

Text-Sequence and Translation

Revision in 3 Reigns 9:10–10:33

David Gooding



MYRTLEFIELD
HOUSE

www.myrtlefieldhouse.com

David Gooding has asserted his right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as Author of this work.

Copyright © The Myrtlefield Trust, 2023

All rights reserved. Permission is granted to reproduce this document in its entirety, or in unaltered excerpts, for personal and church use only as long as you do not charge a fee. You must not reproduce it on any Internet site. Permission must be obtained if you wish to reproduce it in any other context, translate it, or publish it in any format.

This article was originally published in *Vetus Testamentum* 19:4 (1969), pp. 448–463.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the English Revised Version (1885), the King James Version, or are David Gooding's own translations or paraphrases.

The Myrtlefield Trust

PO Box 2216

Belfast, N Ireland

BT1 9YR

w: www.myrtlefieldhouse.com

e: info@myrtlefieldhouse.com

Myrtlefield catalogue no: acd-art.011/sc

Text-Sequence and Translation

I have in a former issue of this journal¹ suggested that the material which now stands at 3 Reigns 10:23–25 stands there as a result of a re-arrangement of the original text, and that the motive for the re-arrangement was a desire to excuse Solomon's accumulation of gold and horses. The purpose of this present article is to call attention to two further pieces of evidence: one confirming that the motive of the re-arrangement was as has been already suggested; the other revealing at what level this revisory activity took place.²

I

If, as I have suggested, the passage which now stands at 10:23–25 once stood between 9:14 and 9:26, its removal to its present position will have brought about a different text-sequence, and therefore a difference in thought-sequence, in three places:

1. 10:22 is now followed by the present 10:23 instead of being followed by what is now 10:26; and 10:23 is now immediately preceded by 10:22 instead of, as formerly, by 9:14.
2. 9:14 and 9:26, which once stood a paragraph apart, now run together.
3. 10:26 is now immediately preceded by the present 10:25, whereas formerly it was immediately preceded by 10:22.

It will be interesting, therefore, to examine these new suture-points, as we may call them, to see if there are any signs of awkwardness or editorial adaptations, and if so, what particular slant, if any, the editorial adaptations give to the story.

1. The suture-point at the present 10:22/23 is the one already discussed in the earlier article. We need say no more about it now, except to remind ourselves that at this point the text is talking about one of Solomon's ships and its cargo; that the ship's cargo in verse 22 seems to have been deliberately altered; and that the insertion of verse 23 ff serves to justify the remaining items of the cargo, and so to excuse Solomon's import of gold, silver and stone.
2. 9:14 and 9:26–28, which are now allowed to run together, likewise deal both of them with gold; and one of them, 9:26–28, deals also with the theme of Solomon's ships. Perhaps this is not insignificant.

The first passage, 9:10–14, tells how Solomon gave Hiram of Tyre twenty cities in Galilee, which, incidentally, did not please Hiram. The last sentence in the MT runs: *And Hiram, sent*

¹ 'The Septuagint's Version of Solomon's Misconduct', *VT* XV (1965), pp. 325–35.

² For the Greek text the verse-numbering used in this article is that of Brooke-McLean, which in some passages cited will be found to differ from that used by Rahlfs.

(πλψ'η) *to the king 120 talents, of gold*. The LXX has καὶ ἤνεγκεν Χειραμ τῷ Σαλωμων ἑκατὸν καὶ εἴκοσι τάλαντα χρυσοῦ. The difference—the king | τῷ Σαλωμων—is small enough. The difference between πλψ'η and ἤνεγκεν is much larger; its possible significance will appear when we now turn to the end of the second passage: (v. 27) καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Χειραμ ἐν τῇ νηὶ τῶν παίδων αὐτοῦ ἄνδρας ναυτικούς ἐλαύνειν εἰδόμενος θάλασσαν μετὰ τῶν παίδων Σαλωμων (v. 28) καὶ ἦλθον εἰς Σωφουρα καὶ ἔλαβον ἐκεῖθεν χρυσοῦ ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι τάλαντα καὶ ἤνεγκαν τῷ βασιλεῖ Σαλωμων. Immediately we notice the ἤνεγκαν. Its counterpart in the MT is יִנְקָה of which ἤνεγκαν is a correct and obvious translation. But ἤνεγκεν in verse 14 is not a correct translation of πλψ'η, and the discrepancy in meaning is emphasised by the fact that in the next verse but one, verse 27, where the MT has πλψ'η ἀπέστειλεν is used. Is, then, ἤνεγκεν of verse 14 simply a mistaken translation; does it go back to different Hebrew; or is it a change, deliberate or accidental, under the influence of the ἤνεγκαν of verse 28? While all three of these explanations are possible, there are indications that the ἤνεγκεν of verse 14 may well be a deliberate assimilation to the ἤνεγκαν of verse 28.

