  in vs.17a. Either the perceived messianic leaning was not important for him, or he had Hebrew and recognised the additions were absent in the MT, or both.

We noted above the parallels in the OT and NT contexts. Isaiah trusts and obeys the Lord in the face of deadly threats, and he presents himself and his children as the Lord's people and as a testimony to His faithfulness to Zion. Jesus, who had come into the world as a human being and to die, is introduced as speaking about His trusting in God and as presenting the children God gave Him, saved as the result of His obedience.

It seems the author did recognize how congruent the contexts were, but the question remains as to why he felt comfortable attributing Isaiah's words to Jesus?

The Psalm 22 quotation in vs.12 may have evoked for the audience the events which occurred in the Passion-week: Jesus' obedience in His struggle while facing abandonment and death in Gethsemane, and His prayer of John 17.<sup>363</sup> The prayer assumes completed obedience and reflects absolute trust. In it, Jesus presents the children which the Father has given Him through His imminent suffering and proclaims their unity with Him. In the light of this prayer and the subsequent Passion-events, the author may have considered Isaiah an appropriate type of Christ in a similar situation. Assuming his audience was familiar with both Isaiah's story and the Passion-narrative, he may have felt they would recognize the typological parallel.

*In conclusion*, there is no evidence of reliance on Greek. If anything, the avoidance of an LXX addition suggests the opposite. In his hermeneutics, the author identifies Isaiah and his children, in the light of the progressing history of redemption and

---

<sup>363</sup> The prayer of John 17 is placed before the cross, but assumes it as a *fait accompli*.

revelation, as types of Christ and His people. There is no reason to conclude he ignored the context of his quotation, which shows clear congruency.

#### 4.8 Hebrews 3:7-11, 15; 4:3, 5, 7 & 4:4 and Psalm 95:7-11 & Genesis 2:2

The quotation in Hebrews 3:7-11 is generally recognised as from Psalm 95:7b-11. It is preceded by the usual IF καθὼς λέγει and the speaker is explicitly identified as the Holy Spirit. Parts of the quotation are repeated in Hebrews 3:15 where it is introduced by the passive infinitive of λέγω, without any direct subject, and in Hebrews 4:3, 5 where the perfect is used, and again in Hebrews 4:7: ἐν Δαυὶδ λέγων, where ‘in David’ may be a reference to the Book of Psalms or David as the composer of Psalm 95.<sup>364</sup> In these last two instances God is the most likely antecedent, though not specifically identified; and in Hebrews 4:7 God may be understood as speaking about himself in the third person.

The same applies to the quotation from Genesis 2:2 in Hebrews 4:4, which is also preceded by the IF, here again in the perfect: εἴρηκεν γὰρ πού.

From the varied use of the IF, it appears the author does not consider it relevant for his purposes which person of the Trinity is the actual speaker, and understands all these quotations as God’s word, which has continuing validity and authority in his day.<sup>365</sup>

---

<sup>364</sup> Psalm 95 is given in the LXX as τῷ Δαυὶδ (Psa.94:1 LXX).

The following passive perfect εἴρηται (Heb.4:7) possibly, like the earlier passive infinitive in Hebrews 3:15, refers back to the author’s own quoting of the text earlier – this is even more strongly suggested by the NA-text with προεἴρηται.

<sup>365</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.101.

## The MT and the LXX

| MT Psalm 95:7-11 & Genesis 2:2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | LXX Psalm 94:7b-11 & Genesis 2:2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>הַיּוֹם אִם־בִּקְלוֹ תִשְׁמְעוּ<br/> <sup>8</sup> אֶל־תִּקְשׁוּ לְבַבְכֶם כַּמְרִיבָה<br/> כִּיּוֹם מָסָה בַמִּדְבָר<br/> <sup>9</sup> אֲשֶׁר נִסּוּנִי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בְּחַנּוּנֵי<br/> גַם־רָאוּ פְעָלִי <sup>10</sup> אַרְבַּעַיִם שָׁנָה<br/> אֶקְוֶה בְּדוֹר וָאֶמַר<br/> עַם תַּעֲנִי לֵבָב הֵם וְהֵם לֹא־יִדְעוּ דְרָכֵי<br/> <sup>11</sup> אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי בְּאִפִּי<br/> אִם־יִבְאוּן אֶל־מְנוּחָתִי</p> | <p>σήμερον ἂν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε<br/> <sup>8</sup> μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν<br/> ὡς ἐν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ<br/> κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ πειρασμοῦ ἐν τῇ<br/> ἐρήμῳ<br/> <sup>9</sup> οὐ ἐπείρασαν οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν<br/> ἐδοκίμασαν<br/> καὶ εἶδοσαν τὰ ἔργα μου <sup>10</sup><br/> τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη<br/> προσώχθισα τῇ γενεᾷ ἐκείνῃ καὶ εἶπα<br/> ἄεὶ πλανῶνται τῇ καρδίᾳ<br/> καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν τὰς ὁδοὺς μου<br/> <sup>11</sup> ὡς ὤμοσα ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ μου<br/> εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου</p> |
| <p>וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי<br/> מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה<br/> וַיִּשְׁבַּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי<br/> מְכַל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>Gen 2:2 καὶ συνετέλεσεν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ<br/> ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἕκτῃ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἃ ἐποίησεν<br/> καὶ κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ<br/> ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ ὧν<br/> ἐποίησεν</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

*Psalm 95.* Interpretations of the character, setting and the structure of Psalm 95 differ widely.

The most common view on structure, which we will follow, discerns a ‘call to worship’ in vss.1-7a and a (prophetic) warning in vss.7b-11.<sup>366</sup> The original unity of these two parts has been doubted because of this sudden shift in the content.<sup>367</sup> The explanation for it is sometimes sought in the cultic-liturgical setting of the psalm at the temple;<sup>368</sup> and many recognise its unity, albeit on different grounds.<sup>369</sup> The psalm

<sup>366</sup> Davies, 1973, p.183; he also gives an extensive overview of the alternative proposals (pp.183-187).

<sup>367</sup> Savran, 2003, p.18: ‘The resulting composition exhibits one of the most brusque shifts of mood in the entire Psalter...’. And: ‘[the] parts differ sharply in tone, content and speaker’ (p.17).

<sup>368</sup> See Tate, 1990, p.498, although he feels this does not always resolve the question of the psalm’s ‘cult functional’ nature or its ‘cultic actuality’ (Davies, 1973, p.192), the descriptions of which can become quite colorful, see e.g. Kraus, 1989, p.246, Davies, 1973, pp.190-193, Hossfeld, 1994, p.32.

<sup>369</sup> E.g.: Some see a ‘worshippers’ entry into the temple and are warned by the priests’-scenario. Other views are: Tucker, 2000, p.535, assuming the psalm post-exilic, sees it as an ‘intertext’, a reinterpretation – through the community hermeneutic - of the pre-exilic Psalm 100, the original ‘text’,

is, because of its first part ('Aufforderung zum Festjubiläum'), seen as a Yahweh-is-king psalm like Psalms 93-100, or, because of its second part ('Warnrede'), as a festival-psalm like Psalms 50 and 81.<sup>370</sup>

The psalm has been dated from Davidic to post-exilic. The LXX and the author attribute the psalm to David and that is our working assumption.<sup>371</sup>

The psalmist starts in vs.1 with an invitation to come and enthusiastically worship God, who is introduced by His covenant-name and called 'the rock of our salvation'. This call is amplified in two parallel paragraphs, repeating the invitation,<sup>372</sup> specifying that it is to come into His presence and giving a reason why they should do so.

The first paragraph, in vss.2-3, invites the reader to come into His presence<sup>373</sup> (פניו) and motivates this (כי) by describing God as the great ruler and creator (אל גדול), supporting this by two again parallel clauses, vss.4-5, both starting with אשר and describing the extent of His rule and creative work.

The second paragraph, in vss.6-7a, invites the hearer to come into the presence of the covenant Lord (לפנייהוה), motivating this (כי) by the assurance that we are His flock.

Having issued to the people the call to worship their creator and redeemer, the psalmist in the second part, vss.7b-11,<sup>374</sup> introduces the Lord as speaking and giving a warning about the consequences of not heeding this call to worship. The warning itself is given in the form of a juxtaposition of היום ('today... do not harden your hearts') and כיום ('[un]like that day...'), comparing the psalmist's audience with the desert generation.

---

based on their changed social 'context'. And Savran, 2003, p.29, understanding a duet of contrasting voices. See also Hossfeld, 1994, p.31, for a discussion of the psalm's unity.

<sup>370</sup> Hossfeld, 1994, pp.29-30. Psalm 50 is a call to worship and sacrifice to God, not as a mere ritual but only in obedience. Psalm 81 is an appeal to worship God and a warning against disobedience and following other gods.

<sup>371</sup> The LXX has τῷ Δαυίδ ('by David'). Hebrews with ἐν Δαυίδ is more ambiguous, since this could also be understood as a reference to the Psalter.

<sup>372</sup> It is difficult to substantiate that the sequence בוא, קרם, הלך is one of increasing proximity and intimacy, although it would fit the pattern of the psalm.

<sup>373</sup> 'Before the face' of God is according to Tate, 1990, p.501 and Kraus, 1989, p.246, 'used in a metaphorical way for the presence of God'. See also Davies, 1973, p.190.

<sup>374</sup> Several emendations for vs.7 have been proposed, cf. Kraus, 1989, p.245 and Tate, 1990, p.497, but not having identified any compelling reason to do so, this is not pursued.

Reference is possibly made to three episodes: through the expression כיום מסה כמריבה (vs.8) to (i) the narratives in Exodus 17:1-7, which mentions both Massah and Meribah; or to (ii) Numbers 20:1-13, which speaks about ‘the waters of Meribah’;<sup>375</sup> and through vss.10-11 to (iii) Numbers 14:1-38, which reports the lack of obedience of the Israelites and subsequent denial of entry into Canaan.

The question whether Massah and Meribah in the psalm refer to a locality or event or to concepts (‘testing’, ‘contention’) is in the MT less pressing. Hearers would have recognized the stem and, since the localities were named after what took place there, place-name and concept were intertwined.

The expression in Psalm 95 is different from any in the Pentateuch and suggests Vanhoye is right in his conclusion that it is ‘...une évocation globale de la vie d’Israël au désert. Il a décrit comme un temps de résistance a Dieu’.<sup>376</sup> While in the MT his allusion to this desert-disobedience is clear, the focus of the poet’s warning is the event at Kadesh-Barnea. It is worthwhile noting here that the sin of tempting (נסה) the Lord is in Exodus defined as questioning His presence.<sup>377</sup>

This warning not to harden hearts is supported by two parallel clauses.

First, after the Lord is introduced as speaking, He refers to the sin of the people (‘they tested and tried me’) and He cites the consequences of the sin ‘and then they saw my works’. וַיֵּן is taken as having consequential force,<sup>378</sup> suggesting that this clause is not a further description (parallel with the previous clause) of the disobedience, but (elaborated or paralleled in the next) describes the result of the disobedience: i.e. they saw and experienced His punishment forty years. The noun פֵּעַל, which is singular, is often used for God’s work in history;<sup>379</sup> here, most likely, His work of punishment.<sup>380</sup>

---

<sup>375</sup> This event was in time and space close to Numbers 14, ‘at Kadesh (-Barnea)’, but is already after it and after the announcement of the 40-year punishment; it also results in the punishment of Moses and Aaron, not the people. The connection with Exodus 17 is closer.

<sup>376</sup> Vanhoye, 1968, p.12: He notes the differences in the narratives of Exodus 17:1-7 and Numbers 20:1-13 and various other references, concluding (p.11) the traditions concerning Massah and Meribah were not fixed.

<sup>377</sup> Exodus 17:7. Similarly, Tate, 1990, p.502. See also Davies, 1973, pp.193-194.

<sup>378</sup> TWOT, no.361a: ‘Sometimes וַיֵּן has a consequential force and is used to introduce an action which is a logical consequence of some antecedent action. וַיֵּן is frequently used to introduce the just and appropriate response of God to transgression (Jud.2:21; Jer.4:12) or repentance (2 Sam.12:13).’

<sup>379</sup> TWOT, no.1279a: ‘When applied to God, פֵּעַל refers primarily to God’s acts in history, not his acts in creation.’ This undermines Savran, 2003, p.25, who prefers a reference to the works of creation in vss.4-5.

<sup>380</sup> It is recognized וַיֵּן can also be translated as ‘although’ and פֵּעַל understood as referring to God’s redemption from Egypt and provision in the desert. Possibly the psalm in poetic ambiguity hints

Secondly, the Lord introduces Himself as speaking and again refers to the sin of the people ('always straying at heart and they do not know My ways') and again specifies the consequences which follow: 'so I swore...if they ever...'.<sup>381</sup>

The question arises as to what the psalmist has in mind when he mentions rest and what exactly he is warning against.<sup>382</sup>

The oath in Numbers 14:21-23 prevents the people's entry into the Promised Land with which rest is often equated in the Pentateuch. However, if David is indeed the psalmist, he already is in the land and has rest, as he himself confirms in Deuteronomic language.<sup>383</sup>

It should be noted that David does so several times in the context of the building of the temple, which represents God's presence amongst his people and is described as the house of (God's) rest.<sup>384</sup> And his interest in the organisation of the temple-cult and the building itself is well recorded.<sup>385</sup> But, in addition, David was also keenly aware of the fact that ritual without obedience was useless.<sup>386</sup> Both may be reflected in this psalm.

Deuteronomy 12:9-11, which can be seen as a possible source of the concept of rest here,<sup>387</sup> already hinted at a specific place of worship within the land. David wanted to build this place but was told that his son was the one to do so. Here, in Psalm 95, he may anticipate the temple is functioning and composes a psalm for use in its liturgy, inviting the people to come and worship God. However, mindful of the necessity of

---

at both, although the parallelism with vss.10b-11 suggest His work of punishment. For our purposes it is enough to establish this is a possible interpretation of the Hebrew, which the author could justifiably follow – thus going beyond the bland *καί* of the LXX.

<sup>381</sup> Either אֲשֶׁר (Tate, 1990, p.498: 'a rare use...to indicate result...' and Savran, 2003, p.27: 'therefore') or אֲזַכֵּךְ or both in vs.11 can be taken as in parallel with אֲזַכֵּךְ drawing out the consequence of the described disobedience, i.e. the punishment.

<sup>382</sup> Cf. Hossfeld, 1994, pp.29-30: 'Warnt der Psalm vor dem Verlust des verheißenen Landes bzw. des Tempels oder übersteigt er bewußt die lokale Bindung in Richtung einer personalen Gottesbeziehung und arbeitet so der Interpretation von Hebr 3,7-4,13 vor?'

<sup>383</sup> E.g. 2 Samuel 7:1, 11 and 1 Kings 8:56; and for the time of Solomon in 1 Chronicles 22:9.

<sup>384</sup> E.g. 1 Chronicles 28:2.

<sup>385</sup> E.g. 1 Chronicles 23-26 and 28.

<sup>386</sup> See the discussion of Psalm 40, also quoted in Hebrews, in §4.9.

<sup>387</sup> Tucker, p.540 points out the word rest appears in the psalm although it is not to be found in the Massah and Meribah narratives nor in Numbers 14 (this narrative only speaks of entering the land). But neither Tucker's approach of 'text-context-intertext' nor his post-exilic setting are necessary for 'moving beyond a Dtr view on rest' (i.e. from land to temple). The concept in its definite form (הַמְנוּחָה, הַמְנוּחָה) is already found in Deuteronomy 12:9-11.

obedience he adds the warning that without obedience one cannot enter into God's presence.<sup>388</sup>

The psalm's concept of rest has moved beyond the land and understands it as living in God's presence (vss.2 and 6: לַפְּנֵי־יְהוָה, פָּנָיו)<sup>389</sup> symbolized by the temple (vs.11: מְנוּחָתִי).

Since the temple was only a representation of God's presence, access to which in itself was dependent on obedience, it appears likely rest already represented 'a salvific blessing that is not material'.<sup>390</sup> For a post-exilic editor of the Book of Psalms, who knew the building had not lasted, the immaterial, possibly eschatological aspect may have been even more important.<sup>391</sup>

A second question arises concerning the urgency of the warning. Savran, having related פָּעַל to vss.4-5, concludes the 40-year period was one of God being patient while being tested and '[t]he message to the generation of the psalmist, then, is one of forbearance...'.<sup>392</sup> As discussed above, this is an unlikely reading and also does not fit well with the emphatic placement of הַיּוֹם in the introduction to the Lord's speaking: the warning is urgent.

In conclusion, it appears Psalm 95 is an exhortation to come into God's presence and worship Him, followed by an urgent warning that without obedience there will be no access to His presence and all that this entails – the rest as it was intended from primordial times and will again be in fullness at a 'future and permanent place of rest'.<sup>393</sup>

---

<sup>388</sup> David may well have remembered the warning that God cannot be tied to a house, having a temple in itself is not enough. The reminder is part of the very narrative of the Davidic covenant, 2 Samuel 7:6 and repeated later in Israel's history in Isaiah 66:1.

<sup>389</sup> The expression 'My rest' (מְנוּחָתִי) is used in Psalm 95 for the first time and otherwise to be found (with a 2ms suffix), in Psalm 132 and 2 Chr.6:41-42, the psalm used at the dedication of the temple, and in Isaiah 66:1, another warning against ritual without obedience, stating that God's presence is not tied to a house. In any case the psalmist has moved beyond the language in Numbers about entry into the *land* and uses a word he could also find in Deuteronomy 12:9 (הַמְנוּחָה), in a section that refers to the future temple and to eating and rejoicing לַפְּנֵי יְהוָה. See also Leschert, 1994, pp.162, 168.

<sup>390</sup> Kraus, 1989, p.248. Similarly, O'Brien, 2010, p.167.

<sup>391</sup> The placing of Psalm 95 next to Psalm 96 in this series of Kingship-of-Yahweh-psalms might suggest this, but a more detailed analysis lies outside the scope of this study.

<sup>392</sup> Savran, 2003, pp.25-26.

<sup>393</sup> O'Brien, 2010, p.167.

*Genesis 2.* The beginning of Genesis is an intricate and powerful narrative to which little justice can be done here.

For our purposes, Genesis 2:1-3 is understood as concluding the creation-narrative. Genesis 2:4-14 elaborates on the creation of man and the purpose-built garden or sanctuary. Vs.15 describes the purpose of man: to glorify God in worshipping and obeying Him in His presence in that garden-sanctuary.<sup>394</sup> And vs.16 the test, set for man to determine whether he would fulfil this task. Chapter 3 describes how man failed the test and the consequences which followed.

Genesis 2:2a states that God ceased His work. The Piel of כלה is best understood as a pluperfect and translated as 'He had completed'.<sup>395</sup> Speiser goes a little further and, anticipating the next clause, translates 'brought to a gratifying close'.<sup>396</sup>

The next clause, vs.2b, is quoted in Hebrews and reports God 'sabbathed' on the seventh day. When used in conjunction with the seventh or Sabbath day, the verb שבת appears to have a technical meaning and is best translated as 'to celebrate the Sabbath'.<sup>397</sup> After the effortless creation in six days, described as God's satisfying acts,<sup>398</sup> now an endless celebration begins of God enjoying His creation.<sup>399</sup> God's

---

<sup>394</sup> For a description of the garden 'as the unique place of God's presence', see Beale, 2004, p.66; and for the identification of the garden as the first archetypal temple, see Beale, 2004, pp.66-78.

<sup>395</sup> For this interpretation of the intensifying function of the Piel, which also obviates the need for the LXX amendment (probably intended to avoid the suggestion there were still a few loose ends to be wrapped up on the seventh day) of the seventh into the sixth day, see Aalders, 1978, p.75, Hamilton, 1990, p.142, Wenham, 1987, p.35.

<sup>396</sup> Speiser, 1983, p.8.

<sup>397</sup> The verb שבת appears 71x of which 27x in the Qal. Its basic thrust is 'to put to/to bring to an end' (TWOT no.2323) When in combination with a reference to the seventh- or Sabbath-day (11x always in the Qal), the verb appears close to a denominative verb (e.g. 'to celebrate/ commemorate/ respect the Sabbath'). The LXX partly reflects this where it uses σαββαρίζω. For no obvious reason – other than possibly stylistic - it alternates it with derivatives from the stem παύω.

<sup>398</sup> 'God said: 'Let there be...', and it was so.'; 'God saw that it was good'; 'and there was evening and there was morning'. The first six days have a beginning and an end, the seventh day has no such defined end.

<sup>399</sup> While the verb שבת may at times demand an alternative, here 'to celebrate the Sabbath' seems justified for two reasons: (i) in the preceding section God has declared Himself 6/7x pleased with His creative work (it was '(very) good'); and (ii) in Exodus 31:17 the Sabbath is described as a sign of the covenant, 'for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed'.

The Hebrew verbs used in parallel at the end of the clause are: שבת וינפש. The last verb occurs only three times (and as a 'medio-passive Niphal'). And it seems appropriate to derive the meaning of this

resting is as Ross puts it: ‘the enjoyment of accomplishment, the celebration of completion’, rather than recovery from exhaustion.<sup>400</sup> The celebratory aspect can also be found in Exodus 31:17 where the Sabbath-day is introduced as a sign of the covenant and the verb שבת is used of God in virtual parallel with נפש, which, as argued above, may be translated as ‘to sigh in satisfaction’.

A few verses later (Gen.2:15), this *time* God has given for ‘sabbathing’ (שבת) is complemented with man receiving a *place*, a garden-sanctuary ‘to worship and obey’.<sup>401</sup> Also man, well-provided for in this garden of delight,<sup>402</sup> celebrates this

---

denominative verb (TWOT no.1395) from the more frequent substantive, which means ‘breath, desire’ or the subject of such desire ‘self, being, soul’. And rather than the usual ‘to refresh’ (as in drinking or washing after a tiring effort) to read it as ‘to take a deep breath’ or ‘to sigh from satisfaction (about having achieved what was desired)’. This fits every context in which it is used: Exodus 23:12, 31:17 and 2 Samuel 16:14.

<sup>400</sup> Ross, 1988, pp.115-116. The particle מן is here understood as ‘in consequence of’ (BDB, no.5395, 2.e), likewise the Greek ἀπο can mean ‘for reason of’ (Louw-Nida, no.89.25). The fact that God ceased from work is included, presupposed and already reported in vs.2a; but the report here goes further; the celebration includes, but goes beyond the cessation.

<sup>401</sup> The two infinitives at the end of vs.15 are usually (because of the suffix ה) translated with ‘to tend/till and keep it’; referring either to the ground, in parallel with Genesis 2:5 and Genesis 3:23, or to the garden.

There are however a number of reasons to question this translation: (i) the antecedent ‘ground’ (ארמה) is explicitly provided in Genesis 2:5 and 3:23, but not here. Vs.5 is too far away to credibly serve as the referent and any hypotheses the verses were once close, but have been separated by an editing process (Westermann, 1984, p.219) are outside the scope of this study; (ii) the garden can not be the object of the infinitives since it is masculine; (iii) the word pair is never used of land, but (with two exceptions where the verbs co-incidentally are used in the same verse, 2 Samuel 22:44, Hosea 12:12) always of either priestly service in the sanctuary (Num.3:7f, 8:26, 18:7) or Israel’s obedience to God or its opposite: a warning not to follow other gods (Deut.11:16, 12:30, 13:4, Jos.22:5, 1 Kin. 9:6, Jeremiah 16:11, Mal.3:14).

The proposed alternative translation may be considered for the following reasons. (i) Immediate context: (a) when the garden is considered as the first sanctuary and Adam as the first priest (Beale, 2004, p.66ff.) then this interpretation of the word fits the context and reading ‘to worship and obey’ is reinforced by the following introduction of a command in vss.16-17. And (b) the concept of ‘guarding’ the ground or garden raises the question: against whom or what? Theft or looting are unlikely; the only intruder could be Satan, but he is not out to nick something from the garden, but to seduce mankind into disobedience; which brings it back to ‘obey’. (ii) Canonical context: not only the combined use, but also the separate use of the verbs supports this. The Qal infinitive of עבר appears 47x and in the vast majority of uses the object is either the sanctuary or the Lord (as opposed to other gods). The Qal infinitive of שמר appears 62x and in the vast majority the object is God’s command, often מצוה, the noun cognate with the verb צוה in the following vs.16. (iii) Morphological: if the ה (a 3fs suffix) is maintained one could speculate the author already thought of the following sentence as a command (מצוה is feminine); alternatively the ה is considered paragogic (so Cassuto, 1961, p.122, Gleason, 2000, p.299, see also Beale, 2004, p.67 and Bauer and Leander, 1922; p.316, paragraph d). The paragogic *hey* is frequent in the OT (401x), most often (263x) with a volative (which is the context here, but not the form) and occurs with the infinitive construct 49x. It is true its occurrence here with the infinitive construct of these verbs would be unique, but so is the current parsing of the form. And in addition it may be noted that it is already unique for another reason: in all other uses of the infinitive construct (46x respectively 61x), unlike in Genesis 2:15, the object is always identified; with the only exceptions Numbers 4:24, where it is implied by the context, and Ecc.3:6, which is a use *sui generis*.

Sabbath. Receiving this place for the celebration of God's presence and His creation in worship and obedience is described with the verb נָח, which might here be translated as 'was given rest'.<sup>403</sup>

These verbs שָׁבַת and נָח may emphasise a temporal or a spatial aspect of rest, but in any case both denote the companionship (original in creation or restored through covenant) between God and man, with the latter worshipping and obeying the creator. Already here in Genesis 2, the concepts of שָׁבַת and נָח are closely related. They are used interchangeably of God between Genesis 2:2 and Exodus 20:11 (the motivation for the Sabbath-ordinance). In this ordinance, they are used also in parallel for man (Exo.23:12).

*MT-LXX differences.* There are several noteworthy differences between the MT and LXX in Psalm 95.<sup>404</sup>

The LXX has translated מְרִיבָה and מִסָּה with the definite nouns παραπικρασμός and πειρασμός and thus may have lost the allusion to the original journey-narratives, but highlights the concepts more abstractly.<sup>405</sup> As a consequence, the LXX's focus is even more on Kadesh-Barnea.<sup>406</sup>

<sup>402</sup> As Westermann, 1984, p.167, notes *otiositas*, divine leisure after the arduous work of creation with mankind now serving the gods, is a widespread motif in the history of religions. However the Genesis account appears starkly polemic in stressing that (i) creation was effortless, (ii) man was not to serve the physical needs of the gods, but to enjoy in the garden with fruit trees, where God had placed him (Gen.2:8), in the presence of God, who 'walked-in-companionship' with him (Gen.3:8), in worship and obedience (Gen.2:15).

<sup>403</sup> Many translations follow the LXX (τίθημι) in taking the Hiphil of נָח as homonym II: 'to put down'; this also reflects the Massoretic pointing, which identifies this homonym by using נָ instead of נַ. The text then becomes a close parallel to Genesis 2:8.

