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The meaning of the noun ὀρκισμός in 1 Macc 6:62

Introduction

The Greek noun discussed in this study belongs to the rarest nouns found in classical literature and the Septuagint as it occurs only five times in the biblical text. The noun does not only have a decisive influence on the sense of the hagiographer's entire statement in the main quotation of the First Book of Maccabees, but it also has, from a historical perspective, a profound impact on the negative evaluation of the conduct of Antiochus V (i.e. the Seleucid king), that is his battle with the Jews for Jerusalem – the sacred capital of the chosen people. Such an approach to the subject matter requires not only an exegesis of biblical texts, but also a study of appropriate ancient literature which undoubtedly speaks of the term's etymology. A. Bailly's dictionary gives a laconic definition of this deverbative noun translated as "administering an oath". The term derives thus from the verb ὀρκίζω, meaning "to administer an oath", "to influence an oath" or "to receive an oath from a witness, to swear in". As such, it belongs to the family of the main noun ὀρκός, which means "an oath, a witness of an oath" and occurs much more frequently in ancient texts.² It is important to investigate the semantics of the expression used by the biblical author, who intentionally applied this very rare term, thereby commenting on the attitude of the Gentile ruler toward the Maccabean insurgents.

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² Cf. A. Bailly, *Dictionnaire grec-français*, Paris 1963, p. 1402.

1. The text of 1 Macc 6:62

The statement made by the hagiographer in the original reads as follows:

καὶ εἰσῆλθεν ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς ὄρος Σιών
καὶ εἶδεν τὸ ὀχύρωμα τοῦ τόπου
καὶ ἠθέτησεν τὸν ὀρκισμόν ὃν ὤμοσεν
καὶ ἐνετείλατο καθελεῖν τὸ τεῖχος κυκλόθεν

Undoubtedly, the conjunction καί, which is present in the above verse, has a decisive influence on its separation *quo ad sensum*. As such, the passage can be translated as:

*the king entered Mount Zion
and saw how the place was fortified
and broke the oath he had sworn
and gave orders to tear down the encircling wall.*

The historical context is related to the battle between the Seleucid monarch, i.e. the underage Antiochus V – who is the son of the widely hated persecutor of Jews, i.e. Antiochus IV Epiphanes – and the Maccabean insurgents. Lysias, on behalf of his king, launched a military operation against Judas Maccabeus and his companions. Lysias was then a regent and the guardian of the heir to the throne of his father's will, who had gone on a military expedition to the East of his empire.³ This event took place in 162 BC, shortly before the death of the underage king who was condemned to death along with his guardian by his successor and cousin, Demetrius I Soter.⁴ According to the inspired author, the military expedition of Antiochus and Lysias was supposed to deter the victorious march of the Maccabean insurgents under Judas' command so as not to allow them to take control of the whole province, thereby cutting the monarchy off from Egypt. The king decided to act according to the denunciation of Judas' adversaries, who were in favor of the Hellenization of the country and subjecting it to the autocratic rule of the Seleucid monarch (vv. 22-27). The ruler gathered a huge army of mercenaries (vv. 28-30) and began a successful campaign (vv. 31-47) despite a few difficult moments of combat caused by the insurgents' tremendous heroism. He captured

³ This event is described in 1 Macc much earlier, that is in 3:31-33, where an order is issued to send an expedition against the insurgents and their entire uprising. In a wider perspective, cf. E.R. Bevan, *The House of Seleucus*, vol. 2, London 1902, pp. 178-187; A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Séleucides (323-63 avant J.C.)*, vol. 1, Aalen 1978, pp. 307-315.

⁴ Cf. P. Schäfer, *The History of the Jews in the Greco-Roman World*, London – New York 2003, p. 50; E. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique. 323-30 av. J.-C.*, vol. 2, Paris 2003, p. 366.

the Bet-Sur fortress in the south of the country (vv. 49-50) and later took control of Jerusalem (vv. 51-54). Unfavorable news about a possible military putsch and takeover of power from Antiochus Epiphanes – who died during the campaign – by Philip caused an unexpected turn of events. A temporary pact which gave the insurgents the right to religious freedom in the country was made shortly after (vv. 55-60). The insurrectionists ceased combat and abandoned the temple fortress after the king took an appropriate oath (v. 61) and was allowed to enter the town and Mount Zion. Having seen its fortifications, the ruler broke his oath and ordered that the city's defensive walls be destroyed (v. 62), so that it became defenseless particularly against the citadel with besieged soldiers inside. Perhaps he wanted to thwart the possibility of the town being defended from a potential expedition if the insurgents rose up again.

The main part of the verse in question begins with the verb ἀθετέω, meaning “to revoke, to invalidate.”⁵ Although the writer uses this verb to refer to the Gentile king's attitude, the insurgents can undoubtedly recall their infidelity and defiance of God.⁶ Their unfaithfulness is going to result in betrayal from those in whom they put more trust (ἠθέτησαν) than in God.⁷ According to the prophecy uttered in Isa 33:1 – which foreshadows a punishment of the Gentiles who break pacts (ἀθετοῦντες)⁸ – the Jews can expect, as God's chosen people, that the culprits will be punished by God, who is always faithful to the Jews (οὐ μὴ ἀθετήσῃ/ἀθετηθῇ, Ps 131:11;⁹ Isa 31:2; cf. 1 Macc 14:45). In this context, Gentile kings do not deserve to be called honorable and trustworthy people. Those who make trust-based agreements with them are fools.

⁵ Later on, Simon Maccabeus will experience the same type of betrayal from Antiochus VII Sidetes (1 Macc 15:25).

⁶ Denoted with the same verb, cf. 1 Par 5:25; 36:14; Isa 1:2; 48:8; Jer 3:20; 5:11; 12:1; Ezek 22:26; 39:23. As intended by the hagiographer, the bitterness felt by the insurgents in the current situation should get them to reflect on the permanent bitterness of God. His people have always remained unfaithful to Him by breaking the resolutions that they voluntarily made and were obliged to fulfill pursuant to the Sinai Covenant.