In the first place is the consideration that according to the MT the gold which Hiram *sent* to Solomon (v. 14) amounted to 120 talents, and the gold which the servants of Solomon and Hiram *brought* to Solomon (v. 28) was 420 talents, obviously a different lot of gold; but according to the LXX the amount which Hiram ἤνεγκεν was 120 talents, and the amount which the servants of Solomon and Hiram ἤνεγκαν was likewise 120 talents. It looks as if this latter figure of 120 is an assimilation to the former, and as if the LXX, in its present state, may intend that the 120 talents of verse 14 be understood as the same 120 as verse 28 mentions; or, to put it another way, it looks as if the story in verses 26–28, how Hiram's servants went with Solomon's servants and *brought* Solomon 120 talents of gold, is intended to exploit what verse 14 means when it says that Hiram brought Solomon 120 talents of gold. The MT, of course, does not intend it so. Not only does it indicate that the amounts of gold differed, but between verse 14 and verses 26–28, it has a long paragraph.

Next we should notice that the present suture–point in the LXX between verse 14 and verse 26 labours under some syntactical difficulty. As Brooke-McLean punctuate them the verses run as follows: verse 14 καὶ ἤνεγκεν Χειραμ τῷ Σαλωμων ἑκατὸν καὶ εἴκοσι τάλαντα χρυσοῦ. verse 26 καὶ ναῦν ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐποίησεν Σαλωμων ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν Εμασειων (B; Γασιων plures) Γαβερ, τὴν οὖσαν ἐχομένην Αἰλαθ ἐπὶ τοῦ χεῖλους τῆς ἐσχάτης θαλάσσης ἐν γῆ Εδωμ. It is at once clear that the clause καὶ ναῦν ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐποίησεν Σαλωμων is very difficult, if not impossible, Greek, that is, if it is intended to mean 'for the sake of which Solomon also built a ship'; one would not normally expect the object of the verb in the relative clause to stand before the relative pronoun.

On the other hand the LXX's order καὶ ναῦν . . . ἐποίησεν Σ. ὁ βασιλεὺς, i.e. object, verb, subject, agrees with the MT's order "וְ הַיָּם הַשְּׂמֹנֶה הַשְּׂמֹנֶה הַשְּׂמֹנֶה, which is the more remarkable, since the MT's order here gives an unexpected emphasis.³ Because, then, the LXX seems in this respect

³ See M. Noth, *Könige*, Biblischer Kommentar A.T. IX, 3, p. 221.

to be following a Hebrew text closely, it has been suggested that ὑπὲρ οὓ is a corruption of a translation of some Hebrew word which in the LXX's vorlage stood between אָנִי and אֲנִי. Klosterman⁴ proposed an original translation Ωφειρα for אֲנִי אֲנִי. This may be the right explanation, though in verse 28 the translation given of אֲנִי אֲנִי is Σωφηρα.

But even if ὑπὲρ οὓ is a corruption of some sort, we should still ask if in its present form it is in any way connected with the removal of verses 15–25. In other words, has what began as a corruption been adapted in an effort to make verses 26–28 follow smoothly on verse 14 after the removal of verses 15–25? Rahlf's text removes the full stop which Brooke-McLean put at the end of verse 14, and so makes verse 14 and verse 26 run together as one continuous whole. Though this does not show definitely that Rahlf's intended the καὶ ναῦν of verse 26 to be construed as a second object of the verb ἤνεγκεν verse 14—and Hiram sent to Solomon 120 talents of gold and a ship—it seems to suggest it. And the suggestion is interesting. Construing the Greek thus would mean that according to verses 14 and 26–28, as they now stand, it was not Solomon, but Hiram, who built the ship that went to Ophir to get gold; and when Chronicles tells this same story, it gives the same impression (2 Chr 8:17–18). Instead of saying, as the MT of I Kings does, that Solomon *built a navy* in Ezion-Geber, and Hiram sent some of his sailors in it with Solomon's servants, both the MT and the LXX of 2 Chronicles say simply that '*Solomon went to Ezion-Geber—and Hiram (sic) sent him by the hands of his servant ships and servants that had knowledge of the sea*'. In other words, whether Solomon built any ships Chronicles does not say: all the ships it here mentions were those sent by Hiram.

Moreover, in the next chapter of 3 Reigns, at 10:11, we are told καὶ ἡ ναῦς Χιραμ ἡ αἴρουσα τὸ χρυσίον ἐκ Σουφίρ ἤνεγκεν ξύλα ἀπελέκητα πολλὰ σφόδρα καὶ λίθον τίμιον. (Rahlf's text). Noteworthy is the article with χρυσίον—and Hiram's ship which brought *the* gold from Ophir. What gold this was is not altogether certain: the remark follows immediately upon verse 10 which tells how the Queen of Sheba gave Solomon 120 talents of gold. Then follows this verse about Hiram's ship, and another, verse 12, about what Solomon made out of the wood which Hiram's ship brought. After that, verse 13 reverts to the Queen of Sheba. So three explanations seem possible of this gold brought by Hiram's ship:

1. It could refer to the 120 talents of verse 10, implying that the Queen of Sheba made Solomon a present of this gold, but Hiram's ship had to fetch it.
2. It could be that verses 11–12 are a parenthetical insertion, and that the gold of verse 11 has nothing to do with the gold of verse 10, but refers to the gold which Hiram's ship brought from time to time over the years.
3. Or it could refer to the 120 talents of our chapter 9:28. In this case, 10:11 would further emphasize that in 9:28 the ship which brought the gold was one of

⁴ Cited by Montgomery, *ICC Kings*, p. 215.

