

## **Did Jeroboam Participate in the Shechem Assembly?: The Portrait of Jeroboam in Three Different Traditions (1 Kgs 11:26-12:24; 3 Kgdms 11:26-12:24; 12:24a-z)**

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Three different traditions preserve the story of Jeroboam's return from Egypt, the negotiation at Shechem between Rehoboam and the assembly of Israel, and the subsequent revolt and secession of the northern tribes. There are not only the tradition of the MT (1 Kgs 11:26-12:24) and its counterpart in the LXX (3 Kgdms 11:26-12:24), but also a third one which is preserved as an appendix in the Codex Vaticanus (hereafter LXX<sup>B</sup>; 3 Kgdms 12:24a-z). The preservation of divergent traditions in three different versions of the Hebrew Bible has raised many interesting textual and literary questions. Among them are the ones of when Jeroboam returned from Egypt and whether Jeroboam participated in the Shechem assembly. These questions, though pertaining to details of the story, have implications in understanding the attitudes and ideologies of each tradition toward Jeroboam and the northern kingdom. In this short study, I wish to describe how each tradition in its final form portrays Jeroboam's return from Egypt and his participation in the Shechem assembly and explore each tradition's attitude toward Jeroboam and the northern kingdom. In order to consider the polemic of each tradition, we shall reconstruct the possible original story from which the three traditions have derived, and for this, we will depend on the reconstructions of previous scholars. By comparing the three traditions with one another and with the original story, we will learn that the three answer the above two questions differently, thus revealing different attitudes to Jeroboam and the northern kingdom.

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## 1. The Three Traditions in Their Existing Forms

Before we start looking at the actual passages, one issue should be discussed. In the LXX<sup>B</sup>, on what basis do we separate the second tradition (3 Kgdms 12:24a-z) from the first one (11:26-12:24)? Although the versification cannot be evidence, the division itself is solid for several reasons. First, there are *Wiederaufnahmen*.<sup>1)</sup> For example, the report of Solomon's death and Rehoboam's succession in 11:43 is repeated almost verbatim in 12:24a. The beginning of the first tradition (11:26), which introduces Jeroboam, is also repeated in 12:24b. Thus the beginning of the second tradition (12:24a-b) is clearly marked. The texts in 12:24 and 12:24y-z are also the same, marking the conclusions of the two traditions. These *Wiederaufnahmen* show that the transmitter inserted a parallel tradition. In addition to these *Wiederaufnahmen*, we of course note that similar events occur in both traditions, though in different order. In short, the repetitions of words and events offer us a safe ground for dividing the first and second traditions of the LXX<sup>B</sup>.

The shared synopsis of the three traditions is as follows: Jeroboam, Solomon's servant, rebels against him; Solomon seeks to kill him; Jeroboam flees to Egypt and stays there; after Solomon's death, Jeroboam returns; then, a meeting is held between Rehoboam and the people of Israel (with or without Jeroboam) at Shechem; the kingdom is divided.

### 1.1. The First Tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> (3 Kgdms 11:26-12:24)

The neatest tradition is the first one of the LXX<sup>B</sup> (3 Kgdms 11:26-12:24). In 3 Kgdms 11:43, we read, "And Salomon slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of his father Daud. And it happened, when Ieroboam son of Nabat heard (and he was still in Egypt, since he fled from before Salomon and settled in Egypt), he went straight and came to his city in the land of Sarira which is in the hill country of Ephraim."<sup>2)</sup> That is, right after Solomon died,

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1) For the hermeneutical significance of *Wiederaufnahmen*, see Zipora Talshir, "The Contribution of Diverging Traditions Preserved in the Septuagint to Literary Criticism of the Bible", in *VIII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Paris, 1992*, SBLSCS 41 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 21-41.

