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Text-critical Suggestions on Hosea xii. 1, iv. 4,
iv. 8; Isaiah xiv. 12^b; Psalm xi. 1.

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Hos. 12¹.—The second half of this verse which in the Masoretic text reads

וְהִוְדָה עַד רֶדְ עַם־אֵל
וְעַם־קְרוֹשִׁים נֶאֱמָן

has always been regarded as a *crux interpretum*. Conjectures have been made again and again, some bearing very famous names, and yet the verdict of the lexicographer Buhl is that it is "*ganz unklar*." And now that this verdict holds still good after Nowack has published his commentary, it seems almost presumptuous for me to suggest another emendation and to declare that the verse is—in my opinion—by no means so difficult as has been supposed. This would have been found out long ago if the LXX had been retranslated into the Hebrew with due regard to the liberties of the translator, and if the *whole* of the verse had been retranslated.

LXX reads, taking וְהִוְדָה with the preceding sentence, *ὦν ἕγωα αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς, καὶ λαὸς ἅγιος κεκληθήσεται θεοῦ*.

The underlying Hebrew of the first half is עַד וְדָעַם אֵל, for which the Masoretic text has עַד רֶדְ עַם־אֵל. It will be seen that the only difference in the consonantal text is the ך instead of the ך. That LXX translated עַד by ὦν is not so extraordinary that by all means (ה)ֶתָּה must be presupposed, if we consider that they wanted to get some good sense; עַד = εἶτι did not seem to fit, so they translated the עַד with ὦν. But whether they read עַד or הֶתָּה, the עַד of the Masoretic text is to be preferred as after all the more fitting reading, and this is done, so far as I know, by all scholars who have written about this verse.¹

¹ Marti, Nowack: וְדָעַם instead of רֶדְ "ist vertraut" (cf. LXX).

M.T.: עַד רֶדְ עַם־אֵל

Wellh.: עַדְרִי (עַדְרִי Pi: "etwas vermissen lassen").

The second half of the Hebrew text of the LXX is וְעַם־קְרוֹשִׁים נֶאֱמַר : which corresponds to the Masoretic text : וְעַם־קְרוֹשִׁים נֶאֱמַן ; the only consonantal difference being the ך instead of the ך. For the use of אֶמַר in this sense compare Jer. 7³².

That the θεοῦ of the LXX presupposes no Hebrew word, but that וְעַם־קְרוֹשִׁים was translated by λαὸς ἅγιος θεοῦ, is manifest.¹

If we regard the thus restored Hebrew text of the LXX as original, we have to translate "God knows them still and people of the Holy One is it called." But does this fit into the context? The first half of the verse reads,

Ephraim compasseth me about with falsehood,
And the house of Israel with deceit.

Then he goes on,

But God knows them still,
And people of the Holy One is it called.

I have omitted here וַיְהוֹדָה which has nothing to do in this verse. The reasons for regarding it as a later insertion Nowack has adduced. But apart from this, does this translation give a good sense? In the previous verses the prophet has so pathetically contrasted the shameful behavior of the people with the marvellous compassion of Jahve, has shown that they pretended to walk after Him, but were really not doing it, they compass him about with falsehood, and yet Jahve will not utterly destroy them. And the reason for this he found to lie in Jahve's nature ; he is not man, but God, *EL*. Now our verse follows directly upon this statement (vv.^{10, 11} are a later insertion²). Insisting in its first half on the deceitful conduct of the people towards Jahve, the prophet cries out in utter amazement that *EL*, in spite of it all, still knew, *i.e.* owned, them, they were still called the people of the Holy One. Thus it explains itself, why the prophet uttered first the message ^{1a} in Jahve's own words and then uttered his own conviction by using not 'Jahve' but the word 'El,' which had brought such a revelation to his soul.

The verse was early misunderstood. Somebody reading here the favorable words for Ephraim reflected that they could only be

¹ M.T. : וְעַם־קְרוֹשִׁים נֶאֱמַן

Cornill : וְעַם־קְרוֹשִׁים נֶאֱמַר cf. Num. 25^{3, 6},

"und mit Hierodulen ist es zusammengekoppelt."

Wellh. : "und macht sich gemein mit den Kadeschen."

² So Smend, Volz, Nowack, and others.

addressed to Judah, and inserted, therefore **וַיְהוֹדֶה**, contrasting thus Judah's faithfulness with Ephraim's deceitfulness. This **וַיְהוֹדֶה** was already in the Hebrew text of the LXX, but the two copyist's errors had not yet been made. When they had been made, especially the first which mistook the **ו** for a **ר**, the text became unintelligible, and the Masorites punctuated as well as they possibly could. That the Masorites regarded the second half of v.¹ as a contrast to the first half, but not as contrasting God and his people, but Ephraim and Judah, is clear, even though the words **עַם רָדָה** be unintelligible. They may have meant by these words "but Judah still *walks* with God," putting perhaps the **רָדָה** in some connection or other with **רָדָה** 'to walk,' cf. Assyr. *radû*.

