

ago, Edwin Good<sup>7</sup> pointed out that *hebel* carried a distinctive meaning in Ecclesiastes, concluding that it serves to point to life's incongruities. His suggested translation was “irony”. T. Polk<sup>8</sup> subsequently developed Good's thesis of the ironic mode, reaching the same conclusion that Ecclesiastes is a matter of irony whose realistic appraisal of life has the one purpose of “bringing us to the fear of God that we may all experience joy in a life that is not at our disposal”.

Our translations of Ecclesiastes will do greater justice to the author's intention if we render the term *hebel* by words such as “enigma”, or “mystery”, and the compound forms in 1.2 and 12.8 as something approaching “everything (about life) is exceedingly enigmatic,” or, “there are so many unanswered questions”!

<sup>7</sup> Good, Edwin, *Irony in the Old Testament*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press 1965, 176-183.

<sup>8</sup> Polk, Timothy, “The Wisdom of Irony”. *Studia Biblica et Theologica* 6, 1976, 3-17.

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## “RIGHTEOUSNESS”—SOME ISSUES IN OLD TESTAMENT TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

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### 1. Introduction

The words “righteousness”, “righteousness” and “justify” have been familiar to English Bible readers for centuries. (Catholic readers will be more familiar with “justice” and “just”.) In modern English usage, however, “righteousness” and “righteous” are no longer common words, other than in combinations such as “self-righteous” and “righteous indignation”. Further, “righteous(ness)”, when understood generally, would be linked with “conformity to the divine or moral law”.<sup>1</sup> “Justify” is commonly used in the sense of “to prove or show to be just, desirable, warranted or useful”.<sup>2</sup> Thus a sentence such as “this man went justified” (Luke 18:14, RSV; similarly NIV) is almost certainly to be misinterpreted by a reader unfamiliar with obsolete meanings of “justify”. At the same time talk of “social justice” and “human rights” has brought “justice” and “right” into a setting broader than the law court.

<sup>1</sup> So, e.g., *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam 1981), where this is meaning “1”. Also listed is “4. A right relationship to God”, clearly only so understood by those familiar with theological terminology. To what extent is this true also for words used in bible translations into languages other than English?

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Significantly the meaning “to pronounce free from guilt or blame” is described as “archaic”.

On the part of biblical studies there has been much modern exegetical work on the Hebrew *šedeq*, the Greek *dikaiousunē* and cognates. Such studies have taken into account usages outside the Bible.<sup>3</sup>

For these two reasons, changes in English and better understanding of biblical usage, reconsideration of translation into English is necessary. My concern here is to review briefly recent studies on *šedeq/šedaqah*, comment on some recent English versions, highlighting issues, and then make proposals. Focus is on the Book of Isaiah as the one book in the Old Testament in which variety of uses is greatest, with representative instances elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. *Šedeq/šedaqah*: General Comments

In studies on the root *š-d-q* two streams have been evident. The slightly older, from Kautzsch (1881) to today, emphasizes the idea of conformity to a norm, while the other, from Cremer (1899) to today, emphasizes relationship. Thus, for instance, Snaith states that "it stands for that norm in the affairs of the world to which men and things should conform, and by which they can be measured",<sup>5</sup> while Achtemeier asserts that "in the OT it is not behaviour in accordance with . . . a norm . . . Rather (it) . . . is the fulfilment of the demands of a relationship."<sup>6</sup>

More recent studies of comparative ancient Near Eastern material have added a dimension, and also shown how those biblical instances which suggest norm and those which point to relationship may be brought together. Schmid<sup>7</sup> highlights the necessity of taking into account the wide range of contexts in which the word is used: law, wisdom, nature/fertility, war/victory, cult/sacrifice, kingship. These are brought together in kingship, instituted by God (or gods) for the well-being of all (particularly evident in biblical material such as Psalm 72 where the king's receiving God's *šedaqah* has wide ramifications). Schmid describes *š-d-q* as being related to *Weltordnung* or "cosmic ordering" which is expressed in given concrete situations. It is not an abstract moral virtue or principle, nor is one to think of "order" in a static sense or as not involving struggle. One therefore

<sup>3</sup> See articles in recent bible dictionaries and works listed in their bibliographies. Most helpful and comprehensive for Old Testament is K. Koch, "*šdq* gemeinschaft treu/heilvoll sein", *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, Bd. II, eds., E. Jenni and C. Westermann, Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1976, cols. 507-30. Refer also to my 'Righteousness' in the *Septuagint of Isaiah: a contextual study* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), and for the New Testament, the work of my colleague, R. K. Moore, *Right with God: Paul and his English translators*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Queensland, 1978.