There are however again a number of reasons to question this translation: (i) the LXX appears too keen to identify a parallel and has repeated the adjectival clause to man in vs.8 (ὄν ζπλασειν), although this is absent from the MT in vs.15; (ii) the MT uses in vs.8 the verb נָח, correctly translated with τίθημι, but the LXX ignores that vs.15 uses נָח and uses the same verb (τίθημι); (iii) the context has changed from (a) God planting a garden, a man being required to tend to it (vs.5) and God now placing such a man there to (b) God giving man the privilege of His presence and His sanctuary with the purpose of there worshipping and obeying Him as requested in the command specified in vss.16-17. (This is not to deny, see also Gleason, 2000, p.300, that tending the ground and ruling the beasts was part of his task, but the emphasis has changed.)

<sup>404</sup> Some others (the plural καρδίας, the translation ἐδοκίμασαν and the somewhat more emphatic translations through adding ἐκεῖνη and ἀεὶ) are not deemed relevant. In this last case the participle (רָעוּ) in the MT is taken as a verbal adjective describing a permanent state of affairs, rather than a bare event; possibly the LXX-translators are trying to hark back some of the MT-allusion to Massah and Meribah, i.e. 'they murmured the whole journey from beginning to end'.

<sup>405</sup> The allusion may have suggested the murmuring was there from just outside Egypt till the border of the Promised Land, but it is difficult to criticize the LXX-translators. In transcribing the

The LXX in vs.9 has also lost the first person suffixes, which indicate it is the Lord whom the people were testing.

The clause גַּם־רָאוּ פְעֻלֵי (‘then they saw My work’) has been translated καὶ εἶδσαν τὰ ἔργα μου. Possibly the LXX translators read in their *Vorlage* the verb בָּחַן (‘to examine’) as belonging to vs.9b and understood ἐδοκίμασαν καὶ εἶδσαν (‘they tested and saw’) as a parallel. The object of ἐδοκίμασαν is then not God, but His works.<sup>407</sup> In that case, גַּם has been turned into a simple conjunction καί. But as discussed above, גַּם can have consequential force.<sup>408</sup> The bland plural ἔργα translating פְעֻלֵ only increases the LXX’s vagueness.

The differences with Genesis 2:2-MT are limited: the LXX translates the seventh as the sixth day, presumably in an attempt to improve the logic of the proposition, and the singular מְלֵאכָה with the plural ἔργα, thus missing the distinction from פְעֻלֵ.

As noted that there is little consistency in the LXX even where שַׁבַּת is used in conjunction with a reference to the Sabbath: here it translates with καταπαύω and in other places with σαββατίζω, ἀνάπαυσις, παύω and ἀναπαύω.<sup>409</sup> καταπαύω, in turn, is also frequently used for the stem נָח.

---

place-names they would have lost the connotation with what went on and in addition Meribah was translated different ways (assuming the Pentateuch was translated before the Psalms): λοιδορήσις, ὕδωρ ἀντιλογίας and τοῦ ὕδατος τῆς λοιδορίας.

<sup>406</sup> Vanhoye, 1968, p.16: ‘la version grecque...laisse...toute leur netteté aux allusions qui concernent le refus d’entrer en Canaan.’ And as he concludes *contra* Käsemann: ‘il ne s’agit plus de longue pérégrination à accomplir dans le désert.’ Since the author follows the LXX here, the same applies for the Epistle to the Hebrews.

<sup>407</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.115. His following comment that ‘Hebrews’ citation conforms to this construal with further variations’ appears based on the preconception the author had no Hebrew. It is simpler to assume he reverted back to the Hebrew text, see below. It may be noted that the LXE supplies twice ‘me’ conforming to both the MT and Hebrews.

<sup>408</sup> TWOT, no.361a. As noted above this suggests this clause is not a further description, parallel with the previous clause, of the disobedience, but, elaborated or paralleled in the next, describes the result of the disobedience.

<sup>409</sup> Genesis 2:2, 3; 16:30; 23:12; 31:17; 34:21; Leviticus 23:32; 25:2; 26:34, 35; 2 Chronicles 36:21). In other contexts the verb is translated with a wide variety of verbs, most frequently τίθημι.

## Hebrews and LXX

BYZ Hebrews 3:7-11 &amp; 4:4

LXX Psalm 94:7b-11 &amp; Genesis 2:2

Διό, καθὼς λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον,  
 Σήμερον ἂν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε,  
<sup>8</sup> μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν,  
 ὡς ἐν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ, κατὰ τὴν  
 ἡμέραν τοῦ πειρασμοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ,  
<sup>9</sup> οὐ ἐπίρασάν με οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν,  
 ἐδοκίμασάν με,  
 καὶ εἶδον τὰ ἔργα μου τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη.  
<sup>10</sup> Διὸ προσώχθισα τῇ γενεᾷ ἐκείνῃ,  
 καὶ εἶπον, Ἄεὶ πλανῶνται τῇ καρδίᾳ·  
 αὐτοὶ δὲ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν τὰς ὁδοὺς μου.  
<sup>11</sup> ὡς ὤμοσα ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ μου,  
 εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν  
 μου.

Heb 4:4 Εἶρηκεν γάρ που περὶ τῆς  
 ἑβδόμης οὕτως,  
 Καὶ κατέπαυσεν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ  
 ἑβδόμῃ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ

-  
 σήμερον ἂν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε  
<sup>8</sup> μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν  
 ὡς ἐν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ κατὰ τὴν  
 ἡμέραν τοῦ πειρασμοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ  
<sup>9</sup> οὐ ἐπίρασαν οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν  
 ἐδοκίμασαν καὶ εἶδοσαν τὰ ἔργα μου  
<sup>10</sup> τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη  
 προσώχθισα τῇ γενεᾷ ἐκείνῃ  
 καὶ εἶπα ἀεὶ πλανῶνται τῇ καρδίᾳ  
 καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν τὰς ὁδοὺς μου  
<sup>11</sup> ὡς ὤμοσα ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ μου  
 εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου

Gen 2:2

-  
 καὶ κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ ἀπὸ  
 πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ ὧν ἐποίησεν

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The most relevant changes<sup>410</sup> in Hebrews are (i) the reintroduction of the two first person pronouns in vs.9, which the LXX had dropped. By doing so the author firmly places the two verbs ἐπίρασαν and ἐδοκίμασαν in parallel as in the MT and makes God the object of the testing, not His works; and (ii) the insertion of διὸ in vs.10. Ignoring the versification, the LXX leaves open whether the 40-years belongs to the preceding or following clause. Hebrews through this last change not only emphasises the causal relation between the disobedience and the consequences, it also allocates the 40-years to the clause ‘they saw my works’. In Genesis 2:2, the author avoids the LXX mistranslation, since he does not quote vs.2a, but he does supply ὁ θεὸς as the subject from there.<sup>411</sup>

*Hebrews 3:6b-4:16.* After the exhortations (i) to heed the word of the divine Son and (ii) to consider Him, who in His mediatorial role of reinstating man to his Psalm-8-

<sup>410</sup> The changes into εἶδον and εἶπον in vss.9 and 10 and the omission of καί in vs.10b are not considered relevant for our study. The NA-text has ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ instead of ἐδοκίμασαν; and ταύτη instead of ἐκείνη, here the Byzantine text agrees with the LXX. The NA-text agrees with the LXX in omitting two times με.

<sup>411</sup> The addition of ἐν, if added by the author, is considered stylistic.

position became Himself man, the author now starts to bring into focus the ultimate goal, while continuing his exhortative approach.

As noted in §2.2 the Epistle's theme can probably be best discerned in the parallels of the overlaps identified in Hebrews 4 and 10: the believing recipients should, in their time of need, hold fast their confession and look at Jesus, the divine and human Son (chapters 1-2) and the divinely-appointed, atoning high priest (chapters 5-9).

He, through the work of His obedience and once-and-for-all sacrifice, reinstates man into: living, worshipping and obeying in the presence of God, his primordial position of rest after God had completed His work of creation. The goal of this reinstatement is in Hebrews 4:16 described as: προσερχώμεθα οὖν μετὰ παρρησίας τῷ θρόνῳ τῆς χάριτος, ἵνα λάβωμεν ἔλεον, καὶ χάριν εὐρωμεν.<sup>412</sup>

And before the author reaches that point in the Epistle he turns the audience's attention to the question how and why they can 'enter that rest'.

The answer appears to have two major components: You have the entry-ticket and the entry-gate remains open – Enter, enter!

More in detail one can discern the following pattern of the discourse Hebrews 3:6b-4:16:

Do/let us [persevere/obey], lest [we fail],

(i) because we are eligible to enter His rest,

but only if we do [persevere/believe]; and

(ii) His rest/Sabbath-celebration remains available,

because like God completed His work of creation,

so Christ completed His work of recreation.

Therefore, let us [persevere/obey], because we have Jesus as high priest, so that we [will not fall/may find grace].

The author emphatically<sup>413</sup> repeats the first statement ((ia): we are eligible) four times, describing our current state:<sup>414</sup> 'we are the house of Jesus' (Heb.3:6b), 'we have

---

<sup>412</sup> And in Hebrews 10:19, after the discourse on Jesus as the high priest of a new and better covenant, in terms of the OT-cult as having: εἰσοδὸν τῶν ἁγίων.

<sup>413</sup> *Contra* Attridge, 1989, p.117, who considers this in vs.14 'a parenthetical comment'.

<sup>414</sup> Thrice the present tense is used (Heb.3:6b and 4:2, 3) and the aorist γεγόναμεν (Heb.3:14) effectively also identifies the current state. The four-fold parallel supports the view regarding

become partners of Jesus' (Heb.3:14). And then briefer: 'we are evangelized' (Heb.4:2) and 'we enter into rest' (Heb.4:3a).

But, as *ἐάνπερ* indicates, there is a condition ((ib): only if we persevere). The condition is explicit in Hebrews 3:6b, 14 and implicit in Hebrews 4:2.<sup>415</sup>

He supports his repeated warning (that the benefit of being with Christ is not unconditional) quoting Psalm 95; in the first instance by giving the quotation itself, and subsequently by sharpening the focus through an exegetical *subiectio* and in the last two occasions only elliptically (Heb.4:2) and briefly (Heb.4:3b). Here also he follows a pattern:

As it was/is said: they [tested me/did not believe]  
and they did/will not [benefit/go in].

Psalm 95 is an invitation to worship God, the creator of the world and the redeemer of His people, but also warns that God's presence, here represented in His place of rest, i.e. the temple, can only be entered into in obedience. The author highlights the Kadesh-Barnea reference in the psalm through his *subiectio* (Heb.3:16-18). There he underlines, first, that these were God's people (*πάντες οἱ ἐξεληθέντες ἐξ Αἰγύπτου διὰ Μωϋσέως*) who were invited into His rest; and, secondly, the conditionality: they lost their access to rest because of disobedience (Heb.3:19).<sup>416</sup>

The section with second statement ((ii): God's rest remains available) in Hebrews 4:3c-10 is hooked into the foregoing through the genitive absolute clause in Hebrews 4:1a. It follows the sad conclusion of Hebrews 4:3b 'they did not go in' and starts with the adversative particle *καὶτοι*, 'and yet...'.<sup>417</sup>

That His people would enter His rest was God's primordial plan: He had completed His creation and started His Sabbath-celebration (Heb.4:3c). Man was destined to live in a temple-garden of delight, in God's presence as His vice-regent (Psalm 8),

---

*εἰσερχόμεθα* in Hebrews 4:3 that '[t]here is no compelling reason in the context to abandon the regular use of the present for a futuristic present', Leschert, 1994, p.133; *contra* Ellingworth, 1993, p.246: 'an empathic equivalent of the future tense'.

<sup>415</sup> οἱ πιστεύσαντες is, notwithstanding the aorist, taken as a conditional substantival participle, Wallace, 1996, p.688, who cites Mark 16:16 as another example. Also Ellingworth, 1993, p.246: 'an implicit limitation'.

<sup>416</sup> Brought out three times in the questions: *παρεπύκρναν* (vs.16), *ἀμαρτήσασιν* (vs.17) and *ἀπειθήσασιν*; (vs.18); and again in the conclusion, *δι' ἀπιστίαν* (vs.19).

<sup>417</sup> Louw-Nida, no.89.72: 'marker of concession with possibility of following contrast'.

worshipping and obeying Him (Gen.2:15) in an eternal celebration of God's completion of His creation (Gen.2:2).

However, man has not entered this rest, as, similarly, we do not yet see him as vice-regent (Heb.2:8).<sup>418</sup> Therefore, concludes the author, this still has to take place and another day is designated.<sup>419</sup> Hence David's warning, so long after Kadesh-Barnea, not to miss entry because of disobedience. And, possibly anticipating the objection that a generation after Kadesh-Barnea Joshua did bring the people into rest,<sup>420</sup> the author reaffirms that this is still to take place, since entry into Canaan was not the final event (Heb.4:9).

The prophetic pronouncements on the *loss of rest*<sup>421</sup> in the exile and the *new dawn of rest*<sup>422</sup> could confirm for the author the continuing actuality of David's warning. The final rest was not yet achieved and God's presence could not be taken for granted.

However, the fact that this rest *has not come* under the old covenant is now complemented by the certainty that it *remains available*.

The rest, or the Sabbath-celebration, is available *because* (γάρ, Heb.4:10) Jesus, this Joshua (καὶ αὐτός) as opposed to the earlier one, has done all that is required to lead His people into salvation. After finishing His work of atonement, He has now re-entered heaven (Heb.1:6), and sits at the right hand God (Heb.1:13); and here (Heb.4:10) He is described as having entered His rest, having completed His work of redemption or re-creation, just like God completed His work of creation ahead of His intended Sabbath-celebration.<sup>423</sup>

---

<sup>418</sup> As Leschert, 1994, pp.128ff., has summarized, there is a broad spectrum of views on the timing of rest. The author states at the same time 'we enter his rest' and exhorts to do so, and confirms 'are Christ's partners' but does not yet see man ruling creation. This question is not our focus, but the concept of inaugurated eschatology, the Kingdom has already come but is not yet consummated, is consistent with our analysis of rest.

<sup>419</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.251: 'Ὁρίζω is used in the NT, though not in the LXX, of God's plans and decisions...'.  
<sup>420</sup>

This seems a more adequate explanation than to say: 'Der Name Josua wird *rein sprachlich* verknüpft mit dem Namen Jesus.' (because the Greek spelling is the same); Schröger, 1968, p.111 (my italics).

<sup>421</sup> *The loss of rest*: Isaiah 1:13, 7:4, 23:12, 28:12, 30:15, 58:13, Hosea 2:11, Amos 8:5, Micah 2:10, Jeremiah 17:21-27. The reflection on the loss of rest: Lamentations 1:3, 2:6, 5:5, Ezekiel 20:12-24, 22:8-26, 23:38, Nehemiah 9:14, 28, 10:31-33, 13:15-22.

<sup>422</sup> *The new dawn of rest*: Jeremiah 30:10, 46:27: return from exile.

<sup>423</sup> The proposed interpretation of Hebrews 4:10 is christological and not anthropological. Not only because the context and flow of the argument clearly suggest this, but also for the following reasons: (i) γάρ is causal, not inferential as the οὖν or ἄρα otherwise expected, (ii) references to believers are usually plural, not a definite singular (*contra* Attridge, 1989, p.131); (iii) a comparison between works of Son-Father is more appropriate than between works of man-God since the sacrificial work of Christ is more important in Hebrews than the works of believers; (iv) the Son entering and resting is parallel to quotations/allusions of Psalm 110 (κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου) and to the following text

The statement in Hebrews 4:3c and 10 that God, through Jesus, sticks to His plan frames the twice-repeated assurance in Hebrews 4:6 and 9 that rest remains available. The supporting quotations from Genesis 2 and Psalm 95 precede the assurance and both times the pattern is:

As it was said [quotation: there is/will be a rest] (vss.4, 7)

and they (neither Joshua's generation, nor a subsequent one) did not go in (vss.5, 8)

So...there remains a rest...for some/God's people (vs.6, 9).

As before, the author uses for 'rest' the word *κατάπαυσις* (referred to through *αὐτήν*) and in parallel introduces the word *σαββατισμός*.

As noted above, the author ends this discourse by repeating the exhortation to enter this rest in Hebrews 4:11 and then, after a brief excursion in vss.12-13, reconnects in the final exhortation in vss.14-16 with Hebrews 3:1-2 where he had referred to Jesus as our high priest: He is the one through whom believers are able to serve as crowned with glory and honour, enjoying God's presence and the throne of grace.

### *Analysis*

The author's perceived dependence on the LXX has been said to show itself several times in this section.

Gheorghita, and many others with him, notes the author follows the LXX translation of Massah and Meribah in the psalm with the generic nouns *πειρασμός* and *παραπειρασμός*. These readings, he argues, represent a significant shift to 'a more

---

Hebrews 4:14 (*ἀρχιερέα μέγαν, διεληλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανοὺς*); (v) the verb (*κατέπαυσειν*) is an aorist, not the present often used for general statements; (vi) the objection that the appearance of Christ here is too sudden, is unconvincing once one realises the whole section 3:6b-4:11 is bracketed by the core statement of Hebrews 3:1-2 and 4:16-17, which explicitly refers to Christ and that He is also emphatically referred to in Hebrews 3:6b, 14. A translation could be: For He who has entered His rest has Himself also rested from His works as God *did* from His.'

For a detailed discussion of the christological-anthropological alternative see Ellingworth, 1993, p.256, who himself opts for an anthropological interpretation. See also Ellingworth, 1993, p.253, for a discussion of the word play Joshua-Jesus.

spiritual outlook'.<sup>424</sup> Kadesh-Barnea overshadows, thus, the desert-journey and the author's focus is on the concepts of disobedience and its consequences.

Another example of dependence on the LXX is the translation of the Hebrew expression יבאוּן ׀א which is the protasis of a conditional sentence ('if they enter...') where the apodosis ('...may then something terrible happen') is missing. In this context ׀א has a negative force. The LXX translates this 'woodenly' with εἴ ('if').<sup>425</sup> The author follows the LXX, and '[t]his Hebrew idiom...is rightly interpreted in Heb 3:11, 18 but missed in Heb 4:3, 5.'<sup>426</sup>

Moreover, his use of the word κατάπαυσις is often considered important evidence for the author not having access to Hebrew. Through it he equates in his syllogism in Hebrews 4:4-6 the 'rest' of the psalm with the 'rest' in Genesis, apparently not realizing that the psalm uses מנוחה and Genesis שבת. As Attridge notes: '[T]he argument used here only works as a strict *gezera shawa* with the LXX form of Gen.2:2, since only in Greek is the verbal association with Ps.95 obvious.'<sup>427</sup>

And the view that the author is using verbal analogy in his hermeneutical approach is widely held.<sup>428</sup>

Both Attridge and Schröger understand the psalm's rest as referring to the resting-place of Canaan.<sup>429</sup> The first identifies 'exegetical subtlety' and the second to 'rabbinical exegesis', which in case of contradiction (David himself confirms Israel

---

<sup>424</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.47. This together with 'other clues...to the interpretative nature of the author's quotation'; for which he refers to Enns 1993 (see below). But Leschert comes to the same conclusion: 'But the writer of Hebrews follows the Septuagint in obscuring the apparent allusion in the Hebrew Bible to these events...', p.131.

<sup>425</sup> See Attridge, 1989, p.116. He furthermore states that the ׀א in Psalm 95:7 represents possibly a wish ('if only') but the LXX, followed by the author, translates with a simple conditional conjunction (εἴ), p.115.

<sup>426</sup> TWOT, no.111.

<sup>427</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.130.

<sup>428</sup> E.g. also Guthrie, 2007, p.958, Schröger, 1968, pp.110 and 114. The often reported fact that both Psalm 95 and this text in Genesis were part of the Sabbath-evening lectionary of the synagogue is little more than a distraction. It being part of the liturgy does not support or clarify the logic, since it only defers the question of how they were exegetically linked. In addition, the evidence for this appears to date from well after the writing of the Epistle. Compare Attridge, 1989, p.129, Ellingworth, 1993, p.247, Kistemaker, 1961, p.36, Leschert, 1994, p.166, Schröger, 1968, pp.110-112.

<sup>429</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.116 and Schröger, 1968, pp.108-110. Ellingworth agrees this is correct 'in terms of historical-critical exegesis', p.248.

had rest in the land, but still allows for the possibility of denied entry in the psalm) seeks for a ‘deeper meaning’. The author, they say, finds this deeper meaning in Genesis 2:2 using the same word *κατάπαυσις*. But for Schröger this hermeneutical method is unsatisfactory, since ‘[d]er Ruhegedanke des Psalms 95 hat mit diesem Sabbat-Ruhegedanken schlechthin nichts gemeinsam.’<sup>430</sup> According to Attridge the rabbinical hermeneutical tool of *gezerah shawah* is used to redefine the psalm’s rest into what in Genesis is ‘ultimately the primordial Sabbath of God’s own rest’.<sup>431</sup>

Although not claiming dependence on Greek only, Enns also notes the author uses a Jewish exegetical technique, *peshet*, to actualize the psalm for his audience by giving it a more eschatological interpretation.<sup>432</sup> He sees the author doing so by some deliberate deviations from the LXX, the most important of which is the interjection of *διό* in Hebrews 3:10.<sup>433</sup> The effect is to separate the clause speaking of God’s anger from the clause stating ‘they saw God’s work for 40 years’. This, according to Enns, emphasizes that for Israel the period between the exodus and the entry was largely one of punishment,<sup>434</sup> but now for the NT church the period between Christ’s redemption and *parousia* is one of blessing in which they can look at His work of redemption.<sup>435</sup>

In addition it may be noted that Schröger<sup>436</sup> considers the exegetical approach, especially in the *subiectio* in Hebrews 3:16-19, as *midrash-peshet*, while Guthrie describes it as an example of Hillel’s *binyan av mikatuv ahad*; he identifies the principle of *dabar halamed me-inyano* in Hebrews 4:7.<sup>437</sup> Neither suggests the

---

<sup>430</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.108-110.

<sup>431</sup> Attridge, 1989, pp.128-129.

<sup>432</sup> Enns, 1993, pp.273-274. He (in turn citing Kistemaker, 1961, p.85) goes as far as saying ‘The psalm does not provide data to support a theological point. Rather it is quoted simply “for the sake of exposition and application”’. And he continues: ‘In wishing to make this psalm more relevant to his readers, the author says things *about* Psalm 95 that are not found *in* Psalm 95.’ Elsewhere, Enns, 2005, p.158 he suggests that a similar practice of ‘christotelic hermeneutics’ is to be followed today.

<sup>433</sup> Enns, 1993, pp.274ff. The other perceived changes are *ἐκέλευ* into the near demonstrative pronoun *ταύτη* and the change of *ἐδοκίμασαν* (‘they tried [me]’) into *ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ* (‘with skeptical scrutiny’). Neither is found in the Byzantine text and they will not be considered further.

<sup>434</sup> He sees this confirmed in Hebrews 3:17, where the author allegedly switches back to Israel and the original meaning of the psalm.

<sup>435</sup> But ‘this’ generation addressed by the author cannot do so ‘with skeptical scrutiny’, *contra* Enns 1993, pp.274-275.

<sup>436</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.113.

<sup>437</sup> Guthrie, 2007, p.955. He sees the latter principle (*dabar halamed me-inyano*; meaning established by context) in the way the author’s logic uses the historical context (David writing the



It is true that to precisely reflect the MT and correct the LXX, the author should have placed *διό* in front of the preceding clause. There may be two reasons why he placed it where he did: (a) the previous clause ('then they saw my works...') is in the bland LXX translation less forceful and expressive in describing the punishment; and indeed in his exegetical questions the author highlights the 'I was angry' aspect (vs.17), and (b) he wanted to avoid confusion between the LXX translation *ἔργα* here with the *ἔργα* in Hebrews 4:4, since the author knew from the MT they were different;<sup>441</sup> and therefore he de-emphasised this clause.

Whereas vss.16-18 are clearly an attempt to bring aspects of the direct quotation in vss.7-11 into focus, it is wholly unlikely the author changed subjects or concepts, switching from a beneficial interim-period for the NT church back to the period of punishment for Israel as in the psalm. Enns' hypothesis is unconvincing and his conclusions regarding the author's hermeneutics, whether labelled Jewish or apostolic, are unjustified.<sup>442</sup>

Secondly, there is further evidence of the author's access to, and respect for, the MT in his re-introducing *με* twice in Hebrews 3:9. The effect of this is that the two verbs *ἐπέρασαν* and *ἔδοκίμασαν* are drawn together in parallel clauses expressing Israel's disobedience to God.<sup>443</sup> As a consequence the next two clauses are more likely a parallel description of the results: they saw for forty years God's work of punishment and He was angry with them. The author confirms that understanding by drawing the 40-year period and His anger together in his exegetical question in vs.17.<sup>444</sup>

---

<sup>441</sup> In Psalm 95 *ἔργα* translates the singular *פִּעַל* (God's work in history, possibly of punishment) and in Genesis 2 *מְלֵאכָה*, a collective singular referring to God's works of creation. It is assumed the author wanted to avoid this lack of distinction in the LXX and therefore does not highlight this clause Hebrews 3:9b, but the next, parallel clause by placing *διό* in front of that one.

<sup>442</sup> Enns, 2005, pp.140-142; and in similar fashion Schröger, 1968, p.103. Enns' alternative exegesis is unnecessarily convoluted: (i) first changing the meaning of the text (by imposing *διό*, and then highlighting his own taking liberties by switching topics (from NT-church to Israel) in a section which is obviously meant to bring certain, for him important, aspects of the text in focus, appears inconsistent and uncharacteristic for the author; (ii) there is also no evidence that a beneficial period of respite for the NT church is part of his message: he does not include it in his *subiectio* where he highlights the relevant aspects. Rather than introducing the idea of a time of blessings or respite, the author in his repetition of *σήμερον* stresses the urgency of his repeated exhortations to perseverance and obedience. The explanation proposed above is much simpler. Occam's Razor is to be applied to Enns' suggestion.

<sup>443</sup> The idea that testing God leads to His anger is also more logical than that the testing of His works (creation?) will do so.

<sup>444</sup> The fact that in vs.17 the author also includes the 40-year period, and now attaches it to the *προσώχθισεν*, indicates that, notwithstanding inserting *διό* where he did, he understood the clauses as essentially parallels.

Thirdly, his use of the concept of rest suggests he read Hebrew.

Above it is argued above that rest in the OT is best understood as living *coram Deo*, i.e. having the privilege and joy of access to the presence of God to worship and obey Him.

In Genesis 2:2, God, after completing His creating work in six days, starts on the seventh His time of Sabbath-celebration (שבת) with His creation, including man. And to that effect God gives man a place of rest (נוח) in the garden-sanctuary, where man is to worship and obey Him (Gen.2:15). Psalm 95 is an invitation to come and worship God combined with the warning that, if obedience is lacking, access to His presence, His rest (מנוחה) will be denied.

