
Βαρουχ ◊ BARUCH

INTRODUCTION

The *Book of Baruch* falls into three main sections, the first two of which are made up of two parts. The first section, in prose, includes an introduction (1:1–14) and a corporate confession of sin (1:15–3:8) for Jews in Jerusalem to recite at the altar there, along with appropriate sacrifices, on various festival days and seasons. The idea of a letter or scroll written in Babylon to be read aloud in Jerusalem is derived from the exchange of letters recorded in Jr 29 and the scroll of Jeremiah’s letters penned by Baruch and read before King Jehoiakim in 605 BCE (Jr 36). The corporate confession is modelled on Dn 9:4–19 (compare Ezr 9:6–15, Ne 9:6–37). The second section consists of two poems: the first (3:9–4:4) is a paean of praise of Wisdom, which though elusive is largely identified with the Torah, God’s precious gift to Israel; the second comprises an address by Jerusalem to the people of Israel (4:5–29), and by a rhetorical apostrophe to Jerusalem (4:30–5:9), inspired no doubt by Is 51:17–52:10, 54, and 60–62, where the speaker is also not always clearly defined.

Chapter 6, sometimes (as in the *NRSV*) included as a separate book entitled “*The Letter of Jeremiah*,” purports to be a letter that Jeremiah composed for those about to be taken into exile from Judah to Babylonia in 597 (or 587) BCE by Nebuchadnezzar’s forces. It was undoubtedly inspired by Jeremiah’s letter (Jr 29:1–23) to those who had been taken hostage in 597 BCE, a decade before the final defeat of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem.

The basic text of this translation is the *LXX*; there are also ancient Syriac, Coptic and Armenian versions based on the Greek. The prose section (1:1–3:8) was probably translated from a lost Hebrew original and recent research indicates that the poetic sections may also derive from Hebrew. The Letter (Ch. 6) appears at different locations in various manuscripts and versions: it stands as a discrete work between Lamentations and Ezekiel in two major *LXX* manuscripts (4th Century *Vaticanus* and 5th Century *Alexandrinus*) and in the *Milan Syriac Hexaplar*. In other Greek and Syriac manuscripts and in the *Vulgate*, it appears as the sixth chapter of Baruch.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

The *Book of Baruch* was probably written sometime between 200 and 60 BC; it is set, however, during the Babylonian Exile of the early 6th Century BCE, and attributed to Jeremiah’s friend and secretary, Baruch son of Neriah (Jr 32:12, 36:4, 43:3, 45:1). Although both Jeremiah and Baruch are reported to have been taken to Egypt in 582 BCE (Jr 43:1–7), a tradition developed later, which is reflected in this book, that Baruch went to Babylonia. If the Book of Daniel was composed in the first half of the 2nd Century BCE, then Baruch would have been written after about 150 BCE, because Ba 1:15–2:19 is largely Dn 9:4–19 rewritten. Most of the book is made up of pastiches of biblical passages copied or paraphrased (from, for example, Dn 9, Job 28 and Is 40–66). Certainly, Baruch himself would not have made the numerous mistakes contained in 1:1–14. Most scholars date the *Letter of Jeremiah* (Ch. 6) in the Hellenistic period; the reference in v. 3 (so some have argued) would yield a date around 317 BC but others date it still later. The allusion to the letter in 2M 2:1–3 would indicate a date at least in the 2nd or 3rd Century BCE.

Βαρουχ Ι

¹ Καὶ οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι τοῦ βιβλίου, οὓς ἔγραψεν Βαρουχ υἱὸς Νηριου υἱοῦ Μαασαιου υἱοῦ Σεδεκιου υἱοῦ Ασαδιου υἱοῦ Χελκιου ἐν Βαβυλῶνι ² ἐν τῷ ἔτει τῷ πέμπτῳ ἐν ἐβδόμῃ τοῦ μηνὸς ἐν τῷ καιρῷ, ᾧ ἔλαβον οἱ Χαλδαῖοι τὴν Ιερουσαλημ καὶ ἐνέπρησαν αὐτὴν ἐν πυρί.

³ καὶ ἀνέγνω Βαρουχ τοὺς λόγους τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου ἐν ὧσιν Ιεχοניου υἱοῦ Ιωακιμ βασιλέως Ιουδα καὶ ἐν ὧσιν παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ τῶν ἐρχομένων πρὸς τὴν βίβλον ⁴ καὶ ἐν ὧσιν τῶν δυνατῶν καὶ υἱῶν τῶν βασιλέων καὶ ἐν ὧσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἐν ὧσιν παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου, πάντων τῶν κατοικούντων ἐν Βαβυλῶνι ἐπὶ ποταμοῦ Σουδ. ⁵ καὶ ἔκλαιον καὶ ἐνήστευον καὶ ἠϋχοντο ἐναντίον κυρίου ⁶ καὶ συνήγαγον ἀργύριον, καθὰ ἐκάστου ἠδύνατο ἡ χεὶρ, ⁷ καὶ ἀπέστειλαν εἰς Ιερουσαλημ πρὸς Ιωακιμ υἱὸν Χελκιου υἱοῦ Σαλωμ τὸν ἱερέα καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἱερεῖς καὶ πρὸς πάντα τὸν

BARUCH 1

¹ This is the text of the book written in Babylon by Baruch son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, son of Zedekiah, son of Hasadiah, son of Hilkiah, ² in the fifth year, on the seventh day of the month, at the time when the Chaldaeans had captured Jerusalem and burned it down.

³ Baruch read the text of this book in the hearing of Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, in the hearing of all the people who had come to hear the reading, ⁴ to the nobles and the sons of the king, and to the elders; to the whole people, that is, to the least no less than to the greatest, to all who lived in Babylon beside the River Sud. ⁵ On hearing it, they wept, fasted and prayed before the Lord; ⁶ and they collected as much money as each could afford ⁷ and sent it to Jerusalem to the priest Jehoiakim son of Hilkiah, son of Shallum, and the other priests, and all the people who were with him in

BARUCH 1

- ¹ In place of 'in Babylon' (following the LXX), the Peshitta has 'to Babylon', which would imply that the author's location at the time of writing was somewhere outside of Babylon.
- ² The date was 582 BC, probably in the 5th month – the anniversary of the fall of Jerusalem, which was doubtless commemorated among the exiles as it was in Palestine (see Zc 7:3), hence the gathering referred to in vv. 3–4.
- ³ 'Jeconiah' is also called Jehoiachin (2K 24:15, Jr 24:1, 27:20, 28:4, 29:2, Est 2:6, 1Ch 3:16-17, Mt 1:11-12) and Coniah (Jr 22:24,28, 37:1).
- ⁴ The 'sons of the king' were the officials and courtiers (cf. Jr 36:26, 38:6). The 'River Sud' is unknown.
- ⁵ The word 'Lord' (κυρίου) appears only in the first part of the book (1:1–3:8). Another reading for 'fasted' is 'and vowed vows'.
- ⁶ The literal translation of 'as each could afford' is 'just as the hand of each one was able'; the expression is a Hebraism.
- ⁷ 'Jehoiakim' was evidently the priest next senior in rank to the High Priest (see 2K 25:18) still living at the half-ruined sanctuary in Jerusalem, where public worship continued to be held (Jr 41:5), although the High Priest (Jehozadak) had been carried off into exile (1Ch 5:41).

λαὸν τοὺς εὐρεθέντας μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ ⁸ ἐν τῷ λαβεῖν αὐτὸν τὰ σκεύη οἴκου κυρίου τὰ ἐξενεχθέντα ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ ἀποστρέψαι εἰς γῆν Ἰουδα τῇ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Σιουαν, σκεύη ἀργυρᾶ, ἃ ἐποίησεν Σεδεκίας υἱὸς Ἰωσια βασιλεὺς Ἰουδα ⁹ μετὰ τὸ ἀποικίσαι Ναβουχοδονοσορ βασιλέα Βαβυλῶνος τὸν Ἰεχονιαν καὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντας καὶ τοὺς δεσμώτας καὶ τοὺς δυνατοὺς καὶ τὸν λαὸν τῆς γῆς ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλημ καὶ ἦγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς Βαβυλῶνα.

¹⁰ καὶ εἶπαν Ἰδοὺ ἀπεστείλαμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἀργύριον, καὶ ἀγοράσατε τοῦ ἀργυρίου ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας καὶ λίβανον καὶ ποιήσατε μαννα καὶ ἀνοίσατε ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον κυρίου θεοῦ ἡμῶν ¹¹ καὶ προσεύξασθε περὶ τῆς ζωῆς Ναβουχοδονοσορ βασιλέως Βαβυλῶνος καὶ εἰς ζωὴν Βαλτασαρ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, ἵνα ὧσιν αἱ ἡμέραι αὐτῶν ὡς αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. ¹² καὶ δώσει κύριος ἰσχὺν ἡμῖν καὶ φωτίσει τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἡμῶν, καὶ ζησόμεθα ὑπὸ τὴν σκιὰν Ναβουχοδονοσορ βασιλέως Βαβυλῶνος καὶ ὑπὸ τὴν σκιὰν Βαλτασαρ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ δουλεύσομεν αὐτοῖς ἡμέρας πολλὰς καὶ εὐρήσομεν χάριν ἐναντίον αὐτῶν. ¹³ καὶ προσεύξασθε περὶ ἡμῶν πρὸς κύριον τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν, ὅτι

Jerusalem. ⁸ In addition, on the tenth day of Sivan, he was given the utensils of the house of the Lord, which had been removed from the Temple, to take them back to the land of Judah; these were the silver utensils that Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah, had had made ⁹ after Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had deported Jeconiah from Jerusalem to Babylon, together with the princes, the prisoners, the nobles and the common people.

¹⁰ Now, they wrote, "Look, we are sending you money; therefore, buy with the money burnt offerings, offerings for sin and incense. Then, prepare oblations and offer them on the altar of the Lord our God; ¹¹ and pray for the long life of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and for the life of his son Belshazzar, that their days be as long as the days of the heavens above the earth; ¹² and that the Lord may give us strength and enlighten our eyes, so that we may lead our lives under the protection of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and under the protection of his son Belshazzar, and that we may serve them for a long time and win their favour. ¹³ Also, pray to the Lord our God for us, because we have

⁸ 'Sivan' (Σιουαν) was the 3rd month (May–June). The historical books speak of a return of the sacred vessels only under Cyrus (Ezr 1:7–11) and make no mention of Zedekiah's manufacturing vessels for the temple.

⁹ In place of 'prisoners' (here following the LXX and NRSV), the NJB, following Jr 24:1, has 'metalworkers'.

¹⁰ The Greek word here translated as 'oblations' (μαννα) is a loanword from the Hebrew מַנְנָה, which usually refers to a grain offering.

¹¹ 'Belshazzar' was actually the son of Nabonidus. On the prayer for long life, see Dt 11:21.

¹² The literal translation of 'under the protection' (twice in this verse) is 'in the shadow'.

¹³ In place of the 2nd instance of 'the Lord our God' (κυρίῳ θεῷ ἡμῶν), here following the LXX and NRSV, the NJB has simply 'him'.

ἡμάρτομεν τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ ἡμῶν, καὶ οὐκ ἀπέστρεψεν ὁ θυμὸς κυρίου καὶ ἡ ὀργὴ αὐτοῦ ἀφ’ ἡμῶν ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης.¹⁴ καὶ ἀναγνώσεσθε τὸ βιβλίον τοῦτο, ὃ ἀπεστείλαμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐξαγορεῦσαι ἐν οἴκῳ κυρίου ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐορτῆς καὶ ἐν ἡμέραις καιροῦ,¹⁵ καὶ ἐρεῖτε

Τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ ἡμῶν ἡ δικαιοσύνη, ἡμῖν δὲ αἰσχύνη τῶν προσώπων ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα αὕτη, ἀνθρώπων Ιουδα καὶ τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν Ιερουσαλημ¹⁶ καὶ τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν ἡμῶν καὶ τοῖς ἄρχουσιν ἡμῶν καὶ τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ἡμῶν καὶ τοῖς προφήταις ἡμῶν καὶ τοῖς πατέρασιν ἡμῶν,¹⁷ ὧν ἡμάρτομεν ἔναντι κυρίου¹⁸ καὶ ἠπειθήσαμεν αὐτῷ καὶ οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου θεοῦ ἡμῶν πορεύεσθαι τοῖς προστάγμασιν κυρίου, οἷς ἔδωκεν κατὰ πρόσωπον ἡμῶν.¹⁹ ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμέρας, ἧς ἐξήγαγεν κύριος τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου, καὶ ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης ἡμεθα ἀπειθοῦντες πρὸς κύριον θεὸν ἡμῶν καὶ ἐσχεδιάζομεν πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἀκούειν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ.²⁰ καὶ ἐκολλήθη εἰς ἡμᾶς τὰ κακὰ καὶ ἡ ἀρά, ἣν συνέταξεν

sinned against the Lord our God, and the anger, the fury of the Lord, has still not turned away from us.¹⁴ Lastly, you must read the scroll that we are sending you, to make your confession in the house of the Lord on the feast day and appropriate days.¹⁵ You must say:

Saving justice is the Lord’s; we have only the look of shame we bear, as is the case today for the people of Judah and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem,¹⁶ and for our kings, and for our princes, and for our priests, and for our prophets, and for our fathers,¹⁷ because we have sinned before the Lord;¹⁸ we have been disobedient to him and we have not listened to the voice of the Lord our God, telling us to follow the commandments of the Lord that he had set before us.¹⁹ From the day when the Lord brought our fathers out of the land of Egypt until the present day, we have been disobedient to the Lord our God; we have been negligent, refusing to listen to his voice;²⁰ and we are not free, even today, of the disasters and the

¹⁴ The syntactical function of the infinitive ἐξαγορεῦσαι (‘to make confession’) is difficult to determine: the infinitive could be taken to indicate purpose for the verb ‘sending’ but it more likely acts epexegetically to the verb ‘read’, explaining what a proper reading of the book amounts to in this context. The ‘feast day’ is the Feast of Shelters (#Ex 23:14), when assemblies were held, on the 1st and 8th days (Lv 23:35–36).