<sup>4</sup> Of 276 instances of the nouns of MT, 61 occur in Isaiah, 83 in Psalms, 27 in Proverbs, and only 21 in the Pentateuch. For the adjective, *šaddiq*, the statistics are 206: 14, 52, 66, and 17 respectively (as given by Koch).

<sup>5</sup> N. H. Snaith, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament*, Philadelphia: Westminster 1946, p. 92. Similar are D. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms*, Cambridge: C.U.P. 1967, and H. G. Stigers, "*šādēq*", *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. L. Harris. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980, Vol. 2, pp. 752-55.

<sup>6</sup> E. R. Achtemeier, "Righteousness in the OT", *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. New York: Abingdon, 1962, Vol. 4, p. 80. Similar is J. A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul*. Cambridge: C.U.P. 1972.

<sup>7</sup> H. H. Schmid, *Gerechtigkeit als Weltordnung*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1968.

speaks of "being right, putting right, ensuring order, bringing about harmony and what is right".

The role of the king in bringing about *šedeq* has been illuminated by comparative materials. Cazelles<sup>8</sup> and, most recently, Weinfeld<sup>9</sup> have highlighted ways in which a "righteous" king is one who brings a good and happy life for all his subjects. One featured means is through edicts at the time of accession which include remission of debts, freeing of slaves and release of land. Thus there is close association with ideas of "generosity", "mercy" and "setting free" (compare Jer 9.24 [Heb 23], Hos 2.19, Psa 89. 14-17 [Heb 15-18]). Unfortunately the English word "righteousness" never suggests such actions, which are far from mere legal or moral rectitude. Semitic emphasis is upon actions which bring about prosperity, benefit, equal rights for all subjects, including freedom from external oppression and deliverance from enemies. One may note the use of the plural *šedaqot* to describe God's actions in the Exodus and subsequent events (Judg 5.11; 1 Sam 12.7).

Within the Old Testament the kinds of actions that are appropriate are expressed in God's *mishpaṭim* ("judgements, laws"), so that *mishpaṭ* often linked with *sedeq* and frequently translated "justice", is associated with the covenantal *mishpaṭim*. Hence there is seen a link between *šedeq* and laws, within the framework of the covenantal relationship. Further *šedeq* for Israel is not only a royal attribute but is to characterize all of God's people, with a similar concern for the well-being of one's fellows. Thus it is surely significant that many of the laws are concerned with provision for poor and powerless people, remission of debts, setting slaves free, and inalienability of the land. It is quite explicit in Ezekiel's description of the *šedaqot* of the *šaddiq* (Ezek 18.5-18). In a broad sense then *š-d-q* signifies actions that bring about what is right and good for all or the state where this is so.

### 3. The Book of Isaiah

Many have drawn attention to the use of the nouns *šedeq/šedaqah* in Isaiah 40-55 as almost synonymous with "salvation" and "prosperity", evident both from semantic parallels and from general context. There is some debate as to whether this is seen also in chapters 56-66. A number of issues may be focused through examination of English versions.

#### 3.1 Rendering of *šedeq/šedaqah* in selected English versions

The following versions give a broad range of backgrounds and style of translation:<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> H. Cazelles, "De l'idéologie royale", *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia* 5 (1973; Gaster festschrift), pp. 59-73.

<sup>9</sup> M. Weinfeld, *Justice and Righteousness in Israel and the Nations*. Jerusalem: Magnes, 1985 in Hebrew; English version forthcoming. For an English summary see his "'Justice and righteousness' in ancient Israel against the background of 'social reforms' in the ancient Near East", in *Mesopotamien und Seine Nachbarn: XXV. Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale Berlin, 3. bis 7. Juli, 1978*, eds. H.-J. Nissen and J. Renger Berlin: Reimer, 1982 pp. 491-519.

<sup>10</sup> In Olley, 'Righteousness', pp. 133-139, the following are compared: RSV, Jerusalem Bible, NEB, and the translation in commentaries by North (chs 40-55, English), Duhamel, Fohrer (both, chs 1-66, German), Eichrodt (chs 1-23, 28-39, German), Kaiser (chs 1-39, German), Auvray (chs 1-39, French) and Bonnard (chs 40-66, French).