Hiram's ships. Why anyone should be concerned to make 9:14 and 26–28 say this, we will consider later.

Meanwhile we must return to the task of trying to make sense of the suture-point between verse 14 and verse 26. And the next difficulty lies in determining in what sense ὑπὲρ οὓ would have been intended.

Naturally one would take it without hesitation to mean 'for the sake of which' or 'concerning which', but from Hatch-Redpath it would seem that the phrase is in the LXX confined to the books of Reigns and Paralipomena, and four⁵ out of its five occurrences represent עַל־אֲשֶׁר and quite clearly mean 'because'. On only one occasion⁶ does it represent plain אֲשֶׁר and mean 'about', or 'concerning which'. On the other hand, if ὑπὲρ οὓ in our passage arises from a corruption, or is, as it could be, an editorial addition, we should not be obliged to look for any Hebrew behind it, but we could take it in its natural sense. Now, in point of fact, the meaning "because" is ruled out because it makes no sense in this context, but the meaning 'for the sake of which' would yield quite good sense: 'And Hiram brought to Solomon 120 talents of gold and a ship, for the sake of which (gold) Solomon wrought in Ezion-geber . . .'

The one difficulty remaining is that if καὶ ναῦν is taken as the object of ἤνεγκεν of verse 14 and not ἐποίησεν of verse 26, ἐποίησεν is left without an object and must, be understood intransitively. ποιέω, of course, is not commonly used in this way in the LXX. On the other hand it is occasionally so used, and one of those occasions is 2 Paralipomena 20:35–36, a passage which curiously enough, deals with shipping and Ezion-Geber, only not Solomon's shipping but Jehoshaphat's. The Greek reads καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐκοινώνησεν Ἰωσαφατ πρὸς Οχοζειαν βασιλέα Ἰσραηλ, καὶ οὗτος ἠνόμησεν ἐν τῷ ποιῆσαι καὶ πορευθῆναι πρὸς αὐτὸν τοῦ ποιῆσαι πλοῖα τοῦ πορευθῆναι εἰς Θαρσεῖς. καὶ ἐποίησε πλοῖα ἐν Γασιῶν Γαβερ. The phrase ἠνόμησεν ἐν τῷ ποιῆσαι καὶ πορευθῆναι seems to spring from a misconstruing of the Hebrew,⁷ but the point of interest for us is that as a result this ποιῆσαι can make sense only if it is understood intransitively.

It is, then, possible that 3 Reigns 9:14, 26–28 is, as it now stands, meant to be understood thus:

And Hiram brought to Solomon 120 talents of gold and a ship, for the sake of which (gold) Solomon the king wrought in Ezion-Geber which is near Elath on the shore of the Last Sea in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the ship (some) of his servants, mariners, men skilled in sailing over the sea, along with the servants of Solomon. And they came Sophera and took thence 120 talents of gold and brought it to king Solomon.

⁵ 2 Reigns 6:8, 8:10; (3 Reigns 9:26 is our passage, and it is doubtful what Hebrew, if any, lies behind ὑπὲρ οὓ); 4 Reigns 22:13; 1 Paralipomena 18:10.

⁶ 1 Reigns 21:2 (MT 21:3).

⁷ Actually in the MT the words הוּא הַרְשִׁיעַ לְעִשׂוֹת refer to Ahaziah, king of Israel, and not to Jehoshaphat.

Translated thus, the Greek is saying that Solomon's works in Ezion-Geber were undertaken for the sake of the gold which Hiram brought. In other words, since Hiram was bringing such a large quantity of gold by sea, Solomon built a port to accommodate the vessel. And this again makes it appear very likely that the 120 talents of gold of verse 14 for the sake of which Solomon built this port, are intended by the Greek to be the 120 talents of gold which verse 28 says were actually brought to the king.

Now if this is indeed the intention of the Greek, it would seem that we have here another deliberate attempt to excuse Solomon's amassing of gold. According to the MT of 9:26–28 Solomon went to great pains to get gold: he built a fleet, secured the help of expert seamen from Hiram and fetched no less than 420 talents of gold from Ophir; and the whole enterprise was initiated and carried through by Solomon himself. But according to the LXX it was Hiram who brought the gold, and Hiram who provided the ship; as far as we are told, Solomon did not seek the gold, he simply made arrangements to collect and receive what Hiram brought.

3. Next we must investigate the third suture-point, 10:26, where the text takes up after the great insertion. The MT's counterpart of this verse is 10:23, which reads '*And the king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom*'. The LXX translates it straightforwardly (v. 26). The difference is that, had it not been for the insertion, this verse would have followed immediately on verse 22 (LXX) as it does in the MT (verse 22), and the sequence of thought would have been:

All the vessel . . . were of gold . . . there was no silver, for it was not accounted of in the days of Solomon. Does the king had a ship of Tarshish in the sea . . . one ship came to the king every three years from Tarshish laden with gold and silver . . . And Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches . . .

The impression this would have given would be that Solomon's excess of riches was the result of his shipping expeditions; but, of course, the great insertion effectively breaks this damaging sequence of thought. Not only does it justify the shipping expeditions, but by the time it concludes it has introduced other topics—forced-labour gangs, warriors, captains of chariots, horsemen—so that one naturally takes verse 26 as beginning a new paragraph, and would tend to understand its remark about Solomon exceeding all other kings in riches and wisdom in the light of what follows, namely that they came to hear his wisdom, and when they came, they all brought him presents of gold . . . a rate year by year.

With this, all possible ground of complaint against Solomon in the matter of gold is removed from the whole section LXX 9:10–10:33. The mention in 10:22 of a ship of Solomon's that came once every three years with a cargo of gold and other valuables is, as we earlier saw, followed now by a passage suitably tailored and inserted in order to excuse these imports. Next the passage, 9:14, 26–28 has been trimmed so as no longer to say that Solomon built a navy on purpose to go after gold himself; but rather that it was Hiram who brought the gold and the ship. And all the other references to gold are those which tell what other people brought him: 10:10 the Queen of Sheba gave him 120 talents; 10:11 Hiram brought him gold;

10:14–15 gold simply ‘came’ to him, in addition to taxes, duties and tribute; 10:26–28, all the kings of the earth came to hear Solomon’s wisdom and, when they came, they brought presents of gold. And, quite dearly, Solomon could not be blamed for receiving what other people brought! It was only those passages which seemed to imply that Solomon ‘greatly multiplied gold to himself’ that worried the rabbis.

II

The piece of evidence which seems to show at what level this revisory activity took place concerns Solomon’s ‘questionable’ activities in gathering large numbers of horses. According to the MT the kings who came to hear Solomon’s wisdom (v. 25) *brought every man his present . . . horses and mules, a rate year by year*, (v. 26) *And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen . . .*. The LXX⁸ says (v. 28) *ἔφερον ἕκαστος τὰ δῶρα αὐτοῦ . . . ἵππους καὶ ἡμιόνους, τὸ κατ’ ἐνιαυτὸν*. (v. 29) *καὶ ἦσαν τῷ Σαλωμων τέσσαρες χιλιάδες θήλειαι ἵπποι εἰς ἄρματα καὶ δώδεκα χιλιάδες ἰππέων . . .* Here the biggest difference is that the LXX has no equivalent of the clause ‘*And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen*’. This could be an accidental scribal omission, or it could be that the LXX is based on a Hebrew vorlage that had no such phrase; but the interesting thing is that the absence of the clause allows the sequence of thought: verse 28 the several kings brought Solomon horses and mules every year, so, verse 29, Solomon naturally had a lot of horses. And seeing the LXX has *female horses* in verse 29, whereas the counterpart in the MT is chariots, this sequence of thought between verse 28 and verse 29 is the more facilitated, and the impression is created that Solomon’s possession of large numbers of horses was due, not to his own efforts to get them, but to the gifts of the kings.

We could, therefore, easily jump to the conclusion that the absence of the clause, ‘*And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen*’, might be another deliberate alteration in order to excuse Solomon.

But here a further consideration enters the picture. Verses 29 and 31 in the LXX are matched by the MT’s verses 26 and 27 respectively; but verse 30 in the LXX has no counterpart here in the MT. It reads *καὶ ἦν ἡγούμενος πάντων τῶν βασιλέων ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ καὶ ἕως γῆς ἄλλοφύλων καὶ ἕως ὀρίων Αἰγύπτου*. However, when we look at a similar passage in 2 Paralipomena 9, not only does this sentence occur here in the LXX, but it has a counterpart in the MT. It will be helpful, then, to compare the LXX of 3 Reigns at this point with the LXX of 2 Paralipomena 9.

3 Reigns 10:28–33

καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔφερον ἕκαστος
τὰ δῶρα αὐτοῦ
σκεύη χρυσᾶ καὶ ἱματισμόν,
στακτὴν καὶ ἡδύσματα

2 Paralipomena 9:24–28

καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔφερον ἕκαστος
τὰ δῶρα αὐτοῦ, σκεύη ἀργυρᾶ
καὶ σκεύη χρυσᾶ καὶ ἱματισμόν,
στακτὴν καὶ ἡδύσματα,

⁸ Rahlf’s text, BM’s verse-numbering.

