

RECENSIONAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MASORETIC TEXT AND THE SEPTUAGINT OF 2 SAMUEL 6:21 AND ITS IMPLICATION ON DANCING AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

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ABSTRACT

The Septuagint in 2 Sam. 6:21 inserts the verb ὀρχέομαι although lacking in the MT nevertheless its focus is on David who executed and wished to execute the action of dancing shortly. It shows the desire of the author or perhaps the desire of a scribe to call attention to dancing as an act to perform before Yahweh. This paper seeks to ascertain what could be considered the most direct witness to the Old Greek and the absence of the verb and the possessive pronominal verbal participle in the Hebrew Vorlage. It would be done bearing the following questions in mind: could the rendering of the Septuagint be as a result of a different primitive text or an editorial addition of the ancient text? Does the context require dancing? How can this text resonate in the light of African act of dancing in the worship of God?

KEYWORDS: Recension, Difference, Dance, Worship.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The sequence of ideas in 2 Sam. 6:21 of the Masoretic Text (MT) are very close to that in the Septuagint (LXX) except for some additional details in the LXX. Because of this, it is difficult to ascertain from a contextual point of view whether the translator or his *Vorlage* brought about these additions. It leaves us with a textual-literary problem which is a textual issue either created by a translator's free volition or from a different literary edition at the disposal of the translator in the formative period of the text in its broader context of 2 Samuel. The MT lacks several words and employed synonyms in this sub-plot in vv. 20, 21, and 22 as well as elsewhere in the chapter (vv. 14, 16, 21), which undoubtedly were also lacking in its *Vorlage*. These differences and the additions of the LXX text of 1 Sam 6:21, makes the assumption of a recensionally different text most likely. Nevertheless, this may point to a late insertion in the LXX text. In other words, it is hard to tell whether the differences between MT and LXX text of 1 Sam 6:21 are the result of a) differing literary traditions resulting in MT and the *Vorlage* of LXX; b) additions to LXX after translation and; c) editorial changes to MT sometime after LXX became translated. Like other texts of the LXX which have drawn the interest of scholars to literary criticism over the years, this study will undertake to highlight the recensional differences between the two leading preserved texts at our disposal at the moment.

1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TEXT OF 2 SAMUEL 6:21

The text of 2 Sam 6 has been classified by Historical-Critical scholarship along with 1 Sam. 4:1-7:1 as the Ark Narrative (AN), (Evans, 2000, 159). 2 Sam. 6:21 falls within the microstructure of the interesting sub-plot (6:20-23) part of the main plot (6:1-23) concerning the movement of the ark from the Gibeonite territory to Jerusalem. The embedded sub-plot is the anecdotal narrative of the conflict between Michal and David. The macrostructure has the following distinct sections. Verses 1-2 constitute the initial action of David staging the platform for the removal of the ark. Verses 3-5 comprise the preliminary action stage, the first steps in the ark removal, with David and all Israel celebrating in the procession. The inciting moment comes in verses 6-7, where Yahweh strikes Uzzah dead, thereby initiating a conflict of perspectives between Himself and David (Cartledge, 2001; Firth, 2009; McCarter, 1984 and Anderson, 1989).

The conflict develops further in verses 8-10, where it leaves the reader wondering whether the ark would ever reach its destination. The climax comes in verses 10-15, where out of envy, arising from the prosperity that Yahweh bestows on Obed-Edom, David resumed the removal of the ark. It is at this climactic stage that the setting of the sub-plot emerges in verse 16, following which is the denouement that announces the placement of the ark in its tent and the sacrifices that followed (v. 17). The closure of the ark removal culminates in verses 18-19, with the benediction and the parting gifts. The conflict of David and Michal treads on the heels of the closure of the ark removal plot (vv. 20-22). Verse 23, then, is used pragmatically as the closure to the sub-plot. Our verse of interest (2 Sam. 6:21) falls within a microstructure consisting of 2 Sam. 6:16 and 20-23 (Peterson, 1999; Brueggeman, 1990 and Evans, 2000). This study seeks to highlight the recensional differences between the MT and

the LXX vis-à-vis the longer text the latter. However, to do justice to this verse is to look at it in its literary-textual context.