RSV	Revised Standard Version (1952)
NEB	New English Bible (1970)
NAB	New American Bible (1970)
GNB	Good News Bible: Today's English Version (1976)
NIV	New International Version (1978)
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible (1985)

### Chapters 1-39:

The first five versions uniformly interpret the twenty instances of the word in terms of an ethical "righteousness" or a forensic "right NAB, following its Latin tradition, favours "justice",<sup>11</sup> as does NEB for six occurrences: 5.23; 10.22; 11.4, 5; 26.9, 10, although "what is right" occurs six times. NJB translates contextually, most often "saving justice", less frequently "fair judgement" and "uprightness".<sup>12</sup>

Amongst commentaries and other versions, Bonnard<sup>13</sup> is the only one known to me who sees a salvific connotation anywhere in chapters 1-39, namely in 1.26-27 and 5.16.

In chapters 40-55, NAB and NIV keep to their traditions with a predominant use of "justice" and "righteousness" respectively. Even they, however, recognize passages where this is inappropriate:

NAB: "victory/triumph of justice" (42.6; 45.13; 46.12), "vindication" (48.18; 54.17), "just decree" (45.23), "just deeds" (45.24).

NIV: "truth" (45.19), "all integrity" (45.23), "what is right" (51.7), "vindication" (54.17) and "victory" (41.2 margin).

NJB uses predominantly "saving justice", but also has "saving" (41.10), "justice" (45.8b; 46.13; 51.5) and "uprightness" (48.1). Noteworthy is GNB's flexibility, as, e.g., in 42.6: "see that justice is done on earth"; 42.21: "eager to save"; and 45.13: "fulfil my purpose and put things right."

Surprisingly NJB is the only version to have kept the close link between the two instances in 45.19,23, where Yahweh affirms that he has announced that there will be *ṣedaqah*.<sup>14</sup>

### Chapters 56-66:

Significantly neither RSV nor NEB carries on into chapters 56-66 the same emphasis on "victory" and "deliverance" they see in 40-55. Where something of this connotation is seen then they use either "vindication" (RSV: 62.1, 2; 63.1) or "right (has won the day)" (NEB: 59.9; 62.1, 2; 63.1). On the other hand GNB

<sup>11</sup> A note on 1.27 states: "This verse is the key to the whole Book of Isaiah. Zion's defiant persistence in sin has demanded a divine *judgement*, by which her survivors will be cleansed and return to God in *justice*; cf. 40.2." NAB tends to translate *mishpat* as "judgement", or occasionally "right".

<sup>12</sup> A similar definition was used for "integrity" favoured by the first edition of The Jerusalem Bible.

<sup>13</sup> P.-E. Bonnard, *Le Second Isaïe, son disciple et leurs éditeurs: Isaïe 40-66* (Etudes Bibliques; Paris: Gabalda, 1972), p. 542. I have argued in support of this interpretation in 'Righteousness', pp. 66-67.

<sup>14</sup> Discussed more fully in my "Notes on Isaiah xxxii. 1, xlv 19,23 and lxiii 1", *Vetus Testamentum* 33 (1983), pp. 446-53.

quite freely uses "victory" or "save".<sup>15</sup> NJB has "saving justice" 12 times, with "uprightness" and cognates seven times (and "justice" in 56.1a). One can only assume that RSV and NEB (as also the first edition of the Jerusalem Bible) have been influenced by a presupposed legalism in chs 56-66. The actual language used, including parallelisms, argues strongly for a continuity of usage.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.2 Suggestions regarding translation

Our preceding comments have stressed the inadequacy of "righteousness". "Justice", as used in modern English may convey a more dynamic sense (e.g., a concern to see that justice is done; quest for social justice). I would suggest however that "justice" is more appropriate as a translation of *mishpat*, which is more closely associated with legal settings and with laws, although also occurring in more dynamic contexts. While *mishpat* and *ṣ-d-q* are very commonly associated as a word-pair, and hence are used in similar contexts, *ṣ-d-q* is more likely to be used in wider settings of bringing about freedom and prosperity for all, while *mishpat* is more common in settings of law-making and enforcing, and in reference to law-conforming.