καὶ ἵππους καὶ ἡμιόνους,
 τὸ κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἐνιαυτόν.
 καὶ ἦσαν τῷ Σαλωμων
 τέσσαρες χιλιάδες θήλειαι ἵπποι
 εἰς ἄρματα καὶ
 δώδεκα χιλιάδες ἰππέων,
 καὶ ἔθετο αὐτὰς ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι
 τῶν ἀρμάτων καὶ μετὰ τοῦ
 βασιλέως ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ.
 καὶ ἦν ἡγούμενος πάντων
 τῶν βασιλέων ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ
 καὶ ἕως γῆς ἄλλοφύλων
 καὶ ἕως ὀρίων Αἰγύπτου.
 καὶ ἔδωκεν ὁ βασιλεὺς
 τὸ χρυσίον καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον
 ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ ὡς λίθους,
 καὶ τὰς κέδρους ἔδωκεν
 ὡς συκαμίνους τὰς ἐν τῇ
 πεδινῇ εἰς πλῆθος.
 καὶ ἡ ἔξοδος τῶν ἵππων
 Σαλωμων ἐξ Αἰγύπτου
 καὶ ἐκ Θεκουε,
 ἔμποροι τοῦ βασιλέως
 ἐλάμβανον ἐκ Θεκουε
 ἐν ἀλλάγματι.⁹

ἵππους καὶ ἡμιόνους
 τὸ κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἐνιαυτόν.
 καὶ ἦσαν τῷ Σαλωμων
 τέσσαρες χιλιάδες θήλειαι ἵπποι
 εἰς ἄρματα καὶ
 δώδεκα χιλιάδες ἰππέων,
 καὶ ἔθετο αὐτοὺς ἐν πόλεσιν
 τῶν ἀρμάτων καὶ μετὰ τοῦ
 βασιλέως ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ.
 καὶ ἦν ἡγούμενος πάντων
 τῶν βασιλέων ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ
 καὶ ἕως γῆς ἄλλοφύλων
 καὶ ἕως ὀρίου Αἰγύπτου.
 καὶ ἔδωκεν ὁ βασιλεὺς
 τὸ χρυσίον καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον
 ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ ὡς λίθους
 καὶ τὰς κέδρους
 ὡς συκαμίνους τὰς ἐν τῇ
 πεδινῇ εἰς πλῆθος.
 καὶ ἡ ἔξοδος τῶν ἵππων
 ἐξ Αἰγύπτου τῷ Σαλωμων
 καὶ ἐκ πάσης τῆς γῆς.

The differences between these two translations are so small, and the agreements so overwhelming (at least down to εἰς πλῆθος), that one must conclude that they go back to Hebrew texts that were virtually identical. Three things are particularly striking:

1. the Paralipomena passage, just like Reigns passage, has no clause '*And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen*'. Since, then, MT text of the Chronicles passage agrees with the LXX of the Paralipomena passage in not having this clause, we can now see that the absence of this clause from the LXX of the Reigns passage comes about because the LXX of Reigns is here following a Hebrew text that differed from the MT of Reigns. The surmise, expressed earlier, that the absence of this clause might be part of a deliberate scheme to rescue Solomon from the charge of multiplying horses to himself, seems therefore, unjustified; the LXX is simply following a different Hebrew, without any ulterior motive — maybe.

⁹ Rahlfs' text.

2. The LXX of both passages has the sentence beginning καὶ ἦν ἡγούμενος . . . in exactly the same contextual position and in almost exactly the same translation. Here too, therefore, it would seem quite unnecessary to suppose that the LXX of Reigns has some tendentious motive in introducing this clause, when it is absent from the MT of Reigns; the LXX is simply following a different Hebrew text.
3. Most remarkable is that both translations have the rendering θήλειαι ἵπποι. The MT of the Chronicles passage has מִסֻּבֹּת וְתִיִּרָא and תִּיִּרָא properly means 'stalls'.¹⁰ It is reasonable then to suppose that the θήλειαι ἵπποι of the Reigns passage goes back to a similar Hebrew, which differed from the MT of Reigns, for the latter has כִּרְכָב *chariots*. But that both LXX Reigns x and LXX 2 Paralipomena ix should have understood תִּיִּרָא in this sense, and that both should have used the same translation, is remarkable indeed, especially when we notice that tucked away at the end of the 2nd Miscellany in 3 Reigns is another completely different translation of what must have been virtually the same Hebrew. Here are the two versions for comparison.

LXX 3 Reigns 2:46

καὶ ἦσαν τῶ Σαλωμων
 τεσσεράκοντα χιλιάδες
 τοκάδες ἵπποι
 εἰς ἄρματα καὶ δώδεκα
 χιλιάδες ἰππέων.

LCC 3 Reigns 10:29 and 2 Paralipomena 9:25

καὶ ἦσαν τῶ Σαλωμων
 τέσσαρες χιλιάδες
 θήλειαι ἵπποι
 εἰς ἄρματα καὶ δώδεκα
 χιλιάδες ἰππέων.

It is quite clear that behind τοκάδες and θήλειαι lies the same idea, yet the difference in expression raises the possibility that the two renderings come from different translators. And the possibility is further increased when we discover that the next verse in the Miscellany, ii 46^k, also offers another different translation of a sentence which 3 Reigns 10 and 2 Paralipomena 9 have in common:

2:46^k

καὶ ἦν ἄρχων
 ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν
 ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ
 καὶ ἕως γῆς ἀλλοφύλων
 καὶ ἕως ὀρίων Αἰγύπτου.