¹⁵ Alternative readings for ‘saving justice’ (following the NJB) are ‘righteousness’ and ‘vindication’.

¹⁶ In place of ‘fathers’ (πατέρασιν), the NRSV has ‘ancestors’, as also in also in vv. 19–20, 2:6,19,21,24,33–34;3:5,7–8. It is, however, possible that the word retains its normal sense of ‘fathers’ here, since a reference to familial leaders would not be out of place in this context.

¹⁷ In place of ‘because’ (here following the NJB), the LXX has ‘who’ (ὧν); it is probable that this is a mistranslation of **וְשֵׁנָה**, which can act as either a causal conjunction or a relative pronoun.

¹⁸ The literal translation of ‘before us’ is ‘according to our face’.

¹⁹ In place of ‘negligent’, the NJB has ‘disloyal’ (restored in line with Dn 9:5); the verb (σχεδιάζω) is found only here in the LXX.

²⁰ Alternative readings for ‘pronounced’ (NJB) are ‘declared’ (NRSV), ‘prescribed’ (NETB), ‘ordained’ and ‘appointed’.

κύριος τῷ Μωυσῆ παιδὶ αὐτοῦ ἐν ἡμέρα, ἣ ἐξήγαγεν τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου δοῦναι ἡμῖν γῆν ῥέουσαν γάλα καὶ μέλι ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα αὕτη. ²¹ καὶ οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν κατὰ πάντας τοὺς λόγους τῶν προφητῶν, ὧν ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ²² καὶ ὠχόμεθα ἕκαστος ἐν διανοίᾳ καρδίας αὐτοῦ τῆς πονηρᾶς ἐργάζεσθαι Θεοῖς ἑτέροις ποιῆσαι τὰ κακὰ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς κυρίου Θεοῦ ἡμῶν.

curse that the Lord pronounced through his servant Moses the day he brought our fathers out of Egypt to give us a land flowing with milk and honey. ²¹ Nevertheless, we have not listened to the voice of the Lord our God as given in all the words of those prophets that he sent us; ²² but, each of us walked according to the dictates of our evil heart; we have taken to serving alien gods and doing what is displeasing in the sight of the Lord our God.

²¹ The literal translation of 'as given in' is 'according to'.

²² The literal translation of 'in the sight' (ὀφθαλμούς) is 'in the eyes'.

Βαρουχ 2

¹ καὶ ἔστησεν κύριος τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ, ὃν ἐλάλησεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς δικαστὰς ἡμῶν τοὺς δικάσαντας τὸν Ἰσραηλ καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς βασιλεῖς ἡμῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἡμῶν καὶ ἐπὶ ἄνθρωπον Ἰσραηλ καὶ Ἰουδα. ² οὐκ ἐποιήθη ὑποκάτω παντὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καθὰ ἐποίησεν ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ κατὰ τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωυσῆ ³ τοῦ φαγεῖν ἡμᾶς ἄνθρωπον σάρκα υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἄνθρωπον σάρκα θυγατρὸς αὐτοῦ. ⁴ καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὑποχειρίους πάσαις ταῖς βασιλείαις ταῖς κύκλῳ ἡμῶν εἰς ὀνειδισμόν καὶ εἰς ἄβατον ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς λαοῖς τοῖς κύκλῳ, οὓς διέσπειρεν αὐτοὺς κύριος ἐκεῖ. ⁵ καὶ ἐγενήθησαν ὑποκάτω καὶ οὐκ ἐπάνω, ὅτι ἡμάρτομεν κυρίῳ θεῷ ἡμῶν πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἀκούειν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ. —

BARUCH 2

¹ So, the Lord has carried out the sentence that he passed on us, on our judges who governed Israel, on our kings and leaders and on the people of Israel and of Judah; ² what he did to Jerusalem has never been paralleled under the wide heavens – in conformity with what was written in the Law of Moses; ³ we were each reduced to eating the flesh of our own sons and daughters. ⁴ Furthermore, he has handed them over into the power of all the kingdoms that surround us, to be the contempt and execration of all the neighbouring peoples where the Lord scattered them. ⁵ Instead of being masters, they found themselves enslaved, because we had sinned against the Lord our God by not listening to his voice.

BARUCH 2

- ¹ Vv. 1–2 follow Dn 9:12–13. The literal translation of ‘people’ is ‘man’ (ἄνθρωπον); the singular used here in a collective sense probably reflects the idiomatic Hebrew text upon which the Greek presumably based. Alternative readings for ‘carried out’ are ‘made good on’ (as NETB), ‘established’ and ‘confirmed’.
- ² One of the emphases of the book of Baruch is that of God’s sovereignty over the historical events that had recently devastated his people. According to the theology of this book, the catastrophe of the Exile was due to judgmental actions taken by the Lord himself. Far from being a disaster that Yahweh was unable to prevent through divine intervention, the captivity of Judah was the result of the Lord’s just displeasure with the sins and failures of Israel.
- ³ See Lv 26:29, Dt 28:53, Jr 19:9, Lm 4:10. The grammar of the Greek text is a bit difficult here: The infinitival construction, τοῦ φαγεῖν ἡμᾶς ἄνθρωπον, seems to indicate a result attached to the preceding verb ἐποίησεν (‘he did’ – v. 2), setting forth a desperate consequence of the divine judgments executed upon the people of Judah.
- ⁴ The literal translation of ‘where the Lord scattered them’ (οὓς διέσπειρεν αὐτοὺς κύριος ἐκεῖ) is ‘where the Lord scattered them there’; the wording shows the influence of Hebrew.
- ⁵ Translated literally, this verse opens, ‘they were below and not above’; that is to say, instead of ruling over others and prospering they were instead subjugated by other nations and reduced to poverty (see Dt 28:13).

⁶ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ ἡμῶν ἡ δικαιοσύνη, ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τοῖς πατράσιν ἡμῶν ἡ αἰσχύνη τῶν προσώπων ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα αὕτη. ⁷ ἃ ἐλάλησεν κύριος ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, πάντα τὰ κακὰ ταῦτα ἦλθεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς. ⁸ καὶ οὐκ ἐδεήθημεν τοῦ προσώπου κυρίου τοῦ ἀποστρέψαι ἕκαστον ἀπὸ τῶν νοημάτων τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν τῆς πονηραῖς. ⁹ καὶ ἐργηγόρησεν κύριος ἐπὶ τοῖς κακοῖς, καὶ ἐπήγαγε κύριος ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, ὅτι δίκαιος ὁ κύριος ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, ἃ ἐνετείλατο ἡμῖν. ¹⁰ καὶ οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ πορεύεσθαι τοῖς προστάγμασιν κυρίου, οἷς ἔδωκεν κατὰ πρόσωπον ἡμῶν. –

¹¹ καὶ νῦν, κύριε ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραηλ, ὃς ἐξήγαγες τὸν λαόν σου ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου ἐν χειρὶ κραταιᾷ καὶ ἐν σημείοις καὶ ἐν τέρασιν καὶ ἐν δυνάμει μεγάλη καὶ ἐν βραχίονι ὑψηλῷ καὶ ἐποίησας σεαυτῷ ὄνομα ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα αὕτη, ¹² ἠμάρτομεν ἠσεβήσαμεν ἠδικήσαμεν, κύριε ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς δικαιώμασίν σου. ¹³ ἀποστραφήτω ὁ θυμὸς σου ἀφ' ἡμῶν, ὅτι κατελείφθημεν ὀλίγοι ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, οὗ διέσπειρας ἡμᾶς ἐκεῖ. ¹⁴ εἰσάκουσον, κύριε, τῆς προσευχῆς ἡμῶν καὶ τῆς δεήσεως ἡμῶν καὶ ἐξελοῦ ἡμᾶς ἕνεκεν σοῦ καὶ δὸς ἡμῖν χάριν

⁶ Saving justice is the Lord our God's; we and our ancestors have only the look of shame we bear today. ⁷ All those disasters that the Lord pronounced against us have now befallen us. ⁸ Yet, we have not tried to win the favour of the Lord by each of us renouncing the dictates of our own wicked heart; ⁹ so, the Lord has been alert to our misdeeds and has brought disaster down on us, since the Lord is upright in everything he had commanded us to do, ¹⁰ and we have not listened to his voice so as to follow the commandments that the Lord had ordained for us.

¹¹ And now, Lord, God of Israel, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand, with signs and wonders, with great power and outstretched arm, and made yourself a name such as you have today, ¹² we have sinned, we have committed sacrilege; Lord, our God, we have broken all your precepts. ¹³ Let your anger turn from us, for we are left, few in number among the nations where you have dispersed us. ¹⁴ Listen, Lord, to our prayer and our petition; deliver us, for your own sake, and let us win the favour of the people who

⁶ Another reading for 'saving justice' (as NJB) is 'righteousness' (as NETB); the NRSV opens with 'the Lord our God is in the right'.

⁷ The literal translation of 'pronounced' is 'spoke'.

⁸ The literal translation of 'favour' is 'face'. Vv. 8–9 follow Dn 9:13–14.

⁹ A more literal translation of 'been alert to' is 'supervised'.

¹⁰ The literal translation of 'follow' is 'go in'.

¹¹ Vv. 11–14 follow Dn 9:15–17.

¹² In place of 'and made' (following the NRSV), the NJB has 'to win'.

¹³ In place of 'for we are left, few in number' (following the NRSV), the NJB has 'since we are no more than a little remnant'.

¹⁴ An alternative reading for 'our prayer and our petition' is 'our prayer of petition', if the expression is to be understood as a hendiadys.

κατὰ πρόσωπον τῶν ἀποικισάντων ἡμᾶς, ¹⁵ ἵνα γινῶ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ ὅτι σὺ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὅτι τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐπεκλήθη ἐπὶ Ἰσραηλ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ γένος αὐτοῦ. ¹⁶ κύριε, κάτιδε ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ ἁγίου σου καὶ ἐννόησον εἰς ἡμᾶς· κλῖνον, κύριε, τὸ οὖς σου καὶ ἄκουσον. ¹⁷ ἄνοιξον, κύριε, τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς σου καὶ ἰδέ· ὅτι οὐχ οἱ τεθνηκότες ἐν τῷ ἄδη, ὧν ἐλήμφθη τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτῶν ἀπὸ τῶν σπλάγγνων αὐτῶν, δώσουσιν δόξαν καὶ δικαίωμα τῷ κυρίῳ, ¹⁸ ἀλλὰ ἡ ψυχὴ ἡ λυπούμενη ἐπὶ τὸ μέγεθος, ὃ βαδίζει κύπτων καὶ ἀσθενοῦν καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ οἱ ἐκλείποντες καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ ἡ πεινῶσα δώσουσίν σοι δόξαν καὶ δικαιοσύνην, κύριε.

¹⁹ ὅτι οὐκ ἐπὶ τὰ δικαιώματα τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν καὶ τῶν βασιλέων ἡμῶν ἡμεῖς καταβάλλομεν τὸν ἔλεον ἡμῶν κατὰ πρόσωπόν σου, κύριε ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, ²⁰ ὅτι ἐνῆκας τὸν θυμὸν σου καὶ τὴν ὀργὴν σου εἰς ἡμᾶς, καθάπερ ἐλάλησας ἐν χειρὶ τῶν παίδων σου τῶν προφητῶν λέγων ²¹ Οὕτως εἶπεν κύριος Κλίνατε τὸν ὦμον ὑμῶν καὶ ἐργάσασθε τῷ βασιλεῖ Βαβυλῶνος καὶ καθίσατε ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, ἣν ἔδωκα τοῖς πατράσιν ὑμῶν. ²² καὶ ἐὰν μὴ ἀκούσητε τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου ἐργάσασθαι

have deported us, ¹⁵ in order that that the whole world may know that you are the Lord our God, because Israel and his descendants bear your name. ¹⁶ Look down, Lord, from your holy dwelling-place and think of us; bend your ear, O Lord, and listen; ¹⁷ open your eyes, Lord, and look: the dead down in Sheol, whose breath has been taken from their bodies, are not the only ones to give glory and due recognition to the Lord; ¹⁸ but the person who is overcome with affliction, who goes along bowed down and frail, with failing eyes and hungering soul, is the one to declare your glory and righteousness, O Lord.