There is, however, the question as to whether "victory", "deliverance" and the like are adequate (although preferable to "righteousness"). How is one to translate in such a way as to have some idea of being, doing or bringing about what is right and beneficial for all? The long phrase of GNB 45.13 conveys this: "to fulfil my purpose and bring about what is right". Indeed, the Hebrew would often be best conveyed by a more frequent use of "(what is) right". It has advantages of some consistency in translating *ṣ-d-q*, of having links with a translation tradition as old as the Septuagint, and of allowing some differences of exegetical understanding as to the nature of "what is right" in specific contexts.

*Ṣ-d-q* frequently occurs in contexts referring to a society in which all, but leaders in particular, perform their tasks justly for the good of the community, evildoers being punished. One could speak of a "just, harmonious, peaceful society". At times non-human features (animals, crops) are included in the description and so "prosperity" is involved. Sometimes it is the rulers' responsibility to bring this about, although more often it is Yahweh who will accomplish "what is right" and so his "bringing about what is right" includes saving action. The emphasis on Yahweh's action is dominant in chs 40-66, although it is also evident in the earlier chapters as well. Thus a more dynamic translation than "righteousness" is also required in chs 1-39.

One advantage of the traditional renderings in NAB and NIV, for all their weakness as modern English, is that the reader becomes aware of ways in which there is interaction between God's and Israel's *ṣedeq/ṣedaqah*. However, a translation such as "what is right" is both modern English and also makes

<sup>15</sup> A similar contrast is observed between the first edition of the Jerusalem Bible and most modern German commentators. The Jerusalem Bible uses "victory" or similar 9 times in 40-55, but throughout 56-66 uses "integrity" or "just". Fohrer, Kessler and Westermann use "Heil" frequently in both sections.

<sup>16</sup> See particularly J. J. Scullion, "ṣedeq-ṣedaqah in Isaiah cc. 40-66," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 3 (1971): 335-48; also 'Righteousness', *passim*.

transparent the link between the promise that Yahweh will bring about what is right and beneficial (deliverance, vindication, prosperity, with judgement upon oppressors) and Israel's responsibility to do what is right towards Yahweh and towards others (actions within the covenant community).

### 3.3 *The Adjective Šaddiq*

Apart from GNB, the translations surveyed have kept to "righteous", "just" (NAB), or "upright" (NJB), including a couple of instances of "innocent, in the right" (5.23; 29.21). The only exceptions are in 45.21: "victorious" (NEB), "saving" (NJB).

GNB is more varied, but does not in general depart from the basic ethical meaning. Of note, as for NEB, is 45.21, "[the God] who saves his people" (translating the composite *šaddiq umoshia*).

A problem with using "righteous" is that it is now often perceived individualistically. *Šaddiq* on the other hand describes a person rightly related to God<sup>17</sup> and concerned for the well-being of others. This characteristic is probably most commonly designated by "good" in modern English (as in GNB 26.7a, b; 57.1a, b). Other possibilities are "person of integrity, fair, just, one who is concerned for what is right". Sometimes it is explicitly forensic, "innocent, in the right". When it is a community that is described, suggested renderings are "just, harmonious, where all is right". "Prosperous" may suggest only material prosperity, and that only for some, and so should only be used when the context clearly shows that this is for all.

### 3.4 *The Verb*

We shall consider here three instances of the *qal* and three of the *hif'il*.<sup>18</sup>

#### (a) *Qal*:

In 43.9, 26, the translations unanimously give a forensic sense such as "prove (them) to be right" or "prove innocence," "justify" (RSV, v. 9), or "justify themselves/yourself" (NJB).

45.25 is more contentious:

RSV, NEB:	"triumph"	NAB:	"vindication"
GNB:	"I will rescue"	NIV:	"be found righteous"
NJB:	"finds justice"		

Earlier comments regarding "victory" apply here to "triumph" and "rescue". The disputation setting (45.18-25) suggests a sense such as NAB and NJB, or perhaps better "shown to have been right (to have trusted in Yahweh)".<sup>19</sup> This is supported by the contrast with the nations being "ashamed", or "shown to be in the wrong" (v. 24).<sup>20</sup> Here one meets a key understanding in the prophetic works and Psalms. Although one may sin and experience Yahweh's judgement, yet one continues to cling to Yahweh in repentant submission and so in that sense can ask for vindication against the scorn and abuse of surrounding nations.