2.0 THE TEXTS

LXX:

καὶ εἶπεν Δαυὶδ πρὸς Μελχολὲν ὠπιὸν κυρίου ὁρχήσομαι εὐλογητὸς κύριος ὃς ἐξελέξατό με ὑπὲρ τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντα τὸ νοῖον αὐτοῦ τοῦ καταστῆσαι με εἰς ἡγούμενον ἐπὶ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ παίζομαι καὶ ὁρχήσομαι ἐνώπιον κυρίου.

Translation: So David said to Michal, “*I will dance* before the Lord. *Blessed the Lord* who chose me before your father and before all his house to set me to be chief over his people, over Israel, therefore, I will play *and dance* before the Lord.” (Divergence in italics)

MT: וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־מִיכָל לְפָנָי הַיְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר־בִּי מֵאֲבֹתַי וּמִכָּל־בֵּיתוֹ לְצַוֹּת אֹתִי נָגִיד עַל־עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׁרָרְאֵל וְיִשְׁחַקְתִּי לְפָנָי הַיְהוָה

Translation: So David said to Michal, “Before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel; therefore, I will play before the LORD.”

There are a few discrepancies of additions in the LXX of 2 Sam 6:21 as appeared from the text in comparison to the MT which might attribute to the Greek translator. The LXX inserts the verb ὁρχήσομαι “I will dance,” here. Likewise, it adds εὐλογητὸς κύριος “Blessed the Lord,” and καὶ ὁρχήσομαι “and I will dance” which do not have their equivalents in the MT. The issue at stake is whether the translator created the differences between the LXX and MT of 2 Sam 6:21 or was already extant in his Hebrew *Vorlage*. However, ascribing to the Greek translator, the inclination will be in the realm of exegesis rather than textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible (Olofsson, 2009, 176-8). Nevertheless, it is equally important to note that these additions could be as a result of an altered Hebrew *Vorlage* which often differed recensionally from MT. It is in this light that this study seeks at this point to consider the exegetical possibility introduced by the translator as well as look out for evidence linking to a different Hebrew *Vorlage*.

3.0 TRANSLATIONAL FACTORS

The LXX text of 2 Sam.6:21 signals an inner-translational factor in the Greek translation rather than to a different Hebrew text behind the differences between the LXX and MT. It might be emanating as a result of the following:

1. There are indications of contextual exegesis in the translation to some extent.
2. The significant discrepancies between the two texts are the additions in the LXX which seems more of an interpretive paraphrase of the verb παίζομαι “I will play,” rather than Greek translation of Hebrew word as found in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. The Greek word παίζομαι “I will play,” being more faithful to the Hebrew וְיִשְׁחַקְתִּי “and I will play,” and the addition ὁρχήσομαι “I will dance,” looking freer and even paraphrastic.

The Hebrew word מְשַׁחֵק (שָׁחַק) has the basic idea of play, make sport, or carefree play involving the use of the musical instrument as in 2 Sam 6:5. The word as used in the

Hebrew Bible has the dominant idea of mockery, derision, jesting, or other forms of non-serious (or even derisive) fun-making. Examples of this include (1) derisive laughter-2 Chron. 30:10; Prov. 29:9; Lam 1:7; Psa. 52:8; Job 30:1; Ps 37:13; Jer. 48:26, 27, 39; Lam. 3:14; (2) entertainment that borders on Jest-ing-Judges 16:25, 27; Eccl. 3:4 2 Sam. 2:14; Prov. 26:19 and (3) music-making as a form of jesting or clowning (fun-making carnival) Jer. 15:17; 30:19; 31:4; Zech. 8:5; (4) the use of such carnivalizing at pagan shrines (Amos 7:9), (BDB, 1996, 966 cf., Morrish, 1974 and Lust et al 2003). It is in this light that the uses of the word in the Samuel narratives (1 Sam 18:7; 2 Sam 6:5, 21) should be understood as well. Nevertheless, Rosenstock preferred the word carnivalizing employing it as jargon that refers to the phenomenon of role reversal in a fertility cult setting. The fertility cultic implication of David's carnivalizing cannot be ruled out, but when it involves Yahweh, it takes a different dimension (Rosenstock, 2006, 70).

Thus the rendering παίξομαι "I will play," reflects the original translation and ὀρχήσομαι "I will dance," a revisional rendering. While it is not impossible that παίξομαι "I will play," and ὀρχήσομαι "I will dance," could be derived both from the primal translator, it is more likely that ὀρχήσομαι "I will dance," was incorporated at one of the phases of the textual transmission by a reviser to smooth the text.