2) The translations of the LXX in the present study are taken from Albert Pietersma and Benjamin

Jeroboam departed from Egypt and returned to his city, Sarira (or ‘Zeredah’, according to the MT) of Ephraim. The scene then changes to Shechem (‘Sikima’, according to the LXX). There, Rehoboam and all Israel had a negotiation in which Jeroboam did not participate (12:1-19, LXX<sup>B</sup>). He was probably in Sarira, as we infer from the context. Only after all Israel rebelled against the house of David (12:16-19, LXX<sup>B</sup>), they “sent and called him to the gathering and made him king over Israel” (12:20, LXX<sup>B</sup>). Thus, according to the first tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, Jeroboam did not participate in the Shechem assembly.

### 1.2. The Second Tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> (3 Kgdms 12:24a-z)

In the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, the events are in a completely different order.<sup>3)</sup> After enjoying the patronage of the king of Egypt (vv. 24c-e), Jeroboam departed from Egypt and came into the land of Sarira in Mount Ephraim (v. 24f); in Sarira, the whole tribe of Ephraim gathered, and Jeroboam built a palisaded camp (v. 24f); then comes a digression about Jeroboam’s sick child and the subsequent oracle of doom (vv. 24g-n), whose parallel is found in the MT in 1 Kings 14; after this Jeroboam went to Shechem and gathered the tribes of Israel (v. 24o); there was a negotiation between Rehoboam and the people (v. 24p), which ended in the division of the kingdom (vv. 24q-z).

With regard to Jeroboam’s relation to the Shechem assembly, the present tradition is in opposition to the first of the LXX<sup>B</sup>. Whereas in the first tradition he did not play any role in the assembly, in the second tradition Jeroboam himself gathered the tribes of Israel (v.12:24o). Jeroboam is therefore given a prominent role in the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>.

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G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

3) For the history of research on this tradition, see R. P. Gordon, “The Second Septuagint Account of Jeroboam: History or Midrash?” *VT* 25 (1975), 368-374; Steven L. McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings: The Composition of the Book of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History*, VTSup 42 (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 27-29; Adrian Schenker, “Jeroboam and the Division of Kingdom in the Ancient Septuagint: LXX 3 Kingdoms 12.24a-z, MT 1 Kings 11-12; 14 and the Deuteronomistic History”, Albert de Pury, Thomas Römer, and Jean-Daniel Macchi, eds., *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 215-218.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy that in the negotiation scene (vv. 24p-u), Jeroboam is not mentioned. Additionally, the terms that refer to the congregation are different in v. 24o and vv. 24p-u: “the tribes of Israel” when Jeroboam gathered them (v. 24o), and “the people” in the negotiation scene. The reader may wonder whether Jeroboam was not related to the present tradition only secondarily. To this matter we will come back.

### 1.3. The Tradition of the MT (1 Kgs 11:26-12:24)

A similar but more complicated picture is preserved in the MT. We read in 1 Kgs 11:40 that Jeroboam “remained in Egypt until the death of Solomon” (NRS). The story then narrates the Shechem assembly. Here, unlike the traditions of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, Jeroboam appears in the scene (12:2-3, 12). Especially, Jeroboam spoke to Rehoboam (v. 3) and heard his response (v. 12). Thus, in the Shechem assembly scene, the MT’s Jeroboam is the most active of the three traditions.

However, the MT’s presentation of Jeroboam in the Shechem assembly may not be as simple as it first appears. Two things complicate the situation: the syntax of 12:2-3 and the statement in v. 20.

First, as for 12:2-3, the MT reads as follows:

ויהי כשמע ירבעם בן־נבט והוא עודנו במצרים (v. 2)  
אשר ברח מפני המלך שלמה וישב ירבעם במצרים:  
וישלחו ויקראו־לו (4)ויבא ירבעם וכל־קהל ישראל  
וידברו אל־ירבעם לאמר:

The sentence starts with a subordinate temporal clause that is governed by ויהי. The question here is where the subordinate clause ends and where the main clause begins. According to Alviero Niccacci, the main clause after a ויהי clause takes the form of either *wayyiqtol* or *waw-X-qatal*, and, the subject of the main clause, if not the same as that of the ויהי clause, should be expressed.<sup>5)</sup> Scholars have pointed as the beginning of the main clause three different places:

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4) Qere. Kethib is ויבא.