<sup>17</sup> Compare the remarks of R. Kassühlke. "Some words of special religious importance in Old Testament poetry," *Bible Translator* 30,4 (Oct., 1979), p. 443.

<sup>18</sup> Verb occurrences are not common in the OT. *Qal* occurs 22 times (14 in Job), *hif'il* 12, *pi'el* 5, *nif'al* 1 and *hitpa'el* 1.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Bonnard, *Le Second Isaïe*, pp. 166, 179-80: "obtiendra justice".

<sup>20</sup> See J. W. Olley, "A forensic connotation of *bôš*," *Vetus Testamentum* 26 (1976): 230-34.

*(b) Hif'il:*

There is unanimity in seeing a forensic sense in 5.23 ("acquit; GNB, more colloquial but also expressing a wider sense, "let go free") and 50.8 ("vindicate", "uphold my right" [NAB], "prove me innocent" [GNB]), "grants me saving justice" [NJB]. All these translations are suitable.

53.11 is notoriously difficult and translations vary:

RSV: "make to be accounted righteous"

NEB: "vindicate"

NAB, NIV,

NJB: "justify"

GNB: "for his sake I will forgive them".

Modern English usage makes "justify" unsatisfactory, and the RSV, while giving traditional Protestant understanding, has problems with "righteous".

It is not possible to go into a detailed discussion here, but some comments are pertinent to the question of translation. (While detailed exegesis and translation are inseparably linked, some decisions can be made regarding translation without solving all exegetical problems.) Central is the issue as to whether to keep a forensic sense. And if the answer is positive, how would this be expressed in modern English? The GNB is certainly clear. Or is one to use a wider understanding? Some clues may be seen in (a) the GNB translation of 5.23, which recognizes that being acquitted (forensic) results in one being "free" to enjoy the full benefits of life in the community; and (b) the relational, well-being aspects of *ṣ-d-q*. It would seem that there is to be a note of being free from judgement (relevant in the original setting of the ending of the Exile) and of the enjoyment of life within the covenant relationship. North uses an embracing phrase, "bring righteousness".<sup>21</sup> I would suggest a phrase such as "bring many to enjoy a right relationship with God".

#### 4. Some Other Passages

In the past the (understandable) practice of translators seems to have been to keep traditional renderings unless they clearly do not fit into a given setting. Changes in modern English and increasing understanding of the Semitic usage of *ṣ-d-q* call for fresh translation.

While one cannot expect to find one word or phrase that exactly corresponds, various combinations using "right" are often suitable. This has the advantage of being able to be used in a variety of contexts, and also of making transparent links between the *ṣedeq/ṣedaqah* of Yahweh, the king, individuals and the community.

Thus in Psalms *ṣedeq/ṣedaqah* is frequently characteristic of Yahweh in contexts which explicitly refer to him as "king" of "reigning". In many of these instances the focus of the psalm is on deliverance from oppression and enemies,<sup>22</sup> or false accusers,<sup>23</sup> while in others it is on his general rule of the world or creation.<sup>24</sup> Significantly in at least two of these passages, forgiveness is

<sup>21</sup> C. R. North, *The Second Isaiah*. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1964, pp. 244-45.

<sup>22</sup> Psa 5.8 (note v. 2).

<sup>23</sup> Psa 33.5; 89.14, 16; 96.13; 97.2, 6.

<sup>24</sup> Psa 99.4 (note v. 8); 103.17 (note vs. 3, 9-12, 19).

involved.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, and derivatively, throughout the OT rulers and leaders are to exercise this characteristic, specifically illustrated by concern for the weak and powerless.<sup>26</sup>

A reading of these passages highlights the way in which the concern of God or rulers for “what is right (for all)” leads to the community enjoying “peace, prosperity and harmony”.<sup>27</sup> In such a community each person is “concerned for the wellbeing of others”.<sup>28</sup> One could highlight two promises. In Jer 23.6; 33.16, “Yahweh our *šedeq* (bringer of deliverance, wellbeing and harmony to us)”, through David, “a Branch of *šedaqah*”, is in direct contrast to the unfaithful king, Zedekiah (*šedeq-Yah*). More widely, the exercise of “what is right” by Abraham and his descendants is to bring blessing to the nations (Gen 18.19; cf. Jer 4.2).