The same strands of *rest or access to God's presence* (κατάπαυσις, μετὰ παρρησίας τῷ θρόνῳ τῆς χάριτος and τὴν εἴσοδον τῶν ἁγίων)<sup>445</sup> are brought together by the author with the exhortation to persevere in faith (the opposite of ἀπιστία), *worship* (προσερχώμεθα) and *obedience* (the opposite of ἀπειθέω).<sup>446</sup> The primordial rest after God's creation-work was to be restored through God's plan of Jesus' sacrifice, and this is now a completed work. Therefore God's new covenant people are exhorted to worship and obey, and thus to enter this rest.<sup>447</sup>

In drawing these strands together the author ignores the LXX mistranslation of Genesis 2:15, and also recognises the stems נוח and שבת (where use in connection with the Sabbath) are in this context both aspects of the same rest and are at times used interchangeably.<sup>448</sup> Evidence of this is the appearance in perfect parallel in Hebrews 4:5-6 and 4:9 of κατάπαυσις and σαββατισμός. The introduction of this latter term would otherwise be puzzlingly sudden, but it is not, once an understanding of, and respect for, the MT is assumed and one recognizes the author has read שבת in Genesis 2:2.

There is no need for the author to rely on a verbal analogy in Greek.

---

<sup>445</sup> E.g. Hebrews 4:5-6, 4:16 and 10:19.

<sup>446</sup> Hebrews 3:19, 4:16 and 10:22, and 3:19 respectively.

<sup>447</sup> An entry into God's presence earlier symbolized by the old covenant people entering into the land and later by having the Jerusalem temple in their midst.

<sup>448</sup> They are used interchangeably (with God as subject) in Genesis 2:2-3 and Exodus 20:11; and used in a very similar fashion of creatures within Exodus 23:12 and between Exodus 23:12 and Deuteronomy 5:14.

The author's own hermeneutical approach assumes the *unity* of God's speaking throughout history. He explicitly places David's statements μετὰ τοσοῦτον χρόνον next to the history of the desert-generation and concludes that they cannot yet have entered the final rest. In support of this conclusion, he may have found further evidence in the subsequent prophetic warnings for, and the reality of, the exile.

He also appears to perceive a *progression in the history of redemption and revelation*, inasmuch as he refers implicitly to God's primordial plan to have mankind enter post-creation this rest (Heb.4:3c), the lack of fulfilment in the OT time (Heb.4:6-8) and the fact this is now made possible (καὶ αὐτὸς κατέπαυσεν) by Jesus (Heb.4:10).

*In conclusion*, there is no evidence the author did not read the Hebrew text and relied on verbal analogy of the Greek translation κατάπαυσις for different Hebrew concepts. On the contrary, it appears likely he was on three occasions, notwithstanding the LXX unclarities, aware of the contents of the Hebrew text.

Recognizing the author understood the Hebrew text also eliminates the need to suggest he used *gezerah shawah*, *peshet* or 'apostolic' hermeneutics. It becomes clear he respected the context of his quotations. His understanding and use of the quotations assumes the unity of God's speaking and the progression of the history of redemption and revelation.

#### **4.9 Hebrews 10:5-7 and Psalm 40:6-8**

These verses in Hebrews contain a quotation which is introduced with the familiar IF λέγει. The author attributes these words to Christ, who is mentioned in Hebrews 9:28a and the most likely referent.

There is no source for the quotation in the Gospels and it is generally recognised as coming from Psalm 40 and put in the mouth of the incarnated Christ.

The MT and the LXX

| MT Psalm 40:7-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | LXX Psalm 39:7-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>זָבַח וּמִנְחָה   לֹא־חִפְצָתָ אֲזַנִּים כְּרִיתָ לִי<br/> עֹלָה וְחִטָּאָה לֹא שִׂאֵלָתָ:<br/> <sup>8</sup> אֲזַ אֲמַרְתִּי הִנֵּה־בָאתִי<br/> בְּמִגְלַת־סֹפֶר כְּתוּב עָלַי:<br/> <sup>9</sup> לַעֲשׂוֹת־רְצוֹנָךְ אֱלֹהֵי חִפְצָתִי<br/> וְתוֹרָתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מַעֵי:</p> | <p>θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας<br/> ὥτια δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι<br/> ὀλοκαύτωμα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ<br/> ἤτησας<br/> <sup>8</sup> τότε εἶπον ἰδοὺ ἤκω<br/> ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ<br/> <sup>9</sup> τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου<br/> ἐβουλήθην<br/> καὶ τὸν νόμον σου ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιλίας<br/> μου</p> |

*Psalm 40* is presented in the MT as לְדָוִד and in the LXX as τῷ Δαυιδ. The date, setting and composition of the psalm are subject to debate. Views range from a unitary psalm of David to a post-exilic composite psalm critical of Israel’s sacrificial cult.<sup>449</sup> The former is assumed here.

After the title, the psalm is generally seen as consisting of two parts: a thanksgiving for deliverance in vss.1b-10 (“I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry.”); and a prayer (“Do not withhold your tender mercies from me, O LORD; let your loving kindness and your truth continually preserve me.”) in vss.11-17. Although the psalm itself gives little indication of its precise setting, it appears the psalmist has emerged from a difficult time, possibly David’s persecution by Saul, and is giving thanks for his deliverance, but also praying for the Lord’s continued presence as he anticipates further challenges. The psalm, when understood as a unity, expresses, as Weiser<sup>450</sup> states it, the tension between possessing assurance of faith and striving for it, through prayer.

After recalling how he waited and waited for the Lord, the psalmist reports how the Lord rescued him and bursts out in praise. Then he comes to his response to this redemption in the vss.6-8.

<sup>449</sup> E.g. see Kidner, 1975, p.158, for the former, and Kraus, 1989, p.424, for the latter. The vss.13-17 are largely also preserved in Psalm 70.

<sup>450</sup> Weiser, 1959, p.334.

And the core of that response is ‘I come’: self-giving in obedience to the Lord. There is no compelling reason to assume an Isaiah-tradition of prophets criticizing the temple cult or a post-exilic psalmist concentrating liturgical and theological attention on proclamation and praise.<sup>451</sup> The Chronicler reports how David, himself, organised the cult.<sup>452</sup> And his ‘sacrifice and offering you did not desire’ can be understood as opposing, not the sacrificial cult, but the belief that going through this as a mere ritual is in itself enough to satisfy God. It is a warning oft repeated by the prophets.<sup>453</sup>

The next clause in vs.6, ‘ears you have dug (or alternatively: pierced) for me’, is read in different ways. In parallel with Isaiah 50:4-5 where the suffering servant speaks, it is understood as the Lord opening the ears so that the psalmist could hear His commands and take them to heart. The alternative of a reference to Exodus 21:6 (where the piercing of the ear symbolizes the lifelong voluntary obedience of a slave to his master) is perhaps less likely, since a different verb (רָצַע) is used in that passage. Either way, the clause points to the obedience of the psalmist.

What follows is the empathic ‘behold, I have come...’ an anacoluthon since the statement is interrupted by a sentence about the law, but then resumed with ‘... to do Your will, O God, I take delight in’.<sup>454</sup> This delight in obedience is expressed as: ‘Your law is within my heart’. The self-giving in obedience is central to the psalm.

This last clause can be understood to refer to the Torah in general, but more likely specifically to the Law-for-the-King of Deuteronomy 17.<sup>455</sup> The question arises

<sup>451</sup> So Mays, 1994, p.170.

<sup>452</sup> E.g. 1 Chronicles 22-26.

<sup>453</sup> E.g. Isaiah 1:10ff. and 66:1ff.

<sup>454</sup> This interpretation reads כַּפְּנֵיהֶם as a resumptive variation on בְּאֵזְרֵיהֶם. The absence of any conjunction seems to allow the possibility of reading vs.7b as a parenthetical clause.

<sup>455</sup> Craigie, 1983, p.315: ‘The following verses (vv 7–9) have often been interpreted as a condemnation of the sacrificial cult in ancient Israel, but to read them in such a fashion is almost certainly to misinterpret them; the context of the royal liturgy provides the appropriate setting for interpretation. The king is now engaged in a liturgy of supplication; he can only participate in such a liturgy (which may well have included sacrifices) after having faithfully performed all his royal tasks as king, which included the offering of appropriate sacrifices. But the offering of sacrifices alone was not enough; more was required of him. The general background, then, to these verses is to be found in the “law (or *Torah*) of kings” (Deut 17:14–20); when the suppliant states: “it is written about me in the scroll of the book” (v 8), he is referring to the Deuteronomic law and its cultic requirements of kings. But the Deuteronomic law, while imposing on the king certain cultic requirements, had a deeper spiritual dimension to it; it was to instil in the king the fear of the Lord and keep him humble amongst his brethren (Deut 17:19–20). These verses in Ps 40 thus point to the characteristics required of the king *beyond* the cultic offerings and sacrifices; the king, after all, had “two ears” (v 7) and had heard the basic requirements of the law, which concerned sacrifice. But now he has progressed further and when he says: “your instruction is in the midst of my being” (v 9b), he is perceiving that God’s “instruction” (*Torah*) has the deeper and spiritual requirements of the *Torah* (Deut 17:18) of kings.’

whether the עָלַי in vs.7 should be read as prescriptive<sup>456</sup> ('written for me') or descriptive ('written about me'). The first would be an unusual translation of the preposition, so the second is more likely. Rather than as a comment that all of the Torah is written 'for him', the clause is, therefore, better understood to refer to Deuteronomy 17, a text which anticipates a king (is 'about him') and includes the command to be obedient to the Torah. The psalmist here does not interpret Deuteronomy 17 as a reference uniquely to him, David, personally, but about (and to) a king of the people of God who acts in accordance with God's will.

And he proclaims, after the Lord opened his ears, his delight in being such a king. In Deuteronomy 17, the king is told to lead his people by his example of obedience to the law, the text of which is to be with him all his days.<sup>457</sup>

Following the commitment of his own obedience, the psalm also contains the indirect reference to his leading others to obedience. The following stanza (vss.9-10) shows him leading his people in his proclamation to the great assembly of the Lord's righteousness.

In the remainder of the psalm, David prays for continued access to God for mercy and protection. He was keenly aware of his imperfections and acknowledged that not only was his trouble the result of his own sin (vs.12), but that in the future this would continue to be the case (vs.17). In his prayer, David indirectly acknowledges that, notwithstanding his delight in obedience, he is not the perfect obedient king.

In summary, one may conclude that in Psalm 40:6-8 Israel's king proclaims his delight, after the Lord opened his ears, in being an obedient king as intended in Deuteronomy 17. He does not oppose the sacrificial cult, but still hearing Samuel, declares that sacrifices are neither desired nor valued if not combined with obedience to God from the heart.

*MT-LXX differences.* The LXX shows a number of deviations<sup>458</sup> from the MT, the most important one being the translation of the second clause of vs.6 which in many

---

<sup>456</sup> So Schröger, 1968, p.175: 'ist mir vorgeschrieben'. So also Attridge, 1989, p.275.

<sup>457</sup> As noted in §3.1: The king gives his people rest in the land, not through power in any form, but by being an exemplar-king. Deuteronomy 17 may have been fresh in David's mind, having heard Samuel's verdict concerning Saul in 1 Samuel 15:22.

variants reads σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι ('a body you have prepared for me'). Rahlfs' Septuagint selects the ὠτία from some MSS, probably as the *lectio difficilior* and this is also found in Greek translations such as those of Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus,<sup>459</sup> which may be corrections based on the MT.

The provenance of the translation σῶμα is unclear, but possibly the translation is an attempt to clarify the Hebrew text after understanding 'ears' as a *pars pro toto* with the whole being the obedient person,<sup>460</sup> although part of the vividness and force of the Hebrew, stating how God has given the psalmist the ability to be obedient, is lost. Others have suggested a scribal error in the uncials with ΗΘΕΛΗΣΑΣΩΤΙΑ becoming ΗΛΕΘΛΗΣΑΣΣΩΜΑ.<sup>461</sup> That this translation was theologically motivated (e.g. more messianic) appears unlikely, since a priestly or kingly messiah may have been anticipated, but a human one subject to suffering and death does not figure prominently before NT times.

The LXX, in vs.7 opting for περὶ ἐμοῦ, seems to agree with the above interpretation 'about me'.

In vs.8, the LXX translates the Qal perfect of צָחַק ('to take delight in') with the passive aorist of βούλομαι ('to desire to have/experience'). The latter seems to lean more towards wishful thinking or intent than to the actual, experienced joy in being obedient, expressed in the Hebrew text. The language of the LXX comes across as weaker than the MT. But the difference should not be exaggerated.

---

<sup>458</sup> Some MSS have the plural ὀλοκαυτώματα for the MT singular. This may also have been in the author's text.

<sup>459</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.48.

<sup>460</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.500.

<sup>461</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.174 and Ellingworth, 1993, 193, p.500; although if the text was dictated that seems surprising.

## Hebrews and the LXX

| BYZ Hebrews 10:5-7                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | LXX Psalm 39:7-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Διὸ εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον λέγει, θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας, σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι·<br/> <sup>6</sup> ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ εὐδόκησας·<br/> <sup>7</sup> τότε εἶπον, Ἴδοὺ, ἤκω- ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ- τοῦ ποιῆσαι, ὁ θεός, τὸ θέλημά σου.</p> | <p>-<br/>         θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν οὐκ ἠθέλησας ὥτια δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι ὀλοκαύτωμα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας οὐκ ἤτησας<br/> <sup>8</sup> τότε εἶπον ἰδοὺ ἤκω ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ<br/> <sup>9</sup> τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου ὁ θεός μου ἐβουλήθη καὶ τὸν νόμον σου ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιλίας μου</p> |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* A comparison between Hebrews and the LXX shows the author retains in his quotation σῶμα, which he probably had in his Greek text<sup>462</sup> without making any reference to the ‘ears’ of the MT, and also retains the περὶ ἐμοῦ, which now seems to refer to Jesus.

Apart from the change of ὀλοκαυτώματα from singular to plural, which his *Vorlage* may have had, understanding the MT as a generic singular, and using a different but similar verb<sup>463</sup> in vs.6, the major change by the author is in vs.7.<sup>464</sup>

By ending the quotation at what appears to be mid-sentence, he more closely connects the ‘I come’ of vs.7a with ‘to do your will’ in vs.7c, making vs.7b more clearly parenthetical. The syntactical shift forward of ὁ θεός is possibly to place more emphasis on ‘your will’. The elimination of μου does not seem theologically important and may serve the same purpose.

*Hebrews 10:5-7.* After the introduction in chapter 7 of Jesus as the God-given, eternal high priest who supersedes the Aaronic priesthood of the old covenant, the author explains that this perfect high priest (Heb.7:28-8:1) is the high priest of the new

<sup>462</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.174. So also Karrer, 2006, pp.348-349, who considers it very improbable the author altered his *Vorlage* to make it fit his Christology.

<sup>463</sup> Εὐδοκέω (‘to be pleased with’) instead of αἰτέω (‘to require’). It gives the passage ‘a christological force’, according to Guthrie, 2007, p.977.

<sup>464</sup> As in other quotations, e.g. Hebrews 1:7, Jobes, 1991, pp.389-391 and 1992, p.189, explains this and other changes as the author using *paronomasia*: ‘the intentional and creative rhetorical product of the author’ to achieve phonetic assonance in order to improve the ‘stickiness’ of the quotation. Since taking such liberties with the text appears uncharacteristic for the author, this is not further reviewed. So also Karrer, 2006, p.346: ‘redaction by our author is unlikely.’

covenant, which was foretold by Jeremiah. In this covenant, the disobedience of His people will no longer spoil the covenant relationship because He will put His laws in their minds (Heb.8:9-10, and repeated in conclusion in Heb.10:16).

In chapter 9, he elaborates further: the first covenant worship and its sacrifices in the tabernacle, although required by the law (Heb.10:8), are insufficient. Restoring the covenant relationship to ‘make perfect those who draw near to worship’ (Heb.10:1) in a new covenant required Jesus’ coming into the world to bring His once-and-for-all sacrifice (Heb.9:28).

It is then that the author continues with διό in Hebrews 10:5 and puts the words of the psalm into the mouth of Christ, who is the most likely referent for εἰσερχόμενος. Thus, coming into the world, Jesus repeats the Davidic statement that obedience is required (vs.9a).

He follows the quotation with a brief elaboration. First, in vss.8, 11, he paraphrases the psalm on the inadequacy of the continually repeated sacrifices, while acknowledging they were according to the law. He indicates he is not ‘anti-cult’ and respects the OT, but concludes that they are now superseded (vs.9b). Secondly, he quotes in vs.9a the words which the Davidic king of the psalm knew he could never adequately honour (because his obedience was imperfect), and states that these words are now validated through Jesus’ perfect obedience in His once-and-for-all sacrifice (vss.10, 12).<sup>465</sup>

The reconciliation with God and the holiness required to draw near to Him have been achieved by Christ (vss.10, 14). And, he notes in conclusion, this sacrifice has been accepted as evidenced by His exaltation (vss.12b-13). Through the allusion to Psalm 110, he refers again to the Davidic king of the quotation: this king-priest Jesus has completed His task. Christ, thus, established a new covenant (vss.16ff.).

---

<sup>465</sup> The NA-text selects in vs.8 θυσίας and προσφορὰς and eliminates in vs.9 ὁ θεός, in both cases deviating from both the BYZ and the LXX. It does not impact the proposed exegesis, since the singulars may be understood as generic singulars.

*Analysis*

Regarding the use the author makes of the text in Psalm 40 a number of observations have been made.

First, where the psalm appears to disavow sacrifices without obedience, Hebrews seems to reject them altogether as inadequate – only Christ’s once-and-for-all offering suffices.<sup>466</sup> This change is facilitated by the LXX use of σῶμα, which might suggest the psalm refers to either the incarnation or to the sacrifice of His body.<sup>467</sup> The author appears to rely on this translation in his introduction to the quotation in vs.5 and in his reference to Christ’s sacrifice in vs.10.

Secondly, in his use of the LXX translation (περὶ ἐμοῦ) the author draws away, even more clearly than the LXX, from a prescriptive reference which some have read in the MT (all the Torah ‘for me’) to a descriptive reference (‘about me’); and this mis-translation has, for the author, become a prophetic reference to Christ.<sup>468</sup>

And thirdly, although not based on a diverging LXX-text because the author makes the amendment himself, this appropriation of the quotation as messianic is reinforced by the author’s elimination of ἐβουλήθην, which has the effect of ‘introducing a more direct reference to the purpose of the incarnation. Jesus, it is strongly implied, did not merely “wish” to do God’s will: He came to earth to do it.’<sup>469</sup>

Based on these observations, it has been concluded that the author relied on the Greek text only. In Schröger’s view, the author has been able to turn the psalm into a prayer of Christ at His incarnation in which He announces His sacrifice by (i) unknowingly<sup>470</sup> using the mis-translation σῶμα, (ii) following the potentially misleading LXX translation of περὶ ἐμοῦ, and (iii) dropping ἐβουλήθην. However, ‘im Urtext ist dafür kein Anhaltspunkt’.<sup>471</sup> Furthermore, Gheorghita states: ‘the application of this Scripture to the Incarnation of Christ is directly provided by the

---

<sup>466</sup> If the psalm is interpreted as (late) anti-cultic, this criticism of the author’s use of the psalm is less compelling. But that is not the interpretation of the psalm suggested here.

<sup>467</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.174, Gheorghita, 2003, p.48: ‘The Septuagintal text is obviously more conducive to a christological interpretation than the Hebrew parallel text.’ So also strongly Lane, 1991, p.262: ‘The writer seized upon the term σῶμα and made it pivotal for his interpretation of the text.’

<sup>468</sup> So Gheorghita, 2003, p.49.

<sup>469</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.501.

<sup>470</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.174: ‘Da der Verfasser aber den Urtext nicht kennt...’

<sup>471</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.175.

Septuagint...'.<sup>472</sup> So also Attridge, who states that 'dependence on the LXX is quite clear.'<sup>473</sup>

Conclusions also follow regarding the hermeneutics employed by the author. Schröger identifies the way the author uses the LXX psalm as *midrash-pesher*. Thus, words and expressions are taken from the text and explained in support of the view of the exegete without much regard for the original context. The psalm was not messianic and, he says, this manner of application is for us unacceptable.<sup>474</sup>

Attridge considers the method to be even more complex: 'The exegesis does not aim to find a prophetic correspondence between an ancient institution or scriptural symbol and an event contemporary with the interpreter.'<sup>475</sup> Rather, the quotation is made to be a programmatic remark of Christ, repudiating exterior cultic acts by placing them in contrast to interior obedience.

Ellingworth understands the author to be uninterested in the original setting of the psalm, but (having established earlier in the Epistle that Jesus spoke and acted in the OT) as seeking to understand where the OT speaks about Him.<sup>476</sup>

But is it correct that the author (a) relied on Greek mis-translations, and (b) in his hermeneutical use of the OT was looking for messianic applications, without much regard for the original setting and meaning? Or is there evidence here also to suggest he did understand the Hebrew and respect its original meaning?

As we noted above, for the psalmist, his declaration of obedience, his delight in being a king of God's people in line with Deuteronomy 17, is the core of the psalm. And it is this 'doing God's will' which the author emphasises twice.

First, he drops (issue (iii) above) the LXX translation ἐβουλήθην, which he recognized as weak, and, assuming he also read the Hebrew as an anacoluthon, contracts the

---

<sup>472</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.49.

<sup>473</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.274.

<sup>474</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.176: 'niemand von uns würde diese Psalmstelle, die in ihrem Zusammenhang etwas ganz anderes sagt als im Zusammenhang des Hebräerbriefes, als "Schriftbeweis" anführen können'. Similarly Lane, 1991, p.262, identifies the author's hermeneutic as 'homiletical midrash'.

<sup>475</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.275.

<sup>476</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, pp.42 and 500. He understands the writer as not reading an antithesis ritual sacrifice *versus* obedience in the psalm, but a narrower *tertium comparationis*: not those multiple temple sacrifices, but Christ's one offering.

sentence to its original MT essence: 'I have come to do your will'. Ellingworth's observation cited above is correct; the author seeks to hear the OT speaking about Christ, but not so much through an unwarranted amendment of the LXX-text as through a restoration of the MT-meaning.

And, secondly, he cites this key sentence again in vs.9a as the positive basis for his conclusion from the quotation: Christ had come to be obedient, therefore there is a new covenant!

While the psalmist declares his desire to obey, he also acknowledges his failure in obedience in the past and in the future. This acknowledgement creates an unresolved problem: sacrifices without obedience are useless, yet that obedience is failing. The author seeks to present Christ as the solution to this problem.

The reference to writing about him (περὶ ἐμοῦ) in a scroll clearly becomes in Hebrews, through the author's changes, a parenthetical clause, and is not taken up in the explanation of the quotation in the following verses. This confirms that the idea that the psalmist or the OT in general, predicted the incarnation and the sacrifice of Christ's body (issue (ii) above) is not the primary thought the author wants to convey. If, in the MT-text, David refers to Deuteronomy 17 as a generic reference to Israel's king, both the LXX translation and Hebrews are correct, and the focus is correctly and consistently on obedience, as demanded in this Law-for-the-King.

The psalm does not present the clause as a prophecy about the person of David, nor does the author present it as a prophecy about Christ; rather, both the psalmist and the author remind the reader of what the leaders of God's people were supposed to be: exemplar-kings, leaders in obedience. And Hebrews presents Christ as such a leader (Heb.2:10, Heb.12:2).

The relationship between obedience and sacrifice is also at the heart of issue (i), the author's use of Psalm 40:6a and the LXX translation of vs.6b.

Unless one considers the psalm as an anti-sacrificial cult pronouncement of some prophetic school or post-exilic composer, there seems to be a difference between the psalm disavowing merely ritual sacrifices without obedience and the author announcing an end to sacrifices altogether. However, on closer reading this is merely an apparent contradiction.

While the author acknowledges that sacrifices were κατὰ νόμον (Heb.10:8), he also knows – as confessed in the psalm - that obedience was lacking. Therefore, the sacrificial cult could only be a shadow (Heb.10:1) of the final solution, as well as a reminder that the problem was still unresolved (Heb.10:3). The resolution comes through the *obedience* of Christ which is the part of the quotation highlighted in vs.9. This obedience *results* in Christ's sacrifice, vs.10: by His will (God's plan to which Christ was obedient) we are sanctified, through the offering (required in that plan) of the body of Christ once-and-for-all.<sup>477</sup>

The MT-text of vs.6b was actually more conducive to the author's emphasis on obedience, with the psalmist's profession that God opened his ears, than the LXX variants with σῶμα.

It is possible that the author wanted to avoid undermining the authority of the LXX in criticizing these translations. If the incarnation or the coming of Christ into this world had been his exegetical point one would expect an elaboration of the clause, but instead he remains silent on the subject.

It is true that both a reference to σῶμα and ἀπαξ (in ἐφάπαξ, once and for all) reappear in vs.10, but the argument of the need for, and sufficiency of, Christ's sacrifice was substantially completed in chapter 9. Here, the author is tying these threads in with his argument that this sacrifice required obedience in accordance with Psalm 40 and the royal duty which David, as the foreshadowing of Christ, accepted, but could only imperfectly carry out. Christ had come to do this duty of the exemplar-king. While the Davidic house often failed to lead the people in and to obedience, the result of Christ's work according to Hebrews 10:16 is that obedience is put in their hearts.

Hermeneutically, the author shows the OT text more respect than he is given credit for.

In accordance with his view that scripture is divinely inspired he can attribute David's words to Christ,<sup>478</sup> whom he has presented as already active in old covenant times. That also explains why, for him, these words can have a *sensus plenior*, a meaning consistent with, but going beyond the understanding of the original setting.

---

<sup>477</sup> The conclusion is starkly reminiscent of Philippians 2:7: γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου.

<sup>478</sup> In addition, Psalm 40 are the words of David, recognizing the generic Law-for-the-King, which also applies to the Davidide Christ.

The psalmist speaks about the insufficiency of sacrifices without obedience, on the one hand, and, on the other, about his delight in obedience which is nonetheless often failing. The psalm is thus an *Unvollendete* and leaves a final solution of the question of how man can exist before God outstanding.

The author, who sees progression in both the history of redemption and of revelation, knows that the Christ has come in perfect obedience and brought the once-and-for-all sacrifice. Jesus' words in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mat.26:39, 42) were stark confirmation that Jesus had come to be obedient to God's will. Thus, he hears through the voice of the psalmist, who in his imperfection could only be a type, Christ speaking of His total compliance with the royal duty of leading in obedience. This obedience led Him to the sacrifice on the cross, a sacrifice of which the OT cult could only be a shadow.

*In conclusion*, the acceptance of divine inspiration, a *sensus plenior*, and the recognition that the OT contains imperfect types or shadows of what was to come, are the hermeneutical devices through which the author employs and exegetes Psalm 40:6-8.

For this he did not have to rely on a deviating Greek text. In fact, he ignores the LXX mis-translation σῶμα which is not used at all in his comments following the quotation. And he cuts off the quotation before the weak LXX translation of ἐβουλήθην.

#### 4.10 Hebrews 10:30 and Deuteronomy 32:35-36

The first part of Hebrews 10:30 is thought to quote from Deuteronomy 32:35a and the second part from vs.36a or Psalm 135:14. These last two texts are identical in both the MT and the LXX.