¹⁹ For, we do not present our humble supplication before you for the righteousness of our fathers and of our kings, O Lord our God. ²⁰ For, you have sent down your anger and your indignation on us, as you threatened through your servants the prophets, when they said, ²¹ "The Lord says this: Bend your shoulders and serve the king of Babylon, and you will remain in the country that I gave to your fathers. ²² However, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord to serve the king of

¹⁵ Literally translated, this verse ends, "for your name is called over Israel and his descendants."

¹⁶ An alternative reading for 'dwelling-place' is 'temple' (see Dt 26:15).

¹⁷ It is noteworthy that this verse does not seem to indicate awareness of a theology of resurrection. See Ps 6:5, 30:9, Is 38:18, Si 17:27–28.

¹⁸ This passage refers to the religion of 'the poor', to whom salvation is promised (see #Zp 2:3).

¹⁹ The basis of an appeal to God is not any human goodness or intrinsic worth, but entirely on the gracious mercy of the LORD.

²⁰ The literal translation of 'through' is 'by the hand of'.

²¹ In place of 'shoulders' (following the LXX and NRSV), the NJB has 'necks'. This verse quotes Jr 27:11–12.

²² In place of 'obey', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'listen to'.

τῷ βασιλεῖ Βαβυλῶνος, ²³ ἐκλείψειν ποιήσω ἐκ πόλεων Ιουδα καὶ ἔξωθεν Ιερουσαλημ φωνὴν εὐφροσύνης καὶ φωνὴν χαρμοσύνης, φωνὴν νυμφίου καὶ φωνὴν νύμφης, καὶ ἔσται πᾶσα ἡ γῆ εἰς ἄβατον ἀπὸ ἐνοικούντων. ²⁴ καὶ οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν τῆς φωνῆς σου ἐργάσασθαι τῷ βασιλεῖ Βαβυλῶνος, καὶ ἔστησας τοὺς λόγους σου, οὓς ἐλάλησας ἐν χερσὶν τῶν παίδων σου τῶν προφητῶν τοῦ ἐξενεχθῆναι τὰ ὀστᾶ βασιλέων ἡμῶν καὶ τὰ ὀστᾶ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν ἐκ τοῦ τόπου αὐτῶν, ²⁵ καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔστιν ἐξερριμμένα τῷ καύματι τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ τῷ παγετῷ τῆς νυκτός, καὶ ἀπεδάνοσαν ἐν πόνοις πονηροῖς, ἐν λιμῷ καὶ ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ καὶ ἐν ἀποστολῇ. ²⁶ καὶ ἔδηκας τὸν οἶκον, οὗ ἐπεκλήθη τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐπ' αὐτῷ, ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα αὕτη διὰ πονηρίαν οἴκου Ισραηλ καὶ οἴκου Ιουδα. – ²⁷ καὶ ἐποίησας εἰς ἡμᾶς, κύριε ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, κατὰ πᾶσαν ἐπιείκειάν σου καὶ κατὰ πάντα οἰκτιρισμὸν σου τὸν μέγαν, ²⁸ καθὰ ἐλάλησας ἐν χειρὶ παιδός σου Μωυσῆ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐντειλαμένου σου αὐτῷ γράψαι τὸν νόμον σου ἐναντίον υἱῶν Ισραηλ λέγων ²⁹ Ἐὰν μὴ ἀκούσητε τῆς φωνῆς μου, ἣ μὴν ἡ βόμβησις ἡ μεγάλη ἡ πολλή αὕτη ἀποστρέψει εἰς μικρὰν ἐν

Babylon, ²³ then I shall silence the shouts of rejoicing, and mirth, and the voices of bridegroom and bride in the towns of Judah and outside Jerusalem, and the whole country will be reduced to desert, with no inhabitants.” ²⁴ But we would not listen to your voice and serve the king of Babylon, and so you carried out what you threatened through your servants the prophets: that the bones of our kings and our ancestors would be dragged from their resting places. ²⁵ They were indeed tossed out to the heat of the day and the frost of the night; and people died in dreadful agony, from famine, sword, and plague. ²⁶ So, you have made this House, which bears your name, what it is today, because of the wickedness of the House of Israel and the House of Judah.

²⁷ Yet, O Lord our God, you have treated us in a way worthy of all your goodness and your boundless tenderness, ²⁸ just as you promised through your servant Moses, the day you told him to write your Law in the presence of the Israelites, and said, ²⁹ “If you do not listen to my voice, this great buzzing crowd will certainly be reduced to a tiny few among

²³ In place of ‘outside’, here following the LXX and NRSV, the NRSV has ‘the streets of’, taking the word ἔξωθεν as a mistranslation of תְּהוֹמֹת (‘from the streets’). This verse quotes Jr 7:34.

²⁴ The literal translation of ‘from their resting places’ is ‘back from their place’.

²⁵ An alternative reading of ‘plague’ (NJB) is ‘pestilence’ (NRSV). This verse quotes Jr 36:30 (& cf. Jr 32:26).

²⁶ The literal translation of ‘made’ is ‘placed’. This verse quotes Jr 7:14.

²⁷ In place of ‘boundless tenderness’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘great compassion’.

²⁸ What follows in vv. 29–35 are OT allusions from: Dt 28:58,62, Dt 9:6, 1K 8:47, Jr 24:7, Lv 26:42, Dt 6:10, Jr 32:37,38–40, Ezk 36:26–29 & Am 9:15.

²⁹ The word βόμβησις (‘buzzing crowd’) is found only here in the LXX.

τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, οἷ διασπερῶ αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ· ³⁰ ὅτι ἔγνων ὅτι οὐ μὴ ἀκούσωσίν μου, ὅτι λαὸς σκληροτράχηλός ἐστιν. καὶ ἐπιστρέψουσιν ἐπὶ καρδίαν αὐτῶν ἐν γῆ ἀποικισμοῦ αὐτῶν ³¹ καὶ γνώσονται ὅτι ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς αὐτῶν. καὶ δώσω αὐτοῖς καρδίαν καὶ ὦτα ἀκούοντα, ³² καὶ αἰνέσουσίν με ἐν γῆ ἀποικισμοῦ αὐτῶν καὶ μνησθήσονται τοῦ ὀνόματός μου ³³ καὶ ἀποστρέψουσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ νότου αὐτῶν τοῦ σκληροῦ καὶ ἀπὸ πονηρῶν πραγμάτων αὐτῶν, ὅτι μνησθήσονται τῆς ὁδοῦ πατέρων αὐτῶν τῶν ἁμαρτόντων ἐναντι κυρίου. ³⁴ καὶ ἀποστρέψω αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν γῆν, ἣν ὤμοσα τοῖς πατράσιν αὐτῶν τῷ Ἀβρααμ καὶ τῷ Ἰσαακ καὶ τῷ Ἰακωβ, καὶ κυριεύσουσιν αὐτῆς· καὶ πληθυνῶ αὐτούς, καὶ οὐ μὴ σμικρυνθῶσιν· ³⁵ καὶ στήσω αὐτοῖς διαθήκην αἰώνιον τοῦ εἶναί με αὐτοῖς εἰς θεὸν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μοι εἰς λαόν· καὶ οὐ κινήσω ἔτι τὸν λαόν μου Ἰσραηλ ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, ἧς ἔδωκα αὐτοῖς. –

the nations where I shall scatter them – ³⁰ for I knew that, being an obstinate people, they would not listen to me. However, in the country of their exile, they will come to themselves ³¹ and acknowledge that I am the Lord their God. I shall give them a heart and ears that hear, ³² and they will sing my praises in the country of their exile; they will remember my name ³³ and they will stop being obstinate; and, remembering what became of their ancestors who sinned before the Lord, will turn from their evil deeds. ³⁴ Then I shall bring them back to the country that I promised on oath to their ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and make them masters in it. I shall make their numbers grow; they will not dwindle again. ³⁵ I will make an everlasting covenant with them, so that I am their God and they are my people; and never again shall I drive my people out of the country that I have given them.”

³⁰ The literal translation of ‘come to themselves’ is ‘return to their heart’.

³¹ In place of ‘ears that hear’, following the LXX and NRSV, the NJB has ‘an attentive ear’. This verse quotes Jr 24:7.

³² A more literal translation of ‘remember’ is ‘be mindful of’.

³³ The literal translation of ‘stop being obstinate’ is ‘turn from the backside of their stiffness’.

³⁴ In place of ‘make them master of it’ (following the LXX and NJB), the NRSV has ‘they will rule over it’.

³⁵ This verse quotes Jr 32:38–40 (compare Ezk 36:26–29, Am 9:15).

Βαρουχ 3

¹ κύριε παντοκράτωρ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραηλ, ψυχὴ ἐν στενοῖς καὶ πνεῦμα ἀκηδιῶν κέκραγεν πρὸς σέ. ² ἄκουσον, κύριε, καὶ ἐλέησον, ὅτι ἡμάρτομεν ἐναντίον σου. ³ ὅτι σὺ καθήμενος τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀπολλύμενοι τὸν αἰῶνα. ⁴ κύριε παντοκράτωρ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραηλ, ἄκουσον δὴ τῆς προσευχῆς τῶν τεθνηκότων Ἰσραηλ καὶ υἱῶν τῶν ἁμαρτανόντων ἐναντίον σου, οἱ οὐκ ἤκουσαν τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου θεοῦ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐκολλήθη ἡμῖν τὰ κακά. ⁵ μὴ μνησθῆς ἀδικιῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν, ἀλλὰ μνήσθητι χειρός σου καὶ ὀνόματός σου ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ. ⁶ ὅτι σὺ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, καὶ αἰνέσομέν σε, κύριε. ⁷ ὅτι διὰ τοῦτο ἔδωκας τὸν φόβον σου ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἡμῶν τοῦ ἐπικαλεῖσθαι τὸ ὄνομά σου, καὶ αἰνέσομέν σε ἐν τῇ ἀποικίᾳ ἡμῶν, ὅτι ἀπεστρέψαμεν ἀπὸ καρδίας ἡμῶν πᾶσαν ἀδικίαν πατέρων ἡμῶν τῶν ἡμαρτηκότων ἐναντίον σου. ⁸ ἰδοὺ ἡμεῖς σήμερον ἐν τῇ ἀποικίᾳ ἡμῶν, οὗ διέσπειρας ἡμᾶς ἐκεῖ εἰς ὀνειδισμόν καὶ εἰς ἀρὰν καὶ εἰς ὄφλησιν κατὰ πάσας τὰς ἀδικίας πατέρων ἡμῶν, οἱ ἀπέστησαν ἀπὸ κυρίου θεοῦ ἡμῶν.

BARUCH 3

¹ Almighty Lord, you God of Israel, the soul in anguish, the weary spirit, now cries to you: ² Listen and show mercy, O Lord; for, we have sinned before you. ³ You sit enthroned forever, while we are perishing all the time. ⁴ Almighty Lord, you God of Israel, hear now the prayer of the dead of Israel, of the children of those who have sinned against you and have not listened to the voice of the Lord their God; hence, the disasters that have clung to us. ⁵ Do not call to mind the misdeeds of our ancestors but remember instead your power and your name. ⁶ For, you are the Lord our God and we will praise you, Lord, ⁷ since you have put fear of you in our hearts to encourage us to call on your name. We long to praise you in our exile, for we have rid our hearts of the wickedness of our ancestors who sinned against you. ⁸ Look, today we are still in exile where you have scattered us as something contemptible, accursed, and condemned, for all the misdeeds of our fathers who had abandoned the Lord our God.

BARUCH 3

- ¹ Vv. 1–8 comprise an impassioned plea of repentant exiles. In place of ‘weary spirit’, following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘troubled heart’.
- ² In place of ‘show mercy’, following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘have pity’.
- ³ The LXX lacks the word ‘enthroned’; it has been added in the translation for clarity.
- ⁴ ‘The dead of Israel’ (the NRSV has ‘the people of Israel’) are the Israelites brought near to death (cf. Is 59:10, Lm 3:6, Ezk 37:11ff).
- ⁵ The literal translation of ‘power’ is ‘hand’.
- ⁶ The NJB opens this verse, here following the NRSV, with, “You are indeed the Lord.”
- ⁷ In place of ‘fear of’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘respect for’.
- ⁸ The fathers’ sins (2:33, 3:4–5) are visited on later generations (Ex 34:7, Lm 5:7; contrast Jr 31:29 & Ezk 18:2–32).