⁷ Such an evaluation should be made in light of Lam 1:2, which stresses the deep dejection of inhabitants deceived by those whom they trusted. Commentators agree that this relates to the alliances made between the Judeans and foreign nations and to the acceptance of their idols. In this context, it is important to stress that the lament of those who have been betrayed is through their own fault; this is manifested in their failure to trust their own God in favor of the treacherous Gentiles, cf. D.A. Garrett, P.R. House, *Song of Songs, Lamentations*, WBC 23B, Nashville 2004, p. 347.

⁸ In Isaiah, this most probably relates to Assyria, which symbolizes the Gentiles who are hateful towards Israelites and who use their better position through betrayal at the expense of the weaker, cf. G.V. Smith, *Isaiah 1-39. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 15A, Nashville 2007, p. 553.

⁹ Translator's note: all references to the Book of Psalms in this paper are derived from the Septuagint.

Another important term which influences the meaning of ὀρκισμός, and which can be found in the First Book of Maccabees, is the verb ὀμνῶμι. It can be translated as “to swear something, to take an oath” and has a strong binding connotation. In a great number of biblical verses, this verb is used to refer to oaths made by God Himself¹⁰ or vows made in His Holy Name.¹¹ The verb ὀμνῶμι is so important because Lev 19:12 contains a categorical and apodictic prohibition on making a false oath. The example of Ps 131:11 indicates that God will never cancel (οὐ μὴ ἀθετήσῃ) what he has pledged to do (ὄμωσεν, cf. also Judg 2:1). For this reason and according to Ps 14:4 only those who do not break (οὐκ ἀθετῶν) their promises (ὀμνύων) will endure with God.¹² The biblical text, however, recounts situations in which the Israelites did not manage to keep their solemnly made oaths, as was the case with Saul’s conduct toward the Gibeonites (2 Sam 21:2). The inspired author does not, however, use the term ἀθετέω here, but contents himself with the statement that the king has striven to annihilate the Gibeonite people from Israel despite the ancient oath of his predecessors given to the Gibeon inhabitants at the time of the occupation of the Promised Land (Josh 9:15).

What is the role of the noun ὀρκισμός in this semantic relationship? Surrounded by the two aforementioned verbs in the main verse, i.e. 1 Macc 6:62, the noun must be interpreted as an important and formally undertaken activity entailing a high degree of responsibility for those who take an oath and are expected to keep it. What is at stake is personal honor that guarantees the trust of the other side. It is imperative that such an oath be kept by all means necessary, regardless of the costs or efforts of the beneficiary.

2. The biblical context

The four remaining verses which contain the term in question and which can be found in the Septuagint will help to explain better the term’s semantics.

a) Gen 21:31

*Therefore that place was called Beer-sheba (ὀρκισμοῦ)
because there both of them swore an oath.*

¹⁰ Cf. inter alia Gen 22:16; 24:7; 26:3; 50:24; Ex 13:5,11; 32:13; 33:1; Num 11:12; 14:16,23; 32:11; Deut 1:8,34-35; 2:14 etc.

¹¹ Cf. inter alia Gen 21:23-24:31; 31:53; Ex 22:7; Num 30:3; Deut 6:13; 10:20; 2 Sam 19:8; 3 Bas 1:30; 2:8,23; 2 Par 15:14; Ps 62:13.

¹² This is certainly supposed to show personal honesty and responsibility for one’s own word, and the value of the one who received this word, cf. J. Goldingay, *Psalms 1: Psalms 1-41*, BCOT: *Wisdom and Psalms*, Grand Rapids 2006, p. 222.

This verse occurs in the context of a pact made between Abraham and Abimelech, the king of Gerar (vv. 21-32). The main verse uses the word ὀρκισμός in the same sense as its Hebrew prototype. The root **שבוע**, which can be translated as “to take an oath, a pledge or a vow”, is understood as a contract made by those who not only play the fundamental role of leading characters in the same pericope, but who are also the foundation of what they represent to the biblical author. On the one hand, Abraham is mentioned as a righteous, just and honest man, and above all – the prototype of the people with whom God made a covenant and from whom the hagiographer comes. On the other hand, the king speaks as the highest leader of another people, and is responsible for choosing the direction of its development – his decisions have a bearing on the fate of many. By definition, both Abraham and the king are expected to display the highest traits of humanity, the former as God’s friend and the carrier of His most important promises, while the latter as a role model for his people. These expectations increase their mutual responsibility to the maximum. Besides, the story utilizes ὀρκισμός in v. 31 to refer to the most important act accomplished by Abraham, that is his oath expressed through the verb ὄμνημι in v. 24 (ὄμοῦμαι).¹³ The weight of this promise shows in v. 23 which contains Abimelech’s demand of Abraham:

- a) the oath must be sworn by God;
- b) it shall concern the pledging party and his successors;
- c) it shall forbid betrayal in any form of conduct;
- d) this conduct shall be an adequate response to the kindness experienced from the other party to the pact;
- e) the oath shall be in effect in the country ruled by the party which showed the aforementioned kindness toward the other side.

One should not overlook the fact that the fundamental term **בְּרִית** occurs in v. 32 of the Hebrew original to denote the accomplishments of both leaders who made a mutual oath¹⁴. This type of oath (**בְּרִית**) was made by God with humanity (Gen 9:9), with Abraham (Gen 15:18; 17:13), and later with the chosen people (Ex 24:8). From a theological perspective, Abraham is supposed to treat the covenant with Abimelech as if it was a covenant with God. The Septuagint’s translator recognized this responsibility through the use of the Greek noun διαθήκη, which defines the Old Testament covenants and denotes the highest level of mutual

¹³ In numerous texts derived from different Pentateuchal traditions, this verb is used in relation to God’s action toward Abraham when He gives him land and establishes inheritance of land by his descendants (Gen 26:3; 31:53; 50:24; Ex 32:13; 33:1; Num 32:11; Deut 1:8; 6:10; 9:5,27; 29:12; 30:20; 34:4). The verb is also used in the Prophetic Books (Mic 7:20; Bar 2:34) and the New Testament (Lk 1:73; Heb 6:13).