5) Alviero Niccacci, *The Syntax of the Verb Classical Hebrew Prose*, W. G. E. Watson, trans., JSOTSup 86 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 51-53.

(1) וַיָּשָׁב יִרְבֵּעַם, (2) וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיִּקְרָא-לוֹ, and (3) וַיָּבֵא יִרְבֵּעַם. Each has its own problem.

First, grammatically, the most natural place would be וַיָּשָׁב יִרְבֵּעַם, the first *wayyiqtol* in the sentence. The translation of the whole sentence is then, “When Jeroboam heard [of it] (now he was still in Egypt, where he fled from the presence of King Solomon), Jeroboam stayed in Egypt ...” Steven L. McKenzie believes that this is the only legitimate translation although he is obviously unsatisfied, thinking that there is a textual corruption.<sup>6)</sup> McKenzie’s discontent has good reason, since it hardly makes sense that “when Jeroboam heard [of it] ... [he] *stayed* in Egypt” (emphasis added), without doing any further action. We should see if there is any better option.

Second, the above semantic difficulty has led many commentators to emending the text on the basis of the Chronicler’s parallel text (2 Chr 10:2). They change וַיָּשָׁב יִרְבֵּעַם בְּמִצְרַיִם to וַיָּשָׁב יִרְבֵּעַם מִמִּצְרַיִם and translate, “When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard [of it] (now he was still in Egypt where he fled from the presence of King Solomon), Jeroboam *returned from* Egypt” (emphasis added).<sup>7)</sup> These scholars then want to retain the naturalness of the syntax of the above first option, while avoiding its semantic difficulty. They emend the text mainly because they believe the sentence, as the MT presents it, is incomplete and lacks an appropriate main clause. I am reluctant, however, to accept the above emendation, since it involves not only vowels (וַיָּשָׁב to וַיָּשָׁב) but also consonants (בְּמִצְרַיִם to מִמִּצְרַיִם), not to mention that such an emendation is not supported by any existing Hebrew manuscripts. One is inclined to look for any better solution that can explain the existing MT.

Third, some scholars view that the main clause begins with וַיָּבֵא יִרְבֵּעַם.<sup>8)</sup> They think that the explanatory clause that starts with וְהָיָא extends to the end of v. 2. For example, D. W. Gooding translates, “And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it, (for he was yet in Egypt, whither he had

6) Steven L. McKenzie, “The Source for Jeroboam’s Role at Shechem (1 Kgs 11:43-12:3, 12:20)”, *JBL* 106 (1987), 299.

7) So James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings*, ICC (New York: Scribner’s, 1951), 249; John Gray, *I and II Kings*, 3rd ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979), 301; Mordechai Cogan, *1 Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 10 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 345; and also the editors of BHS.

8) D. W. Gooding, “The Septuagint’s Rival Versions of Jeroboam’s Rise to Power”, *VT* 17 (1967), 174; Jerome T. Walsh, *1 Kings* (Berit Olam; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996), 161.

fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt, and they sent and called him); that Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spake unto Rehoboam.”<sup>9)</sup> Gooding’s translation might seem to be confusing concerning the time when “they sent and called” Jeroboam: was it when Jeroboam heard the news, or while “he was yet in Egypt”? His use of parentheses, however, indicates that the latter is the case: upon hearing the news of Rehoboam’s succession and the Shechem assembly, Jeroboam reacted. He and the assembly of Israel came to Rehoboam and had a negotiation. Semantically, this understanding seems solid.

The apparent solidness, however, is achieved by packing information in parentheses. Gooding’s parenthetical statement must mean that all Israel sent and called Jeroboam *while* he was yet in Egypt. The understood simultaneity is based on the expression עורנו (in והוא עורנו במצרים). והוא עורנו indeed expresses simultaneity, but one aspect has escaped scholars’ attention. That is, the clause with עורנו is almost always followed by the *waw-X-qatal* structure, and never by a *wayyiqtol* form as in our case (וישלחו ויקראו-לו).<sup>10)</sup> Therefore, it is doubtful on grammatical basis that their sending and calling Jeroboam was simultaneous with his staying in Egypt. We should seek for another way of understanding the *wayyiqtol* forms of וישלחו ויקראו-לו.