The IF is unusual both in its length and its use of the aorist. The one who has spoken (τὸν εἰποῦτα) is 'the one we know'; language is, as Attridge says,<sup>479</sup> portentous.

The IF is further complicated by the λέγει κύριος in the Byzantine text.<sup>480</sup> The punctuation could suggest it is part of the quotation, but it is found neither in the MT

---

<sup>479</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.295. But does that mean it is ominous or marvelous? Vs.31 suggests the former; vss.32ff. could suggest the latter.

nor in the LXX. If it is part of the IF, it would be unusual in the direct attribution to the covenant Lord, and the duplication of the verb λέγω in the aorist and present make for uneasy grammar.

The familiar καὶ πάλιν appears between the two quotations, most likely to indicate the omission of vs.35b, or to give them equal emphasis.

*The MT and the LXX*

| MT Deuteronomy 32:35-36a                  | LXX Deuteronomy 32:35-36a                      |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| לִי נִקְמָ וְשִׁלְמָ                      | ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀνταποδώσω                 |
| לְעֵת תְּמוּט רַגְלִים                    | ἐν καιρῷ ὅταν σφαλῆ ὁ ποὺς αὐτῶν               |
| כִּי קָרוֹב יוֹם אִידִם                   | ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἡμέρα ἀπωλείας αὐτῶν                 |
| וְחָשׁ עֲתַדְתָּ לָמוֹ                    | καὶ πάρεστιν ἔτοιμα ὑμῖν                       |
| כִּי־יִדְּיִן יְהוָה עִמּוֹ <sup>36</sup> | <sup>36</sup> ὅτι κρινεῖ κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ |
| וְעַל־עַבְדָּיו יִתְנַחֵם                 | καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ<br>παρακληθήσεται   |

*Deuteronomy 32:35-36a.* As with the quotation in Hebrews 1:6, these verses come from the Song of Moses. The introduction (vs.2) and the epilogue (vss.44-47) state that this was his final teaching as the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land. The song itself tells of God’s goodness and faithfulness towards a foolish people (vss.4-14), the people’s future prosperity and apostasy (vss.15-18), the Lord’s judgement for their lack of discernment (vss.19-25), followed by the Lord suspending judgement (vss.26-35) and the confirmation that He will come to bring justice and atonement (vss.36-43).

In Deuteronomy, the verses quoted are often understood to speak about judgement on the enemies of God’s people and the vindication of His people.<sup>481</sup> However, not unusual for a good poem, the text is a good deal more ambiguous and McConville is

<sup>480</sup> Somewhat surprisingly, the NA apparatus does not mention it, Aland, 2001, p.762. If the *lectio difficilior* is to prevail, the Byzantine text should be selected.

<sup>481</sup> So Craigie, 1983, p.387, Attridge, 1989, p.296, Ellingworth, 1993, p.542, Guthrie, 2007, p.981, Lane, 1991, p.295.

appropriately equivocal: the language itself in vss.35-36 implies the ‘just righting of wrongs’ and this could imply judgement on His people also.<sup>482</sup>

After announcing his judgement in vss.19-25, the Lord suspends it in vss.26-27 since His purposes and power might be misunderstood. This theme also appears in Moses’ mediatorial prayer in Numbers 14:15-16 at Kadesh-Barnea, the same event which is extensively referred to in Hebrews 3-4.

In the intermezzo of vss.28-33, the speaking possibly switches between Moses and the Lord,<sup>483</sup> but the content of the section is a double complaint. The first is about the enemy who do not understand that it is not them prevailing, but God giving up His people (vss.28-31); and the second is about the treacherousness of the enemy (vss.32-33).

In vss.34-35 it is unquestionably the Lord speaking again: הֲלֹא־הוּא בְּמִסַּע עִמָּדִי (‘[has] he/this not been stored up with me?’). The question is what the masculine personal pronoun refers to. It seems likely the Lord is, after the interjected complaints in vss.28-33, returning here to the topic of His suspended judgement.<sup>484</sup> This judgement was on His people (judgement on the enemies has not yet been discussed) and it is stored until a certain time.

Considering the references to ‘time’ and ‘day’ in vs.35 and the LXX translation ἐν ἡμέρᾳ, it is possible that לִי (‘to me’) in vs.35a may be a mutation or abbreviation of לַיּוֹם (‘at the day’). Resolution is outside the scope of this study; but such an understanding could fit the context.<sup>485</sup>

Reading וַי in vs.36 as an asseverative conjunction, Moses is speaking again: ‘and indeed...the Lord’s judgement will certainly come’. The verb וַיִּן is considered an archaic or poetic synonym of שָׁפַט, which has the broad meaning of governing or bringing justice; this can affect both the enemy and the people.

---

<sup>482</sup> McConville, 2002, pp.458-459 in his comments on both vs.35 and vs.36.

<sup>483</sup> Moses may start speaking in vss.28 or 30 and most likely stops with vs.33. There is also ambiguity regarding who is spoken about in vss.28-29: Israel or the enemy; or is the ambiguity to suggest both?

<sup>484</sup> It should be acknowledged that no noun referring to judgment is used in vss.26-27, but also recognized that the nouns שָׁפַט, אִיד, נָקַם and שָׁלַם (last three used in vs.35) are all masculine; BDB, no’s. 10246, 196, 6318 and 10006. The LXX has translated the personal pronoun in vs.34 with ταῦτα, which is somewhat vague, but the only list of ‘things’ it can refer to is the list of judgments in vss.19-25.

<sup>485</sup> See Ellingworth, 1993, p.542 and Kistemaker, 1961, p.45, who discerns a trend in textual tradition.

Likewise, the verb נָחַם is more wide-ranging than the English ‘to have compassion’. It originally meant ‘to take a deep breath’<sup>486</sup> and here may reflect the mixed emotions of the Lord as the scorned lover: anger, regret, love and compassion. The Lord’s love for a people who foolishly rejected Him in order to follow other gods, and His jealousy and anger in response, are described earlier in the song (vss.1-9 and 19-25). The anger against His people is still there in the rhetorical challenge to go and seek help from the foreign gods for whom they left Him (vss.37-38); and the compassion and love surface again in the appeal to return to Him, their covenant Lord (vs.39), in the promise of revenge on their enemies, and of atonement for His people at the close of the song.

The Song of Moses is one of warning and encouragement, a tension that is maintained throughout. This tension is still evident in the verses quoted in Hebrews as they refer to the suspended judgement (נָקַם) against God’s people held in store, but also to God taking a deep breath (נָחַם) as in His anger He looks at His people and once more appeals to them as their covenant Lord.

*MT-LXX differences.* One of the differences between the MT and LXX has already been noted. The latter may have read לִיּוּם, which could fit the context. This change may have caused the noun שָׁלַם to be translated as a verb.<sup>487</sup>

In vs.36a, כִּי has been translated with ὅτι, suggesting a causal link,<sup>488</sup> perhaps more strongly than the MT warrants. Vs.36b renders the passive παρακληθήσεται, giving a less than comprehensible translation (‘and He will be comforted over His servants’). As a result, the LXX may place slightly more emphasis on the certainty of the coming day of justice than on the fact it is the Lord, as opposed to the enemy, who imposes this justice. It also seems to lean towards reading in vs.36 vindication rather than the bringing of judgment.

---

<sup>486</sup> TWOT, no.1344: ‘The origin of the root seems to reflect the idea of "breathing deeply," hence the physical display of one's feelings, usually sorrow, compassion, or comfort.’

<sup>487</sup> The Hebrew allows the supply to both nouns of a verb (‘to be’), but the LXX retains the noun ‘vengeance, vindication’ and transforms the noun ‘recompense’ into ‘I will recompense’ (ἀνταποδώσω).

<sup>488</sup> So Thomas, 1965, p.315: ‘This causal participle...showed...this punishment of their enemies was the vindication of God’s people.’

*Hebrews and the LXX*

| BYZ <b>Hebrews 10:30</b>                                                                                                          | LXX <b>Deuteronomy 32:35-36a</b>                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Οἶδαμεν γὰρ τὸν εἰπόντα,<br>Ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω,<br>-<br>λέγει κύριος· καὶ πάλιν,<br>-<br>κύριος κρινεῖ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ | -<br>ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀνταποδώσω<br>ἐν καιρῷ ὅταν σφαλῆ ὁ πούς αὐτῶν ὅτι<br>ἐγγὺς ἡμέρα ἀπωλείας αὐτῶν καὶ<br>πάρεστιν ἔτοιμα ὑμῖν<br><sup>36</sup> ὅτι κρινεῖ κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The author's rendering in vs.30a deviates from the LXX and through the empathic ἐμοί and ἐγώ reflects the emphasis of the MT in 'ל. He also reflects the parallelism in the Hebrew clause, although the LXX translation with the verb ἀνταποδώσω has been retained.

Kistemaker has posited a corruption over time from the LXX-text and the Samaritan Pentateuch with 'day' towards the MT with 'I, mine'.<sup>489</sup> In addition, a Greek OT-version reflecting this corruption is assumed as a common source for both the author and Paul.<sup>490</sup> These hypotheses are usually preferred over the assumption that the author (and Paul, who had Hebrew) reverted to the MT-text.<sup>491</sup>

If λέγει κύριος is part of the quotation, it is obviously also an addition to both the MT and LXX.<sup>492</sup> Alternatively, it may result from the author quoting this text through Paul, who has it in Romans 12:19.<sup>493</sup> In this research it is assumed to be part of the IF. Although it is somewhat duplicative, it may (like in Paul's case) have been added for solemn emphasis, which would fit the context of the preceding ominous reference to the speaker and the following dark warning in vs.31.

<sup>489</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.45. He does not explain the reasons for and dynamics of such process.

<sup>490</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.542. To date, no such version has been found.

<sup>491</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.542, Guthrie, 2007, p.980 and Lane, 1991, p.295, following Katz, 1958, p.219, who assumes Hebrews is proof of a corrupted Hebrew text, which in turn is reflected in a conformed Greek version.

<sup>492</sup> Although it may be noted it is in both the MT and LXX indeed the Lord speaking. The NA-text does not have these words.

<sup>493</sup> Paul has introduced the quotation in his usual manner (γέγραπται), but then has it followed by again a somewhat redundant second 'IF', presumably to reemphasise his point that vengeance is not for his audience, but that it is claimed by the Lord Himself.

In vs.30b, the author has left out the causal particle ὅτι and has not quoted the LXX mistranslation of Deuteronomy 32:36b.

*Hebrews 10:30.* After a long expository section (Heb.4:14-10:18) on the high priest Christ, the new covenant, and His once-and-for-all sacrifice, the author concludes with an exhortation in Hebrews 10:19-39 where the urgent call to persevere in vss.19-25 is core. It is followed by a warning not to persist in sin (vss.26-31) and by an encouragement of the promised salvation - if they persevere as they did before (vss.32-39).

The warning not to continue with sin is based on an *a fortiori* argument (πόσω χείρονος, vs.29). It recalls the punishment of ‘death without mercy’ for rejection of the OT law of Moses and states, through a rhetorical question, that the punishment for one scorning Christ and the Spirit (‘trampling, insulting’) will be much more severe.

Then follows the quotation in vs.30, and the final statement on how dreadful that judgement will be.

Through the use of γάρ, the quotation serves as a further argument from the OT to support the author’s warning. As noted above, the OT reference is to judgement on the people in Deuteronomy 32:35 and in vs.36 to the double-edged sword bringing justice both to and for the people. The song contained both warning and encouragement, and the same elements are also found in Hebrews. The OT people who scorn the Lord will become subject to judgement if they do not heed the call to see that the Lord is their covenant God who saves them. The congruency with Hebrews is clear: there is the warning to a people who have received the light (vss.26, 32), but who are rejecting the Son of God (vs.26) and thus become enemies (vs.29) and who are subject to judgement, which will certainly come on the approaching day (vs.25).

The encouragement, although still laced with a warning, follows in the reference to their earlier faith, confidence and courage (vss.32-34) and the reference to the rich reward of promised salvation (vs.35).

*Analysis*

The author's dependence on the LXX deviations from the MT for his argument is not commonly argued. In fact, Howard sees vs.30a as evidence of dependence on Hebrew,<sup>494</sup> but there is a general reluctance to follow him, and another Greek *Vorlage* is frequently suggested as the author's source.<sup>495</sup>

The conclusion that the author uses the quotation without regard for its original context is regularly drawn and is often based on the view that the verses in Deuteronomy are a 'promise to vindicate his [God's] people by exacting judgement on their enemies.'<sup>496</sup> In the author's discourse, the coming judgement on God's people themselves is the crux, with the IF emphasising that it is the Lord's judgement. Attridge concludes about the author's hermeneutics: 'As usual in Hebrews, the original context does not determine the application of the text...'<sup>497</sup> Schröger qualifies the author's approach again as an application in '*reinen Literalsinn*',<sup>498</sup> which for him implies a verbatim application without any regard for the context.

But is the assumption that the author (a) in his understanding of the OT had no Hebrew, and (b) in his hermeneutical use of the OT had little respect for the original setting and meaning, indeed the most suitable to explain the 'cutting' and use of this quotation? Or is there reason to suggest he did understand the original text and did respect its original meaning?

As noted, the parallels between the situation of Israel and the author's addressees are remarkable.

---

<sup>494</sup> Howard, 1986, p.213, focuses on the difference with the LXX in vs.30a. It may also be noted there is some contextual evidence insofar as the author avoids the LXX mistranslation of the asseverative conjunction with the causal ὅτι and the complete clauses of verses 35b and 36b.

<sup>495</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.542, Guthrie, 2007, p.980 and Lane, 1991, p.295: '...departs from the LXX to follow a variant Greek textual tradition that had been conformed to the MT.', following Katz, pp.219-220, who takes the view Hebrews 'certainly agrees with our Hebrew, but the latter is inferior when compared to the text common to the Samaritan and the Septuagint.'

<sup>496</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.296. Similarly Ellingworth, 1993, p.542: 'The context in Deuteronomy refers to the coming judgment and destruction of the pagans, who are not the concern of the author of Hebrews.' Guthrie, 2007, p.981 and Schröger, 1968, p.181: 'seinem Volk Recht verschaffen'.

<sup>497</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.296.

<sup>498</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.181.

The general prophecy of the Lord coming to judge His disobedient people (Deu.32:35) with the double-edged sword of judgement and vindication (Deu.32:36) is here applied by the author to his addressees, placing the emphasis on judgement. However, the balance of warning and encouragement is also maintained. Disrespect for the context of the quotation can, therefore, not be claimed.

However, it leaves the question as to why the (partial) amendments of the LXX have been made.

The reason for not changing the verb ἀνταποδώσω back to a noun may well be that the difference in meaning is not substantive enough to risk confusing his addressees.

And if כִּי is read as asseverative rather than causal, like ὅτι, the replacement by καὶ πάλιν, apart from being the usual component of the IF to separate the quotations, is consistent with the meaning of the MT, and fits better in his sentence.

The more important change is the return (ἐμοί) to the MT (יְיָ) from the LXX (ἐν ἡμέρα) in vs.30.

The apostle Paul, who certainly had Hebrew, uses in Romans 12:19 the same words as the author. For him, the reading יְיָ is critical. He understands the Lord as saying that judgement belongs to Him as opposed to others, i.e. the enemies who thought they were in control (Deu.32:27), and Paul bases his admonition to abstain from self-revenge on this aspect. Had the emphasis for the author been eschatological, i.e. on the day of the threatened judgement, then יְיָ and the LXX with ἐν ἡμέρα would have served equally well. Or, considering his reference to ‘the day’ in Hebrews 10:25, served even better. Nonetheless, he retains neither the LXX mistranslation, nor the second reference to ‘day’ in Deuteronomy 32:35b. Although, the author would doubtless have fully confirmed the certainty of the final judgement, the emphasis does not appear to be eschatological here.

A reason for the reappearance of ἐμοί could be that the author wanted to emphasise that it was God who would come in judgement: the very one who loved them, who had given the promised Son and whom they were about to scorn by their scandalous rejection of Jesus. This emphasis is reflected in the empathic ἐμοί and ἐγώ, in vs.31, and is also, possibly, the reason for the somewhat menacing οἶδαμεν γὰρ τὸν εἰπόντα and the grammatically awkward λέγει κύριος. The author emphasises not so much the

eschatological element<sup>499</sup> or the aspect of vindication, but the personal character of the relationship they were about to reject. His addressees already knew of that judge, His love and His anger (Heb.10:30).

Unless the language used was familiar to his audience,<sup>500</sup> he risked confusing them by deviating from the LXX, but apparently the author felt strongly enough about the relevance of the MT rendering as opposed to the LXX mistranslation to do so.

*In conclusion*, to simply assume the author follows the Hebrew text provides a better explanation of his quotation, rather than to postulate the author used a Greek translation which conformed to a corruption of the Hebrew, for which there is no evidence.

He also respects the OT context, which refers to judgment *also* on His people.

#### 4.11 Hebrews 10:37-38 and Isaiah 26:20 & Habakkuk 2:3b-4

Hebrews 10:37-38 are often seen as quotations from Isaiah 20:26 and Habakkuk 2:3b-4. However if indeed quotations, they are unique in Hebrews in lacking the IF. Moreover, the use of καὶ πάλιν, to mark a transition from one quotation to the next or to mark separate clauses which each receive emphasis, is also absent. Furthermore, the author takes a significant liberty with the LXX-text in order to place his own comment in vs.39, which is *not* an exegetical comment, in apposition to the last clause of vs.38; all of which points to this being two conflated allusions.

It is, nevertheless, useful to include these verses in our review. Not only because they are often considered quotations that demonstrate particularly clearly the author's dependence on the LXX and illustrate his hermeneutical method, but also because his treatment of these allusions in fact supports the alternative hypotheses.

---

<sup>499</sup> So Guthrie, 2007, p.981.

<sup>500</sup> Either through a different *Vorlage*, or through Paul's use of the quotation. Some consider it possible the λέγει κύριος of the IF was copied from Paul (where it is his IF), e.g. Katz, 1958, pp.119-120. There is no evidence for this.

The MT and the LXX

| MT Habakkuk 2:3-4                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | LXX Habakkuk 2:3-4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>כִּי עוֹד חֲזוֹן לְמוֹעֵד וַיִּפַּח לִקְצֵן וְלֹא יִכְזֹב<br/> אִם־יִתְמַהֲמַה חֲכֵה־לוֹ כִּי־בֹא יִבֹּא לֹא־<br/> יֵאָחֵר<br/> <sup>4</sup> הֲנֵה עֹפְלָה לֹא־יִשְׁרָה נַפְשׁוֹ בּוֹ<br/> וַיִּצְדִּיק בְּאַמוֹנָתוֹ יַחְיֶה</p> | <p>διότι ἔτι ὄρασις εἰς καιρὸν καὶ ἀνατελεῖ<br/> εἰς πέρας καὶ οὐκ εἰς κενόν<br/> ἐὰν ὑστερήσῃ ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν<br/> ὅτι ἐρχόμενος ἦξει καὶ οὐ μὴ χρονίση<br/> <sup>4</sup> ἐὰν ὑποστείληται οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ<br/> μου ἐν αὐτῷ<br/> ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται</p> |

*Habakkuk 2:3-4.* The setting of Habakkuk’s prophecy is Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian conquest. It is possible that the first set of complaint and response was delivered just before the conquest and the second some time thereafter. The prophecy is in the form of a dialogue between the prophet and the Lord, with the intended audience listening in.

The prophet’s first complaint to the Lord in Habakkuk 1:2-4 is about injustice and perverse judgement prevalent in Judah. In response, the Lord tells him that He will, as a judgement, send the Babylonians and that they will in turn be a violent people, not honouring the Lord (vss.5-11).

The prophet subsequently complains in distress, questioning how the Lord could allow such wicked people to prevail (vss.12-17).

In Habakkuk 2:1, the prophet describes himself as one besieged by his difficulties and awaiting on his ramparts the answer of the Lord to his second complaint; the answer which he is to take back, presumably, to his audience listening to his dialogue with the Lord. In vs.2, the Lord announces he will receive the answer in a vision, which is not to be kept private, but to be made public, and possibly preserved for a long time. In vs.3, the Lord tells Habakkuk that the fulfilment of the vision may appear to be delayed, but he is not to give up, for it will certainly come and not a moment later than its own divinely appointed time.

The content of the vision, and arguably the core of Habakkuk’s prophecy, is presented in vs.4, following the introduction ‘Behold...!’

In vs.5, the Lord warns the prophet that, although for the proud the writing is on the wall, for now, the feasting of the proud goes on and the boastful appear to continue as usual. Nonetheless, his fate is sealed and vs.6-20 elaborate on the woes for the wicked. The prophecy concludes in chapter 3 with Habakkuk's prayerful song of reflection on the terror of Lord's judgement and of praise and joy in the Lord, his strength.

The vision itself in Habakkuk 2:4 consists of two parallel compound clauses describing the fate of the proud: 'she/it is puffed-up,<sup>501</sup> not upright – his soul in him'. And of the righteous: 'the righteous one – by/in his steadfastness he will live'. Thus, the vision declares judgement on the proud and assurance of salvation for the righteous.

For Habakkuk, this may in the first instance refer to the overthrow of the Babylonians. However, since even that event was not yet visible in Habakkuk's time and, nevertheless, both למועד ('on the appointed time') and לקץ ('to the end') are definite, the termination point of the vision may for the prophet equally well have been the final stage of God's judgement and redemption.<sup>502</sup>

The implied message for Habakkuk's listeners is to persevere, not to give up on God in the face of the ostensibly inexplicable difficulties which they encounter. Only then can they join the prophet in the joy of his closing song.

*MT-LXX differences.* The differences between the MT and LXX in Habakkuk 2:3-4 are many. Only some of them will be reviewed below.<sup>503</sup>

In vs.3b $\alpha$ , the translator has retained the third person masculine pronoun of the Hebrew text (ὁπόμεινον αὐτόν). In the MT, חכה-לו ('wait for him') most likely refers to the vision, which is masculine; although it is grammatically possible for it to refer to a third entity. Considering the context, any such third entity is most likely either the personification of the judgement which is announced in the vision, or the judge

<sup>501</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.302, suggests the form עפלה (a verb) is corrupt and most likely should be a participle (מעפל), making it a parallel with vs.4b: 'the proud – his soul is not upright in him'.

<sup>502</sup> See also Robertson, 1990, p.171, who notes: 'By the time of Daniel, the 'appointed time' and the 'end' clearly possessed eschatological significance...' and '...it is quite legitimate to see eschatological significance in Habakkuk's reference.'

<sup>503</sup> For a full review, see Gheorghita, 2003, pp.153-155.

himself. In Greek, ὄρασις is feminine; therefore, the LXX's literal translation strongly suggests the waiting is for a third person, and this is reinforced by ἐρχόμενος in vs.3bβ which is also masculine.

Reading in vs.3bβ the infinitive absolute נב as a participle, the LXX probably construed this ἐρχόμενος as personal.<sup>504</sup>

The difference in meaning with the MT, however, is not as significant as it may seem, since the 'waiting' in the Hebrew text must also refer to the *fulfilment* of the vision. The vision itself had already come: the prophet was writing it.

Nevertheless, this LXX translation is not without difficulties.

In vs.4a the LXX translates הנה ('behold'), which in the MT marks the beginning of the vision, with the conditional particle εἰν ('if'), which seems to link the subject of vs.4a with the third person of vs.3bβ, unless a pronoun (e.g. τὸς) is supplied.

In addition, the verb עפלה ('she/it [the soul of the wicked] is puffed-up') is translated using ὑποστέλλω ('to shrink back'), the verb ישרה ('she is upright') becomes εὐδοκεῖ ('is pleased with') and two of the third person masculine suffices in vs.4a-b of the MT are read as first person pronouns.

As a result, the first clause of the vision in the LXX now reads: 'if he shrinks back, my soul takes no pleasure in him'. It is a long way from the MT and the meaning is unclear. Who is shrinking back – a messiah of LXX-Habakkuk? And if it is the judge/judgement of vs.3bβ, what is left of Habakkuk's message about the certainty of the vision?

And in the second clause, the just is now said to live by *my* (μου), rather than *his*, faith(-fullness).

Several suggestions for emendation have been made regarding these divergences,<sup>505</sup> but they suggest more confusion than a deliberate messianic leaning in the LXX.

---

<sup>504</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.302.

<sup>505</sup> See Attridge, 1989, p.302, Schröger, 1968, p.184. In addition, numerous suggestions have been made for emendations or variants of both the MT and LXX, see Gheorghita, 2003, pp.160-170 and 170-175 respectively. We follow his conclusion (although in his conclusion he prints the Hebrews-text, rather than the LXX-text) that there are no compelling reasons to deviate from the MT or LXX text.

*Hebrews and the LXX*

| BYZ <b>Hebrews 10:37-38</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | LXX <b>Habakkuk 2:3-4</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Ἔτι γὰρ μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον,<br/><br/>                     Ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἤξει, καὶ οὐ χρονιεῖ.<br/> <sup>38</sup> Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται·<br/>                     καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ<br/>                     ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ.</p> | <p>-<br/>                     διότι ἔτι ὄρασις εἰς καιρὸν καὶ ἀνατελεῖ<br/>                     εἰς πέρας καὶ οὐκ εἰς κενόν<br/>                     ἐὰν ὑστερήσῃ ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν<br/>                     ὅτι ἐρχόμενος ἤξει καὶ οὐ μὴ χρονίση<br/> <sup>4</sup> ἐὰν ὑποστείληται οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ<br/>                     μου ἐν αὐτῷ<br/>                     ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται</p> |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* Three, or in the NA-text four, differences can be identified between Hebrews and the LXX.

οὐ μὴ χρονίση (aorist subjunctive) becomes οὐ χρονιεῖ (indicative future), but the negation is not thought to be less emphatic.<sup>506</sup>

The pronoun μου, the mistranslation in LXX-Habakkuk 2:4b ('my faithfulness' or 'faith in me'), is either attached to the subject ('my righteous one') in the NA-text or, in the Byzantine text, eliminated altogether.

The author also supplies the definite article before ἐρχόμενος, suggesting, even more strongly than the LXX, that a person is coming. Thus the question arises who this might be.

The most drastic change is the reversed sequence of the two clauses of Habakkuk 2:4.<sup>507</sup> The effect is that ὁ δίκαιος is the likely subject of ὑποστείληται.

If this subject is a particular person (more likely in the NA-text, because of the retention of μου), namely, the one who is also ὁ ἐρχόμενος, the unclarity of the LXX remains: who is this coming one who may withdraw?

If δίκαιος is read as a generic singular, the clause becomes a warning for the righteous not to withdraw.

<sup>506</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.554, Wallace, 1996, p.468.

<sup>507</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.554, suggests the author may have had a different source, but Gheorghita in his extensive review of the variants, pp.170-175, reports no such alternative.

The change also allows the author to place the clause in apposition to the concluding, positive note of his exhortation in vs.39: ‘But we do not withdraw...’.