¹⁴ Cf. TDOT XIV, p. 318.

commitment.¹⁵ When talking about the activity of pledging, the above points indicate that ὀρκισμός entails the highest degree of importance and lasts throughout the life of the pledging party. This longevity is underscored in v. 31 through the name of the place where the pact was made between both main characters – Φρέαρ ὀρκισμοῦ – which can be literally translated from Hebrew as “a well of the oath”, and is etymologically derivative from **בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע**, that is “Beersheba”¹⁶. It also means an obligation for the descendants to act according to their ancestor’s conduct.

b) Gen 24:41

*You will be free from my oath only if,
when you come to my kindred and they refuse to give her to you
—then you will be free from my oath (ὀρκισμοῦ).*

Another text containing the noun in question is Gen 24:41, where it appears in the context of a commitment which Abraham gives to his servant, a steward of his goods, so that he should seek a wife for Isaac and bring her to Canaan (Gen 24:1-67). The narrower context of vv. 34-49 includes the servant’s speech before Laban, the brother of Rebekah, who was meant for Isaac. Verse 41 recounts the words of Abraham whereby his servant can be released from his oath if Abraham’s kindred refuse to send Rebekah with him. The terminology of this verse is quite typical – there are two synonymous words to refer to the servant’s oath that occur twice in the text. The first word, i.e. ἀρά, is understood as “a prayer, a plea” in its primary sense, but it can also mean “a curse, an anathema”. The second word, i.e. ὀρκισμός, is a counterpart of ἀρά. Both these nouns should not be treated merely as synonyms used to enrich the hagiographer’s entire account. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that the Hebrew original contains only one noun, that is **אָלָה**, meaning “an oath” or “a curse”. Commentators typically agree that the noun conveys the latter sense here; the Septuagint’s translator perhaps noted this detail and translated **אָלָה** as ἀρά, for Abraham’s servant treated his oath as a curse in case he did not fulfill the promise he swore to his master.¹⁷ Now it goes without saying that ἀρά influences the proper understanding of what

¹⁵ This is manifested through possible ritual slaughter of animals to make a covenant and to sacrifice the remaining flesh as a testimony of truthfulness and commitment (vv. 27-30), cf. K.A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 1B, Nashville 2005, p. 280-281.

¹⁶ The Septuagint has several verses that convey this name through a synonym – φρέαρ τοῦ ὄρκου – which can be translated as “a well of the oath” (Gen 21:14.32-33; 22:19; 26:23; 28:10; 46:1.5; Amos 5:5) or φρέαρ ὄρκου in short (Gen 26:33).

¹⁷ Cf. J. Lemański, *Księga Rodzaju, rozdziały 11,27-36,43*, NKB ST, vol. 1, pt. 2, Częstochowa 2013, p. 558.

ὄρκισμός means. The latter noun subsumes the highest degree of commitment to a delegated job under the threat of being cursed, which would influence one's future life.¹⁸ The entire text features a particularly solemn style to underscore the significance of the discussed matter which requires that one make a binding oath.¹⁹ This significance shows in the context of v. 3 where Abraham demands that his servant swear by God. It also shows in vv. 6-7 where God's authority is recalled once again, only this time it relates to His prohibition that Abraham should not return to the land he has left once and for all. Ὀρκισμός also displays a religious connotation in this passage; the servant is entirely conscious of the effects that his oath before God involves.

c) Lev 5:1

*When a person sins in hearing the spoken oath (ὄρκισμοῦ),
and he is a witness, whether he saw or knew about the incident,
if he does not report it, he bears guilt.*

The above verse introduces the theme of guilt offering for various kinds of sins (vv. 1-4). Verse 1 mentions the sin of contumacy despite one's having heard about a matter through the official channels and about the threat of being cursed in case of non-appearance in court. For a court trial benefits social welfare by restoring justice in a specific case.²⁰ With this in mind, a court witness should place a testimony confirmed by his personal oath in a trial against anyone who has committed a punishable act. A lack of such a testimony is equated with failure to keep one's own pledge. According to Prov 29:24, such a person is harmful to himself and is an enemy to his own life.²¹ For if he disobeys a court order, he brings a curse to himself, and can only be released from it by providing a guilt offering preceded by a public confession of his sin (v. 5).²² The necessity of bringing a guilt offering engages a man before God, who is a truthful witness, and who knows all the circumstances of human life. This offering is supposed to mollify God so that He abstains from punishing a person guilty of negligence. In this sense, the term ὄρκισμός appears once again as a Greek counterpart of

¹⁸ It is possible that the curse will result in infertility, cf. J. Lemański, *ibidem*, pp. 545-546.

¹⁹ Cf. T.L. Puett, *Institute of Biblical Studies: The Book of Genesis*, Pueblo 2013, p. 329.

²⁰ Cf. J.E. Hartley, *Leviticus*, WBC 4, Dallas 1992, p. 68.

²¹ Cf. M.F. Rooker, *Leviticus. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 3A, Nashville 2000, p. 117.

²² The author does not explain the issue of negligence whether due to his own fault or not. He rather assumes that the absence of a witness in trial results from reasons other than purposeful disregard. In such a case, the victim is supposed to bring the weight of their case to the attention of trial observers. Only under exceptional circumstances can a witness have the case withheld, cf. A. Tronina, *Księga Kapłańska*, NKB ST III, Częstochowa 2006, p. 115.

the Hebrew **הָלַךְ** in a similar context referring first and foremost to God and His righteousness bestowed upon the chosen people.

d) Sir 36:7

*Hasten the day, and remember your oath (ὄρκισμοῦ),
and let people recount your mighty deeds.*

The broader context of this final quotation concerns the hagiographer's prayer directed to God (vv. 4-19) while the closer context of vv. 9-12 concerns his plea for complete destruction of the Jews' adversaries (v. 9). This destruction is to be accomplished by God's oath, which will become a reason for the Jews' praise of the Almighty (v. 10). Verses 11-12 deal with further demands for the pulverization of those enemies who have managed to survive and who maintain in their pride that there is no one above them. The Seleucid people are doubtless the enemy destined for destruction and perdition here. The Lord is expected to hasten the end of their reign over Judea and the Jewish people (v. 10a).²³ In the quoted verse, ὄρκισμός refers to God Himself because the context mentions only that His actions are destined to work to the people's advantage. Besides, God has sworn an oath and promised to Israel through Abraham that He would multiply his progeny and give them a land forever (Gen 50:24). Pursuant to His oath, God should support his people and lead it to a better future, thereby ending the reign of the Gentiles over the chosen people once and for all. Ὁρκισμός certainly functions on both levels, that is the level of the people and its land, which the biblical tradition typically expresses through the verb ὄμνυμι.²⁴ The supplication is based entirely on God's absolute fidelity to His given word and the fact that He will never violate it.²⁵ Furthermore, such deter-

²³ Cf. A.A. di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira. A New Translation with notes by P.W. Skehan. Introduction and Commentary*, AB 39, New York – London – Toronto – Sydney – Auckland 1987, p. 422. It is quite possible that the Maccabean revolt led by Mattathias is God's response to these expectations.

