The book of Isaiah is well known for its focus on the holy city, Jerusalem/Zion, and its temple, but it does not display a great interest, at least not explicitly so, in priests and priesthood. The passages referring to priests are small in number; see 8:2; 24:2; 28:6; 37:2; 61:6, and 66:21, the latter instance being the only place where also the term ‘Levites’ occurs.\(^1\) The Septuagint of Isaiah (LXX Isaiah), however, displays a different picture as there are several instances where, different from MT, its vocabulary reflects an interest in priests and priesthood.\(^2\) The first place to be mentioned is 40:2, since here the LXX offers the term ‘priest’ where MT (cf. 1QIsaa, 1QIsab, 4QIsa\(^b\)) does not: ‘O priests, speak to the heart of Jerusalem, comfort her.’ The Greek version makes explicit who, to the mind of its translator, are the ones that are being addressed.\(^3\) In his view, ‘priests’ are the appropriate authorities to comfort the people of Jerusalem.

Another passage which is of great interest is to be found in ch. 22: it contains a prophecy (vv. 15–25) about Sebna and Eljakim who in MT are presented as high officials of the court, fully in line with Isa 36–37, but who in LXX turn out to be priestly leaders.\(^4\) Furthermore, there is reason to believe that LXX Isa 9:5–7 (MT, vv. 4–6) allude to priestly leaders as well—to illegitimate high-priests in v. 5, and to a legitimate high-priestly leader to be expected, in vv. 6–7.\(^5\)

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1. But see also 43:28 (‘the princes of the sanctuary’).
2. In Isa 8:2 (‘Uriah, the priest’), on the other hand, LXX has no equivalent of ‘priest.’
3. Compare the explicitation in Tg. Isa 40:2 (‘prophets’).
In this contribution I will deal with two other instances in LXX Isaiah, which, in my view, also testify to a strong interest in priesthood: 6:13 and 29:22.6

I. Isaiah 6:13 (LXX)

And the tenth is still/again on it, and it will again be for plunder, like a terebinth, and like an acorn when it falls from its husk.

(MT: And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains standing when it is felled. The holy seed is its stump [RSV])

LXX offers a text which is shorter than MT (and 1QIsa*). There is no rendering of several words found in MT. On the basis of the version of Theodotion (σπέρμα ἅγιον τὸ στήλωμα αὐτῆς) it was thought that the final clause of v. 13 was the part missing in the Greek.7 However, scholars have pointed out that, since the word αὐτῆς (‘its [husk]’) plausibly shows that the last word in Hebrew (מצבתה) was read, the words not translated are קרש זרע בם מצבת.8 The minus can be explained as due to homoiarkton.9

The clause ‘And the tenth is on it,’ interestingly, uses a present tense, ἐστι—MT has a non-verbal clause—whereas the context of v. 12 and the remainder of v. 13 is in the future. How should one interpret the present tense in the first part of the verse? Troxel is the only one who has dealt with this issue, and according to him, this feature is best explained in the

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6 It is a great pleasure to contribute to this volume in honour of Hugh Williamson who has contributed significantly among other things to the study of the book of Isaiah.

7 See e.g. Joseph Ziegler, Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaias (ATA 12/3; Münster: Aschendorff, 1934), 48.