3. Evident of Translational Exegesis in the addition of stiches

a. MT: וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־מִיכָל לְפָנָי יְהוָה

So David said to Michal, "Before the LORD..."

LXX: καὶ εἶπεν Δαυὶδ πρὸς Μελχολένωπιον κυρίου ὀρχήσομαι εὐλογητὸς κύριος

So David said to Michal, "I will dance before the Lord. Blessed the Lord..."

The LXX retains most of the elements of the Hebrew except two additional stiches ὀρχήσομαι "I will dance," and εὐλογητὸς κύριος "Blessed be the Lord." It is interesting to note how the extrastich ὀρχήσομαι "I will dance," continues the idea the translational addition of the participle τῶν ὀρχουμένων "the dancers," previously mentioned in v. 20 which also is not a faithful translation of the MT Hebrew word רְקִיָּה "the empty or worthless fellows."

The word רְקִיָּה translates as "worthless fellows." It is a substantive adjective given in the masculine plural form. It is used literally of physical objects to show that they are empty of content (cf. Gen. 37:24; 41:27; Judg. 7:16; 2 Kings 4:3; Eze. 24:11; Jer. 14:3). On another level it is used, in a sense more metaphorical than literal, to refer to vanity or vain pursuit (Prov. 12:11; 28:19). The latter sense is used substantively of humans to mean worthless persons. However, in this latter sense it has acquired a specialized meaning in the Hebrew Bible by referring to a band of social misfits who attached themselves to a rebel leader to disrupt established social order or to rise up against established authority (Judg. 9:1-6; 11:3; 2 Chron. 13:6-7, cf. 1 Sam. 22:1-2). The LXX softens the idea of the MT of "worthless fellows" to "one of the dancers" (εἷς τῶν ὀρχουμένων), (Morrish, 1974; Lust et al, 2003). It is unnecessary and obscures the scandalous manner in which David carried himself, as portrayed, certainly, from the perspective of Michal (Ben-Barak, 1991, 74-90). There is the likelihood that the addition stich occurs in the Greek rather than in Hebrew which is unsolicited.

b. In the same vein another extrastich is visible in the text:

MT: וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־מִיכָל לְפָנָי יְהוָה:

So David said to Michal, “Before the LORD...”

LXX: καὶ εἶπεν Δαυιδ πρὸς Μελχολ ἐνώπιον κυρίου... εὐλογητὸς κύριος

So David said to Michal, “before the Lord... Blessed be the Lord...”

It is yet another proof of an exegetical expansion. The addition stich εὐλογητὸς κύριος “Blessed be the Lord,” is not found in the MT. This composition in the Greek is meant to give credence to God according to David for His choice of him. Given the word order, though, it is possible that there was some haplography due to parablepsis between LORD and LORD? “Before YHWH I will dance, blessed be YHWH.” Since Hebrew does not display case markers, such an omission is at least possible at the beginning of v. 21. It seems that the text as it stands in MT (apparently with David breaking off mid-thought into a relative clause and then resuming his train of thought at the end of the sentence) is a little unusual, and could be the result of an accident (Ellen, 2007, 451-64). In other words, might the LXX translator have been nudged more strongly into his *dancing* theme before and after this phrase if there were another reference to it in his *Vorlage*? At least it is a possibility worth considering.

From the above, it appears that inner-translation factors are leading to contextual exegesis in the LXX translation of the text of 2 Sam 6. 21. It is as a result of the translator intention to provide additional detail information. The content of this extra stich has close connections with the wording of the translation elsewhere so that the original translator himself probably added it. Thus, the attempt to reconstruct a Hebrew *Vorlage* of these Greek additions might seem unwarranted.

4.0 TEXT-CRITICAL EVALUATION

In addition to the changes made by the translator or a subsequent reactor, there are also recensional differences between the two texts deriving from a different Hebrew *Vorlage* used by the translator. This situation necessitates the text-critical evaluation of the LXX of 2 Sam 6:21.

a. The added ὀρχήσομαι “I will dance,” is based on the participle τῶν ὀρχουμένων “the dancers,” occurring in v. 20. The fact that it occurs in the ensuing verse, rather than a preceding one, one might conclude that the Greek addition became possible by an already existing translation. The added ὀρχήσομαι “I will dance,” even though phrased in the singular, continues the train of thought of the participle τῶν ὀρχουμένων “the dancers.” These probably elaborate on the occurrence of the word ὀρχούμενον “I dance,” which faithfully translates the Hebrew word וּמְכַרְכֵּר “and I dance,” in v. 16. On the one hand, it is difficult to deny inner-Greek activity and the inner-translational differences between the translations in 6:20, 21. On the contrary, 2 Sam 6:16 attest to the translator’s word-for-word faithful rendering of his Hebrew *Vorlage* (Cf., 1 Chron. 15:29; Eccl. 3:4 and Isa. 13:21 for similar pattern).