²⁴ This verb has already been mentioned in this article; cf. Gen 24:7; 26:3; Ex 13:5,11; 32:13; 33:1; Num 14:23; 32:11; Deut 1:8,35 etc.

²⁵ Ps 146:6 also mentions this fidelity, as both the Hebrew and Greek versions read that God "keeps faithfulness forever". This faithfulness concerns the fundamental relation to His creation; God does not only content Himself with bringing it to being, but also, in His faithfulness, He accompanies His creation and never leaves it, cf. J. Goldingay, *Psalms 3: Psalms 60-150*, BCOT: *Wisdom and Psalms*, Grand Rapids 2008, p. 711. In the Old Testament theology, this is perhaps the most profound motivation also for man; having created mankind, God has once and for all decided to take care of it. However, 2 Tim 2:13 introduces a New Testament definition of this fidelity and applies it to each of His disciples; this faithfulness means fidelity to Himself and the inability to break His own word or take a false oath. These are totally at variance with His "nature", that is His inner action that comes from His very essence. This feature can bring us a step closer in the theological understanding of God's fidelity to His creation, cf. W.D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46, Nashville 2000, p. 518.

mined action to destroy those who still reign over the chosen people will contribute to the praise of God's mighty deeds by the saved people. God's action will also fill the Gentiles with terror and respect for His potency, for He has shown mighty deeds against them. This will be an exact repetition of God's mighty liberation of the chosen people from the Egyptian oppression. Exactly these theological themes can be found in an account of the Book of Exodus. In passage 3:6-8, recounting God's conversation with Moses, the Lord first states that He is the God of the covenant through reference to the patriarchs, with whom He made the aforementioned covenant (v. 6). This statement is followed by God's acknowledgment of His chosen people's misery in exile (v. 7), combined with His decision to bring them out of the Egyptian land (v. 8). Now the themes of terror and praise can be observed looking at the ultimate fate of the Israelites and the Egyptians, when the former cross the Red Sea (14:5-31). A moment before their extermination, the Gentile Egyptians come to the realization that God, who has fought against them, is mighty indeed (14:25). After this annihilation, the saved people extol the Almighty with a song (15:1).

3. The context of ancient literature

It is noteworthy that the historical circumstances of ὀρκισμός are known and well documented in ancient Greek literature, similarly to the agreement between Antiochus V and the Jews involving a ceasefire. These circumstances can be exemplified by referring to an uneven treaty between the Aetolian League and Rome in 189 AD, when Marcus Fulvius Nobilior was a consul.²⁶ The treaty is mentioned by Polybius, who stresses that both sides provided oaths (ὀρκίων) and established peace (*The Histories* 21,32.15).²⁷

Strictly speaking, the term ὀρκισμός appears in classical Greek literature only in *The Histories* by Polybius in Book 6,33.1:

μετὰ δὲ τὴν στρατοπεδείαν
 συναθροισθέντες οἱ χιλιάρχοι
 τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ στρατοπέδου πάντας ἔλευθέρους ὁμοῦ καὶ δούλους ὀρκίζουσι,
 καθ' ἓνα ποιούμενοι τὸν ὀρκισμὸν.

²⁶ Titus Livius writes about it in *Ab Urbe condita*, 37.50; 38.1–11, cf. also Z. Kubiak, *Dzieje Greków i Rzymian*, Kraków 2014, p. 241. The issue of taking mutual oaths was customary to kings and was their identification, cf. Plutarch, *Pyrrhus* 5.2; *Eumenes* 12.2.

²⁷ Cf. also inter alia 21, 44.1; 29, 3.6; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiquitates Romanae* 1:59,1; 4:58.4; Herodotus, *The Histories* 1:29.2; 9:106.4; Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 2.2.

*After forming the camp,
the tribunes meet,
and administer an oath, man by man, to all in the camp, whether freemen or
slaves,
each man swears individually.*

General principles of martial life and camp order are the context of this verse. These principles enable the troops to function properly in difficult circumstances (6, 19-42) including the military draft and martial life, weaponry (19-26), the Roman campus (27-34), guard, prizes and punishments (35-39), and marching (40-42).

The oath assumed that each warrior was obliged not to steal anything in various parts of the camp but was rather expected to bring everything he had found to the tribunes (v. 2). One could suspect that the tribunes also gave a public oath to their subordinates. A Roman historian of the common era called Vegetius in his four-volume work *Concerning Military Matters* states that:

Nothing does so much honor to the abilities or application of the tribune as the appearance and discipline of the soldiers, when their apparel is neat and clean, their arms bright and in good order and when they perform their exercises and evolutions with dexterity.

It comes as no surprise that proper order and discipline in camp were given much more attention than physical appearance.

The semantics of ὀρκισμός used by Polybius is influenced primarily by the fact that it is not an oath taken *ad hoc* for a specific reason or on a specific occasion, but it is civil law. As such, the oath has concrete penal consequences in case of failure to keep it – although the author does not list the potential consequences of such an offense. It is impossible that such consequences should not exist whatsoever, because in such a case the law would not be obeyed but totally ignored given natural human inclination to evil. Fear of punishment must have been at work here. But one can suspect that the honor of each soldier mattered even more; no one probably wanted to tarnish their honor with a misdeed that would work to the disadvantage of all. Awareness of this simple fact involved personal honesty, loyalty toward others and decency. These attitudes resulted, in turn, from sharing the same fate and life circumstances. Demand for such an oath explicitly shows that thefts must have happened multiple times, including stealing from the weaker. These incidents must have significantly lowered the soldiers' morale as they frequently lived in uncertainty, feared getting cleaned out and suspected these or other colleagues. It is also noteworthy that taking the aforementioned oath was demanded immediately after forming an entire *castrum*. This very detail indicates

that the honesty of particular inhabitants was *conditio sine qua non* for a castrum's proper functioning and for the desired atmosphere of mutual trust between soldiers. It is important to underscore that the foundation for taking an ὀρκισμός is the personal welfare of particular soldiers, as well as the common wealth of the whole military unit founded on discipline and a code of conduct.