LCC 3 Reigns 10:30 and 2 Paralipomena 9:26

καὶ ἦν ἡγούμενος
 πάντων τῶν βασιλέων
 ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ
 καὶ ἕως γῆς ἀλλοφύλων
 καὶ ἕως ὀρίων Αἰγύπτου
 (ὀρίου: Paralip.).

What we have, then, is a translation in 3 Reigns 10:29 and 30 that agrees so closely with the translation in 2 Paralipomena 9:25 and 26 that one suspects some kind of interdependence;

¹⁰ For a possible explanation of the origin of the meaning 'brood mares', see J. Gray, *I and II Kings*, S.C.M. Press, 1964, p. 245. n.e.

and in 3 Reigns 2:46ⁱ and ^k a translation of virtually the same Hebrew that seems to come from the hand of a different translator. This, of course, is interesting in itself, because it raises the question of the relation of the Miscellanies to the main text. I have elsewhere suggested¹¹ that what may have happened is this: some reviser of the Greek text took exception to the translation of certain verses. He therefore removed these verses and substituted a (better) translation; but instead of discarding the removed translations altogether, he assembled them in some sort of order in what we now call the Miscellanies at 2:35^{a-o} and 46^{a-1}. And certainly this explanation would fit the present situation, for between ii 46ⁱ and 3 Reigns 10:29, 2 Paralipomena 9:25 there is one notable difference: ii 46ⁱ says that Solomon had 40,000 *τοκάδες ἵπποι*, while the other two passages say that he had 4,000 *θήλειαι ἵπποι*. Now this discrepancy between 40,000 and 4,000 is one which the ancient rabbis felt needed some explanation. For instance, in the Babylonian Talmud,¹² *Sanhedrin 21b*, we read

Rab Judah raised a point of contradiction [in the following passages:] It is written, *And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots*. But elsewhere we read, *And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots*. How are these [to be reconciled]?—Thus: if he had forty thousand stables, each of them must have contained four thousand horsestalls; and if he had four thousand stables, each of them must have contained forty thousand stalls.

The learned Rabbi was, of course, commenting not on Greek, but on Hebrew, texts, and unlike the Greek translators he takes *אַרְיֹת* as ‘stalls’, not ‘brood mares’. But the fact that he felt the difficulty posed by the discrepant numbers and tried to solve it in his own way, lends colour to the idea that some earlier reviser of the Greek translation might well have felt the same difficulty, but overcame it in a different way; and not content simply to correct the number, 40,000, substituted a different translation of the verse and its context.

But at this stage the mystery, instead of being solved, deepens. Rab Judah, as we have already observed, was commenting on Hebrew texts, and in the MT the two texts in question are 2 Chronicles 9:25 and, not 1 Kings 10:26 (= 3 Reigns 10:29), but 1 Kings 5: 6, as will be seen quite clearly if we put the MT of these three passages side by side:

| 2 Chronicles 9:25 | 1 Kings 5:6 | 1 Kings 10:26 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| וַיְהִי לְשִׁלְמֹה | וַיְהִי לְשִׁלְמֹה | וַיְהִי לוֹ |
| אַרְבַּעַת אֲלָפִים | אַרְבַּעִים אֲלֶף | אֲלֶף וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת |
| אַרְיֹת סוּסִים | אַרְוֹת סוּסִים | רֶכֶב |
| וּמִרְכָּבוֹת | לְמִרְכָּבוֹ | |
| וּשְׁנַיִם־עֶשְׂרֵן אֲלֶף | וּשְׁנַיִם־עֶשְׂרֵן אֲלֶף | וּשְׁנַיִם־עֶשְׂרֵן אֲלֶף |
| פָּרָשִׁים | פָּרָשִׁים | פָּרָשִׁים |

Second Chronicles 9:25 has 4,000 stalls, 1 Kings 5:6 has 40,000 stalls—here is the rabbi’s discrepancy—but 1 Kings 10:26 has neither 4,000 nor 40,000, but 1,400, and it is talking not

¹¹ In an article entitled ‘The Shimei Duplicate and its Satellite Miscellanies in 3 reigns II’, *JSS* Vol. 13, (1968), pp. 91–2.

¹² Translated by J. Shachter, Soncino Press, London, 1935 p 117.

about stalls but about chariots. From this it is quite evident that the translation given in 3 Reigns 2:46ⁱ goes back to the MT of 1 Kings 5:6: there is a word for word equivalence:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| MT 1 Kings 5:6 | LXX 3 Reigns 2:46 ⁱ |
| וַיְהִי לְשִׁלְמֹה | καὶ ἦσαν τῶ Σαλωμων |
| אַרְבַּעַיִם אֲלָף | τεσσεράκοντα χιλιάδες |
| אַרְוֹת סוּסִים | τοκάδες ἵπποι |
| לְמַרְכָּבוֹ | εἰς ἄρματα |
| וַיִּשְׁנִים-עֶשְׂרֵה אֲלָף | καὶ δώδεκα χιλιάδες |
| פָּרָשִׁים | ἵππέων. |