Thus it is worthy to affirm that these additions are as a result of an expanded Hebrew *Vorlage* with the words, מְפַיֵּז וּמְכַרְכֵּר “playing and dancing.”

b. The addition in 6:16 is more or less identical with the text of 1 Chron. 15:29

An Ark Narrative parallel passage in 1 Chron. 15:29 affirm the use of the verb ὀρχέομαι “I dance,” in its cognate form as in 2 Sam 6:16.

1 Chron. 15:29

LXX: “εἶδεν τὸν βασιλέα Δαυὶδ ὀρχοῦμενον καὶ παίζοντα.”

“She saw King David dancing and playing.”

MT: וַתִּרְאֵהוּ אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד מְרַקֵּד וּמְשַׁחֵק:

She saw the king David dancing and playing

2 Sam 6:16

LXX: εἶδεν τὸν βασιλέα Δαυὶδ ὀρχοῦμενον καὶ ἀνακρουόμενον

She saw the King David dancing and playing (leaping)

MT: וַתִּרְאֵהוּ אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד מְפַזֵּז וּמְכַרְכֵּר:

She saw King David playing and dancing.

In both cases, the Greek and Hebrew provide synonyms for playing and dancing except for the Greek text usage of the word dancing which remains the same. It is possible to assert that the text of 2 Sam 6:16 has been repetitive on an inner-Greek activity or inner-translational level on account of the two translations. In the same vein, it is also possible to assert that the discrepancies would most likely be as a result of different translations of different Hebrew texts. It is evident from 2 Sam. 6:16 ἀνακρουόμενον “I am playing or leaping,” and 1 Chron. 15:29 παίζοντα “I am playing,” in the LXX of both text. Also, also is the different Hebrew renderings of 2 Sam. 6:16 מְפַזֵּז “leaping or playing,” and מְכַרְכֵּר “and dancing” and of 1 Chron. 15:29 וּמְשַׁחֵק “and playing,” and מְרַקֵּד “dancing.” In both the LXX and MT renderings the words may differ but both places they matched the setting.

c. Evidence of the same reasoning for the repetition of the following verse:

2 Sam 6:16

LXX: εἶδεν τὸν βασιλέα Δαυὶδ ὀρχοῦμενον καὶ ἀνακρουόμενον

She saw the King David dancing and playing (leaping)

MT: וַתִּרְאֵהוּ אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד מְפַזֵּז וּמְכַרְכֵּר:

She saw King David playing and dancing.

1 Chron. 15:29

LXX: “εἶδεν τὸν βασιλέα Δαυὶδ ὀρχοῦμενον καὶ παίζοντα.”

“She saw King David dancing and playing.”

MT: וַתִּרְאֵהוּ אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד מְרַקֵּד וּמְשַׁחֵק:

She saw king David dancing and playing

The contexts in which the verses occur in the parallel narratives are similar-the Ark Narrative. In both texts, the construction of the wording is similar except for the verbal participles in the LXX and the noun and verbal participle in the MT. Such an occurrence could hardly be ascribed to inner-translation factor or ascribed to the Greek translator; instead, it mirrors a Hebrew text in which these verbal participles occurred. Since MT itself contains such instances of verbal participle usage, it is not surprising that the

Vorlage of the Greek contains instances of such usage interchangeably too (Philippe, 2015, 73). It is evident in 2 Sam 6:16 where the participles used are ὀρχούμενον και ἀνακρουόμενον “dancing and playing or leaping,” and of verbs in 2 Sam 6:21 παίζομαι και ὀρχήσομαι “I will play and dance.” Both Greek and Hebrew words can be said to be the known translation equivalents of the same words, even if the exact equivalent does not seem strange.

c. The use of the verb ὀρχέομαι “I dance,” and its Hebrew equivalents.