It might be said, why cannot we do that, too? It would make sense! Yes, it would make sense, if taken by itself, but in the context it would be impossible; we should have to regard the whole of ^{1b} as a later addition, which is done by many scholars, last by Nowack, for Judah is utterly out of place here as well as in v.³, where it has to be changed into **יִשְׂרָאֵל**.

If the above proposed emendation is accepted, we have to strike out merely **וַיְהוֹדֶה** as later, and read as the original text:

סִבְבֵּי בַחַשׁ אֲמַרִים
וּבְמַרְמָה בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְעַד יִדְעֵם אֵל
וְעַם קְדוֹשִׁים נֶאֱמָר:

Ephraim compasseth me about with falsehood,
And with deceit the house of Israel,
Yet El knows them still,
And people of the Holy One is it called.

What a contrast! They are false, but he punishes them not with utter destruction! Astonishing? Yes, but He is **אֵל וְלֹא-אִישׁ**.

Hos. 4^a. —

וְעַמִּי כַמְרִיבֵי בְהֵן

This phrase has given a good deal of trouble to scholars, all the more because the LXX text does not help us here. It reads $\delta \delta \epsilon$ *λαός μου ὡς ἀντιλεγόμενος ἱερέυς*, which presupposes as the Hebrew original **וְעַמִּי כַמְרִיבֵי בְהֵן**. This is essentially the consonantal text of the Masorites, only the **ך** in **עַמִּי** and the final **י** in **מְרִיבֵי** are omitted.

Scholars have usually thought that the trouble was in the **מְרִיבֵי**,

and have thus tried to remedy the text by attacking מריבי, so Wellhausen, who reads with Beck, וְעַמִּי כְּבִקְרִי, "und mein Volk macht es wie seine Pfaffen;" P. Ruben, and Nowack, וְעַמִּי כְּמוֹד הַבְּהֵן, "and my people is like thee, O priest!" Oort וְעַמִּי רִיבֵי הַבְּהֵן, "with thee is my strife, O priest!"

I believe that the real cause of the difficulty does not lie in מריבי but in בְּהֵן, for which I would read בֵּן. The whole clause would then be in Hebrew, וְעַמִּי מְרִיב בֵּן, "thy people is namely striving thus." Taken together with the first part of this verse,

אֵד אִישׁ אֶל־רֵיב
וְאֶל־יִבְחָ אִישׁ

Yet let nobody strive
and let nobody reprove,—

it is a kind of explanation, "thy people is namely striving thus," and is, in my opinion, an old additional gloss.

Hos. 4^b.—

הַטֹּאת טַמִּי יֶאֱכֹל
וְאֶל־טֹנִים יִשְׂאוּ נַפְשׁוֹ

Nowack has again pointed out with what difficulties the common interpretation which takes הַטֹּאת עַמִּי as referring to sin-offerings, is beset. For in how far could there be a reproach in this statement, since the priests received the sin-offerings by law? But also the modification by reference to 8^b, that they desire the aggregation of Israel's sin because they will have the profit by receiving all the more income from the sin-offerings,— is not free from objections. For as Nowack points out: (1) the sins which had to be atoned for by a sin-offering could not be designated by טֹנִים; (2) it cannot be proved that sin-offerings occurred in this time of Hosea.

Nowack regards, therefore, rightly הַטֹּאת and טֹנִים as parallels, referring to the sin of the people. He defines the sin more definitely as the cult of the people by comparing 8¹¹ (also Am. 7⁷) and says: "they think they fulfil Jahve's requirements by their sacrifices, but that is only a proof that they do not know Jahve. The priests cultivate this ignorance, instead of restraining it, because they live by the sacrifices."

I do not think that we can feel altogether at ease in accepting this interpretation. If it had been noticed that this sentence does not refer to the priests but to the people, the difficulty would have

been solved long ago, for it would have suggested itself that we should punctuate the text,

חַטָּאת עַמִּי יֹאכְלוּ
וְשִׁנָּם יִקַּח נַפְשׁוֹ

My people's sin shall devour it,
and their guilt shall take away its life.

The suffix in יֹאכְלוּ refers to עַמִּי. The verse expresses the way of punishment. In the previous verse Jahve had said that every one of them sinned and that he would change their glory into shame. This 8th verse carries out this thought.