Fourth and last, I argue that וישלחו ויקראו-לו is the main clause for the יהיה clause. The two verbs have a *wayyiqtol* structure and thus obey one of the principles observed by Niccacci (see above). However, the subject of the main clause (‘they’), which is different from that of the subordinate clause (‘Jeroboam’), is not expressed, a situation which violates Niccacci’s second principle.<sup>11)</sup> Nevertheless, we can still understand וישלחו ויקראו-לו to be an impersonal sentence, translating “he was sent for and called.” It is well known that an impersonal sentence may not have a subject. The translation of vv. 2-3 is

9) D. W. Gooding, “Rival Versions”, 174.

10) In addition to our verse, עורנו or עורנו occurs 15 more times in the Bible (Gen 18:22; 29:9; 43:28; 44:14; Num 11:33; Judg 6:24; 8:20; 1 Sam 13:7; 2 Sam 18:14; 1 Kgs 1:42; 2 Kgs 6:33; Jer 33:12; Job 8:12; 2 Chr 14:6; 34:3). Eight cases (Gen 18:22; 43:28; 44:14; Judg 6:24; 8:20; 2 Sam 18:14; 2 Chr 14:6; Jer 33:1) have a sentence structure different from ours and thus are not relevant. Among the relevant 7 cases (Gen 29:9; Num 11:33; 1 Sam 13:7; 1 Kgs 1:42; 2 Kgs 6:33; 2 Chr 34:3; Job 8:12), 6 have the *waw-X-qatal* structure in the second clause and one has the structure of *waw-X-participle* (2 Kgs 6:33).

11) Alviero Niccacci, *Syntax of the Verb*, 53. See above, p. 4.

then, “When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard [of it] (now he was still in Egypt where he fled from the presence of King Solomon and stayed<sup>12)</sup>), he was sent for and called. Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam.”<sup>13)</sup> This translation avoids both the semantic difficulty of the first option and the grammatical one of the third one. In short, I argue that the MT of 1 Kgs 12:2-3 says the following: at the time when Jeroboam heard of Rehoboam’s succession and the Shechem assembly, he was called out from Egypt; then, with all the assembly of Israel, he came and spoke to Rehoboam (possibly as their representative). And our understanding of 12:2-3 connects Jeroboam tightly with the Shechem assembly and the subsequent secession.

A statement in 12:20, however, further complicates our case. In v. 20a, it reads, “When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel” (NRS). This verse contradicts 12:2-3, 12, since in 12:20a, Jeroboam seems like a newcomer.<sup>14)</sup> He had not been in the foreground and was acknowledged only after the revolt occurred (v. 18).<sup>15)</sup> We will come back to this issue below.

## 2. Reconstruction of the Original Story

So far we have examined the final forms of the LXX<sup>B</sup> and the MT that narrate Jeroboam’s return, the Shechem assembly, and Jeroboam’s rise to power. In this section, we will attempt to reconstruct the possible original text behind the three traditions. We will do so by reviewing the text-critical explanations presented by previous scholars.

Three scholars have shaped a governing opinion for the textual growth of our story: Ralph W. Klein, Steven L. McKenzie, and Timothy M. Willis.<sup>16)</sup> Willis’s

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12) Literally, “and Jeroboam stayed in Egypt.” I have omitted in the translation ‘Jeroboam’ and ‘in Egypt.’ While the Hebrew sentence is not ungrammatical, translating the two forms renders the English awkward.

13) Among the scholars I have reviewed, Timothy M. Willis takes this position. Timothy M. Willis, “The Text of 1 Kings 11:43-12:3”, *CBQ* 53 (1991), 39.

14) See Mordechai Cogan, *1 Kings*, 346-347.

15) This has been noted by commentators. See, for example, James A. Montgomery, *Kings*, 248; John Gray, *Kings*, 278.