There is considerable evidence within the broader context of the LXX (2 Sam 6:16, 21; 1 Chron. 15:29; Eccl. 3:4; Isaiah 13: 21) attesting to the use of the verb ὀρχέομαι “I dance” in the Greek *Vorlage* seeing it is not an *hapax legomenon*. It is also true of the verb equivalents in the MT from the said verses above of the LXX. Thus the reason for these recensional differences will not be at best connected with the textual transmission, or with the word order of the manuscript from which the translations emerged. It would be reasonable to describe the two texts represent recensionally different editions. It is in addition to the loose nature of the renderings of the abovementioned texts cited attesting to each as more or less independent. The two different editorial traditions could have existed. Furthermore 2 Sam 6:21b in the MT lacks the equivalent of the verb ὀρχέομαι “I dance” which appears in the LXX. This situation does not necessarily render the LXX version preferable to that of the MT, where such an editorial principle is not visible. The verb could have been added secondarily in the edition of LXX as an appendix to the previous verse dealing with τῶν ὀρχουμένων “the dancers.”

d. The sequence of the verbal participles in 2 Sam 6:16 of the MT followed in the LXX of 6:21.

2 Sam 6:16

LXX: εἶδεν τὸν βασιλέα Δαυὶδ ὀρχούμενον και ἀνακρουόμενον

She saw the King David dancing and playing (leaping)

MT: וַיֵּדַע הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד מִן־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּנְחַץ וַיִּדְבֹּר

She saw King David playing and dancing.

2 Sam 6:21

LXX: και παίζομαι και ὀρχήσομαι

Therefore, I will play and dance

It is not certain that the above verbal arrangement of LXX 2 Sam 6:21 is indeed the direct representation of LXX 6:16, but it presents elements that could reflect it. It is evident in the use of the cognitive form of the verb ὀρχέομαι “I dance,” and perhaps in the synonymous use of the cognitive forms of the verbs παίζω “I play” and ἀνακρούομαι “I play or leap.” It seems to agree with the MT verbal arrangement of וַיִּנְחַץ וַיִּדְבֹּר “playing and dancing,” too. Therefore, the idea of a possible inner-translation factor or translator’s exegetical tendency is less plausible. Furthermore, there is the logical connection between the verses which brings about the arrangement in 6:21 a possibility. The omission of the verbal participle וַיִּנְחַץ “and dancing” in the MT is plausibly a scribal factor than editorial which might have been responsible for the recensional difference.

5.0 EXPLANATIONS FROM ANCIENT TEXTS OF 2 SAM 6:21B

The use of the cognate form of the verb ὀρχέομαι “I dance,” in the LXX, ὀρχήσομαι “I will dance,” does not receive the acknowledgment of some ancient texts. Nevertheless, these ancient texts of Latin Vulgate and Syriac Peshitta which do not attest to the dual occurrence of the verb ὀρχήσομαι “I will dance,” in 2 Sam 6:21 as it appears in the LXX. The verb only occurs towards the end of the verse. These ancient texts of the Latin and the Syriac follow the translation of the MT or the presumed *Vorlage* of it. This situation does not necessarily render the MT version preferable to that of the LXX. The Vulgate and Peshitta quite often agree with MT, since the Hebrew texts the translators consulted were basically of MT type (Tov, 1999, 202-23). These ancient texts are also bearing witness to other Hebrew *Vorlage* different from that used by the translation of the LXX of 2 Sam 6:21. It would be reasonable to ascribe that the texts of the LXX and the MT represent two different editions.

6.0 EVIDENCE FROM THE QUMRAN SCROLL

The trustworthiness of the LXX of Samuel has been heightened in recent years by the finds of Hebrew scrolls of Samuel in Qumran. These scrolls contain many readings which previously had undergone reconstruction for the *Vorlage* of LXX. Unfortunately, 2 Sam 6:21 is not preserved in 4QSam^a (2 Sa 5:19–6:18), but elsewhere in the chapter, LXX is word-for-word close thus revealing the credibility of the text of 2 Sam 6:21 of the LXX version (4Q51 Samuel a, 2010). This state of affairs thus gives the LXX more reliability in those chapters of which no ancient Hebrew manuscripts have emerged (Kreuzer, 2015, 159-61). 2 Sam 6 happens to be one of such text.