The translation given in 3 Reigns 10:29, on the other hand, goes back neither to the MT of 1 Kings 5:6, nor to the MT of 1 Kings 10:26, but to a Hebrew text almost the same as the MT of 2 Chronicles 9:25:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| MT 2 Chronicles 9:25 | LXX 3 Reigns 10:29 |
| וַיְהִי לְשִׁלְמֹה | καὶ ἦσαν τῶ Σαλωμων |
| אַרְבַּעַת אֲלָפִים | τέσσαρες χιλιάδες |
| אַרְיֹת סוּסִים | θήλειαι ἵπποι |
| וּמַרְכָּבוֹת | εἰς ἄρματα |
| וַיִּשְׁנִים-עֶשְׂרֵה אֲלָף | καὶ δώδεκα χιλιάδες |
| פָּרָשִׁים | ἵππέων. |

To complete our observations from this particular vantage point, we should notice that while MT 1 Kings 5:6 is represented in 3 Reigns by a verse in the Miscellany at 2:46¹, at the point in the LXX main text that would correspond to MT 5:6, the LXX has nothing similar at all. If it had anything, it would appear immediately before 4:20 (BM's numeration); but this whole context in 3 Reigns has been drastically re-arranged in the LXX (and perhaps in the Hebrew texts also). What, therefore, stands now at 2:46¹ may well have been removed thither from somewhere in the context of 4:20.

MT 1 Kings 10:26, on the other hand, has no equivalent in 3 Reigns anywhere at all. Nowhere does 3 Reigns quote the figure 1,400 chariots.

To see the significance of all this we should perhaps now change our point of observation slightly. Forgetting the Greek texts for the moment, we may observe that as far as the Hebrew texts are concerned, both the Kings passages have counterparts in Chronicles. Thus, as we have already seen, MT 1 Kings 5:6 has its counterpart in MT 2 Chronicles 9:25, the only major

difference being the discrepancy in the numerals.¹³ Similarly MT I Kings 10:26 has its counterpart in MT 2 Chronicles 1:14:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| MT 1 Kings x 26 | MT 2 Chronicles i 14 |
| וַיֵּאָסֶף שְׁלֹמֹה | וַיֵּאָסֶף שְׁלֹמֹה |
| רָכָב וּפָרָשִׁים | רָכָב וּפָרָשִׁים |
| וַיְהִי־לּוֹ אֵלֶּף | וַיְהִי־לּוֹ אֵלֶּף |
| וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת רָכָב | וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת רָכָב |
| וּשְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר אֵלֶּף | וּשְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר אֵלֶּף |
| פָּרָשִׁים | פָּרָשִׁים |

Nor only do MT I Kings x and MT 2 Chronicles 1 agree over this part of this verse, but from here onwards to the end of the paragraph (I Kings 10:29, 2 Chronicles 1:17) they proceed in complete agreement except for minor differences such as arise even in closely related manuscripts.

So then, in the MT we have two sets of twins: 1 Kings 5:6 and 2 Chronicles 9:25, which we will call A and A' respectively; and 1 Kings 10:26 and 2 Chronicles 1:14, which we will call B and B' respectively. Using this notation we may now sum up what we have found about the translation of these passages in the LXX. MT 1 Kings 5:6, i.e. A, is translated by LXX 3 Reigns 2:46ⁱ (see p. 459); let us label 3 Reigns ii 46ⁱ as A too. MT 2 Chronicles 9:25, i.e. A', is translated by LXX 2 Paralipomena 9:25 (see p. 455–459); let us label LXX 2 Paralipomena 9:25 as A' also. MT 1 Kings 10:26, i.e. B, is not represented in 3 Reigns at all. What we get in the LXX at 3 Reigns 10:29 is a translation, not of a B passage, but of an A passage; and in its wording it agrees exactly with translation A', which is quite different from translation A' (see p. 455–459). So we must label LXX 3 Reigns 10:29 as A'. Finally MT 2 Chronicles 1:14, i.e. B', is translated by LXX 2 Paralipomena 1:14 thus:

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| MT 2 Chronicles 1:14 | LXX 2 Paralipomena 1:14 |
| וַיֵּאָסֶף שְׁלֹמֹה | καὶ συνήγαγεν Σαλωμων |
| רָכָב וּפָרָשִׁים | ἄρματα καὶ ἵππεῖς |
| וַיְהִי־לּוֹ אֵלֶּף | καὶ ἐγένοντο αὐτῷ χίλια |
| וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת רָכָב | καὶ τετρακόσια ἄρματα |
| וּשְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר אֵלֶּף | καὶ δώδεκα χιλιάδες |
| פָּרָשִׁים | ἵππέων. |

So we will call LXX 2; Paralipomena 1:14 B' too.

¹³ The other difference is לַמְרַכָּב in 1 Kings v 6 and וּמְרַכָּבוֹת in 2 Chronicles 9:25. 3 Reigns 2:46ⁱ, 10:29 and 2 Paralipomena 9:25 all have εἰς ἄρματα, which seems to favour the reading in 1 Kings 5:6.