16) Ralph W. Klein, “Jeroboam’s Rise to Power”, *JBL* 89 (1970), 217-218; Steven L. McKenzie,

argument is a critical adoption of McKenzie's, which is in turn based on Klein's explanation. Since the three scholars do not differ greatly, I will summarize Willis's reconstruction, the most recent and I believe the most refined.

Willis, with the other two scholars, believes that the Greek tradition of Jeroboam's return from Egypt (i.e., LXX<sup>B</sup> 11:43), which is longer than the MT tradition (12:2-3a), preserves the tradition closest to the original. This longer tradition was originally located in 12:2-3a as the MT now has it, but was transposed to the present position. This supposed original position of the longer tradition is attested in what he calls the miscellaneous Greek manuscripts (i.e., N d e f h m p q s t v w y z). In these Greek manuscripts what we read from 11:43 in LXX<sup>B</sup> is in 12:2-3a.<sup>17)</sup>

According to Willis, the text developed as follows (*italics* represents sections lost during the textual development, while **bold** represents ones added):<sup>18)</sup>

Stage 1 (as represented in the Greek manuscripts of N d e f h m p q s t v w y z; in 12:2-3a):

“And when Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, heard—now he was still in Egypt where he had fled from before King Solomon, and he dwelt in Egypt—*he went straight and came to his city in the land of Sererah in the hill country of Ephraim.* And the people spoke to King Rehoboam, saying...”

This longer tradition was shortened in the MT due to the haplography occasioned by homoioteleuton (*mišrayim... 'eprayim*).<sup>19)</sup>

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“Source”, 297-300; Timothy M. Willis, “Text of 1 Kings”, 37-44. Klein's note is a critique of D. W. Gooding, “Rival Versions.” See also Gooding's response, “Jeroboam's Rise to Power: A Rejoinder”, *JBL* 91 (1972), 529-533, and Klein's further response to it, “Once More: ‘Jeroboam's Rise to Power’”, *JBL* 92 (1973), 582-584.

17) Timothy M. Willis, “Text of 1 Kings”, 37-44. The supposed transposition is additionally supported by the awkward division of the succession formula in 3 Kgdms 11:43: “*And Salomon slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of his father David. And it happened, when Ieroboam son of Nabat heard ... he went straight and came to his city ... And King Salomon slept with his fathers, and his son Roboam ruled in his stead*” (emphasis added). The reason for this transposition is explained well by Gooding (see below, n. 23 of this study, and D. W. Gooding, “Rival Versions”, 177-179), although I do not agree to Gooding's assertion that the Greek version is a deliberate alteration of the MT, which according to him preserves the original tradition.

18) The following reconstruction comes from Timothy M. Willis, “Text of 1 Kings”, 43. The biblical quotations are also his.

19) Timothy M. Willis, “Text of 1 Kings”, 39, 43.

Stage 2 (following haplography, as the proto-Masoretic text of 12:2-3a):

“And when Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, heard—now he was still in Egypt where he had fled from before King Solomon—then he dwelt in Egypt. And *the people* spoke to King Rehoboam, saying...”

In the LXX<sup>B</sup> this was relocated to the current position (3 Kgdms 11:43). In the MT, since the above sentence was not understood, the transmitter added between vv. 2 and 3a “And they sent and they called him; and Jeroboam came, and all Israel.” This addition in the MT made Jeroboam attend the Shechem assembly from the beginning of the event.<sup>20)</sup>

Stage 3 (2 Chr 10:2-3):

“And when Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, heard—now he was still in Egypt where he had fled from before King Solomon—then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. **And they sent and they called him; and Jeroboam came, and all Israel,** and they spoke to King Rehoboam, saying...”

Stage 4: The addition in 2 Chr 10:3 is inserted into the text of 1 Kings 12.

