Motion Terminology in Septuagint Gen 12:6

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ABSTRACT

This article[1] is devoted to the analysis of movement terminology in LXX-Gen 12:6. The research problem aims to investigate the contextual differences in the usage of the Greek verbs διοδεύω, διαβαίνω and παρέρχομαι, which are the common counterparts of the Hebrew עָבַר in the Greek Bible. In particular, the article seeks to understand the precise meaning of the Greek verb διοδεύω used in LXX-Gen 12:6. It concludes that the choice of the very rare verb διοδεύω in LXX-Gen 12:6 can be well understood in the context of the geography and topography of Canaan and the ethnic ideology of the biblical writers. Namely, the itinerary in LXX-Gen 12:6–9 did not require Abram to overcome any natural obstacles (which would have required the use of διαβαίνω) or pass by somebody or something (best expressed by παρέρχομαι). He did, however, have to travel through a wider space – the country inhabited by a foreign and potentially hostile population.

KEYWORDS: Septuagint (LXX), Masoretic Text (MT), to pass through, Pentateuch, עָבַר, διοδεύω, διαβαίνω, παρέρχομαι

A   INTRODUCTION – LXX AND GEN 12:6

Brock has described the Septuagint (LXX) – the first translation of Semitic sacred texts into an Indo-European language – as a "phenomenon."[2] A comparison of the LXX with the other ancient versions will show that, next to the Masoretic Text (MT) and Qumran scrolls, the LXX belongs to the most significant sources of information pertaining to the editorial development of the biblical books.[3] The data in the LXX form an integral part of the transmission of

the Bible as a whole and therefore in the literary analysis of the biblical books, equal attention should be paid to Hebrew and Greek evidence as well as to any other ancient source.[4]

The Septuagint Genesis (LXX-Gen) was the first of all the Hebrew Bible (HB) books to be translated into Greek. It is generally accepted that the formation of LXX-Gen dates back to the third century B.C.E. Some scholars even indicate a more precise date for the origin of LXX-Gen. For example, M. Rösel[5] argues that LXX-Gen emerged as a translation around 247 B.C.E. but N. L. Collins[6] believes it was produced around 281 B.C.E.

Although the general assessment of the Greek Genesis is that it is lexically and syntactically a witness to the original Hebrew text, its distinctiveness is manifested, as R. J. V. Hiebert points out, when the Greek translator departs from his typical patterns and produces a translation that reflects Greek conventions for the benefit of the Greek reader rather than replicating the Hebrew idiom.[7] Many of the differences between the LXX and MT are due to literary trends, while others were probably determined by the translators themselves.[8] Strzałkowska lists formal, grammatical and lexical changes, harmonising changes that interpret the text and alterations that adapt the text to the new language and environment.[9]

In this context, the present paper seeks to explore a short passage in Gen 12:6: "And Abram passed through the land in its length as far as the place Shechem, at the high oak. Now at that time the Chananites used to inhabit the land" (NETS).[10] After a preliminary reading, this passage was chosen as part of a larger scientific inquiry aiming to explore whether and to what extent the

Hebrew Bible: The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered (ed. Adrian Schenker; Atlanta: SBLSCS, 2003), 133.

4   Cit. Tov, "The Nature of the Large-Scale Differences,"

5   M. Rösel, "The Text-Critical Value of Septuagint-Genesis," *IOSCS* 31 (1998): 63. [cited 20 April 2022]. Online:
http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/ioscs/journal/volumes/bioscs31.pdf.

6   N. Collins, "281 B.C.E.: the Year of the Translation of the Pentateuch into Greek under Ptolemy II," *SBLSCS* 33 (1992): 403–503. [cited 19 June 2022]. Online:
http://khazarzar.skeptik.net/books/brooke01.pdf.

7   Robert J. V. Hiebert, "Genesis to the Reader," in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint: A New Translation of the Greek into Contemporary English - an Essential Resource for Biblical Studies* (ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1.