*Hebrews 10:37-38.* As noted before, the second main section of the Epistle ends with an extensive exhortation in Hebrews 10:19-39. Since they have Christ as their high priest (vss.19-21), the believers are told to approach God with boldness (παρρησία), to hold fast their confession, and to stir each other up to live in faith as they see the day<sup>508</sup> approaching (vss.22-25). Those who fail, the readers are warned, will face the judgement God has announced (vss.26-31). The exhortation is resumed with the imperative to remember (ἀναμιμνήσκεσθε δέ) their earlier commitment and not to abandon their παρρησία, which has great reward, for (γάρ) through endurance in doing God’s will they will receive the promise (vss.32-36).

Vss.37-38 then give a reason (γάρ) for either not abandoning their boldness or for continuing to do God’s will: ‘for yet in very a little while ὁ ἐρχόμενος will come’.

The allusion to Isaiah 26:20 in the first clause places the hearers in a context of waiting for God’s judgement to be executed shortly.<sup>509</sup> The next clause does the same. The phrase in Habakkuk alluded to here, refers to either the imminent arrival of the fulfilment of the vision, i.e. the judgement; or to the judge who will bring this fulfilment. In Habakkuk, God is the one who acts. Similarly, the most likely antecedent in Hebrews 10:37 is God, who is mentioned in vs.36 and in vs.30 has announced He will bring judgment.

However, – taking δέ as mildly adversarial and δίκαιος as a generic singular - the just will have nothing to fear in the judgement; he will live by (his) faith. The author deletes<sup>510</sup> the LXX mistranslation (μου) but does not deviate so much as to replace it with αὐτοῦ, though that is probably implied. There is only limited textual support for Hebrews following the LXX in attaching μου to πίστεως (‘My, [i.e. God’s], faithfulness’).<sup>511</sup>

---

<sup>508</sup> Most likely of judgment, either for Jerusalem (so Geertsema, 2001, pp.136-138) or in the eschaton (e.g. Lane, 1991, pp.277 and 290).

<sup>509</sup> The judgment in Isaiah 26:20 is, as in Habakkuk, not on God’s people, but on other people.

<sup>510</sup> Or in the NA-text attaches it to δίκαιος.

<sup>511</sup> See Aland, 2001, p.763. In the NA-text of Hebrews the author follows LXX A. According to the Byzantine-text the author has deleted μου and it may be noted that Paul, who certainly read Hebrew, does the same in Gal.3:11 and Rom.1:17. Any difference with the Pauline use of the quotation falls outside the scope of this study.

The incomprehensible LXX-text is amended, by changing the sequence of the clauses, into a warning in vs.38b for the just to persevere and not to draw back. Otherwise, the message is, they may have to fear the coming judgement. However, this message is implied and not exegetically spelled out.

Nor does the next verse present an exegetical conclusion derived from the text; rather in contrast, it gives an encouragement, thus ending the exhortative section of vss.19-39 on a positive note: we do not draw back, but are preserved in the judgement.

### *Analysis*

Ellingworth observes that the author depended on the LXX translation ἐρχόμενος and reinforced a personal understanding by adding the definite article ὁ, making it a reference to Christ.<sup>512</sup> These changes, says Schröger,<sup>513</sup> make it easy for the author to read in Habakkuk a messianic reference to the second coming of Christ.

Thus, in ‘quoting’ Habakkuk 2:4-LXX, he follows the mistranslation of the verb עָפַל (‘to be puffed up’ with ὑποστέλλω: ‘to draw back’), the peculiar LXX translation of the verb יָשָׁר (‘to be straight’ with εὐδοκέω: ‘to be pleased’) and the misreading of the pronominal suffixes to ‘soul’ and ‘faith’. It is through using this LXX quotation and its reference to God’s displeasure with the believer who draws back that the author supports his final conclusion to the exhortation. According to this view it clearly demonstrates his dependency on the LXX.<sup>514</sup>

Schröger concludes that the author uses a *midrash-pesher* approach to the text and others see ‘the author again working on the principle of verbal analogy’<sup>515</sup> with the common reference ἐρχόμενος as the key-word in this and the earlier Psalm 40 quotation. However, Schröger thinks the author can be excused: he could only read

---

<sup>512</sup> So e.g. Ellingworth, 1993, p.554. In addition, he notes the change from an aorist subjunctive, χρονίσθη, to a future indicative increases emphasis.

<sup>513</sup> Schröger, 1968, pp.183-184.

<sup>514</sup> E.g. Gheorghita, 2003, p.179 and Attridge, 1989, p.301.

<sup>515</sup> Guthrie, 2007, p.982.

the LXX<sup>516</sup> and thus understand ἐρχόμενος of the coming messiah. While he considers the MT as ultimately eschatological,<sup>517</sup> it is the LXX which articulates this in such a way that the text becomes messianic. And this is considered key for the author, whose ‘theology here is overtly messianic’.<sup>518</sup>

But is the assumption that the author (a) did not notice the deviations between the MT and LXX - even depended on such deviations, and (b) in his hermeneutical use of the OT had little respect for the original setting and meaning, indeed the most fitting to explain his use of this reference to Habakkuk? Or is assuming that he was aware of and respected the MT a better explanation? Indeed, why is the IF omitted in this case?

The hypothesis that the author relied on (i) the messianic leaning of the LXX translation and applied the text in a *midrash-pesher* hermeneutical approach, zeroing in on the words ‘the coming one’ as a reference to Christ coming in judgement; and (ii) the mistranslation ‘withdraw’ to extract a warning for his audience, leaves a number of questions unanswered.

It explains neither the omission of the usual components of the IF nor the unusual degree of liberty the author takes with the text, which causes it to deviate meaningfully not only from the MT, but also from the LXX.

The alternative hypothesis is that the author, in his continued exhortation to persevere, desired to use Habakkuk’s encouragement, implied in his vision of God’s coming judgement and salvation. However, he noticed the LXX translation of Habakkuk 2:3b-4 was poor, making the text incomprehensible. Therefore, he decided to make the necessary minimum amendment to the LXX-text and no longer present it as an authoritative quotation preceded by the IF.

In his changes, the author continued to respect the context of the allusion to the coming judgement.<sup>519</sup> However, whereas Habakkuk’s vision, in order to encourage the listeners to persevere, speaks of an inevitable twofold judgement (on the proud

---

<sup>516</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.187.

<sup>517</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.187:: ‘Grundsätzlich ist aber auch dem hebräischen Text die eschatologische Ausrichtung nicht abzusprechen.’

<sup>518</sup> Guthrie, 2007, p.984.

<sup>519</sup> This also applies to the allusion to Isaiah 26:20. This song of victory for Judah also encourages the just to persevere in the face of certain and imminent judgment and salvation.

and the just), the author does not elaborate on the fate of the wicked, but only applies the encouragement and warning to the righteous.

The ambiguity of vs.3b in the MT, between either the fulfilment of the vision (judgement) or the judge coming, is not particularly relevant for the author, since in both cases it is ultimately God acting. While the passage in Hebrews (and in Habakkuk) is likely to have an eschatological perspective in its pointing to the Day of Judgement,<sup>520</sup> any messianic leaning in the LXX is not critical to his argument, nor is any perceived change from God to Christ as the coming judge.<sup>521</sup> The addition of *ὁ* may simply be because he starts the allusion there and the reference to a person indicates a reference back to God in vs.36.

The clause about the proud in Habakkuk 2:4a, which his audience had in the LXX in front of them, was mistranslated and useless. It is not reconstructed by the author possibly for two reasons: (a) such radical surgery of the LXX would have confused his audience and raised too many questions and doubts as to the reliability of the OT-text; and (b) the fate of the unbelievers was not his concern in this exhortation. He turns it, by changing the sequence of the clauses, into a warning to the just, leading to an encouraging final note; thus expanding and explicating that aspect of Habakkuk's message.

In vs.4b, he rejected the LXX misunderstanding of 'My [i.e. God's] faithfulness', which was neither Habakkuk's message, nor useful for his argument. By eliminating *μου*, he implicitly reverts to the MT: the faithfulness of the just.

Intent on evoking the prophets' message to the just, he uses Habakkuk's prophecy through an *allusion*, conscientiously marking it as such through the absence of the IF. This also gave him the liberty to reverse the clauses in vs.38, without the usual *καὶ πάλιν*, thus placing it apposition to his concluding encouragement.

---

<sup>520</sup> So Attridge, 1989, p.301, Guthrie, 2007, p.982.

<sup>521</sup> There is no reason to understand the passage as 'overtly messianic', *contra* Guthrie, 2007, p.984.

In his hermeneutical method, the author either understood Habakkuk's prophecy as eschatological,<sup>522</sup> which is compatible with the OT text, or he sees a double fulfilment of his prophecy,<sup>523</sup> first for the OT believers in the overthrow of the Babylonians, and, secondly, for all believers in the final judgement. In that case, the prophecy is understood to have a *sensus plenior*.

The contexts of Isaiah, Habakkuk and Hebrews are congruent: God's coming to judge is a warning/encouragement for His people to persevere.

*In conclusion:* While the author respects the context, possibly assuming the Habakkuk prophecy has a *sensus plenior*, he recognised the LXX translation as confused, eliminated one disturbing mistake (μου) and otherwise decided not to present it as a quotation, but to use it as an allusion.

#### 4.12 Hebrews 12:5-6 and Proverbs 3:11-12

These verses in Hebrews are generally thought to be sourced from Proverbs 3:11-12. When considering it a quotation, rather than an allusion, it must at least be conceded that this is a special case. The IF is unusual and does not directly introduce God as the speaker. The subject of διαλέγεται is 'the exhortation' of Proverbs, i.e. Scripture itself, and speaks of God in the third person.

In the following comments, applying it to his audience, the author uses the language of the Proverbs-text, but no exegetical conclusions are derived from it; the frequent conjunctions διό or γάρ are missing.<sup>524</sup> Only the whole section of vss.4-11 is concluded in vs.12 with a διό, but that introduces a rather broadly formulated admonition to persevere.

Indirectly, however, the speaker is God (see below) and since the author's comment is relatively extensive, it is included in this review.

---

<sup>522</sup> As noted above, so Robertson, 1990, p.171, and Guthrie, 2007, p.982.

<sup>523</sup> So also Guthrie, 2007, p.982.

<sup>524</sup> Although the distinction of exegesis versus application should not be pressed too hard, Guthrie 2007, p.986, does describe the following comments as exposition. He translates εἰς παιδείαν ὑπομένετε as 'With reference to discipline, endure'.

## The MT and the LXX

| MT Proverbs 3:11-12                                                                                                                                                | LXX Proverbs 3:11-12                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>מוֹסֵר יְהוָה בְּנֵי אֶל־תִּמְאָס<br/> וְאֶל־תִּקַּץ בְּתוֹכְחָתוֹ<br/> <sup>12</sup> כִּי אֵת אֲשֶׁר יֵאָהֵב יְהוָה יוֹכִיחַ<br/> וּכְאֵב אֶת־בֶּן יִרְצֶה</p> | <p>υἱέ μὴ ὀλιγώρει παιδείας κυρίου<br/> μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος<br/> <sup>12</sup> ὄν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος παιδεύει<br/> μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὄν παραδέχεται</p> |

*Proverbs 3:11-12*. Introducing his words as the book of the proverbs of Israel's wise king Solomon to teach wisdom and discipline (MT: מוֹסֵר, חִכְמָה; LXX: σοφία, παιδεία), the teacher proceeds to speak in the role of the father to a son in Proverbs 1:8 in words similar to Proverbs 3:11a: שְׁמַע בְּנֵי מוֹסֵר אָבִיךָ ('Hear, my son, the instruction of your father'). Alternatively, he seems to speak as a woman, Wisdom, who as Waltke notes, personifies either God's attribute of wisdom or Solomon's inspired wisdom. The teaching often refers to God in the third person, and it is at times 'as difficult to distinguish Wisdom's speech from the father's as it is to distinguish from style and substance whether the Lord or the father is speaking...'.<sup>525</sup> Similarly, the 'son' is also used in 'an extended, non-literal sense'.<sup>526</sup>

The section from which the quotation is taken (Proverbs 3:1-12), is the third of a number of lectures by the father, this one on the son's obligations and the Lord's promises. In Waltke's analysis, it takes the form of a series of admonitions to the son (keep my commands; hold on to unfailing love; trust, fear and honour the Lord), which are followed by promises (life and peace, favour with God and people, a straight path, healing and prosperity). Furthermore, he notes, the promises are of such a nature that '[o]nly the Lord can give the reciprocal rewards'.<sup>527</sup>

From the concluding verses, it appears the son has not kept his obligations and has been punished. He is now admonished not to despise or resent the Lord's discipline,

<sup>525</sup> Waltke, 2004, pp.86-87.

<sup>526</sup> So Ellingworth, 1993, p.647. This possibly explains the addition in Pro.3:12 of πάντα in the LXX 'every son/child').

<sup>527</sup> Waltke, 2004, p.239.

since by it the Lord manifests His love. Thus, it implied a warning for his benefit, like a father's rebuke to his son.

*MT-LXX differences.* A number of divergences between the MT and LXX can be observed.

First, the LXX omits the possessive pronoun in the address 'my son'.

Secondly, the noun מוסר ('discipline, correction') and the related verb יסר ('to correct, instruct'), which have an element of punishment or correction resulting in education,<sup>528</sup> are translated with παιδεία or its cognates, which in classical Greek carry the connotation of education and training, but in the NT also gravitate towards correction.<sup>529</sup> The LXX uses the same stem (παιδεύει) in vs.12a, where the MT has יכח, ('to rebuke, correct'), possibly with a more forensic meaning of discerning between right and wrong. The Hebrew noun תוכחה ('reproof') also derives from this stem, but is translated with the participle ἐλεγχόμενος ('being reproofed').

Thirdly, the verb קין ('to detest') has been translated with ἐκλύω ('to grow weary'), which the author used in Hebrews 12:3.

Finally, the LXX translators possibly read כאב ('like a father') as the Hiphil from the verb כאב ('to cause pain') and translated as μαστιγοῦ.<sup>530</sup> In Greek, this verb often means 'to beat with a whip' and carries no connotations of education.<sup>531</sup> As a result, the MT's explicit comparison of the Lord to a father has disappeared, though one can argue that when speaking of a son, a father is implied. And, while it probably should not be exaggerated, the LXX appears less consistent than the MT, veering from παιδεία (beneficial correction) to the extreme of the whip.

The other differences are considered less important.<sup>532</sup>

---

<sup>528</sup> TWOT, no.865; Waltke, 2004, p.249.

<sup>529</sup> Thayer, no.3928.

<sup>530</sup> Bruce, 1964, p.359, suggests the verb may have been the original reading; Waltke, 2004, p.237-238, disagrees. In the eight times the verb occurs in the OT it is never translated with μαστιγόω.

<sup>531</sup> Louw-Nida, no.19.9, 38.11. Even in the stern saying of Proverbs 13:24 the שִׁבְתָּ ('rod, staff': the shepherd's implement or an instrument for remedial punishment, see TWOT, no.2314) is used to achieve מוסר ('correction which results in education', TWOT, no.0877)

<sup>532</sup> E.g. (i) the translation παραδέχεται ('to receive'), possibly the consequence of reading instead of the Qal of the verb רצה ('to be pleased') the Niphal ('to be favorably received'), and (ii) the LXX supplying πάστα.

Hebrews and the LXX

BYZ Hebrews 12:5-6

LXX Proverbs 3:11-12

καὶ ἐκλέλησθε τῆς παρακλήσεως, ἥτις ὑμῖν ὡς υἱοῖς διαλέγεται, Ὑἱέ μου, μὴ ὀλιγώρει παιδείας κυρίου, μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος·<sup>6</sup> ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος παιδεύει· μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται.

-  
υἱέ μὴ ὀλιγώρει παιδείας κυρίου μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος  
<sup>12</sup> ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος παιδεύει μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The sole, but notable, difference between Hebrews and the LXX is the addition of μου in vs.5b.

*Hebrews 12:5-6.* The cloud of witnesses in chapter 11 is followed in chapter 12 by an exhortation, introduced by an empathic conjunction (τοιγαροῦν), to run the race with endurance (vss.1-3), an explanation of the reason for and benefit of hardship (vss.4-11), and concluded with yet another exhortation to persevere (vss.12-13).

The author's audience, faced with hardship and the distraction of sin, is encouraged to run the race, fixing their attention (ἀφορῶντες) on Jesus. He, facing the hardship, persevered and prevailed. It is He, τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτήν, who initiates and completes their faith. Nor is it only by example that He leads;<sup>533</sup> His perfect obedience and sacrifice on the cross complete the basis for their restored relation with God referred to later in vs.10b. Now they are to consider (ἀναλογίσασθε) Him, His suffering and exaltation so that they may not be discouraged.

In the vss.4-11, the author explains that they are to view hardship as an encouragement. In their difficulties, which have not gone as far as those of Jesus, they have forgotten a word from God in Proverbs.<sup>534</sup> There, the father tells his son: do not reject discipline which is for your benefit; you receive it because God loves you as His child. To encourage them, the author makes two points: when receiving discipline (i) it confirms God is their father and that they are treated as His children; and (ii) it is for their benefit.

<sup>533</sup> See Lane, 1991, p.412: 'The phrase reiterates and makes explicit what was affirmed with a quotation of Scripture in Hebrews 2:13, that Jesus in his earthly life was the perfect exemplar of trusting in God.'

<sup>534</sup> Whether the clause is a question, or not, it amounts to a rebuke.

The first point is elaborated in vss.7-8. The father-child relationship is heavily emphasised through the repetition of ὡς υἱοῦς before and after the quotation and of υἱὸς at its beginning and end. Likewise, the concept of father, although absent from the LXX, is referred to three times in vss.7-10. The point is explicitly made in vs.7a.

The second point is expounded in vss.9-11. The author begins a new argument through the conjunction εἶτα and then builds an *a fortiori* argument (πολλῶ μᾶλλον) as follows: our human fathers disciplined us for a little while as best as they could (κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν). The question of how much good that did is left hanging, but we respected them for it. However, God in heaven<sup>535</sup> corrects us for our good (τὸ συμφέρον), so we should all the more submit to his discipline and live. In vs.11, he re-emphasises that discipline, although at the time unpleasant, is for their benefit.

Throughout both points, the author consistently uses παιδεία, or its cognates; twice in the quotation, six times in the following comments. He never uses the concept of μαστιγῶ which he found in the LXX. The encouragement derives from the fact their hardship is not meaningless castigation, but instructive correction within a covenantal or familial relationship.<sup>536</sup>

The section concludes (διό) with an exhortation to persevere in the race, in words alluding to Isaiah 35:3 and Proverbs 4:26.

### Analysis

Schröger observes that the author cannot be held responsible for the deviations in his quotation from the MT, since he only cites the LXX.<sup>537</sup> However, the reintroduction of μου leads Kistemaker to say: '[it] would almost leave the impression that the author of this Epistle was acquainted with the Hebrew language.'<sup>538</sup> However, he notes other deviations have not been corrected and does not draw this conclusion. He sees it, as

---

<sup>535</sup> Lane, 1991, p.424, suggests the phrase τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων emphasises God's transcendence as opposed to the human fathers. There is however no need to attribute its use to the LXX. The MT knows a similar expression in the MT: אלהי הרוחה (Num.16:22 and 27:16).

<sup>536</sup> Lane, 1991, p.420. It is also interesting to note he translates μαστιγῶ with 'corrective punishment', in a footnote explaining he finds this addition necessary to stress the positive notion in this context, p.401.

<sup>537</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.148.

<sup>538</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.51.

many others do, as a ‘natural expansion rather than a following of the Hebrew text’.<sup>539</sup> Both maintain the author had no Hebrew.

The author’s argument is not usually seen to depend on the LXX-text. Only Gheorghita suggests that the LXX translation of  $\mu\alpha\sigma\tau\iota\gamma\omicron\iota$  provides the author with ‘a more overt reference to physical punishment, which is absent from the Hebrew text’ and serves ‘as reinforcement of the author’s thought in this section’.<sup>540</sup> He does not elaborate as to why this is so. If anything, vs.4 suggests the author’s audience may have been under pressure, though not yet subject to physical violence.

The descriptions of the author’s hermeneutical method differ.

Kistemaker calls the vs.7ff. *midrash pesher*, but Attridge disagrees, saying it is hardly an example of *pesher*.<sup>541</sup> He refers to Schröger, who qualifies this as a literal application of the text: ‘die Worte werden im *reinen Literalsinn* angeführt’<sup>542</sup> and prefers to describe the hermeneutical method as *midrash haggadah*.

Lane also agrees that the emphasis is on the application of the text and classifies it as *paraenetic midrash*. *Midrash*, since it actualises the authority of a biblical text for a present situation, and *paraenetic*, since it ‘recognizes that the purpose of the exposition is explicitly hortatory, as distinct from an exposition structured upon an exegetical or narrative basis.’<sup>543</sup>

*Midrash* is often associated with an a-contextual use of the text, and while he does not actually state this conclusion in his review of this quotation, Schröger’s qualification of its use as *reinen Literalsinn* seems to suggest the same.<sup>544</sup>

But is the view that the author (a) in his quotation was unfamiliar with Hebrew, and (b) in his hermeneutics applied the text with little respect for the original setting and

---

<sup>539</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.648. Similarly: Attridge, 1989, p.361, Guthrie, 2007, p.987, Kistemaker, 1961, p.52, Schröger, 1968, p.188. Also McCullough, 1980, p.377, who notes with Kistemaker other corrections are not made (i.e. the mistranslation of  $\kappa\alpha\iota$ ) and in addition observes the author did not conform his *Vorlage* to the MT, because ‘it is not characteristic of the author, who usually quotes the Septuagint without regard for the MT.’ This is begging the question.

<sup>540</sup> Gheorghita, 2003, p.50.

<sup>541</sup> Kistemaker, 1961, p.75, Attridge, 1989, p.361.

<sup>542</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.189.

<sup>543</sup> Lane, 1991, p.406.

<sup>544</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.259: ‘Unter Literalsinn (oder Wortsinn) is der Sinn verstanden, der unmittelbar in den Worten liegt und sich durch die Erklärung des Wortlautes ergibt.’

meaning, indeed the most plausible understanding of his use of this quotation? Or are there clear indications he read the Hebrew text and respected its original meaning?

There is both textual and contextual evidence to suggest that the author, indeed, understood the Hebrew.

The textual evidence is his reintroduction of μου. The addition is indeed natural, and this would be a reason for him not to worry that his audience might be disturbed by the more intimate address 'my son'. However, this would not in itself be a reason to supply it as neither grammar nor readability requires it. The motivation for doing so is more likely that he realized the pronoun was in the MT in the first place.<sup>545</sup>

The contextual evidence is found in the author's frequent use of παιδεία and πατήρ and the avoidance in his comments of μαστιγῶν noted above.

The verb μαστιγῶν is in the LXX most often the translation of נכה (Hiphil: 'to smite/beat', e.g. the Israelites by the Egyptians) or its synonym נגג. It has never had the connotation of painful correction for education. In fact, elsewhere in Proverbs, it is the opposite: e.g. even if one beats the fool, he never learns.<sup>546</sup> Only once, in Proverbs 3:12, is it the translation of a perceived verb כּאב. In the NT, it is mainly used for the scourging.<sup>547</sup>

Contra Gheorghita, it seems much more likely that the author recognized the LXX mistranslation and, in the following comment, carefully avoided using this verb altogether. Instead, six times he uses the much more appropriate concept of παιδεία and its cognates, even where in vs.11 he explicitly refers to the painful effects of discipline.

While through this mistranslation the reference to a father has gone from the LXX, the author refers to him in his comment three times. In speaking about children, a father is obviously implied and this may again have given him comfort that his audience would not be disturbed by him doing so, but a strong reason for reintroducing the father was most likely that he, looking at the Hebrew, recognized it as original.

---

<sup>545</sup> Howard, 1986, p.215, also concludes to dependence on a Hebrew text.

<sup>546</sup> Proverbs 17:10, 19:25 (where, if we follow the NKJ, the two verbs נכה ('to beat') and יכח ('to rebuke, correct') are contrasted) and 27:22.

<sup>547</sup> E.g. of Jesus (Mat.20:19, Mar.10:34, Luk.18:33) and of believers (Mat.10:17, 23:34, Heb.11:36).

The son, in Proverbs, had apparently not followed the earlier advice of his father and received correction. The quoted verses encourage him not to reject this discipline, since it reflects the father's love.

The author's audience may have encountered hardship and was about to give up. He encourages them by pointing out that hardship is to be seen as discipline (vs.7a) by God; it confirms His love for them and is for their benefit.

The use of the quotation is a paraenetic application, and there is no reason to suggest the author did not respect the context of his quotation. The general wisdom-teaching of Proverbs is applied to his audience, which finds itself in similar circumstances to the son in Proverbs.

*In conclusion*, there is textual (re-introduction of μου) and contextual (references to the father, but not to μαστιγώω) evidence that the author read the Hebrew text. He also did respect the context in Proverbs. General wisdom teaching about the benefits of persevering in trusting the Lord, even when experiencing His loving, paternal correction, is applied to an audience which apparently also felt under pressure.

#### **4.13 Hebrews 12:26b and Haggai 2:6**

This verse in Hebrews is generally recognised as a quotation from Haggai 2:6. The IF has the common feature, λέγων, but, being preceded by νῦν δὲ ἐπήγγελλται, is unusual in its format.

νῦν δέ is adversative in setting up a juxtaposition with τότε, and νῦν is probably also temporal in pointing out that this speaking happened (ἐπήγγελλται, a perfect middle) subsequent to the event at Sinai. The use of this verb is also unusual in an IF and will be considered below.

The MT and the LXX

| MT Haggai 2:6                                                                                                                                           | LXX Haggai 2:6                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת<br/> עוֹד אֶחַת מְעַט הִיא וְאֲנִי מְרַעִישׁ<br/> אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ<br/> וְאֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־הַחֲרָבָה</p> | <p>διότι τάδε λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ<br/> ἔτι ἄπαξ ἐγὼ σεισω<br/> τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν<br/> καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηρὰν</p> |

*Haggai 2:6.* The setting of Haggai’s prophecy is the year 520 B.C. when the remnant of Israel has returned to Jerusalem. Unfortunately, the joyous event has turned into a disappointment and the rebuilding of the temple, the centre of Israel’s spiritual and political life, has ground to a halt as the people are disinterested or dispirited.

The prophet’s first message (Hag.1:1-11) is a warning and exhortation not to prioritise their personal comfort over the temple. His warning: ‘give careful thought to...’<sup>548</sup> is similar to the author’s repeated ‘consider/fix your thoughts on...’.<sup>549</sup> But as the people respond positively and return to the work (Hag.1:12-15), they are also overwhelmed by despair as they realise the temple will never regain its former beauty.

The prophet responds with an encouragement from the Lord to their leaders, the high priest Joshua and the Davidide, Zerubbabel (Hag.2:1-9). On, or shortly after, the day upon which the foundation of the temple was laid, the prophet concludes with two messages, one to the people (Hag.2:10-19): disobedience in the past was punished, but now their obedience will be blessed. In the other, final message (Hag.2:20-23), in language reminiscent of the Davidic covenant, Zerubbabel is told of an eschatological judgement in which he, presumably through a descendent, will be confirmed as God’s chosen representative to rule the world.

