PART ONE

LAND IN JOSHUA AND OTHER
PARTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
TRANSLATOR’S COMPETENCE AND INTENTION IN LXX-JOSHUA 2

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The Greek Joshua has attracted some of the best minds during the past century. Since scholars seek challenges, their studies often deal either with the book as a whole, its most difficult passages, or its most bewildering features. But how can we avoid the circular reasoning that easily clings to such ambitious approaches? For this article, I therefore took the opposite route, hoping that the discussion of some “omissions” in a relatively easy chapter (Joshua 2) would yield clues for the more difficult parts of the book and for clearing up some general issues. I follow the method I outlined elsewhere.

Let us begin with the Greek text and ask what impression it must have made on contemporaries. First of all, the majority of the narrative clauses begin with καί. In other words, the syntax is pervaded by co-ordination or parataxis. In Koine Greek, parataxis was usual in simple narrative style, but not to this extent. It was deemed inelegant in Greek with its elaborate system of hypotaxis. Especially disturbing are the cases of apodotic καί (2:5, 8a). Second, the word order (verb-subject-object) deviates systematically from normal Greek word order, where it is limited to verba dicendi. Third, many items are unnatural or unnaturally frequent, such as λέγων “saying” (and its declensions) introducing direct speech (2:1,