When considering ancient literature, there are a few examples which do not make explicit use of the noun ὀρκισμός, but which utilize the verb ὀρκίζω, belonging to the same semantic group as the former noun. *The Histories* by Polybius mentions an instance of breaking one's word in Book 6, 58.1-13. The historian recounts the story of a Roman soldier who was taken to captivity by Hannibal and was then sent to Rome with ten others to plea for a ransom to bail out all the prisoners of war. Having sworn an oath to Hannibal, all the prisoners were expected to eventually return to captivity:

Upon their naming ten of their most distinguished members, he sent them off after making them swear that they would return to him (v. 3).

This way, the captives would be able to give him a report of their mission. But one of the ten attempts to deceive the Carthaginian leader by immediately returning to camp under the pretext that he has left something there – he takes it and goes on his way to Rome again. Thus, he has just attempted to deceive the enemy leader, his companions and probably himself that he has formally fulfilled the oath. Even the Romans, as the historian relates, will later return him in fetters, thereby suggesting that he truly acted in a dishonest way by attempting to outwit his enemies.²⁸

Similar accounts can be found in *Alcibiades* 14,1-3 by Plutarch, who recounts a violation of the conditions and guarantees of the so-called Nicias' peace in Greece.

Alcibiades was therefore distressed beyond measure, and in his envy planned a violation of the solemn treaty (ὀρκίων, v. 2).

The undertaken measures resulted in the destruction of peace and the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta in its second phase, that is the Sicilian Expedition (415-413 BC).²⁹

Flavius Josephus notes another example of treason in *Antiquitates* 10, 6.3, recounting a similar behavior of the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar. Having

²⁸ Herodotus notes a much more complicated case of the conduct of someone called Prexaspes, who having broken his oath (ὀρκίους) acted in an honest manner by dying for what he had said (3:74-75).

²⁹ Cf. A. Ziółkowski, *Historia powszechna. Starożytność*, Warszawa 2011, pp. 511-513.

arrived at the walls of Jerusalem in 598 BC, the king also broke a treaty (ὄνκ ἐφύλαξε τὰς πίστεις) with the Judean king – Jehoiachin. When he let Nebuchadnezzar into the city without combat, the Babylonian king slew the most distinguished citizens, including the Judean king and the royal retinue, and took the principal persons in dignity for captives.

The Histories by Herodotus describes an opposite situation in Book 3, 19.1-3. Here, the Phoenicians choose to disobey the order of the Persian ruler – Cambyses – who has commanded that they sail against Carthage, for they stated that:

they would not do it; for they were bound, they said, by strong oaths (ὀρκίοισι, v. 2), and if they sailed against their own progeny they would be doing an impious thing

As shown above, they kept their oath. One should therefore recognize their honesty toward the other party to the pact and their courage not to submit to the mighty ruler. Luckily for them, he did not decide to use his army against them, because they were valuable allies who had voluntarily given in to his orders. The above example shows that the ethos of honesty and loyalty to agreements and the given word was important in ancient times.

4. The theological context of the Seleucid king's conduct

In light of the aforementioned remarks, it is justifiable to ask about a wider context of the biblical decisions taken by the Seleucid monarch because these had a bearing on both himself and the Maccabean insurgents whom the emperor had simply deceived. What matters here are not the historical consequences, because they can be easily foreseen. They were presented by the inspired author when he spoke of the destruction of the walls encircling Mount Zion (1 Macc 5:62d). It is imperative that one evaluate the entire issue on a theological plane, as it is the most important level of the Bible.

a) villainy of character

First of all, it is important to underscore the wickedness of the Seleucid ruler, who mocked at his own idols to whom he had probably sworn. This attitude is mentioned in LJe 34b (= Bar 6:34b). In his long and detailed satire of idolatry (vv. 3-57), Jeremiah mentions one important argument against the truthfulness of metal idols, that is the fact that no consequences will ever occur after breaking a word given to such idols³⁰ as they simply do not exist, but are plain dead. They

³⁰ Although the Greek author uses a different phrase here (εὐχὴν εὐξάμενος – “an oath is taken by”), the sense of this text is exactly the same as in the main verse of the First Book of the

are not capable of fulfilling what typically belongs to the world of God, i.e. a recompense or payback for committed evil or good rendered, material protection of His believers, fulfilling His vows and oaths, and liberation of His believers from the hands of their oppressors.³¹ In this sense, treating idols as the highest value of human life is the biggest mistake. That which is dead cannot rule that which is alive.³² This conviction may be a valuable explanation of why the Seleucid king made an oath to his idols despite knowing that they would probably prove ineffective. Even when one assumes that the monarch had some faith in his idols, he did not have to fear them as he himself was treated as a god.³³ In the Jewish mind, however, an oath to idols was binding in the highest degree, as no human is a god or is equal to one. In that way, the Gentile king was able to easily deceive the partners of his own commitment.

As mankind was created in God's image and according to His likeness, man should strive to remain totally faithful to his given word. This faithfulness is required not only from a member of the chosen people, who is bound to God by covenant, but from everyone on the grounds of being created by God. As God's creature, a human is supposed to reflect His image and likeness, and God is absolutely faithful to His given word.³⁴ But this is not their only task. Since Ps 14:5 mentions that those who do not break (οὐκ ἄθετῶν) their uttered pledges (ὀμνύων) will abide in God's sanctuary and in His presence, the Gentiles also have a chance to experience the close presence of the God of Israel on Mount Zion (Isa 2:2-5). No doubt, the biblical authors meant that the Gentiles' moral obligation is to act according to the eternal will of God, who has created all the peoples on Earth.

In light of the aforementioned points, the religiousness of Antiochus V turns out to be a dummy that serves his and his lieges' extrinsic purposes. Breaking his given word is not Antiochus V's concern, nor are his idols whom he allegedly serves.³⁵

Maccabees. But due to the difference between these expressions, one cannot speak of a literary relationship between both verses, but only of a thematic or theological coincidence.