Considering (i) the awareness of the messianic overtones of the Davidic covenant,<sup>550</sup> (ii) Israel’s depressing actual situation, and even more (iii) the scope of the announced judgement in Haggai 2:6-9, 21-22, it appears likely that the prophecy was at the time

<sup>548</sup> Haggai 1:5, 7; 2:15, 18

<sup>549</sup> E.g. Hebrews 3:1; 12:3

<sup>550</sup> See §3.1.

understood as possibly regarding the monarchy, but certainly as eschatological or even messianic.<sup>551</sup>

The quotation is taken from the exhortation to Israel's leaders to be strong in the face of their despair about the temple (Haggai 2:1-9). The temple was seen as God's footstool; it symbolized His presence in their midst. But, with the limited resources of the remnant of a subjected nation, no matter how hard they tried, this temple would not regain the beauty of Solomon's. This may have raised doubts as to whether God would be present and, as a sign of that presence, fill it with His glory again.<sup>552</sup>

The prophet's response is twofold: the Lord is already present (vss.4b, 5b), and, in final judgement, His glory will come and bring peace (vss.6-9).

In the second part of the quotation, vs.6b, the comprehensiveness of the judgement is described. In the following verses, this totality is elaborated (vss.7a, 8) and in addition, in vs.7b, the Lord repeats His promise that He will be with them and His glory will fill the temple as the cloud filled the tabernacle.

Of the quotation vs.6aβ, עוֹד אֶחָת מְעַט הִיא, is notoriously difficult.

עוֹד, by itself, normally means 'yet, still, again' and has an element of continuance.<sup>553</sup>

This is reflected in many English translations 'once more'; it allows, or suggests, one more event in a possible series of many. However, the expression עוֹד מְעַט occurs seven times, nearly always in a similar context of a following judgement, where it means 'in a little while'.<sup>554</sup>

The feminine cardinal, אֶחָת, also poses a problem: as an adjective it usually follows the noun it modifies, but can here only be connected with הִיא, since מְעַט is masculine. The alternative is to assume adverbial use<sup>555</sup> with a verb to be supplied.

Finally, the emphatic use of this feminine personal pronoun is usually left untranslated altogether,<sup>556</sup> presumably since its referent is unclear.

---

<sup>551</sup> So Kistemaker, 1961, p.54, Schröger, 1968, p.194.

<sup>552</sup> Note the references not only to the glory of the temple (Hag.2:3, 9), but also to God's assurance of His presence and *filling* the temple with His glory (Hag.2:4, 5, 7)

<sup>553</sup> BDB, no.6851.

<sup>554</sup> TWOT, no.1228a. The texts are: Psalm 37:10, Isaiah 10:25, Isaiah 29:17, Jeremiah 51:33, Hosea 1:4 and Haggai 2:6. The LXX usually translates with ἔτι ὀλίγον or ἔτι μικρόν. Stand-alone מְעַט means 'a little'.

<sup>555</sup> Waltke and O'Connor, 1990, p.275, e.g. Psalm 89:35 'once-and-for-all I have sworn...' and 2 Kings 6:10.

<sup>556</sup> Even when literal translations are analysed, e.g. Mackay, 2003, p.38, Verhoef, 1987, p.101.

To come to a resolution, it may be helpful to look at the preceding vss.4b-5, where one also notes some differences with the LXX.

| MT Haggai 2:4b-5                                                                                                                                                                  | LXX Haggai 2:4b-5                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>כִּי־אֲנִי אֶתְכֶם נָאִים יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת<br/> אֶת־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־פָּרַתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּצֵאתְכֶם<br/> מִמִּצְרַיִם<br/> וְרוּחִי עִמָּדְתָּ בְּתוֹכְכֶם אֲלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל</p> | <p>διότι μεθ' ὑμῶν ἐγώ εἰμι λέγει κύριος<br/> παντοκράτωρ<br/> -<br/> <sup>5</sup> καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐφέστηκεν ἐν μέσῳ<br/> ὑμῶν θαρσεῖτε</p> |

A number of observations can be made.

The Lord motivates His exhortation to be strong with the parallel statements that (i) He is with them, i.e. they are not to fear He will refuse to take up residence in this lesser temple (vs.4b), and (ii) that His Spirit is abiding in their midst (vs.5b). The participle used, עמדה ('standing, remaining'), denotes continuous action and, since the verb is unusual in connection with the Spirit, may allude to the related noun עמוד which is also used for the 'pillar' of cloud representing God's presence in the tabernacle (Exo.14:24).<sup>557</sup>

The phrasing and the parallelism with vs.4b suggests vs.5b is not so much a reference to the Holy Spirit and a possible work of regeneration, but really a second reference to the presence of God.

Between these parallel clauses, the MT has a sentence sometimes considered a gloss since it is missing in several versions including the LXX. The combination דבר ('word') with כרת ('to cut', normally paired with ברית, covenant) is unusual and is frequently read as 'my word of promise', i.e. 'what I covenanted'.<sup>558</sup> The clause, which reminds the prophet's audience that the Lord had promised His presence of old,

<sup>557</sup> Verhoef, 1987, p.100 and TWOT, no.1637c.

<sup>558</sup> E.g. ESV, NKJ, NIV. For further comments on the object-marker and translation alternatives see Verhoef, 1987, p.99 and Taylor and Clendenen, 2004, 152-157.

evokes both Israel's redemption from Egypt (which was at the same time judgment on Egypt) and the covenant-making at Sinai.<sup>559</sup>

Returning to the clause in vs.6aβ, it may be noted that the most likely antecedent for the emphatic pronoun, **היא**, is God's Spirit mentioned in vs.5b.<sup>560</sup> This suggests **היא ואני** is, like vss.4b and 5b, again a double reference to the Lord and the clause might be translated: 'in a little while it (i.e. My Spirit) [will be/come] once-and-for-all and I will shake...'.<sup>561</sup> **אחה** is read adverbially. And, in addition to the imminence, finality and scope, the twofold reference to God underlines the *certainty* of His coming.

In summary: the people are close to giving up on the temple-project, but are then admonished to persevere. Daunted by the scale of the challenge and despairing of the return of the Lord's glory to this lesser temple, they are encouraged by the Lord with the assurance, based on His covenantal promise, that He is already with them (vss.4-5). And furthermore He assures them, looking ahead into the future (vs.6ff.), that one more time He will come in judgement and fill His house with glory. The judgement will be final and total, but, for them, bring peace.

*MT-LXX differences.* One of the differences between the MT and LXX has already been noted: in vs.5a, the clause alluding to the coming out of Egypt and the covenanting at Sinai does not appear in the LXX.

In vs.6aβ the translator has not acknowledged the expression **עור מעט** and translated **עור אחה** with **ἄπαξ** and **ἔτι**. The words **עור מעט** are left untranslated. Together with the personal pronoun also the double assurance of the Lord's coming has disappeared. As a result, the LXX has lost the aspects of imminence and certainty, while retaining the emphasis on the finality and the totality (vs.6b) of judgement.<sup>562</sup>

---

<sup>559</sup> In their analysis of this clause, and especially in the use of **אחה**, Taylor and Clendenen, 2004, 152-157, conclude the **אחה** provides an empathic sense: 'This is indeed the word...'. This conclusion fits well with the emphasis on certainty in the next verse, identified below.

<sup>560</sup> The noun **רוח** is feminine.

<sup>561</sup> This suggestion does not explain the interposition of **אחה** between **עור** and **מעט**, but maybe not too much importance should be attached to that. It also requires supplying 'will be/come', which is not unusual.

<sup>562</sup> The English translation, 'once more', creates an ambiguity which is not present in the MT, and should be replaced with 'one more time, once-and-for-all'.

Otherwise, the Hebrew plural, heavens, is translated by a collective singular, οὐρανός.

*Hebrews and the LXX*

| BYZ <b>Hebrews 12:26</b>                                                                                                                      | LXX <b>Haggai 2:6</b>                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| οὐ ἡ φωνὴ τὴν γῆν ἐσάλευσεν τότε,<br>νῦν δὲ ἐπήγγελλται, λέγων,<br>-<br>Ἔτι ἅπαξ ἐγὼ σείσω<br>οὐ μόνον τὴν γῆν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν<br>οὐρανόν.<br>- | -<br>-<br>διότι τάδε λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ<br>ἔτι ἅπαξ ἐγὼ σείσω<br>τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν<br>καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηράν |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* Apart from one other difference<sup>563</sup> the author has amended Haggai 2:6b, after curtailing the verse, by reversing and juxtaposing the remaining elements of heaven and earth (οὐ μόνον...ἀλλὰ καί). The result is that the description of the comprehensiveness and totality of the judgement, which Haggai gave in general terms, is retained, but within it the author emphasises that this judgement will go further than any before. To paraphrase: ‘this judgement will be truly cosmic and it will go beyond the former judgements; it is now to include even the heavens.’

The finality is also retained in the ἔτι ἅπαξ, the latter frequently used in Hebrews in the sense of once-and-for-all, and is elaborated on in Hebrews 12:27.

*Hebrews 12:26.* The context of the quotation is, as often, one of exhortation. After the examples of the faithful, a series of admonitions follows in chapter 12: ‘run with perseverance’ (vs.1b), ‘fix your eyes on Jesus, who endured the cross’ (vs.2a), ‘endure hardship’ (vs.7a) and ‘strengthen your feeble knees’ (vs.12a). They are concluded with the warning of Esau’s fate: his rejection of his inheritance was irreversible and thus final (vs.16-17).

The author then continues to build an *a fortiori* argument comparing the situation under the old Sinaitic covenant with the situation of his audience under the new

<sup>563</sup> In the Byzantine text: σείω, an present indicative active. NA retains the LXX σείσω, an future indicative active. If an (ingressive) futuristic present is read (which requires an indication of immediacy or certainty in the context (Wallace, 1996, pp.536-537)), there is no great difference in meaning.

covenant in vss.18-24.<sup>564</sup> The covenant at Sinai, with its requirement of obedience and its promise of either a land of rest or punishment, was a terrifying event. For his audience, however, the contrast is even starker: the promised land of rest is now a joyful assembly in heaven with Jesus giving access to God as a better mediator than even Moses, and the punishment is now cosmic and final.

The conclusion in vs.25a precedes the comparison: ‘see to it you do not refuse the one who speaks’. For if the people, to whom the covenant was given at Sinai did not escape when they refused to listen (οὐκ ἔφυγον) – an allusion to Kadesh-Barnea expounded on in chapters 3-4 -,<sup>565</sup> then *a fortiori* (πολλῶ μᾶλλον)<sup>566</sup> we will not escape the final judgement announced from heaven by Jesus.

In vs.27, the author notes in an exegetical comment on ἔτι ἄπαξ, that this ‘once-and-for-all’ indicates that this judgement is the end of the old creation, as the author already indicated in Hebrews 1:10-12. Only God’s unshakeable, rock-solid kingdom, to which his audience had come in vs.22, will remain.

The author ends the exhortation on a broadly positive note: therefore (διό), since we have this unshakeable kingdom, let us be thankful (vs.28). However, God is still the judge of all (vs.29).

Vs.26 is an adjectival clause qualifying τὸν ἀπ’ οὐρανῶν [χρηματίζοντα]. This clause expresses the power of the judge and the scope of His judgment.<sup>567</sup>

It contains the quotation and places τότε and νῦν δέ in juxtaposition, but the contrast is not between the event at Sinai, ἐσάλευσεν, and the future judgment, σείω, which would rest on a mere verbal analogy connecting two different kinds of shaking.<sup>568</sup> The shaking of Mount Sinai was not a judgement, but evidence of God’s power and awesomeness, a God who is to be worshipped with reverence and awe (vs.28). It appears better to understand the author as comparing the Kadesh-Barnea judgment, which followed the awesome covenanting at Sinai and the subsequent disobedience, with the future judgement, which, with the rhetorical flourish of using similar verbs, is described as a shaking.

---

<sup>564</sup> Lane, 1991, p.480.

<sup>565</sup> Note also the repetition of βλέπετε as in Hebrews 3:12.

<sup>566</sup> The NA-text has πολλὸ μᾶλλον, the Byzantine text a ‘dative of degree of difference’. The argument is ‘elliptical but clear’, Ellingworth, 1993, p.684.

<sup>567</sup> This implies ignoring the semicolon at the end of vs.25 in the Byzantine text.

<sup>568</sup> Literally used of the shaking of Sinai and metaphorically used of judgment.

The Kadesh-Barnea judgement was local, on earth, and one of many,<sup>569</sup> but Haggai announced a final, cosmic judgement. And now, the author, through his re-ordering in vs.26b, emphasises this scope will include even the heavens.

The finality and the cosmic scope of this judgement, already announced by Haggai, and here compared to Kadesh-Barnea, are the basis for his *a fortiori* warning.

### Analysis

Schröger, followed by e.g. Attridge and Ellingworth,<sup>570</sup> argues that the shift of emphasis from imminence in the MT to finality, resulting from the ἔτι ἅπαξ mistranslation of the LXX in Haggai 2:6a, allowed the author to apply this quotation in his warning of the coming, final judgement: '[i]m ἔτι ἅπαξ ist für ihn die Einmaligkeit und Unwiederholbarkeit des eschatologischen Ereignisses ausgedrückt'.<sup>571</sup> And he concludes: '[d]ass die LXX aber ἔτι ἅπαξ sagt, macht...das Zitat...erst brauchbar'. He concedes: 'Agg 2,6 ist nach dem hebräischen Text eschatologisch...'<sup>572</sup>, but sees the LXX-text going further. It is not only eschatological but also messianic.<sup>573</sup> The quotation could only be used by the author in its LXX version.

Schröger states that the author's hermeneutics amount to *midrash-pesher* in his use of the expression 'heaven' and 'earth', used by Haggai to express totality, but through the addition of οὐ μόνον...ἀλλὰ καί, has been turned into a juxtaposition of temporal and eschatological judgement.

Guthrie sees an occurrence of 'implicit midrash' based on the use of the verb 'to shake': the author bases a *qal wahomer* argument on verbal analogy after he has

---

<sup>569</sup> E.g. the Exile was still to follow.

<sup>570</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.380, Ellingworth, 1993, p.686

<sup>571</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.192.

<sup>572</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.192.

<sup>573</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.194. It is, however, difficult to substantiate the LXX is messianically inclined. Unlike e.g. the NKJ which reads a messianic reference in Haggai 2:7 and translates 'the Desire of All Nations', the LXX correctly interprets the MT singular דְּמִדְּרָה ('desire, delight'), since it goes with a plural verb, as collective noun and translates τὰ ἐκλεκτα ('the elected, selected things'). Taylor and Clendenen, 2004, 159-165, conclude this is not a messianic prophecy. Wolf, 1976, 101, proposes to retain a messianic element by suggesting Haggai was deliberately creating ambiguity here (between a reference to wealth and a person), paralleling the perceived twofold use of glory (splendour and personal presence of God) in this verse. See Mackay, 2003, p.39, for an indirect messianic reading.

presented the Haggai-text ‘as referring to an event that he has already discussed [Sinai] and one that is foundational for the rhetoric of his current exhortation.’<sup>574</sup>

Implicitly, Attridge does the same when he suggests that the author, for his *a fortiori* argument, considers that ‘the final quake will be far more encompassing than the first.’<sup>575</sup>

But is it plausible that the author (a) in his use of this Haggai-quotation depended on the LXX, and (b) in his hermeneutical use of the OT was largely relying on *midrash* and its exegetical tools? Or is there reason to suggest he did understand the original text and did respect its original meaning?

A dependence of the author on the Greek text is suggested, but, considering the exegesis above, hard to substantiate. On the contrary, there is circumstantial, contextual evidence that the author is familiar with the Hebrew text.

The allusion in Haggai 2:5a to the exodus from Egypt (and the judgement on that country) and the covenant at Sinai (present in the MT, but absent from the LXX) may for the author have made this quotation particularly suitable, since he, also, was speaking of judgement and Sinai. The broader context of exhortation for a people who were ‘led out of Egypt’<sup>576</sup> but at risk of giving up and not persevering and so losing the benefit of access to the presence of God, is remarkably similar.

Regarding his use of the LXX translation of Haggai 2:6a, it is not surprising that the author chose not to create doubt about the LXX translation by re-introducing the aspect of imminence, which was lost in the LXX. Its absence is no reason for discomfort, as he had already emphasised that aspect in Hebrews 10:37;<sup>577</sup> and here it is not critical for his argument.<sup>578</sup>

---

<sup>574</sup> Guthrie, 2007, p.990.

<sup>575</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.380. It is noted the verbs used are different, but they are generally considered synonyms (Ellingworth, 1993, p.685).

<sup>576</sup> Note the use of this expression in the similar context referring to the Kadesh-Barnea judgement in Hebrews 3:16.

<sup>577</sup> *Contra* Ellingworth, 1993, p.686: ‘he would have been unlikely to omit these words if he had found them in his text.’

<sup>578</sup> Although it may be noted with Lane, 1991, p.480, that in vs.28 the author uses παραλαμβάνοντες, a present participle. Similarly the judgment still to come is also already in progress. And his audience is already living *coram Deo* and therefore are to serve him with reverence and fear.

For his warning here, he relies on (i) the aspects of totality and finality of the judgement; and (ii) the certainty of God's judgement.

While, regarding (i), there is a clear allusion to Egypt and Sinai in the MT and Haggai was obviously keenly aware of the earlier judgement of the exile, he makes no comparison. The prophet's focus is on the *imminence* and the *certainty* of the Lord's presence and returning glory, and on the *finality* and *cosmic scope* of the future judgement.

The author, having (vss.18-24) compared the past Sinai with the future Zion, may have noted Haggai's allusion to the covenant at Sinai. And he emphasises, in an *a fortiori* comparison, the difference in *scope* between one of the preceding OT judgements (i.e. the foregone entry into the promised rest of Canaan) and the coming cosmic one. The *finality* of the coming judgment he stresses in his exegetical comment in vs.27 on the ἔτι ἄπαξ.

The *certainty*, (ii), he found in vs.5a ('I covenanted') and in vs.6aβ of the MT in the double assurance of God's coming ('My Spirit will come...and I will shake...') and he reflected it by using the perfect middle ἐπήγγελλται. He is referring to a certain promise, made at the time of Haggai, but still valid today.<sup>579</sup>

It is a legitimate emphasis on some aspects of Haggai's prophecy, albeit limited in its selectiveness.

As outlined above, the *a fortiori* argument is not based on a comparison of the future judgement with Sinai's physical shaking, but on comparing the desert-history of God 'cutting his word' at Sinai (Hag.2:5a), the disobedience and resulting verdict at Kadesh-Barnea on the one hand, and the judgement in the eschaton, subsequently revealed to Haggai, on the other.<sup>580</sup>

---

<sup>579</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.686: *νῦν* understood temporally.

<sup>580</sup> The speaking from heaven (vs.25b) can be understood as the revelation to Haggai. Alternatively, one can understand the author as referring to Jesus' subsequent speaking (Heb.1:1-2), or to the scene of Hebrews 12:22. For our analysis this makes no difference.

*In conclusion*, there is no evidence the author relied on a messianically biased LXX deviation from the Hebrew or on a mis-translation shifting emphasis from imminence to finality of the coming judgment.

On the contrary, there is contextual evidence he was aware of Haggai 2:5a-MT (missing in the LXX) and understood the double assurance of vs.6aβ better than the LXX.

There is also no reason to conclude that the author, in his exegesis, did not respect the quotation or its context or relied on hermeneutical techniques such as *midrash-pesher*, *gezerah shawah* or *qal wahomer*.

#### 4.14 Hebrews 13:5 and Deuteronomy 31:6 or Joshua 1:5

Hebrews 13:5 introduces the quotation with the IF αὐτός γὰρ εἴρηκεν. The speaker is αὐτός, an empathic reference to God, who is the antecedent explicitly mentioned at the end of vs.4. The perfect tense indicates that God spoke in the past and that His words still apply.

The source of the quotation is disputed with Deuteronomy 31:6b and Joshua 1:5 often referred to, and also Genesis 28:15c, Deuteronomy 31:8 and 1 Chronicles 28:20 are mentioned. None of them are exactly identical to Hebrews 13:5.

#### *The MT and the LXX*

| MT Deuteronomy 31:6b & Joshua 1:5                                                                    | LXX Deuteronomy 31:6b & Joshua 1:5                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>לֹא יִרְפֶּךָ וְלֹא יַעֲזֹבֶךָ<br/>Deu 31:6</p> <p>לֹא אֲרַפֶּךָ וְלֹא אֲעֲזֹבֶךָ<br/>Jos 1:5</p> | <p>οὐ μή σε ἀνή οὔτε μή σε ἐγκαταλίπη<br/>Deu 31:6</p> <p>καὶ οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψω σε οὐδὲ ὑπερόψομαί<br/>σε Jos 1:5</p> |

*The possible sources.* On a brief review of the alternative sources,<sup>581</sup> a number of similarities are immediately clear: (i) the context, (ii) the concept and (iii) the Hebrew verbs used.

The context is in all cases one where the hearers are in some form of distress or facing a challenge, and are directly or indirectly addressed by God. In Genesis 28:15, it is Jacob fleeing for his life from Esau who is addressed by God. In Deuteronomy 31:6 and 8 Moses is addressing Israel and Joshua respectively<sup>582</sup> facing the conquest of Canaan. In Joshua 1:5, it is the same context, but Joshua is addressed by God and in 1 Chronicles 28:20 it is Solomon, faced with the challenge of building the temple, who is being spoken to by David.

The common concept in all cases is encouragement through the assurance that the Lord will be with the addressees and in his covenant faithfulness will not leave them nor forsake them. In Genesis and Joshua, it is the Lord speaking and in Deuteronomy and 1 Chronicles, Moses and David speak, based on His promises, on God's behalf.

The pair of verbs used are always רפה (Hiphil: 'to abandon') and עזב ('to forsake, leave, abandon'), apart from Genesis which only has עזב.

*MT-LXX differences.* The LXX translation of these MT-texts has some variations.

The negation, in Hebrew consistently לא..ולא, is reflected with some alternative negations of varying emphasis. And the verbs רפה and עזב, are usually rendered as ἀνίημι ('to let go') and ἐγκαταλείπω ('to forsake').<sup>583</sup> The only exception is Joshua 1:5 where רפה and עזב are rendered as the indicative future of ἐγκαταλείπω and ὑπεροράω ('to overlook').

---

<sup>581</sup> For an overview of attributions, see Schröger, 1968, pp.194-195 and Allen, 2008, p.69.

<sup>582</sup> In both cases the verb-forms (Hiphil and then Qal imperfect) and suffices (second masculine singular) are similar, but the context demands Deuteronomy 31:6 is addressed to the people and therefore usually preferred over vs.8 as the possible source.

<sup>583</sup> The Hiphil and then Qal imperfect are rendered as an indicative future or subjunctive aorist; any difference in meaning, however, is not considered relevant.

*Hebrews and the LXX*

| BYZ <b>Hebrews 13:5</b>                                           | LXX <b>Deuteronomy 31:6b &amp; Joshua 1:5</b>                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| αὐτὸς γὰρ εἶρηκεν,<br>Οὐ μή σε ἀνώ, οὐδ' οὐ μή σε<br>ἐγκαταλείπω. | -<br>οὐ μή σε ἀνή οὔτε μή σε ἐγκαταλίπη<br>Deu 31:6<br>καὶ οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψω σε οὐδὲ<br>ὑπερόψομαί σε Jos 1:5 |

*LXX-Hebrews differences.* The Hebrews version of the quotation uses the first person subjunctive aorist and present active of ἀνίημι and ἐγκαταλείπω respectively,<sup>584</sup> presenting the statement as a direct promise of God to his audience. It differs from all likely LXX sources.

*Hebrews 13:5.* The context is similar to the OT-alternatives. The broader context of Hebrews is one of an audience under pressure and at risk of falling away; the immediate context is the exhortation to face up to the challenges of life such as sustaining love and hospitality and abstaining from sexual immorality and greed. In these circumstances, the author presents God's continued commitment to His people as a basis for their perseverance.

*Analysis*

On the basis of this quotation the author is not considered to be dependent on the LXX-text and its possible deviations from the MT, because he had no knowledge of Hebrew.

Concerning the author's hermeneutics, Attridge notes: 'Whatever the source, our author construes the text...as a word addressed to his contemporaries.'<sup>585</sup> And whoever the original speaker, consistent with his opening sentence, the author

<sup>584</sup> The NA-text has ἐγκαταλίπω, a subjunctive aorist active; the Byzantine text a subjunctive present active. The combination of οὐ μη with a subjunctive aorist or a future indicative is more common and denotes the emphatic denial of the potentiality of something happening (Wallace, 1996, p.468).

<sup>585</sup> Attridge, 1989, p.389. Similarly, Guthrie, 2007, p.992.

understands it as ultimately God speaking. Likewise, whoever the original addressee, the expression is often used in a covenantal context and the author applies it to his audience of new-covenant believers - even when the addressee is an individual: 'It is important in any case that the singular of address...has in view an individual who represents the whole people.'<sup>586</sup> Changing from the people to an individual is done without modification in Deuteronomy and possibly also by the author.<sup>587</sup> It is, accordingly, recognised that the author respects the context of his quotation.<sup>588</sup>

The key question here is the source of the quotation and the liberty the author may have taken with it. Various suggestions as to the source of his quotation have been made. Philo has been identified as using the same expression, but is usually thought to be an unlikely source, since the application of the text is very different.<sup>589</sup> Others have suggested a different *Vorlage*, possibly shared with Philo, although to date no evidence of its existence has surfaced.<sup>590</sup> Still others<sup>591</sup> suggest a conflation of texts, i.e. Genesis 28:15 and Deuteronomy 31:6 or the liturgy of the Synagogue as its source.<sup>592</sup>

The difficulty with these suggestions is that they assume either the author used a source outside the OT as authoritative, or quoted from the OT while taking liberties, both otherwise uncharacteristic, or an alternative source-text for which there is no evidence.

But may the assumption that the author had Hebrew possibly assist in identifying the source of this quotation?

Allen has observed: 'In terms of lexical affinity, Josh 1:5 MT is identical to Heb 13:5...purely on lexical grounds, therefore, Heb 13:5 is a quotation of Josh 1:5, exhibiting either an unattested variant Greek form...or possibly the use of a Hebrew

---

<sup>586</sup> Lane, 1991, p.520.

<sup>587</sup> See Ellingworth, 1993, p.700.

<sup>588</sup> As Schröger, 1968, p.196, puts it: '...so würde man auch heute guten Gewissens die Mahnung v.5 mit diesem "Schriftbeweis" stützen können.'

<sup>589</sup> Allen, 2008, p.70: 'minimal thematic correlation', Attridge, 1989, pp.388-389, Ellingworth, 1993, p.699, Guthrie, 2007, p.992, Kistemaker, 1961, p.55.

<sup>590</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.700, Schröger, 1968, p.195.

<sup>591</sup> Katz, 1958, p.220.

<sup>592</sup> So Kistemaker, 1961, p.56, who suggests the quotation '*est igitur instar adagii divini*'. But he does not mention a source.