A close comparative analysis of the fragment of the Qumran scroll has revealed the confidential reliability of the LXX of 2 Sam 6 as a product of a different Hebrew *Vorlage* about the MT though it does not differ considerably from the MT. It is evident that the recensional difference is slight. With the absence of 2 Sam 6:21, we compared the LXX of 2 Sam 6:16 and discovered they are same (see d. above). This is evident in the verbal arrangement of מְצַדְדִים וְמְצַדְדִים “playing and dancing,” which agrees with the MT and is inconsonant with the use of the Greek equivalent cognate form of the verb ὀρχέομαι “I dance,” and the synonymous use of the cognate forms of the verbs παίζω “I play,” ἀνακρουόομαι “I play or leap.”

7.0 SUMMARY OF EXEGETICAL POSSIBILITIES

The text-critical evaluation is plausible to assume a scribal phenomenon which seems that the translation of the LXX of 2 Sam 6:21 appears to be from a Hebrew *Vorlage* which differed recensionally from that of MT. These differences consisted of minor two additional stiches ὀρχήσομαι “I will dance,” and εὐλογητὸς κύριος “Blessed be the Lord.” It is interesting to note how the extra stich ὀρχήσομαι “I will dance,” continues the idea of the translational addition of the participle τῶν ὀρχουμένων “the dancers,” mentioned in v. 20, which also is not a faithful translation of the Hebrew word קִיָּיִר “the empty or worthless fellows.” Moreover, though it is not definite that the verbal arrangement of LXX 2 Sam 6:21 is indeed the direct representation of LXX 6:16, but it presents elements that could reflect it. Thus it is correct to affirm that the LXX bears witness to a Hebrew *Vorlage* different from that used by the

translation of the LXX of 2 Sam 6:21. It would be reasonable for now to describe that the texts of the LXX and the MT represents two recensionally differentiated editions until proven otherwise perhaps in the nearest future.

It is expedient at this point to demonstrate how the additional *stichôρχήσομαι* “I will dance,” which continues the idea of the translational addition of the participle *τῶν ὀρχουμένων* “the dancers,” has implication for the worship of God from the LXX text of 2 Sam 6:21.

8.0 THE IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY ON DANCING AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

The narration leaves a limited perspective on Michal as to what triggered the deep-seated resentment that she harbors against David. The narrator leaves the reader with an epistemological gap. Ackerman’s term for the narrative gap, a concept he also sees to be a germane characteristic of the Court History (Ackerman, 1990, 41-64). There are several possible clarifications for this turn of events. The contempt for David brimming up in Michal’s heart is thus plausibly attributable in some degree to all of the following. The unseemly public display which David is making of himself. Michal’s jealousy might arise jealousy as a result of the glory David is enjoying while she sits alone, a neglected co-wife, back at the provisional palace. Michal’s anger over David’s indifference to her all these years, over the other wives he has taken, over being torn away from the devoted Paltiel. David’s dynastic ambitions—now revealed in his establishing the Ark in the ‘City of David’—which will irreversibly displace the house of her father, Saul (Buchanan, 2002, 51-54). Furthermore, according to Eskenazi, the orthodoxy of Michal’s religious sentiments is not lost on the rabbis, who in the literature of Midrashic traditions have shown a remarkably impressive and positive appreciation of Michal. Eskenazi shows that while rabbinic literature thrives on debate, it is surprisingly consistent in its praise of Michal and its sympathy for her second husband, Paltiel. (Pesiqta Rabbati 29:11 cited in 1986, 157-74).

Perhaps, she became piqued by David’s flamboyant display of religiosity. Plausibly she was scandalized by David’s undignified manner of behavior, which she considered unfit for royalty. Possibly she was horrified at his dancing which she considers an element of cultic practice that from every indication seems to have been alien to Israel’s religious practice. Several scholars find many parallels between this procession and processions of similar type within the ancient Near Eastern milieu. In the ancient Near Eastern context, such processions were an integral part of cultic fertility practices involving phallic display that should eventuate into a *hierosgamos* with the *gebirah* (Rosenstock, 2006, 67-74; Carlson, 1964, 87-95). From such perspective, then, it is to such pagan practice that Michal was adamantly opposed.