8   Tov, "The Nature of the Large-Scale Differences," 131.

9   B. Strzałkowska, "Księga Rodzaju w Septuagincie," *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia UKSW Warszawa* 4 (2011): 110–19. [cited 21 April 2022]. Online:
https://www.academia.edu/45282153/Ksi%C4%99ga_Rodzaju_w_Septuagincie.

10   The NETS –New English Translation of the Septuagint – is used here. However, a more common version of the transliteration of the proper name שְׁכֶם / Συχέμ is used – Shechem instead of NETS' Sychem.

changed conditions of travel and mobility in Hellenistic times influenced the LXX authors of the Bible.

B   CONTEXTUAL,   PHILOLOGICAL   AND   HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON GEN 12:6

The context of Gen12:6 is the travels of the biblical patriarch, Abram. Abram is said to receive a divine revelation to leave his home country and travel to the land of promise (Gen 12:1–3). Consequently, he leaves Haran (the place his family had moved to from Ur in southern Mesopotamia during his father's lifetime) and arrives in Canaan (Gen 12:4–5). In particular, Gen 12:6–9 enumerates several stopping points along Abram's journey in Canaan—the great tree of Moreh at Shechem, the hills between the cities of Bethel and Ai and the Negev before his descent into Egypt (Gen 12:10–20). Thus, Gen 12:6, the passage of interest here, belongs to the section enumerating the various stages of Abram's itinerary in Canaan.

Genesis 12:6

MT	וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בָּאָרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שְׁכֶם עַד אֵלוֹן מוֹרֶה וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי אָז בָּאָרֶץ	LXX	καὶ **διώδευσεν** Ἀβρὰμ τὴν γῆν εἰς τὸ μῆκος αὐτῆς ἕως τοῦ τόπου Συχεέμ, ἐπὶ τὴν δρῦν τὴν ὑψηλήν· οἱ δὲ Χαναναῖοι τότε κατῴκουν τὴν γῆν.
NJB	Abram **passed through** the country as far as the holy place at Shechem, the Oak of Moreh. The Canaanites were in the country at the time.	NETS	And Abram **passed through** the land in its length as far as the place Sychem, at the high oak. Now at that time the Chananites used to inhabit the land.

C   MOTION TERMINOLOGY IN THE MT AND THE LXX

The passage in Gen 12:6 begins with information about Abram's journey to Shechem. The Masoretic Text (MT) uses the verb עָבַר *(avar)* to express passage: וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בָּאָרֶץ *(vayyavor Abram baarec;* "And Abram passed through the land").

Although the etymology of the verb עָבַר is uncertain, the root of the term *ʿbr* generally refers to a change of position or location from one point to another. Within different contextual aspects and various other meanings, עָבַר primarily expresses physical, spatial and purposeful movement as "going; going away;

coming;[11] to push; to go on your way; to surge through; to cross; to pass by; to skip, to go around a place; to cross; to exceed; [12] to pass over; through; by; pass on."[13] The movement verb עָבַר occurs a total of 485 times in the (HB.[14] The Hebrew verb עָבַר is most frequently translated in Genesis by two Greek equivalents διαβαίνω and ἔρχομαι (with their prefixes, most often παρέρχομαι). The same can be said about other books.[15] As a rule, the LXX translates the Hebrew verb עָבַר as διαβαίνω or παρέρχομαι.[16]

In the case of Gen 12:6, the LXX version does not use the most frequently occurring verbs διαβαίνω or παρέρχομαι but rather a different verb διοδεύω. To better understand why the LXX employs the unusual verb διοδεύω, we will examine the other two most common translations of the Hebrew עָבַר, which are διαβαίνω and παρέρχομαι.

The first term διαβαίνω consists of the preposition διά and the verb βαίνω. The most frequent translation is "to pass;[17] to pass through; to go beyond;[18] to straddle; to strut; to walk; to go; to cross;[19] to step across; to pass over; to cross

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[11] H. F. Fuchs, "עָבַר," in *The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament Volume 10* (ed. G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, and H. Josef Fabry; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 408.

[12] L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, J. J. Stamn. *Wielki słownik hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski Starego Testamentu I, II* (Warszawa: Vocatio, 2013), I. 729–731; II. 40–760.