*Vorlage*.<sup>593</sup> This is on the assumption that the single addressee can be understood as the representative of the community, as noted above.

It would be natural to assume that the author recognised (i) Joshua 1:5 was most suitable for his purpose (God speaks directly), (ii) a single addressee can be understood as representative of the people (as is clear from Deuteronomy 31:6, 8) and, if the author understood Hebrew, that (iii) the LXX rendering of the two ‘standard’ verbs in this version of the *adagium Dei* was highly unusual and had lost the association with the other texts.<sup>594</sup> He may, therefore, have decided to give his own translation, restoring the parallelism with the other texts which he saw in the MT.

His normal, and understandable, concern with changing translations (because of the confusion and suspicion this might have raised with his audience) was most likely significantly mitigated by the fact that the phraseology of his rendering was familiar to them from several other texts.

*In conclusion*, assuming the author had Hebrew, recognized the LXX has in Joshua 1:5 an unusual rendering and replaced it by the usual translation of the Hebrew ‘standard’ verbs, may assist in attributing this quotation.

In his use of it he sees the individual Joshua as the representative of his people, for which there is a clear precedent in the Deuteronomy parallel texts. In thus applying these words of God to his audience he respects the context.

#### 4.15 Other quotations or allusions

There remain OT-quotations/allusions in Hebrews, where the author is generally not considered to depend for his argument on a divergent LXX-text.<sup>595</sup> A review to ascertain whether they contain any evidence supporting or refuting (any part of) our hypothesis is nevertheless desirable. Such review is to focus on the IF, any linguistic

---

<sup>593</sup> Allen, 2008, p.69. So also Howard, 1986, p.214: ‘The text is exact to the Hebrew of Josh. I 5.’

<sup>594</sup> This connotation may well have been important to him as evidence of God’s faithfulness throughout history.

<sup>595</sup> These texts are also identified in Table 2.5. Hebrews 3:2 and 5, 7:1-2, 11:21 and 12:12-13 lack an IF and are considered allusions and were not reviewed. Recognized as quotations and reviewed are Heb.6:14, 8:5b, 8:8-12, 9:20, 10:16-17, 11:18 and 13:6. In Hebrews 12:20 and 21 the preceding clauses could be understood as (unusual) IFs, but are more likely part of the narrative which is alluded to; they were, however, briefly reviewed.

#### *4. Hebrew or no Hebrew: the other OT quotations*

differences between the MT and the LXX and between the latter and Hebrews, the OT-context and the (hermeneutical) use by the author.

A brief review undertaken did not provide any clear evidence for either dependence on Greek or for knowledge of Hebrew.

The author also remained consistent in his use of the IF.

In no case was any reason identified to conclude the author did use other hermeneutical tools other than his own, as identified in §2.3.

Since lack of space does not allow for the presentation of the results of this review, this outcome remains a working assumption.

## 5. Concluding comments

### 5.1 Concluding comments: the author's knowledge of Hebrew

#### *Hypothesis*

The first part of the hypothesis to be tested was that the author of Hebrews understood the Hebrew language.

If correct, the following findings were expected in a review of his quotations: (i) any divergence between the Hebrew and Greek text is not critical to his argument; (ii) when exegeting, paraphrasing or amending, the author follows or moves towards the Hebrew (con-) textual meaning; (iii) otherwise, he ignores and is silent regarding any divergence; and (iv) any Greek text so divergent that ignoring differences is difficult and correction would constitute a major change is not presented as a quotation.

#### *Findings*

*Quotations.* The task of identifying quotations is greatly helped by the author's consistency in using an IF. As summarized in Table 2.5 virtually all quotations are introduced as a person of the Trinity speaking; usually with the continued validity of the quotation indicated through the use of the present tense or the perfect.<sup>596</sup>

Variations are 'someone' (as an indeterminate reference to Scripture, Heb.2:6), 'Moses' (most likely on behalf of God, Heb.9:20) and 'we' (based on Scripture, Heb.13:6). In all cases the element of 'speaking with authority' is combined with an IF.

---

<sup>596</sup> The perfects ('occurred in the past, but effect is still with us') are: Hebrews 1:13, 4:**3**, 4, 5, 7, 8:5, 10:**9**, **15**, 30, 13:5. Those printed in **bold** may refer back to earlier use of the quotation by the author. In addition, the IFs to Hebrews 2:5, 5:5 and 10:30 are aorists combined with a present tense form of  $\lambda\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$ . The only exceptions are the aorist in Hebrews 1:5, possibly intended to give this first rhetorical question a more open character; and in Hebrews 11:18, where God's speaking is part of a narrative about a past event.

In Habakkuk 2:3-4 the LXX deviates significantly from the MT and, as expected in (iv), the IF is notably absent in Hebrews 10:37. The text is also not exegeted. The author treats it as an allusion.

*No dependence on Greek.* Dependence on a perceived openness of the LXX to a more messianic reading has been alleged in several quotations.<sup>597</sup> However, it was found that the author did not rely on any imposed (possibly LXX supported) original messianic character of his quotations in attempts to ‘prove’ Jesus as messiah. He either did not apply them to Jesus (Heb.2:6-8, 12:26), applied them messianically, but based on a *sensus plenior* or typology (Heb.2:12, 13 respectively), or used these texts to bring out certain characteristics of the Son (already identified as divine) which were important for his argument (Heb.1:8-9 (ruler), 1:10-12 (creator), 10:5-7 (obedient)).

In other cases an LXX dependence has been identified because the author’s argument was understood to depend on verbal analogy in Greek.<sup>598</sup> However, it was concluded that, although he may have found the verbal analogy rhetorically attractive, his argument relies not the Greek words, but on a hermeneutic which respects the content and context of his quotations.

In no case does the author for his argument depend on a deviating Greek text.

*Evidence of Hebrew.* An argument from silence is relatively weak, but it is worthwhile noting that in several instances the author can be seen as being silent on, ignoring and *not* using LXX mistranslations and avoiding any resulting confusion (Heb.1:10-12, 2:13, 4:4, 10:5-7, 10:37-38 and 12:5-6). The clearest example is the lack of an IF for the garbled LXX rendering of Habakkuk 2:3-4.

At other times there are indications he read the Hebrew (con-)text (Heb.1:7, 2:6-8, 10:5-7 and 12:26).<sup>599</sup> In Psalm 104, the LXX rendering is unhelpful to his application and ignored in Hebrews 1:7. His reading of the Hebrew of Psalm 8 may have supported an eschatological application in Hebrews 2:6-8.<sup>600</sup> In Hebrews 10:5-7, the

<sup>597</sup> E.g.: Hebrews 1:8-9, 1:10-12, 2:6-8, 2:12, 2:13, 10:5-7, 10:37-38, 12:26.

<sup>598</sup> E.g.: Hebrews 1:6, 1:7 and possibly 2:6-8 (through ἄγγελοι), 1:8-9 and 1:10-12 (through σὺ), 3:7-11 and associated texts and 4:4 (through κατάπαυσις) and possibly 10:5-7 and 37-38 (through ((εἰς)ερχόμενος).

<sup>599</sup> As noted in §4.6 the positive evidence in Hebrews 2:12 is not to be pressed.

<sup>600</sup> As discussed in §4.5 Craigie’s reading of the tenses in vss.5-6, not reflected in the LXX, suggests an eschatological, but not a messianic, reading.

theme of Psalm 40 (obedience is required) is reflected in the use of the quotation, not the LXX mistranslation  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ . Contextual evidence suggests in Hebrews 12:26 he was familiar with Hebrew text missing and mistranslated in the LXX.

Hebrews 10:30 and 12:5-6 are at times recognized as closer to the MT, but hypotheses regarding different *Vorlagen* then put forward. Since there is no evidence for these, it was concluded Occam's Razor may be applied, i.e. the simpler assumption of the author's knowledge of Hebrew preferred.

For Hebrews 1:6 and 13:5, the form of the quotation seems to contradict the assumption the author had Hebrew, but it was concluded there are plausible alternative explanations.

In a number of cases he moves in his quotation or allusion or in his exegetical comments closer to the Hebrew (Heb.3:7-11, 10:30, 10:37-38, 12:5-6 and 13:5).

This is most notable in Hebrews 3-4, where the assumption the author had closely read the Hebrew text of Genesis 2 (and its use of  $\text{שבת}$  and  $\text{נוח}$ ) helps to explain his use of the quotations and the interchangeable use of  $\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\pi\alpha\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and  $\sigma\alpha\beta\beta\alpha\tau\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ .

*Open issues and special pleadings.* Above, reference is made to differences between the quoted texts in the Hebrew OT, the Greek OT and Hebrews.

To identify such differences the text-forms specified in §2.4 are used. It is acknowledged that there is no certainty the MT and LXX were indeed the relevant *Vorlagen* nor that the BYZ-text is the autograph, but textual criticism is outside our scope.<sup>601</sup>

The only exception made is the assumption of the possible use in Hebrews 1:6 of a non-MT Hebrew text of Deuteronomy 32:43, for which there is some evidence (see §4.1).

---

<sup>601</sup> The use of the Byzantine text may be considered unusual; its differences with NA support the argument of this study in §4.8, but they are not critical to the overall conclusion.

### *Observations*

When accepting the author understood Hebrew, a number of observations can be made.

*Authorship.* Amongst the 13 names Ellingworth lists as proposed authors for Hebrews, Paul is an unlikely candidate if the writer had no Hebrew. The narrow scope of this study does not allow concluding, or even suggesting, Paul was the author, but the language-argument against it no longer applies.<sup>602</sup>

*Translation.* The view the Epistle cannot stem from a Hebrew original could be defended with two arguments: (i) the Greek is too elegant for it to be a translation;<sup>603</sup> and (ii) certain critical arguments do not work in Hebrew. Again, the scope of this study allows no conclusion there was a Hebrew original, but the latter argument against it has fallen away.

*Audience.* Although not impossible, it is less likely an author who had no Hebrew wrote this Epistle to a congregation in Palestine. Considering the above, the view the original audience was a Greek-speaking congregation in the Diaspora cannot be argued based on the author's language capabilities.

*Florilegium.* The view the author uses in Hebrews 1:5-13 a Greek *florilegium*, possibly even without knowing where the quotations came from,<sup>604</sup> is wholly improbable. Not only does the author present a tailored argument, but he also displays an awareness of the (Hebrew) context of his quotations.

---

<sup>602</sup> An interesting question, beyond the scope of this study, is whether the Church Fathers who entertained the idea of Pauline authorship were aware of the divergences between the Greek and Hebrew text of the quotations; and what they thought of it.

<sup>603</sup> Obviously in addition to the argument the author had no Hebrew. This argument itself takes an unnecessarily dim view of the first century abilities to produce a good translation. That any such translation, made for the benefit of a Greek-only speaking audience, switches to quotations from the Greek bible would not be surprising.

<sup>604</sup> E.g. Montefiore, 1964, pp.43-44: 'These *testimonia* seem to have been taken from an existing catena of Old Testament proof texts. ... If our author had done his own research into the Old Testament, some explanation of his selection would have been likely. ... The selection of the seven *testimonia* seems ill-adapted for his purpose, since only one of them in the LXX contains the actual word angels.'

*An inspired LXX.* To assume the author considered the LXX inspired and authoritative, as distinct from and in addition to the MT, implicitly assumes he was aware of differences –for which he needed Hebrew.<sup>605</sup>

In any case, his understanding of the Hebrew text suggests he had no need for such view.

## 5.2 Concluding comments: the author's respect for the Hebrew text

### *Hypothesis*

The second part of the hypothesis was that the author of Hebrews, in using quotations, applies hermeneutical techniques which respect the meaning within the OT context as expressed in the Hebrew text.

If correct, one expects to find the use of a quotation in Hebrews is congruent with the Hebrew OT-meaning of the quotation, which e.g. excludes unwarranted messianic applications.

In §2.3 several hermeneutical presuppositions and approaches which the author refers to were identified (inspiration, from which flow authority and unity, and progression-in-history of both redemption and revelation, together with such features as prophecy-fulfillment, typology and *sensus plenior*). These are considered compatible with respect for the context, defined as ultimately the canonical context, as read with a historical-grammatical hermeneutic.

### *Findings*

*Messianic applications.* The unique contribution of the author to Christology is undeniable. However, caution is required in concluding from this that he used a

---

<sup>605</sup> Schröger, 1968, p.265, concludes to the author's dependence on Greek *and* his treatment of the LXX as inspired.

‘christological hermeneutic’.<sup>606</sup> Ellingworth considers the pre-existence of Christ a hermeneutical key: ‘Any part of the OT may thus in principle be understood as speaking about Christ, or as spoken to or by him.’<sup>607</sup> But this is too sweeping. The author is more discerning.

Against the background of the promise of the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7, it appears likely (§3.1) that David intended his pronouncements in Psalms 2 and 110, while likely made at Solomon’s coronation, to messianic-prophetically look beyond him. And in his introductions of Jesus as the divine Son and high priest (Heb.1:5, 13 and 5:5-6) the author applies them messianically: God said this about/to Jesus.

However, there appears to be no reason to identify further messianic applications by him ‘applying the same principle’ or ‘stretching and teasing’.<sup>608</sup> And for many quotations where the author is assumed to rely on a messianic leaning of the LXX translation,<sup>609</sup> another reading is proposed as more likely. Declaring an OT text messianic-only in order to explain the author’s application is found to do injustice to both the OT and Hebrews.<sup>610</sup>

*Inspiration, authority and unity.* That it was God speaking through the prophets is the author’s very first statement. And the authority he attributes to these utterances is reflected in his IFs. Nearly all are in the present or perfect tense indicating their current validity; and through these IFs he carefully marks his use of these authoritative quotations.

Since there is one, authoritative speaker, the author also acknowledges the unity of these quotations; they do not contradict and can be combined across time to derive conclusions. Statements from the time of creation (Heb.4:4) placed next to those from later days (Heb.4:7) result in conclusions for today (Heb.4:11).

Through his IFs the author employs these words as support for his argument<sup>611</sup> and there is no evidence he saw himself as a *peshet*-style revealer of truth hidden in these texts. As Moyter puts it: ‘The style of the argument is not revelatory, but

---

<sup>606</sup> Guthrie, 2004, p.433.

<sup>607</sup> Ellingworth, 1993, p.42.

<sup>608</sup> Motyer, 1999, pp.17-21, regarding Psalms 45, 102 and Deuteronomy 32:43.

<sup>609</sup> E.g. Schröger, 1968, pp.259-262, lists Hebrews 1:8-9, 10-12, 2:6-8, 2:12, 13, 10:37-38 and 12:26.

<sup>610</sup> See §4.3 on Harman’s proposal in this respect.

<sup>611</sup> The suggestion he is ‘proof-texting’ or somewhat at random selecting them for rhetorical decoration (Motyer, 1999, p.7, labels this suggestion the ‘Schiftgnosis’-approach) is based on our analysis wholly improbable.

argumentative...’;<sup>612</sup> it appeals to the authority of the text, not to any pneumatological or other disclosure he might have received. It is also difficult to see how such approach would have convinced his audience.

*Literal application.* God’s authoritative word speaking about God in Deuteronomy 32:43, Psalm 104:4 and Psalm 102:25-27 is, *having established Jesus’ divinity earlier*, literally applied to Jesus; and speaking concerning man in Psalm 8:4-6, Proverbs 3:11-12 and Psalm 118:6-7 is literally applied to man. In other instances it is quoted as a part of a narrative and used in a literal sense (Heb.6:14, 8:5, 9:20 and 11:18).

*Progression in the history of redemption and revelation.* The author does not only perceive unity, he also assumes progression in God’s speaking and acting.

The progression of the history of revelation is affirmed in the *exordium* and in the progression of redemption which is emphasized many times in the references to a better (κρείττων) hope, covenant and, above all, mediator.<sup>613</sup> The progression is the basis for the many *a fortiori* exhortations (πολλῶ μᾶλλον) urging the audience to persevere.

The three categories below in which this progression is understood to find its outworking are not mutually exclusive and do overlap.

*Prophecy-fulfillment.* The scope of the Davidic-covenantal promises made fulfillment in a human king never realistic, and, as Guthrie says ‘the text must have anticipated a greater fulfillment...’.<sup>614</sup> It reflects what Caird has called the ‘OT-texts’ self-confessed inadequacy’.<sup>615</sup> The quotations from 1 Samuel 7 and Psalms 2 and 110 fall into this category.

Outside the application of these messianic texts regarding the Davidic descendent there are actually few quotations which appeal to a direct prophecy-fulfillment

---

<sup>612</sup> Motyer, 1999, p.5.

<sup>613</sup> Hebrews 1:1, 12:25; respectively 1:4, 7:19, 22, 8:6, 9:23 and 12:24.

<sup>614</sup> Guthrie, 2004, p.436; he goes on to qualify the author’s use of these texts as ‘typological hermeneutics’, which indicates the fluid boundaries between prophecy-fulfillment and typology.

<sup>615</sup> Caird, 1959, p.47.

relation. This conclusion is the corollary of the earlier observation that several quotations are not used as LXX dependent, messianic source texts.<sup>616</sup>

Haggai, encouraging the Israelites who despaired about the lesser, post-exilic temple, announced that in final judgement God's glory will fill the temple and bring peace. In Hebrews 12:25ff., after typologically alluding to the Kadesh-Barnea judgment, the author repeats this prophecy of the (already) coming judgment in his exhortation to worship with reverence and awe.

*Typology* can be seen as a specific form of prophecy-fulfillment whereby an object, person, event or procedure (fore)shadows another, more 'fuller' one. In Hebrews 2:13 and 10:5-7 typology may be recognized in the role and experiences of Isaiah and his children and of the obedient Davidic king. That this foreshadowed Christ is probably more seen in hindsight, making the texts prophetic-*typological*.

Also the concept of 'rest' is used typologically, with the 'rest' of Psalm 95 (most likely the temple) a shadow of the Sabbath-rest at creation and foreshadowing the eschatological 'rest'. The constant factor in this concept is always, from Genesis 2 to Hebrews 3-4, the benevolent presence of God; and it would be reasonable to assume that as Israel's history progressed the eschatological element became more prominent. Accordingly the concept may, for the author and his audience, have been more *prophetic-typological*.<sup>617</sup>

*Sensus plenior* attributes a 'fuller' meaning to words, which goes beyond what the original, human author may have understood.<sup>618</sup> In order to distinguish it from allegorical speculation and fantasy, *peshet*-like 'inspiration' for the revelation of hidden meanings, ecclesiastical authoritarianism or postmodern subjectivism, identifying such meaning needs to be moderated by the broader context of the canon and the progression of revelation therein.<sup>619</sup> And any meaning so identified needs to

---

<sup>616</sup> E.g. Schröger, 1968, pp.259-262, lists Hebrews **1:8-9**, 10-12, 2:6-8, **2:12, 13, 10:37-38** and **12:26** as messianic LXX-dependent quotations and the ones **in bold** as using a prophecy-fulfillment hermeneutic.

<sup>617</sup> The quotation in Hebrews 9:20 and the author's discourse on the earthly tabernacle may be seen as recognizing typology. He explicitly identifies the relation between the tabernacle and the sanctuary Moses saw as such (Heb.8:5). Identifying typological use in Hebrews 11:19 may be a stretch.

<sup>618</sup> As distinct from objects, persons, events or rituals, which would make it typology.

<sup>619</sup> Moo, 1986, pp.205-206, notes this approach can and needs to build on the scriptural basis of a redemptive-historical framework and be able to demonstrate the validity of the added meaning from further canonical revelation.

be a homogeneous extension of the original message, thus recognizing the unity of the inspired text.<sup>620</sup>

*Sensus plenior* possibly plays a role in Hebrews 1:8-9. Here, *having established Jesus' divinity earlier*, Psalm 45 (hyperbolically referring to a Davidide king as god) is applied to Christ and the author may well have found comfort for this application in Jesus' self-revelation as the Son of God. The same may be true for the author putting the words of Psalm 22 into the mouth of Jesus (Heb.2:12), after He had so used the Psalm at the cross. In Psalm 40 the insufficiency of sacrifices without obedience is left unresolved by David; however, Jesus' obedient willingness to carry the cross, expressed in the Garden of Gethsemane, could give the author the comfort to draw his conclusions in Hebrews 10:5-10. Also, if the Habakkuk-text itself is not already eschatological, the author could have based his application of the allusion in Hebrews 10:37-38 to the final judgment on Jesus' warnings in e.g. the Olivet Discourse.

*No reliance on 'Second Temple hermeneutics'*<sup>621</sup> and no chain quotations. The structure of the argument in Hebrews 1:5-13 suggests it has a clear internal logic, and while the author may have welcomed the verbal analogies from a rhetorical perspective, his reasoning does not depend on stringing texts together on this basis. When one is so inclined, it is possible to label verbal analogies as *gezerah shawah* and *a fortiori* arguments as *qal wahomer*. However, it was found that in none of the reviewed instances did the author ignore the context of his quotations, as may be the case in other instances of Second Temple hermeneutics.

---

<sup>620</sup> Motyer, 1999, p.10, quotes C. Spicq commenting 'only the Holy Spirit who inspired Scripture can make plain to the reader the Christological meaning of that Scripture...'. While assistance of the Holy Spirit is critical, Motyer is correct in observing that the author does not make a great play of claiming divine inspiration for his interpretations, but rhetorically presents arguments based on traditional exegetical methods (p.11).

<sup>621</sup> As discussed in §2.3, the question reviewed in this study is not whether the author's hermeneutical approach can be labelled 'Second Temple hermeneutics' or has parallels in contemporaneous exegesis, but whether for the author's approach this means he, like was at times the case in 'Second Temple hermeneutics', did not respect the context of his quotation, as understood in a historical-grammatical approach.

*Observations*

In his use of the OT-text the author is involved in a delicate balancing act: on the one hand, he appeals to the authority it has as God's word (a view he appears to share with his audience) and, on the other hand, he wishes to demonstrate its self-confessed inadequacy, in order to emphasize for this audience the even greater relevance of Jesus and His words and the need to persevere in them.

Using, presumably for their benefit, a Greek translation, he must be careful not to create uncertainty or unease by unnecessarily criticizing the translation of the very text to which he appealed. He also cannot introduce interpretations based on a method they could not accept or not validate themselves, such as claiming the inspired revelation of hidden meanings. And he does not.

Since they have heard the gospel (Heb.2:3-4) he could, however, refer to Jesus, His words and the story of His life, in presenting his argument for fulfillment and a fuller meaning of such OT texts in light of these recent developments. And so he does.

To avoid the "modern snobbishness" of thinking the acceptability of the author's interpretation depends on conformity to modern yardsticks,<sup>622</sup> be they grammatical-historical or post-modern, his own comments on this issue were briefly investigated (§2.3) and found compatible with a canonical grammatical-historical approach. And a review of the author's use of explicit quotations in turn found it consistent with his comments.

---

<sup>622</sup> Moo, 1986, p.185, also quoting M. Silva.

## Bibliography

Abbreviations used correspond to D.N. Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, New York NY: Doubleday, 1992. For 'TWOT' see Harris, 1980.

Aalders, G.Ch., *Genesis, Volume I*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1978.

Abasciano, B.J., *Paul's Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9.1-9, An Intertextual and Theological Exegesis*, London: T&T Clark, 2005.

Aland, B. and K. Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1987.

Aland, B. et al. (eds.), *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition*, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001.

Allen, D.M., "More Than Just Numbers: Deuteronomistic Influence in Hebrews 3:7-4:11", *TB* 58, pp.129-150, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation in Hebrews*, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2008.

Allen, L.C., *Psalms 101-150, Word Biblical Commentary*, Waco TX: Word Books, 1983.

Anderson D.R., *The King-Priest of Psalm 110 in Hebrews*, Bern: Lang, 2001.

Andersen, A.A., *Psalms, Volume 2*, London: Oliphants, 1972.

Anderson, R.D., "The Division and Order of the Psalms", *WTJ* 66, pp.219-241, 1994.

Andriessen, P., "La teneur judéo-chrétienne de Hé I 6 et II 14B-III 2", *NovT* 18, pp.293-313, 1976.

Attridge, H.W., "Let Us Strive to Enter that Rest, The Logic of Hebrews 4:1-11", *HTR* 73, pp.279-288, 1980.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Philadelphia NJ: Fortress, 1989.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Paraenesis in a Homily (λόγος παρακλήσεως): The Possible Location of, and Socialization in, the 'Epistle to the Hebrews'", *Semeia* 50, pp.211-226, 1990.

Barker, M., *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of the Christian Liturgy*, London: T&T Clark, 2003.

Barrett, C.K., "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews", in: W.D. Davies and D. Daube (eds.), *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology*, Cambridge: CUP, 1964.

Barth, M., "The Old Testament in Hebrews, An Essay in Biblical Hermeneutics", in W. Klasen and G.F. Snyder (eds.), *Issues in New Testament Interpretation*, New York NY: Harper & Row, 1962

Bateman, H.W., "Psalm 110:1 and the New Testament", *BSac* 149, pp.438-53, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_, "The First-Century Messianic Uses of the OT: Heb 1:5-13 and 4QFlor 1.1-19", *JETS* 38, pp.11-27, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Early Jewish Hermeneutics and Hebrews 1:5-13, The Impact of Early Jewish Exegesis on the Interpretation of a Significant New Testament Passage*, New York NY: Lang, 1997.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Psalm 45:6-7 and Its Christological Contributions to Hebrews", *TJ* 22, pp.3-21, 2001.

Bauer, H. and P. Leander, *Historische Grammatik der Hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments*, Halle: Niemeyer, 1922.

## Bibliography

- Bauernfeind, O., “ἀναπαύω κτλ.” *TDNT*, 1, pp.350-351.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “καταπαύω κτλ.”, *TDNT*, 3, pp.627-628.
- Beale, G.K., *The Temple and the Church’s Mission. A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, Downers Grove IL: IVP, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “Eden, the Temple, and the Church’s Mission in the New Creation”, *JETS* 48, pp.5-31, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “Myth, History and Inspiration: A Review Article”, *JETS* 49, pp.287-312, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts?”, *Them* 32.1, pp.18-43, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “A Surrejoinder to Peter Enns”, *Them* 32.2, pp.14-25, 2007.
- Bergh, R.H. van der, “A Textual Comparison of Hebrews 10:5b-7 and LXX Psalm 39:7-9”, *NeoT* 42, pp.353-378, 2008.
- Bock, D.L., “Book review of W.C. Kaiser’s *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*”, *JETS* 29, pp.489-491, 1986.
- Branch R.G., “The Messianic Dimensions of Kingship in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 as fulfilled by Jesus in Matthew”, *Verbum et Ecclesia* 25, pp.378-401, 2004.
- Brand, J., “Sabbath-Rest, Worship, and the Epistle to the Hebrews Celebrating the Rule of Yahweh”, *Didaskalia*, pp.3-12, 1990.
- Braulik, G., “Menuchah. Die Ruhe Gottes und des Volkes im Lande”, *BK* 23, pp.75-78, 1968.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “Gottes Ruhe – Das Land oder der Tempel: zu Psalm 95:11”, in: E. Haag and F.L. Hogsfeld (eds.), *Freude an der Weisung des Herrn*, Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Studien zur Theologie des Deuteronomiums*, Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1988.
- Brenton, L.C.L., *The English Translation of The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament*, London: Samuel Bagster and Sons original ASCII edition, 1844, 1851.
- Bruce, F.F., *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “The Kerugma of Hebrews”, *Int* 23, pp.1-20, 1969.
- Brüggemann, W., *The land: place as gift, promise and challenge in Biblical faith*, Minneapolis MN: Fortress, 2002.
- Bruggen, J. van, *De tekst van het Nieuwe Testament*, Groningen: De Vuurbaak, 1976.
- Bruyn, J.J. and D.J. Human, “’n Kontekstuele uitleg van Psalm 110 binne sy historiese raamwerk”, *IDSk* 40, pp.465-482, 2006.
- Buchanan, G.W., *To the Hebrews, AB*, Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1972.
- Caird, G.B., “The Exegetical Method of the Epistle to the Hebrews”, *CJT* 5, pp.44-51, 1959.
- Calvin, J., *Commentaries on the first Book of Moses called Genesis*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1979.

