

## UNGODLY ADDITIONS? AN ANALYSIS OF THE PLUSES OF ἀσεβής IN LXX PROVERBS

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**Abstract.** In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the transformations of the Septuagint (LXX) compared to the Masoretic Text (MT). These transformations often entail shifts of a theological or ethical nature. LXX Proverbs, being a free translation, is a prime example in which such transformations took place. Therefore, in order to contribute to the question of the theology and ethics of LXX Proverbs, this contribution analyses the pluses of ἀσεβής ('ungodly, impious') in LXX Proverbs. Since this word can be considered a *locus theologicus et ethicus*, examining its pluses, which are explicit differences between the Hebrew and Greek text, might shed light on the translation technique and the theology and ethics of LXX Proverbs.

**Keywords:** Septuagint, Proverbs, ἀσεβής, Ethics, Translation Technique.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the transformations of the Septuagint (LXX) compared to the Masoretic Text (MT). These transformations often entail shifts of a theological or ethical nature. In an attempt to examine whether the LXX of Proverbs attests a different theology than MT, I have recently analysed the pluses in LXX Proverbs containing κύριος and θεός.<sup>1</sup> The results of these studies have indicated that the LXX translation of Proverbs attests a more nuanced theology than its Hebrew counterpart. Next to the study of theological transformations, there is the question whether the LXX text of Proverbs attests a different view on ethics. Several scholars have already indicated, often very briefly, that the LXX translator of Proverbs has tried to moralise his text.<sup>2</sup> However, none

<sup>1</sup> See Bryan BEECKMAN, "De Nomine Dei: Theological Exegesis in Verses of the Septuagint Version of Proverbs Containing ὁ θεός Without Any Counterpart in the Masoretic Text?," *Louvain Studies* 43.4 (2020): 372–387; Bryan BEECKMAN, "De Nominibus Sacris: Theological Exegesis in Verses of LXX-Proverbs Containing ὁ κύριος Without Any Counterpart in MT?," *RB* 128.4 (2021): 501–524; Bryan BEECKMAN, *One or Two Translators? Translation Technique and Theology of LXX Proverbs and its Relation to LXX Job*, BZAW 549 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2024), 262–295.

<sup>2</sup> See Gillis GERLEMAN, *Studies in the Septuagint. III. The Book of Proverbs*, LUA 52/3 (Lund: Gleerup, 1956), esp. 36ff.; Michael B. DICK, "The Ethics of the Old Greek Book of Proverbs," in *The Studia Philonica Annual. Studies in Hellenistic Judaism Volume II 1990*, ed. David T. RUNIA,