[13] עָבַר in Team Bible hub, NAS Exhaustive and Strong's Concordance, 'Bible Hub - Online Parallel Bible Project' (Glassport, 2021 2004), https://biblehub.com/.

[14] עָבַר in P. Williams, D. Instone-Brewer, and D. Brueggemann, *STEP Tyndale House 2020* (Cambridge: STEPBible, 2020), n. p. [cited 10 April 2022]. Online: https://www.stepbible.org/?q=version=ESV|version=WLC|reference=Gen.12&options=HVNUG.

[15] Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Job, Isaiah, Amos. The verb ἔρχομαι dominates in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Nahum, Psalms and Song of Songs.

[16] Fuchs, "עָבַר,"Botterweck, Ringgren, and Fabri, *The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament Volume 10*, 425.

[17] N. Watts, *The Oxford New Greek Dictionary* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 50.

[18] G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 344.

[19] H. Panczová, *Grécko-slovenský slovník od Homéra po kresťanských autorov* (Bratislava: Lingea, 2012), 330.

over;[20] to pass by; to go across; to go through."[21] The morphology of the second frequently used verb παρέρχομαι consists of the preposition παρ and the verb ἔρχομαι and means "to go by, beside; to pass; to pass to; to surpass; to overreach; to come to; to come closer; last a while;[22] to pass over; to go by, to pass by; to transgress; to go, to depart (from)."[23]

The morphology of the third term διοδεύω consists of the preposition διά (δί-) and the noun ὁδός or the verb ὁδεύω. Bernard Taylor's analytical lexicon translates the Greek διοδεύω, used in Gen 12:6, as "to travel through; to march through,"[24] whilst other sources add "to pass through; to pass over; to cross; to pass away;[25] to cross over, to go through."[26] Some other authors synonymise the verb δι-οδεύω with δι-οδοιπορέω as "to move; to circulate;[27] to stroll through; to walk on."[28]

As indicated above, in some cases, the standard translations offer the same or at least very similar meanings of these verbs. Each of the above-mentioned verbs can be interpreted as "to pass; to pass over; to pass through; to go; to go through; to pass by or to pass away; to walk or to walk on; to cross; to cross over, etc." In most instances, the Hebrew MT version uses one particular verb, עָבַר, to indicate a transition or crossing. The question then remains as to why the LXX authors used different verbs to denote transition or passage. What are the differences in the terms used? An analysis of the occurrence of these terms in the Pentateuch will serve as a basis for a deeper understanding of the issues surrounding the use of the different terms in the LXX.

Διαβαίνω

In non-biblical sources in the period third B.C.E. to first C.E., this lemma is attested twenty-seven times. The use is found in Plutarch and its highest attestation by century is first C.E.[29]

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[20] J. Lust, E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003), 329.

[21] G. A. Magazis, *Langenscheidt's Standard Greek Dictionary* (Berlin: Langenscheidt, 1996), 539.

[22] J. Strong, *Grecko-polski słownik Stronga z lokalizacją słów greckich i kodami Popowskiego* (Warszawa: Vocatio, 2015), 591.

[23] Lust, Eynikel, and Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, 923 – 924.

[24] B. A. Taylor, *Analytical Lexicon To The Septuagint* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Academic, 2009), 140.

[25] Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon,* 372.

[26] Lust, Eynikel, and Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, 364.

[27] Strong, "Grecko-polski słownik," 202.

[28] Panczová, *Grécko-slovenský slovník od Homéra po kresťanských autorov*, 358.

[29] Maria Pantelia, 'Thesaurus Linguae Graecae. A Digital Library of Greek Literature', UC Regents 2014, http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.twu.idm.oclc.org/index.php.

In the Pentateuch, the verb διαβαίνω occurs six times in the book of Genesis, seven times in the book of Numbers and most frequently, twenty-one times in Deuteronomy. The Hebrew version of the MT uses the verb עָבַר in all of these instances.