⁹ Ἄκουε, Ἰσραηλ, ἐντολὰς ζωῆς,
ἐνωτίσασθε γνῶναι φρόνησιν.
¹⁰ τί ἐστίν, Ἰσραηλ,
τί ὅτι ἐν γῆ τῶν ἐχθρῶν εἶ,
ἐπαλαιώθης ἐν γῆ ἀλλοτρίᾳ,
¹¹ συνεμιάνθης τοῖς νεκροῖς,
προσελογίσθης μετὰ τῶν εἰς ἄδου;
¹² ἐγκατέλιπες τὴν πηγὴν τῆς σοφίας.
¹³ τῇ ὁδῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εἰ ἐπορεύθης,
κατώκεις ἂν ἐν εἰρήνῃ τὸν αἰῶνα.
¹⁴ μάθε ποῦ ἐστίν φρόνησις,
ποῦ ἐστίν ἰσχὺς,
ποῦ ἐστίν σύνεσις τοῦ γνῶναι ἅμα,
ποῦ ἐστίν μακροβίωσις καὶ ζωή,
ποῦ ἐστίν φῶς ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ εἰρήνη. –
¹⁵ τίς εὔρεν τὸν τόπον αὐτῆς,
καὶ τίς εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τοὺς θησαυροὺς αὐτῆς;
¹⁶ ποῦ εἰσιν οἱ ἄρχοντες τῶν ἐθνῶν
καὶ οἱ κυριεύοντες τῶν θηρίων τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,

⁹ Listen, Israel, to commands that bring life;
hear, and learn what knowledge means.
¹⁰ Why is it, Israel,
why are you in the country of your enemies,
growing older and older in an alien land,
¹¹ defiling yourselves with the dead,
reckoned with those who go to Sheol?
¹² You have forsaken the fountain of wisdom!
¹³ Had you walked in the way of God,
you would be living in peace forever.
¹⁴ Learn where knowledge is,
where there is strength,
where there is understanding, and so learn
where there is length of days, and life,
where there is light of the eyes and peace.
¹⁵ Who has found her place?
Who has entered her treasured house?
¹⁶ Where now are the leaders of the nations
and those who dominated even the beasts of earth?

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- ⁹ There is a change in style in the section, 3:9–5:9; most agree this is written in poetry, which is reflected in the layout adopted here.
¹⁰ That the people had grown old while in captivity seems to imply that by the time of the writing of this portion of the book, the Exile had already lasted for a considerable period of time.
¹¹ The Greek translator probably read תמנת ('defiling yourselves') by mistake for the Hebrew תמות ('you are like').
¹² At the beginning of this verse, the NJB inserts 'it is because'.
¹³ The literal translation of 'walked' is 'gone'.
¹⁴ Compare the ideas of this verse with the similar ones found in Pr 3:13–18.
¹⁵ This question is first answered negatively: no one can achieve wisdom unaided; the positive answer follows: wisdom is God's (Job 28:13–28).
¹⁶ In place of 'dominated' (κυριεύοντες), here following NETB, the NJB has 'ruled'; a more literal translation (as NRSV) is 'lorded it over'.

¹⁷ οἱ ἐν τοῖς ὀρνέοις τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐμπαίζοντες
καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον θησαυρίζοντες καὶ τὸ χρυσίον,
ᾧ ἐπεποίθεισαν ἄνθρωποι,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν τέλος τῆς κτήσεως αὐτῶν,
¹⁸ οἱ τὸ ἀργύριον τεκταίνοντες καὶ μεριμνῶντες,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξεύρεσις τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν;
¹⁹ ἠφανίσθησαν καὶ εἰς ἄδου κατέβησαν,
καὶ ἄλλοι ἀντανέστησαν ἀντ' αὐτῶν.
²⁰ νεώτεροι εἶδον φῶς
καὶ κατώκησαν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,
ὁδὸν δὲ ἐπιστήμης οὐκ ἔγνωσαν
²¹ οὐδὲ συνῆκαν τρίβους αὐτῆς·
οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ αὐτῶν πόρρω ἐγενήθησαν.
²² οὐδὲ ἠκούσθη ἐν Χανααν
οὐδὲ ὤφθη ἐν Θαιμαν,
²³ οὔτε υἱοὶ Ἀγαρ οἱ ἐκζητοῦντες τὴν σύνεσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,
οἱ ἔμποροι τῆς Μερραν καὶ Θαιμαν
οἱ μυθολόγοι καὶ οἱ ἐκζητηταὶ τῆς συνέσεως
ὁδὸν τῆς σοφίας οὐκ ἔγνωσαν
οὐδὲ ἐμνήσθησαν τὰς τρίβους αὐτῆς. —

¹⁷ Where are those who played with the birds of heaven,
those who accumulated silver and gold
on which all people rely,
and whose possession had no end?
¹⁸ Where are those who worked so carefully in silver
but of whose works no trace is to be found?
¹⁹ They have vanished, gone down to Sheol,
and others have risen to their places.
²⁰ Younger people have seen the day
and peopled the earth in their turn,
but the way of knowledge they have not found.
²¹ Nor have they understood her paths,
nor have they taken hold of her:
her sons have strayed far away from her way.
²² Nothing has been heard of her in Canaan;
nothing has been seen of her in Teman,
²³ The children of Hagar in search of worldly wisdom,
the merchants of Merran and Teman,
the tale-spinners and the philosophers:
none of them have found the way to wisdom
or remembered her paths.

¹⁷ The words 'where are' are not repeated in the LXX and are added here (as also in v. 18) for the sake of clarity and style.

¹⁸ The literal translation of the last line is 'and there is no discovery of their works'.

¹⁹ In place of 'Sheol' (following the NJB), the NRSV has 'Hades'.

²⁰ In place of 'younger people' (following NETB), both the NJB & NRSV have 'later generations'.

²¹ 'Her way' follows the Peshitta and some LXX MSS; most LXX MSS have 'their way'. The NRSV includes the first 2 lines in the v. 20.

²² Ezekiel (Ezk 28:3-5) associates Tyre (in 'Canaan') with wisdom and 'Teman' (in Edom) was reputed for its wisdom (Jr 49:7, Ob 8-9).

²³ In place of 'Merran' (following the LXX & NRSV), the NJB has 'Midian'. The word, *μυθολόγοι* ('tale-spinners'), is used only here in the LXX.

24 ὦ Ἰσραηλ, ὡς μέγας ὁ οἶκος τοῦ Θεοῦ
 καὶ ἐπιμήκης ὁ τόπος τῆς κτήσεως αὐτοῦ·
 25 μέγας καὶ οὐκ ἔχει τελευτήν,
 ὑψηλὸς καὶ ἀμέτρητος.
 26 ἐκεῖ ἐγεννήθησαν οἱ γίγαντες
 οἱ ὀνομαστοὶ οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς,
 γενόμενοι εὐμεγέθεις, ἐπιστάμενοι πόλεμον.
 27 οὐ τούτους ἐξελέξατο ὁ Θεὸς
 οὐδὲ ὁδὸν ἐπιστήμης ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς·
 28 καὶ ἀπώλοντο παρὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν φρόνησιν,
 ἀπώλοντο διὰ τὴν ἀβουλίαν αὐτῶν. –
 29 τίς ἀνέβη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἔλαβεν αὐτήν
 καὶ κατεβίβασεν αὐτὴν ἐκ τῶν νεφελῶν;
 30 τίς διέβη πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ εὔρεν αὐτήν
 καὶ οἴσει αὐτὴν χρυσοῦ ἐκλεκτοῦ;
 31 οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ γινώσκων τὴν ὁδὸν αὐτῆς
 οὐδὲ ὁ ἐνθυμούμενος τὴν τρίβον αὐτῆς·
 32 ἀλλὰ ὁ εἰδὼς τὰ πάντα γινώσκει αὐτήν,
 ἐξεῦρεν αὐτήν τῇ συνέσει αὐτοῦ·

24 How great, Israel, is the house of God,
 and how extensive is his domain!
 25 It is huge and has no boundary,
 high and without measure!
 26 In it were born the giants,
 famous from the beginning,
 immensely tall, experts in war.
 27 God's choice did not fall on these,
 nor did he show them the way of knowledge.
 28 They perished for lack of wisdom,
 perished by their own folly.
 29 Who has ever gone up into heaven and seized her
 and brought her down from the clouds?
 30 Who has ever crossed the ocean and found her
 and acquired her for the finest gold?
 31 No one can learn the way to her;
 no one understands her path.
 32 But the One who knows all discovers her:
 he has grasped her with his own intellect,

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- 24 This verse speaks of the universe as God's 'domain'.
 25 For this verse, here following NETB, the NJB reads, "It is immeasurably wide, infinitely lofty!"
 26 The word *εὐμεγέθεις* ('immensely tall') is found in the LXX only here and 1S 9:2.
 27 For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "God did not choose them."
 28 The word *ἀβουλίαν* ('folly') is used in the LXX only here and in Pr 14:17.
 29 In place of 'gone up into heaven', following the NRSV, the NJB has 'climbed the sky'.
 30 Alternative reading for 'acquired' are 'bought' or 'brought ... back'.
 31 The literal translation for 'understands' is 'lays to heart'.
 32 For the 3rd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, "The one who prepared the earth for all time."

ὁ κατασκευάσας τὴν γῆν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον,
ἐνέπλησεν αὐτὴν κτηνῶν τετραπόδων·
33 ὁ ἀποστέλλων τὸ φῶς, καὶ πορεύεται,
ἐκάλεσεν αὐτό, καὶ ὑπήκουσεν αὐτῷ τρόμῳ·
34 οἱ δὲ ἀστέρες ἔλαμψαν ἐν ταῖς φυλακαῖς αὐτῶν
καὶ εὐφράνθησαν,
35 ἐκάλεσεν αὐτοὺς καὶ εἶπον Πάρεσμεν,
ἔλαμψαν μετ' εὐφροσύνης τῷ ποιήσαντι αὐτούς.
36 οὗτος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν,
οὐ λογισθήσεται ἕτερος πρὸς αὐτόν.
37 ἐξεῦρεν πᾶσαν ὁδὸν ἐπιστήμης
καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν Ἰακωβ τῷ παιδί αὐτοῦ
καὶ Ἰσραηλ τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ·
38 μετὰ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὤφθη
καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις συνανεστράφη.

he has set the earth firm for evermore
and filled it with four-footed beasts.
33 He sends the light – and it goes;
he recalls it – and, trembling, it obeys.
34 The stars shone forth in their watches,
and were glad.
35 When he calls them, they answer, “Here we are;”
they shine to delight their Creator.
36 This is our God;
no other can be compared with him.
37 He has uncovered the whole way of knowledge
and shown it to his servant Jacob,
to Israel his well-beloved.
38 Only then did she appear on earth
and live among human beings.

33 A more poetic rendering of ‘trembling’ is ‘shimmering’.

34 In place of ‘in their watches’, the NRSV has ‘at their posts’.

35 The NRSV includes this verse as part of v. 34; subsequent verse numbers therein are accordingly decremented.

36 An alternative (more literal) translation of ‘can’ is ‘will’.

37 Vv. 37–38 talk of Wisdom becoming incarnate in Jewish Law; no universalism is envisaged here.

38 Although there is some ambiguity in this verse, the unexpressed subject antecedent of the verb ‘appear’ is probably Wisdom, personified here along the lines of Pr 8. The word, *συνανεστράφη* (‘lived among’), is found in the LXX only here and in Gn 30:8 & Sir 41:5.

Βαρουχ 4

- ¹ αὕτη ἡ βίβλος τῶν προσταγμάτων τοῦ Θεοῦ
καὶ ὁ νόμος ὁ ὑπάρχων εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα·
πάντες οἱ κρατοῦντες αὐτῆς εἰς ζωὴν,
οἱ δὲ καταλείποντες αὐτὴν ἀποθάνονται. —
- ² ἐπιστρέφου, Ιακωβ, καὶ ἐπιλαβοῦ αὐτῆς,
διόδευσον πρὸς τὴν λάμψιν κατέναντι τοῦ φωτὸς αὐτῆς.
- ³ μὴ δῶς ἐτέρῳ τὴν δόξαν σου
καὶ τὰ συμφέροντά σοι ἔθνη ἀλλοτρίῳ.
- ⁴ μακάριοί ἐσμεν, Ἰσραηλ,
ὅτι τὰ ἀρεστὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῖν γνωστά ἐστίν.
- ⁵ Θαρσεῖτε, λαός μου,
μνημόσυνον Ἰσραηλ.
- ⁶ ἐπράδητε τοῖς ἔθνεσιν
οὐκ εἰς ἀπώλειαν,
διὰ δὲ τὸ παροργίσει ὑμᾶς τὸν Θεὸν
παρεδόθητε τοῖς ὑπεναντίοις·
- ⁷ παρωξύνετε γὰρ τὸν ποιήσαντα
ὑμᾶς δύσαντες δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ Θεῷ.

BARUCH 4

- ¹ She is the book of God's commandments,
the law that stands forever;
those who keep her shall live;
those who desert her shall die.
- ² Turn back, Jacob, and seize her;
in her radiance, make your way to light.
- ³ Do not yield your glory to another,
your privileges to a people not your own.
- ⁴ Israel, blessed are we:
What pleases God has been revealed to us!
- ⁵ Take courage, my people,
who perpetuate the name of Israel!
- ⁶ You were sold to the nations,
but not for extermination.
You provoked God,
and so were delivered to your enemies.
- ⁷ For, you had angered your Creator
by offering sacrifices to demons and not to God.

BARUCH 4

- ¹ The feminine pronoun here refers to Wisdom personified (cf. 3:38).
- ² The Greek word *λάμψιν* ('light') is found only here in the LXX.
- ³ The literal translation of 'privileges' is 'the things that are advantageous (or profitable) for you'.
- ⁴ The literal translation of the 2nd line is, "the things pleasing to God are known to us."
- ⁵ After the introductory verses, in vv. 5–9^a personified Jerusalem addresses the neighbouring towns and her own scattered children; in vv. 9b–29, the poet then replies with a promise of recovery in messianic days (4:30–5:9). The literal translation of the 2nd line is 'the memorial of Israel'.
- ⁶ An alternative reading for 'provoked' is 'angered'.
- ⁷ In the theology of Baruch, offering sacrifices to pagan idols amounts to worship of demonic spirits (cf. Dt 32:16–17, Ps 96:5; 106:37–38).