Put now in tabular form the situation looks like this:

| | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|-----|----------------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| MT | 1 Kings 5:6 | A | LXX | 3 Reigns 2:46 ⁱ | A | } identical translations |
| | 1 Kings 10:26 | B' | | 3 Reigns 10:29 | A' | |
| | 1 Chronicles 9:25 | A' | | 2 Paralipomena 9:25 | A' | |
| | 1 Chronicles 1:14 | B' | | 2 Paralipomena | B' | |

Simply by its lack of a B-passage and its repetitiousness in having two A'-passages, the LXX creates the impression immediately that it is less likely to represent the original Hebrew as well as the MT does. And this impression is strengthened when we observe how well the MT's A and B passages not into their contexts, while the LXX's A passage is most curiously placed, and its A' passage in 3 Reigns 10:29 is not particularly apt.

MT passage A, in 1 Kings 5:6 (EVV. 4:26) is talking of '*stalls of horses for chariots and horsemen*'. It is followed by two verses: verse 7 about victuals for Solomon and his guests, verse 8 reading '*And the barley and the chopped straw for the horses and the chariot steeds they used to bring to the place where each (prefect) was according to his established office*'.¹⁴ Quite obviously *stalls of horses* and *horse food* are items that go closely together.

MT passage B, in 1 Kings 10:26, on the other band, does not talk of '*stalls of horses for chariots and horsemen*' but simply of '*chariots and horsemen*'. The reason is clear to see: the context is concerned with the problem not of *feeding* large numbers of horses, but of *importing* horses and chariots. Verses 25 and 28 tell us where Solomon got his horses from; verse 29 tells us where he got his chariots from, and the price of both chariots and horses.

The LXX, however, at 3 Reigns 10:29 has an A'-passage, and instead of talking about *chariots* and *horsemen*, talks of *mares for chariots* and *horsemen*. It still makes sense, of course, because doubtless the mares were included in the import of horses. But it does not fit the context so well as the MT which mentions both items—chariots and horses—the import of which the subsequent verses describe.

As for the LXX's A-passage, 3 Reigns 2:46ⁱ, nothing more need be said about it; the position of the whole Miscellany in which it is found, is obviously secondary, and its own place therein is artificially contrived.

But if the LXX in these several passages does not represent the original Hebrew as well as the MT does, it does seem also that the present State of the LXX is not the simple result of the original translator(s) working straightforwardly on what Hebrew text(s) lay before him (them). Rather what we now have is a revision of the LXX. This is particularly clear from a comparison of the translations in 3 Reigns 2:46ⁱ and 3 Reigns 10:29, which are based on almost identical Hebrew texts. We have no reason to suppose that the original translator would have necessarily used exactly the same translation for both passages; he may well have allowed

¹⁴ J. Gray's translation, *I and II Kings*, p. 138.

himself some variety. What is most unlikely, however, is that on the second occasion he should have used exactly word for word the same translation as that used by the translator of 2 Paralipomena 9:25; and the same goes for the translation of 3 Reigns 10:30 which agrees exactly with the rendering in 2 Paralipomena 9:26, but differs widely from the earlier translation of the same Hebrew in 3 Reigns 2:46^k (see p. 357). What is much more likely is that some reviser, concerned, as later Rab Judah was, about the discrepant numerals in the LXX's equivalents of MT 1 Kings 5:6 and 2 Chronicles 9:25, banished the original translator's rendering of 1 Kings 5:6 to the Miscellany, and finding no place in his reordering of the context of this 5:6 for a 'correct' version of the numeral, put the 'correct' version in 10:29, borrowing the rendering of 2 Paralipomena 9:25 for the purpose. That both contexts, 3 Reigns 4:20–21 (= 1 Kgs 5:7–8) and 10:28–33 were talking about horses in very similar terms would make it easy for him to do this. Whether he was also concerned to whitewash Solomon's character over the question of his equestrian activities, as he was over Solomon's gold-collecting we cannot say for certain. It is the fact that, as we observed at the beginning of section II of this article (p. 454), the absence of the clause *'And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen'* from the beginning of verse 29 does allow a sequence of thought: between verse 28 and verse 29 that suggests that Solomon's brood mares were presents given by neighbouring kings. On the other hand verses 32–33, however crudely they translate the Hebrew still speak about Solomon's import of horses from Egypt. But then we have no need to suppose that the reviser obsessively whitewashed every single mention of Solomon's horses, any more than we need imagine that only one intention lay behind his many alterations.

About the Author

DAVID W. GOODING was Professor Emeritus of Old Testament Greek at Queen's University, Belfast and a member of the Royal Irish Academy. He has taught the Bible internationally and lectured on both its authenticity and its relevance to philosophy, world religions and daily life. He has published scholarly articles on the Septuagint and Old Testament narratives, as well as expositions of Luke, John, Acts, Hebrews, the New Testament's Use of the Old Testament, and several books addressing arguments against the Bible and the Christian faith. His analysis of the Bible and our world continues to shape the thinking of scholars, teachers and students alike.