An examination of the Pentateuch texts reveals that διαβαίνω is mostly connected with the crossing of the Jordan River. Of the thirty-four uses of διαβαίνω in the Pentateuch, it is explicitly linked with the crossing of the Jordan River twenty-seven times (Gen 32:11; Num 32:7, 29, 30; 33:51; 35:10; Deut 3:21, 25, 27; 4:21, 22, 26; 9:1; 11:8, 29, 31; 12:10; 27:2, 3, 4, 12; 30:18; 31:2,13; 32:47).

In order to offer a closer look at the contextual occurrences of the motion verb under investigation, an examination of the term διαβαίνω in the Pentateuch will be provided.

The book of Genesis uses the term διαβαίνω once in connection with the crossing of the Jordan River (32:11). In similar contexts in Genesis, the term is likewise associated with the presence of crossing other obstacles, that is, "to cross the river [Euphrates], to cross over the mound and stele, to cross the ford, to cross the wadi" (Gen 31:21, 52; 32:23–24). The book of Numbers features διαβαίνω a total of seven times in chapters 32–35. In six instances, it refers to the context of the crossing of the Jordan River and once it refers to the crossing of the "middle of the sea into the wilderness" (Num 33:8). The verb διαβαίνω is, however, mentioned the most, up to twenty times, in reference to the crossing of the Jordan River in the book of Deuteronomy and once in the phrase "cross over ahead of this people" (Deut 3:28).

Additionally, διαβαίνω is used in the Pentateuch seventeen times in the context of God's promise of the land to the Israelites: "to cross over [the Jordan] into the land that the LORD is giving to them" (Num 32:7); "going to cross over, and you will take possession of this good land" (Deut 4:22); "crossing over the Jordan to take possession of it there" (Deut 11:8) and "crossing the Jordan there to inherit it" (Deut 30:18; 31:13; 21:47).

Παρέρχομαι

This lemma is attested forty-five times in the period third century B.C.E. to first century C.E. The most frequent use is found in Plutarch and Pseudo-Apollodorus and its highest attestation by century, twenty-seven, is in first century C.E.

The Greek verb παρέρχομαι is mentioned thirty-six times in the LXX Pentateuch (LXX-Pent) in relation to physical movement. Of these thirty-six cases, the MT uses the verb עָבַר thirty-two times and other synonyms of the Hebrew motion verbs occur four times, including סוּר (*sur,* "pass by" in Exod

3:3); פָּסַח (*pasah,* "pass by" in Exod 12:23 b); עָלָה (*alah,* "pass along" in Num 20:19 a) and הָלַךְ (*halak*, "travel, turn" in Deut 2:27b).

The term παρέρχομαι occurs four times in LXX-Gen. In all these cases, the equivalent to the Hebrew is עָבַר. The term is mentioned for the first time when Abram begs God not to bypass him: "LORD, if I have found favour before you, do not pass by your servant" (Gen 18:3). In the following verses, Abram extends hospitality to his guests before they continue on their way: "you will pass by on your way" (18:5).Additionally, παρέρχομαι is mentioned when Jacob said to Laban: "let your sheep pass by today" (30:32). Finally, it is said of Jacob that "he passed by Penuel" (32:32).

In the book of Exodus, παρέρχομαι appears seven times. For instance, when Moses is about to pass by the burning bush, he decides to look at it: "When I pass by, I will look at this great sight, why it is that the bush is not burning up" (3:3). The MT uses the motion verb סור "to turn aside; to deviate; to dismiss; to withdraw; to deny; to give up; to dismiss."[30] The LXX counterpart is παρέρχομαι.

In Exod 12:23, the MT uses two different verbs to express the idea of God passing by. Firstly, it employs וְעָבַר יְהוָה – עָבַר (*veavar*; YHWH "YHWH goes through)." However, it subsequently changes to a different verb וּפָסַח יְהוָה – פָּסַח (*ufasakh*; YHWH "he will pass over [the door])." In both instances, the Septuagint utilises the same phrase παρελεύσεται κύριος" And the LORD will pass by." The form used – παρελεύσεται – is an indicative verb of the future tense third person singular from παρέρχομαι.