According to Willis’s reconstruction, the original story in its original location of 12:2-3a (stage 1) tells us that Jeroboam returned from Egypt to his hometown upon hearing not of Solomon’s death (as in the LXX<sup>B</sup>), but of Rehoboam’s succession and the Shechem assembly (12:1 of the MT). In the original story, we cannot know whether Jeroboam participated in the negotiation between Rehoboam and the people (v. 3). It seems that Jeroboam’s return (v. 2) and the people’s speaking to Rehoboam (v. 3) were separate events. Nevertheless, one should note that the original writer juxtaposed Jeroboam’s return and the Shechem assembly, thus linking the two events at least implicitly. This aspect is not compromised by the statement in v. 20 of the MT. The assembly mentioned in v. 20 was possibly a body different from the one in v. 3. This may be supported by the different Hebrew terms that are both translated as “assembly” in English (קהל in v. 3 and עדה in v. 20).<sup>21)</sup> It was in any way held on a

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20) Willis rightly notes that the insertion first occurred in Chronicles, which then influenced the Kings passage. See his detailed discussion in Timothy M. Willis, “Text of 1 Kings”, 40-42.

21) Mordechai Cogan, *1 Kings*, 353.

different occasion. As Gooding notes, it is possible that the originally two different assemblies had been merged into one because of the confusion of the transmitter of the MT.<sup>22)</sup>

### 3. The Development and Purpose of the Existing Traditions

The above reconstruction of the original tradition offers us a basis on which to investigate the significance of the changes and revisions made in the existing traditions. We now explore the development of each of the existing traditions while paying attention to its purpose.

#### 3.1. The First Tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>

Regarding the first tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, the effect of the changes and revisions is as follows. When the report of Jeroboam's return was transposed to a different context (from 1 Kgs 12:2-3 to 3 Kgdms 11:43), the time and situation was accordingly changed. Unlike the original story in its original location, the present tradition presents Solomon's death as the occasion for Jeroboam's return.<sup>23)</sup> Although this was possibly a corruption, the relocation resolves the discrepancy between 12:1-3 and 11:40 of the original text, because whereas 11:40 attributes Jeroboam's flee to Solomon's threat, 12:1-3 of the original story attributes Jeroboam's return to the Shechem assembly (not to Solomon's death). In the present text of LXX<sup>B</sup>, 11:40 and 11:43 are in good harmony: Jeroboam left because of Solomon; he returned when he died.<sup>24)</sup>

Further, an ambiguity was resolved by the transposition. In the original story, the relationship between Jeroboam's return and the Shechem assembly had been unclear. Jeroboam was not mentioned during the assembly, although he returned upon hearing of the assembly. In our first tradition, however, not only does Jeroboam have no place in the assembly, but also was his return unrelated to it.

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22) D. W. Gooding, "Rival Versions", 181.

23) The anomalous interruption of the succession formula is, as Gooding astutely notes, in order to emphasize Jeroboam's beeline movement from Egypt to his home city upon the occasion of Solomon's death. See D. W. Gooding, "Rival Versions", 177-179.

24) Cf. D. W. Gooding, "Rival Versions", 177-179.

He returned upon hearing of Solomon's death, not upon hearing of the Shechem assembly; he took no part in the assembly but remained silent in Sarira; and he was not involved in the violent revolt depicted in 12:18. Only after the ten tribes became independent, Jeroboam was invited to be king (12:20).

What would be the purpose of this change? A few points may be noted. First, there is a rationalizing tendency. The discrepancy between 11:40 and 12:1-3 in the original story has been resolved, and the ambiguity of the relationship between Jeroboam and the Shechem assembly has also been avoided. This is not a matter of polemic or attitude. Rather, as John W. Wevers has noted, such a rationalizing tendency is one of the general tendencies of the translator of this portion of the LXX.<sup>25)</sup> Second, there is a move toward absolving Jeroboam of any responsibility for the division of the kingdom.<sup>26)</sup> Although he had received from Ahijah the oracle that he would be the king of the ten tribes, he was not a Jehu to rise to act. He waited as David did.<sup>27)</sup> Of course, many of the charges against Jeroboam were not removed by the translators or transmitters of the LXX<sup>B</sup>. Nevertheless, a comparison of the specific details which concern us here offers a sound basis on which to appreciate the transmitter's sympathy toward Jeroboam and the northern kingdom.

