CHAPTER 4

Representation of the Constituents of Hebrew Words by Individual Greek Equivalents

A sign of literalness in the Greek translations is that the translators often preferred to divide Hebrew words into meaningful elements, which they rendered each by its own Greek word. For example, the rendering of \( וֹבְהִנָּבְאֹת \) consists of a preposition, an infinitive, and a pronominal suffix. If each element is rendered separately, as in the phrase \( ἐν τῷ προφητεύειν αὐτόν \) (13:4), the rendering should be regarded as literal. Further, the extent to which this manner of translation is implemented may, according to Tov, indicate the degree of literalness in the LXX/OG translation unit.

Several scholars have studied the representation of the constituents of Hebrew words. However, the analyses they have undertaken vary to some degree when it comes to the selection of the material to study.

Benjamin Wright compares several translation units and describes the relative degree of literalness of each unit. He confines his material to renderings of Hebrew words that consist of several elements, such as the example mentioned above. In Wright’s approach literalness is distinct from whether the translator chose to represent each element by the equivalent word class in Greek (e.g., rendering a conjunction with a conjunction), an element he addresses under the categories “lexical consistency” and “lexical adequacy.”

In contrast, Edward Glenny, in his analysis of the translation of Amos, does study the rendering of word classes under the rubric of constituent elements of Hebrew words. He adopts the term “paraphrase” from James Karol Palmer to describe non-literal renderings. Palmer defines “paraphrase” as “a translation that communicates the sense of a Hebrew word or phrase, but does not make an attempt to represent the form.” Thus Glenny includes in his study issues such as the extent to which the translator of Amos rendered Hebrew

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2 Wright, No Small Difference, 65.
3 Wright, No Small Difference, 58.
4 Wright, No Small Difference, 57.
participles by Greek participles, nouns, or finite verbs. This approach is different from Tov’s, nevertheless Glenny uses the name of Tov’s category (namely, “the representation of the constituents of Hebrew words by individual Greek equivalents”) and draws on Palmer’s approach.

In this chapter I will attempt to paint the whole picture concerning this phenomenon in OG-Zechariah. In my analysis I will follow the approaches of Tov and Wright since their definition best captures the essence of this category. Like Wright, I will distinguish between this category and the categories “lexical consistency” and “lexical adequacy.” In contrast to Wright, my aim is not to measure the relative freedom or literalness of one translation unit compared to other units. Instead, I will focus on the description of the way that the translator worked in the book of Zechariah.

Analysis

In order to give an overall description of how the translator rendered the Hebrew words consisting of two or more elements, I have counted all such words in the Hebrew text and studied how they are rendered in the translation. This analysis informs us as to how often the translator rendered every constituent element of the Hebrew words by a Greek representation in the translation. But, before we consider the results, we should make some reflections on the method.

Methodological Considerations

Any categorization of a philological phenomenon will encounter challenges in drawing the borders between categories. Some words or phrases defy simple categorization. I have used the following set of rules to place words and phrases into their respective categories:

- The constituent element of the Hebrew word must be visible in the consonantal text for us to expect the translator to render it. This implies that a

7 Glenny, *Finding Meaning*, 51–52. The extent to which the translators were familiar with word classes, may be discussed. Theo van der Louw (*Transformations*, 144) points to Alexandrian librarians’ interest in word classes as a justification for an analysis similar to Glenny’s. Such a reference does not necessarily indicate that the translators of LXX/OG had the same knowledge, but another indication is found in 8ḤevXIIgr where it appears that the translator made some revisions based on his understanding of word classes; see Tov, *The Greek Minor Prophets*, 134.