In other passages of Exodus, the Hebrew עָבַר and the Greek παρέρχομαι are used. The texts have to do with "passing by" people and concrete things, such as Moses' wish to look at the burning bush as he "passes by" (παρελθών in 3:3). The LORD will pass by (παρελεύσεται) to strike the Egyptians. Then he will pass by (παρελεύσεται) the door (12:23) and in 34:6, "the LORD passed by before his face" (παρῆλθεν κύριος πρὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ). The Israelites are mentioned as passing by to safety (15:16), "until your people should pass by" (ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ λαός σου) and in 33:22, "the glory of God will pass by" (ἡνίκα δ᾽ ἂν παρέλθῃ μου ἡ δόξα).

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[30] L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamn, "Wielki słownik hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski Starego Testamentu, volume I," 701.

In LXX -Num, παρέρχομαι occurs thirteen times. In all but one case, the MT employs עָבַר. The only exception is Num 20:19, where a different verb of motion is used: עָלָה "pass through on foot, go up."

The NETS translates the Greek παρέρχομαι as "pass by" for all the passages in Genesis and Exodus. Conversely, in the book of Numbers, it appears in the case of the crossing of land: "pass through the land" (Num 13:32; 20:17; 21:22). It employs the same phrase "pass through" to denote border crossings (Num 20:17; 21:22–23) and the shorter version "to go through the borders" (Num 20:21) is used once. Twice, there is a reference to passing alongside mountain ranges, such as "pass along the mountain" (20:19) and passing alongside locations, such as "pass along Senna and Asemona" (34:4). One occurrence refers to crossing the Jordan River: "to pass the Jordan" (32:21). In LXX-Num, the translator uses παρέρχομαι in the majority of cases to determine movement through a geographical point such as a border, a mountain or a territory.

In LXX-Deut, παρέρχομαι occurs eleven times. In almost every passage, the MT refers to the verb עָבַר. In only one reference does παρέρχομαι refer to another very frequently used Hebrew motion verb, הָלַךְ "to go, come, walk,"[31] in the context of "I will turn neither right nor left" (2:27).

The LXX-Deut uses παρέρχομαι in most cases to indicate passage through a specific locality or alongside a geographical point, for example, "we went along the wilderness route of Moab" (2:8); "we passed along the plain of Zared" (2:13, 14); "to pass through the plain of Arnon" (2:24); "I pass the Jordan [river] into the land" (2:29). Alternatively, it is used to indicate locations where a person stayed: "we passed by our brothers" (2:8) and "the king did not want to let us pass by him" (2:30). One other reference is to the method of transition "I will pass by on foot" (2:28), whilst two of the fragments signify "passing through the land" (2:27; 29:15).

Διοδεύω

Whereas παρέρχομαι appears thirty-six times in the context of physical movement and διαβαίνω occurs thirty-four times, the verb διοδεύω appears only twice throughout the Pentateuch. Both cases concern the story of Abram's travel to Canaan.

Firstly, in Gen 12:6a:

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[31] הָלַךְ in Team Bible Hub, NAS Exhaustive and Strong's Concordance, n. p. [cited 11 April 2022]. Online: https://biblehub.com/hebrew/1980.htm.

MT	וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בָּאָרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שְׁכֶם עַד אֵלוֹן מוֹרֶה	LXX	καὶ **διώδευσεν** Αβραμ τὴν γῆν εἰς τὸ μῆκος αὐτῆς ἕως τοῦ τόπου Συχεμ ἐπὶ τὴν δρῦν τὴν ὑψηλήν
NJB	Abram **passed through** the country as far as the holy place at Shechem, the Oak of Moreh.	NETS	And Abram **passed through** the land in its length as far as the place Sychem, at the high oak.

Secondly, in Gen 13:17:

MT	קוּם הִתְהַלֵּךְ בָּאָרֶץ לְאָרְכָּהּ וּלְרָחְבָּהּ כִּי לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה	LXX	ἀναστὰς **διόδευσον** τὴν γῆν εἴς τε τὸ μῆκος αὐτῆς καὶ εἰς τὸ πλάτος ὅτι σοὶ δώσω αὐτήν
NJB	On your feet! **Travel** the length and breadth of the country, for I mean to give it to you.	NETS	Rise up, **pass through** the land, both in the length of it and in the breadth, for I will give it to you.