## Bibliography

- Caneday, A.B., "The Eschatological World Already Subjected to the Son: The Οἰκουμένη of Hebrews 1.6 and the Son's Enthronement", in R. Bauckham *et al.* (eds.), *A Cloud of Witnesses, Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Context*, London: T&TClark, 2008.
- Carson, D.A., "Three More Books on the Bible: A Critical Review", *TJ* 27, pp.1-62, 2006.
- Cassuto, U., *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, Jerusalem: Magnes, 1989.
- Chester, A., *Messiah and Exaltation. Jewish Messianic and Visionary Traditions and New Testament Christology*, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2007.
- Cheung, A.T.M., "The Priest as the Redeemed Man: A Biblical-Theological Study of the Priesthood", *JETS* 29, pp.265-277, 1986.
- Childs, B.S., "Psalm 8 in the Context of the Christian Canon", *Int* 23, pp.21-31, 1969.
- Clements, R. E., *God and temple: the idea of the divine presence in Ancient Israel*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1965.
- Cockerill, G.L., "Melchizedek or 'King of Righteousness'" *EvQ* 63, pp.305-312, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Hebrews 1:6: Source and Significance", *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 9, pp.51-64, 1999.  
[http://www.ibr-bbr.org/IBRBulletin/BBR\\_1999/BBR\\_1999\\_04Cockerill\\_Hebrews1\\_6.pdf](http://www.ibr-bbr.org/IBRBulletin/BBR_1999/BBR_1999_04Cockerill_Hebrews1_6.pdf)
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Melchizedek without Speculation: The Validity of Hebrews 7 Use of Genesis 14", [www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~www\\_sd/hebrews2006/papers.htm](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~www_sd/hebrews2006/papers.htm), 2006.
- Cody, A., *Heavenly sanctuary and liturgy in the Epistle to the Hebrews: the achievement of salvation in the Epistle's perspectives*, St-Meinrad: Grail, 1960.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *A History of the Old Testament Priesthood*, Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969.
- Cole, H.R., "The Sabbath and Genesis 2:1-3", *AUSS* 41, pp.5-12, 2003.
- Coldwell, E.C., "The Complex Character of the Late Byzantine Text of the Gospels", *JBL* 5, pp.211-221, 1935.
- Collins, C.J., *Genesis 1-4, A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary*, Phillipsburg NJ: P&R, 2006.
- Craigie, P.C., *Psalms 1-50, Word Biblical Commentary*, Waco TX: Word Books, 1983.
- Dahood. M., *Psalms I, 1--50*, Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1970.
- D'Angelo, M.R., *Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews*, Missoula MI: Scholars Press, 1979.
- Davies, G.H., "Psalm 95", *ZAW* 85, pp.183-195, 1973.
- Davis, B. C., "Is Psalm 110 a Messianic Psalm?", *BSac* 157, pp.160-173, 2000.
- Demarest, B., "Hebrews 7:3, a Crux Interpretum Historically Considered", *EvQ* 49, pp.148-165, 1977.
- deSilva, D.A., *Despising shame : honor discourse and community maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Atlanta GA: Scholars Press, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Despising Shame: A Cultural-Anthropological Investigation of the Epistle to the Hebrews", *JBL* 113, pp.439-461, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Entering God's Rest: Eschatology and the Socio-Rhetorical Strategy of Hebrews", *TJ* 21, pp.25-43, 2000.

## Bibliography

- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Invention and Argumentative Function of Priestly Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews", *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 16, pp.295-323, 2006.
- Docherty, S., "The Text Form of the OT Citations in Hebrews Chapter 1 and the Implications for the Study of the Septuagint", *NTS* 55, pp.353-365, 2009.
- Dumbrell, W.J., "The Spirits of Just Men Made Perfect", *EvQ* 48, pp.154-159, 1976.
- Elliger, K. and W. Rudolph, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1967/77.
- Ellingworth, P., *The Epistle to the Hebrews, A Commentary on the Greek Text*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1993.
- Enns, P., "Creation and Re-Creation: Psalm 95 and Its Interpretation in Hebrews 3:1-4:13", *WTJ* 55, pp.255-281, 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Book review of D.F. Leschert's Hermeneutical Foundations of Hebrews", *WTJ* 60, pp.164-165, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Apostolic Hermeneutics and an Evangelical Doctrine of Scripture: Moving beyond a Modernist Impasse", *WTJ* 65, pp.263-287, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Inspiration and Incarnation, Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Response to G.K. Beale's Review Article", *JETS* 49, pp.313-326, 2006.
- Eusebius, *The Church History*, P.L. Maier (ed.), Grand Rapids MI: Kregel, 1999.
- Fee, G.D., "Modern Textual Criticism and the Revival of the Textus Receptus", *JETS* 21, pp.19-33, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Modern Textual Criticism and the Majority Text: A Rejoinder", *JETS* 21, pp.157-161, 1978.
- Fitzmyer, J.A., "'Now this Melchizedek...' (Heb 7:1)", *CBQ* 25, pp.314-320, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The One Who Is to Come*, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007.
- France R.T., "The Writer of the Hebrews as a Biblical Expositor", *TB* 47, pp.245-276, 1996.
- Gaffin, R.B., "A Sabbath Rest Still Awaits the People of God", in C.G. Dennison and R.C. Gamble (eds.), *Pressing Toward the Mark*, Philadelphia NJ: OPC, 1986.
- Geertsema, J., "Is een bekering van een afvallige mogelijk? Hebrëen 6,6 verklaard in zijn historische situatie", in P.H.R. van Houwelingen *et al.* (eds.), *Exeget[h]isch*, Kampen: Kok, 2001.
- Gerbrandt, G.E., *Kingship according to the Deuteronomistic History*, Atlanta GA: Scholars Press 1986.
- Gheorghita, R., *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2003.
- Gleason, R.C., "The Old Testament Background of Rest in Hebrews 3:7-4:11", *BSac* 157, pp.281-303, 2000.
- Graham, R.E., "A Note on Hebrews 4:4-9", in K.A. Strand, *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, Washington DC: Herald, 1982.
- Grant, J.A., *The King as Exemplar, The Function of Deuteronomy's Kingship Law in the Shaping of the Book of Psalms*, Atlanta GA: SBL, 2004.

## Bibliography

- Grogan, G., "The New Testament Interpretation of the Old Testament: A Comparative Study", *TB* 18, pp.54-76, 1967
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Christ and His People, An Exegetical and Theological Study of Hebrews 2: 5-19", *Vox Evangelica* 6, pp.4-71, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "New Testament Christology or New Testament Christologies?", *Them* 25, pp.60-73, 1999.
- Groom, S.A., *Linguistic Analysis of Biblical Hebrew*, Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003.
- Grosheide, F.W., *De Brief aan de Hebreëen en de Brief van Jacobus*, Kampen: Kok, 1955.
- Guthrie, B.D., *The Letter to the Hebrews, An Introduction and Commentary*, Leicester: IVP, 1983.
- Guthrie, G.H., *The Structure of Hebrews, A Text-Linguistic Analysis*, Leiden: Brill, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The NIV Application Commentary: Hebrews*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Discourse Analysis", in: D.A. Black and D.S. Dockery (eds.), *Interpreting the New Testament, Essays on Methods and Issues*, Nashville TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Hebrews' Use of the Old Testament: Recent Trends in Research", *Currents in Biblical Research* 1, pp.271-294, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Hebrews in its First-Century Contexts: Recent Research", in: S. McKnight and G.R. Osborne (eds.), *The Face of New Testament Studies*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Hebrews" in G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (eds.), *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2007.
- Hagner, D.A., *New International Biblical Commentary, Hebrews*, Carlisle: Paternoster, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Encountering the Book of Hebrews, An Exposition*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2002.
- Hamilton, V.P., *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17, NICOT*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1990.
- Harman, A.M., "The Syntax and Interpretation of Psalm 45:7", in: J.H. Skilton (ed.), *The Law and the Prophets*, Phillipsburg NJ: P&R, 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Commentary on the Psalms*, Fearn: CFP, 1988.
- Harris, M.J., "The Translation of *Elohim* in Psalm 45:7-8", *TB* 35, pp.65-89, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Translation and Significance of 'Ο Θεός in Hebrews 1:8-9", *TB* 36, pp.129-162, 1985.
- Harris, R.L., *Inspiration and the Canonicity of the Bible*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_, G.L. Archer, B.K. Waltke (eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Chicago IL: Moody, 1980.
- Hay, D. M., *Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity*, Nashville TN: Abingdon, 1973.
- Hays, R.B., *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul: Abstract", and "On the Rebound: A Response to Critiques of *Echoes of Scriptures in the Letters of Paul*" in C.A. Evans and J.A. Sanders (eds.), *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The Conversion of the Imagination, Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2005.

## Bibliography

- Heen, E.M. and P.D.W. Krey (eds.), *Hebrews, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity, 2005.
- Hensel, R. and C. Brown, "Rest", *NIDNTT* 3, pp.254-258, Carlisle: Paternoster, 1986.
- Hodges, D.M. and Z.C. Hodges, "Appendix C" in: W.N. Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, Nashville TN: Nelson, 1977.
- Hodges, Z.C., "Modern Textual Criticism and the Majority Text: A Response", *JETS* 21, pp.143-155, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Modern Textual Criticism and the Majority Text: A Surrejoinder", *JETS* 21, pp.161-164, 1978.
- Hofius, O., *Katapausis, Die Vorstellung vom endzeitlichen Ruheort im Hebräerbrief*, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1970.
- Holwerda, B., *Hebreeën*, Kampen: Kok, 2003.
- Horton, F.L., *The Melchizedek Tradition: a critical examination of the sources to the fifth century A.D. and in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Cambridge: CUP, 1976.
- Hossfeld, F.-L., "Psalm 95, Gattungsgeschichtliche, kompositionskritische und bibeltheologische Anfrage", in K. Seybold and E. Zenger (eds.), *Neue Wege der Psalmenforschung*, Freiburg: Herder, 1994.
- Howard, G., "Hebrews and the Old Testament Quotations", *NT* 10, pp.208-216, 1968.
- Hughes, G., *Hebrews and Hermeneutics, The Epistle to the Hebrews as a New Testament Example of Biblical Interpretation*, Cambridge: CUP, 1979.
- Hughes, P.E., *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1977.
- Hulst, A.R., "De betekenis van het woord *menucha*", in: D.S. Attema et al. (eds.), *Schrift en Uitleg*, Kok: Kampen, 1970.
- Hurst, L.D., *The Epistle to the Hebrews. Its Background of Thought*, Cambridge: CUP, 1990.
- Hutton, W.R., "Hebrews iv 11", *ExpTim* 52, pp.316-317, 1940.
- Jewett, R., *Letter to Pilgrims: A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, New York NY: Pilgrim, 1981.
- Jobes, K.H., "Rhetorical Achievement in the Hebrews 10 'Misquote' of Psalm 40", *Bib* 72, pp.389-396, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Function of Paronomasia in Hebrews 10:5-7", *TJ* 13, pp.181-191, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and M. Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2000.
- Johnson, A.R., *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel*, Cardiff: University of Wales, 1955.
- Johnson, E.E., "Hermeneutical Principles and the Interpretation of Psalm 110", *BSac* 149, pp.429-454, 1992.
- Johnson, L.T., "The Scriptural World of Hebrews", *Int* 57, pp.237-250, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Hebrews*, Louisville KY: Westminster, 2006.

## Bibliography

- Joslin, B.C., "Can Hebrews be Structured? An Assessment of Eight Approaches", *Currents in Biblical Research* 6, pp.99-129, 2007.
- Joüion P. and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew Vol. I*, Roma: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1971.
- Kaiser, Jr. W.C., "The Promise Theme and the Theology of Rest", *BSac* 130, pp.135-151, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Blessing of David: The Charter for Humanity", in: J.H. Skilton (ed.), *The Law and the Prophets*, Phillipsburg NJ: P&R, 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*. Chicago IL: Moody, 1985.
- Karrer, M., "The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Septuagint", in W. Kraus and R.G. Wooden (eds.), *Septuagint Research, Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures*, Atlanta: SBL, 2006.
- Katz, P., "The Quotation from Deuteronomy in Hebrews", *ZNW* 49, pp.213-223, 1958.
- Kidner, D., *Psalms 73-150, TOTC*, Leicester: IVP, 1975.
- Kistemaker, S., *The Psalm Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Amsterdam: Van Soest, 1961.
- Kline, M.G., *Kingdom Prologue*, Overland Park KS: Two Age Press, 2000.
- Koch, D.-A., *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums, Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus*, Tübingen: Mohr, 1986.
- Kraus, H.J. *Psalms 60-150, A Commentary*, Augsburg MN: Augsburg Publishing, 1989.
- Kuhn, T.S., *De Structuur van Wetenschappelijke Revoluties*, Meppel: Boom, 1972.
- Kurialan, J., *Jesus Our High Priest. Ps 110,4 as the Substructure of Heb 5,1-7,28*, Frankfurt: Lang, 2000.
- Laansma, J.C., *I Will Give You Rest, The Rest Motif in the New Testament with Special Reference to Mt 11 and Heb 3-4*, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Rest", in T.D. Alexander and B.S. Rosner (eds.), *The New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, Leicester: IVP, 2000.
- Lakatos, I., "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" in I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave (eds.), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, Cambridge: CUP, 1970.
- Lake, K., "Excursus I: The Ecclesiastical Text" in K. Lake, R.P. Lake and S. New, "The Caesarean Text of the Gospel of Mark", *HTR* 21, pp.336-358, 1928.
- Lane, W.L., *Hebrews 1-8 and 9-13, Word Biblical Commentary*, Dallas TX: Word Books, 1991.
- Lee, A.H.I., *From Messiah to Preexistent Son. Jesus' Self-Consciousness and Early Christian Exegesis of Messianic Psalms*, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2005.
- Leschert, D.L., *Hermeneutical Foundations of Hebrews: A Study in the Validity of the Epistle's Interpretation of Some Core Citations from the Psalms*, Lewiston NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1994.
- Lincoln, A.T., "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology in the New Testament", in D.A. Carson (ed.), *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1982.
- Lohse, E., "σάββατον, σαββατισμός, παρασκευή.", *TDNT* 7:1-35.

## Bibliography

- Longenecker, R.N., *The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Melchizedek Argument of Hebrews: A Study in the Development and Circumstantial Expression of New Testament Thought", in: R.A. Guelich (ed.), *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_, (ed.), *Contours of Christology in the New Testament*, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2005.
- Louw, T.A.W. van der, *Transformations in the Septuagint, Towards an Interaction of Septuagint Studies and Translation Studies*, Leuven: Peeters, 2007.
- Mackay, J.L., *Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*, Fearn: CFP, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*, Fearn: CFP, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Jeremiah Vol.2*, Fearn: CFP, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *A Study Commentary on Isaiah, Volume 1: chapters 1-39*, Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2008.
- Mackie, S.D., *Eschatology and Exhortation in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Confession of the Son of God in Hebrews", *NTS* 53, pp.114-129, 2007.
- Mason, E.F., "Hebrews 7:3 and the Relationship between Melchizedek and Jesus", *BR* 50, pp.41-62, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 'You are a Priest Forever.' *Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Leiden: Brill, 2008.
- McCarthy, D.J., "II Samuel 7 and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History", *JBL* 84, pp.131-138, 1965.
- McConville, J.G., "Jerusalem in the Old Testament," P.W.L. Walker, (ed.), *Jerusalem Past and Present in the Purposes of God*. Cambridge: Tyndale House, pp.21-51, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Deuteronomy, AOTC*, Leicester: Apollos, 2002.
- McCullough, J.C., "The Old Testament Quotations in Hebrews", *NTS* 26, pp.363-378, 1980.
- McKenzie, S.L., "Deuteronomistic History", *ABD* 2:160-168.
- McKnight, S., "The Warning Passages of Hebrews: A Formal Analysis and Theological Conclusions", *TJ* 13, pp.21-59, 1992.
- Merrill, E.H., *Kingdom of Priests, A History of Old Testament Israel*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Royal Priesthood: An Old Testament Messianic Motif", *BSac* 150, pp.50-62, 1993.
- Metzger, B.M., "The Lucianic Recension of the Greek Bible", in: *Chapters in the History of New Testament Textual Criticism*, Leiden: Brill, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition*, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994.
- Metzger, M., "Himmlische und irdische Wohnstatt Jahwes", *UF* 2, pp.139-158, 1970.
- Miller, P.D., "The Gift of God: The Deuteronomistic Theology of the Land", *Int* 23, pp.451-465, 1969.

## Bibliography

- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Human Sabbath: A Study in Deuteronomic Theology", *PSB* 2, pp.81-97, 1985.
- Montefiore, H.W., *A Commentary on The Epistle to the Hebrews*, London: Black, 1964.
- Moo, D.J., "The Problem of Sensus Plenior", in: D.A. Carson and J.D. Woodbridge (eds.), *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1986.
- Mounce, W.D., *Pastoral Epistles, Word Biblical Commentary*, Nashville TN: Nelson, 2000.
- Motyer S., "The Psalm Quotations of Hebrews 1: A Hermeneutic-Free Zone?", *TB* 50, pp.3-22, 1999.
- Mugridge, A., "'Warnings in the Epistle to the Hebrews,' An Exegetical Study", *RefTR* 46, pp.74-82, 1987.
- Nardoni, E., "Partakers in Christ (Hebrews 3.14)", *NTS* 37, pp.456-472, 1991.
- Oberholtzer, T.K., "The Warning Passages in Hebrews – Part 2: The Kingdom Rest in Hebrews 3:1-4:14", *BSac* 145, pp.185-196, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Warning Passages in Hebrews – Part 5: The Failure to Heed His Speaking in Hebrews 12:25-29", *BSac* 146, pp.67-75, 1989.
- O'Brien, P.T. *The Letter to the Hebrews, The Pillar New Testament Commentary*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Osborne, G.R., *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, Downers Grove IL: IVP, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Christ of Hebrews and Other Religions", *JETS* 46, pp.249-267, 2003.
- Oswalt, J.N., *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66, NICOT*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Parsons, M.C., "Son and High Priest: A Study in the Christology of Hebrews", *EvQ* 60, pp.195-216, 1988.
- Paul, M.J., "The Order of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4 and Heb 7:3)", *WTJ* 49, pp.196-211, 1987.
- Peterson, D., *Hebrews and Perfection: An Examination of the Concept of Perfection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Cambridge: CUP, 1982.
- Popper, K.R., *Conjectures and Refutations, The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.
- Porter, S. (ed.), *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2007.
- Poythress, V.S., "Divine Meaning of Scripture", *WTJ* 48, pp.241-279, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Science and Hermeneutics" in M. Silva (ed.), *Foundations in Contemporary Interpretation*, Leicester: Zondervan, 1997.
- Rad, G. von, *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays*, London: Oliver & Boyd, 1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Genesis*, London: SCM, 1972.
- Ralston, T.R., "The 'Majority Text' and Byzantine Origins", *NTS* 38, pp.122-137, 1992.
- Reymond, R.L., *Jesus, Divine Messiah: The Old Testament Witness*, Fearn: CFP, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Paul, Missionary Theologian*, Fearn: CFP, 2000.

## Bibliography

- Rhee, V.(S.-Y.), , *Faith in Hebrews. Analysis within the context of Christology, Eschatology, and Ethics*, Bern: Lang, 2001.
- Robertson, O.P., *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*, NICOT, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1990.
- Robinson, G., “The Idea of Rest in the Old Testament and the Search for the Basic Character of the Sabbath”, *ZAW* 92, pp.32-42, 1980.
- Robinson, M.A. and W. G. Pierpont, *The New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform, 2005*. Southborough, MA: Chilton Book Publishing, 2005. (As provided through Bibleworks8).
- Robinson, M.A., *The Case for the Byzantine Priority*, Southborough, MA: Chilton Book Publishing, 2005, <http://koti.24.fi/jusalak/GreekNT/APPENDIX.PDF>, [accessed 7/2/10].
- Rooke D.W., “Jesus as Royal Priest: Reflections on the Interpretation of the Melchizedek Tradition in Heb 7”, *Bib* 81, pp.81-94, 2000.
- Rose, W., “Messianic Expectations in the Old Testament”, *IDSk* 35, pp.275-288, 2001.
- Ross, A.P., *Creation & Blessing*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1988.
- Roth, W. “The Deuteronomic Rest Theology: A Redaction Critical Study”, *BR* 21, pp.178-191, 1989.
- Sailhamer, J.H., “The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible”, *JETS* 44, pp.5-23, 2001.
- Satterthwaite, P.E. et al. (eds.), *The Lord’s Anointed. Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1995.
- Savran, G.W., “The Contrasting Voices of Psalm 95”, *RB* 110, pp.17-32, 2003.
- Schnabel, E.J., “Textual Criticism: Recent Developments” in: S. McKnight and G.R. Osborne (eds.), *The Face of New Testament Studies*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2004.
- Scholer, J.M., *Proleptic Priests: Priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Sheffield: JSOT, 1991.
- Schröger, F., *Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes als Schriftausleger*, Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1968.
- Silva, M., “Perfection and Eschatology in Hebrews”, *WTJ* 39, pp.60-71, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “Book review of W.C. Kaiser’s *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*”, *JETS* 29, pp.491-493, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “The New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Text Form and Authority”, in: D.A. Carson and J.D. Woodbridge (eds.), *Scripture and Truth*, Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1992.
- Smalley, S.S., “The Atonement in the Epistle to the Hebrews”, *TB* 7-8, pp.28-35, 1961.
- Son, K., *Zion Symbolism in Hebrews. Hebrews 12:18-24 as a Hermeneutical Key to the Epistle*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005.
- Speiser, A.E., *Genesis, AB*, Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1983.
- Stec, D.M., *The Targum of the Psalms*, London: T&TClark, 2004.
- Steyn, G.J. “Psalm 2 in Hebrews”, *NeoT* 37, pp.263-281, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “The Vorlage of Psalm 45:6-7 (44:7-8) in Hebrews 1:8-9”, *HTS* 60, pp.1085-1103, 2004.

## Bibliography

- Swetnam, J. “’Εξ ἐνός in Hebrews 2,11”, *Bib* 88, pp.517-525, 2007.
- Tate, M.C., *Psalms 51-100, Word Biblical Commentary*, Waco TX: Word Books, 1990.
- Thayer, J.H., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 1996.
- Thomas, K.J., “The Old Testament Quotations in Hebrews”, *NTS* 11, pp.303-325, 1965.
- Thompson, J.W., *The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy: The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Washington DC: Catholic Bible Association, 1982.
- Towner, W.S., “Hermeneutical Systems of Hillel and the Tannim: A Fresh Look”, *Hebrew Union College Annual* 53, pp.101-135, 1982.
- Toussaint, S.D., “The Eschatology of the Warning Passages in the Book of Hebrews”, *Grace Theological Journal* 3, pp.67-80, 1982.
- Trull, G.V., “Views on Peter’s Use of Psalm 16:8-11 in Acts 2:25-32”, *BSac* 161, pp.194-215, 2004.
- Tucker, W.D., “Psalm 95: Text, Context, and Intertext”, *Bib* 81, pp.533-541, 2000.
- Turretin, F., *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* (Geneva, 1679 – Ed. by J.T. Dennison Jr.), Phillipsburg NJ: P&R, 1992.
- Ulrich, D.W., “Exodus 33:12-23”, *Int* 56, pp.410-412, 2002.
- Ulrich, E. et al., *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XIV*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- VanGemeren, W.A. (ed.), *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997.
- Vanhoozer, K.J., *Is there a Meaning in this Text?* Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1998.
- Vanhoye, A., “Longue marche ou accès tout proche? Le contexte biblique de Hébreux 3,7-4,11”, *Bib* 49, pp.9-26, 1968.
- Vaux, R. de, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1961.
- Verhoef, P.A., *The Books of Haggai and Malachi, NICOT*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1987.
- Wallace, D.B., “The Majority-Text Theory: History, Methods and Critique”, *JETS* 37, pp.185-215, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1996.
- Wallace, D., “The Use of the Psalms in the Shaping of a Text: Psalm 2:7 and Psalm 110:1 in Hebrews 1”, *ResQ* 45, pp.41-50, 2003.
- Walters, J.R., “The Rhetorical Arrangement of Hebrews”, *Asbury Theological Journal* 51, pp.59-70, 1996.
- Waltke, B.K., “A Canonical Process Approach to the Psalms”, in: J.S. and P.D. Feinberg (eds.), *Tradition and Testament*, Chicago IL: Moody, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 1-15*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_, “Psalm 110: An Exegetical and Canonical Approach”, in L.G. Tipton and J.C. Waddington (eds.), *Resurrection and Eschatology*, Phillipsburg NJ: P&R, 2008.

## Bibliography

- \_\_\_\_\_ and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, Winona Lake IN: Eisenbaums, 1990.
- Walton, J.H., "Psalms: A Cantata about the Davidic Covenant", *JETS* 34, pp.21-31, 1991.
- Weiss, H., "Sabbatismos in the Epistle to the Hebrews", *CBQ* 58, pp.674-689, 1996.
- Wenham, G.J., "Were David's Sons Really Priests?", *ZAW* 87, pp.79-80, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Genesis 1-15, Word Biblical Commentary*, Waco TX: Word Books, 1987.
- Westermann, C., *Genesis 1-11*, London: SPCK, 1984.
- Westfall, C.L., *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews. The Relationship between Form and Meaning*, London: T&TClark, 2005.
- Wisselink, W.F., *Assimilation as a Criterion for the Establishment of a Text, A Comparative Study on the Basis of Passages from Matthew, Mark and Luke*, Kampen: Kok, 1989.
- Woudstra, M.H., *The Book of Joshua, NICOT*, Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1981.
- Wray, J.H., *Rest as a Theological Metaphor in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel of Truth: Early Christian Homiletics of Rest*, Atlanta GA: Scholars Press, 1998.
- Wright, N.T., *The New Testament and the People of God*, Minneapolis MN: Fortress, 1992.
- Yeo, K.-K., "The Meaning and the Usage of the Theology of 'Rest' (καταπαυσις and σαββατισμος) in Hebrews 3,7-4,13", *AJT* 5, pp.2-33, 1991.