8 ἐπελάθεσθε δὲ τὸν τροφεύσαντα ὑμᾶς θεὸν αἰώνιον,
 ἐλυπήσατε δὲ καὶ τὴν ἐκθρέψασαν ὑμᾶς Ἱερουσαλημ·

9 εἶδεν γὰρ τὴν ἐπελθοῦσαν ὑμῖν ὀργὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ
 καὶ εἶπεν Ἀκούσατε,
 αἱ πάροικοι Σιων,
 ἐπήγαγέν μοι ὁ θεὸς πένθος μέγα·

10 εἶδον γὰρ τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν
 τῶν υἱῶν μου καὶ τῶν θυγατέρων,
 ἣν ἐπήγαγεν αὐτοῖς ὁ αἰώνιος·

11 ἔθρεψα γὰρ αὐτοὺς μετ' εὐφροσύνης,
 ἐξαπέστειλα δὲ μετὰ κλαυθμοῦ καὶ πένθους.

12 μηδεὶς ἐπιχαιρέτω μοι τῇ χήρᾳ
 καὶ καταλειφθείσῃ ὑπὸ πολλῶν·
 ἡρημώσθην διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας τῶν τέκνων μου,
 διότι ἐξέκλιναν ἐκ νόμου θεοῦ,

13 δικαιώματα δὲ αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν
 οὐδὲ ἐπορεύθησαν ὁδοῖς ἐντολῶν θεοῦ
 οὐδὲ τρίβους παιδείας ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ αὐτοῦ ἐπέβησαν.

14 ἐλθάτωσαν αἱ πάροικοι Σιων,
 καὶ μνήσθητε τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν
 τῶν υἱῶν μου καὶ θυγατέρων,

8 You had forgotten the eternal God who reared you;
 you had also grieved Jerusalem who nursed you.

9 For, she saw the wrath of God falling on you,
 and, she said:
 Listen, you neighbours of Zion:
 God has sent me a great sorrow.

10 I have seen the exile
 of my sons and daughters,
 which the Eternal brought down on them.

11 I had reared them joyfully;
 in tears, in sorrow, I watched them go away.

12 Do not, any of you, exult over me,
 a widow, deserted by so many;
 I am bereaved because of the sins of my children,
 who turned away from the law of God.

13 They did not want to know his precepts
 nor walk the ways of God's commandments
 nor tread the paths of discipline as his justice directed.

14 Come here, neighbours of Zion!
 Remember the captivity
 of my sons and daughters,

8 The NJB includes the 2nd line in v. 9.

9 The NJB has 'God's anger' in place of 'wrath of God'.

10 'The Eternal' is a common designation for God in this section of Baruch.

11 The NRSV has 'nurtured' rather than 'reared'.

12 An alternative reading for 'exult' (in context) is 'gloat'.

13 In place of 'God's', following the LXX and NRSV, the NJB has 'his'.

14 In place of 'Eternal' (throughout this section), the NRSV has 'Everlasting'.

ἦν ἐπήγαγεν αὐτοῖς ὁ αἰώνιος·
 15 ἐπήγαγεν γὰρ ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἔθνος μακρόθεν,
 ἔθνος ἀναιδὲς καὶ ἀλλόγλωσσον,
 οἱ οὐκ ἠσχύνθησαν πρεσβύτην
 οὐδὲ παιδίον ἠλέησαν
 16 καὶ ἀπήγαγον τοὺς ἀγαπητοὺς τῆς χήρας
 καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν θυγατέρων τὴν μόνην ἠρέμωσαν.
 17 ἐγὼ δὲ τί δυνατὴ βοηθῆσαι ὑμῖν;
 18 ὁ γὰρ ἐπαγαγὼν τὰ κακὰ ὑμῖν
 ἐξελεῖται ὑμᾶς ἐκ χειρὸς ἐχθρῶν ὑμῶν.
 19 βαδίζετε, τέκνα, βαδίζετε,
 ἐγὼ γὰρ κατελείφθην ἔρημος·
 20 ἐξεδυσάμην τὴν στολὴν τῆς εἰρήνης,
 ἐνεδυσάμην δὲ σάκκον τῆς δεήσεώς μου,
 κεκράξομαι πρὸς τὸν αἰώνιον ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις μου. —
 21 θαρσεῖτε, τέκνα, βοήσατε πρὸς τὸν Θεόν,
 καὶ ἐξελεῖται ὑμᾶς ἐκ δυναστείας,
 ἐκ χειρὸς ἐχθρῶν.
 22 ἐγὼ γὰρ ἠλπισα ἐπὶ τῷ αἰωνίῳ τὴν σωτηρίαν ὑμῶν,
 καὶ ἦλθεν μοι χαρὰ παρὰ τοῦ ἁγίου

which the Eternal brought down on them.
 15 For, he brought a distant nation down on them,
 a ruthless nation speaking a foreign language:
 they showed neither respect for the aged
 nor pity for the child.
 16 They carried off the widow’s beloved sons;
 they left her quite alone, bereft of her daughters.
 17 For my part, how could I help you?
 18 He who brought these calamities down on you
 will deliver you from your enemies’ clutches.
 19 Go, my children, go your way!
 I must stay bereft and lonely.
 20 I have taken off the clothes of peace
 and put on the sackcloth of entreaty;
 I shall cry to the Eternal all my life.
 21 Take courage, my children, cry to God:
 he will deliver you from tyranny,
 from your enemies’ hands.
 22 For, I look to the Eternal for your rescue,
 and joy has come to me from the Holy One

15 The word here translated as ‘speaking a foreign language’ (ἀλλόγλωσσον) appears in the LXX only here and in Ezr 3:6.

16 In place of ‘beloved’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘cherished’.

17 For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “But I, how can I help you?”

18 In place of ‘these calamities’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘those disasters’.

19 For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the NRSV reads, “for I have been left desolate.”

20 The literal translation of ‘all my life’ is ‘in my days’.

21 In place of ‘cry to’, here following the LXX and NRSV, the NJB has ‘call on’.

22 An alternative reading of the last line is ‘from your Eternal Saviour’.

ἐπὶ τῇ ἐλεημοσύνῃ, ἣ ἤξει ὑμῖν ἐν τάχει
παρὰ τοῦ αἰωνίου σωτήρος ὑμῶν.

²³ ἐξέπεμψα γὰρ ὑμᾶς μετὰ πένθους καὶ κλαυθμοῦ,
ἀποδώσει δέ μοι ὁ θεὸς ὑμᾶς μετὰ
χαρμοσύνης καὶ εὐφροσύνης εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

²⁴ ὥσπερ γὰρ νῦν ἐωράκασιν αἱ πάροικοι Σιων
τὴν ὑμετέραν αἰχμαλωσίαν,
οὕτως ὄψονται ἐν τάχει τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ
ὑμῶν σωτηρίαν, ἣ ἐπελεύσεται ὑμῖν μετὰ δόξης
μεγάλης καὶ λαμπρότητος τοῦ αἰωνίου.

²⁵ τέκνα, μακροθυμήσατε τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ
ἐπελθοῦσαν ὑμῖν ὀργήν· κατεδίωξέν σε ὁ ἐχθρὸς σου,
καὶ ὄψει αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀπώλειαν ἐν τάχει
καὶ ἐπὶ τραχήλους αὐτῶν ἐπιβήση.

²⁶ οἱ τρυφεροὶ μου ἐπορεύθησαν ὁδοὺς τραχείας,
ἤρθησαν ὡς ποίμνιον ἠρπασμένον ὑπὸ ἐχθρῶν. —

²⁷ θαρσήσατε, τέκνα, καὶ βοήσατε πρὸς τὸν θεόν,
ἔσται γὰρ ὑμῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐπάγοντος μνεία.

²⁸ ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐγένετο
ἡ διάνοια ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ πλανηθῆναι ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ,
δεκαπλασιάσατε ἐπιστραφέντες ζητῆσαι αὐτόν.

at the mercy soon to reach you
from your Saviour, the Eternal.

²³ In sorrow and tears, I watched you go away,
but God will give you back to me
with joy and gladness forever.

²⁴ For, as at the present time, the neighbours of Zion
have witnessed your captivity,
so they will soon see your rescue by God,
which will come upon you with great glory
and with the splendour of the Eternal.

²⁵ My children, patiently bear the anger brought
on you by God. Your enemy has persecuted you,
but soon you will witness his destruction
and set your foot on his neck.

²⁶ My pampered children have travelled by rough roads,
carried off like a flock by a marauding enemy.

²⁷ Take courage, my children, and cry to God:
he who brought this on you will remember you.

²⁸ As, by your will,
you first strayed from God,
so now turn back and search for him ten times harder.

²³ An alternative reading for 'joy' is 'delight'.

²⁴ Alternative readings for 'rescue' are 'deliverance' and 'salvation'.

²⁵ In place of 'place your foot on', here following the NJB & NETB, the NRSV has 'tread on' and the NAB has 'trample'.

²⁶ In place of 'pampered', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'favourite'.

²⁷ Translated literally, the 2nd line reads, "for there will be remembrance of you by the one who brought (this on you)."

²⁸ The verb δεκαπλασιάσατε ('multiply by ten') is found only here in the LXX; alternative translations (here, we follow the NJB) are 'with tenfold zeal' (NRSV), 'with tenfold sincerity' (NETB) and 'ten time more' (NAB).

29 ὁ γὰρ ἐπαγαγὼν ὑμῖν τὰ κακὰ ἐπάξει ὑμῖν τὴν αἰώνιον εὐφροσύνην μετὰ τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν.

30 Θάρσει, Ἱερουσαλημ,
 παρακαλέσει σε ὁ ὀνομάσας σε.

31 δαίλαιοι οἱ σὲ κακώσαντες
 καὶ ἐπιχαρέντες τῇ σῇ πτώσει,

32 δαίλαιαι αἱ πόλεις αἷς ἐδούλευσαν τὰ τέκνα σου,
 δειλαία ἢ δεξαμένη τοὺς υἱούς σου.

33 ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐχάρη ἐπὶ τῇ σῇ πτώσει
 καὶ εὐφράνθη ἐπὶ τῷ πτώματί σου,
 οὕτως λυπηθήσεται ἐπὶ τῇ ἑαυτῆς ἐρημίᾳ.

34 καὶ περιελῶ αὐτῆς τὸ ἀγαλλίαμα τῆς πολυοχλίας,
 καὶ τὸ ἀγαυρίαμα αὐτῆς ἔσται εἰς πένθος.

35 πῦρ γὰρ ἐπελεύσεται αὐτῇ
 παρὰ τοῦ αἰωνίου εἰς ἡμέρας μακράς,
 καὶ κατοικηθήσεται ὑπὸ δαιμονίων τὸν πλείονα χρόνον.

36 περιβλεψαὶ πρὸς ἀνατολάς, Ἱερουσαλημ,
 καὶ ἴδὲ τὴν εὐφροσύνην
 τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ σοι ἐρχομένην.

29 For, the one who brought these calamities on you will rescue you and give you eternal joy.

30 Take courage, Jerusalem:
 he who gave you your name will console you.

31 Disaster will come to all who have ill-treated you and gloated over your fall.

32 Wretched are the cities that enslaved your children; wretched will be whichever rejected your sons.

33 For, just as she rejoiced at your fall and was happy to see your ruin, so she will grieve over her own desolation.

34 I shall deprive her of the joy of a populous city and her insolence will turn to mourning.

35 For, fire will come upon her from the Eternal for many days, and demons will dwell in her for ages.

36 Look towards the east, O Jerusalem, and see the joy that is coming to you from God.

29 In place of 'these calamities', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'those disasters'.

30 In giving Jerusalem its name, God makes the city his own (Ps 46:4, Is 60:14).

31 Contrast the attitude toward Babylon in vv. 31–35 to that shown in 1:11–12.

32 In place of 'wretched will be', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'disaster will come to'.

33 Alternative readings of 'ruin' are 'downfall' and 'misfortune'.

34 A more literal translation of 'insolence' is 'pride'.

35 Compare this verse with Is 13:19–22.

36 For the 1st line, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Jerusalem, turn your eyes to the east."

³⁷ ἰδοὺ ἔρχονται οἱ υἱοὶ σου,
οὓς ἐξαπέστειλας,
ἔρχονται συνηγμένοι ἀπ' ἀνατολῶν
ἕως δυσμῶν τῷ ῥήματι τοῦ ἁγίου
χαίροντες τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ δόξῃ. —

³⁷ Look, your sons are coming, whom you sent away;
gathered from east and west,
they are on their way home
at the Holy One's command,
rejoicing in God's glory.

³⁷ The NJB has 'reassembled' in place of 'gathered', here following the NRSV.