While in Gen 12, the Hebrew version uses the verb עָבַר, in Gen 13, the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek διοδεύω is the Hebrew הָלַךְ. Common features can be discerned in the context of the two passages in both chapters. Abram is already in the land of Canaan. In addition to the activity of διοδεύω, the crossing of the land, two significant promises by God play an important role. In the context of Gen 12, the LORD makes a promise to Abram: God will give the land of Canaan to Abram's descendants (Gen 12:7). In Gen 13, the LORD instructs Abram to rise and pass through the land. Prior to this command, Abram receives another assurance. Whereas in ch. 12, he is assured of the promise of the land, in ch. 13, he obtains a commitment that his descendants will multiply like the sand on Earth.

Besides these two occurrences of διοδεύω in the Pentateuch, this very rare verb is found no more than nine times in seven biblical books, having an equivalent in the MT in the Psalms and in the prophetic books of Zephaniah, Zechariah, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Interestingly, in all these prophetic books and in one of the Psalms, the verb διοδεύω is linked to a certain negative contextual aspect, that is, to plunder; no one passes through; no one comes through; an annihilation.

Psalms 89:41   "everyone passing by plunders him"

Zephaniah 3:6   "no one travels through; their cities failed"

Zechariah 7:14	"the land behind them will be annihilated of anyone going through"
Isaiah 59:8	"through [their paths] which they travel, are crooked, and they do not know peace"
Jeremiah 2:6	"in a land that nothing passed in it and no person settled there"
Jeremiah 9:11	"For what reason did the land perish, was kindled like a wilderness, to the point that nothing passes through it?"
Jeremiah 27:13	"[the land] shall not be inhabited, and all of her shall become an annihilation"
Ezekiel 5:14	"I will make you and your daughters around you into a wilderness before every passer-by"
Ezekiel 14:15	"it shall be as an annihilation, and there shall not be one who passes through"

Διοδεύω is found a total of eighteen times in the entire LXX, including the books that have no equivalent in the MT: 1 Maccabees, Wisdom, Baruch and Daniel. Remarkably, it is not related to "passing through" a particular point, as is the case with διαβαίνω and παρέρχομαι.

1 Maccabees 10:77	"went to Azotus as if he were passing through"
1 Maccabees 12:32	"and passed through all that country / passed through as far as Ascalon"
Wisdom 5:7	"journeyed through trackless wastes"
Wisdom 5:11	"is traversed by the movement of its wings"
Wisdom 11:2	"They journeyed through an uninhabited wilderness"
Wisdom 14:1	"to travel over raging waves"
Baruch 4:2	"pass through toward the shining in the presence of her light"
Daniel 3:48	"and flared out and burned those of the Chaldeans"

D   PASSING THROUGH THE LAND OF SHECHEM

It is important to keep the location of Abram's travels in mind. Namely, "Abram passed through the land in its length as far as the place Shechem, at the high oak." It is apparent that Abram's travel was not a single act. In addition to the verbs of movement, the pericope also contains geographical information about

Shechem.[32] It is significant that it is not stated that Abram entered any of the ancient cities of Canaan; instead, he lived in tents as a travelling stranger.[33]

Shechem, שְׁכֶם in Hebrew, literally means "shoulder; neck; a person; a geographical indication of the city."[34] Shechem occurs fifty-four times in the Bible, the first instance being in the verse that is the focus of this study, that is, Gen 12:6.

An examination of the reference to the city of Shechem reveals that it is not connected with a particular verb, as is the case, for example, with Jerusalem. As the height is above sea level, the connotation with Jerusalem is not "to go to" Jerusalem, but "to go up to Jerusalem" (Greek ἀναβαίνω "to go up, to ascend; to rise, to come up"). However, this is not the case with the city of Shechem. The HB uses various verbs of motion associated with this city. It appears most frequently as πορεύομαι in, "now his brothers went to Shechem" (Gen 37:12) and ἔρχομαι, "he came to Shechem" (Gen 37:14).