### 3.2. The Second Tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>

It may not be fair to say revisions or changes about this totally different tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> (12:24a-z). It would be especially so if we accept some scholars' view that this tradition was not derived from what we have in the MT or in the first tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, but was an independent tradition.<sup>28)</sup> To appreciate this second tradition, we would have to consider its whole structure

25) See John W. Wevers, "Exegetical Principles Underlying the Septuagint Text of 1 Kings ii 12-xxi 43", *OTS* 8 (1950), 300-322, especially, 302-306.

26) In Gooding's words, this is to "whitewash" Jeroboam. D. W. Gooding, "Rival Versions", 186.

27) D. W. Gooding, "Rival Version", 185-186.

28) See, for example, Zipora Talshir, *The Alternative Story: 3 Kingdoms 12:24A-Z*, JBS 6 (Jerusalem: Simor, 1993), 163-180; Zipora Talshir, "Is the Alternate Tradition of the Division of the Kingdom (3 Kgdms 12:24a-z) Non-Deuteronomistic?", George J. Brooke and Barnabas Lindars, eds., *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings: Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and Its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings (Manchester, 1990)* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 599-621.

and content, not just some details.<sup>29)</sup> Nevertheless, it is still meaningful to compare the details among the different traditions, as long as we do not lose sight of the overall structure and content.<sup>30)</sup>

Regarding our question about Jeroboam's presence in the Shechem assembly, we have suspected that Jeroboam's active role in 'gathering' the tribes of Israel may have been secondary. The suspicion is confirmed if we accept Willis's reconstruction. That is, into this second tradition was added an aspect that had not existed in the original tradition: that Jeroboam is unequivocally the leader of the Shechem assembly and accordingly of the secession. This is a new element, since in the original tradition, Jeroboam's possible participation in the assembly was only hinted at: "When Jeroboam heard [of it (i.e., the Shechem assembly)], he returned..."

What would be the purpose of this revision? Many scholars have noted anti-Jeroboam or anti-northern features of this second tradition.<sup>31)</sup> One significant piece of evidence is that the writer of this tradition did not give Jeroboam the title of king.<sup>32)</sup> According to this second tradition, Jeroboam is the culprit of the secession. He was never called king until the end of his story. Therefore, the transmitter of the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> shows a more hostile attitude toward Jeroboam and the northern kingdom than that of the first tradition. This will become clearer when we examine the tradition of the MT.

### 3.3. The Tradition of the MT

Last, let us examine the significance of the changes made in the tradition of

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29) This point has been made clear by Talshir and Schenker. See Zipora Talshir, *Alternative Story*; Adrian Schenker, "Jeroboam and the Division."

30) For example, Schenker makes a comparison of all the details between the tradition of the MT and the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, after he examines the structure and content of each tradition. See Adrian Schenker, "Jeroboam and the Division", 214-257.

31) See, for example, D. W. Gooding, "Rival Versions."

32) Cf. however, Moses Aberbach and Leivy Smolar, "Jeroboam's Rise to Power", *JBL* 88 (1969), 69-72. Aberbach and Smolar argue that 3 Kgdms 12:24a-z is "a complimentary description of Jeroboam" (p. 69), and it "rather consistently supports the rise of Jeroboam to power" (p. 71). However, Aberbach and Smolar compare this tradition with that of the MT, and their thesis is therefore that the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> is no more polemical than that of the MT (p. 72) a point which I do not agree with. When we compare it with the first tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, it is certain that the second tradition is more polemical.

the MT. The MT has dropped the remark that Jeroboam came to his hometown. Instead, 12:3a was inserted that says that Jeroboam was sent for and called on the occasion of the Shechem assembly. In addition, although Jeroboam is not said to ‘gather’ the congregation as in 12:24o of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, he is Rehoboam’s main conversation partner. This aspect features in 12:3, 12. The note in 12:20, which apparently contradicts the other references to Jeroboam, is easily resolved, when we consider the original tradition. In the original tradition, Jeroboam was not mentioned during the Shechem assembly and the revolt. Only after these, Jeroboam was appointed as king. The text of 1 Kgs 12:20 is therefore a remnant of the original tradition in which Jeroboam was not active for the assembly.