Βαρουχ 5

- ¹ ἔκδυσαι, Ιερουσαλημ,
τὴν στολὴν τοῦ πένθους καὶ τῆς κακώσεώς σου
καὶ ἔνδυσαι τὴν εὐπρέπειαν
τῆς παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ δόξης εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.
- ² περιβαλοῦ τὴν
διπλοῖδα τῆς παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνης,
ἐπίθου τὴν μίτραν ἐπὶ τὴν
κεφαλὴν σου τῆς δόξης τοῦ αἰωνίου.
- ³ ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς δείξει τῇ ὑπ' οὐρανὸν
πάσῃ τὴν σὴν λαμπρότητα.
- ⁴ κληθήσεται γὰρ σου τὸ ὄνομα παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς τὸν
αἰῶνα Εἰρήνη δικαιοσύνης καὶ δόξα Θεοσεβείας. –
- ⁵ ἀνάστηθι, Ιερουσαλημ, καὶ στῆθι ἐπὶ τοῦ ὑψηλοῦ
καὶ περιβλεψαὶ πρὸς ἀνατολὰς
καὶ ἴδε σου συνηγμένα τὰ τέκνα
ἀπὸ ἡλίου δυσμῶν ἕως ἀνατολῶν
τῷ ῥήματι τοῦ ἁγίου χαίροντας τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ μνεΐα.
- ⁶ ἐξῆλθον γὰρ παρὰ σοῦ πεζοὶ
ἀγόμενοι ὑπὸ ἐχθρῶν,

BARUCH 5

- ¹ Remove, Jerusalem,
your dress of sorrow and distress,
and put on forever
the beauty of God's glory for evermore.
- ² Wrap around you
the cloak of God's saving justice around you
and put on your head
the diadem of the Eternal One's glory.
- ³ For God means to show our splendour
to every nation under heaven.
- ⁴ The name God gives you for evermore will be,
"Righteous Peace," and "Reverent Glory."
- ⁵ Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights
and turn your eyes to the east:
see your children reassembled
from west and east at the Holy One's command,
rejoicing because God has remembered.
- ⁶ Though they left you on foot,
driven by enemies,

BARUCH 5

¹ A more literal translation of 'beauty' is 'attractiveness'.

² Compare this verse with Is 61:10.

³ An alternative translation for 'splendour' is 'radiance'.

⁴ For other messianic names given to Jerusalem, see Is 1:26, 60:14, Jr 33:16 and Ezk 48:35.

⁵ The literal translation of 'west' is 'setting sun'.

⁶ In place of the word *θρόνον* ('throne'), many witnesses have here *υἰούς* ('sons'). Some English versions follow the alternative reading (e.g., KJV, Douay); 'throne', however, is the more difficult reading and should be preferred here. For the theme of the New Exodus, see #Is 40:3.

εἰσάγει δὲ αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς πρὸς σὲ αἰρομένους
μετὰ δόξης ὡς θρόνον βασιλείας.

- ⁷ συνέταξεν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ταπεινοῦσθαι πᾶν ὄρος
ὑψηλὸν καὶ θῖνας ἀενάους
καὶ φάραγγας πληροῦσθαι
εἰς ὀμαλισμὸν τῆς γῆς,
ἵνα βαδίσῃ Ἰσραὴλ ἀσφαλῶς τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ δόξῃ·
- ⁸ ἐσκίασαν δὲ καὶ οἱ ὄρυμοι καὶ πᾶν ξύλον εὐωδίας
τῷ Ἰσραὴλ προστάγματι τοῦ θεοῦ·
- ⁹ ἠγήσεται γὰρ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ μετ’
εὐφροσύνης τῷ φωτὶ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ
σὺν ἐλεημοσύνῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ τῇ παρ’ αὐτοῦ.

now God brings them back to you,
carried gloriously like a royal throne.

- ⁷ For God has ordered that
every high mountain and the everlasting hills
be made low and the valleys filled up,
to make level ground,
so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.
- ⁸ The woods and every fragrant tree will provide shade
for Israel, at God’s command.
- ⁹ For God will guide Israel in joy,
by the light of his glory,
with mercy and righteousness that come from him.

⁷ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk safely in God’s glory.”

⁸ Alternative reading for ‘woods’ (here following the NRSV) are ‘forests’ (NJB) and ‘thickets’ (NETB).

⁹ An alternative reading for ‘the light of his glory’, taking the phrase as a hendiadys, is ‘his glorious light’.

Επιστολη Ιερεμιου

Ἀντίγραφον ἐπιστολῆς, ἧς ἀπέστειλεν Ιερεμίας πρὸς τοὺς ἀχθησομένους αἰχμαλώτους εἰς Βαβυλῶνα ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν Βαβυλωνίων ἀναγγεῖλαι αὐτοῖς καθότι ἐπετάγη αὐτῷ ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

¹ Διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας, ἃς ἠμαρτήκατε ἐναντίον τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀχθήσεσθε εἰς Βαβυλῶνα αἰχμάλωτοι ὑπὸ Ναβουχοδονοσορ βασιλέως τῶν Βαβυλωνίων. ² εἰσελθόντες οὖν εἰς Βαβυλῶνα ἔσεσθε ἐκεῖ ἔτη πλείονα καὶ χρόνον μακρὸν ἕως γενεῶν ἑπτά, μετὰ τοῦτο δὲ ἐξάξω ὑμᾶς ἐκεῖθεν μετ' εἰρήνης. ³ νυνὶ δὲ ὄψεσθε ἐν Βαβυλῶνι θεοὺς ἀργυροῦς καὶ χρυσοῦς καὶ ξυλίνους ἐπ' ὤμοις αἰρομένους δεικνύντας φόβον τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. ⁴ εὐλαβήθητε οὖν μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀφομοιωθέντες τοῖς ἀλλοφύλοις ἀφομοιωθῆτε καὶ φόβος ὑμᾶς λάβη ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ⁵ ἰδόντας ὅχλον ἔμπροσθεν καὶ ὀπίσθεν αὐτῶν προσκυνούντας αὐτά, εἶπατε δὲ τῇ διανοίᾳ Σοὶ δεῖ προσκυνεῖν, δέσποτα. ⁶ ὁ γὰρ ἄγγελός μου μεθ' ὑμῶν ἐστίν, αὐτός τε ἐκζητῶν τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν.

BARUCH 6

¶ A copy of the letter that Jeremiah sent to those about to be led captive to Babylon by the king of the Babylonians, to tell them exactly the message that he had been commanded by God to give them.

¹ “Because of the sins that you have committed before God, you are to be deported to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar king of the Babylonians. ² Once you have reached Babylon, you will stay there for many years, as long as seven generations, after which I shall bring you home in peace. ³ Now, in Babylon you will see gods made of silver, of gold, of wood, being carried shoulder-high, and filling the gentiles with fear. ⁴ Be on your guard! Do not imitate the foreigners and do not have any fear of their gods, ⁵ as you see their worshippers prostrating themselves before and behind them. Instead, say in your hearts, “Master, it is you that we must worship.” ⁶ For, my angel is with you, and he is watching over your lives.

BARUCH 6

In the LXX (and NRSV), this chapter forms a separate book, “*The Letter of Jeremiah*”; here, we follow the Vg (and NJB).

¶ The title (or superscription) is included as v. 1 in the NRSV, with subsequent verse numbers accordingly incremented. Here, we follow the arrangement of the NJB.

¹ The deportation was that of 597 BC (2K 24:10–17).

² Contrast the ‘seven generations’ here with the ‘seventy years’ of Jr 29:10, the ‘forty years’ of Ezk 4:6 and ‘seventy weeks of years’ in Dn 9:24.

³ Here, and in v. 5, there are allusion to Babylonian processions, in which the statues of the gods were carried out of the temples.

⁴ In place of ‘their gods’, the LXX has ‘them’.

⁵ In place of ‘Master’, here following the LXX and NJB, the NRSV has ‘O Lord’.

⁶ The meaning of the phrase ‘and he is watching over your lives’ (as NRSV) is uncertain; literally, the LXX reads ‘and he is seeking out your souls’.

⁷ Γλῶσσα γὰρ αὐτῶν ἐστὶν κατεξυσμένη ὑπὸ τέκτονος, αὐτὰ τε περιχρῦσα καὶ περιἀργυρα, ψευδῆ δ' ἐστὶν καὶ οὐ δύνανται λαλεῖν. ⁸ καὶ ὡσπερ παρθένῳ φιλοκόσμῳ λαμβάνοντες χρυσίον κατασκευάζουσιν στεφάνους ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς τῶν θεῶν αὐτῶν. ⁹ ἔστι δὲ καὶ ὅτε ὑφαιρούμενοι οἱ ἱερεῖς ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν αὐτῶν χρυσίον καὶ ἀργύριον εἰς ἑαυτοὺς καταναλώσουσιν, δώσουσιν δὲ ἀπ' αὐτῶν καὶ ταῖς ἐπὶ τοῦ τέγους πόρναις. ¹⁰ κοσμοῦσί τε αὐτοὺς ὡς ἀνθρώπους τοῖς ἐνδύμασιν, θεοὺς ἀργυροῦς καὶ χρυσοῦς καὶ ξυλίνους· οὗτοι δὲ οὐ διασώζονται ἀπὸ ἰοῦ καὶ βρωμάτων. ¹¹ περιβεβλημένων αὐτῶν ἱματισμὸν πορφυροῦν, ἐκμάσσονται τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν διὰ τὸν ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας κονιορτόν, ὅς ἐστιν πλείων ἐπ' αὐτοῖς. ¹² καὶ σκῆπτρον ἔχει ὡς ἄνθρωπος κριτῆς χώρας, ὃς τὸν εἰς αὐτὸν ἀμαρτάνοντα οὐκ ἀνελεῖ. ¹³ ἔχει δὲ ἐγχειρίδιον ἐν δεξιᾷ καὶ πέλεκυν, ἑαυτὸν δὲ ἐκ πολέμου καὶ ληστῶν οὐκ ἐξελεῖται. ¹⁴ ὅθεν γνώριμοί εἰσιν οὐκ ὄντες θεοί· μὴ οὖν φοβηθῆτε αὐτούς.

⁷ “Overlaid with gold and silver, their tongues polished smooth by a craftsman, they are counterfeit and have no power to speak. ⁸ As though for a girl fond of finery, these people take gold and make crowns for the heads of their gods. ⁹ Sometimes, the priests filch gold and silver from their gods to spend on themselves, even giving some of it to the prostitutes on the terrace. ¹⁰ They dress up these gods of silver, gold and wood, in clothes, like human beings; on their own, they cannot protect themselves from either tarnish or woodworm; ¹¹ when they have been dressed in purple cloaks, their faces have to be dusted, because of the temple dust that settles thick on them. ¹² One holds a dagger like the governor of a province, yet is powerless to put to death anyone who offends him; ¹³ another holds sword in his right hand and a mace, yet is powerless to defend himself against war or thieves. ¹⁴ From this, it is evident that they are not gods; do not be afraid of them.

⁷ The idols had a wooden frame that was ‘overlaid’ or plated with gold and/or silver.

⁸ In place of ‘these people’, the LXX has ‘they’.

⁹ The ‘prostitutes’ were those sacred to the Babylonian temples.

¹⁰ The NRSV includes the latter part of this verse (from ‘they cannot’) in the next (therein, v. 12). The word βρωμά (‘woodworm’) normally means ‘food’; however, the precise sense of the word here is not clear. The NAB has ‘insects’, which is probably vague by intention; it is also possible that the Greek text has sustained damage here due to a misreading of its putative Hebrew usage.

¹¹ The literal translation of ‘temple’ is ‘house’ (as throughout this chapter).

¹² In place of ‘dagger’, the NJB has ‘sceptre’. Here, the verb ‘offends’ apparently refers to invading the sanctuary where the idol resides.

¹³ In place of ‘sword’, the NRSV has ‘dagger’; the Hebrew word behind the Greek could mean either. After ‘mace’, the Peshitta adds ‘in his left hand’, which has the effect of simplifying what is in the right hand according.

¹⁴ An alternative reading for ‘be afraid of’ is ‘worship’.