This more dynamic understanding, with its notes of deliverance and benevolence towards all (although including punishment for the recalcitrant wicked) is seen in still further passages.<sup>29</sup> Again, there are instances where recognition of sin is explicit.<sup>30</sup> Relevant here is the use of the plural, *šedaqot* (“acts of restoring people to freedom and enjoyment of life”). These can be actions of either Yahweh<sup>31</sup> or his people.

We have already noted instances where Yahweh’s “bringing about what is right” includes forgiveness. To these may be added those references, surprising to us perhaps, where people who recognize their sin appeal to Yahweh’s *šedaqah*.<sup>32</sup>

In such instances “righteousness” or “justice” is clearly inappropriate. Here is an appeal to God, the King, to do what is a common (ideal) royal act throughout the ancient Near East, to be gracious and benevolent, restoring subjects to the enjoyment of all that is right. Implied is the willingness of the subject(s) to be loyal. One who persists in rebellion clearly cannot expect favourable treatment, but one who turns humbly to the ruler may seek restoration. For Israel, the previous acts of Yahweh provided a basis for hope for similar action in the present.

Two instances may be quoted in full, with a suggested translation:

<sup>25</sup> 2 Sam 8.15; 1 Kg 10.9 (= 1 Chr 18.14; 2 Chr 9.8); Psa 45.4, 7; 72.1, 2; Prov 25.5; Jer 22.3 (note 3b), 15; 23.5; 33.15; Ezek 45.9.

<sup>26</sup> Jer 23.5-6; 31.23; 33.15-16; Joel 2.23; Mal 4.2 (MT 3.20).

<sup>27</sup> Deut 16.20; 24.13 (6.25 may describe continuance of “good” and “life”); Psa 112.9 (*šedaqah* may also be enjoyment of prosperity, v. 3); Amos 5.7; Zeph 2.3. There are a number of references to *šedeq* in connection with commerce (weights) and court cases (setting free the innocent, not the wicked).

<sup>28</sup> Psa 4.1; 17.15; 31.2; 35.24, 28; 71.2, 15, 16, 19, 24.

<sup>29</sup> Psa 40.9, 10 (note v. 12); 65.5 (note v. 3; rest of the psalm affirms God’s benevolent activity as Creator).

<sup>30</sup> Jdg 5.11; 1 Sam 12.7; Mic 6.5; Psa 103.6; Jer 51.10.

<sup>31</sup> Ezek 18.5-18.

<sup>32</sup> Psa 40.9, 10 (note v. 12); 85.10-13 (note vs. 1-9); Psa 143.1, 11; Daniel 9.16 (also 7, 14, 18); Micah 7.9-10.



Psalm 143.1-2, 11:

By your trustworthiness, respond to my cry *by graciously saving me*;  
Do not come in judgement with your servant  
for no person living is *innocent* before you . . .  
On account of your name, Yahweh, preserve my life,  
With your *action to put right*, bring me out of trouble.

Micah 7:9-10:

The anger of Yahweh I will bear,  
for I have sinned against him,  
until he pleads my case  
and executes my matter for judgement.  
And he will bring me out to light,<sup>33</sup>  
I will see his *putting everything right*,  
And my enemy will see and shame will cover her,  
The one who said to me, "Where is Yahweh your God?"

How truly Paul spoke of a "*dikaio sunē theou* apart from law, to which the law and prophets testify" (Romans 3.21).

<sup>33</sup> A common image for deliverance.

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### TRANSLATING THE APOCRYPHA IN SWEDEN: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE TEXTUAL PROBLEMS

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Readers of this journal are often reminded that translators of the Bible stand between the rigorous discipline of academic research and the imminent demands of a practical task. The process of translation inevitably involves taking sides in hundreds of difficult scholarly controversies, but not even the most prominent translation committee can claim to have done thorough independent research in all such cases. Shorthand procedures are necessary in collecting and weighing the available evidence, and the smaller the resources are in proportion to the need for swift results, the more will the work be dominated by simple rules of thumb. Several recent contributions to *The Bible Translator* testify that textual criticism is a critical area from this point of view. (See, e.g., July 1975, pp. 314-324; January 1977, pp. 121-142; October 1982, pp. 430-435; July 1984, pp. 301-308; January 1985, pp. 122-129). The need for practical help in the highly technical task of choosing between competing readings is obvious. At the same time, the translator must himself be a reliable, honest and understandable guide to the common reader, when textual uncertainties are to be exposed in footnotes to the translation. This is not easy either.