³¹ Cf. S.A. Adams, *Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremiah: A Commentary Based on the texts in Codex Vaticanus*, Leiden – Boston 2014, p. 190.

³² Cf. J.D.G. Dunn, J.W. Rogerson, *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*, Grand Rapids – Cambridge 2003, p. 802.

³³ Even if the Gentile world evoked actual fear of breaking a vow that would result in a punishment from idols, as was already mentioned, cf. also M. Wojciechowski, *Księga Barucha*, NKB ST, t. 24, pt. 2, Częstochowa 2016, p. 134.

³⁴ Cf. inter alia Josh 1:6; 5:6; Judg 2:15; Ps 89:4,36; 95:11; 132:2,11; Isa 45:23; 54:9; 62:8; 22:5; 32:22; 44:26-27; Bar 2:34; Ezek 16:8; Amos 6:8; Mic 7:20.

³⁵ This is nothing extraordinary, as the Greek mythology presents examples of gods breaking their own vows. The most important commitment was made regarding the river Styx, and failure to fulfill it involved one year of water and food shortage and nine years of exile, cf. L. and M. Roman, *Encyclopedia of Greek and Roman Mythology*, New York 2010, p. 446, or one year of disability to

b) damage suffered by victims

Dishonesty often triggers catastrophic results for its victims, who are gullible, trusting those from whom they have every right to expect honest behavior. 1 Macc 1:30 presents such a situation, where Apollonius, i.e. the agent of Antiochus IV, speaks using terminology defined as peaceful words that evoke no anxiety (λόγους ειρηνικούς). These words are primarily supposed to protect his own troops from huge losses in case of attack. The Seleucid leader utters lies in order to lure away the attention of his listeners, so that they may become defenseless. 2 Macc 5:25 describes how Apollonius pretends to be peaceably disposed (ειρηνικὸν ὑποκριθεὶς) only to later attack the Jews on the holy Sabbath day when they are resting.³⁶ The naive inhabitants of the city believe the words and assurances of the man who gives every reason to be trusted as one who serves an office. The inspired author underscores the apparent contradiction between Apollonius' declared attitude and his actual state of mind. The dissonance proves that the Seleucid leader has employed a trick and, in his hypocrisy, deceived the inhabitants of Jerusalem.³⁷

c) betrayal as God's punishment of a disloyal people

When looking at the entire event caused by Antiochus V, another aspect becomes apparent, namely God's punishment of His disloyal people manifested in their awareness that they have been deceived by those whom they trusted. There are a few biblical texts that present this type of situation. In the closer context of Isa 30:1-5 – which recounts the expedition of Judean messengers to Egypt with a request for help – Isaiah criticizes his fellow countrymen by calling them “rebellious children”.³⁸ As predicted by the prophet, seeking aid and refuge from the Pharaoh means humiliation (αἰσχύνην) and shame (ὄνειδος, Isa 30:3) for the Judeans regardless of whether Egypt fails to fulfill its obligation

move, breathe and speak, cf. R. Heggen, *Underground Rivers: From the River Styx to the Rio San Buenaventura, with occasional diversions*, Albuquerque 2009, p. 1056.

³⁶ In the light of 1 Macc 7:15, one of the elements that calmed the inhabitants was Alcimus' oath that he would not seek to injure anyone, similarly to Mic 7:3, cf. K.L. Barker, W. Bailey, *Micah – Nahum – Habakkuk – Zephaniah. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 20, Nashville 1999, p. 122.

³⁷ The inhabitants' gullibility can be interpreted as a punishment for rejection of the God of Israel and for letting the invaders into one's own ranks. Lack of trust in and fidelity to the Lord resulted in the fulfillment of the prophecy uttered in Deut 28:25-26. The historicity of Apollonius' campaign is confirmed by Polybius' texts which recount similar examples of treacherous seizures of land (*The Histories* 1, 7.2-4; 18, 14.1-4).

³⁸ For the meaning of this expression, see. J. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19, New York – London – Toronto – Sydney – Auckland 2000, pp. 411-412.

out of powerlessness or aversion.³⁹ Knowing the destination of his kindred (v. 4), Isaiah further states that the people to whom they set out will not benefit them (οὐκ ὠφελήσει) and will bring neither help (βοήθειαν) nor profit (ὠφέλειαν) but shame (αἰσχύνην) and disgrace (ὄνειδος, v. 5). The very employment of the aforementioned synonyms and antonyms indicates that the disappointment of the messengers, their ruler and his people will be significant. This serves as sufficient punishment for their naivety founded on weakness and shallow human promises, as well as for rejection of God's unfailing protection. The prophet uncovers the true intentions of the Egyptians who seek, on the one hand, an alliance with the Judeans but who, on the other hand, are indifferent to their fate and merely want to secure the western flank of their borders. As long as the Judeans endure as a country, they block the Assyrians' way into Egypt. In this context, the conduct of Antiochus V can only be interpreted as a repetition of the king's earlier actions – he egotistically pursues his political interest and uses the naivety of his western neighbors to his own advantage.

Another quotation comes from the Book of Jeremiah who, on behalf of God, attacks his own people by questioning the point of God repeatedly showing mercy toward the stubbornly sinful people. The Judeans abandon their God and swear (ᾄμνυον) by non-existent gods. The Lord's kindness (5:7) meets with the Judeans' guilt likened to prostitution.⁴⁰ They have accepted idols in the vain hope that this would give them a sense of security from those whose faith they adopted. Meanwhile, they have to endure strict consequences such as the invasion of a foreign nation, exile and terrible famine (vv. 14-16), because they have been unfaithful to God. Their painful punishment is not only supposed to evoke a bitter feeling related to their idols' deceit, but it is also supposed to make them recognize that the God of Israel is the only one and true God. In times of Antiochus V, they will likewise experience a bitter feeling of deceit from those whom they naively trusted.