¹⁵ Ὡσπερ γὰρ σκεῦος ἀνθρώπου συντριβὲν ἀχρεῖον γίνεται, τοιοῦτοι ὑπάρχουσιν οἱ θεοὶ αὐτῶν, καθιδρυμένων αὐτῶν ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις. ¹⁶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν πλήρεις εἰσὶν κονιορτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ποδῶν τῶν εἰσπορευομένων. ¹⁷ καὶ ὥσπερ τινὶ ἠδίκηκότι βασιλέα περιπεφραγμένοι εἰσὶν αἱ αὐλαὶ ὡς ἐπὶ θανάτῳ ἀπηγγεμένῳ, τοὺς οἴκους αὐτῶν ὀχυροῦσιν οἱ ἱερεῖς θυρώμασιν τε καὶ κλείδουσι καὶ μοχλοῖς, ὅπως ὑπὸ τῶν ληστῶν μὴ συληθῶσι. ¹⁸ λύχνους καίουσιν καὶ πλείους ἢ ἑαυτοῖς, ὧν οὐδένα δύνανται ἰδεῖν. ¹⁹ ἔστιν μὲν ὥσπερ δοκὸς τῶν ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας, τὰς δὲ καρδίας αὐτῶν φασὶν ἐκλείχασθαι, τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἐρπετῶν κατεσθόντων αὐτούς τε καὶ τὸν ἱματισμὸν αὐτῶν οὐκ αἰσθάνονται. ²⁰ μεμελανωμένοι τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ καπνοῦ τοῦ ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας. ²¹ ἐπὶ τὸ σῶμα αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐφίπτανται νυκτερίδες, χελιδόνες καὶ τὰ ὄρνεα, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ οἱ αἴλουροι. ²² ὅθεν γνώσεσθε ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοί· μὴ οὖν φοβεῖσθε αὐτά. ²³ Τὸ γὰρ χρυσίον, ὃ περικεῖνται εἰς κάλλος, ἐὰν μὴ τις ἐκμάξῃ τὸν ἰόν, οὐ μὴ στίλψωσιν· οὐδὲ γάρ, ὅτε ἐχωνεύοντο,

¹⁵ “Just as a common pot becomes useless once it is broken, ¹⁶ so are these gods enshrined inside their temples. Their eyes are full of dust raised by the feet of those who enter. ¹⁷ Just as the courts are locked on all sides on someone who has offended a king and is under sentence of death, so the priests secure the temples of these gods with gates and bolts and bars for fear of burglary. ¹⁸ They light more lamps for them than they do for themselves, and the gods see none of them. ¹⁹ They are like one of the temple beams, which are said to be gnawed away from within; the termites creep out of the ground and eat them and their clothes too, and they feel nothing. ²⁰ Their faces are blackened by the smoke that rises from the temple. ²¹ Bats, swallows, birds of every kind perch on their bodies and heads, and so do cats. ²² From this, you can see for yourselves that they are not gods; do not be afraid of them. ²³ “As for the gold they wear for beauty – it will not shine unless someone wipes off the tarnish; for, they were without

¹⁵ The word *σκεῦος* (*common pot*) is an ambiguous term used to refer to an implement or utensil or type of equipment whose exact meaning must be determined from the context; various alternative translations are: *‘bowl’* (TEV), *‘dish’* (NRSV), *‘tools’* (NAB) and *‘jar’* (Knox).

¹⁶ The NJB, following the LXX, includes the first part of this verse in v. 15; here, we follow the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁷ In place of *‘courts’* (*αὐλαί*), one Greek MS and the Vg have *‘gates’*, taking the LXX text as corrupt here and claiming a misreading of *πύλαι*.

¹⁸ The literal translation of *‘and the gods’* is *‘of whom’*.

¹⁹ The meaning of this verse is difficult to grasp; it is possible that the text is corrupt.

²⁰ A more literal translation of *‘smoke’* is *‘soot’*.

²¹ This is the earliest Jewish reference to *‘cats’*, which were first domesticated in Egypt.

²² In v. 14, the pronoun (*αὐτούς*) is masculine, referring to the gods; here, the pronoun (*αὐτά*) is neuter, referring to the idols.

²³ Alternative readings for *‘tarnish’* are *‘corrosion’* and *‘rust’*.

ἡσθάνοντο. ²⁴ ἐκ πάσης τιμῆς ἡγορασμένα ἐστίν, ἐν οἷς οὐκ ἐστὶν πνεῦμα. ²⁵ ἄνευ ποδῶν ἐπ’ ὤμοις φέρονται ἐνδεικνύμενοι τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀτιμίαν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, αἰσχύνονται τε καὶ οἱ θεραπεύοντες αὐτὰ διὰ τό, μήποτε ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέση, δι’ αὐτῶν ἀνίστασθαι. ²⁶ μήτε ἐάν τις αὐτὸ ὀρθὸν στήσῃ, δι’ ἑαυτοῦ κινήσῃται, μήτε ἐάν κλιθῇ, οὐ μὴ ὀρθωθῇ, ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ νεκροῖς τὰ δῶρα αὐτοῖς παρατίθεται. ²⁷ τὰς δὲ θυσίας αὐτῶν ἀποδόμενοι οἱ ἱερεῖς αὐτῶν καταχρῶνται· ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες αὐτῶν ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ταριχεύουσαι οὔτε πτωχῶ οὔτε ἀδυνατῶ μεταδίδασιν· τῶν θυσιῶν αὐτῶν ἀποκαθήμενη καὶ λεχῶ ἄπτονται. ²⁸ γρόντες οὖν ἀπὸ τούτων ὅτι οὐκ εἰσιν θεοί, μὴ φοβηθῆτε αὐτούς.

²⁹ Πόθεν γὰρ κληθεῖσάν θεοί; ὅτι γυναῖκες παρατιθέασιν θεοῖς ἀργυροῖς καὶ χρυσοῖς καὶ ξυλίνοις. ³⁰ καὶ ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις αὐτῶν οἱ ἱερεῖς διφρεύουσιν ἔχοντες τοὺς χιτῶνας διερρωγότας καὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς καὶ τοὺς πώγωνας ἐξυρημένους, ὧν αἱ κεφαλαὶ ἀκάλυπτοι εἰσιν, ³¹ ὠροῦνται δὲ βοῶντες ἐναντίον τῶν θεῶν αὐτῶν ὥσπερ τινὲς ἐν περιδείπνῳ νεκροῦ. ³² ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱματισμοῦ αὐτῶν ἀφελόμενοι οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐνδύουσιν τὰς

feeling even when cast. ²⁴ Whatever was paid for them, they have no breath. ²⁵ Having no feet, they have to be carried on shoulders, showing how futile they are; and they shame their worshippers, who have to stand them up if they fall over. ²⁶ Once they have been stood up, they cannot move on their own; if they tilt askew, they cannot right themselves; gifts given to them are as gifts made to the dead. ²⁷ The priests sell the sacrifices made to them and use the money themselves. Likewise, their wives preserve some of the meat with salt but give none to the poor or helpless. ²⁸ Sacrifices to them are touched by women in their periods or at childbirth! From this, you know they are not gods; do not be fear them.

²⁹ “Indeed, how then can they even be called gods, when women set food before these gods of silver, of gold, and of wood? ³⁰ And, in their temples, the priests stay sitting down, their garments torn, their heads and beard shaved and their heads uncovered; ³¹ they roar and shriek before their gods as people do at funeral feasts. ³² The priests take some of the robes of their gods to clothe their own wives and children.

²⁴ After ‘breath’, the NJB adds ‘of life’; perhaps a better translation is ‘spirit’.

²⁵ In place of ‘having no feet’, the NJB has ‘being unable to walk’.

²⁶ Throughout this verse, the pronouns and verbs are singular in the LXX.

²⁷ The NJB includes the first part of v. 28 in this verse; here, we follow the NRSV (& NETB).

²⁸ The verb ἀποκαθήμενη means ‘sitting apart’; here, it refers to women who were expected to refrain from social contacts during their period.

²⁹ It was forbidden by Jewish Law for women to make offerings in the Temple.

³⁰ The word διφρεύουσιν (‘stay sitting down’) usually means ‘driving a chariot’ but this makes no sense here; this is the only occurrence in the LXX.

³¹ ‘Funeral feasts’ is an allusion to the cults celebrating the annual death and resurrection of certain gods, such as Tammuz (Ezk 8:14).

³² In place of ‘some of the robes of’, the NJB has ‘the robes from’; the preposition ἀπὸ is used here in a sense of partition.

γυναῖκας αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ παιδιά. ³³ οὔτε ἐὰν κακὸν πάθωσιν ὑπό τινος οὔτε ἐὰν ἀγαθόν, δυνήσονται ἀνταποδοῦναι· οὔτε καταστήσασιν βασιλέα δύνανται οὔτε ἀφελέσθαι. ³⁴ ὡσαύτως οὔτε πλοῦτον οὔτε χαλκὸν οὐ μὴ δύνωνται διδόναι· ἐὰν τις αὐτοῖς εὐχὴν εὐξάμενος μὴ ἀποδῶ, οὐ μὴ ἐπιζητήσωσιν. ³⁵ ἐκ θανάτου ἄνθρωπον οὐ μὴ ῥύσονται οὔτε ἥττονα ἀπὸ ἰσχυροῦ οὐ μὴ ἐξέλωνται. ³⁶ ἄνθρωπον τυφλὸν εἰς ὄρασιν οὐ μὴ περιστήσωσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκῃ ἄνθρωπον ὄντα οὐ μὴ ἐξέλωνται. ³⁷ χήραν οὐ μὴ ἐλεήσωσιν οὔτε ὀρφανὸν εὖ ποιήσουσιν. ³⁸ τοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους λίθοις ὁμοιωμένοι εἰσὶν τὰ ξύλινα καὶ τὰ περιέχρυσα καὶ τὰ περιάργυρα, οἱ δὲ θεραπεύοντες αὐτὰ καταισχυνθήσονται. ³⁹ πῶς οὖν νομιστέον ἢ κλητέον αὐτοὺς ὑπάρχειν θεούς;

⁴⁰ Ἔτι δὲ καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν Χαλδαιῶν ἀτιμαζόντων αὐτά, οἱ, ὅταν ἴδωσιν ἐνεὸν οὐ δυνάμενον λαλῆσαι, προσενεγκάμενοι τὸν Βῆλον ἀξιούσιν φωνῆσαι, ὡς δυνατοῦ ὄντος αὐτοῦ αἰσθῆσαι, ⁴¹ καὶ οὐ δύνανται αὐτοὶ νοήσαντες καταλιπεῖν αὐτά, αἰσθήσιν γὰρ οὐκ ἔχουσιν. ⁴² αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες

³³ Whether they are treated badly or well, they are incapable of paying back either treatment; as incapable, too, of setting up a king or deposing one; ³⁴ and, similarly, they cannot distribute wealth or money. If anyone fails to honour a vow he has made to them, they cannot demand that he does so.

³⁵ They can neither save anyone from death nor rescue the weak from the strong; ³⁶ by no means can they restore sight to the blind, nor save anyone in trouble, ³⁷ nor can they take pity on a widow, nor be generous to an orphan. ³⁸ These wooden gods, overlaid with gold and silver, are about as much use as rocks cut out of the mountainside. Their worshippers will be confounded! ³⁹ Why then must anyone think that they are gods, or call them gods?

⁴⁰ “The Chaldaeans do them no honour; if they find someone who is dumb and cannot speak, they present him to Bel, entreating him for the gift of speech, as though he could perceive it! ⁴¹ They are incapable of drawing the conclusion and abandoning these gods – such is their lack of perception.

³³ Rather than ‘either treatment’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘it’.

³⁴ The literal translation of ‘money’ is ‘bronze’.

³⁵ Literally translated, the phrase ‘they can neither save’ is ‘by no means can they save’.

³⁶ In place of ‘by no means can they’, here following NETB, the NJB has ‘nor can they’.

³⁷ In place of ‘take pity on’, here following the NJB & NRSV, NETB has ‘show mercy to’.

³⁸ The literal translation of ‘wooden gods’ is ‘things made of wood’.

³⁹ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, “So how can anyone think or say that they are gods?”

⁴⁰ The ‘Chaldaeans’ here are a subset of the Babylonians consisting of professional magicians, who were frequently asked by royalty to interpret difficult events.

⁴¹ For ‘these gods’, here following the NJB, the LXX text (and NRSV) has simply ‘them’.

περιθέμεναι σχοινία ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς ἐγκάθηνται θυμιῶσαι τὰ πίτυρα.⁴² ὅταν δέ τις αὐτῶν ἐφελκυσθεῖσα ὑπό τινος τῶν παραπορευομένων κοιμηθῆ, τὴν πλησίον ὄνειδίξει, ὅτι οὐκ ἠξιώται ὡσπερ καὶ αὐτῇ οὔτε τὸ σχοινίον αὐτῆς διερράγη.⁴³ πάντα τὰ γινόμενα αὐτοῖς ἐστὶν ψευδῆ· πῶς οὖν νομιστέον ἢ κλητέον ὥστε θεοὺς αὐτοὺς ὑπάρχειν;

⁴⁴ Ὑπὸ τεκτόνων καὶ χρυσοχόων κατεσκευασμένα εἰσὶν· οὐδὲν ἄλλο μὴ γένωνται ἢ ὃ βούλονται οἱ τεχνῖται αὐτὰ γενέσθαι.⁴⁵ αὐτοὶ τε οἱ κατασκευάζοντες αὐτὰ οὐ μὴ γένωνται πολυχρόνιοι· πῶς τε δὴ μέλλει τὰ ὑπ' αὐτῶν κατασκευασθέντα εἶναι θεοί; ⁴⁶ κατέλιπον γὰρ ψεύδη καὶ ὄνειδος τοῖς ἐπιγινόμενοις.⁴⁷ ὅταν γὰρ ἐπέλθῃ ἐπ' αὐτὰ πόλεμος καὶ κακά, βουλεύονται πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς οἱ ἱερεῖς ποῦ συναποκρυβῶσι μετ' αὐτῶν.⁴⁸ πῶς οὖν οὐκ ἔστιν αἰσθέσθαι ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοί, οἳ οὔτε σώζουσιν ἑαυτοὺς ἐκ πολέμου οὔτε ἐκ κακῶν;⁴⁹ ὑπάρχοντα γὰρ ξύλινα καὶ περίχρυσα καὶ περιάργυρα γνωσθήσεται μετὰ ταῦτα ὅτι ἐστὶν ψευδῆ· τοῖς ἔθνεσι πᾶσι τοῖς τε βασιλεῦσι φανερὸν ἔσται ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶ θεοὶ

⁴² Women with strings round their waists sit in the streets, burning bran like incense; ⁴³ if one of these is picked up by a passer-by and lays with him, she scorns her neighbour for not being as desirable as she and not having had her string cut. ⁴⁴ Whatever is done for them is spurious. So how can anyone think or say that they are gods?