What would be the purpose of these changes? The connection between Jeroboam and the northern tribes, which was implicit in the original tradition, has now become explicit. Jeroboam was “sent for and called” presumably by the leaders of Israel. Thus, according to the transmitter of the MT, Jeroboam may have communicated with the northern tribes while he was in Egypt. Also, since Jeroboam is the only named character in the Shechem negotiation, he has become the antagonist of Rehoboam in the MT. Thus, although there can be a confusion caused by 12:20, the MT makes it indisputable that Jeroboam was from the beginning the cause of all the misfortune. Nevertheless, if we compare the story of the MT with the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, it seems that the polemic is less strong in the MT, because the MT does not say that Jeroboam gathered the tribes of Israel, and he is nevertheless the king of the nation whose foundation has been upon the divinely sanctioned prophecy.<sup>33)</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

In this study we have examined three traditions that relate Jeroboam’s rise to power. We have surveyed Willis’s reconstruction of the possible original text, discerned the revisions and changes made in the existing traditions, and explored the polemic of each tradition. The first tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> shows a sympathetic attitude toward Jeroboam and the northern kingdom; the second

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33) Gooding makes a similar point. See his “Rival Versions”, 188-189.

tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> is the most hostile against Jeroboam and the north; and the tradition of the MT is also hostile but less so than the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>. Of course, our conclusions cannot be definitive, since we have examined only some details of the traditions—that is, Jeroboam's return from Egypt and his participation in (or absence from) the Shechem assembly. Nevertheless, of the relevant details, ours are ones of the most significant in answering the broader question regarding the ideologies of the different traditions.

Bible translation, I believe, is not simply a process of translating words and sentences of the original text. It also requires a deep appreciation of the background and history (and story) of the transmitted text. I hope that my contribution to the present issue of the *Journal of Biblical Text Research* has appropriately addressed this latter, no less important, aspect.

<Keywords>

Jeroboam, Septuagint, Codex Vaticanus, Shechem Assembly, Textual Criticism.

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<Abstract>

**Did Jeroboam Participate in the Shechem Assembly?:  
The Portrait of Jeroboam in Three Different Traditions**  
(1 Kgs 11:26-12:24; 3 Kgdms 11:26-12:24; 12:24a-z)

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The story of Jeroboam's return from Egypt, the negotiation at Shechem, and the subsequent revolt and secession of the northern tribes is preserved in three different traditions: MT 1 Kgs 11:26-12:24; LXX<sup>B</sup> 3 Kgdms 11:26-12:24; and LXX<sup>B</sup> 3 Kgdms 12:24a-z. They share major events, but differ in their order and some important details, reflecting different attitudes towards Jeroboam and the northern kingdom. In order to appreciate the different ideologies and attitudes of the three traditions, the present study asks the following questions: when did Jeroboam return from Egypt?; and did he participate in the Shechem assembly? The first tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> (3 Kgdms 11:26-12:24) portrays Jeroboam as not participating in the Shechem assembly. In the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> (3 Kgdms 12:24a-z), Jeroboam does participate in the Shechem assembly although he is not mentioned in the negotiation scene proper. The MT's Jeroboam, similarly, participates in the Shechem assembly, but in comparison with the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup>, he is given a more prominent role. This is also supported by a proper understanding of the difficult Hebrew syntax of 12:2-3. The present study also attempts to reconstruct the possible original text behind the three traditions, and for this, it depends on the models proposed by previous scholars. The study then examines how each tradition developed from the reconstructed original text and what are the significances of the changes and revisions made to each of the traditions. It is concluded that the first tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> (3 Kgdms 11:26-12:24) is sympathetic toward Jeroboam and the northern kingdom, whereas the second tradition of the LXX<sup>B</sup> (3 Kgdms 12:24a-z) and the one in the MT (1 Kgs 11:26-12:24) are hostile, with the latter being more so.