CHAPTER NINE

JOSHUA 8:30–35: MT—4QJOSHUA—a—LXX

9.1 INTRODUCTION

9.1.1 The Contents of the Passage

One of the major literary and textual problems of the book of Joshua is posed by the relatively short passage MT-Joshua 8:30–35. The passage describes how Joshua builds an altar on Mount Ebal in accordance with the commandments of Moses (8:31 cf. Deut. 11:29–32), i.e. an altar of unhewn stones (8:31 cf. Deut. 27:5–6 and Exod. 20:25). The Israelites offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings on it. Joshua writes on the stones a copy of the torah of Moses (8:32 cf. Deut. 31:9). All Israel with its elders, officials, and judges is placed around the ark which is carried by the Levitical priests half of them facing Mount Gerizim, half of them facing in the opposite direction Mount Ebal, as prescribed by Moses (8:33 cf. Deut. 11:29–30; 27:11–13) in order to bless the people of Israel in the beginning (8:33 cf. Deut. 27:12). After that, Joshua reads all the words of the torah, both blessing and curse as written in the book of the torah. Again, it is emphasised that there was not a single word of Moses’ commandments that was not read by Joshua in front of all Israel. The passage ends as abruptly as it had started (R).

For the sake of convenience a synopsis of the three relevant textual witnesses is offered here, although it is not my purpose to deal with the smaller divergencies between LXX and MT. The sole instance of a difference in the reconstruction of the original Greek text by Rahlfs and Margolis will be dealt with in a footnote.¹

¹ [LXX-Josh. 9:2c] Margolis adopted the reading attested by Codex Vaticanus, ms. 72 (M), and Eth without the words ἐκ τῶν φυλακῶν (Rahlfs). According to D. Barthélemy, Critique textuelle 1, p. 13, the reference to Or-lat (in the Brooke-McLean and Margolis editions) is erroneous. For a proper presentation of the other witnesses, see S. Simiä, A Note to the Users of Margolis’ Joshua Edition, p. 19. The absence of the words are best seen as an inner-Greek stylistic shortening of the longer expression, thus Barthélemy and C.G. den Hertog, Studien, p. 68.
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LXX-Josh. 9:2a–f (ed. Rahlfs)  
4QJosh¹ (ed. Ulrich)  
MT-Josh. 8:30–35 (BHS)

92a Tότε φκοδόμησεν Ήσσούς θυσιαστήριον  
kυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ Ἰσραήλ  
ev ὀρεί Γαιβαλ,  
92b καθότι ἐνετειλατό Μωυσῆς ὁ θεράπον κυρίου  
toῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραήλ,  
καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ — — — νόμῳ Μωυσῆ,  
thυσιαστήριον λίθων ὀλοκλήρων,  
ἐφ’ οὐς οὐκ ἐπεβλήθη σίδηρος,  
kαὶ ἀνεβίβασεν ἐκεῖ ὀλοκοντώματα κυρίῳ  
kαὶ θυσίαν σωτηρίου.

92c καὶ ἔγραψεν Ήσσοὺς -- εἴπ τῶν λίθων  
tὸ δευτερονόμιον, νόμον Μωυσῆ,  
(δν ἔγραψεν) ἐνόπλων υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ.

92d καὶ πᾶς Ἰσραήλ καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι αὐτῶν  
kαὶ οἱ δικασταὶ καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν  
παραπροέντο ἐνθέθεν  
kαὶ ἐνθεὶ τῆς κυβῳτος ἀπέναντι,  
kαὶ οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ οἱ Λευίται  
ἤραν τὴν κυβῳτὴν τῆς διαθήκης κυρίου,  
kαὶ ὁ προσήπλυτος καὶ ὁ σύνθεων,  
οἳ ἤραν ἡμῖν πλησίον ὄρους Γαριζίν,  
kαὶ οἳ ἤραν ἡμῖν πλησίον ὄρους Γαιβαλ,  
kαθὼς ἐνετειλατό Μωυσῆς ὁ θεράπον κυρίου  
eὐλογήσας τὸν λαὸν — — ἐν πρώτοις.  
92e καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα οὕτως ἀνέγνω Ήσσοὺς  
pάντα τά ῥήματα τοῦ νόμου τούτου,  
tάς εὐλογίας καὶ τάς κατάρας,  
kατὰ πάντα τά γεγραμμένα  
ev τῷ — — — νόμῳ Μωυσῆ·

92f οὐκ ἦν ῥῆμα ἀπὸ πάντων,  
ὡν ἐνετειλατό Μωυσῆς  
tῷ Ήσσοί,  
ὁ οὖν ἀνέγνω Ήσσούς  
eἰς τά ῥίτα πάσης ἐκκλησίας  
vοίῳ Ἰσραήλ,  

καὶ τοῖς ἀνδράσιν καὶ ταῖς γυναιξίν  
καὶ τοῖς παιδίοις  
καὶ τοῖς προσήφιτοις  

καὶ τοῖς προσπορευόμενοις τῷ Ἰσραήλ.