⁴⁵ “Made by carpenters and goldsmiths, they are only what those workmen decided to make them. ⁴⁶ Their makers have not long to live themselves, so how can the things they make be gods? ⁴⁷ Their legacy to their descendants is nothing but delusion and dishonour. ⁴⁸ If war or disasters befell them, the priests discuss where best to hide themselves and these gods; ⁴⁹ how can anyone fail to realise that they are not gods, if they cannot save themselves from war or disasters? ⁵⁰ Since they are only made of wood overlaid with gold or silver, it will later become apparent that they are spurious; it will be obvious to everyone, to nations as to kings, that they are not gods but the work of human hands, and that there is no

⁴² An alternative reading for ‘bran’ is ‘husks of corn’.

⁴³ The custom of cutting the string was associated with sacred prostitution.

⁴⁴ A tiny Greek fragment about the size of a postage stamp and containing portions of vv. 43–44 was found in Cave 7 at Qumran. Dating to circa 100 BC, this fragment provides no significant textual variants from the accepted LXX text.

⁴⁵ The NJB has ‘woodworkers’ in place of ‘carpenters’, here following the NRSV.

⁴⁶ The NRSV includes the latter part of this verse (from ‘so how’) in v. 47.

⁴⁷ In place of ‘delusion and dishonour’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘lies and reproach’.

⁴⁸ For ‘their gods’, the LXX reads simply ‘them’ (αὐτῶν).

⁴⁹ In place of ‘realise’, the NRSV has ‘see’; another option is ‘perceive’.

⁵⁰ In place of ‘divine activity’, here following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘work of God’ (θεοῦ ἔργον); the meaning of the statement is not entirely clear.

ἀλλὰ ἔργα χειρῶν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ οὐδὲν θεοῦ ἔργον ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐστίν. ⁵¹ τίτι οὖν γνωστότερον ἐστίν ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοί;

⁵² Βασιλέα γὰρ χώρας οὐ μὴ ἀναστήσωσιν οὔτε ὑετὸν ἀνθρώποις οὐ μὴ δῶσιν ⁵³ κρίσιν τε οὐ μὴ διακρίνωσιν αὐτῶν οὐδὲ μὴ ῥύσωνται ἀδικούμενον ἀδύνατοι ὄντες· ὥσπερ γὰρ κορῶναι ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς. ⁵⁴ καὶ γὰρ ὅταν ἐμπέση εἰς οἰκίαν θεῶν ξυλίνων ἢ περιχρύσων ἢ περιαργύρων πῦρ, οἱ μὲν ἱερεῖς αὐτῶν φεύξονται καὶ διασωθήσονται, αὐτοὶ δὲ ὥσπερ δοκοὶ μέσοι κατακαυθήσονται. ⁵⁵ βασιλεῖ δὲ καὶ πολεμίοις οὐ μὴ ἀντιστῶσιν. ⁵⁶ πῶς οὖν ἐκδεκτέον ἢ νομιστέον ὅτι εἰσὶν θεοί;

⁵⁷ Οὔτε ἀπὸ κλεπτῶν οὔτε ἀπὸ ληστῶν οὐ μὴ διασωθῶσιν θεοὶ ξύλινοι καὶ περιάργυροι καὶ περιχρῦσοι, ὧν οἱ ἰσχύοντες περιελούνται τὸ χρυσίον καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον καὶ τὸν ἱματισμὸν τὸν περικειμένον αὐτοῖς ἀπελεύσονται ἔχοντες, οὔτε ἑαυτοῖς οὐ μὴ βοηθήσωσιν. ⁵⁸ ὥστε κρεῖσσον εἶναι βασιλέα ἐπιδεικνύμενον τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀνδρείαν ἢ σκεῦος ἐν οἰκίᾳ χρήσιμον, ἐφ' ᾧ χρήσεται ὁ κεκτημένος, ἢ οἱ ψευδεῖς θεοί· ἢ καὶ θύρα ἐν οἰκίᾳ διασώζουσα τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ὄντα ἢ οἱ ψευδεῖς

divine activity in them. ⁵¹ Does anyone still need convincing that they are not gods?

⁵² “For, they can neither appoint a king over a country, nor give rain to mankind. ⁵³ They cannot regulate their own affairs, nor rescue anyone who suffers a wrong. ⁵⁴ They are as helpless as crows between sky and ground: if fire falls on the temple of these wooden gods overlaid with gold or silver, their priests fly to safety while they for their part stay there like beams, to be burnt. ⁵⁵ They cannot put up any resistance to a king or to enemies. ⁵⁶ How, then, can anyone think or say that they are gods?

⁵⁷ “These wooden gods, overlaid with gold or silver, cannot evade thieves or marauders; strong men may rob them of their gold and silver and make off with the robes they are dressed in; yet, they are powerless to help even themselves. ⁵⁸ Therefore, it is better to be a king displaying his prowess, a household pot of use to its owner, than to be these counterfeit gods, or merely the door of a house, protecting what is inside, than these counterfeit gods, or a wooden pillar in a palace

⁵¹ The meaning of the Greek text of this verse is uncertain; the NRSV has, “Who can then fail to know that they are not gods?”

⁵² Literally translated, this verse opens, “By no means can they appoint ...”

⁵³ The NRSV, more precisely following the LXX, opens this verse with a new sentence, “They cannot regulate ...”

⁵⁴ The NJB includes the first part of this verse in v. 53; here, we follow the NRSV (& NETB).

⁵⁵ For this verse, the NRSV reads, “Besides, they can offer no resistance to king or enemy.” (And see #56).

⁵⁶ The NRSV includes this verse as part of the preceding one.

⁵⁷ The NRSV splits the verse into two, before the word ‘strong’.

⁵⁸ Some see the 3-fold repetition of ‘than these counterfeit gods’ (ἢ οἱ ψευδεῖς θεοί) as suspicious but cannot provide evidence that it is not original.

θεοί, καὶ ξύλινος στῦλος ἐν βασιλείοις ἢ οἱ ψευδεῖς θεοί.
⁵⁹ ἥλιος μὲν γὰρ καὶ σελήνη καὶ ἄστρα ὄντα λαμπρὰ καὶ ἀποστελλόμενα ἐπὶ χρείας εὐήκοά εἰσιν. ⁶⁰ ὡσαύτως καὶ ἀστραπή, ὅταν ἐπιφανῇ, εὖοπτός ἐστιν· τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ πνεῦμα ἐν πάσῃ χώρᾳ πνεῖ. ⁶¹ καὶ νεφέλαις ὅταν ἐπιταγῇ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιπορεύεσθαι ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην, συντελοῦσι τὸ ταχθέν· τό τε πῦρ ἐξαποσταλὲν ἄνωθεν ἐξαναλῶσαι ὄρη καὶ ὄρη ποιεῖ τὸ συνταχθέν. ⁶² ταῦτα δὲ οὔτε ταῖς ἰδέαις οὔτε ταῖς δυνάμεσιν αὐτῶν ἀφωμοιωμένα ἐστίν. ⁶³ ὅθεν οὔτε νομιστέον οὔτε κλητέον ὑπάρχειν αὐτοὺς θεοὺς, οὐ δυνατῶν ὄντων αὐτῶν οὔτε κρίσιν κρῖναι οὔτε εἶ ποιεῖν ἀνθρώποις. ⁶⁴ γνόντες οὖν ὅτι οὐκ εἰσιν θεοί, μὴ φοβηθῆτε αὐτούς.

⁶⁵ Οὔτε γὰρ βασιλεῦσιν οὐ μὴ καταράσωνται οὔτε μὴ εὐλογήσωσι. ⁶⁶ σημεῖά τε ἐν ἔθνεσιν ἐν οὐρανῶ οὐ μὴ δεῖξωσιν οὐδὲ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος λάμπουσιν οὐδὲ φωτίσουσιν ὡς σελήνη. ⁶⁷ τὰ θηρία ἐστὶν κρείττω αὐτῶν, ἃ δύνανται ἐκφυγόντα εἰς σκέπην ἑαυτὰ ὠφελῆσαι. ⁶⁸ κατ' οὐδένα οὖν

than these counterfeit gods. ⁵⁹ The sun, the moon and the stars, which shine and have been given work to do, are obedient; ⁶⁰ similarly, the lightning, as it flashes, is a fine sight; in the same way, the wind blows across every land, ⁶¹ the clouds execute the order God gives them to pass over the whole earth, and the fire, sent from above to consume mountain and forest, carries out what has been appointed. ⁶² Now, these gods are not their equals, either in beauty or in power. ⁶³ Therefore, no one should think or say that they are gods, powerless as they are to administer justice or to do anyone any good. ⁶⁴ Thus, since you know that they are not really gods, do not be afraid of them.

⁶⁵ “They can neither curse nor bless kings. ⁶⁶ They cannot produce signs in heaven for the nations, nor shine like the sun, nor shed light like the moon. ⁶⁷ The wild animals are better off than they are, being able to look after themselves by making for cover. ⁶⁸ There is not the slightest shred of

⁵⁹ In place of ‘which shine’, following the NJB, the NRSV has ‘are bright’.

⁶⁰ An alternative reading for ‘every land’ is ‘everywhere’.

⁶¹ In place of ‘what has been appointed’, the NJB has ‘its orders’.

⁶² The literal translation of ‘gods’ is ‘things’.

⁶³ A more scholarly reading for ‘think or say’ is ‘suppose or declare’.

⁶⁴ The NJB and NRSV lack the word ‘really’, here following NETB.

⁶⁵ Literally translated (as NETB), this verse reads, “For by no means can they curse or bless kings.”

⁶⁶ For this verse, the NJB, continuing the sentence from v. 65, opens with ‘nor produce’.

⁶⁷ The literal translation of ‘wild animals’ is ‘beasts of the field’.

⁶⁸ For this verse, here following the NJB, the NRSV opens, “So we have no evidence whatever.”

τρόπον ἔστιν ἡμῖν φανερόν ὅτι εἰσὶν θεοί· διὸ μὴ φοβηθῆτε αὐτούς.

⁶⁹ Ὡσπερ γὰρ ἐν σικυηράτῳ προβασκάνιον οὐδὲν φυλάσσει, οὕτως οἱ θεοὶ αὐτῶν εἰσὶν ξύλινοι καὶ περιίχρσοι καὶ περιάργυροι. ⁷⁰ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ τῆ ἐν κήπῳ ῥάμνῳ, ἐφ' ἧς πᾶν ὄρνεον ἐπικάθηται, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ νεκρῶ ἐρριμμένῳ ἐν σκότει ἀφωμοίονται οἱ θεοὶ αὐτῶν ξύλινοι καὶ περιίχρσοι καὶ περιάργυροι. ⁷¹ ἀπὸ τε τῆς πορφύρας καὶ τῆς μαρμάρου τῆς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς σηπομένης γνώσεσθε ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοί· αὐτὰ τε ἐξ ὑστέρου βρωθήσονται, καὶ ἔσται ὄνειδος ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ. ⁷² κρείστων οὖν ἄνθρωπος δίκαιος οὐκ ἔχων εἰδωλα, ἔσται γὰρ μακρὰν ἀπὸ ὄνειδισμοῦ.

evidence that they are gods; therefore, do not be afraid of them!

⁶⁹ “Their wooden gods, overlaid with gold and silver, are like a scarecrow in a garden of cucumbers – protecting nothing.

⁷⁰ Or again, their wooden gods overlaid with gold and with silver are like a thorn bush in an orchard – any kind of bird may perch on it – or like a corpse that is thrown out into the dark. ⁷¹ From the purple and linen rotting on their backs, you can tell that they are not gods; and, in the end, eaten away, they will be the dishonour of the country. ⁷² Better, then, someone upright who has no idols: dishonour will never come near him.”

⁶⁹ The word *προβασκάνιον* ('scarecrow') occurs only here in the LXX, and the word *σικυηράτῳ* ('cucumber bed') only here and in and in Is 1:8, where desolate Zion is likened to an abandoned hut in a seasonal field.

⁷⁰ The word *ῥάμνος* ('thorn bush') is used to refer to various types of prickly shrubs, such as the box-thorn (*Lycium europaeum*), the stone buckthorn (*Rhamnus graeca*), and the black buckthorn (*Rhamnus oleoides*).

⁷¹ The literal translation of 'linen' (*μαρμάρου* – used only here in the LXX) is 'marble'; this probably translates the Hebrew word normally meaning 'linen', though also 'alabaster'; the Peshitta has 'silk'.

⁷² Presumably, the writer does not mean that one who avoids idols will necessarily avoid thereby all other forms of dishonour as well. In light of the context, the word should probably be understood in a qualified sense to refer specifically to that of idolatry; but, if the language is pressed, it could be argued that the statement is actually a *non sequitur* and a 'lame conclusion' that is not really accurate.