E   TEXTUAL, TRADITION AND REDACTION CRITICISM OF GEN 12:6

1   Textual Criticism Based on the Hebrew MT Version BHS[35]

MT

וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם [εἰς τὸ μῆκος αὐτῆς] עַד מְקוֹם שְׁכֶם עַד אֵלוֹן מוֹרֶה וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי אָז בָּאָרֶץ בָּאָרֶץ

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[32] Shechem was an ancient town whose existence is confirmed by the Egyptian curse text of Pharaoh Senuseret III (gr. Sesostris) from 1872–1853 B.C.E. and was situated ca. seventy km north of Jerusalem between Mt. Ebal in the north and Mt. Gerizim in the south. Due to its location at the centre of Palestine, Shechem was an important trading hub on the routes from Egypt and Arabia to Syria and Mesopotamia, between the Jordan Valley and the Mediterranean Sea. Shechem also played a vital role in biblical history. Here, Jacob "bought a parcel of a field at the hands of the children of Hamor" from the Hivites after his return from Mesopotamia (Gen 33:19); Joshua gathered all of Israel at Shechem "before God" and delivered to them his second parting address; Shechem became one of the cities of refuge, the central city of refuge for Western Israel; the bones of Joseph were buried in Shechem (Josh 20:7; 24:1–15; 24:32) and Rehoboam was appointed king in Shechem (1 Kgs 12:1).

[33] R. N. Whybray, "Genesis, The Story of Abraham," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (ed. J. Barton and J. Muddiman; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 49.

[34] See שְׁכֶם inL. i in. Koehler, *Wielki słownik hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski Starego Testamentu II*, vol. II (Warszawa: Vocatio, 2013), 480–82.

[35] Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia version (BHS).

There is only one text-critical note associated with this verse in the BHS edition; the Old Greek version adds the phrase "in its length" (εἰς τὸ μῆκος αὐτῆς), which is given in parentheses in the Hebrew text above[36] because this phrase is missing in the Hebrew MT version.

According to J. W. Wevers, the phrase could be connected to Gen 13:17, in which God speaks to Abram to: "Rise up, pass through the land, both in the length of it and in the breadth, for I will give it to you." Wevers doubts that Abram crossed the length of the land because Shechem lies in the central hill country. In his view, Shechem is defined as (ἐπὶ) τὴν δρῦν τὴν ὑψηλήν, "the high oak tree."[37]

2   Textual Criticism Based on the Greek Version Ralphs LXX

LXX   καὶ διώδευσεν Αβραμ **τὴν γῆν** εἰς τὸ μῆκος αὐτῆς ἕως τοῦ τόπου Συχεμ ἐπὶ τὴν δρῦν τὴν ὑψηλήν οἱ δὲ Χαναναῖοι τότε κατῴκουν τὴν γῆν

NETS   And Abram passed **[through] the land** in its length as far as the place Shechem, at the high oak. Now at that time the Chananites used to inhabit the land.

τὴν γῆν   – the first occurrence of τὴν γῆν is in the 911 manuscript, but it is absent from the Codex Alexandrinus.

3   Tradition and Redaction Criticism

Previous critical literary analyses assigned Gen 12:6–9 to the Yahwist tradition. In recent times, however, an increasing number of scholars have leaned towards the later dating and editorial nature of Gen 12:6, pointing to the period of the Babylonian exile or even afterward.[38] In their view, the whole composition gives the impression of a post-Deuteronomistic tradition and, according to J. L. Ska, even a post-Levitic period. The debate has not been definitively settled.[39]

There are four major textual witnesses to the book of Genesis—the Masoretic Text, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint and the fragments of Genesis found in Qumran.[40] The Qumran group provides the oldest manuscripts but covers only a small portion of the book. In general, the

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[36] K. Elliger and W. Rudolph ed., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1997), 17.

[37] J. W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis* (Atlanta: Scholar Press, 1993), 166.

[38] J. V. Seters, *The Pentateuch: A Social-Science Commentary*, Trajectories 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 20–80.

[39] J. Lemański, *Nowy komentarz biblijny Stary Testament Księga Rodzaju*, Gen 11,27–36,43, I–III vols (Częstochowa: Edycja Św. Pawła, 2014), I., 102.

