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**“Targum Neofiti 1—Księga Liczb.
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This publication is the next stage in the implementation of a broader project initiated by Rev. Prof. Miroslaw S. Wróbel, PhD, from the Institute of Biblical Studies at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin in Lublin, which began in 2014 and aims to publish a multi-volume series of the Aramaic Bible in Polish, including the Targums to the Pentateuch (Targum Neofiti 1, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Targum Onkelos), the Targums to the Prophets and the Targums to the Writings.

Targumic texts were very popular in the times of Jesus and the apostles. On the one hand, they were a paraphrase and explanation of the texts of the Hebrew Bible and a commentary on them, and on the other hand, they were a source of inspiration for Jesus and the authors of the New Testament. Much of the content contained in the rich Jewish traditions of the intertestamental period and later Christian traditions can be better understood in the light of the Targumic message. In the times of Jesus, when Aramaic was commonly used in everyday speech, including in synagogues, schools and families, religious content was explained and commented on through colorful and lively Targumic traditions.

Although Targumic texts often depart from the original Hebrew texts, they stem, like the New Testament, from the same source: faith in the revelation of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Studying them reveals a new way of understanding the Bible. Furthermore, their content inspires deeper biblical, archaeological, historical, paleographic, philological, and theological studies.

Targum Neofiti 1 on the Book of Numbers, the fourth volume of the project entitled *The Aramaic Bible*, fits this list perfectly. Its translation, along with critical apparatus and footnotes clarifying more complex issues, was prepared by Dr. Anna Kuśmirek, a professor at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. The translation was made from the edition edited by Alejandro Díez Macho: *Neophyti 1. Targum Palestinese. MS de la Biblioteca Vaticana*, vol. 4, *Números*, Madrid 1974. Targum Neofiti 1 to the Book of Numbers completes the five-volume work of the Aramaic Bible, preceded by volume 0 by Rev. Prof. Mirosław S. Wróbel, entitled “Introduction to the Aramaic Bible,” which serves as an explanation and introduction to the Targumic literature. Together with the previously published volumes of Genesis, Exodus (translated by Rev. Prof. Mirosław S. Wróbel), the Book of Leviticus (translated by Rev. Prof. Antoni Tronina) and the Book of Deuteronomy (Rev. Prof. Marek Parchem), the publication forms the entire Pentateuch, or Torah—the most important text in Judaism. The entire work is the first translation of the Torah according to Targum Neofiti 1 into Polish.

Codex Neofiti 1 was discovered in the Vatican Library in 1949 and belongs to the group of Aramaic translations of the Pentateuch known as the “Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch.” The Aramaic text it contains dates to the 1st-2nd-century AD, making it a valuable source for biblical studies. It is written in a Galilean dialect, similar to that spoken by Jesus. Making this codex available in Poland (and in Polish) allows an understanding of the Jewish interpretation of the Holy Scriptures at the end of the Old Testament period and the beginning of the New Testament, then what Judaism was and developed during this period, and also plays a significant role in research on the language of Jesus, the Apostles, and the emerging Christianity.

A great advantage of Targum Neofiti 1 to the Book of Numbers is that it combines the highest scientific standards with an accessible form. The texts are arranged synoptically: on the left-hand side is the Targum text in Aramaic, and on the right-hand side is the Polish translation. Of particular importance to the skilled reader is the inclusion in the critical apparatus of alternative versions of the text from other manuscripts, versions and biblical translations,

including explanations based on apocryphal writings and rabbinical literature. The footnotes also provide a direct opportunity, without referring to the Hebrew Bible (Masoretic text), to compare important, interesting, different or already interpreted phrases and terms translated from the Hebrew Bible in the Targum. Even less experienced readers, even without knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic, will find translations or explanations in Polish in the footnotes. Volume 4 of the Aramaic Bible is not only a translation, but a complete critical study containing an introduction explaining the specificity of Targum Neofiti 1 to the Book of Numbers.

The Book of Numbers, interpreted in Targumic terms, reveals connections with other books of the Pentateuch. It alludes to promises and curses from Genesis. It continues the cultic regulations from Leviticus. It foreshadows themes developed in Deuteronomy.

In view of the above, this publication should be of interest to biblical scholars and theologians seeking sources for academic research, students of theology and Jewish studies exploring ancient interpretations of biblical texts, clergy wishing to enrich their understanding of the Holy Scriptures, as well as Bible enthusiasts interested in the oldest commentaries on the texts contained therein.