In verse 7:9 of the same book, the prophet lists, on behalf of God, a number of hideous sins committed by members of the chosen people. On the one hand, they practice false and treacherous swearing (ᾄμνύετε) combined with moral sins (i.e. theft, murder, adultery), and on the other reject God in favor of idolatry. Particular hideousness related to the Judeans' hypocrisy is shown in their coming to the temple to provide offerings to God while still retaining a sense of illusory security. The foundation for this illusion is the conviction that God is blind to their deeds and idolatry. If God's temple is located in the capital city, then He will not allow anyone to destroy His home. Meanwhile, the opposite thing happens – God

³⁹ Cf. T. Brzegowy, *Księga Izajasza. Rozdziały 13-39*, NKB ST, vol. 22/2, Częstochowa 2014, p. 560.

⁴⁰ The inclusion of the cult of fertility idols is possible here, as it was part of the Judeans' idolatry, cf. P.C. Craigie, P.H. Kelley, J.F. Drinkard, *Jeremiah 1-25*, WBC 26, Dallas 1991, p. 88.

lets his temple be destroyed as a sign of forsaking the people that first forsook Him through breach of the covenant's provisions (v. 14). Lack of reaction from God would mean that He permitted the sinful conduct of His people and disregarded different accidents from its history such as the destruction of one of its former sanctuaries.⁴¹

Finally, Jer 12:6 reveals the treason of some of the prophet's closest kindred, which must be particularly hurtful to him. To denote the actions of Jeremiah's fellow Israelites, the Greek text uses the same verb as the author of the main quotation – ἀθετέω. This verb can be translated as “I reject, I breach, I invalidate”. It is noteworthy that the most important expression in this verse reads not as in 1 Macc 6:62, i.e. ἠθέτησεν τὸν ὀρκισμὸν, but ἠθέτησαν σε meaning “they rejected you”.⁴² This expression sheds important light on the actions of the Seleucid king toward the Jews; rejection of his own word means, in fact, showing disrespect to the other party through placing the current circumstances above honesty. The prophet's kindred act in the exact same way by deceiving him, on the one hand, and speaking well of him in his presence, on the other. In the context of Jeremiah's question to God about the success of scoundrels (vv. 1-2), it can be concluded that the prophet's kindred choose to ally themselves with the treacherous to win something for themselves at the expense of their own honesty and family relationships. With this in mind, the prophet is expected to distrust a single word of one of those people. Furthermore, Jeremiah shall place no trust in anyone, for there are traitors even among his closest ones.⁴³ The prophetic text in question helps to evaluate the attitude of Judas Maccabeus toward Antiochus V as sheer naivety which manifests itself in Judas' excessive and foolhardy trust in the king's honor. After all, the ruler acted opportunistically and broke his given word as the circumstances began to change.

d) God's punishment of the wrongdoer

God's punishment as a consequence of the presented attitude is mentioned at least in three texts. Isa 24:16, which is part of the so-called Grand Apocalypse,⁴⁴ is the first such text. Its closer context of vv. 14-18a speaks of the joy related

⁴¹ According to 1 Sam 4, the sanctuary in Shiloh was destroyed by the Philistines, as confirmed by archeology, cf. J.A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, NICOT, Grand Rapids 1980, p. 282.

⁴² This situation was mentioned earlier by the prophet Micah, who foresaw division among many families where those who chose to live by God's word would stand against those who placed their disloyalty above honesty (Mic 7:5-6), cf. L.C. Allen, *Jeremiah. A Commentary*, OTL, Louisville – London 2008, p. 150.

⁴³ Cf. F.B. Huey, Jr., *Jeremiah, Lamentations. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 16, Nashville 1993, pp. 140-141.

⁴⁴ This refers to chapters 24-27 of the book. These were probably written around the 5th century BC as a series of several eschatic prophecies and hymns created independently, cf. W. Harrington, *Introduction à la Bible*, Paris 1971, pp. 388-389.

to the praise of Yahweh, the God of Israel (vv. 14-16a), and the pain related to the prophesied destruction of the Earth and its inhabitants (vv. 16b-18).⁴⁵ Those who currently sing for joy and praise God's majesty, but have cunningly hoped that they would get away with their offense, will experience the dread of God's action in the form of total destruction, for they have particularly rejected the law (ἀθετοῦντες τὸν νόμον).⁴⁶

The quotation of 1 Chron 12:18 can be seen in the broader context of vv. 1-23 which enumerate new supporters of David in his fight with Saul. The closer context of vv. 17-19 mentions the arrival of new comrades in arms with whom the young leader deals cautiously; he wants to validate their loyalty, which he eventually succeeds to do.⁴⁷ Verse 18 stresses the possibility of being loyal and enjoying God's blessing or being disloyal through betraying David to his enemies (παραδοῦναι τοῖς ἐχθροῖς), as David was a fugitive from the royal court.⁴⁸ This betrayal should therefore meet with God's retaliation. The wish for God's punishment is to come true if the newcomers attempt to probe into the weak points of David's camp. The future king seals the entire matter with an oath engaging God's authority on his side.

Sir 1:30 warns of exalting oneself. This attitude can in no way be pleasing to God who discovers the vile human intention and publicly humiliates the proud who reject the fear of God and whose heart is full of deceit (πλήρης δόλου).

Sir 23:11 appears in the closer context of vv. 7-12 which deal with the warning against swearing oaths one can easily break. Discipline concerning the mouth is the foundation of secure life (v. 7). After all, the lips can cause a sinner, a scoffer or a show-off to fall (v. 8). Therefore, the author discourages anyone who aspires to be wise from making reckless oaths (ὄρκῳ) or uttering the Holy Name (v. 9); those who swear (ὀμνύων) or call the Holy Name of God (v. 10) will incur sin similar to slaves incurring bruises. Verse 11 explicitly states that whoever takes frequent and unjustified oaths heaps up offenses and will be punished. If they swear in error, sin is incurred. If they neglect their obligation, they sin doubly. If they swear a false oath (κενής ὄμοσεν), they will not be justified, for their household will be filled with calamities. What becomes apparent here is the typical gradation of sin, from a coincidental flaw, through conscious belittling of one's

⁴⁵ Cf. M.A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39: With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature*, FOTL 16, Grand Rapids 1996, p. 329.

⁴⁶ This is probably related to some invasion similar to the Assyrian incursion into Judea, cf. G.V. Smith, *Isaiah 1-39. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 15A, Nashville 2007, p. 422.

⁴⁷ Cf. H. Langkammer, *Pierwsza i Druga Księga Kronik*, Lublin 2001, p. 104.