[40] Cit. R. S. Hendel, "Genesis, Book of," in *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (ed. D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 3077.

Masoretic Text is well preserved and reliable, but there are many individual instances when the other versions preserve a superior reading.

The best-known material related to Genesis is the Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen), testifying to the popularity of the book of Genesis in the Qumran community in the first century B.C.E.[41]

F   CONCLUSION

The aim of this article is to understand why the LXX author used the rare verb διοδεύω in Gen 12:6. As a result, the research focused on a search for the contextual differences in the use of the Greek verbs διοδεύω, διαβαίνω and παρέρχομαι, which are the most common counterparts to the Hebrew עָבַר. In English, they are often translated similarly, as *to pass; to pass over; to pass through; to go; to go through; to pass by or to pass away; to walk or to walk on; to cross or to cross over.*

Since the uncommon διοδεύω occurs only twice in Genesis, the present investigation has been extended to all the books of the Pentateuch to understand better the occurrence of the verb. The answer to this question is provided based on the examination of these terms in their various contexts.

The analysis of the relevant passages in LXX-Gen has shown that the verb διαβαίνω appears thirty-four times in the Pentateuch and its peculiarity is that in almost all occurrences it refers to the crossing of a particular obstacle, often of a natural type, such as a river (twenty-seven times in connection with the Jordan River), a mountain, a ford, a desert, etc. Therefore, we can deduce that the LXX translators used this expression to indicate the crossing of a concrete, tangible boundary, often linked to the idea of the acquisition of a land.

The second most frequently used verb, παρέρχομαι, does not generally appear in the context of overcoming obstacles, arriving somewhere at a particular place or crossing something. Rather, the context speaks of going around something, alongside an object, not entering some space.

In the LXX books, which have Hebrew counterparts, the motion verb διοδεύω appears only twice in the book of Genesis in connection with the travels of Abram, once in the book of Psalms and only eight times in the prophetic books. Interestingly, the verb διοδεύω is usually associated with a certain negative aspect in the prophetic books, such as "plundering; annihilation; no one travels through; nothing passes through it; shall not be one who passes through; etc." In total, διοδεύω is used in the whole Greek Bible only eighteen times and appears in a slightly different context. In none of the occurrences does διοδεύω relate to the transition of something specific. This verb is not associated with

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[41] Cit. V. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis* (NICOT 1–17; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 72.

overcoming specific obstacles. Overall, it can be said that the main distinguishing characteristic in comparison to the previous two verbs is that it appears in the context of wandering through the country or traveling but not when crossing something tangible or a precisely marked point. In this context, it is also important to point to the negative stance of the Hebrew Bible towards the local populations of Canaan – the patriarchs were not supposed to intermarry with them and ultimately the local populations were to be exterminated (in the times of Exodus and the conquest under Joshua and his descendants). Importantly, in the times of the LXX writers, Shechem was occupied by Samaritans (see Sir 50:26) and there was a strong animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans.[42] Thus, the use of διοδεύω stresses that Abram did not come into contact with the local population on his travels through the country.

If we wish to reduce (for easier understanding) the English translations of the individual terms to just one, according to the results of the present analysis of the LXX-Pent, we could say that διαβαίνω is most often used closest to *to cross over (something, i.e., river, mountain, etc.)*, the verb παρέρχομαι is most akin to *to pass by* or *to pass over* in the sense of going around, not entering and the most suitable translation for διοδεύω is *to travel through, to migrate, to wander through* a larger space. This is probably why the verb διοδεύω was used in connection with Abram's journey; he did not have to cross a specific thing or pass by a person or thing but had to travel through a wider space – the country inhabited by a foreign, potentially hostile population.

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[42] On the Samaritan-Jewish conflict, see I. Hjelm, *The Samaritans and Early Judaism: A Literary Analysis* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000). On the hostile view of the Jews towards the local populations of Palestine, see D. Mendels, *The Land of Israel as a Political Concept in Hasmonean Literature: Recourse to History in Second Century B.C. Claims to the Holy Land* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987).

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