David's 'wild' dance is unreported of any other previous or subsequent leader of Israel for that matter as far as I can remember. Rosenstock believes the ark procession to be a Canaanite cultic practice and sees that very fact to be the immediate source of conflict between Michal and David at this point (2006, 67-74; cf., Ben-Barak, 1991, 74-90). However, Brueggemann views the matter differently as, he sees in the narrative some abnormality, not only regarding liturgy but also both social extravagance and royal extravagance. On the cultic nature of the dance, he writes,

There has been much speculation about David's dance. At the negative extreme, it is suggested that David participated in a Canaanite ecstatic dance that became something of an orgy, and that is why he is rebuked by Michal. At the positive extreme, the dance is taken as legitimate liturgic dance, the bodily expression as proper worship. The narrative invites such probes, but it gives us little clue about David's intention (Brueggeman, 1990, 250).

David will take no shame in being debased for the glory of Yahweh. Indeed, Yahweh is to get honor and glory from those who draw near Him to offer sacrifices (Lev. 10:3), as David was doing at this historic moment. They were not to uncover themselves, as David did; but appropriately clad (Lev 6:10; 16:4; Ezek. 44:18; cf. Rev 3:18). It is to avoid indecent exposure of the officiating priest that there even was a strict provision about the construction of the altar - it was to have an access ramp rather than steps (Exod. 20:26).

Nevertheless, it is unlikely if Yahweh was displeased with what David did, but we are sure if he had displeased Yahweh perhaps he would have suffered the same fate as that of Uzzah. Thus it is expedient to say for David the dance was as legitimate, a liturgic dance, the physical expression as proper worship to Yahweh. We explore in the next section how this resonates with the African act of dancing in the worship of God.

8.1 The relevance of Dancing for the African Church

The act of dancing in Africa lies in our primitive cultural heritage. It is as old as the history of the community the dance style is emanating. Dance styles can be polyrhythmic (complicated rhythms happen concurrently) and typically are incorporated into the texture of everyday living (Tierou, 1989, 3). Dancing is an integral part of celebrations, events, and spiritual ceremonies. Primus affirms this as he asserts that, dancing in Africa is not a separate art, but it is a part of the whole complexity of the act of living which is essential and vital (Primus, 1994, 4). It links the physical and metaphysical aspects of life – a material, social world and the belief systems that are used to interpret living (Thompson, 1999, 7). African dance is cued, orchestrated, and punctuated by specific and correlating rhythms or drum patterns. In traditional African religion, it was a ritual invocation dance used in performing spells or enchantments, in which dancers fall into a trance or ecstasy in the worship of the gods.

The power of dancing shapes the Africans' individual and collective identities through the premise of our connectedness both in the secular and religious spheres. Dancing in Africa comprises a host of styles. It defines our nationalistic as well as our religious affiliations. One's dance styles can easily reveal his/her geographical and ethnic identity. Dancing in the African Christian religious context has helped to blur the

heterogeneity of our geographical and ethnic identity and communicative cultures (Welsh-Asante, 2010, 38). Because dance reveals relations of power – through it social identities remain rehearsed and negotiated and, since dance styles are shared and inculcated across ethnic and cultural lines, differences and similarities become evident. Thus it is common to find peoples of a particular culture worshipping God through the singing and dancing in the styles of other cultures. Dancing as an act of worship is essential for/to the Africa Church as it is a means through which knowledge about our spirituality as well as church affiliation is transmitted and received. Second, dance reveals the ways African church communities continue to be constituted, shaped, negotiated, and transformed today.

9.0 CONCLUSION

It is difficult to conclude concerning 2 Samuel 6:21 if the MT of this verse is the Hebrew *Vorlage* behind the Greek translation of the LXX. Because of the proof of the LXX text additions which made it differ from the MT. The additions to the LXX of 2 Sam. 6:21 which made it slightly different from the MT could be ascribed to a scribal factor rather than inner-translational factors thus the plausibility to ascribe it a different Hebrew *Vorlage*. It is attested by the confidential reliability of the LXX of 2 Sam 6 by the fragment of the Qumran scroll. This different Hebrew *Vorlage* asserts that David not only played but also danced before the Lord. Perhaps the physical contortions of his dance may seem to be debasing himself before Yahweh, but it was only meant perhaps to demonstrate that he recognized Him as the real King. We are meant to know from the LXX version that King David had dance compadres with him as he worships Yahweh. We can incorporate the act of dancing into our worship services in a demonstration of our recognition of God's kingship and lordship over our lives (Psalms 150:4).

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