⁴⁸ Cf. A. Tronina, *Pierwsza Księga Kronik*, NKB ST 10/1, Częstochowa 2015, pp. 263-264. That this is not merely a parable is confirmed by the fact that David was betrayed three times by those whom he trusted, cf. J.A. Thompson, *1,2 Chronicles. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 9, Nashville 1994, p. 124.

own word, to complete denial of a given oath. When referring the above remarks to the conduct of Antiochus V, there is a clear correspondence between the biblical description and the king's later fate, i.e. his and his protector's, Lysias' death, which immediately followed the succession of Antiochus V by Demetrius I.

Finally comes the quotation derived from Zech 5:4, which should be interpreted in the closer context of a prophetic vision of a flying scroll (vv. 1-2) embodying a curse which goes out over the face of the whole land, where a thief steals and a perjurer (ἐπίορκος) takes a false oath – they will all be cut off (v. 3). The curse shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of anyone who swears falsely by the Holy Name (τοῦ ὀμνούντος τῷ ὀνόματί μου ἐπὶ ψεύδει), thereby desecrating it. It shall enter those houses and consume them. He who impudently takes a false oath by God breaks the rule of Lev 19:12, which explicitly forbids swearing falsely by the Lord's name (τοῦ ὀμνούντος τῷ ὀνόματί μου ἐπὶ ψεύδει)⁴⁹ so as not to profane it.

The possibility of severe punishment for those who ignore an oath sworn in the name of God should come as no surprise. Although Antiochus certainly did not swear by the God of Israel, Josh 23:7 forbids Israelites to swear by the pagan gods, which means that such oaths were also in use in the Gentile world. This supposition is also confirmed by Zeph 1:5, which speaks of the annihilation of those who swear by the pagan god Milcom.⁵⁰ It is also confirmed by Jer 5:7, which attacks the Judeans for swearing by those who are not gods,⁵¹ and 12:16, which accuses the Gentiles of teaching the chosen people to swear by false idols.⁵² One can conclude, without error, that Antiochus V must have sworn by one of the Greek idols which he worshiped, thereby profaning its name. The fact that this idol, according to the faith of Israel, does not exist is meaningless here as the king must have believed in the authenticity of his gods. He turned out to be a man who disregarded those whom he officially worshiped.

⁴⁹ This breach is also a violation of the Third Commandment as stipulated in Ex 20:7 and Deut 5:11, which forbids making wrongful use of the Lord's name, as it is at variance with His glory, cf. M.F. Rooker, *Leviticus. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 3A, Nashville 2000, pp. 256-257.

⁵⁰ Thereby equating the false idol with God Himself, cf. K.L. Barker, W. Bailey, *Micah – Nahum – Habakkuk – Zephaniah. An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, NIV NAC 20, Nashville 1999, p. 421.

⁵¹ Commentators point out that the apostasy of Manasseh left a deep trace in the hearts of the chosen people since even Josiah's reform was unable to eliminate the attitude of the rejection of God and the elevation of idols as a guarantee for the fulfillment of previously sworn oaths, cf. J.A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, p. 239.

⁵² Probably also Amos 8:14 and Wisdom 14:29 mention swearing by the name of idols.

5. The meaning of ὄρκισμός in 1 Macc 6:62

Summing up the hagiographer's entire account recounting the breach of a word given to the leader of the Maccabean revolt by the Seleucid king, there are a number of aspects related to the Greek term in question:

- a) ὄρκισμός is not an occasional or a one-time oath, but rather it is a constant law and a moral imperative;
- b) the term entails a demand of absolute faithfulness to a given oath;
- c) having uttered such an oath, a man engages his own authority and incurs the risk of a total downfall or disgrace;
- d) breaking a given ὄρκισμός reveals a person's dismissive attitude toward their own gods in whom they believe and whom they formally serve;
- e) the term entails a demand of total conformity of a declared attitude with the actual intentions behind an oath;
- f) ὄρκισμός is supposed to prevent an egotistical approach to serve one's own political interests. It is also supposed to prevent the exploitation of its naive addressees by hidden and vile means;
- g) ὄρκισμός incurs an irrevocable guilt when someone breaks his word that was sworn particularly in the name of the true God, who is a reliable guarantor of oaths.

This context reveals the negative attitude of the Seleucid king; he is not worthy of the trust placed in him. Furthermore, those who, in their gullibility, have been the object of deceit should await the consequences of having trusted the Gentiles even when they are rulers who, based on their might and the dignity of their office, are obliged to be faithful to their given word.

Translated by: Mateusz Sylwestrzak

Summary

The discussed text of 1 Macc 6:62 contains the noun ὄρκισμός, which defines an oath given to the leader of the Maccabean revolt by the king, and which is worthy of investigation. The fact that this oath is taken by the most noble person in the country, and is given to his adversary who played the highest role in the insurrection, i.e. that of the leader, reveals the term's significant value. Additionally, the two surrounding verbs related to the activity of taking an oath show that the term must be interpreted as an extremely important activity undertaken solemnly with a high degree of responsibility on the part of the one who takes it, so that he can keep it. What is at stake is personal honor, which guarantees the trust of the other party. An oath taken in such a way should be kept by any means necessary, even if this would require the highest costs and efforts from the one who made an oath to its beneficiary. If breaking the oath entirely ruins one's honor, then no office can compensate for one's loss of authority. In the discussed book, this downfall is also related to the fact that, contrary to the Jews, promises are never kept by the Gentiles.

Keywords

Biblical exegesis, Old Testament, deuterocanonical books, The First Book of the Maccabees, Antiochus V Eupator, Judas Maccabaeus

Słowa kluczowe

egzegeza biblijna, Stary Testament, księgi deuterokanoniczne, Pierwsza Księga Machabejska, Antioch V Eupator, Juda Machabeusz

Abbreviations used in this paper

- AB – The Anchor Bible
 BCOT – Baker Commentary on the Old Testament
 FOTL – The Forms of the Old Testament Literature
 NICOT – New International Commentary on the Old Testament
 NIV NAC – New International Version – New American Commentary
 NKB ST – Nowy Komentarz Biblijny, Stary Testament
 OTL – Old Testament Library
 WBC – Word Biblical Commentary
 WT UAM – Wydział Teologiczny UAM Poznań

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