The difference in the suffixes עֲוֹנָם plural and נַפְשׁוֹ singular need not occasion any difficulty, for עֲוֹנָם is to be taken distributively, the guilt of the different members of the people, while נַפְשׁוֹ is used collectively for the life of the people as a whole.

The אֵל before עֲוֹנָם in the Masoretic text has probably come in by dittography, the ל of יֹאכְלוּ having been repeated.

It is, however, also possible that אֵל is here, as so often = עַל. In this case we should have to read, וְעַל-שִׁנָּם יִקַּח נַפְשׁוֹ, "and because of their guilt shall they take away its life"; or, since the active construction is used for the passive, "and because of their guilt shall its life be taken away." The parallelism is good also in this case:

My people's sin shall devour it,
and because of their guilt shall its life be taken away.

Isa. 14¹³ δ. —

כַּדְרִיטָה לְאַרְץ
חֹלֵשׁ עַל-נְפִימָם

The חֹלֵשׁ עַל-נְפִימָם has given very much trouble to the exegetes. Gunkel's suggestion to regard חֹלֵשׁ as meaning 'prostrate,' and change נְפִימָם into נְפִימָת 'corpses,' though accepted by Marti and Cheyne, who translate

How art thou struck down to the ground,
to lie a stiff corpse upon corpses,

(Cheyne, *SBOT*, Isaiah) has not met with universal assent, and has not been accepted by the *New Hebrew Lexicon*. It is true that the LXX does not help us much, for it read δ ἀποστέλλων, i.e. שׁוֹלֵחַ instead of חֹלֵשׁ, and the meaning thus received "who stretched out (his hand) against the nations" is too weak in this connection.

I suggest that we take the hint of the LXX to transpose the letters of **חילש** but not so as to read **שולח** but **חושל**, transposing only the last two letters. It is abundantly clear from the cognate languages, for which see the references in the *New Hebrew Lexicon*, s.v. **חשל**, that **חשל** means 'to shatter.' But if we put this into the text, we are troubled by the **על**, for we should expect the accusative. But here again the LXX helps us, for it reads *πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*, therefore **כל** instead of **על**. The *πρός* was made necessary by the **שולח**; it presupposes no Hebrew equivalent.

If we make these two changes and read **חושל כל-גוים**, "who shattered all nations," we have a powerful contrast to the condition in which this "shatterer of all nations" is now, in the first half of the sentence. The whole verse requires just such a strong antithesis, for it reads :

How art thou fallen from heaven,
radiant one, son of the dawn!
How art thou struck down to the ground,
shatterer of all nations!

Formerly it was supposed that the passage Ex. 17¹³ shed light on this passage in Isaiah, but the Exodus passage was itself doubtful in regard to the meaning of **חלש**. If the suggested transposition be made in Is. 14¹⁹, we might make it also in Ex. 17¹³ and read **ויחשל** : **יהושע** **את-עמלק** **ואת-עמו** **לפי-חרב** : "and Joshua shattered and destroyed Amalek and his people with the sword."

The Masoretic text has the root **חשל** only once in Deut. 25¹⁸ **כל-הנחשלים**, and strangely enough in this instance the transposition of **חשל** into **חלש**, i.e. **כל-הנחלשים** would fit better, being more in harmony with the following **ואתה עיף ויגז**.

Ps. 111. —

אֵד תֹּאמְרוּ לְנַשְׂרֵי
נֹד הַרְרָם צִפּוֹר

The literal translation would be "how do you say to my soul, 'Flee to your mountains, ye birds!'" Duhm has shown in his commentary that this can hardly be correct, and he proposes to read **נוד הררים** **כצפור** "flee to the mountains like a bird," transposing in the consonantal text only the **כ** and **מ** of **הררם** and reading the singular **נוד** which also the Masorites suggest and LXX read. His authority for transposing the **כ** and **מ** is the LXX, which reads *ὡς στρούθιον*. There can be hardly any doubt that Duhm is in the main correct.

The only question is, was it necessary to transpose the כ and מ? I think not, for that נוד הַר can be and must be used here collectively has always been held by scholars, so that we can translate נוד הַר "flee to the mountains" (*Gebirg*, Duhm). The troublesome suffix קָם we should punctuate (ו)קָמוּ and read thus נוד הַר קָמוּצִפּוֹר. That קָמוּ is used in poetry instead of קָ is plain from Ex. 15⁵, "they went down כְּמֵרֶאשֶׁבֶן like a stone," cf. *New Hebrew Lexicon*, s.v. קָמוּ. (Compare he fled *kima issuri*, 'like a bird.')

How do ye say to my soul,
 'Flee to the mountains like a bird'?